

## Interview with G. Lewis Schmidt

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project  
Information Series

G. LEWIS SCHMIDT

Interviewed by: Allen Hansen

Initial interview date: February 8, 1988

Copyright 1998 ADST

### Introduction

The first part of this (greatly restructured) interview deals extensively with the establishment and early years of the USIS program in Japan. It is difficult to fit a short description of the conditions prevalent in the country at the end of WWII into the flow of narrative once the interview begins. Therefore, the following paragraphs are given as an introduction to the Japanese part of the interview. It is also well to remember that USIS did not begin operations as such in Japan until six and a half years after the War's end. The Army had handled all in country informational work up to April 29, 1952, the effective date of the Peace Treaty.

Although there were similarities between the situation in Japan and Germany at the end of WWII, there were substantial differences. There had been no ground war in Japan. Urban destruction except in Kyoto, had been great, but the countryside had not been ruined in battle. The decision of MacArthur to retain the Emperor gave the people a symbol of continuity and cohesion. The Government was basically intact. The country was not plagued by a refugee problem. Despite a few fanatic military officers, there was

## Library of Congress

no Nazi-like menace to search out. The populace, once it discovered its own government propaganda about the horrors of American occupation were unfounded, was friendly to the point of embarrassment. They were sick of their own military and police, ashamed of having precipitated the war, and for the most part cooperative.

A major difference between Japan and Germany was the fact that the media were still organizationally intact as the war ended. Newspaper publication might have been temporarily suspended and radio broadcasting momentarily discontinued, but the personnel and operational structure were all in place. There was little fear that if allowed to publish or broadcast, the media would become a source of dangerous subversion or public incitement. Therefore, there was no need as in Germany and Austria, to create and staff new papers or radio broadcasting stations. Scarcity of newsprint and reporting talent restricted the size and reporting of existing papers, and lack of adequate transmitter facilities as well as shortages of trained broadcasters and technical personnel curtailed radio output, but those shortcomings would correct themselves in time.

On the other hand, the fall of the nation had destroyed the monetary base. Monetary holdings were worthless. People from previously wealthy to poor had no means of buying anything. Supplies of everything from food and clothing to the barest necessities of life were in critically short supply. Economic ruin was complete.

The Japanese psyche had suffered a terrible blow. It was their first and only loss to an outside enemy, a condition previously unthinkable. There was a wide spread sense of shame and loss of confidence. Even at the end of the occupation, this feeling of insecurity and guilt and not fully dissipated.

From the informational point of view, the Japanese had been shut off from the outside world certainly from the time of Pearl Harbor, but in many ways since the late '30's when the military took control of the government and censored all media. They were hungry for information about everything. Though benign, the Occupation was careful to control

## Library of Congress

what the Japanese could read. This restriction was gradually eased, but it meant that the Occupation supplied libraries were popular, and since these formed the countrywide base for the post-Occupation USIS program the army's Civil Information and Education program (CI&E) offered USIS a ready made platform from which to launch operations.

### Short Summary of Career in Department of State's USIA Predecessor Organizations

*Q: This is Side 1, Tape 1 of Session 1 of an interview with G. Lewis Schmidt, a retired Foreign Service officer of USIA being conducted February 8, 1988 at his home in McLean, Virginia. The interviewer is Allen Hansen. Transferring over from the Department of Agriculture, Lew Schmidt began his State Department career in 1949 as a budget analyst for the U.S. Information and Education Program of the Department of State, the forerunner of USIA. During the next 23 years, until his retirement in November of 1972, he held a number of high positions with the Agency. In 1952 he became the Executive Officer of USIS Tokyo at the time the Japanese peace treaty had just been signed. In 1956 he was the Deputy Director and Acting Director of USIS in Brazil until medically evacuated after having contracted polio.*

He went on to become Deputy Assistant Director and Acting Director of Latin American Operations from 1957 to 1959, Assistant Director of the Agency for Administration, 1960-64, Acting Deputy Director of the Agency for a few months in 1960-61 prior to the Kennedy transition team's arrival, U.S. Consul General in Izmir, Turkey, Country Public Affairs Officer in Thailand and, prior to his retirement, Director of the USIA Resource Analysis Staff.

### Getting Into USIA Affairs was an Accident of Circumstances

Lew, let's begin by telling us about how you happened to become a Budget Analyst in the State Department's Information and Education Program in 1949.

## Library of Congress

SCHMIDT: Before I do that I just want to back up a minute. My government career actually began in 1940 after I came out of graduate school at Harvard. But, I had had a 2nd Lieutenant Reserve Commission in the Army, so, of course, the Army picked me up and I spent the next 5+ years in the Army and then was in private business in California for a couple of years. Because I had worked for Agriculture for a year and two months before I went into the Army, when I left private business on the west coast, I came back to Agriculture and transferred over to the Department of State in the fall of 1949.

I had not previously been in budgetary activities. In fact, my education had been in Political Science and Economics. I was Economic Officer for the Military Government Section of Sixth Army and First Corps during the first year of occupation in Japan, and I really had never expected to get into the administrative area. But after going back to Agriculture, I looked around and decided that if I was ever going to reach executive levels in the Department or anywhere else I probably better know something about the budgetary operation.

So I talked to Mr. Robertson, Ralph Robertson, who at that time was the Director of Budget and Finance for Agriculture. And he made me a Section Chief in the Budget Division of Agriculture. And after about a year and a half in that position, some friends of mine who wanted me to come over and work with them in State got me into State. I had always been interested in going into the Foreign Service, I wanted to go to State for that reason.

Since my most recent experience had been in budget and there was a vacancy in the Budget Division at that time, I went into the budget operation in State. The vacancy happened to be in the area which was concerned with preparing and defending the budget for the U.S. Information and Education Program, USIE, which at that time, of course, was a part of the Department of State. So that's how I happened to get into the budget operation, and subsequently into Government Information programs.

## Library of Congress

I advanced so rapidly in the budget area that it was hard to get back out of it. It took me about seven years to escape.

*Q: You were in the Section of the State Department's Budget Division that handled Budget work for the Office which was actually the forerunner of USIA. Were you and your colleagues for or against the idea of a separate information agency? What was the atmosphere at this time?*

1950 Attitudes In USIE About Separating From Department of State

SCHMIDT: Well, of course, when I first came in I really knew so little about USIA or USIE as it then was known that I didn't initially have any strong opinion. However, it didn't take me very long to realize what was happening. Because at that time the Chief of the Division of Budget in the Department of State, a man named Ed Wilbur, didn't like USIE. And USIE was sort of a stepchild in the department anyway. The old line Foreign Service didn't have very much use for it and looked upon us as second or even third class citizens. And that was often not very pleasant.

*Q: USIE is what the office was called at that time.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, it's now USIA but it was then the United States Information and Education Office of the State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs.

*Q: I see.*

SCHMIDT: Well, I also discovered that Wilbur, who was always trying to gain influence with John Rooney, the head of the Congressional Subcommittee that heard our Foreign Service appropriations requests on the Hill, was behind our backs, going up and seeing Rooney and telling him that this group at USIE isn't that important. And if we can get money for [a certain] program in State you can cut out some of this junk at USIE. So

## Library of Congress

Rooney was often following Ed Wilbur's lead, giving USIE a bad time and cutting its request, to obtain money for one or another appropriation at State.

Things got a little better when Henry Ford succeeded Wilbur, who went up to be the head of the Office of Budget and Fiscal Affairs in the Department of State. But even so State did consider USIE sort of second class. Understandably, before long I also began to feel that the operation would be better served if it were separate from the Department of State. Although, of course, I had no influence, at that point I did join the general feeling that things should be handled that way.

Events Leading To Assignment To Tokyo in January, 1951

*Q: When you left the Budget Office you ended up in Tokyo. How did that come about?*

SCHMIDT: Well, to give you a little background on that, Henry Ford soon left the position of Budget Division Chief, but before leaving, he had made me Deputy Chief of the Budget Division. Then he shortly left to become the Executive Director of the Near East Bureau for the Department of State, and so for a time I was left as the Acting Director of the Budget Division.

About that time (late 1951) the peace treaty with Japan was signed, and it was obvious we were soon going to take over the Army information operation in Tokyo. [Then called the Civil Information and Education (CI&E) program of GHQSCAP (General Headquarters, Supreme Commander, Allied Powers Stanford University).] USIE was looking for someone who had both Japanese experience and also budgetary and administrative experience. So we struck a bargain. I agreed that I would like to go back to Japan in that capacity if they felt that I was the person to handle the job.

Background of Experience in Japan

*Q: Where had your Japanese experience come from?*

## Library of Congress

SCHMIDT: It started in 1938 or even earlier. I was the American Chairman of a University level Student organization called the Japan-America Student Conference. It was an Exchange Program between U.S. and Japanese university students completely organized, planned and run by students—no Senior Support or controlling group. I had attended the 4th Annual meeting of this program in 1937 at Stanford University. I was elected chairman of the U.S. delegation for the 5th Conference to be held in Japan. So, I organized the American delegation in 1938 and led it to Japan for the summer meeting of 1938. After the conference we traveled extensively in Japan, then to Manchukuo, which was at that time under Japanese control, and Korea.

When I came back to the States I had gotten a fairly wide exposure to Japan. Of course, no real knowledge in depth. Because of that experience when the war came on and when the American Army was preparing after VE Day, or even before VE Day, was preparing to invade Japan, they were looking around for military officers who had had exposure to Japan. You can imagine that in 1944, '43, '44, nobody in the Army had—or at least a very few people in the Army—had ever had any first hand knowledge of Japan at all. Because I had been there, even though briefly, the Army picked me up for the Military Government operation, and I spent nine months studying the Japanese language and Japanese area studies. Eventually I went to the Philippines and from there into Japan after the armistice was signed in September, 1945. I spent nine to ten months of the first year of the Occupation in Japan during which time I was the Economics Officer for the Military Government Section of the Headquarters of Sixth Army located in Kyoto, and in charge of all Southwestern Japan during the early Occupation. Again, in 1951 there weren't all that many people in DepState with my background who had been in Japan. And so when we were getting ready to take over the program from the Army (as it was then known) were very happy to have me go out and assume the position of Executive Officer, USIS/Japan. It was my duty initially to manage all logistics for the takeover from the Army of the CI&E Program, with 24 field offices, 900 Japanese employees, a \$7,000,000 to \$8,000,000 Budget, plus.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Well, you certainly had the background for it. It must have been a tremendous logistical problem providing the administrative needs for a major cultural and information program in what was enemy territory.*

### The Early Preparations for Assuming Army's Information Program

SCHMIDT: Well, it was. The Army had set up very extensive information and education program in what they called the CI&E or the Civil Information and Education Program under the headquarters which was known as GHQ SCAP. General Headquarters of the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers in Japan. They had 24 field offices of the program located all over Japan. Two of them were in Tokyo. They were designated as libraries, though they also were conduits for cultural programming. When the USIS took over, we changed the name to USIS Cultural Centers. The Japanese have been intrigued always by the concept of culture, and held suspicions about anything called "information." That word to them (as in Europe) was often synonymous with "Intelligence. So when we took over, we called them cultural centers or bunka senta in the Japanese language, which were libraries but also with an extensive program of cultural activities including lectures and motion picture showings and all the paraphernalia that USIS frequently employs or did employ then (and to a large extent still employs today) in its centers abroad.

There were over 900 Japanese employed by the CI&E either in Tokyo or in the various cultural centers around the country. Each one of the centers had at least one vehicle as sort of a mobile unit which they could take out into the boondocks and show movies. And they had, of course, substantial libraries of anywhere from three to five thousand volumes each, plus, of course, all the necessities of supporting a staff of that size. Each center was manned by at least one American. Only one or two of them had more than one American. And the rest were all Japanese employees.

The task fell to me alone at first because I at that time was the only executive officer there. I was all by myself in what was then the Diplomatic Section of General Headquarters



## Library of Congress

SCAP. Shortly thereafter, however, I was lent a young man by the name of Joseph Womack who was a junior officer in the administrative office of the embassy. He became my assistant and was with me for the next year and a half. It was a great help to get him. He was very good. Next we soon began to acquire a very excellent Japanese staff, as the official take over date (April 29, 1952) approached.

We screened every one of the 900 Japanese employees. We made a decision to close the second center in Tokyo, so we eliminated the facilities that were there and kept just the one main center in the central part of downtown Tokyo. Initially, we kept all the other centers, and so eventually took on about 850 of the Japanese who had been in the CI&E operation. And believe me, screening 850 employees in the three months time was quite a job in itself. I should add that the treaty was supposed to have become effective early in February. And I arrived about the 21st or 22nd of January.

Fortunately, because I don't think we could have achieved the takeover in that short period of time, there were various reasons, which I don't need to elucidate here, for the delay in putting the treaty into effect, and it did not actually go into effect until the 29th of April. This gave me and Joe Brown who was the Chief Administrative Officer for the CI&E operation a chance to sort things out. We were able to take advantage of a lot of the so-called GARIOA funds, Government Affairs Resources in Occupied Areas.

Although the Army didn't actually transfer this local currency to us which had been available under the terms of our giving money to the defeated country and their putting up bank accounts in Japanese yen for the equivalent amount, they did at my request give us a great deal of purchasing power against the Army budget while the Army was still in control. As a result of that help we were able to expand our library collections, get a lot of more modernized equipment, make considerable repairs or improvements at various centers and get them in good shape before we actually took over.

## Library of Congress

We also had to screen all the Japanese in the CI&E central headquarters in Tokyo. We did that and selected I would say more than two-thirds of them to come over and work in the operation that soon became USIS in Tokyo.

Another thing fell to our lot. Not knowing exactly how many people we would need to handle an operation of this size, which, except for Germany, at that time was by far the largest overseas operation IIA had overseas, Washington had set up 135 American positions for Tokyo. We wanted to hire quite a number of the people who had been in similar positions in GHQ SCAP CI&E operation, so we began selecting them. I would say that we probably selected about two-thirds of the Americans who were in positions there to come over to our operation. This included a number of the people who were in cultural centers around the country.

### Security Clearance Problems Handicap Takeover

Every one of these people, of course, had cleared the security requirements of the Army back in '45, '46 and '47 when they came aboard with the Army. But by 1952 Senator McCarthy ad begun his depredations on the American side. Fortunately, just as an aside, we were never afflicted with Mr. Cohn and Mr. Schine in the Orient. They preferred to dangle around Europe.

Nevertheless, about half the requests that we sent in or the transfer of these people from GHQ SCAP into our operation were turned down by Security. Security had become highly sensitized by the McCarthy raids, and if there was anything even remotely that might set off some accusation of "left-wingism" or immorality by Security (SY) definition or whatever it might be, they turned them down.

*Q: So you undoubtedly lost a lot of good people.*

SCHMIDT: We lost a lot of good people.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Some that spoke Japanese.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, unfortunately, we didn't have anybody in the motion picture area. And we were about to embark on a rather large motion picture program, including production. We had bought quite a lot of equipment and were ready to start producing some of our own films. Security turned down the first two people requested from the motion picture section of the Army operation that I wanted to get. Finally they turned down the last one. I was really not only exhausted but utterly turned off by the whole process. I knew this man, and I couldn't see how in the world they could turn him down.

So I persuaded Sax Bradford who was the head of USIS in Tokyo at that time to send a telegram which I had drafted, and which I felt was rather important. Sax was a bit skeptical at first, but I sent it anyway. [And he was pretty mad himself.] So the cable read, "Your security turn down of George Gierke [the third man in question] completes destruction of the USIS motion picture program in Tokyo. If you can't find some way to send this man over to us, will you please furnish someone of your own choosing?"

The net result of that was that they did renege. They cleared Gierke. He arrived late in 1952 and was our motion picture officer for the next two years until he had to go back to the States for reasons of health.

Well, on the famous day of April 29th we were at last in business. We had covered or had filled I think somewhere in the neighborhood of 80 or 85 of the authorized American positions. We never did reach the full 135. I'll get into that later.

Getting the Program Under Way as USIS

*Q: And when you say the famous day the 29th you mean when the treaty was signed?*

SCHMIDT: That's when the treaty became effective. It had been signed the preceding autumn in San Francisco. Up to that time the man who had the personal rank of

## Library of Congress

ambassador and was the head of what was then called the Diplomatic Section of SCAP was Bill Sebald who himself was an old Japan hand. But because this was to be a new era, the Department didn't want Sebald to stay on after the Occupation had been terminated. So Washington sent out Robert Daniel (Bob) Murphy.

SCHMIDT: DepState withdrew Sebald and sent out Robert Murphy as ambassador. Murphy had made his reputation in the Foreign Service by being the man sent ashore in advance of the allied invasion of North Africa in 1942 and early '43 and had negotiated the arrangements with the Vichy French Government representatives there which facilitated the allied landings. [Murphy later wrote a fascinating, and best selling, book about his experiences and activities on this historic episode. It was titled *Diplomat Among Warriors*.] He was quite a man and excellent diplomat although he himself didn't have any prior experience in Japanese affairs. They sent Sebald out the night of April 28th. Murphy arrived early in the morning by plane on the 29th and became our ambassador. We went into business as business opened on the morning of the 29th as USIS Japan.

At that time as I say we had filled probably 80 to 85 of the 135 American positions that were authorized. And we spread our own people out all over Japan. Several of the people who had been heads of centers in various places around the country during the Army program were still there. A number of them remained in position for the next year to 15 months, some of them decided they had had it and wanted to go back to the States. Whereupon we sent our own recruits, newly arrived IIA personnel into the centers. Very few of them had had prior Japanese experience.

Building up a program from scratch was facilitated, of course by the fact that the Army had done a superb job, but we wanted to put our imprint on it. We wanted to start wide scale radio programming, a wide ranging motion picture program, and to expand field programming generally.

## Library of Congress

Most of the jeeps that the Army had been using for mobile units in the various centers belonged to the GHQ SCAP. The Army took back most of those jeeps, when USIS took over the Information program. We were faced with the necessity of replacing the returned Army vehicle with our own.

### The Delahaye Monsters

Replacement was another story. In Washington USIE (through DepState) controlled large amounts of local currency in European countries. France had just gotten its automotive industry back into operation, and were producing something called a Delahaye, D-E-L-A-H-A-Y-E.

*Q: This was a van wasn't it? Or no?*

SCHMIDT: Pardon? It was a van. It was a very large cumbersome, extremely heavy van. And, of course, there was no power steering in those days. About half of our center directors in Japan were women, some of them quite frail. I had never seen a Delahaye. I didn't know what the darned thing looked like. So I said, fine, if we can get 20 of those sent out here as soon possible please send them.

Well, it took about five months before they began to arrive. When the first three or four hit the pier in Yokohama, I went down to look at them and was appalled. I didn't know how in the world some of the women who were supposed to operate these things were ever going to be able to control them. One of the funniest pictures I remember is a little woman who at that time was our center director up in the Japanese city of Niigata on the north coast of Japan. She was about five feet tall. I don't think she weighed more than 95 or 100 pounds soaking wet. And to see her behind the wheel of this Delahaye trying to wrestle that non-power steering mastodon around was really something.

## Library of Congress

Also, their speedometers were all calibrated in kilometers. We were supposed to report our mileage in miles. That posed another small administrative problem. But we did operate for, I would say, nearly two years with these Delahayes.

In addition to that fact, they were the first products off the French assembly line when they began manufacturing. They weren't too well put together, and they began breaking down very rapidly. There were no facilities in Japan to repair Delahayes—and worse, no parts! In fact, there weren't any facilities to fix much of anything in Japan at that time except those operated by the military. So we had our troubles. Eventually over a period of my nearly 4-1/2 years out there we replaced all of them. But for the first year and a half or two years we had to operate mostly with these monstrosities and then finally junked them. There was no market for them once we were ready to get rid of them.

As I've said before the motion picture program was the hardest to get underway because it took more than seven months from the time we started operation until George Gierke got out to Japan. Therefore, we started rather slowly. However, George did produce some excellent movies. One of them particularly, called “The Arts of Japan” which was premiered in one of the major theaters in Tokyo in the Fall of 1954 was a masterpiece. It received accolades throughout the USIA program in many parts of the world. It was in its time a remarkably sensitive movie which was a tremendous hit in Japan. USIA in Washington thought it was great, and gave all sorts of compliments to George for his success.

He produced a number of other films. But I think that one was the jewel in his crown. He was subsequently diagnosed as having throat cancer and had to come back to Washington. He was replaced in Tokyo by Harry Keith. Harry, who came out on 1953, was really a genius at producing documentary films. I'll talk a little bit more about him later on. But he did an excellent job. Some of the best agency films produced during those years were put out by Harry Keith in Tokyo. Japan had developed a fine mopix capability in pre-War years. Largely under the tutelage of Army personnel, it was, by 1952,

## Library of Congress

recovering well. Thus USIS could produce films on contract without having to build its own production facilities. We were especially fortunate because with Army assistance during Occupation years, Japan had developed excellent color processing capabilities in Tokyo. Keith devised and directed, using Japanese talent and production equipment.

We were also blessed by the fact that just as we were taking over from CI&E, Germany was winding down its immense HICOG operation. As the German operation phased down, a number of fine officers became available to fill our crying needs in Japan. Even though they did not have Japan expertise, they had obtained excellent grassroots informational and educational experience in their various roles in the German occupation and knew what they were doing.

One of the best of these was a remarkably talented woman by the name of Patricia van Delden. Pat often raised hackles among male officers, particularly her superiors, because she was smarter than most of them, and she was an absolute fountain of extremely good ideas, some of which weren't necessarily endorsed by higher ups when they were first suggested. But Pat was so good at logical argument that she usually persuaded her superiors (occasionally against their will) to put her ideas into effect. This didn't necessarily endear her to her superiors, who felt that she was rather a pushy woman and perhaps was exceeding the bounds of her "proper place" in USIS. One of those who especially came to feel that way was USIS Director Sax Bradford—but more of that later.

However, we made her the supervisor of the field program which put her in charge directly of all the remaining 23 centers in Japan. I might add also that with so many Centers, we decided there ought to be a regional office in Kobe, where there was also a Consulate General, a regional office for the Tokyo area, and a regional office for Kyushu.

Since we only had one center in Sapporo on the Island of Hokkaido, we felt we didn't need a regional officer there and handled that center out of Tokyo. Of the three regional officers that we had, one was an old Japan hand, Walter Nichols, who had been born in Japan,

## Library of Congress

had grown up there until he was about 14 or 15 and spoke Japanese quite fluently. Walt was designated the Kobe regional officer. He had the largest number of centers under his general jurisdiction but was also operating under the supervision of Pat van Delden. I must say I have forgotten the names of officers who were in charge elsewhere. I suppose if I had tried hard enough and tried to look up their names I might remember. But at the moment I do not.

### The Nagano Seminar

Well, I said earlier that Pat van Delden was a virtual fountain of ideas. Since I am speaking about her here, I will at this point discuss one of her most successful ones, even though it developed in 1953, and thus is a bit out of sequence here in the discussion of what constituted the formative stage of USIS/Tokyo. This was the highly popular and effective summer program that came to be known and recognized throughout a good part of academic Japan as The Nagano Seminar. Although a few others of us assisted in developing the final venue and format, Pat conceived the idea of staging a seminar on American literature in some quiet, smaller city of Japan, away from the distractions of Tokyo. We would select a manageable number (28 was decided for the first summer, and 32 thereafter) of top Japanese professors of English and American literature, support them for a full four weeks of study and discussion under the guidance of American professors of literature, and generally exchange ideas with them on a wide range of subjects both during, and informally after, seminar sessions.

We selected the charming and historic cultural city of Nagano located about 100 miles northwest of Tokyo in a softly beautiful setting at the foot of the Japan Alps, which includes near its (then) northern outskirts one of Japan's lovelier and more spacious Buddhist temples. From the USIS/Japan budget, we paid the participant's complete board and lodging for a month in Nagano's two top class Japanese ryokan—in those times, not an overly expensive undertaking. Applicants for the limited slots greatly exceeded the number of openings USIS could offer.



## Library of Congress

In the first year, we relied on competent American professors who were teaching American literature in Japanese universities to be moderators or discussion leaders, since it was too late in the spring to obtain name persons from the U.S. through the Exchange of Persons program. We brought the moderators and the professors to Nagano at the beginning of August. I took two or three of our administrative office Japanese employees up a few days ahead of the opening, and went up myself to handle the logistics of getting the program under way. The Japanese stayed throughout most of the seminar.

In the years after 1953, the Exchange of Persons office in Washington furnished name figures of American literature to perform as discussion leaders at the seminar. The most famous of these was William Faulkner, whose participation in 1955 made headlines all over Japan, and whose visit provided one of the most memorable set of events in my career. But that is a story for later in this interview.

The seminar paid off handsomely in the spreading influence the professors exerted on their students and the publicity the program gave to the American academic reputation. Unfortunately, USIA's 1957 budget disaster occasioned by the animosity of then Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson for newly nominated USIA Director Arthur Larson so curtailed Agency funding that the seminar was dropped, and has never been reinstated.

*Q: There was a motion picture made about his visit also, wasn't there?*

SCHMIDT: Yes, there was a motion picture. USIS made a film up there which was produced by Harry Keith, named, as I recall, "William Faulkner in Japan." It was a great hit and was extremely successful in our Japan motion picture program later on.

I will talk a little bit more later about Mr. Faulkner's visit which had a number of interesting and often disturbing sidelights. I want to go back now to an earlier period and talk about the development of the Information and Education program in Japan after it became a USIS operation. Let's pause for just a minute at this point.

## Library of Congress

### A New Cultural Center Building: "The Manchurian Candidate"

SCHMIDT: I went ahead of our USIS program story in Japan because I wanted to say a few words about Pat van Delden and about some of the other people who participated in building what I thought was one of the finest programs with which I've ever been associated.

So now let's resume near the beginning. One of the developments that provided our first small crisis in the program was that our Tokyo cultural center, located right in the heart of downtown Tokyo just off the Ginza was about to be reclaimed by the Japanese. As soon as the Occupation was over the Japanese began to pick up a little courage, and to express their desires as an independent country which is not only natural but I think desirable. And they wanted our center building.

So we were faced with the necessity of finding a new location. Tokyo had been to some extent rebuilt. But it was still a partially ravaged city even in 1952. Vacant spaces for the type of operation that we needed was not readily available.

So our Director, Sax Bradford, went to see the Foreign Ministry to determine what kind of help they could give us in finding a location that would be an adequate substitute. They had their troubles. I don't know whether the building that they finally came up with as a suggestion belonged to the Foreign Ministry or whether it belonged to the Mombusho, the Ministry of Education.

Anyway, they said we could have this building providing that we would rehabilitate it, that it was in bad repair because nothing had been done with it through the whole period of the war and even the occupation. One favorable thing about it, it was over in the Kanda district of Tokyo which is not far from Tokyo University. It's also near the location of many art and book stores, frequented extensively by student populations which we were trying to reach and many of whom were radically inclined. So we thought that would be a good location.

## Library of Congress

Well, Sax went over to look at it and discovered that the whole thing was occupied by I don't know how many—we never did count them—but a substantially large number of students from Manchukuo. The Foreign Office was appalled. They didn't know these students were still in Japan— especially in Tokyo. The Japanese Government brought them over in the period shortly before and during the early part of the war as exchange students under the Japanese exchange program. I don't know how many people will remember that Manchuria had been taken over by the Japanese Army in 1931-32. The Japanese civilian government shortly thereafter broke it off from China, set it up as a puppet state of Manchukuo.

The Japanese were interested in getting as many as they could of the university students over from Manchukuo to be educated in Japan. Rather large numbers were brought over, and many of them were housed in this building which the Foreign Ministry had just told us now after many years of use that we could have. The situation soon turned into a comedy. There were at least a score of ex-students there. As I say, we never counted them. But there were at least a score of them. Most of them had either married or at least were cohabiting with Japanese women or with Manchurian women students who had come over. And here they were after five years of war and 6-1/2 or seven years of Occupation, still living in the place unbeknownst to the Foreign Ministry and/or the Ministry of Education, both of which were embarrassed to find out that they were still in this building. What was even more unnerving was that this group was at the heart of one of Tokyo's black market operations.

We were disgusted at the appearance of the building which would have cost so much to rehabilitate that we decided against using it. I never did find out what happened to the long occupying Manchurian students, presumably the Ministries found some way to clear them out and perhaps sent them back to Manchuria. But that's the last we heard of them.

May Day! May Day!

## Library of Congress

Shortly before the center search episode I just spoke about, Tokyo, and all Americans then living there, experienced something that few if any of us had anticipated. It was just three days after the Peace Treaty went into effect—May Day, 1952. The MacArthur Occupation had, among other things, made a point of writing a new law code governing labor, and allowing the unions the sort of freedom they had never enjoyed under the former Imperial Government. The new freedom had allowed a fairly substantial infiltration of communists into the labor unions, and the majority of the union membership were at least partly leftist in orientation.

Each May 1, since the Occupation began, the unions had been staging May Day parades and celebrations. I am not sure what the Japanese Government expected for this first May Day outside the restricting confines of the Occupation. Probably more militancy than had been in evidence before the Treaty freed up the country, but also probably not what erupted. When the parade began, I wasn't up on the roof of our building, the Mitsubishi Shoji Building near the Imperial Palace moat, and in the heart of Tokyo. The first I knew of the mounting riot, was when one of our officers came into my office and told me I had better get up on the roof to see the rioting.

It was frightening. None of my past experiences in Japan had prepared me for seeing the Japanese perform like that. The police were clearly unprepared. If there had been any semblance of a parade to begin with, it was out of hand by that time. Mobs were running about with no apparent destination in mind, carrying (obviously inflammatory) banners attacking anyone or anything they could see for no apparent reason. The police were outmanned, but doing the best they could to beat back attacks either against themselves or hapless bystanders. Fires were being set. Automobiles overturned. The mob grew in violence and numbers as the afternoon wore on. By around 3:30 p.m. there was a sea of humanity roiling all along the moat and onto the outer plaza leading to the entrance to the Imperial Palace.

## Library of Congress

Our then Cultural Attach#, Margaret Williams, I learned later, had decided when the rioting seemed to be building, that she had better get home while flight was still possible. That proved to be a mistake. Her driver thought he could get through the mobs by detouring off the main streets through the narrower passages in the downtown theater district. By the time they reached that street, parts of new mobs were coming down toward them from the opposite direction. The crowd suddenly attacked Margaret's car with stones and long wooden poles, pulverizing, but fortunately not shattering, windshield and car windows, and extensively denting the car. By some miracle, perhaps police arrival, they finally managed to get through and tore home. Several other Americans had similar experiences, and suffered extensive car damage. There were no severe American casualties, but this sudden explosion of violence toward Americans who had never experienced much but gratitude from the local citizens, really shook up the resident Yankees. It sure shook me. Ultimately the riots were quieted, but it was a long time before a lot of us could feel the same sense of friendliness and security we had known earlier.

### A Subtle Coolness Between Our USIS Director and Myself

It was not long after my arrival in January of 1952 that I began to sense a cool aloofness in Sax Bradford's attitude toward me. There was no overt hostility, simply an attitude of superiority and almost condescension. I began to feel that he considered anyone in an administrative assignment as somehow less intelligent or intellectual than officers holding other, substantive positions.

Later developments and incidents, which I'll mention at the appropriate points in this interview confirmed my suspicion, but one small episode reinforced my belief early on that I was correct. At a small informal social gathering we both attended one evening, he began a conversation with me, and a few minutes later, rather abruptly without any seeming relationship to what we had been discussing, began to tell me about a time a few years earlier when he was heading a delegation to some conference in Mexico City. A State Department administrative officer had been assigned to the delegation to handle

## Library of Congress

logistics and finances. Sax had ordered this officer to pay a rather substantial amount of money for something, the nature of which I have forgotten. Anyway, the officer argued with Sax that the expenditure was a violation of both Departmental regulations and Federal appropriation language, and he couldn't legally pay it. Sax insisted, and according to him, the officer became very emotional about it. As a result, Sax sent a rough telegram to Washington. The officer was recalled and presumably reprimanded. The incident was told clearly to illustrate the single minded blindness of the administrative type to matters of higher importance.

Although I never mentioned the fact to Sax, it happened that the man in the story had been a classmate of mine at the Harvard Littauer Graduate School some thirteen years earlier. I recalled that he had suddenly left Government about the time Sax was describing. I had thought it strange then, because he already had 15 years invested in Government service, and so far as I knew, hadn't any intention of resigning. He returned to his hometown of Denver. Later, I learned that he had had a nervous breakdown, but recovered. It may not, of course, have had any relation to the incident described by Sax, but again, it might.

Not too long after that, another USIS officer brought me a copy of a memo written by our Cultural Attach#, Margaret Williams, to Sax. I don't know how he got it, but the subject was interesting. She was complaining to Sax that "Our Executive Officer" was assuming excessive responsibilities in the area of program priorities and resource allocations, and wondering if it was right for an administrative type to "meddle" so deeply in substantive matters.

There were, of course, grounds for her contention that I was deeply into program. I had been at first surprised, and later disturbed that Sax seemed to be little concerned with the details of USIS program operation. He had set up his office over in the chancery. In the early days of USIS operation, all of USIS except Sax and his secretary were in the Mitsubishi Shoji Building which was more than two miles away on the edge of the financial district near Tokyo Station. Later, USIS, again except for Sax, moved to what was

## Library of Congress

designated the Embassy Annex, the Mantetsu Building, about two blocks from the main Embassy building. If I hadn't been living in the same embassy residential compound, I would have seen him only infrequently. He almost never came down to USIS offices and staff meetings were not regularly held.

The date for our assumption of the Army's CI&E program was getting closer. Our budget and program responsibilities were about to take a quantum leap. Sax seemed utterly complacent. In the absence of any direction, I began drawing up organizational and staffing plans, as well as proposed resource allocation by program unit. At our occasional staff meetings, I would present these proposals. Sax seemed to accept them without question. Having been accustomed in Washington to considerable program officer participation in budgetary allocations and other administrative decisions, I found this attitude strange. As spring and summer progressed, I began more and more to consult directly with newly arriving and already on duty unit heads concerning their program plans and resource needs, and making advance budgetary allocations accordingly. At staff meetings I told Sax what I was doing and received his OK, but no comment. As a result, before long, all the officers except Margaret Williams were coming directly to me to discuss their plans and requirements.

An even more peculiar and upsetting development took place during the summer of 1952. Washington sent out a request to draw up a complete detailed program plan of operations, together with cost tags attached, descriptions of goals, and methods of reaching them. This was far more than the standard budget document of those days. It was what I suppose was the forerunner of the country plan and management by objectives approach that was used in later years, and was to apply to our newly born USIS operation in Fiscal Year 1953. It seemed to me that it was a document that screamed for PAO participation. Sax treated it as something beneath him that he should sign when the peons had finished it. By this time Pat van Delden was aboard. She and I took the initiative, consulted all the

## Library of Congress

program heads, and undertook to write an extensive plan that ultimately ran to over 100 single spaced typewritten pages.

When we had it in final draft, I sent it to Sax for his OK. He read and signed it, sending it to Washington without change. A few days later when I met him in the chancery, he said to me: "Those guys did a pretty good job on the program paper, didn't they?" I had planned and written almost the entire document. There was no recognition on his part that I had had any part in it. It's an understatement to say that I was let down.

### The Radio Operation in Early USIS/Japan and its Later Development

*Q: You mentioned earlier that you would discuss some other parts of the USIS effort getting under way in the early days of USIS/Japan.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, now, I want to get back to some of the other program activities that were under way in spring and summer of 1952. Particularly, let me talk a bit about the radio program. One of the few men from CI&E not disqualified by Security was Bill Meredith from their radio shop. He transferred to us immediately after April 29, 1952, as did all the Japanese employees whom, during the late winter months, we had already screened and decided to hire from the CI&E. Meredith was a capable man, but not overly energetic. We needed more spark.

A couple years before, Sax had met Henry (Hank) Goshu, who had worked on some projects for VOA in New York. Hank was unique. He was an American Nisei, whose father had sent him to Japan at pre-high school age to be educated in Japan. Hank went through middle and higher school there, and the first year or so of college. Seeing the probability of oncoming war, his father brought him back to the States on one of the last ships coming to America before Pearl Harbor. Hank's Japanese schooling had made him bilingual in Japanese-probably the only American in the Information program with that qualification. He also had acquired extensive radio experience. However, because his wife was not yet an American citizen, she couldn't accompany Hank to Japan, and Hank wouldn't take a



## Library of Congress

regular assignment without her. Sax arranged for him to come on a six month TDY, and he provided the spark that got the USIS Radio program going. (His wife, Jeanne, finally got U.S. citizenship, and Hank later returned for a regular assignment that lasted several years.)

At the time the Peace Treaty became effective, and for some years thereafter, Japan had no national radio network. I don't know exactly how many stations there were then, but I would guess there may well have been 200 or more in various cities and towns around Japan. Most of them had a very weak signal—not more than 15 or 20 watts. Only a few had even 100 watts, and I doubt if any were as powerful as 500 or 1,000 though I'm not sure. Their low power severely limited their range, so stations could proliferate without interfering with one another's frequencies. They wanted to broadcast several hours a day, but had little capacity to produce programs, and so were frantic for material to fill broadcast time. This gave USIS a tremendous opportunity.

Under Hank's planning, he and a couple Japanese employees traveled frequently around the country, establishing a large and enduring clientele of radio outlets delighted to use USIS taped material. The response was enthusiastic. USIS began an operation that eventually (when we acquired enough tape dubbing machines to satisfy the demand) saturated the Japanese airwaves. I don't want to describe this work in detail. Hank himself will be interviewed and give a thorough explanation of what USIS accomplished. It is enough here to say that this sort of saturation went on for several years, until the Japanese finally got back into network coverage. Then the USIS role wound down and terminated.

Toward the end of my first year in Japan, Bill Meredith went home, and was replaced by Victor (Vic) Hauge. In late 1953 or early '54, Hank came back for a regular tour, worked closely with Hauge during Vic's years, and remained for some years after Vic's return to Washington. The Radio effort at its peak demanded an ever increasing amount of USIS resources. Besides, we were being cut back from our early affluence. When we first took

## Library of Congress

over from CI&E, our annual budget was something like \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000, which was a tremendous budget in the early '50s, though not so much these days. Earlier, we had been pretty well able to fund almost anything that we wanted to do. But we were beginning to get progressively restricted, and even though we were by that time closing many centers, [a situation I'll discuss later] we still were running rather tight on money.

I managed however to reprogram things enough as we gradually closed centers so that I could give more money to the radio operation. Vic Hauge performed wonderfully. We had probably an average of two or three hours and sometimes more a day on almost every radio station in Japan for a period of several years. A large amount of it was music. I think for better or for worse we probably played a fairly large role in indoctrinating the Japanese on American popular music. But in any event there were other programs that carried more program freight than that. The fact that we had this opportunity was heaven sent. Vic and Hank did a tremendous job in satisfying their requirements and getting programs on the air for the Japanese at a time when every radio station was receptive.

*Q: And you had the staff and facilities to carry it out?*

SCHMIDT: Yeah, we had a large radio staff. We had three or four Americans. And Hank was a godsend at a most critical stage. He had incidentally served in the China Burma India theater with the Army and had therefore been rehabilitated as an American citizen. Well, actually I don't think he had to be. Because he went back from Japan—went back to the States just before Pearl Harbor, and therefore was not in Japan like many of the other Nisei who temporarily lost their citizenship because they were in Japan during the war and naturally worked for the Japanese war industry, the only way they could survive.

He came with a tremendous amount of experience. He knew Japan intimately. He knew radio, perhaps even better than Vic Hauge did. He had this bilingual capability in Japanese, was a superb negotiator with the Japan radio stations. Could always deal with them as if he were a native. We also had superb, highly intelligent staff, not only among

## Library of Congress

the Japanese who were highly skilled, but among our two or three top Americans, in the radio section. We were also without the sort of competition that would have made such success impossible. At that time television had not started. It was just beginning to come into Japan when I left in 1956. I don't think there was more than one station in Japan and it broadcast a very limited amount of time. There probably weren't more than 100 receivers in the whole country. None of them were owned by individuals. They were all in the hands of restaurants or businesses or something of that sort. And people, of course, were getting very excited about it.

*Q: And before you left in 1956 weren't you acting country public affairs director?*

SCHMIDT: No, I had been acting before that. And I'll come to that shortly. But by the time I left in May, 1956, Joe Evans had come to be PAO, and Art Hummel had come out to be deputy PAO.

*Q: Art Hummel who later became ambassador to Pakistan and China?*

SCHMIDT: That's right. As well as to Burma and Ethiopia. He was Assistant Secretary of State for Far East for a while. Since you've asked the question, however, I'll go ahead and discuss that part of my Japan experience now, although it involves jumping ahead in sequence nearly three years. Sax Bradford had been named to a new, powerful position in Washington in late 1953. His replacement was Willard Hannah, who in mid-year 1954 resigned. Ken Bunce had been named Acting Director when I was on home leave in the summer of 1954, and Willard Hannah resigned. Ken remained in that capacity through the balance of '54 into the early spring of 1955, when he came to the end of his tour. By then he had spent so much of his career in Japan he felt he didn't want to return, and he went back to the States. He later became PAO in India and never did return to Japan in an official capacity.

Schmidt Becomes Acting PAO/Japan: Spring and Summer, 1955

## Library of Congress

I became Acting Director at that time, and was Acting from either April or May, whichever it was, I think late April, until Joe Evans and Art Hummel arrived in October. Several rather significant events occurred during my short stay on the “throne.”

### Staging the Atoms for Peace Exhibit

I'll come back a little later to the William Faulkner visit to Japan which in time preceded the exhibit. Commercial Atomic Energy was just coming into existence. There was only one functional reactor in the world then, the one at Shippingport. The Eisenhower Administration wanted to make the world aware of this great new power source and America's leading role in its development. I believe our exhibit in Japan was the first ever undertaken by USIS. By the time the exhibit opened in November, Joe Evans and Art Hummel had already arrived, but the staging period all took place during my brief reign. Frances Blakemore, who was our USIS artist, a very creative and imaginative woman, was the chief force in planning the entire show, although ably assisted by a skilled Japanese staff and “Tom” Tuch who came out on TDY from the Agency's Exhibits Office. Tom had been in on the ground floor of the Washington planning for these shows, and was a great help.

Atomic energy was such a brand new means of power that people could really not comprehend its potential nor all the dangers of atomic generation of electricity.

The Japanese were fascinated, but they were also scared of atomic energy anywhere except—or maybe even—in a reactor. However, at that time they thought it might be a good solution to some of their own power problems. They were hungry for information about it.

A man by the name of Shoriki, who was one of the principal developers of and then editor of the newspaper Yomiuri, which had under his direction become one of the two most

## Library of Congress

powerful papers in Japan, wanted more than anything else to be the first head of Japan's Atomic Energy Commission.

Realizing this, our information section prevailed upon him and his paper to sponsor the exhibit. He enthusiastically agreed and saved USIS tremendous expense. Yomiuri owned or controlled a large auditorium which Shoriki placed at USIS disposal to house the show. He also put a lot of money into it, furnishing much labor and material. Of course Shoriki was present at the exhibit opening, and got all sorts of accolades for having sponsored it. He later did become the first director of Japan's Atomic Energy Commission.

My first meeting with "Tom" Tuch took place at that time. Tom was then a young junior officer in USIA. He was working in the exhibit section in USIA in Washington. He came out on TDY, and was extremely helpful, because he had a lot of information about what Washington wanted to get across by means of the exhibit, and stayed for about two months until we got the exhibit well mounted. Then he returned to Washington. I don't believe he was there when the exhibit actually opened, though my memory is not clear on this point. But he was there for a good part of the summer while it was being put together and was highly instrumental in its successful conclusion.

So Shoriki realized his ambition to be the first director of the atomic energy commission in Japan. The exhibit was a tremendous success. It stayed open somewhat longer than had originally been planned because it was so popular. I don't know how many thousands of people went through it. When Joe Evans and Art Hummel arrived in late October, I, of course, returned to my official position as Executive Officer and turned the program back over to them. I remained until the spring of 1956 at which time I was transferred to Brazil. Before I leave this discussion of my short period as Acting PAO, Japan, I would like to speak briefly about two other events which occurred which I think were really three which were very instrumental in making the Japan programs a success in those early years and which also gained certain degree of notoriety with a bit of humor and dismay on occasion.

## Library of Congress

### The "Famous Faulkner" Visit to Japan

The one was the visit of William Faulkner as the person who was sent out from Washington under the exchange of persons program in 1955 to be the moderator of the Nagano Seminar. We had 32 Japanese professors of English at that meeting. The competition for participation in that year's session because of Faulkner was tremendous. He had won the Nobel Prize a few years before and was a legend in Japan among those who knew anything about literature. His coming was highly heralded.

I'll not go into all the details of Mr. Faulkner's visit. But nobody in Washington had told us that he had trouble with alcoholism. When he arrived and got off the plane after a 22 hour flight from the States, he obviously was under the weather. I was in Nagano handling the first stages of logistics and setting up the arrangements for registering all the professors and getting the seminar ready to operate, taking care of the hotel facilities and what not. I got a call from Tokyo saying, well, you better come back. Mr. Faulkner is here and there are some problems.

So I left Nagano and got back to my office the next day. Leon Picon who was our book translation officer and assistant cultural attach# had been designated as the man to meet Faulkner. Leon was going to be the resident American from the embassy at the seminar in Nagano because of the fact that he was deep into the book program.

Well, Leon was pretty resourceful. He, of course, had come out in an embassy car. When he got Faulkner off the plane and realized his condition, he managed to get Faulkner back to the International House, which a few years earlier had been established under Rockefeller Foundation auspices. John D. Rockefeller III had made sort of a career of charities and ran the Rockefeller Foundation. He was a Far Eastern specialist himself, had given a large grant of money to the Japanese government and the Japanese cultural operations to set up this International House, which still exists and is an extremely important part of the cultural and exchange program with America today. It is completely

## Library of Congress

independent of the embassy, but the PAO sits on the board of that center while he's active in Tokyo, and for years it housed the Japan Fulbright Commission offices. The House has hotel like facilities for visiting cultural personages staging cultural conferences, providing study space for visiting scholars, etc. It's sort of an exclusive hotel arrangement. They even have their own dining room.

Leon got into a conversation with Faulkner who, despite the fact that he was quite inebriated, handled his liquor fairly well. He was just a charming person, a real southern gentleman, polite, gracious, absolutely a delightful individual. But, of course, somewhat slurred in his perceptions when he was having this difficulty.

He finally confided in Leon, who had a great capacity to establish rapport with people quite quickly. On the way in to the International House he virtually broke down and almost tearfully said that he did have a problem with alcohol. And he was going to rely on Leon to keep him at least relatively sober so he wouldn't disgrace himself. So Leon said, okay. By this time they were on the Leon and Bill basis. He said, why don't you, Bill—Faulkner is Bill—why don't you let me have any liquor you've got with you? He said, I'll do that. When they got to the International House he opened a suitcase which was full of bottles of gin, and gave all the visible bottles to Leon who took them away and sort of tucked him in for the night. Leon said, well, we've got a program starting at 9:30 when you have an appointment tomorrow morning with the ambassador. I'll come by and pick you up about nine o'clock or a little before in the morning. See you then. He then took off with his armload of gin bottles.

Leon went back to pick Faulkner up the next morning. And Faulkner had obviously secreted some liquor elsewhere in his luggage, because he was once more pretty well under the influence and was stark naked, wandering around the halls of the International House in the all together. Leon got him back in his room and they got him dressed. Leon phoned me. By this time I was over in the ambassador's office waiting for them to arrive. I think the appointment was actually at ten o'clock. This was about 9:30. And he called

## Library of Congress

me in the ambassador's office and said that he was having a little trouble, but don't worry. They would get there.

Faulkner and he arrived about fifteen minutes later. The International House is not that far from the embassy. Faulkner had sobered up a little bit but not all that much, and he plunked down in a great big overstuffed chair, not very communicative. The ambassador's number two secretary, a young girl who was in her first overseas post came over and said, very awed at having Mr. Faulkner, a Nobel Prize winner there, and said, "Mr. Faulkner, can I get you a drink?" And he said, "Yes." And she said, "What would you like? Water?" He said, mischievously, "No. Gin." The poor girl was completely nonplused. She retreated in confusion, but did bring him a glass of water.

At about that time the ambassador showed up at his outer door and said that, okay, come in, Mr. Faulkner. Bill couldn't get out of the chair. So Leon and I hoisted him out and each one got under an armpit. We guided him into the ambassador's office and sat him down. The interview proved to be a disaster. The ambassador didn't immediately recognize that he was almost incommunicado. And he began directing a few questions at him to start the conversation. Faulkner's responses were at least uncommunicative, usually about two or three words or yes or no or something like that. And it soon became obvious that he wasn't going to be able to make a successful interview at all. I could see the ambassador getting very fidgety.

So I finally said after about ten minutes, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, we thank you very much for your interview. We'll leave now because we don't want to take up more of your time. And we'll see you this afternoon." [The Ambassador had agreed to give a party for him at the residence to which we had invited quite a large number of the American press, some of the cultural big wigs of the Japanese government and some from the universities.] So again, Leon and I hoisted him out of the room and we got him over to the Embassy annex where the USIS offices were and into the office of Don Ranard, the head of the Exchange of Persons Program.



## Library of Congress

Well, Bill was supposed to speak to the foreign press club at 12:30 that day and didn't look like he was going to make it. Leon and I stayed with him trying to get him sobered up in the meantime. However, I wasn't sure he was going to make it at all. He kept passing out. So I got hold of my wife by phone. She was a nurse. She came over with a lot of antidotes for fainting and that sort of thing plus our air mattress which we blew up and put down on the floor and got Bill stretched out on the mattress.

Meanwhile, Leon went down to the press club and tried to pacify the press. As 12:30 approached, when he was supposed to speak, everybody wanted to know where Faulkner was. Leon kept phoning back reporting on the situation, and we kept reporting to him that we weren't sure Faulkner was going to get there. But Faulkner kept saying, yes, I'll do it. So we told Leon well, maybe we'll get him down there but we'll be a little late.

Finally about 12:30 when he was due at the press club he sat up straight on the mattress, but promptly threw up all over himself and all over the floor. And that immediately, of course meant he wasn't going to get to the Press Club. So I got hold of Leon who had the outline of remarks that he had made for Faulkner to speak from. Faulkner was terrified of speaking anyway. He hated public speaking. And Leon had to give a talk.

The Press Club audience was infuriated. There was an article that appeared in Time magazine the next week, next issue, saying that Faulkner had chickened out and come inebriated to Tokyo and hadn't been able to perform. And that while the press club was filled with people who'd come in from all over the Far East to listen to him, Faulkner "was bedded down with a nurse somewhere in Tokyo" which was, I guess, literally true, but not the implication that they meant, my wife being the nurse.

So anyway, we had to take him up to our apartment in the Embassy compound. Leon went up and got a fresh set of clothes for him up at the International House. We got him in the shower, washed him off, put him to bed for an hour or so. Then got him up around 4:00 p.m. He got dressed in his fresh clothes and really had come out of it pretty well by

## Library of Congress

that time. We had a lovely conversation with him. Wonderful guy when he was sober. My children came in, met him and got his autograph. He was gentle, gracious, kind.

We got him up to the Ambassador's in time for the reception, around 6:30. I told the waiters up there, "Now, don't give him anything alcoholic to drink." I had no sooner gotten him into the receiving line—(Tape runs out)

SCHMIDT: Well, as I was about to say, the waiter handed him every tall and strong gin and tonic. I glared at him but I didn't want to make an issue because the guests were already coming in, I made signs not to give him any more. But Faulkner began bowing over the hand of every woman who came in and bowing very low in his southern fashion and kissing her hand. About that time another waiter brought in another gin and tonic. I watched Bill carefully. He hadn't completely recovered from the morning. So I knew that this was going to be damaging. But I couldn't take it away from him. Every time he bowed he bowed lower and lower. I was afraid he might collapse face forward on the mats. And as soon as all the guests had arrived or most of them I got him out of the line and we put him over at a table nearby. This was in the main reception salon of the ambassador's residence. Several tables were placed around the hall.

Mrs. Allison came over and sat down, and started to converse with him. By that time they'd given him another gin and tonic, a brand new one. Fortunately at least, he was by this time in conversation with Mrs. Allison, and wasn't drinking it. Well, I don't think they'd been talking more than three or four minutes when Mrs. Allison asked him a question. Strangely enough although he was a little tipsy he was still quite rational. He was explaining something, and suddenly he swung his arms open in a wide gesture, knocked over this tall gin and tonic and it all drained over into Mrs. Allison's lap. She was wearing a brand new specially tailored Chinese brocade that the Ambassador had ordered for her from Hong Kong and had been done by her dressmaker. The drink splashed all over her new suit, cocktail suit. Obviously, she was very angry and so was the ambassador. All in all it didn't make for a very successful party.

## Library of Congress

We had to stay a while. But I finally got Faulkner out fairly early. The party broke up. We took him out to the Army officer's club and fed him a good meal. That sobered him up a little bit, and we took him back to the International House.

The next morning the Ambassador sent me a letter by courier, saying, I want to know what idiot in USIA or the Department of State ever thought of sending this lush, this drunk over here to participate in a nationally advertised seminar. I want you to give me one good reason why I shouldn't put this character back on the next plane to the United States and cancel his whole visit. That was about ten o'clock in the morning.

Of course, all the professors had arrived at Nagano waiting for the great personage to show up. And I debated what in the world to do to satisfy the Ambassador. Finally about three o'clock I wrote him a letter back. I said that I was very sorry this had happened. In his letter the Ambassador had said "I never expected that he would embarrass me and my wife to such an extent, et cetera, et cetera." I wrote back and I said I was very sorry all this had happened, that I had no idea that anything like this would occur. And I had thought I would be able to deliver to him a perfectly sober Nobel Prize winner. But I felt that we couldn't send him back now and terminate the program as far as we were into it—that I thought we could keep him under control and he would make a great contribution.

I hadn't heard anything back when the work day ended. It happened to be the day on which the Ambassador was giving a big party for the embassy staff. He did this two or three times a year so he could get closer and more familiar on a friendly basis with his staff.

The embassy population was pretty large, and when I got there the party was already well underway. I could tell by the decibel count that several drinks had already been served. When I got up to the party which was being held on the roof garden of the apartment in which I was living in the embassy compound, the Ambassador was there in an aloha shirt, and, in a fine mood. He had another drink in his hand. I went over to him wondering what

## Library of Congress

in the world I was going to get as a response. And he said, "Lew, you were right." He said, "I lost my cool. I'm sorry. The guy can stay. But I'm going to hold you responsible and he better perform all right."

Well, Leon managed to keep Bill under control, not always, but for most of the time he was a relatively sober guy. His performance in Nagano was tremendous. The Japanese kind of like drunks anyway, especially if they're artists—celebrities of one type or another. He was vastly successful in making a tremendous impression on the Japanese who were there. He got excellent press as we mentioned earlier. Harry Keith stage managed a picture called "William Faulkner in Japan" which was beautifully done. It was narrated by a then JOT who now is the PAO in Tokyo, some thirty years later, Jack Shellenberger, who had been a radio announcer before he came into the USIA program. All in all it was a tremendous success.

After Faulkner had returned to the States, we were having a staff meeting, the first Ambassador staff meeting after Faulkner's departure. I reported that the Faulkner visit was over and that it had gone very well, that we had had a great response, that the press reports were all favorable, and the Japanese were enchanted and what not. So Andy Kerr, the rather cynical number two man in the Economic Section said, "Well, was it because he really was all that good? Or was it just because he had a big name having won a Nobel Prize?" I didn't think very fast. And I said, well, it was a little of both. But anyway, his was an effective program. Afterwards, I thought what I really should have said was: "Andy, you're missing the whole point. It doesn't make any difference what the reason was. The fact that he got that kind of coverage and made that kind of an impression was the important thing. And it was a tremendously successful program." But I wasn't quick enough on the trigger to have said what I ought to have said. At least it was a successful program.

A Triumph for our Cultural Attach#

## Library of Congress

A third thing that I would like to mention just very briefly. Margaret Williams had long since returned to Washington. We had as our cultural attach# at that time a man by the name of Glenn Shaw. He had been an educational missionary in Japan and had lived practically all his adult life except during the war in Japan. He spoke Japanese fluently. His accent wasn't all that good. But he was perfect in his syntax and knew Japanese like a native.

He also was absolutely steeped in Japanese culture. He probably knew more about Japanese cultural arts than the Japanese did themselves.

On one occasion in the, I think it was the spring of '55, some sort of a cultural fair was being given by the Japan prefectural office up in Kanazawa. A lot of people gathered up there. At that time the Japanese communist party, although not a legal party was still very active in Japan, and they had all kinds of representatives at the fair. They had infiltrated the organizational committee and managed to get much of their material included in this cultural program.

We hadn't realized the extent to which they were infiltrating. Our branch PAO, Paul Bethel in Nagoya, who at that time was responsible also for managing the north coast part of our USIS operation, had gone up to attend this fair. He soon realized what was happening, so he sent an emergency call down to Tokyo to get Glenn Shaw up there. Glenn went up and extemporaneously gave a series of discussions through the afternoon citing all sorts of Japanese cultural achievements, bringing down the house, and thus very effectively counteracting the communist surge. There was nobody on the communist side that had the kind of background that he had or the knowledge of Japanese history. Since then, I think the Russians have trained many more people in usable Japanese. But at that time they didn't have them. So Glenn largely rescued us from an otherwise unhappy and overmatched situation. He also received more press coverage than the left wingers did.

Dr. Compton Visits USIS/Japan

## Library of Congress

Well, I jumped way ahead of the chronological story, but I now will come back to late 1952. The Director of IIA, or I guess it was by this time the General Manager, had changed again. The new man was one of the Compton Brothers. Two of them were famous scientists, and university professors. The third was a rancher, I believe, in eastern Washington. There is a story, perhaps apocryphal, that when a new General Manager was to be appointed for IIA, the intent was to appoint either Arthur or Karl, the physicists. By mistake, the third brother was called, accepted, and could not be dismissed after the error was discovered. I can believe it. I do not recall this Compton's given name, but in any event, he arrived with several other officers from IIA for a Tokyo visit just before the November election in 1952. He asked for an appointment with Ambassador Murphy.

I have mentioned Murphy earlier. He was a brilliant man, who didn't suffer fools easily. The Ambassador agreed to see Compton, not in his office but in an anteroom at the Residence at about 8:00 a.m. I don't recall why I was the one who escorted Compton to the Residence. (Sax was still PAO, but this must have been the time he was on home leave. However, Olcott Deming, his deputy was in Tokyo.) Compton appeared to be absolutely stupid. He talked disconnectedly, made childish remarks, couldn't address a significant subject, and worst of all, seemed to have no idea what he should say to the busy Ambassador of whom he had requested an audience. I could see Murphy getting edgier and edgier, and finally really angry. Somehow I managed to make an excuse to conclude the interview and get Compton out. Murphy must have thought poorly of the caliber of IIA if he judged it by its then chief.

Compton wasn't through with his absurdities. A couple days later, Eisenhower was elected. Compton called an ad hoc meeting of the top USIS officers, and told them that: "Don't worry! The election of Eisenhower won't make any difference. I'm a life-long Republican, and I will be kept in my job." In less than a month he was dismissed.

From Tokyo, he and his wife, who accompanied him, went to Southeast Asia. A conference of some sort was being held in Rangoon, which Compton was to attend. While

## Library of Congress

he was conferencing, some of the Burmese employees tried to entertain Mrs. Compton with a sightseeing tour that included Burma's famous and historic Golden Pagoda. To make conversation, one of the Burmese ladies asked Mrs. Compton how she liked it. Her reply: "Yes, it's lovely, but don't you think it is rather extravagant for such a poor country?" That story is not apocryphal.

### Sax Bradford's Home Leave and the Cultural Center Closings

I'll back up now to the point where Sax Bradford went on home leave some months before he became the assistant director of USIA for Far East. When he left we were already under pressure from Washington to start cutting back on the size of the Japanese program. He realized we would have to close several—at least eight and probably ten—of the cultural centers. Before he left there was a session with him, Pat van Delden as the field program head and Olcott Deming who was the deputy PAO. Deming was a State Department officer but on loan to USIS, USIA. And with Sax's suggestions and with their recommendations they finally determined on eight that they would definitely offer to close and two more that they would close if they had to.

There was great reluctance. Pat van Delden, Olcott Deming and I were at the meeting. I was there because I would have had to handle all the logistics of the center closings. I was upset at the number that were to be closed, but I said very little at that time.

Olcott and Pat argued with Sax about the closings. Sax said, well, I don't like it either. But we're going to have to close them, I think, because Washington wants us to cut back on the size of the Japan operation.

So he went on home leave thinking that the closing of eight or ten centers was settled. He assured everybody in Washington that he had selected the ten centers that would be closed, but that they wouldn't be eliminated before the end of the year.

## Library of Congress

While he was gone Pat began to rethink this whole problem, and felt that she just couldn't bring herself to close ten centers. They would close four of them but they would ask Washington to permit them to retain the remaining 19, having closed one of the two in Tokyo already early in the game.

She and Olcott got together one evening, spent about half the night plotting what they were going to do, and finally sent a telegram to Washington saying we have decided we cannot close eight or ten centers. We propose to close only four of them. We'll examine the others later on. For the time being we're going to retain 19.

Well, Sax was not only on home leave but he was at his hometown in Phoenix, Arizona, at the time this cable came in. Of course, it went directly against anything that he had just gotten through telling the people in Washington he was going to do.

When he got back to Washington—I guess they phoned him, and said, what's going on here? He rushed back to Washington and was apoplectic about this reversal. He just said, well, when I left I thought we had agreed on these closings. I'll have to take care of it when I return.

When he returned he blamed me for the whole reversal. He said, "Boy, you guys really undercut me on that policy. I'll never forget that as long as I live." He was rather hostile to me the rest of his tour of duty both as PAO, Japan, and as the Assistant Director for Far East. Actually it was Pat and Olcott Deming, not I, who had altered the closing plan. But I didn't even try to dissuade him. I felt I had to roll with the punch. To do otherwise would have seriously undercut both Pat and Olcott, and look as though I was attempting to save my own skin by blaming them.

If I remember correctly, we finally did get down to fourteen centers, and later closed another two. Twelve remained. Not very long after Sax left Japan to become Assistant Director of USIA for the Far East, Pat van Delden developed a health problem and was



## Library of Congress

returned to Washington. Walt Nichols moved up from Kobe to succeed her as Field Supervisor. We retained the Kobe Regional Office for a year or more after that with newly arrived Jerry Novick as Regional Officer. After my departure from Japan, Washington ordered more centers closed and the Kobe Regional Office was eliminated. Ultimately USIS eliminated all regional offices and ran the field program directly from Tokyo.

I don't remember exactly when Sax returned from home leave, probably late in 1952 or early 1953, and he was there for several months before being called back to Washington.

Meanwhile, through much of 1952, we had been continuously trying to fill as many as possible of the 135 positions originally authorized, but it became obvious, as indicated by pressure to close centers, that there would have to be some cutback. I doubt if we ever filled more than 85 or 90 of that initial authorization. Then, came the Eisenhower inauguration in January, 1953. As is always the case with a new administration, particularly one involving a change from the political party holding the White House, the Republicans believed the Government in general, and the Foreign Service in particular, was vastly overstaffed. The resulting cut-back fell pretty heavily on USIS Tokyo. We lost all the unfilled American positions, and five or six other Tokyo headquarters jobs besides. One casualty was my young assistant.

The heartbreaking part of the roll back was the need to eliminate a substantial number of Japanese jobs. I remember having to call a meeting of the entire Japanese staff. The rumors of coming dismissals had been circulating for some weeks, and the whole staff was terribly upset. Japan had not yet gotten out of its economic trough, and finding new employment threatened anyone dismissed with real hardship. Before the meeting, I had determined pretty well how many we were going to have to prune, and realized that if we were forced to close as many centers as we apparently had to, we could satisfy a large part of the RIF there. We still had to lose some from the Tokyo contingent. The meeting was long and painful, but I think we managed it as well as could be expected under the

## Library of Congress

circumstances. The few we had to let go were given some help in the transition, and things calmed down after a few weeks.

Of the Americans outside of Tokyo, one was the man who had been running our cultural center in Kanazawa on the north coast of Japan, a fellow named Robert Flershem. Flershem was an interesting gentleman. I would say he was in his late 30's or early 40's, and was sort of a loner. He enjoyed living alone—away from other Americans—and he especially enjoyed being on the north coast of Japan where he got a minimum of attention from headquarters. The Japanese all liked him, and he was doing a very creditable job there.

I have already discussed the impending center closings, and so we decided that Flershem's job was one of those we might eliminate. His name went on the list of those to be returned home. He took the plane out of Tokyo to Seattle. Those were the days of prop planes. It took about 22 hours to reach Seattle. Transpacific travelers were entitled to a one night stopover en route to Washington. Flershem chose Seattle. He was scheduled out the next afternoon on a Northwest Airline flight to DC. He boarded the plane. It taxied down the runway and burst into flame. There was an emergency evacuation. No one was killed, but Flershem was rather badly burned and had to be hospitalized.

It was some time before he got back to Washington, and because of his injury, he was still technically an employee of DepState and entitled to State supported medical care. He was later moved to Washington and hospitalized there. By the time he was released the Administration had decided they'd made a mistake and had eliminated too many slots in the Foreign Service. DepState issued authority for us to rehire people in about a half dozen or so positions from our Japan program. We hadn't closed Kanazawa after all, and so, suddenly, Flershem was rehabilitated, remained on the rolls, and went back to Kanazawa, owing his longevity in service to his unhappy accident of being burned in a plane disaster in Seattle while on the verge of separation.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Could I ask what happened to the center that had to move out of Tokyo when you didn't get the funding?*

SCHMIDT: Well, we finally—I forgot to mention that. We finally did get a building which had been a Japanese women's cultural club, sort of a—it's a Kaikan. They called it the Joshi Kaikan which in free translation means the women's club. It was a cultural club to which the young women of the country or the city could belong. They could have meetings there. Or hold conferences, programs, etc. in the Center. This was not under our control. This was completely Japanese.

But the organizations had faltered during the war and the occupation period. The Joshi Kaikan was not greatly in use. And while its location was not as desirable as the one that we had had in downtown Tokyo they eventually did turn it over to us. I understand now that there is a new one that is a much better center. The Tokyo Cultural Center in the Joshi Kaikan reopened, I think, about the middle of—or in early 1953 and operated for a number of years at that location.

Somebody else will tell the story of the transition from the State Department USIE to U.S. Information Agency. I believe that someone is going to interview Abbott Washburn who was named the first Deputy Director of the new U.S. Information Agency. And he was, to appropriate the title of a book written by Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation. So I won't try to go into any of the details. Anyway I was not personally present. But it, of course, affected us out in the area. The State Department, still treating all Information Officers as inferiors, immediately decided that we were no longer a State Department entity. Our program, as of August 1, 1953, became an independent agency, reporting directly to the President, and called The U.S. Information Agency (USIA). I should note that more than a year before this change over, USIE had been reorganized—still under DepState, as a semi-autonomous entity—a status not unlike that of AID today—headed by a general manager, and titled the International Information Administration (or Agency,

## Library of Congress

I have forgotten which) and known as IIA. We operated in that fashion until Eisenhower issued the August 1, 1953 Executive Order creating us an independent agency.

Up to that time there had only been two types of passport. One was the regular tourist passport and the other was the diplomatic passport. State—largely at the imperious suggestion of Mrs. Shipley who then controlled all DepState passport issuances—created a so called special passport with a red cover, and those are the kind under which USIA had to operate for the next several years, until Mrs. Shipley retired from Consular and Security Office of the State Department.

*Q: Was that called an official passport then?*

SCHMIDT: It was called a special passport, I think.

*Q: Special passport.*

SCHMIDT: And it was given to people like us heathens, the USIA, and what is not AID personnel, who, when it came into existence, had to operate on the special passport. As I say, that went on for a number of years. I've forgotten just when it was that they finally conceded. Mrs. Shipley left and a new head of the passport operation came in. And from that point on we went back to diplomatic passport entitlement.

*Q: At one stage did you replace Sax Bradford? Or were you acting director of USIS in Tokyo?*

SCHMIDT: Well, yes in a way, but that's a little different story. I didn't replace Sax Bradford. I'll cover that one now since you've asked the question. Eisenhower created the new independent agency as a result of the so-called Jackson Committee Report. C.D. Jackson had been asked to head an ad hoc committee to study the matter of U.S. overseas information programs. His report recommended that the Information program be taken out of the Department of State, which didn't want it in those days. Dulles was

## Library of Congress

adamant about that. The committee didn't confine itself just to recommending separation—it went on to propose a good deal of the internal reorganization of what was to be USIA. Ted Streibert was named USIA's first Director. He accepted the committee report almost in toto. Perhaps the most significant element of the reorganization which Streibert adopted was the one that set up four regional offices. These were to be—and for many years were—the most prestigious and powerful units in USIA. Streibert looked for men who were considered to be the officers most capable of heading up these elements. Each one was to be designated Assistant Director of USIA for (region).

He selected Sax Bradford to be the head of the Far East, Bill Clark to direct Latin America, and Hunt Damon for the Near East and North Africa. I do not remember who if anyone headed Europe at that time, but soon Bill Clark was moved over to Direct the European region, and his deputy, Frank Oram, succeeded to the direction of Latin America.

So, Sax left, quite suddenly. His deputy, Olcott Deming, had already gone, so for two or three months, we had no director—or designated deputy. I was not named Acting PAO at that time.

Willard Hannah becomes PAO: Hannah and The Terrible Tempered Mr. Allison

Shortly thereafter, Willard Hannah came out to be the PAO. He had a fine academic background, and he was also a very competent administrator. He had been PAO in Indonesia for about 4 # years and had proven his worth out there by ingratiating himself with Sukarno. In fact he was practically on a first name basis with Sukarno and all the top officials of the Indonesian government as it took over from the Dutch and began its period of independence. He was an unusually capable officer, very intelligent. But somewhat short tempered. And this provides an opportunity to give us another example of some of the things that happened.

When the Eisenhower Administration took over they wanted their own man as ambassador in Tokyo. And much to the disgruntlement of Bob Murphy who thought he was going to

## Library of Congress

be ambassador out there for at least three or four years, the Department told him he was going to be replaced.

Dulles had been instrumental in drafting the peace treaty with Japan, and as his assistant in working on the peace treaty preparation he had taken John Allison who at that time was the head of one of the regional bureaus—or rather one of the divisions in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs. Allison so impressed Dulles that he apparently decided if the opportunity ever arose, he would make Allison Ambassador to Tokyo. When the Peace Treaty went into effect in April, 1952, the unit that had been the Diplomatic Section of GHQ SCAP became the Embassy. As indicated earlier, Bob Murphy became Ambassador. However, shortly after Eisenhower's inauguration, Dulles became Secretary of State, and appointed Allison Ambassador to Japan.

Allison was a rather touchy man. And, he had minimum respect for USIA. Above all, he was extremely wary of the press, and didn't want to have anymore to do with it than he could help. Worse, he had the erroneous idea that if he withheld information from the press on any problem facing the embassy, the press would somehow refrain from reporting anything about it. Two incidents occurring during Hannah's incumbency illustrate the difficulty for USIS of operating with Ambassador Allison.

### The Lucky Dragon Affair

In the late spring or early summer of 1954, the American Government conducted the second of its atomic bomb tests in the Pacific. They gave prolonged radio notice that a very large area of the sea around the atoll on which the test was to be conducted would be forbidden to shipping. But Japanese fishing vessels operating in the area were in those days without any radio contact, so no one got word to them that they would be anywhere near where the atomic explosion was to be detonated. One such boat with perhaps a dozen fishermen aboard was "The Lucky Dragon." The boat sailed directly through the radiologically contaminated zone. The first thing they knew, the ship began collecting a

## Library of Congress

blanket of gray-white ash. They had no idea as to its source. And so they started picking it up and brushing it off the boat. Finally, there got to be such a mantle on the boat that they got out their brooms and swept it off. Still they kept picking it up and looking at it, trying to figure out what it was and where it was coming from.

At last they sailed out of the fallout area. They had pretty well gotten their catch anyway, so they started back for Japan. Well, the trawler they were on was a rather slow moving ship, so it took them about a week or ten days to reach Japan. Before they did they all became violently ill. None of them died, but they were all just deathly sick. Understandably, they couldn't imagine what had happened to them. Of course, what had happened was that the ash from the atomic explosion had gone up into the stratosphere and then precipitated back out, landing on the Lucky Dragon.

When they hit the small fishing port down on the southwestern coast of Honshu, they reported in to the nearest medical center. It happened that there were some medical people nearby who had taken care of some of the survivors of Hiroshima. Immediately, of course, they determined what the difficulty was.

Well, the word got to Tokyo about a day later, and the whole foreign press took off for this small village including practically every American correspondent, in fact every American correspondent who was there, as well as British, French, German, everybody else. They were all down to this small village.

They weren't permitted to get near the ship when they got down there. The Japanese authorities screened them off because they didn't want them to get in touch with the people who were suffering from the atomic fallout. I don't know whether any of the fishermen actually died. I don't think they did. Undoubtedly, it affected them in later life because they had suffered a severe dosage.

## Library of Congress

Well, Mr. Allison, Ambassador Allison, decided that if we didn't tell the press anything about it, and refused to comment on what had happened that they wouldn't have any story. Therefore the problem would simply go away.

Willard Hannah having handled the press very extensively realized that this was the worst thing that one could possibly do, that it would simply pique the curiosity and raise the anger of all the correspondents who had been denied information. Willard went to see Allison and had a tumultuous session with the Ambassador trying to persuade him of the necessity of doing something about it. Allison steadfastly refused to talk to the press or allow any information to be released by the embassy at all.

So Hannah had to go down to the Foreign Press Club and face the whole gamut of press people. He couldn't even tell them that it was Allison who refused; Allison had forbidden him to say that this was an order from the Ambassador. He simply had to go down and tell them "No comment."

So Hannah faced the press with no logical defense. Of course, the press was irate. They blamed him for covering up information. It was a very rough session. He came back utterly exhausted by the whole thing and terribly depressed.

The next day he went back to Allison and tried again to persuade him that what was going to happen was that his refusal would erupt into a terrible brouhaha in the press—that the whole embassy would be denigrated for being uncooperative. Allison still wouldn't budge. The result was that he and Willard got into a real shouting match. I wasn't present at the match. But Willard came back and said, I'm afraid that I got rather profane and the Ambassador was even more profane. We just called each other a whole series of unprintable names.

I was about due to go on home leave. I was supposed to leave for the States about the first of June and this was mid or late May, I think or thereabouts. Willard came back and



## Library of Congress

went into a long session with himself. By the time I left to go back on home leave he had just about decided that he couldn't live under Allison's regime, that he was going to resign. I tried to persuade him not to resign. But as it turned out he did. While I was on home leave he submitted his resignation, not only as PAO in Japan but from USIA, went off and joined the American Field Service where he subsequently had an excellent career as sort of a roving reporter who went all around the world making contacts with high level people everywhere, especially in Indonesia, and never returned to Government again. The Agency lost one of its finest officers.

Ken Bunce was in Japan with USIS at the time that Willard left. I was away on home leave. So Willard appointed Ken as acting PAO during the absence of a new PAO being appointed for Tokyo. Willard proved to be extremely prophetic and absolutely correct. A terrible brouhaha had erupted in the press. And the embassy and Willard personally were vilified as being restrictive, disruptive and non-cooperative. The press raked the whole embassy and especially Willard up and down for failure to cooperate. It was a very unhappy time.

### The Battle Over Press Handling of the Governors' Visit

I've forgotten now whether it was somewhat before that or somewhat after that—I think it was before that—when our press attach# had a similar unhappy experience with the Ambassador. A group of governors, 12 of them, were visiting Tokyo. Of course, the Ambassador had to entertain them and spend a good deal of time with them.

The big party was to be a big dinner for the visiting governors at the ambassador's residence one evening about midway through their week and a half in Japan. Naturally, the American press wanted an interview with the governors to get their impressions of Japan.

John Henderson was our press attach#. John actually had been a USIA employee who had been integrated into the State Department Foreign Service under the Wriston program

## Library of Congress

in 1953 and '54. But he was nevertheless, assigned back to USIA or USIS, and he was serving as our press attach#.

He went up to the residence early in the evening before the dinner, but while the preliminary cocktails were being served. Because he knew the press was coming up, he had told the ambassador (or at least he claimed he had done so) that the members of the press wanted to meet with the governors, and he asked if he could bring them up to the residence. According to John, the Ambassador had rather grudgingly said, ah, bring them up for a few minutes, words to that effect.

So the press arrived while the cocktail party was in session. And John went in to tell the Ambassador that they were there. By that time the Ambassador had had a couple of drinks himself along with the governors. I don't really know what caused him to act as he did. But he said, I'm not going to interview those sons of bitches. John started to argue with him and said, "You can't do this to the press. You know you'll have a big problem if you do." The Ambassador was utterly adamant.

Finally, both John and the Ambassador walked out of the main salon where the governors were and where the cocktail party was proceeding, into the anteroom where the press were waiting. And where John and the Ambassador proceeded to have a profane shouting match at one another. And the Ambassador in effect said, you're through.

The next morning John came into the office and said, I'm sorry, but I'm going to be removed as the press attach#. I've got to go elsewhere. Within less than a week he was out of Tokyo and was assigned as press attach# in Indonesia. Fortunately, he didn't get cashiered from the foreign service. But he had to leave Tokyo, and we were several months without a press attach# because of that episode.

So, you see, it wasn't very easy to operate under Mr. Allison if you were a USIA officer. Because he didn't have much use for the press, he didn't have much respect for us either.

## Library of Congress

He was not terribly cooperative with the press under the best of circumstances, and these two episodes indicate some of the difficulties we had.

### The Deputy PAO Episode

Before I left on home leave, Willard Hannah called me in and told me he was going to recommend that I be appointed Deputy PAO for Japan. Knowing Sax Bradford's attitude toward me, I thanked Willard, but told him I doubted his recommendation would be accepted. He felt that with his recommendation, there was a good chance it would be. We left it at that.

Another incident had occurred earlier which I felt sure would make Willard's recommendation ineffectual. In the spring of 1954, I had received a letter from the Agency's personnel office, noting that my first tour was concluding, and what preferences did I have for my next assignment? It had been no secret that I had wanted to be DPAO. A number of officers of some rank had spoken favorably about such an appointment in Washington. When I received the letter, I was pretty sure that the idea had been vetoed. I wrote a long reply, saying, in substance, that I had long hoped for such advancement, that the personnel letter was the veiled answer that my hopes were not to materialize, and that, given those circumstances, I would just as soon return for a second tour as Executive Officer in Tokyo. This request was granted.

I learned later that my letter had created quite a stir in the Administrative Area in the Agency, and resulted in a renewed push in some quarters to give me the DPAO job. Before long, I received letters from friends in Washington, saying that everyone who knew about the situation, exclusive of Director Streibert who left all such decisions to Area Directors, and, of course, Bradford, had unanimously supported my appointment. This was especially true of the head of Personnel and the Administrative Area in general. However, Bradford had vetoed it, and given the power of Area Directors, that was it.

## Library of Congress

Just two or three weeks after those letters from Washington friends, Bradford made one of his periodic visits to Tokyo. I knew he had to say something to me during his visit. However, he studiously avoided me, even keeping a discreet distance at a cocktail party at which we were both in attendance. Finally, on his last day, only two or three hours before his plane was scheduled to depart, he appeared in my office. It was after hours, and on one but myself was there. He entered and sat down. I don't remember his precise words, but the following is a pretty good paraphrase of his story. Smiling unctuously, he said: Lew, I wanted to give you a summary of what happened to your attempt to be named DPAO. You had extensive support throughout the Agency, including from me, but those doggone characters in Personnel and the Administrative Area just nixed it. I guess they are jealous of any one from Administration getting this type of promotion if they don't.

I sat there for a couple seconds, thinking: "The liar! Do I or don't I have the guts to call his fabrication?" Before I had time to lose my nerve, I looked him right in the eye, and said: "Sax, within the past few days, I have had several letters from friends in Washington telling me that as far as anyone else in the Agency is concerned, I could have the job. This includes everyone in Administration. But you are the one that nixed the deal!"

The Bradford reaction was startling. I had read of such physical changes in fiction, but I had never seen it in the flesh. He was absolutely silent for several seconds, during which time every drop of color drained out of his usually rather ruddy complexion. His face went to a sallow white. His eyes, which were naturally a rather pale blue almost literally lost all color. I kept my eyes on his, so I don't know if he trembled, but without regaining his color or composure, he said: "Well, that's the way it is." and got up and left. I knew my promotion goose was cooked as long as he remained the Assistant Director of USIA for Far East.

### The Balance of the Tokyo Tour

I left on home leave the end of May, and returned during the first week in September.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Had a new PAO been assigned to Tokyo by that time?*

SCHMIDT: No, and it was to be a full year before one was assigned. As I said earlier, Ken Bunce had been appointed as Acting PAO while I was away on home leave, and he remained in that capacity until his departure from Japan in late April or early May of 1955. I returned to my assignment as Executive Officer, which, among other duties, involved handling the logistics of some further Cultural Center closings.

In some cases of proposed closings, the Prefectural Governors became terribly exercised. One of them, from Takamatsu on the north coast of the Island of Shikoku, came to Tokyo to plead his case personally. He saw Ken Bunce, and wanted to see the Ambassador. I can't remember whether we actually got him an appointment with Allison or not. In any event, his pleas were effective enough to cause us to leave an American officer (Harry Kendall, who was already there) in that Center. In one or two other cases, we agreed to keep the centers, support them at a lesser level, and leave the running entirely to the Japanese staff. In those instances, the prefectures agreed to pay some of the operational costs.

As I mentioned earlier, when Ken Bunce left in the spring of 1955, I was designated Acting Country PAO. I have already mentioned the preliminaries of staging for the Atoms for Peace Exhibit; the immensely productive 1955 Nagano Seminar with William Faulkner as the piece de resistance, and the saving of the American reputation by Glenn Shaw at the fair in Kanazawa, all of which occurred during my "Acting" period. Also during that summer, we presented the Tokyo performances and Japan wide tour of the Symphony of the Air, mentioned earlier. And I personally take credit for another musical coup. I cannot recall whether the three musicians involved had come to Japan as part of the Symphony, or as part of another—a chamber music—group. In any event, I knew that many smaller cities in Japan had longed for the visit of an American musical ensemble. Neither the Symphony nor the larger chamber ensemble had considered it sufficiently important to visit any of these smaller cities. In talking to three members of whichever group it was, I

## Library of Congress

learned that they had no immediate commitments in the U.S., and would like to stay on a bit after their group concerts were completed. I arranged for them to constitute themselves as a chamber group: pianist, cellist, and violinist. We christened them "The American Trio" and sent them out on a 24 town/city tour. Their audiences were wildly enthusiastic, the press coverage was ecstatic, and the men themselves had a wonderful time, enhanced doubly by their enthusiastic audiences.

The Accomplishments of Fazl Fotouhi

*Q: Do you have any other points you wish to cover regarding the Japan program?*

SCHMIDT: Well, I wouldn't want to leave the discussion of Japan without mentioning briefly some of the work done by other highly competent officers who were part of that unusually fine group in the Japan program. The most unique experience and performance was probably the one by a man named A. Fazl Fotouhi.

Fazl was Iranian by birth, a naturalized American citizen, married to a charming American woman. A very friendly sort of individual. We were lucky. I don't know whether he was employed by USIA already. I think he had been. But anyway, he spoke both Iranian (Farsi) and English, had a very slight accent in English. He came out to Japan to be one of the center directors, and we sent him down to Hiroshima.

By that time Hiroshima was partially rebuilt, fairly well rebuilt from the atom bomb attack. And it was the center of a medical research program still run at that time under the auspices of the American Army for the rehabilitation and treatment of victims of the atom bomb. Already there were the beginnings of the resentment which later became very strong in Japan about the Americans having dropped the first atomic bomb in history on the hapless city of Hiroshima.

So Fazl went down there. We told him he would likely have a rather tough row to hoe because of the growing resentment. Well, I don't think there was anybody except Glenn

## Library of Congress

Shaw in Japan who became so beloved by the Japanese, as did Fazl. I don't know what it was, but he just thoroughly immersed himself in Japan, and things Japanese. He went to every function that the Japanese officialdom gave. He was always available to them. He sent his daughter who at that time was only about six or seven-years old to a Japanese public school where she learned Japanese pretty well, children's Japanese anyway. Instead of sending her to one of the available American schools, he sent her to the Japanese school. He was there, I think, in all about five years. When he left you'd have thought they'd lost their father confessor. He was so feted by the Japanese in leaving that many years later they still talk about him and they still talk about his departure from Hiroshima. He was a complete hero to the people down there and thoroughly converted that whole segment of the area to a pro-American's viewpoint. So I think that was another great success story which probably happened by accident because we were lucky in getting somebody who could establish that kind of rapport with the Japanese. Great praise should go to Fazl for having done such a marvelous job of getting that segment of Japan in an area where it could have been disastrous because of the resentment of the atomic bomb, pretty well oriented towards things American. And I don't know of anybody anywhere, perhaps there are others, who did as complete and successful job as Fazl did in that five year period he spent in Hiroshima.

Well, I think I've probably talked enough about Japan. There are other things that could be said about how the program went. I left in late May of 1956. I never went back officially to Japan although I have been back there probably 25 or more times since and spent various periods of time. It's a country of which I will always be extremely fond. I fell in love with it when I first went there. And I am very grateful for having had the experience to spend those 4# years with the embassy. Let's cut this off at this point.

### The Objectives of USIS Japan

*Q: Before we leave Japan I wondered if you would comment a little bit about what the goals or objectives were of USIS when you first arrived there.*

## Library of Congress

SCHMIDT: Well, I must say that we had a general objective in mind which, of course, was to make the Japanese thoroughly familiar with American cultural and economic achievements. And also to continue the process which had been so well begun by the Occupation of converting them into a favorable attitude toward the United States. I've got to give the Army and the MacArthur regime tremendous credit for having done a number of things. MacArthur overrode the objections of a lot of highly placed persons in government in deciding to keep the Emperor as a nominal head of government. That proved to be a tremendous decision. I agree with scholars and historians who say it is the glue that held Japan together in those crucial post defeat days. It's been talked about often. And I won't go on further here.

But above all he decided America was not going to go in as a tough occupying power. These people had been defeated. They were hungry. They were already disenchanted with their own Army and their own secret police which had treated them abominably. By the time the war was over they hated their military. They hated the secret police, the Kempeitai. At first they were scared to death because they had been saturated with propaganda to the effect that the Americans when they came in were going to rape all the women and tear down the whole Japanese governmental structure, generally oppress the populace and so forth.

Since I was there almost at the beginning of the Occupation, I can tell you that the Japanese were scared stiff. The first day I was in Kyoto which was only about 18 or 20 days at most after the armistice was signed we were the first people—except for a small four man landing party—were the first people in Kyoto. We were told we had to go armed with our pistols, because we didn't know what was going to happen. And so I was wandering around Kyoto while the headquarters that we were going to occupy was being set up in a partially finished concrete skeleton building in downtown Kyoto on which construction had stopped when the war began. Having been there in 1938, I was trying to find a couple of places in Kyoto that I had visited then. My memory was not



## Library of Congress

entirely accurate, and I didn't immediately find them. But in the process I headed down a residential street not far from the locale I was trying to find, but not the place I was looking for.

When my roommate and I, both of us with a pistol strapped on each hip, started down that street, the street was full of kids. And every shutter was open. The Japanese had wooden shutters on their windows which they always opened during warm days and slid the windows open. This was early fall. Still pretty warm. They were airing out the houses. I don't think we'd walked 20 steps down that street, when every child had disappeared from sight, and practically every shutter had snapped shut. By the time we walked through that street you would have thought it was a deserted city. Absolutely nobody on the street. Once in a while you could see somebody peeking through a shutter. But they were frightened to death.

Well, after about three days they discovered that none of this propaganda was true, that the Americans were really going to help them. And the Americans being naturally friendly anyway started giving chocolate bars to the kids. They hadn't seen chocolate in years. And giving some of their sake rations to families that they were getting in touch with, soon all that fear disappeared.

The basic gentleness with which the Occupation handled the entire operation was, I think, tremendous. I don't think any other occupying power had ever before done anything like it. The Japanese were so grateful that an American could do no wrong. It was almost ridiculous. I won't take the time here to discuss a number of interesting situations that occurred in my experience during that first year of the occupation. The good treatment continued. I want to reiterate that the Army had done a tremendous job, and even though they had carried on the tradition of treating the Japanese well, if perhaps a little patronizingly, but nevertheless, with kindness and understanding. And USIS picked up where they left off. We wanted to expand on it. We wanted to increase the knowledge that we inculcated into the Japanese as to the cultural background that the United States

## Library of Congress

had and give them extensive information about our cultural achievements. We wanted them to understand that we were going to continue to treat them as friends. And that generally we wanted to win their allegiance to the United States. That was our major overall goal.

Now, there were a couple of other ones that were related to that. One was the extent to which the Occupation had given the Japanese a freedom they had not previously known, and interfered as little as they felt they could afford to with the Japanese return to normality. In short, we hoped to assist in guiding them further toward democracy.

Incidentally, the Occupation had openly allowed labor unions to form again. Japan had never really allowed truly free labor unions to exist. Occupation authorities didn't realize at first the extent of liberal thinking existing among many of the young officers managing the labor union rebirth. There may even have been a few people in the Occupation who might have had a communist background. I won't say there weren't. But even if there was no communist influence, there were a lot of very, very liberal young people who were writing the labor code, and who didn't want to interfere with the formation of unions or the activities of unions. The unions therefore had a very heady beginning and in some areas were for a long time rather well infiltrated by native communist party representatives. I mean, Japanese Communist party representatives.

In fact I think it is possible the Japanese unions may have started the sit-in. I say this because in my role in Japan in the first year I was in charge of the economic activities in the Military Government Section of first, 6th Army and later I Corps, Headquarters which controlled Japan from west and south of Nagoya. And through my office had to come every Japanese corporation in the area that wanted to convert from wartime operations to civilian manufacturing. Their permit had to be issued from my office. We had to investigate their intentions, see what they were going to do before granting the permit.

## Library of Congress

One of the big corporations represented in that area was Mitsubishi, which had had a large aircraft engine manufacturing plant on the outskirts of Kyoto. I became very closely acquainted with the top management of that particular region of the Mitsubishi operation. They were wanting to reopen several plants in the area.

Eventually we did give them permission by the early spring of 1946 to start resuming operations, and as soon as they did their new labor unions went on strike. This was the first experience that the Japanese industry had ever had with a really full-fledged strike, and they didn't know how to handle it. So at first they were trying to act as they always did before whenever anybody came up with a labor proposal. They were going to stonewall it.

The next thing they knew the Japanese unions had moved in. They had about a thousand people sitting down in the Mitsubishi factory and offices, and they wouldn't get out. So the management all descended on my Military Government office in Kyoto, pointing out this terrible phenomenon that had occurred and what could they do with it? I had not been blessed with any organized labor experience previously, and I don't know that I helped very much. But I did give them a few suggestions. I told them they'd have to stop this stonewalling, that they would simply have to negotiate some of their requirements, some of the demands of their labor. And I thought that if they were reasonable in their handling that they probably would come out all right. As it turned out they did.

I think the Japanese labor was so surprised that they got a favorable response and some understanding and concessions that they themselves were amazed and they withdrew. I still think that was probably one of the first if not the first examples of a sit in of the labor movement. For Japan, I am sure it was.

Well, that's a long way of saying that later on by the time we neared the end of the Occupation the communist influence had infiltrated quite a bit of the labor movement, particularly the seaman's union and to a lesser extent the civil service unions. Although communists were still an illegal party they were managing to make themselves rather

## Library of Congress

obstreperous and they probably had a hand in the May 1, 1952 riot I talked about earlier. They didn't get much support from the general public. Even though the elections were not managed, communists didn't score highly. They couldn't stand for election. They were not permitted to put up a ticket at that time, but tried to make their power effective through the Socialist Party.

We were worried about their growing influence in certain quarters. So one of our objectives was of course to try to counteract the influence of the communist infiltration of various important areas of the Japanese business and industry and also political front.

A third objective stemmed from the fact that the Japanese were not terribly well convinced that America was all that culturally advanced. And so another one of our objectives was to impress them with the cultural achievements of the U.S. and the widespread concern for and capabilities in the performing arts and arts generally in the United States. I think we were reasonably successful in that regard. One of the things we did not too long before I left Japan was to arrange a visit to Japan of what was then called the American Symphony of the Air. It had been the NBC Symphony Orchestra. And I think Stokowski had at one time been conductor. NBC had just a short time earlier decided to discontinue their contract with the orchestra. They were no longer going to broadcast regularly for NBC. So they struck out on their own, renamed themselves the American Symphony of the Air and sought engagements. They had no initial commitments within the United States, so we negotiated a trip for them to Japan. And we scheduled them all over the country. Many people don't realize or at least didn't in those days, that the Japanese were not only great students of their own music, but were tremendous aficionados of Western classical music. They're nuts about it, and had little chance to enjoy it during the war years. No top flight symphony orchestra had performed in Japan at least since some years before the war. I am not sure one had ever visited Japan. So when we brought the Symphony of the Air to Japan, the demand for tickets was enormous. The climax of their visit was a joint concert with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra in Karakuen Stadium, a huge baseball

## Library of Congress

stadium in Tokyo which normally seats about 60,000, but could only seat about 40,000 people for the orchestral performance.

The demand for tickets was so great that people stood in line for 15 hours starting the night before at the box office to get tickets. The 50,000 were completely sold out. Peoples stood throughout the concert. Some climbed trees outside to view and listen over the walls. As I noted earlier, Harry Keith shot another notable motion picture around the Symphony Orchestra's visit which was widely successful in Japan.

We scheduled them not only in Tokyo but in I think about 12 to 15 Japanese cities. It was probably the single most successful cultural event USIS staged in Japan. It went a long way towards convincing the Japanese that the Americans weren't just a bunch of shallow cultural people—that they didn't put on or were incapable of staging excellent cultural performances.

So I think those were basically our efforts at that time. We did have subsidiary ones based on trying to convert or at least soften editorial writers and other press representatives who were pretty well left wing oriented and who really were taking off in the Japanese press against anything American. We had mixed results there. I won't say that we were as successful in that regard as we were in some other activities.

But we did have a few minor successes, one of them brought off by the same Paul Bethel that I talked about in connection with the episode when Glenn Shaw went to the Kanazawa Fair. He spent about six months cultivating a major columnist for the newspaper in Nagoya that was giving us a bad time. Both by extensive personal contact and providing him extensive pertinent information setting forth the American point of view. He had some success. He didn't convert the man, but I think at least he tempered his anti-U.S. editorials a bit. At least for a time the editorials seemed to be less vitriolic. I think Paul had a reasonable degree of influence on them. There were a couple of other episodes of that nature when we were working out other columnists with individuals assigned to them.

## Library of Congress

### The Book Translation Program

I should mention one further thing and that is the Japanese had not yet in those early days resuscitated their cultural magazines. Later they flourished and became very important. But Leon Picon as the book translation officer was greatly successful not only in getting a large number of books translated into Japanese, getting them distributed and sold through Japanese book stores, and introducing them into Japanese schools—he also established a magazine called the Beisho Daiori (pronounced Bay Sho Dy-oh'ry) which was devoted to book reviews (almost entirely) of American books in translation. The publication caught on and was well accepted in Japanese cultural circles. It was still in existence in 1970, even after Japanese cultural publications had long been flourishing once more, but it was finally superseded by the present magazine, printed at the USIS Regional Service Center in Manila,—a much fancier, slicker magazine than the old one. Leon's came at a time when Japan was only beginning to recover its cultural publications production, and went a long way toward introducing and popularizing American books in translation in Japan. I give full credit to Leon. It was an imaginative approach at which he worked very hard and successfully. In the process, he became reasonably proficient himself in the Japanese language. He was, and still is, a highly alert and intelligent man, of wide ranging interests and accomplishments.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two other programs, ones that are more routine to USIS operations and therefore not so noticeable, were ably run in Tokyo. While Bill Hutchinson was the director of Press operations in the first two years of USIS, our placement in an always resistant Japanese press was good, and our publications program moved along productively even though up against a growing Japanese magazine industry that now probably eclipses any other in the world. Bill's successor was not as imaginative or as energetic, and I believe we were less successful in this area after his departure.

## Library of Congress

the Exchange of Persons Program with Japan was unusually large. It did not compare with the resources devoted to this operation in Germany, but as other USIS operations go, it was large. It was supervised by Don Ranard, and was a separate unit within USIS Tokyo. To this operation, among other things, can be credited our getting William Faulkner for the Nagano Seminar in 1955, and the American Symphony of the Air that same year. Those were the two more spectacular achievements. Don's unit also cooperated extensively with the Fulbright office, organizing volunteer help to assist in student counseling, giving the annual Fulbright competitive examinations, and negotiating with the Japanese Government for expanded exchanges. The Fulbright program today is 50% funded by the Japanese Government, and although that development matured after Don's time, he can be credited with having laid the groundwork for later success.

Well, Allan, I think that is enough discussion on Japan.

*Q: In 1956, you were transferred from Tokyo to Rio, which was then the Capital of Brazil. What was it like then? You were the Deputy Director and Acting Director of USIS there.*

SCHMIDT: I was sent there as Deputy Director. My PAO was a man with a newspaper and radio background. I don't know if he first came into the Agency as an information man, or through VOA. At one time he was Program Director of the Voice of America but had gotten himself integrated under the Wriston program into the Department of State. His name was Jack Vebber, V-E-B-B-E-R. And then although he had become an FSO State had assigned him back to USIA and there he was a PAO.

My experience in Brazil was relatively limited. I think you mentioned earlier I managed to contract polio after I'd been down there only about seven or eight months and had to come out. My rehabilitation was so long that I never got back to Brazil in an official capacity.

However, it was an interesting time because the Soviet Communist Party Congress of 1956—I've forgotten which session it was of the USSR Communist party congress—

## Library of Congress

had only recently concluded. It was the occasion at which Khrushchev had given his speech denouncing Stalin; when he was making his effort to get the administration of the communist party out of some of its more restrictive doldrums and get the country moving, an attempt by the way which ultimately ended in his overthrow.

But anyway, he'd given this long speech. It had been taken down by the American Foreign Broadcast Service, and translated into English. We had an English copy. We were fortunate in Brazil in having on our staff of locals two or three top flight journalists who had come over from newspapers in Brazil to work for USIS. I remember the first names of the two gentlemen so I'll refer to them as that.

The senior gentleman was named Roberto and I've forgotten his last name now. And the younger man who only recently retired from USIS in Brazil was Rodriguez. They both were quite fluent in English and exceedingly capable people. In fact, the whole Brazilian staff was almost as capable as the Japanese staff. And I found that they were very high quality individuals, unusually well educated, very smart and very energetic, very innovative.

We went into a session shortly with Roberto whose English was perhaps a little more fluent than Rodriguez. He translated the entire Khrushchev speech into Portuguese. And we published it in paperback format which we managed to get into a large number of the schools, universities, newspapers and magazines in Brazil.

At that time, Brazil had a very large communist party and a fairly influential one. I think to this day there is much left wing influence in Brazil despite the long term administration of the Army there which only terminated a few years ago after running a dictatorial government for nine or ten years. But the communist influence really was effective in Brazil in my time there.

This move on our part among other things triggered a rather wide scale counter offensive on the part of communist sympathizers. Since a fair amount of the press had leftist



## Library of Congress

leanings, they were getting a lot of material into the Brazilian papers. Furthermore, publications were not censored, and they had their own magazines and publications.

*Q: This is the Communist Party?*

SCHMIDT: The Communist Party, yes. I believe that when the Army took over about 10 or 12 years ago they suppressed the Communist Party. And I do not know whether it is once more operating as a legal party. The CIA decided that something had to be done to counter this, and they orchestrated in conjunction with us the rather extensive program of anti-communist posters, newspaper placements, etc., exploiting the weaknesses of the Soviet government as exposed by the Khrushchev speech.

*Q: You're referring strictly to information activities I gather.*

SCHMIDT: Pardon?

*Q: You're referring strictly to information activities.*

SCHMIDT: I'm referring strictly to information activities just now. And in fact, during the relatively short period I was there, most of my efforts personally were directed toward the information—media—side of the program.

We did have a very large cultural center in Rio. It was one of the Binational centers of which there are a great many, not only in Brazil, but all over Latin America. These centers were begun originally under the Institute of Inter-American affairs (IIA) that began operating as early as 1937-38 in that area under the direction of Nelson Rockefeller. They were known as Binational Centers, because they were designed to engage the joint participation of the U.S. and host country leaders. They are directed by binational boards, composed usually of equal numbers of prominent local leaders and resident Americans.

I will not go into detail about them here, because John Ewing, who served with me in Brazil, will later provide an interview for our oral history project in which he will cover the

## Library of Congress

origins and activities of these centers. John began his career in the center in Mexico City shortly after WWII. When he served in Brazil, he began as an officer in a single center, but later was named head of the Binational center program for all of Brazil. Although there were already several centers in Brazil, they had not everywhere reached the level of prominence they were later to attain, and they were mostly confined to major cities. It is to John Ewing that we owe their phenomenal growth in both prestige and numbers.

Most of this effort took place after I was forced to leave Brazil. However, the Center in Rio was already a prominent force in the community long before my arrival. Many of the USIS cultural activities were staged in or through the centers. This was especially true of the exchange programs—not only important visitors, and exchange scholars, but also visiting performing arts groups. Although USIS contributed personnel and money to their operations, they were not directly part of USIA/USIS. USIS generally placed Agency-contracted personnel in the centers as Center Directors, and in the larger ones, one or two other similarly employed Americans as well. They were paid by the Agency, which also contributed some operational funds, but the ultimate policy control had to rest with the center's board. Furthermore, the centers were only partially dependent on USIS financial aid. They developed much of their own operating costs through an enormous English Language teaching program. John Ewing either personally, or with the aid of assistants, produced most of the teaching manuals used for the program throughout Latin America.

But getting back to my activities jointly with the CIA, I must explain that in those days there was occasional collaboration between USIS and CIA in the so-called gray areas—never in the “black.” CIA had ways of getting materials into certain media outlets, and had distribution channels not available to us. In this particular instance we mounted a large scale effort which was supposed to be choreographed pretty much by the political section of the embassy. But since they didn't have experience in the case of informational operations, USIS people were the ones who were putting the informational products together.

## Library of Congress

The part that the political section was playing was to advise us, and keep the Brazilian government advised as to what we were doing, making sure that we were not going beyond the bounds of what the Brazilian government would approve. An amusing situation took place during that period. Many of the old line Foreign Service personnel of the State Department of that time still held the pre-war and early post-war attitude toward USIA, that we were second class citizens, really didn't know how to operate very well abroad and needed the guidance of more sagacious foreign service people.

The political counselor at that time was a man by the name of Eric Wendelyn, who was a typical holder of that old view. The ambassador was—cut it a minute.

SCHMIDT: The ambassador was Ellis Briggs. Briggs was a very fine gentleman and he was always warmly hospitable to me personally. Yet, I could always detect a feeling that he somehow didn't quite trust anyone with foreign service duties who hadn't come up through the old guard foreign service channels.

Schmidt Named Acting PAO in Brazil: October, 1956

Just before we entered fully into this cooperative venture with CIA, our PAO, Jack Vebber, was suddenly called to be Deputy Chief of Mission in Guatemala. Once again, on short notice, I became Acting PAO, this time in Brazil. The time was somewhere near the middle of October, 1956.

Anyway, we were in the middle stages of planning for the joint USIA/CIA effort, and so, I was asked to attend a meeting designed to discuss details. Eric Wendelyn was there, along with the DCM, and the Station Chief (as the head of CIA was known). He and I had become close friends. He was a well-educated man who looked the part of the patrician that he was, but had no airs. He was easy to know and work with. Eric started to outline the course of action to be followed, then turned to me, who was orchestrating the information side of the effort, and said condescendingly, "You know, of course, what we're

## Library of Congress

trying to do here, don't you?" I thought, well—you know I could have made a very sarcastic remark, but for once figured discretion was the better part of valor, so I just said, "yes, I'm quite aware of it," and let it go at that. But that little exchange illustrates the attitude many old line diplomats held toward USIS and USIA.

However, personally, we got along very well. In fact, I got along well with almost everyone in the Embassy. USIS helped publicize projects such as the construction of a large dam that was to be the driving power for a major electrical generating plant. This was a project of the predecessor of AIDS (I have forgotten by what designation it operated then), and I became a very close friend of the program Director, Howard Cottam. Howard was the first Foreign Service Officer to hold the double job as Counselor of Embassy for Economic Affairs and Director of the AID operation in Brazil. This dual assignment was tried several times in different countries later, with varying degrees of success. I don't know of any such arrangement in recent times. Howard was a highly capable and cooperative man, very friendly toward USIS, who often helped USIA in various ways. He was a few years later America's first Ambassador to Kuwait when it became an independent country. Unhappily, he died of cancer two or three years ago.

*Q: Were you fluent in the language?*

SCHMIDT: I didn't know any Portuguese when I went to Brazil. I was transferred directly from Japan. I did know a fair amount of Japanese and got around pretty well in Japan at that time. But Portuguese was something else again. I was studying Portuguese and trying to become reasonably fluent. I had just reached the point where, although I was not yet able to carry on extensive conversations on important matters, I at least could carry on in ordinary social conversations and get myself around satisfactorily.

Polio: Back to the U.S. for Recuperation 1957

Then, I was stricken with polio in January of 1957. At first they thought I would recover quickly. It didn't happen that way. I was there for a month after that, first in the hospital and

## Library of Congress

then at my residence. Even when I was taken back stateside I thought that I was going to be able to go back to Brazil. I didn't know how long it was going to take to get rehabilitated. So I got back to Washington, from there I was sent out to Seattle. My parents were still living at that time and had returned from Alaska to Seattle. I entered the Northwest Respirator Center which was in Seattle's Harborview Hospital. It was run by the medical staff of the University of Washington Medical School under the direction of Dr. Plum who in the intervening years by the way has moved to New York and become a great authority on respiratory difficulties and related troubles, paralytic difficulties, and has made himself a national reputation. He was young then and just getting started.

In any event, my rehabilitation, even before I could come back to work took about seven or eight months, and so I never returned to Brazil. USIA had to send down both a director and a deputy director finally. Johnny McKnight ultimately became the PAO down there, but Steve Baldanza was sent down first as deputy PAO until McKnight arrived. He and Johnny didn't get along, and Steve was subsequently transferred out of Brazil.

1957: Deputy Assistant Director, USIA, for Latin America

SCHMIDT: Well, as I said, I never returned to Brazil in any official capacity. When I did get back to work it was in late July or early August in 1957. At that time I came back as the deputy assistant director of the U.S. Information Agency for Latin America operations, and spent the next two years in Latin America affairs.

*Q: What were some of the major issues of concern in those years when you were Deputy Director? You were also the Acting Director for Latin America for a period of time.*

SCHMIDT: Well, the first major concern was an administrative one. Because I had been the Acting Director there was no deputy when I left. So for many months there was neither an acting head nor a deputy director in Brazil. For some reason Frank Oram, who was my boss—Assistant Director, USIA for Latin America could not make up his mind whom to appoint. Ambassador Briggs became seriously annoyed because the Agency didn't get

## Library of Congress

anyone down there. Even by the time I came back to work in late July or early August, seven months after my departure, a new PAO had not been appointed.

I have mentioned that Frank Oram was the Assistant Director at that time for Latin America. Frank is a wonderful, highly intelligent and personable guy but he often had difficulty making up his mind. He just couldn't decide whom it was that he wanted to send to Brazil. Finally, at one time Ellis Briggs became so charged up over the fact that he didn't have either Director or Deputy Director that he got on the phone to Washington. Those were the days when we still had long distance from abroad over radio telephone, and in an effort to overcome fading and static, you sometimes shouted loud enough to be heard from one end of the hemisphere to the other.

Arthur Larson was then Director of the Agency. He had only been in the position a few months. I don't think Larson really ever fully understood the functioning of USIA, and he wasn't a terribly successful director. But anyway it happened that about seven o'clock p.m. Washington time when the call finally got through from Ellis Briggs to Washington, phone operators couldn't rouse anybody in the headquarters except in the Director's office. Arthur Larson was there, so he picked up the phone.

And I guess Ellis Briggs really let him have it. He could be very profane when angry. He was not only voluble, but eloquent, eloquent both in excellent grammar and in profanity. Briggs didn't know he was talking to the Director of the Agency, and I don't think Arthur Larson fully focused on who was calling him. According to somebody who came into the office just at that time, Arthur Larson just sat there dumbfounded as Briggs went on for about five minutes with certain interruptions in the transmission saying that he absolutely had to have somebody down in Rio immediately. The net result was that they did get somebody down there within just a couple of weeks after the phone call, after all those long months of delay. That was the first major crisis that we had.

## Library of Congress

The next thing that came up was that the Agency had just come around to employing their earliest concepts of management by objectives. This was before the concept was later perfected in academia and was instituted in all sorts of courses on public administration and management in business as well as in universities.

Agency management got the idea, not without some justification, that we weren't being specific enough and sufficiently directed in our efforts abroad to operate according to a set of objectives around which we should tailor our programs. I was given the task of writing a directive as to how to develop objectives and how to report on them once established. I had not done any of this myself, although I had been operating in Japan setting out the directives sort of by instinct. But I'd never really sat down and written any set of directives as to how one should implement a program of management by objectives. I did the best I could—and got out a directive telling posts how they should establish objectives and tailor their annual reports around the degree of progress made in achieving them.

Every year, every PAO was then required to write an annual report back to Washington as to what they had done in the preceding year and to what degree they had made successful steps toward the achievement of their objectives. When the annual reports started coming in it was then given to me to write a critique, an analysis of each report. I must say that I spent a heck of a lot of time in the fall of 1957 and the early winter of 1958 writing responses, because we had about 24 programs in Latin America at that time, some them very small. But we had some large ones too in Argentina, Brazil, Chili, Venezuela and to a lesser extent in Colombia and Ecuador. The majority of them are rather small because the countries are rather small. Nevertheless, each one submitted a full report that had to be analyzed.

Then the Bureau of the Budget got into the act and wanted to see what we were doing, so I had to submit all of my reports not only to the Agency but also to the analysts over in the Bureau who were handling our program. And all the time I was in the midst of this mess, I was trying to do something else. Latin America always got the lean end of

## Library of Congress

Budget resources, in what had already become an impoverished appropriation so our Policy Officer (Eugene "Rocky" Staples) and I were trying to get some kind of a non-governmental organization set up in Latin America through which we could funnel some of our activities and which would in part help by financing from private enterprise. Private enterprise had even in those times, although not as bad as earlier, a rather unsavory reputation in Latin America for having gone down there and set up big businesses, particularly in extractive enterprises, such as mining of copper, phosphates, tin and other metals, and literally robbed the Latin countries of their natural resources, employed what amounted to slave labor and generally brow beat the local populace, taking all their proceeds out of the country and doing little for the benefit of the country's people.

We had two or three very enlightened businesses in Latin America at that time, notably Standard Oil's subsidiary. There was a gentleman called Nelson who was resident in New York. He was, I believe, their top public relations man. He was sympathetic to the idea of trying to work through the Business Council and trying to rally businesses into helping us through business organizations outside governmental lines of information dissemination, perhaps taking over and financing some of our projects.

I spent an awful lot of time on this effort while I was still the Deputy Assistant Director, and continued later when I became the Acting Assistant Director for the area. In the meantime, Andy Berding, who had been Deputy Director for Policy and Plans in the Agency was called by Secretary Dulles to assume an assistant secretary position in State. Sax Bradford, who had been PAO in Spain since 1956, succeeded Andy. From information I was given in bits and pieces, I am sure that Sax was largely responsible for the personnel shuffles that soon occurred.

Sax did not have a high opinion of my supervisor, Frank Oram. The next thing I knew, Frank had been notified he was to be removed from the Assistant Directorship, and Al Harkness, for whom Sax had developed a great liking, was to succeed him as Assistant



## Library of Congress

Director for Latin America. Well, Frank had had no wish to leave his job, in which he was very happy, and, he thought, entrenched.

*Q: And Frank became PAO to Madrid, I believe.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, but not immediately. He spent an academic year as the USIA appointee to the first State Department Senior Seminar session, which then was not so prestigious as it has become, but now is a competitor, and some believe superior, to the National War College. I remained the Deputy Assistant Director, but after about three months, the Assistant Director for Cultural Affairs was transferred, and Al Harkness was again moved to replace him.

*Q: Which was ICA at that time?*

Schmidt Becomes Acting Assistant Director for Latin America

SCHMIDT: Yes, it was ICS then. So that left me. I became the Acting Assistant Director of USIA for Latin America. That was, I think, early in 1958. No, I'm sorry. It was late '58 and early '59. So, for about six months, I headed Latin America operations. I remained there until June of 1959. The Agency then brought John McKnight back from Brazil to be the Assistant Director. He arrived in July, and took over the position. I reverted briefly to the Deputy position. In the meantime, I had been appointed to the National War College for the academic year 1959-60, and left to enter there about August 20.

Before finishing a brief discussion of my last half year or so in Latin America affairs, I want to recount a couple other incidents involving Bradford. Not infrequently after the Director's weekly staff meeting, Sax would convene a smaller meeting of just the Area Directors. On the day I'm talking about, Jim Hoofnagle, the then Assistant Director of USIA for Administration had spoken for about five minutes on some major administrative question. I don't remember what it was, but it did not involve any program matters at all. In the middle of the later Area Directors session with Sax, the discussion was dealing with

## Library of Congress

some program decisions. Suddenly, Sax broke off and said: I just want to warn you guys that you've got to watch out that the administrative types don't jump in and try to take over your program work. They'll do it any time they can.

Whether Hoofnagle's completely non-program remarks triggered this comment I have no way of knowing. There was absolutely no reason that anyone could see why Sax should suddenly out of context introduce this thought. It was another clue to his anti-administrative bias, or maybe he thought, because I was there, now in a program capacity, that he would reemphasize his feelings.

On another occasion, in a Director's staff meeting that immediately preceded the annual promotion panel meetings, some of the policies on how panels should proceed were being considered. Suddenly, again, out of context, Sax remarked that the panels would have to be careful about appointing some women to too high a level. Then, he looked directly at me, and said, (and if my recollection is correct, this an almost an exact quote) "I think you know particularly the woman I mean." Since he knew my high opinion of Pat van Delden, whereas he didn't like her aggressive defense of her program positions, the reference could not have been to any other woman in the Agency.

Well, in talking about organizational changes and the two incidents involving Bradford, I got diverted from my discussion of the attempts to get business assistance for Latin American information activities. I'll wrap that up briefly now. I spent an awful lot of time and energy trying to put this idea across. I never succeeded in doing it during the time I was Deputy and then Acting Director for Latin America, although Mr. Nelson of Standard Oil seemed much in favor of it. At one point I thought he was going to be able to swing some support from certain business organizations, but it didn't work out.

Later, only about a year later, the Business Council of Latin America did set up a program headquartered in Venezuela, Caracas. The Council carried out a fairly large number of informational type programs. Whether their program was in any way stimulated by what I

## Library of Congress

had been working on, I don't know. In any event, they did it primarily without contact with USIA. They apparently didn't want to be associated too directly with USIA. My old boss, Jack Vebber, by that time having retired from the Foreign Service, was given the position of Executive Director of that enterprise in Caracas. He moved down to Venezuela and headed it for three or four years before he finally retired a second time and returned to his old hometown just outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Jack, by the way, died just about a year ago. He lived to be 84 or 85 and died I think in November of 1986. But for about three or four years he was the head of that business-operated and financed effort in Caracas, largely to give American business a better image on things American. So I like to think those were some of the major efforts in my period as Deputy Assistant Director and Acting Assistant Director for Latin America.

Vice President Nixon's 1958 Visit to Latin America:and the Role of "Rocky" Staples in that Trip

One of the other things we did during my tour in those positions was to help orchestrate the visit of then Vice President Nixon to Latin America. That was the famous trip he made in which he was vilified in a number of countries. Rocks were thrown at him, he was spit on; he was the target of riotous attacks in Peru and Venezuela.

*Q: In Caracas he had a very difficult time.*

SCHMIDT: Yeah, he had a bad time in Caracas. He also had a bad time in Lima. His troubles began in Lima. He'd gotten along all right in Brazil. I was not there at the time, of course. I was here in Washington. But I was one of those who helped to set up some of the arrangements for Nixon when he went. The White House wanted to have someone with him from USIA who spoke fluent Spanish, was familiar with the Latin America media and could act as sort of his spokesman and his informational assistant for any efforts in which he was involved when he was dealing with people who spoke only Spanish.

## Library of Congress

“Rocky” Staples was at that time the Policy Officer for Latin America in the Office of Latin American Affairs in USIA. “Rocky” fitted that bill precisely, a brash, very bright, energetic man, absolutely fearless. And his Spanish was perfect. He had lived in Mexico as a UP correspondent for a number of years and perfected his Spanish down there, then later served with USIS in Chile.

So we detailed Rocky to be the one to accompany the Nixon party. They welcomed him like a long lost brother. He was unbelievably effective on that trip. We got more accolades out of “Rocky's” performance than I could have imagined. Nixon was absolutely enchanted. And I will say this: although Rocky—I don't know what his political affiliations were; I never was quite sure whether he was a Democrat or a Republican—”Rocky” wasn't terribly fond of Nixon when he started out on that trip. But he became an admirer of the Vice President because he said Nixon had the mind of a sponge. He assimilated and retained masses of information in very short order. He not only retained what he learned but he could analyze it, come to astute conclusions, and bring it forth in arguments very effectively. “Rocky” said that he gained a tremendous amount of admiration for Nixon on that trip. Whatever anybody else thought about him politically he was probably the smartest man in that part. He could talk to any person if they'd give him a chance. His grasp and analytical usage of the information he had at his fingertips, “Rocky” felt, far exceeded that of the people who were running the program for the Department of State. Of course, State didn't like to hear that, but that was “Rocky's” opinion. Maybe not everyone felt that way. But Nixon thought “Rocky” was great. And it was a big plus for USIA.

It also finally earned Rocky a special award. The Junior Chamber of Commerce granted an award every year to two or three young people in government. The recipients had to be young men under 40 years of age. Rocky had made such an impression during the trip that I decided we should submit his name. And I'll say without being too humble about it, that I wrote a damn good citation for him and he got it. He was awarded the citation as the

## Library of Congress

outstanding young man as far as the Junior Chamber of Commerce was concerned for that year. I think it was awarded in late '58.

Q: *Where is he now?*

SCHMIDT: Right now I don't know where he is. He went to language school after that to study Russian. He was so good, so linguistically gifted, that at the end of one year of study he rated a four plus in both spoken and written Russian. His wife, Charlotte, who also had been a foreign correspondent and whom he had met in Mexico during his years there with the UPI, or the UP at that time, took it with him. She scored three plus each way. And she wasn't able to study as intensively as he was because they still had young children at home, and she was tied up a good part of the time with home duties.

After a year here they sent him to a Garmisch Partenkirchen in Germany to study Russian terminology relating to military affairs. He studied in the military school there for another six months, then went on to replace Lee Brady who had been our first, well, not really our first, Cultural Attach# in Moscow.

Q: *"Tom" Tuch.*

SCHMIDT: Tom Tuch was the first USIS officer in Moscow. Although at the time he was too junior to have the title of Cultural Attach# and was not allowed to serve as a USIA officer. Lee Brady was the first one to be able to operate as a USIS man. Lee was only there two years and then "Rocky" replaced him and was there from 1962 I think until 1964 —no, he must have gone in '61 because he was there three years or almost three years and came back in '64. When he got back in '64 he and Tuch weren't seeing eye to eye. Tuch and Brady had given "Rocky" a somewhat discouraging efficiency rating. And he was pretty exercised over that fact.

He also had caught the eye of George Bundy who thought he was a superb performer in Moscow. And so George, with his connections and his later position with the Ford

## Library of Congress

Foundation, advised the Ford Foundation to offer Rocky a very lucrative position with them. At that time the Ford Foundation was much more influential than it has been in the most recent years, and their operations were very highly publicized in the U.S. I don't exactly remember what position it was that Rocky got. But in the fall of 1964 he finally decided to leave USIA and go with the Ford Foundation.

He was with them several years in New York. Then they offered him the job of going out to be the head of the Ford Foundation in India, which was, I think the largest overseas foundation office they had. He was out there for almost ten years. His wife Charlotte developed cancer while they were out there, and although she managed to hand on for several years, she did die before he left India.

He came back to the States about the end of '83 or early in '84. By that time the Ford Foundation top management had completely turned over. The old group was out. "Rocky" felt that he really wasn't doing much and probably didn't have a big future there any longer. So he resigned, and about that time was offered a job as Deputy Assistant Director of AID for European Affairs—European and they had part of another area—it wasn't all in Europe. I've forgotten just how they're organized over there now.

Anyway, he came down to Washington and took that job. And was there in '84, '85 and early '86. But at the time he said, I don't know whether I want to stay in government or not. Then he suddenly left, and I lost track of him. I don't know where he is now. He left before Christmastime of '86, and when I wrote him our usual Christmas card and greetings in '86 it came back saying he was no longer resident at his D.C. address. I haven't been able to find out where he went.

1960: Schmidt Named Assistant Director/USIA for Administration

*Q: Getting back to your career after the year at the National War College, you were named Assistant Director of the Agency for Administration.*

## Library of Congress

SCHMIDT: That's right.

*Q: And that was a time when the Kennedy transition team landed on the Agency. Would you tell us about that?*

SCHMIDT: Well, the first several months I was head of administration—from July to December, 1960, George Allen was still Director. Kennedy was elected in November, and the transition team arrived shortly afterwards. I will come to that part of the story a little later. I didn't want the job as Assistant Director for Administration. I'd pretty well gotten out of administration, and I didn't want to get back into it again. I was going to the National War College. When I first left to go to the War College I went up to see George Allen who was then the Director of USIA. He agreed that when I got out of the War College that I could go to Spanish language training and be made PAO in Mexico City.

That was something I wanted very much to do at that time. So once I had that agreement I thought things were going to be fine. I would come out of the War College and get my Spanish language training. I thought my Portuguese, as little as I'd had of it might help me, then I could really consolidate my Spanish.

Along about the end of February or the first of March of that year 1960—

*Q: 1960?*

SCHMIDT: Well, I went into the War College in August of '59. And I was in the War College 1959-1960.

*Q: Right.*

SCHMIDT: Along about the end of February or the first part of March of 1960, I got a call from George Allen saying he wanted me to come up and see him. So I took the afternoon off from War College and I went up to his office. I walked into his office—no one ever

## Library of Congress

called Mr. Allen by his first name. He was always Mr. Allen. You never called him George like you could call Ed Murrow, Ed, or Carl Rowan, Carl—so I just said Hello, Mr. Allen.

He said, sit down, Lew. So I sat down. He didn't say anything for about two minutes. I was beginning to get a little nervous. He said, how would you like to be the Assistant Director for Administration? I said, well, Mr. Allen, I feel it's quite an honor. But, you know, you had promised me that I could be PAO in Mexico. And I said I really prefer to go to Mexico since I've been out of the field now for some time because of my bout with polio. Also I said, if I thought you were going to stay on I'd feel much better about it. Besides, I don't know who might replace you, but you and I both know that the Eisenhower Administration is drawing to a close and that there's going to be a new president at least come next January. I don't know whether it's to be a Republican or a Democrat, but in either case it's going to be a total change in practically all the top offices. And I don't imagine you will be here after that. Absolute silence from Allen.

And I said, therefore, I really wish you would let me escape from that job, not take it. He just sat there for a while, then swiveled around in his chair and looked out the window for what seemed to me several minutes, though it probably was not over a minute. Then he said, "Yes, Lew. There's no doubt. You're the man to be the Assistant Director for Administration. Jim Hoofnagle, who had had that position, had just been named PAO in Germany. He was taking off for Germany in two or three months. I guess they were going to put him through German for three months, three or four months first. But in any event the job was coming open. Since I would be out the first week in June from the War College he felt the timing was right and I was the one who should take it. Well, one didn't say no to Mr. Allen when he put it that way. And I came on as Assistant Director for Administration.

In retrospect I think it turned out to be one of the most fortunate experiences in my career, because I couldn't have foreseen the fact that Ed Murrow would become the Director of USIA and would give me the opportunity to be both an administrative managerial person and a deep participant in program operations as he did. Nor would I have had the good



## Library of Congress

fortune to have been so closely associated with a man whom I still consider to be one of the greatest Americans that ever lived. I'm a great admirer of Ed's. I think he was a tremendous man. And I wouldn't give up anything the nearly three years that I had while he was still well and able to manage the Agency.

In any event I came aboard. But before I actually went to work at the job, I had to have an operation myself which kept me out for several weeks. I finally took over effectively about the middle of July after convalescing for about four weeks.

*Q: That's 1959.*

SCHMIDT: No, that was 1960.

*Q: 1960.*

SCHMIDT: Yes. Mid-July or late July of 1960. I was very fortunate in that my Deputy Director was Irv Schwartz who was an exceptionally sharp and capable man, an absolute whiz at budget work. And, of course, Ben Posner was the chief of the budget division. We had two of the best budget and fiscal people in the whole government in my estimation in that work, and I was heavily supported by both of them. It turned out to be a sad situation: Irv became progressively ill after we were together only about three months. I think he was only about 45 or 46 years of age, but he had developed liver cancer which had progressed very rapidly. He died within a week, within about two weeks after the electoral victory of John Kennedy as President. So I lost a very valued assistant and a very good friend. I've regretted that loss ever since. Later I was able to persuade Ed Murrow to move Ben Posner up to be my deputy. And, of course, Ben was a superb performer also. He was an excellent replacement for Irv. But I deeply regretted his death.

I suppose that the first thing that we—I really can't remember all the projects that we started. But we were about to embark on a very large number of new projects both administratively and program wise. Personnel was then under my jurisdiction and we were

## Library of Congress

undertaking a complete revision of personnel regulations. We were also called upon to reformulate to some extent the nature of the budget presentation. There was another operation which we were going to revise but it escapes my memory at this moment. Anyhow, we began work immediately on these projects.

We were in the late summer and fall of 1960. At that time Tom Sorensen had not yet appeared on the scene. He was an officer, a rather middle grade officer in USIS at the time. I don't know whether he was around Washington at that time or whether he was still overseas. He had studied Arabic and had been serving abroad somewhere in the North African area, perhaps in Egypt although I'm not sure of that. I didn't meet him until right after Ed Murrow came in as the Director of the Agency and Tom was pulled up to be the Deputy Director for policy and plans. That was March 6, 1961.

During the late months of George Allen's incumbency, Sax Bradford was still the Deputy Director for Policy and Plans, which was Tom's job later, and which was then the number three position in the Agency. He had come back from Spain and had taken that position while I was still in the Latin American area. And he was going to be seconded over to the State Department about the time that I came out of the War College. He was going over to CU in State in some rather high position over there. I don't think he was the Director of CU but he might have been the deputy. Anyway, it was a fairly substantial position. And that left a vacancy up there. Bernie Anderson was in the Policy and Plans office—whether he was the actual deputy as he later became, I don't recall. If he wasn't he later became that under Tom Sorensen.

Also I was very fortunate in that L.K. Little had been the Director of Personnel. He was ready to retire a second time, his earlier career having been for years the Director of the Chinese Government's Customs Service, a position he left because of the communist takeover in 1949.

## Library of Congress

Fairly early on after the Agency became independent, he came over to be the Agency's Director of Personnel. A man by the name of Dick Cook was then the Assistant Director for Administration, and it was he who brought L.K. in as Director of Personnel. L.K. was retiring finally after several years in that position about the time that I came aboard as Assistant Director for Administration.

L.K. was a great admirer, as were a number of other people, of Bill Weathersby. Now, Bill had just been told that he was going to go off to India. I don't remember whether he was going to be Deputy PAO or PAO at that time. He was very reluctant to take the job. He didn't want to come into the administrative area and he wanted to go abroad. But L.K. persuaded him to come on. And he got Don Wilson—no, at that time, not Don Wilson. He got George Allen to promise that after two years Bill could go out to the field, and could name his own post to go abroad.

Bill reluctantly agreed to stay for two years. At the time Bill was Director of Personnel it was still part of the Office of Administration. It hadn't been separated as it was after I left four years later, and became an independent organization for about five or six years. Now it's back again under Administration's management.

At the urging of Henry Loomis, we brought Lionel ("Mose") Mosley up from VOA to be Deputy Director of Personnel. Bill and I both decided that the restrictions in regulations governing of what people could or could not do on home leave and what they could do about transportation to and from their field posts and a lot of other things were unduly restrictive and that they really were prejudicial to the best interest of the Foreign Service officers coming in on home leave. So we launched a real program to try and get that changed. We rewrote pretty extensively the personnel regulations making them much more liberal in what you could do when you came in, in treating people who were on home leave, extending their leave for extenuating circumstances or giving them special breaks if for some reason or other they were called back to their post earlier than they had to be than they would have gone and to cut short their home leave. And there were a number

## Library of Congress

of other things that we wrote into the regulations which should and to some extent did facilitate the role of foreign service officers.

I found out later that some of the people in personnel undercut those regulations after Bill Weathersby had gone on out to India. But that's another story. They had continued to insist upon the old regulations. I found out about this some six or seven years later when I was inspecting Paris and ran into the press attach# who had been the victim of one of those misinterpretations.

When Kennedy was elected President, Mr. Allen promptly resigned. He had been given an opportunity to be the executive head of the Tobacco Institute. A lot of people were rather disappointed that he would take that position where he had to be sort of a huckster for the tobacco industry. Because Allen had always been a man of considerable principle. And they felt he was perhaps denigrating some of his own scruples in taking a position. But he took it. I guess it was a very lucrative one. And he served in it for a number of years before he retired a second time, went back to his home state of North Carolina.

The Kennedy Transition Period: Abbott Washburn Becomes Acting Director and Schmidt Acting Deputy Director of USIA

In any event he left almost immediately. I don't think more than a week or two after the election of Kennedy. That meant that there was no director. We knew that there wasn't going to be any director appointed until a new president came in, and probably not for some time thereafter, given the usual delays of filling jobs when a new administration assumes office.

Abbott Washburn then took over as Director of the Agency. I don't know whether Abbott would have named me or not. I never asked him. He might or might not have wanted to do it. But George Allen as almost his last act before he left, issued an order within the agency that I would be the Acting Deputy Director until the Kennedy transition team took over. I was the Acting Deputy Director, and Abbott stayed on as Acting Director until about

## Library of Congress

two weeks before Ed Murrow came in. I was never designated the Acting Director of the Agency although Abbott was gone most of that time the last two weeks. I remained the Acting Deputy Director until Ed Murrow came in. Don Wilson, who had been the head of the transition team at USIA for the Kennedy Administration was nominated by Kennedy to be the Deputy Director, and I reverted to my regular status.

So I was the Acting Deputy Director of the Agency for the latter part of November, December, January and most of February, I guess all of February. I think Ed didn't come in until about the first week in March because Kennedy had had a hard time persuading him to take the job. I am told although Ed never told me, somebody else did, that President Kennedy offered Ed the job almost as soon as he was inaugurated. Ed at that time did not take it. So meanwhile, two or three other people were under consideration. I don't know whether any of them—Josephus Daniels was one—turned it down. I think Daniels probably did. There was someone else who was considered. I can't remember who it was. And I'm not sure whether he rejected the offer or whether for some reason or other Kennedy decided not to ask him to accept.

### Edward R. Murrow Becomes Director of USIS

Finally, towards the end of February Abbott called me up at home one Saturday and said, we have a new director subject only to Congressional confirmation. And I don't think we'll have any trouble. So I asked him who it was and he said, well, I can't tell you now until it's officially announced. But he said, you'll like him and he will be a great plus for the Agency.

The rumor began to get around the following Monday that it was Ed Murrow although nobody would confirm it. I think we had our first meeting, first director's meeting with Ed Murrow the day he arrived. Abbott Washburn brought him in, although he had left the Agency by then. He brought Ed Murrow in and introduced him, and, of course, that confirmed the rumor. Everybody was ecstatic about the appointment. As I recall, that was

## Library of Congress

about the first week in March, although I can't be absolutely sure. My memory's not firm on that point.

In the meantime, I had been working very closely with Don Wilson. By that time I was thoroughly familiar with all the internal operations of the Agency which, of course, Don was only beginning to learn. So I was actually Don's principal advisor on how things were being handled in the Agency, how each Agency elements interacted with the other, some of the problems that existed, some of the things that in my estimation at least I felt ought to be changed.

During the time that I was Acting Deputy Director I had also been engaged in a number of problems that the Director and Deputy Director normally would have handled, but if you asked me now what they were I would have a hard time explaining what they were.

So, as soon as Don knew that Ed was to be appointed Don asked me to write a complete analysis of all the major programs in which the Agency was involved, what the major difficulties were, what progress was being made on their implementation and some recommendations as to where I thought they ought to go. I spent almost, I'd say, 80 or 90 percent of my time the last month before Ed Murrow came in, in writing that analysis which I gave to Don about the time that Ed came aboard. It became to a large extent the initial blueprint out of which they operated.

A few days after Ed officially became Director, I was sitting in Ed's outer office. Marian Anderson had been waiting to see Ed when I came in. It was the first time I'd ever seen her in person except from a great distance at Easter of 1939 when she sang from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. She was sitting in the outer office. I sat down along with Jim Halsema, facing her. She was a most gracious lady. She didn't say anything while we were sitting there and I didn't really feel that I was called upon to go up and introduce myself. But she had the appearance of a very self composed, great and gracious woman.

## Library of Congress

Well, in a few minutes Ed Murrow came out of his office. Of course, he knew her very well. He went over and said, how are you Marian and shook hands. Then he introduced us to her and took her into his office. We sat there again for a while waiting, not too long. I don't think she was in there more than 15 minutes before she came out. About that time a young man entered and without stopping went right into Ed's office. That turned out to be Tom Sorensen. It was the first time I'd ever seen him. Jim and I sat there for another ten or fifteen minutes., then Tom emerged, didn't say anything to either of us, just walked out into the hall.

Halsema looked at me and said, our new Deputy Director for Policy and Plans? He apparently had heard a rumor. I hadn't. But that turned out to be what it was. In those days that position didn't require a Congressional confirmation. Tom was a very capable guy, but I'm sure that he was plucked out of his middle grade level in the Agency and given that position, one of the top three or four jobs in the Agency, only because his brother, Ted, was top White House Assistant to Kennedy.

*Q: This is Side 1 of Tape 3 of an interview with G. Lewis Schmidt being conducted at his home in McLean, Virginia on February 18, 1988. It is a continuation of an interview begun on February 8th. The interviewer is Allen Hansen. Lew, we were talking about Tom Sorensen coming on board as one of the new Deputy Directors, or as the Deputy Director, Policy and Plans, under Ed Murrow. And Ed Murrow had just arrived I think. Can you tell us about that period?*

SCHMIDT: Yes, Ed had arrived a few days before this incident occurred in which Jim Halsema and I were sitting in the outer office when Tom was being interviewed by Ed and came out of his office. It did transpire actually that Tom because the Deputy Director for Policy and Plans. He stayed in that position all through Ed's incumbency and for some period thereafter when Ed had left the Agency because of health. There were many times in which Tom's incumbency in that position resulted in some rather controversial matters.

## Library of Congress

I will come back to that a little later. But I'd like to say a few words about Ed Murrow and about what he meant to the Agency. I think that Ed's accession to the job as Director of the USIA was undoubtedly the high point of the U.S. Information Agency existence. He brought to us a prestige and acceptability which we had not really had before. He was such a national personality that he immediately was accepted and the Agency was accepted with him.

In addition to that fact, Ed had the confidence of the White House. He had a direct hot line—not immediately upon assuming office but shortly thereafter, permitting him to pick up his phone and talk immediately to Kennedy and the White House. At that time also Chester Bowles was the Under Secretary of State. Ed had known Chester for a long time and they were very close friends, so that gave us an entree into the State Department which we had never had before. Also, it gave us a new leg up on our prestige over there.

One of the first things that Ed did was to ask me to stay on as Assistant Director for Administration. It was very flattering to me. It opened up a new career possibility to me in the Agency, because Ed felt that my long experience in USIA, both overseas and in the Agency, gave me an insight into how things operated which he in those early days did not have.

As a result, I was given a great deal more to do both in program fields as well as in the administrative area than perhaps any other assistant director in that position had previously enjoyed. It was, therefore, as I say, a very important time to me.

The influence of Ed first became noticeable on the Hill. It was a time when we were preparing for our fiscal year 1963 budget hearings. Ed had made up his mind that he was going to sit through the entire hearings on the Hill. We had some rather tough customers with which to deal. I'm sure much has been said elsewhere about Mr. Rooney who was the chairman of the Subcommittee in the House of Representatives that heard our appropriation justification. In the past, usually, the Director had only gone up the first



## Library of Congress

day or two and then had left the balance of the hearings to the people in each case who handled the particular section of the agency that was being discussed that day.

Instead Ed went up in person. The attitude of Rooney was entirely different than it had been with other directors and with individuals who went before him. He treated Ed with a considerable degree of respect and attention, and we were spared quite a bit of the hassling and harassment that we usually experienced on the Hill.

Unfortunately, it didn't result in very much of an increase in our appropriation. Ed had made a very strong appeal for an increase. Rooney, however, played his usual role, i.e., that of being very parsimonious with these civil servants or with these people in the executive branch who were trying, in his words, to overspend. We ended up, therefore, with a very small increase in the appropriation, and Ed was quite disappointed. In fact, he was disappointed through his entire career, because he was unable to bridge that gap.

Then I'd like to go forward just a moment to mention our appropriation hearings in the Senate. In the Senate the Chairman of our subcommittee was McClellan of Arkansas. But the principal man, the ranking man behind him on the Democratic side was Senator Ellender. Ellender had a particular dislike for the U.S. Information Agency. He felt the whole program was nothing but a boondoggle. He told us frequently that our entire effort in Europe was unnecessary. I recall now, that when I was Acting PAO in Japan, Ellender had visited Tokyo. The head of each Embassy Section was scheduled to appear for a one on one "chat" with the old curmudgeon. When my turn came, he looked at me as I entered and, paraphrased, said: Well, young man, so you represent USIA. I want you to know before we start that I don't believe in your Agency. I think the whole damn Agency is useless.—A complete waste of taxpayers' money. Now you sit down and tell me what you're doing out here. A nice guy to deal with.

I remember on one occasion in which Murrow faced him in the appropriation hearings. We were talking at that point about the multilateral force agreement. In other words, the offer

## Library of Congress

to the European governments of a multilateral role in the utilization of atomic weapons. The Kennedy Administration was urging NATO nations to set up a multilateral force to handle the atomic weapons. There was considerable opposition to it both in Europe and in places outside the Executive Branch in the United States. It was particularly non-saleable to Europe.

Ed made the point that we had been able to do some effective work in the information media in Europe in getting this idea across and getting some degree of public acceptance. Ellender refused to believe it. He said, oh, no. Come on, Mr. Murrow. You don't mean to tell me that we had anything to do with it, USIA had anything to do with acceptance of any policies that the U.S. government was trying to institute in Europe. You just can't make me believe that. I've never seen Ed quite so angry before nor did I see him as angry since. There was a pause of about 30 seconds which was a very pregnant silence. And then he said, Mr. Senator, I meant to say precisely what I said. And I will not accept your evaluation that this was a useless effort. We have had influence. There is evidence to show it. It was the only time I ever saw Ellender shut up.

On our way back up to the USIA officer a few of us were in the car with Ed riding back. He said, "Well, gentlemen. I draw one conclusion from my hearings this morning, and that is that the pigs shall inherit the earth."

### Episodes Involving Lyndon Johnson

SCHMIDT: I think that rather than try to cover in sequence everything that went on during the Murrow administration, I would like to cite what I consider to be some highlights.

Early the first significant one came up when Lyndon Johnson who was then Vice President made his famous trip around the world. He visited a great many of the far eastern countries, got over into the Middle East and even made a stop or two in Europe before he returned. When he came back he was very critical of USIA. He felt that he had not been given adequate coverage by the members of the USIS operations abroad. Shortly after his

## Library of Congress

return he was scheduled to speak at the National Press Club. Of course, Ed went over to listen to him.

Before the luncheon started, Ed happened to be going down the corridor in the Press Club and encountered Lyndon Johnson coming up the corridor in the other direction. They met about midpoint and Johnson immediately grabbed Ed by the lapels and pushed him up against the wall of the corridor.

He said, I just want you to know that your (expletive deleted) operatives abroad are lousy. They didn't give me any kind of adequate coverage. They often left me when they were supposed to be photographing me. And there were times when I was giving out interviews or statements when they weren't there.

Ed said, Mr. Vice President, the times that they failed to cover you were times when there were other significant things that were going on and when you were not doing anything that was especially important. My people are not abroad to cover a President or a Vice President exclusively. They are there to do the types of things that are necessary to give the best impressions of the United States to the host country. I have evidence that you were covered in any important event. And I will not accept your criticism of the USIS personnel.

Johnson never forgot that as he never forgot a lot of other things. His pique was most petty. At the time later when Ed was dying of cancer, had to resign from the U.S. Information Agency, and wanted to leave town, he sent his written resignation sometime in November, 1963, to Lyndon Johnson who by that time, of course had acceded to the presidency following the assassination of John Kennedy. Johnson refused to acknowledge his resignation. He wouldn't either reject it or accept it. He just let it lie without comment.

The resignation had been submitted in November of 1963. In late January of 1964 there was still no word from the White House. Ed had made arrangements to leave Washington. He was still nominally Director because his resignation had not been accepted. He had

## Library of Congress

made plane reservations to leave Washington on I think the 24th of January. He was headed for LaJolla, where he was going to stay with Jonas Salk the man who was the discoverer of the first polio vaccine, and try to rest up. He hoped then to recover from his difficulties.

Finally on the 23rd when he hadn't received any notice from Johnson, he had to call the White House. Johnson would not speak to him. But as a result of that phone call the next morning Johnson issued a one-sentence statement to the press. I don't recall the exact wording, but it was simply a very cursory one, no expression of regret that he was leaving, simply a one line acceptance of the resignation. And that's the way that Ed Murrow was forced to leave the administration, largely because of the antipathy and vindictiveness that Johnson had carried in his mind as a result of that earlier meeting, some 2-1/2 years before in the press club.

I had a personal brush with the Johnson contingent. When Johnson came back from a trip, he was always extremely demanding. One Friday afternoon I happened to be in my Agency office when practically everyone else had gone home. It was about seven o'clock in the evening and nobody else was there to answer the phone. So the phone which apparently rang first in Ed's office with no answer was transferred to my office and I picked up the line.

It was a colonel whose name I don't recall but who was the military advisor and personal secretary at that time to Johnson as Vice President. He asked to whom he was speaking and I told him. And he said, have you guys got the clippings from abroad? I said, no that we didn't. The Vice President had been back less than a week, and it took a little time for things to get in through the mails and pouch. He said, by Monday morning the Vice President wants at least one copy of every article that was written about him at every post that he went to. Where the articles are in a foreign language he wants them translated and appended to the foreign language copies. In addition to that he wants copies of every picture that was taken of him either by the military photographer or by the USIS

## Library of Congress

photographers abroad. We want those pictures no later than the end of next week, and we want the press stories by next Monday.

I said, Colonel, that is utterly impossible. We don't even have them yet here. And they're not very likely to be in for ten days or two weeks. When we get them if you want a translation, each one is going to have to be translated. And that takes time. They're undoubtedly hundreds of stories.

I'm sorry, but the Vice President insists that he have them next week. Whereupon he hung up the phone. I won't go into all the details of this absurdity. But I'll say that we were constantly harassed. And I kept telling him when he would call, which was about every other day, that we were working on it but we didn't have it yet. He finally started calling Ed and other people in the front office.

*Q: This was the colonel?*

SCHMIDT: This was the colonel. Insisting that they give him what he had asked for. We couldn't do it of course within the time frame that he wanted. In the last analysis we got most of the articles. We did translate those that were in foreign language when they came in and got them over to him. But as for the pictures we discovered that somewhere in the neighborhood of six to seven thousand photos had been taken.

At last the Vice President agreed that if we would get all those photos, make a selection of the best hundred or two in USIA, and put them in a leather bound volume for them he would accept that arrangement. But he wanted to look at those selected before he fully agreed.

So after about two months our photo staff had gone through all six or seven thousand photographs that had been taken and made a painstaking selection. They mounted the chosen photos very beautifully in a leather bound volume, embossed the volume in gold and sent it over to him.

## Library of Congress

Within 24 hours USIA got another call back. This time I think from the Vice President himself although I can't be sure because I'm not the person who answered the phone. He wanted 20 of them exactly the same because he wanted to make a presentation of one to the head of each nation that he had visited. USIA was forced to foot the bill of getting an additional nineteen copies of this volume and sending them over to him. I have no idea precisely what the cost was. But it must have run into several thousand dollars. Of course, there was no offer from the White House to meet the bills.

### Incidents Involving Senator Ellender

Another significant series of events that I would like to record have to do with some of our additional hearings on the Hill. Whenever Ed showed up anywhere in public there was always a train of people that formed after him. We would, as he passed, look back and you could see the immediate conversation going on. "My God, that's Ed Murrow. Look at that."

Well, we entered the Senate side of the Capitol one afternoon for the Senate hearings. In the hallway was a rather unattractive woman of indeterminate age who stood off in one of the little niches in the wall. Ben Posner and I were on either side of Ed as we came up the hallway headed for the hearing room. This woman stood there looking like a vulture. I think the nearest description I can give of how she appeared is one that will be familiar to anyone who reads the comic strip, "Peanuts," when Snoopy the dog sits up in a tree and pretends that he's a vulture scowling down on the people below. That's about the way she looked.

Well, it turned out that she was a former mistress of this "famous" Senator Ellender. About a year before he had sent her on an around the world trip ostensibly to make an investigation of how USIS was operating overseas. She got very bad press from everyone. In one instance she had an encounter with a young Thai in a hotel room in Thailand in which she allegedly enticed him to the room and, according to him later, made sexual overtures to him. Well, Time Magazine got that story because the then PAO happened to

## Library of Congress

recount it over drinks one evening in one of the hotel barrooms, and the story appeared in Time Magazine.

Senator Ellender immediately hit the roof. He demanded that the Agency give him copies of every account that had come in from Thailand about this woman's visit, that we repudiate the story, that we name the person who gave the information to the Time interviewer and otherwise that we come up and publicly submit ourselves to a hearing on this incident.

Well, Ben Posner was the one who was in custody of these reports, so he was the one that Ellender got on the phone. That was the reason that the woman was in the wall niche on the occasion of our trip down the hall to the hearing room. She blamed Ben for holding out and failing to give Ellender the reports that he wanted. Ellender tried to bring this up in the hearings, but it became so embarrassing to the rest of the Appropriations Subcommittee in the Senate that finally McClellan, who was the chairman said, now, just a moment, gentlemen. I think that we had better remove this last exchange from the record. I don't think this is an appropriate subject for a hearing on the budget of the U.S. Information Agency, and we will delete it when the text is up for editing. That shut Ellender up. But it shows you the extent to which this man would go to embarrass the Agency and generally to put us in a bad light. The thing finally simmered down over the next year or so. But it was a bad time for the Agency.

The first thing that Ed set out to do after he came into the Agency was, to the extent to which he could do so, start building a reputation for the Agency's accomplishments abroad. He allowed himself to be questioned, to be interviewed. He gave out innumerable statements. And he instituted a number of new ideas on how things should be handled. Above all, as I said, he had this rapport with the White House and with the State Department and immediately raised our prestige there.

The Latin American PAO Conferences of 1961

## Library of Congress

He also wanted to get to know the USIS personnel abroad. So in the early fall of 1961 which was his first year in the Agency, he set up two public affairs officers conferences in Latin America which he attended and which he persuaded Chester Bowles, who was still at that time the Under Secretary of State, to attend.

The first was in Lima attended by all the public affairs officers from the South American countries. The second one was in Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, where he had all the public affairs officers from the Central American countries, Mexico and the Caribbean countries.

In Latin America he was quite a well-known personality too, so the Agency got lots of excellent publicity there. One of the incidents that arose that was interesting and amusing at the first conference which was in Lima resulted from the fact that in addition to having the persons I've already mentioned, we also had young Mr. Symington, the son of then Senator Symington of Missouri. Young Jim was subsequently himself elected to Congress in later years. But at that time he was as a very young man, one of the regional directors of the Food for Peace Program.

Also in attendance was Carl Rowan who at that time was the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs but who later became the Director of the Agency after the resignation of Ed Murrow.

Symington wanted some time on the agenda in his capacity of an officer in the Food for Peace Program. He gave a very emotionally impassioned plea for what we could do with Food for Peace. One of his pitches was that the Food for Peace Program had devised a means of making a very high protein meal out of ground fish, and also adding a flour made from soybeans that was equally nutritious. According to Symington, we (the U.S.) had been able to bring that product to Pakistan and feed thousands if not millions of poor people, giving them a proper diet—and also much to the Pakistan Army, thus enhancing their ability to discharge their military duties.



## Library of Congress

Well, the plea got so emotional that finally Chester Bowles felt young Symington was taking far too much time and becoming embarrassingly emotional. So he managed to damp him down and get him off the air as it were.

Sy Nadler who at that time was the PAO in Buenos Aires and was attending the conference slipped me a note containing a little poetic verse which I remember to this day. He wrote, "Western civilization has surmounted its darkest hour, saved by the meal of the fish, and the beans converted to flour." Murrow had several less than complimentary comments about that particular episode. As usual, he won over practically all the people who were attending from Latin America and made a great impression especially on the local employees. We moved on, stopping in Quito, Ecuador where Maurice Bernbaum was then ambassador, then on to Panama, Colombia, and ultimately to Costa Rica where we had the second conference. Much the same thing was repeated there. Everywhere we went he spoke to the embassies, again, winning prestige for the Agency. I'll come back now. Let's pause a moment.

### Frictions With Tom Sorensen

SCHMIDT: I mentioned earlier that Tom Sorensen was from time to time a rather controversial figure in the Agency. There were a number of people who didn't like what he was doing, who felt that he was being overbearing and arrogant in the administration of his area in program operation. On occasion there were even caustic exchanges between him and Don Wilson.

The battles between him and the Voice, the VOA, were particularly acute. I'm sure that most any reader of these remarks who has been with USIA will recognize that there has always been a certain amount of friction between VOA and the policy directives, both from the State Department and from the Agency. The Voice feels that it is essentially a news organization and that it should not be unduly inhibited in telling the news as it sees it. It concedes that it should certainly exert caution—that it should follow the usual journalistic

## Library of Congress

practice of getting two clear confirmations of the story before it puts it on the air. But having done so, having confirmed a story from reliable sources, it ought to be able to broadcast the story without regard to government policy sensitivities, as it would if it were any other news agency of credible nature.

On the other hand, the policy people have felt, I think less from USIA than from the State, but even to a certain extent from USIA, that they ought to be able to screen out or tone down anything being broadcast by the Voice of America that impinges unfavorably in the U.S. image, because people accept it abroad as the authoritative voice of our country and government. Anything which reflected too adversely on the U.S. they should at least shape in such a way that it came across strained through the oversight of policy direction.

Tom Sorensen particularly felt this way. He wanted to put his policy stamp on the Voice. As a result, there were some real pitched battles between Henry Loomis who was at that time the Director of the Voice and his people down there and Sorensen. I don't think the disagreement was ever completely resolved. It reached a point on two or three occasions when the Director of the Voice and other representatives of the Voice came up and put their pleas to Ed, claiming that they were being unduly inhibited. Ed tried to mediate these differences. To some extent he was successful in doing so, but never completely.

Later, when Ed had had to undergo his surgery for lung cancer and had to all intents and purposes left the real direction of USIA to his deputies, the difficulty between the Voice and Tom flared anew.

*Q: Was Henry Loomis the Director of the Voice at that time?*

SCHMIDT: Yes, he stayed on during the—at least during a substantial part of Murrow's incumbency. Henry was VOA Director at the time Murrow came in, having been appointed to the position by George Allen when Allen was Director. In those days, Senate

## Library of Congress

confirmation was not required for any USIA officer but the Director and the first Deputy Director.

All of us who were Assistant Directors of the Agency felt Henry should remain as VOA head. So a few of us talked to Don Wilson about it while he was still heading the Transition for the Kennedy Administration. This laid the groundwork, and when Don became Deputy to Ed, he was influential in getting Ed's and eventually the Administration's approval for Henry to stay. I don't recall exactly the date of Henry's departure, but I think he did not leave until after Ed himself had left, at which time he left to become President of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The frictions that existed between Tom and VOA personnel was representative of difficulties with other Agency elements. One particular obsession with Tom was prejudice against the European program. I sometimes thought he challenged even the necessity of the Agency's European operations. The dislike approached a vendetta, and included not only the program itself, but some of the officers in it. He felt that European posts were (a) over-staffed, (b) over indulged financially, and (c) that certain officers serving in Europe had become so entrenched in their posts—so smug in their continued European sophistication that they had become effete and elitist. He was determined that they should be moved to other more difficult areas where, he felt, they would probably fail to perform with the same excellence they seemed to exhibit in Europe.

Parenthetically, it is my opinion that Ed shared a little of the feeling that Europe was over-blessed, and should be cut back, though not emasculated. I think he felt the German operation especially was a bit bloated. It was still the largest in Europe. Also, however, Ed was an unabashed Anglophile. He had shared with the British the merciless bombings of the Nazis during the war; had admired their resilience and determination to win out over disaster. I suspect he never fully forgave Germany for that action. However, his antipathy in no way matched Tom's virulent dislikes.

## Library of Congress

John Mowinckel, PAO, in Paris, and Ed Schechter, Deputy PAO in Rome were especially in Tom's disfavor. To a lesser extent his personal antipathies extended to Mickey Boerner, previously PAO in Bonn, and Bill Cody, then Assistant Director for Europe. There were others whose names do not come to mind at the moment.

His dislike for Schechter had a deeper, personal base. Schechter was sitting on a promotion panel in late 1960, just after the election of John Kennedy. One of the officers being considered was Tom Sorensen, then a regular mid-level career officer in the Agency. The panel had already considered Tom, and had not placed him at a competitive level from which he was likely to be promoted. Before the panel concluded its work, Schechter was visited by an Agency officer who suggested that Tom Sorensen ought to be promoted. The point was made that his brother Ted was likely to be in a high position in the Kennedy White House, and it would be politic to promote Tom. The panel did not reconsider its initial decision. Although the deliberations and actions of all promotion panels are supposed to be confidential, Tom somehow knew of the attempt to influence his promotion, and of course since he had not been promoted, knew the attempt had been rejected by the panel.

I don't believe Schechter had ever met Tom in person. Sometime after Tom became a Deputy Director, he made a European trip the itinerary of which included Rome. Schechter met the airplane. Shortly after the preliminary greetings, Tom turned to Schechter and said, with overtones that carried ominous meaning, "I just want you to know that I don't hold any grudge against you because you didn't promote me!"

When Schechter's tour was up in Rome, Tom saw to it that he was appointed to a rather disagreeable African post. The assignment did not come about, however, for reasons of which I am not aware. In any event, Tom got in his dig. Schechter was an excellent linguist. He knew several languages, including English. His English was, and still is, heavily German accented, though grammatically quite correct. Tom got him ordered to FSI Language School for three months to study—English! A move I considered petty and

## Library of Congress

vindictive. Schechter later was assigned as PAO first in Bolivia and then Caracas, in both of which he was a successful operator. Mowinckel was assigned to Africa—I believe to Zaire. Other European hands were also reassigned to less desirable posts.

### The Special European Program Study of January-March, 1963

Tom's dislike of the European program resulted in his persuading Ed in the fall of 1962 to make a study of USIA operations in West European countries with a view to seeing where we could cut excess work and divert resources thus saved to non-European countries.

I was selected to head the study group that went to Europe to make the study. I apparently selected two people whom Tom especially didn't care for, though I was at the time unaware of his dislike. I selected Pat van Delden for whom I had and continue to have, great admiration. She may not still be living, but she possessed unusual abilities, program imagination, and a keen, incisive mind. I also selected Chet Opal who was one of the brightest people we ever had in USIA, but who had a knack for rubbing people the wrong way. He was brilliant and he never failed to make it known that his opinions were perhaps worth more than those of people who objected to his ideas. As I later realized, he obviously had rubbed Tom the wrong way. The fourth member of our party, other than the secretary, was Bob Benedict who at that time was deputy head of the Personnel operation, Mosley having taken over from Bill Weathersby as Director when Weathersby went to India as PAO.

We traveled to most major posts in western Europe. I thought we made a very careful evaluation. None of us felt—after examining it very carefully—that the program merited the kind of wholesale slashing that Tom Sorensen apparently felt it should undergo. So we tried to select very carefully those aspects of each country program that we did feel were, though not entirely superfluous, could be eliminated without seriously affecting the operations and influence that the program enjoyed in that country.

## Library of Congress

We spent about six weeks in Western Europe analyzing and evaluating the western European program.

This, of course, involved England, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and the low countries. We came back after six weeks of investigation and spent about another month writing the report. Ed thought it was an excellent report and he complemented us greatly on it. He said he thought it was a first rate piece of writing and also a very careful evaluation of what could be done to lower a bit the threshold of European financing and personnel.

At the time, although Tom was in the meeting when Ed made these remarks, he didn't say anything. But a day or so later he encountered me in the hall and said, you guys didn't really do half a job. He said, you didn't cut the program the way it ought to be cut. It should have been slashed to the bone. And you left it with an awful lot more than it ought to have.

I made no reply. I just said that I thought we had done the best we could, and I didn't share his view of how deeply the program ought to be cut in Europe.

Later after Ed was gone and after I had left the position of Assistant Director for Administration, Tom was much more free to exercise his options. I understand that he did cut the European program much more severely than our report had indicated we felt was acceptable. But that came later after I had departed and I didn't see it first hand.

*Q: What was that timing?*

SCHMIDT: Well, the report, the team that went to Europe was appointed at the end of 1962. We started in Europe about mid-January 1963 and spent approximately six weeks there, then returned to Washington and spent another 3 or 4 weeks writing the report so we were involved for the last two weeks of January, all of February and the better part of March.

## Library of Congress

### Establishment of Office of Soviet and East European Affairs

*Q: And you were going to comment why you did not go to eastern Europe.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, the reason that we didn't go to eastern Europe was something that had occurred prior to that time. There had been a lot of feeling in the Agency that not enough attention was being given to talking to the Soviet Union and to the eastern bloc nations. Perhaps not enough attention in the sense that we were not selecting the themes that were best calculated to influence the peoples and authorities of East European nations.

So Ed asked me and several other officers to give some thought to it. After consulting a number of people, some of whom were opposed to what I was suggesting, and others of which felt it was perhaps a solution, I recommended that we split the European program. At that time the European area office included both eastern and western European countries. I recommended that the Agency set up, at least for a few years, a separate Assistant Directorship for East Europe, breaking it off from the western European program.

After some substantial disagreement and opposition the recommendation was adopted. Two officers were particularly opposed to it. One was John McKnight who at that time was Assistant Director for Latin America and, of course, Bill Cody, who was then Assistant Director for Europe.

SCHMIDT: As I was saying when we came to the end of the last tape, the other person objecting most strenuously to the split of the European operation was Bill Cody, understandably—because at that time he was the Assistant Director for European operations. Nevertheless, Ed felt it was a good idea. He gave it his blessing. And we did set up the east European area office.

Lee Brady was the first head of it. Lee had been the second person, second officer of USIA, and the first to serve in the Soviet Union as, technically, the Cultural Affairs officer. It was, of course, understood both by the Soviets and by USIA that in reality he was PAO

## Library of Congress

for the country. But the Soviets didn't want him designated that way, and wished to restrict USIS activities to the cultural field, with primary emphasis on cultural exchange operations.

Lee had just completed two years in Moscow at the time we set up this arrangement and was coming in ready for re-assignment. So he was made the first director, i.e., the first Assistant Director, USIA, for Eastern Europe. Just parenthetically, the first USIS officer in Moscow was not Lee but had been Hans Tuch. However, at that point since he was pioneering, the Soviets wouldn't let him remain a USIS officer. He technically had to resign and be appointed by the State Department as a State Department FSO, and for the duration of his tour in the Soviet Union he operated as a State Department rather than a USIA officer. When Lee went out, the Soviets finally conceded that he could remain a USIA officer and he served in that capacity. Tom Tuch became Lee Brady's deputy in the east European affairs office.

The Soviet and East European Affairs office remained separate from the Western European one for several years. I think it was only somewhere in the late '70s or early '80s that a decision was made to put it back together. Now all Europe again is handled by one office. But for more than ten years Eastern Europe operated separately. I do think at the time it was able to place more emphasis on the programming for the Soviet Bloc than it had been able to place when it was part of the total European operation. Nowadays, probably that time has passed, and it is well that it has been rejoined. But at the time that it happened I think it was a good idea. Ed Murrow seemed to think so too.

### The Cuban Missile Crisis

I have gotten a bit out of sequence in discussing my time as Assistant Director for Administration, so perhaps it won't be too wrenching to backtrack a little and speak about the Cuban Missile affair. USIA, having squawked loudly over being kept in the dark about the Bay of Pigs invasion, was thoroughly involved in the Cuban Missile crisis. I, however, was not part of the Agency group planning the Agency role. Of course, I was reading the



## Library of Congress

papers, and knew the allegations being made about the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. But that was as far as my knowledge went.

I was working in my office the Saturday preceding President Kennedy's television bombshell, when I received a call from an old friend and former boss of mine in State—Henry Ford. He was obviously clued into DepState's planning, and began asking me questions about what the Agency was doing in specified areas of preparation. My ignorance was immediately evident, and he signed off quickly. At the first opportunity, I sought out Sorensen to ask him what Henry Ford's query was about. He was furious that I had gotten wind of the coming event. His outburst was so volcanic, that it immediately let me know some frantic planning was underway to meet the missile question. When it was announced a day or so later that there would be a special Presidential telecast on, I believe, Tuesday evening, I knew a confrontation was about to take place.

A party of some sorts had been planned a week or two before to take place in a conference room at USIA, so a substantial number of Agency employees was there. A TV had been brought in. Everyone was a bit jittery awaiting the moment of the telecast. A few minutes before the president's scheduled appearance, an announcer came on, giving some preliminary remarks about the gravity of the situation, and stating the obvious, that the president was about to make a momentous statement to the American people. Everyone expected the president to be immediately on screen. But no! Not in America! First a commercial. The ad then being shown daily for Doublemint Gum flashed on. Two attractive look-alike young women scantily dressed began cavorting across the screen, singing "Double your Pleasure, Double your fun; Doublemint, Doublemint, Doublemint Gum." Then, without even a fade-out—fade-in, the President was there, making the announcement of his determined response to Soviet effrontery that, for all we knew, could end in nuclear holocaust! I have never been able to forget the absurdity, the effrontery of commercial broadcasting in showing a frivolous commercial ahead of possible Doomsday revelations.

## Library of Congress

### Bobby Kennedy's Worldwide Safari and Later Talk to USIA Officers on the Lessons We Should Learn from his Experiences

I believe it was sometime in 1963 that Bobby Kennedy, then Attorney General of the U.S., made a trip around the world, concentrating primarily on developing countries where considerable leftist agitation was prevalent among students. In each instance, he asked USIS to arrange an appearance for him before the entire student body of each country's principal university. He would speak briefly, then invite the students to fire questions. The thrust of inquiries from a left leaning student body to a capitalist government high official who was also the president's brother can be imagined. Kennedy fielded them pretty well, though as is usually the case, the students were not greatly dissuaded from their semi-Marxist certainties. Press coverage, at least in the U.S., was extensive, and Bobby got the kind of publicity he doubtless was seeking.

When he returned, Ed and Don Wilson asked him to attend a Director's staff meeting, enlarged for the occasions by a substantial number of officers who did not usually attend. Bobby talked at some length, but the principal theme of his remarks was the USIS abroad was dropping the ball on student contacts. Wherever he went, he said, he found that USIS was not in touch with students. In fact, HE had to go to these countries and appear before the student bodies to give them their first chance at exchanging views with a representative of the American government.

I knew from personal experience that this was a bum rap for USIS abroad. When Bobby opened the session for questions, I gained recognition, and began my own statement. I said that in the first place it was not true that USIS failed to seek contact with students. If he wanted to take the time, we could inform him of a number of posts that were doing quite well in such an effort. However, I said, when students are determined to go left and castigate the U.S. it isn't very easy to get next to them. I continued that there was a great difference in the ease experienced by a high ranking U.S. official, who happened also to

## Library of Congress

be the president's brother, getting an entire student body to assemble for his remarks, and a regular USIS officer abroad, trying to penetrate the students' politically protective shell.

My remarks were not appreciated. I could see Kennedy's face redden with visible and not too well controlled anger. I had heard much about the anger of the Kennedys when crossed, and especially of Bobby's vindictive responses. I couldn't help wondering if I had let myself in for retaliation. It never occurred, and I have often wondered if I escaped it only because of Ed Murrow.

### Ed Murrow's Expressed Opinion About Bobby Kennedy

Ed's opinion of Bobby was formed rather early. I don't remember the exact time of the little story that follows, but it was before the date of Bobby's appearance at USIA. Ed had just attended a National Security Council meeting. I don't recall how it was that he picked me up in his limousine, because I obviously never attended an NSC meeting. In any event, he had dropped by wherever I had been, and was giving me a ride back to the office. He began talking about the just concluded NSC meeting. He began by saying, "Thank God, there isn't much of Bobby in the President." He went on to explain that in his estimation, Bobby was far more rash, less reasoned and disciplined in his approach to crises—much more inclined toward precipitate action and more vindictive. He sensed that the President was able to keep a damper on Bobby's more rash inclinations. It was the only time I ever heard him express an opinion about the Attorney General, but it was revealing.

### Murrow's Methods of Operation as USIA Director

I mentioned earlier Ed's efforts to raise Agency prestige. He was particularly zealous in trying to do that. In his appearance at the National Press Club, in radio and occasional TV appearances, in his contacts with press and radio representatives, he stressed the competence and experience of Agency personnel. Because he was so highly respected,

## Library of Congress

his support went far in enhancing the Agency's reputation, which had not always been too high among professional media practitioners.

But I was impressed as much by his methodology of operation within the Agency. There are those in the years since his death who have stated that he was not a good administrator. I would qualify that. It is true that he had no experience as a technical manager, and there were sometimes flaws in his judgment of personalities. But he had the quality of seeking advice and assistance in areas where he recognized his lack of knowledge. He relied on those who did know, and listened to what they had to say. Not that he didn't reach his own conclusions, but his openness to reason and advice was refreshing.

His availability to his top staff was a joy.

He was also always available. I could call him up, and if he wasn't in conference with somebody else, I could ask to see him, and he would invite me to his office within five minutes time. It was an open door policy. The same was true of any other officer in the Agency who felt that he had something of immediate importance he wanted to get off his chest with Ed or any policy about which he wished to consult him.

I think back upon that time because although I left the Agency some years ago, I still know a little about what goes on and how things are handled there today. The difference is amazing. It often takes several days to get an appointment with the Director now, I'm told. And very frequently it is necessary to send an advance memorandum indicating the subject matter to be discussed. With Ed there was never any such problem. If you told him in two or three words what you wanted to discuss, you could come down and talk to him about it, often get half an hour of his time, a thorough consideration and usually a decision if one was necessary as to what should be done.

1962: The Trip to Paris and Tehran

## Library of Congress

During Ed's incumbency he made a couple of trips abroad other than the 1961 tour around Latin America. One of them was in the summer and fall of 1962. He went first to Paris. He became ill in Paris, diagnosed as a low-grade pneumonia, and he was held up there for a few days. But he was so insistent about going on that he got up before he was really ready to do so, and went on to Tehran. He had a relapse there and was very ill. At that time I wasn't aware of the fact, because I had not known him personally before, that for years he'd had a persistent weakness in the lungs, and had had many of these bouts of similar nature, some of which were exceedingly serious.

Finally after he was able to travel he had to cut out the rest of his itinerary, and come on back to the States where he spent some time recuperating before he could come back to work.

Everyone recognizing his heavy smoking was of course immediately wary and afraid that perhaps he was developing lung cancer. The X-rays taken at the time I've been told subsequently showed enough suspicious shadings to have developed more attention than his illness received. But the doctors who looked at it felt perhaps it was just old scar tissue from former bouts with pneumonia and they let it go. A little more than a year later Ed did come down with the final illness which was diagnosed as lung cancer. There is no use repeating the account of what happened thereafter.

### Murrow's Angry Speech to the Conference of the National Association of Newspaper Editors

I think there's one final story about Ed that probably is worth recounting now. And that is that he had become so frustrated by his constant attempts to gain more resources for USIA, particularly larger appropriations, that he finally decided to make one all out push in the spring and summer when we were up for our hearings in 1962—no, 1963—with Rooney and see if he couldn't improve our fiscal position.

## Library of Congress

So we all spent a tremendous amount of time, an unusual amount of time in preparing for the hearings that year. I thought we presented a very excellent case. Rooney himself seemed to be impressed. When we left the hearings he made some remarks the exact nature of which I cannot now recall. But it led all of us to believe that he was favorably disposed towards giving us a better appropriation break than he had in previous years.

Well, when the committee report came out which it did along in July or August—I don't recall the precise date, late, of course, because in those days the appropriations were supposed to be enacted by July 1—Not only had he not given us any increase to speak of, but he had actually placed a couple of restrictions, limitations in the appropriation which limited our ability to give adequate representation allowances and to carry out certain program activities that we had planned as new initiatives. Ed was absolutely livid. He felt that he had been betrayed by Rooney and been led down the garden path. He made up his mind that he was going to blast out in public at this lack of appreciation of what the Agency was doing—was capable of doing abroad.

It happened that he was due to make a speech either before the National Association of Broadcasters or the National Association of Newspaper Editors in Atlanta. I can't recall at the moment which one it was, though I think it was the Newspaper Editors. So he elected to make his pitch at that time.

I think it was the one time he lost his cool. And I'm afraid the rest of us lost our cool with him. Knowing Rooney we should have admonished him not to do it, we did not, Don Wilson, Tom Sorensen and I were called down to his office to help him put the finishing touches on his speech, and he took off for Atlanta where he delivered a scathing denunciation of the Congressional committees which were incapable of recognizing the value of USIA, stating that something ought to be done by the public to force a better consideration of our needs.

## Library of Congress

Of course, Rooney took this as a personal attack on him, which in effect it was. All the rapport that had been developed between Murrow and Rooney over the preceding 2-1/2 years was shattered in that one speech. Ed, when he came back from the speech, wasn't feeling too well even at that time. But he tried to get an appointment to see Rooney. Rooney refused to see him. He tried several times and never could get an appointment.

### Last Confrontation with Rooney 1963: Ed's Final Illness and Resignation from USIA

In the meantime he went up to Baltimore one afternoon in October to give another speech. After the speech was over he was asked to appear on a short radio program being broadcast from a Baltimore station. Right in the middle of that broadcast he lost his voice completely. It just went out on him. There wasn't any voice left. Well, of course, they had to shut off the interview from the air. I don't know. I wasn't listening to it. So I don't know just what arrangements they made to cover up, but it was a frightening thing. Ed was brought out of the studio, came on back to Washington and finally admitted that this wasn't the first time such a thing had happened. It had occurred on other occasions but not under such dramatic circumstances to that it had not become a matter of public knowledge.

Of course, he was immediately rushed off to the hospital the next day. And that's when doctors discovered that the bronchi and one of the lungs were seriously affected and that it probably indeed was cancer. He was advised to have to undergo almost immediate surgery. Above all he was going to have to stop his smoking immediately. That was probably the greatest perdition that Ed ever went through, to have to stop smoking which he'd been doing so heavily or so many years. But, of course, he did.

At the time that he went in, the doctor told him that they thought they probably would only have to remove the upper lobe of the affected lung and that it apparently wasn't going to be as serious an operation as it turned out to be. In the event, they had to remove one whole lung. The operation was much more extensive, much more devastating than Ed had anticipated. He tried to come back although he was out for several weeks. I saw

## Library of Congress

him occasionally because he wanted to keep in touch with the Senate side of the budget hearings which were coming up. I went out on two or three occasions to his home to brief him on it and also to get his ideas on the assignment of resources to emphasize certain aspects of the program.

Well, it was obvious that he even then was in pain and wasn't recovering as he had expected to. I never saw him dressed on any of those occasions. He was always in pajamas, slippers and bathrobe. It looked to me like he was a long way from returning which he said he hoped to do. He did subsequently come back to the Agency for a few days at a time, and he made another effort to see Rooney. The first couple of times Rooney still refused to see him. But finally at last, somewhere around, I don't know just when it was, probably late November or early December. He agreed to see Ed.

*Q: This is Congressman John Rooney?*

SCHMIDT: John Rooney, yes.

*Q: He was from New York.*

SCHMIDT: He was from Brooklyn, New York. And he was the chairman of our Subcommittee on Appropriations in the House. I should have said beforehand that Ed having lost one lung was just a shadow of his former self. He could not say more than one sentence—sometimes even less—without running out of breath at or before the end of it. Often he couldn't even finish one sentence. He would start a sentence, tail off because he didn't have enough lung power to finish it, take another breath, finish the sentence and then just be exhausted.

Well, he went up to see Rooney in Rooney's office on the Hill. I wasn't with him at the time. I think it was our general counsel Stan Pleasant, who went up with him. Rooney was visibly shaken, because he himself had just undergone lung surgery, not nearly as radical as Ed's. But surgeons had taken out an upper lobe of one of his lungs. When he saw Ed



## Library of Congress

in this condition I think he perhaps looked down the vista of the future and thought: there I am a little later on.

Anyway, he softened notably toward Ed as a result of that and wished him well when he left. And as far as I know the two men never met again. And it didn't affect Rooney's attitude toward the USIA appropriations. We never got any more money out of him either that year or to my knowledge in the next two or three years thereafter.

Ed still tried to come back to the Agency. By the end of November or early December (1963) he knew he wasn't going to hack it. That's when he submitted his resignation. I have mentioned earlier the cruel experience he had with Lyndon Johnson in trying to resign.

As a final comment I remember the sadly ironic fact that when Winston Churchill broke his hip several months to a year before Ed's illness forced him out of the Agency, the British Government, knowing that people of Churchill's age rarely outlived a broken hip, cabled Ed asking him if he would write an obituary for the great man to hold for publication at the time of actual death. Miraculously, Churchill recovered and slightly outlived Ed. With that, I think I will leave the discussion of my time as Assistant Director, Administration.

September, 1964: Consul General, Izmir, Turkey

*Q: Your next assignment was Turkey, I believe.*

SCHMIDT: Yes, but there was an unexpected interlude. Ed, before he became ill, had asked me what overseas post I preferred. I told him Germany, and he agreed. In March of 1964, I entered the FSI to study the German language. It was a four month course, and I managed to do rather well in it, though I am not a facile linguist. Just a few days before I completed the course, Ambassador McGhee in Germany told DepState that he wanted to appoint Al Hemsing, who was the DPAO in Germany with offices in Berlin, to the PAO. My four months of intensive German went out the window, and I was without an assignment.

## Library of Congress

After a month or so of negotiation with State, I was named Consul General in Izmir, Turkey. At the time, I was deeply disappointed, at losing Germany, but the assignment in Izmir turned out to be one of the highlights of my career.

My first inclination in this account was to exclude any detailed discussion of the Turkey assignment, because it was not a USIA position. However, in thinking about it, I realized that much of what I did in Izmir was similar to USIS activities, so I decided to spend some time recounting the highlights.

### The Mayor of Izmir

Within the first few days I had met and made a close friend of the flamboyant Mayor of Izmir, Osman Kibar. He was a short stocky character of boisterous nature. He reminded me of a cross between Jimmy Walker, the backslapping, public relations genius who was mayor of New York in the 1920's, and Jimmy Durante, who, with benefit of a large nose, he somewhat resembled. We immediately formed a rapport. Kibar was not only mayor, he was also one of the founders of the justice Party. That party was the successor to the Democrat party that had been turned out of office in 1960 by a military coup that ended with the execution of Prime Minister Menderes. When the Army loosened its controls a bit, the party was permitted to return to politics. It reorganized and assumed the new name of Justice Party, and when elections were again allowed in 1965, overturned the military's supported candidate and won control of the Turkish Government again. Kibar's support during my time in Izmir was invaluable to me in getting entree into many important circles.

### Press Contacts In Izmir

My next move was to make contact with the local press. There were three papers in Izmir, the largest, most influential, Yeni Asir, was middle of the road politically, and generally supported the new Justice Party. The other two were radically left leaning. They were knee-jerk, radical, anti-American rags with relatively small circulation. I have forgotten their

## Library of Congress

names, but they have long since failed and ceased publication. My good relations with the principal reporters at Yeni Asir, especially their top man, Halik Cansin, on occasion during my Izmir days enabled me to counter anti-American stories and get better explanations in print about matters currently riling the Turkish public.

### Contacts With Turkish Student Organization

One of my principal targets in Izmir was the Ege (Aegean) University branch of the national student organization. The latter was pretty well radicalized, and delighted in finding some excuse to riot against almost anything American. The Ege national university at Izmir was not quite as irrational as the Istanbul branch, or the national headquarters at Ankara, but they were a reasonable facsimile thereof. Ships from the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet frequently visited Izmir, and the students took to holding anti-U.S. rallies on the occasion of one or another of these visits. The most absurd instance occurred on one such fleet stopover when the students, finding nothing else to riot about, claimed to be insulted because the Turkish flags flown by the ships allegedly had misplaced slightly the relative position of the crescent and the star that adorns the national (red colored) flag. The misplacement, if indeed it existed at all, was so slight that I could not detect it. The flags had been ordered from a flag-maker specifically for the fleet's visit. Probably the maker was not a Turk firm. The students pretended to be outraged at the insult to Turkish nationalism by the callous desecration of the sacred flag.

I decided to tackle the student antagonists. I had already made friends with the Aegean Regional chairmen of both political parties. The revived Justice Party was one. The other was the Republican Peoples Party (known as the RPP). Interestingly enough, the RPP was the party closest to and supporting the military which at that time governed the country, but it was the relatively radical party as opposed to the conservative Justice Party. I knew that the student organization had close ties to the RPP, so I called on my friend who was the RPP regional chairman, and told him I wanted to start meeting with the executive committee of the Ege University student organization once every month or two. I

## Library of Congress

proposed that I meet with them initially at a neutral site. The purpose of the session would be to discuss with them frankly and off the record any point of disagreement they had with American policies. I promised to give them straight answers, and if I could not answer a given question, I would seek the answer later, and give it to them the next time we met. I gave the RPP chairman a couple days to talk to the students, and then I issued them both a written and verbal invitation.

Obviously my political friend had done his work, because the student executive committee agreed. Initially, we met in a hotel party room downtown. After a few meetings they realized that I was not going to try to overwhelm them, but would talk reasonably and seriously. So I was finally able to persuade them to hold the meetings at the ConGen residence. I would invite them for dinner, and an after-dinner discussion.

It became something of a game. After a short time, I could guess with moderate accuracy what they would bring up at the next meeting. I enlisted the help of the Embassy Economic and Political sections to get materials on what I expected to have to answer, and would carefully read up on the anticipated subject matter. It worked quite well. In the latter months of my tour, the meetings occasionally lasted into the small hours of the morning, once or twice breaking up after 3:00 a.m. It seems doubtful that if the students weren't interested they would have stayed the course.

I don't claim to have turned the students away completely from their anti-American biases. They were always a little wary of me, but I convinced them by a couple of very frank exchanges that they could rely on me to be honest. I believe the sessions were important and within reasonable limits, successful. At one of our meetings, the then president of the regional student group was a little hot under the collar and was making some outrageously absurd allegations. I said to him that I would be very interested to see where he was in his political viewpoint and regarding his thinking about American policies twenty years from that time. I told him I was betting he would have turned around completely in his political outlook, would be rather conservative, and rational about his views of the U.S. I

## Library of Congress

revisit Turkey occasionally. The last time I was there was nineteen years after the time of my bet with the young man. I didn't see him personally, but my friends from my ConGen days told me that he was now a conservative business man, had given up his student day radicalism, and was at least rational about things American.

### Contacts With the Turkish Provincial Governors

Another of my targets was the group of men who were then the governors of the 13 or so provinces in my consular district. I arrived at a critical time in Turkish-American relations. Turks were still angry at the U.S. because after persuading the Turkish Government to place missiles in Turkey, and training a substantial number of the Turkish military on how to operate the, the U.S. removed them all shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis. Turks were convinced the U.S. had let them down, and used the missile removal as a quid pro quo with the Soviets to get the USSR missiles removed from Cuba. I have been told that the removal was not primarily motivated by the Cuban affair, and on the other hand have been told that it indeed was. I am not sure even today. But in any event, another crisis had arisen. In the summer of 1964, it looked as though the Turkish Army was poised to invade Cyprus. President Johnson sent a vitriolic letter to Ismet Inonu, then Prime Minister of Turkey, stating that if the Turkish army did invade Cyprus, and if the Soviet then attacked Turkey in retaliation, the U.S. would not come to Turkey's aid. Of course, this was a complete repudiation of the guarantees inherent in the NATO agreement, and the Turks were rightly outraged. Johnson was absolutely wrong.

I spent much of my time the first few months I was in Turkey visiting all the governors, a few more than once. The Johnson letter was invariably a major point of discussion. I met it head on, agreeing that the letter was contrary to NATO guarantees, and trying to reassure the governors that the U.S. would not have deserted them in the face of a Soviet invasion. It was a gamble, because Johnson could actually have done otherwise. I felt, however, that if it came to invasion, the president could not have deserted our NATO ally. Since I

## Library of Congress

made personal friends of nearly all the governors, I believe I contributed greatly to calming down their fears and indignation.

### The Turkish and American Military

Finally, both the Turkish and the American Military had been rather stand-offish with my predecessor. I was told that neither were on very good terms with him. I undertook to reverse this situation, and did so. I developed close friendships with the commanding generals of both Land Southeast (the Southeastern command of NATO based in Izmir) and Sixth ATAF (the Air Command of NATO there). I also, with the help of my Turkish political advisor and interpreter, made friends with the Turkish Air, Navy, and Army commanders in the Aegean region. Every time I gave a reception, I invited all the top military commanders, American and Turkish. The Mayor used to stand close to me as the guests arrived to see whether or not the Turkish military would come. They invariably did, and the Mayor would always comment on the fact, saying that it was a minor triumph to have gotten them all present.

### Attendance at the Turkish Labor Party Meeting

The Turkish Labor Party was relatively small, but loudly activist, and loudly anti-American. In the spring of 1966, they scheduled a large meeting in Izmir, at which the Chairman of the Party, Mehmet Ali Aybar, was to speak. He was a tall, greying, distinguished appearing man with shining expressive eyes, and was a spell binding orator. By this time, my successive meetings with the students and the governors were well and widely known. To my surprise, I received a personal invitation from Aybar to attend the Labor conclave in Izmir. I debated as to whether I should or should not go. I realized this was a challenge to me, and if I didn't attend, I would probably be ridiculed in the leftist press as a cowardly evader of contact with this leftist attacker of American policies. On the other hand, I felt sure that if I did go, I would be ridiculed in some other way. Without consulting the Embassy at Ankara, which I felt might well forbid my attendance, I decided to go. And

## Library of Congress

did. I had my interpreter with me so I could be constantly aware of any slurs or attacks being delivered by Aybar at me personally or at the U.S. Aybar spoke eloquently for more than three hours. He made only a few snide remarks about “our American friend” but took off more sternly against some American policies. In balance, though, his speech was not overly offensive.

The next morning, the Izmir leftist press was at it as I expected. There was quite an article on my attendance accompanied by a number of snide remarks as to what prompted the nosey American Consul General to be there. In addition, there was a political cartoon, a caricature of me that was quite recognizable, dressed in a Texas ten gallon hat, cowboy chaps and shining spurs, a pistol at belt, and \$ signs all over my cowboy shirt and trousers. The Embassy was displeased, and told me I should not have appeared. However, the reaction on all sides in Izmir was commendatory, so I guess it played well with the public.

### Departure from Izmir

I was gratified at the time of my exit from Izmir. I made it a point, starting a couple weeks before departure, to call on all the top contacts I had made, including the editors of the two left-wing newspapers, to say goodbye. With these last two, I said that I realized our political outlooks were at opposite poles, but that I felt we had exercised an honest dialogue over our differences, and I thanked them for their coverage of my activities (even though on several occasions it was hardly pleasing). Accolades on my two year performance were effusive. Even the leftist papers gave grudging praise for my activities. It was the most direct and satisfying public expression of recognized accomplishment I ever enjoyed. It was a highlight of my career.

*Q: And your next post was Thailand?*

SCHMIDT: Yes, but there was a considerable interim before I went out there. I was selected to sit on a joint State-USIA promotion panel that fall, considering class 2 officers

## Library of Congress

for promotion to class 1 (These were the old class grades, before the whole grade structure was re-shaped about ten years or so ago.) This lasted from mid-September to just before Christmas. I then took home leave, and returned to Washington in February. Meanwhile there was extensive discussion in Washington as to where I was to be assigned. It was thought that Barry Zorthian was soon coming out of Vietnam, and that I might replace him. The other possibility was PAO Thailand, where a smaller communist insurgency was in full swing. I had expected to go out in March. Instead decisions hung in the balance for nearly three months. I went on a two week inspection trip to Taiwan, and returned. Barry still hanging in there. Finally, it was decided that I would go to Thailand. (Barry remained in Vietnam close to two more years.)

Schmidt Appointed PAO in Thailand: 1967

*Q: Excuse me. What year was that?*

SCHMIDT: This was the end of May, 1967. In my final briefings for Thailand I was told that USIA was expanding the Thai program very rapidly. We felt it necessary to expand because there was a substantial insurgency in northern Thailand, and a smaller one, completely separate from the other, in southern Thailand. We had just opened the last of 13 field posts scattered throughout Thailand in various smaller cities both up country and down on the Malaya peninsula near the border between Thailand and Malaysia. In the north, we had opened the most recent post, the 13th, Nong Khai, just across the Mekong River from Vientiane, the capital of Laos.

An additional post or two had been tentatively authorized, and I was given every reason to believe that we were going to expand further. However, just as I was leaving, Dan Oleksiw, who was then the Assistant Director of USIA for East Asia and the Pacific, told me that when I got out there, I should perhaps think about cutting back one or two positions, because Director Leonard Marks was getting a bit concerned about the size of the Thai program. He thought perhaps we were overstaffed there. I was never given to understand



## Library of Congress

that Leonard was at all concerned about the number of field posts we had. Nor was I told that he had any reservations about the kind of field program the post was operating.

### Nature of the Field Program

Each field post had a small library, but its principal effort was in the villages. Every field post was equipped with several mobile units. Teams from the post, sometimes with the Branch PAO along, other times with only Thai employees, would make large numbers of village visits each month. The BPAO was expected to spend 40 to 50% of his time out in the villages. The communist propaganda effort was touting a principal theme that Thai Government officials didn't care anything about the people living in the back country. They were only interested in feathering their own nests, increasing their salaries, etc. So, each team attempted to get one Thai official, local, provincial or national to go with the team to the target village. There, he would be expected to provide some service (medical, agricultural, etc.) to the village, and give a talk on what plans the government was making to aid the village. Later in the evening, the team would erect mopix screens and show movies. Some of these were merely documentaries; others showed the activities of the King and Queen (very popular figures in Thailand), and later, USIS had its own motion picture studios in our offices in Bangkok, and produced a number of blatantly anti-communist films, using a story line to show how insurgent teams tried to take over villages and impress the young men into the insurgent para-military forces. There were others that demonstrated the tactics used by insurgents to infiltrate a village, and ultimately take it over.

It was pretty hard hitting anti-communist stuff, featuring Thai actors and locales in the North or South, easily recognizable to the villagers. The insurgents were right up in the areas being visited. From deserting insurgent soldiers who defected to the Government, we later learned that in most cases the insurgent bands had orders not to shoot Americans on these village visit teams, but at the time, knowing the insurgents were all around, we exercised great caution. Just after I left Thailand in 1970, one of our local teams

## Library of Congress

out of Chiang Mai was ambushed, and all three Thai employees from the branch post were killed. We made every effort to teach young officers coming into USIA and being assigned to Thailand to learn Thai. Most of them learned it well, and during village visits, made it a point to converse extensively with the villagers, find out about their wishes and expectations, and generally give a good impression of Americans. I believe we scored many points with the back country people, and now, that Thailand is developing rapidly, and the isolation of the villages is disappearing, the fruits of that program are beginning to be demonstrated.

### The Bangkok Part of USIS was the More Conventional USIS Type Program

Back in Bangkok, we ran the more conventional USIS type of program. Press and publications, a huge binational cultural center with a large well used library collection, and an enormous English teaching effort. In fact, many Thais who later rose to responsible positions in Government and business learned English through the Center. The Center was established as the AUA—The American University Alumni Association, for those Thais who had gone to University in the States. It has high prestige in the country, and continues to add to its prestigious and expanding membership. Most of our exhibits were staged through the center. There was a heavy exchange program, including a very active Fulbright operation.

In addition, Bangkok was the supply line for the field. The motion pictures were either made or distributed out of our large mopix studio offices. Our print shop produced a continuing series of posters and booklets to be put up or otherwise distributed by the mobile unit teams. Enormous quantities of these products were reproduced in the Regional Service Center at Manila. I had some doubts about the effectiveness of poster and pamphlet/booklet effort. Thai literacy was not very great, and the posters usually needed a little reading ability to make the pictorial themes fully understandable. I don't think they were worth the expenditures we put into them. The actual presence in the

## Library of Congress

villages of our mobile teams, the motion pictures, the visits of the Thai officials, I feel were highly useful.

### Radio in Thailand

In addition to the mobile unit field program which USIS was running directly, we had obtained the use of a mobile transmitter from the Army. This transmitter we set up in north central Thailand, with a USIS officer in charge, and some mobile units. The purpose was to train Thai Army personnel to carry out a roving reporter type of program in the field. Each Army team was sent out regularly with mobile tape recorders to interview rural Thai people. They would record accounts of the villagers' problems. When the Thai government did something to help a village, they recorded those events. If communist insurgents raided a village, or made efforts to recruit young men into service, these traveling reporters recorded the villagers' accounts of the event. The tapes were edited, and played on the field transmitter beamed back to the villages. It was an effective program. Villagers often heard tapes recorded in their own or nearby villages, and often by voices they recognized as friends or acquaintances. The authenticity made the program. Sometimes, however, it was difficult to persuade the laid back Thais to spend enough time on the road. The effort was designed to train enough personnel so the American could be withdrawn, leaving the Army to carry on with its own resources. I regret to say that after we withdrew the American supervisor/trainer, the Program wound down, and lost much of its vigor.

The radio section in Bangkok, however, was productive. We had a fine radio officer in Ivan Campbell, put out innumerable shows, and were able to place most of them on regular Thai stations.

### The Battle of the Cutbacks

At urgings from Dan Oleksiw, I did reduce two or three positions in Bangkok, but still there was no indication that we should cut back field posts. Later, I began to get hints that Washington wanted further cutbacks, but it was not until toward the end of my second year

## Library of Congress

that the pressures began to be direct. I guess because of the lack of actual orders, I was late in realizing what was wanted, and was late in coming to the realization that a complete turnabout in the program was in the making.

The U.S. election was approaching in the fall of 1968. USIS set up its usual "election center" with VOA broadcasts coming in and a huge electoral tote board. The Thais were all cheering for a Nixon victory, because they felt that U.S. support against their own insurgency and secondarily, that in Vietnam, would be better assured under a Republican than under a Democratic administration. Earlier returns indicated that Humphrey might pull out a victory. But as the day wore on, and Nixon's victory seemed assured, cheers arose.

As things turned out, Nixon began to wind down the war, and the American support for counter insurgency began to dwindle. Frank Shakespeare came in as USIA Director, and began to exert recognizable pressure to phase out our Thai counter-insurgency effort. The Thai Army had a small, lackluster type of village field program, in which they tried to do something of what USIS did in its village effort. However, the army had little stomach for operating in the boon docks. Their fleet of vehicles was small; and they simply had neither the resources, the know-how, the willingness to work with the civilian Thai government people, nor the will to carry on vigorously. They seemed, however, to be the best, if not the only bet to take over the field operation.

There was a rather ineffective Thai Department of Public Affairs, but its contributions to any sort of counter insurgency were virtually nil.

So, when it became evident that we would have eventually to either greatly reduce or perhaps fully abandon our field program, we began a serious effort to prepare the Thai army field unit to assume our functions. The going was slow. The Thai army had no desire at all to assume USIS field functions. Periodically I would have calls from the army colonel in charge of the unit pleading with me not to stop our program. Even the prospect of getting all our C-J 6 mobile units didn't titillate them. Nevertheless, they were finally

## Library of Congress

convinced it was going to happen, and so resigned themselves to taking over. Gordon Murchie, who had been closest of all USIS officers to the army group practically lived with them. John Reid devoted 90% of his time in the attempt to push the Thais into learning how to operate in USIS fashion.

About that time, Frank Shakespeare made the only trip he made during my incumbency to Asia. He was accompanied by the ubiquitous and sour Teddy Weinthal, who was bitterly opposed to any American involvement in counterinsurgency either in Vietnam or in Thailand. Most of the visit was a probe and a push to speed up the turnover to the Thais. I was suffering from a terrible cold, really a flu, and it soon became apparent that Frank and I were not very compatible. The turning point came, I guess, the night the Ambassador gave a dinner for Frank in the Residential compound. Finally Frank turned to me and said: Lew, how long do you think it will take the Thai Army counter insurgency unit to take over the field program. I made a serious mistake. I knew the Thais would never really perform. And even if they did make a semblance of doing so, it was going to be a long pull. I was annoyed at Frank, and I felt lousy. So, facetiously, I said, Oh, about seven or eight years. Frank, I realized immediately, was not amused by facetious humor. It was probably then that he decided I ought to be removed from the Thai program. He didn't know it, but that didn't bother me. I had made it plain that I would go to Thailand for only one three-year tour, which would be up in May of 1970. In any event, he clearly decided at that point that I was a total loss to USIA. This was proven on a few subsequent occasions when attempts of other officers in the Agency who had known my abilities over a long past tried to promote me for good assignments. Frank turned them all down, never having the courage to tell me directly that he was blocking them. It was that antipathy of Frank for me—and vice versa—that crystallized my own decision to retire early, which I did in 1972. But I'm getting ahead of my account.

The program was wound down. The operation replete with all the mobile units, was turned over with pomp and ceremony to the Thai army by my successor a few months after I left Thailand. As we had anticipated, the Thais were happy to get the equipment, but not

## Library of Congress

the program, and it gradually lapsed into innocuous desuetude. The USIS was out of the village operation by late 1970, and all but about three or four of the field posts were closed.

But I'm getting ahead of my account again.

### Dan Oleksiw and the Field Program

By late '69, Dan had become a strong advocate of cutting out the field program. Some time after Frank's visit, Dan made one of his frequent visits to the post. His arrival coincided with a planned visit of mine to our southernmost post at Songkhla, not too far from the Malaysian border. From there we were due to make a village visit. And when that was over, I scheduled a few days leave to go over into Malaysia and pay a visit to Malaysia's Penang Island, a pleasant old British colonial type duty free port.

I told him about my plans, and he decided to go south with me, then on to Penang. I persuaded him to make the village visit with me as well. It happened that our visit coincided with an event of considerable moment for the village. AID ran a training program for midwives near Bangkok. A young woman from the village that was our target for the evening had just completed her training, and was returning to set up shop in her hometown. AID had also built her a small clinic in the village which was being dedicated that evening. In accordance with our plan always to have a Thai official present if possible during a USIS visitation, we had been able with the assistance of AID, to get the Deputy Minister of Health of the Royal Thai Government to be our visiting official. The mood was festive. The clinic was dedicated. The young midwife was introduced to cheers and the Deputy Minister gave a speech, none of which I understood, but evidently the villagers were grateful for the gifts and the visit.

The next day, I took off with Dan for Penang. We were there two or three days, during which time Dan made no comments about the village visit, or anything else about the Thai program. We had long conversations about many other things, but nothing official.

## Library of Congress

We parted at the end of the visit. He went on to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and I back to Bangkok.

About three months later I received an “eyes only” cable from Dan. Its opening sentence said: “I direct USIS Thailand to cease immediately all midwifery programming,” and went on to direct other reductions in the USIS operation. I was thunderstruck. I couldn't believe Dan really thought we were involved in a midwife program. I felt it was a grandstand play to catch attention back in Washington, and make it appear that we had been caught in actions completely unrelated to what we were supposed to be doing. I was so angry that I waited two days to send a reply. I should have waited longer. I was still too upset. Instead of calmly replying that his whole statement was foolish and misleading—that this one village visit happened to coincide with the culmination of an AID project (that we would in any event have publicized in support of AID), and had nothing to do with our ongoing work in the country, I blew a cork. I started out by saying we could not stop what we weren't doing, and raged on from there. Clearly, it was a mistake on my part, and probably hurt me more in Washington than even my previous facetious remarks to Frank Shakespeare had done. I will say that the cable got high level attention in Washington. Seemingly, almost everyone heard about it.

I am revising this part of my interview while editing it, long after the interview was first transcribed. I probably would not have mentioned the Midwife episode had I not read the transcript of Dan's own interview recently. In it he remarks that one of his tasks in his position as Assistant Director East Asia and Pacific, was keeping the Thai program on track, and eliminating their activities in such areas as midwifery. I still can't believe that he ever truly thought we were into such activity in Thailand, but this statement nearly 20 years after the event makes me wonder.

Miscellaneous Episodes in the Thai Saga

## Library of Congress

I will close the discussion of my USIS tour in Thailand with accounts of two occurrences not directly related to the program.

### The Non-Peace Corps Related Actions of the Peace Corps

As usual in most countries, the Peace Corps representatives in Thailand were a fine bunch of young people, and for their own program, they were doing a splendid service.

Their Director was Tim Adams, son of the noted columnist and commentator of the 30's and 40's, Franklin P. Adams. Tim was a loudly vocal opponent of American involvement in Vietnam. His opinion was his own and he was entitled to it. But his vocal opposition in Thailand, where the Embassy was deeply involved with the Thai Government in supporting their own counterinsurgency effort, and the U.S. Air Force was flying bombing missions into Vietnam was embarrassing. Whenever challenged, Tim would loudly assert that he owed no allegiance to the Embassy, and was free to express publicly any opinion he held. He also preached the same philosophy to the Peace Corps members, one or another of whom would occasionally sound off adversely, not only on the American role in Vietnam, but also on the U.S. support of Thai counterinsurgency efforts.

The most irritating incident came when a Peace Corps girl gave an interview to one of the Bangkok English language newspapers, in which she remarked that she had been recently in Ubon (where many of the bombing missions originated). She said that she watched a U.S. bomber take off into a gorgeous red sunset, noted the colorful tail of flame from the jet's engines mix with the grandeur of the setting sun, and wished that the pilot would be shot down in similarly red flames over Vietnam.

### Knifing Incident on the Chao Phya River

I had been in Bangkok only a few weeks by the Fourth of July. Several of us had been attending the Embassy Fourth of July observance, and had gathered at the home of one of our USIS staffers. Someone came running in to announce that there had been a



## Library of Congress

serious incident on a boat that a group of AID people had hired for the evening to make an excursion on the river. Reportedly a USIA man was involved. A group of us rushed to the dock where the boat had come in from the water.

It seems that a man who was a VOA monitor whose job it was to monitor foreign broadcasts, particularly those from hostile nations such as the USSR, China, North Vietnam, etc. and also monitor the strength of Voice signals, had been involved. He was independent of the USIS and even of the VOA correspondent in Bangkok. I had never met him. Evidently he had become somewhat intoxicated, had provoked an altercation with an AID officer, and when the latter defended himself, grabbed the man's \$250 camera, threw it overboard, pulled out a hunting knife and stabbed the man. Fortunately, the blade struck the AID officer's belt, glanced off, and only penetrated his abdomen superficially, but otherwise, he might have been fatally wounded.

Inquiry revealed that the assailant had a history of bullying attacks on people, especially, though not only, when drunk. He was reported to beat his (Finnish) wife occasionally, and was an all around belligerent personality. We reported the incident to Washington, and asked for his recall. He came to see me, threatening, defensive. He also visited the Embassy Assistant Administrative Officer who was reporting the matter to DepState. The latter was a black. The assailant tried to intimidate him by saying that where he came from down in North Carolina, they knew how to handle "niggers." It took about ten days to get him out of Bangkok and back to Washington, where he filed a grievance claim against the Agency that took six months to resolve.

But the worst effrontery came about a month later. An Embassy officer was listening one morning to the VOA Breakfast show. Suddenly who should be heard but the erstwhile assailant. Evidently looking for some possibly interesting personality to fill in the morning program, the host on the show had flagged him down in the hall, knowing that he had recently come from Bangkok, but unaware of his trouble there, had interviewed him. The guy claimed to be the post Radio Officer, and gave a long exaggerated and scarcely

## Library of Congress

truthful account of his role in Bangkok. The Embassy was outraged. I wrote to Dick Cushing, who was at the time Deputy (perhaps Acting) Director of the Voice, who sent me an explanation of the mistake and an apology. It wasn't one of the Voice's better moments.

POSTSCRIPT ON THAILAND: When I left Thailand, I was afraid the Thais were losing the battle against the insurgents. A major reason for their success was that China was extensively funding them, as well as helping to impress rural youth out of Thailand, send to a training camp in North Vietnam, then reinfiltate them into fighting units in Thailand. Somewhat later, China and Vietnam, never historically friendly, had a falling out. Then Nixon opened China to U.S. relations. The Chinese stopped aiding the Thai insurgency, and it gradually faded away. I am convinced to this day, however, that had China sustained its support for the insurgency, the insurgency would have won out. Thailand might be a very different country today.

1970: Washington—Resource Analysis Staff

Having been told I was no longer wanted in Thailand, and not wanting to be there any longer myself, I came in for an assignment with the Agency. It was half way a made job, and half way an experiment that Henry Loomis wanted to try out. It was heading up a small element of rather nebulous responsibilities called the Resource Analysis Staff. The idea was that we would analyze resources available, and from our knowledge of program needs would allocate the available resources where most needed. We would make special studies as required, classify posts in descending order of importance for resource purposes, etc.

Actually, the duties could just as well have been performed by the Office of Administration, and really should have been. As proof of that, it was folded into Administration about a year after I left, and exists no more.

We did, I think, make a couple of useful studies. One had to do with the value of libraries. Some officers in the Agency doubted their value. It may be that some of them are

## Library of Congress

moribund, but the 15 to 20 we studied in representative countries were booming, and were precious assets to the program. Libraries escaped, for the most part, any emasculation.

Another investigation had to do with the need for Regional Service Centers—those large in house printing plants that served regional needs for many posts. Then, there were three: Beirut, which has been erased by the troubles of Lebanon; Mexico City; and the original, largest and daddy of them all, Manila. The press service was very concerned, and angry, thinking we were going out with a closed mind to find reasons to dispense with the Centers. I personally was of two minds. We investigated their comparative costs against private contracting in great depth, and came away with irrefutable evidence that their costs could not be beaten, to say nothing of the convenience of having a production plant of that enormous capability at the beck and call of USIS posts alone—no other competition. The Press Service (IPS) was ecstatic.

I think Henry Loomis, who had initiated the study, was unhappy. Henry had a great bias in favor of private business. A recent inspection of a post where one such plant existed (I think it was Beirut), had included a public member on the inspection team who was from Readers Digest. On the basis of two work days looking at the plant, he had come back in the inspection report with the recommendation that it be scrapped and the posts of the region rely on private printers. Henry would not accept the report we made until I had personally taken a trip up to the Readers Digest aerie in New York, and talked to the guy who had been the inspection team public member. After two or three hours of discussion, he finally agreed the report was ok, with one or two relatively minor changes. On the basis of this, Henry agreed to use it. For some time, it was the definitive report on the Centers, though I imagine by now it's long outdated.

There were other studies, but not of major significance, and it seemed that their primary use was to throw them as bones for a lot of element heads to chew on, come up, each one, with a pet objection, and haggle over the carcass for weeks.

## Library of Congress

After a little more than two years of this, I had had it. When I returned from Thailand, I had made up my mind that if this assignment, which never looked good to me from the start, did not pan out, I would retire before I was so old it would be too late to find anything remunerative on the outside. I felt that under Frank Shakespeare, the Agency was rapidly slipping into mediocrity, and in many places, ridicule. I retired the end of November, 1972. Three months later, Shakespeare resigned, and was replaced by Jim Keogh, a former Time Magazine editor and more recently a White House aide under Nixon. I am told by those who were still in the Agency that morale and reasonableness revived a bit under him.

I had loved the Agency. It brought me the happiest working years of my life. But I would not have wanted to return, even minus Frank Shakespeare. Retirement was a good decision.

End of interview