

UNITED NATIONS INTELLECTUAL HISTORY PROJECT
The Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW OF

LOUIS EMMERIJ

BY

THOMAS G. WEISS

New York, 27 September 2005

THOMAS G. WEISS: It is the 27th of September 2005, Tom Weiss here at The Graduate Center doing the penultimate interview with Louis Emmerij on the fifth floor. Let's start at the beginning. We've discussed this over drinks on a couple of occasions, but I would like you to tell me a bit about your parents' background, when you were brought into the world in 1934, and what happened to them.

LOUIS EMMERIJ: As you said, I was born in Rotterdam in the Netherlands, on a beautiful, white Christmas Day, the 25th of December 1934. We had a nice family. My mother and father were there and were married. I give that marriage some attention these days. And there was my brother, who was six years and one month my senior. He was born in November 1928. My father was from a middle class background. His father, my grandfather, had made some money. It was not an enormous amount of money, but some money in the Netherlands East Indies, the present Indonesia, on the island of Sumatra, where he had a rubber plantation as a young man. He remained a bachelor until the age of thirty-five or thirty-six, sold his plantation, came back to the Netherlands, married, and never did a stroke of work again.

They had four sons and one daughter. My father was the second son. They all, except my father, went to university. They all did law and they all became involved in commercial banking, except for the youngest brother of my father who worked in the municipality of Rotterdam and who became actually the equivalent of the secretary-general of the municipal machine, the bureaucracy in Rotterdam.

My father was the exception. He did not go to university. He went to non-university, post-secondary technical education. In Holland we have two streams at the post-secondary level: the fully-fledged university stream and a non-university stream. In the days of my father, these were mainly technical schools that led up to sub-engineers, higher technicians. That stream still

exists today and has been generalized. We now have post-secondary, non-university schools in all domains.

Many people claim that the post-war reconstruction, of which my father was no longer part—we will come back to that later—that the post-Second World War reconstruction of the Netherlands owes more to people with this non-university, technical education than to the fully-fledged polytechnical people because the former were hands-on people. They knew how machines worked, and they worked with them.

My father was an interesting man, although I only knew him for seven-and-a-half years. He worked in a business that was producing and selling all kinds of machines, from typewriters to printing presses for newspapers. My father knew everything about all these machines. Actually, he was the technical advisor to the director of that company. He must have had left-wing leanings. He taught himself Esperanto, as many socialists did in those days. We're talking about the 1920s and 1930s. He taught himself musical instruments, from the piccolo to the violin. He read rather widely. He had all the works of Jack London. I still have his copy of *John Barleycorn*. So that was interesting.

On my mother's side, working class. I have never known my grandparents on my mother's side. They worked hard and died early. My grandfather from my mother's side was a docker who worked in the Port of Rotterdam. My mother only finished, with difficulty, primary school and was sent to work. She was a nice, tall, sweet, beautiful girl, judging from the pictures. My father was 185 in European terms, my mother was 172, which in those days was tall.

Much later, I asked them, "Where did the two of you meet? You came from such different directions." Well, they met in Rotterdam in a ballroom, which still existed when I was

a young man, and I went there myself, but I didn't find my wife there. But they found themselves on the dance floor. It was a very civilized place, and that's how it happened.

My father therefore had an interesting career. He didn't make a lot of money, but he made more than enough to cater for his family. But then, of course, the war came. By the way, he did not suffer from the Great Depression. His company and his work remained in high demand, also in Germany. By the time I came into this world, [Adolph] Hitler was already in power in Germany, in January 1933. There was a fantastic expansion going on, including in the printing and office sector. So my father was nicely employed, contrary to many of the people on my mother's side in particular.

When the war came to Western Europe in May 1940, when the Germans attacked the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France, I was there. I witnessed the bombing of Rotterdam on the 14th of May 1940, as a five-year old. I remember everything about it. I have a poetic memory of the bombing. I have three specific memories, or snapshots. In the first snapshot, I saw the grownups—the big boys and the fathers. I saw them getting water and sandbags, and putting paper and tape over their windows. So they must have been warned before the bombing that that could be a possibility. The second snapshot, I heard noise in the air and I looked up and saw what I thought were birds. I was five years old, and I saw what looked to me were birds coming closer to us. But they made a lot of noise, and they turned out to be *Stukas* and *Junkers*, as those planes were called. The third snapshot, out of these noisy birds dropped bon-bons. Incredibly enough, that was for a five year old the poetic memory of a terrible event.

My father went into the resistance movement. He never talked to my mother, nor my brother, nor, of course, to me. We didn't know what he was doing in that resistance movement, and I have often asked myself the question, "Did he really believe, as an intelligent man, that he

could shorten the war by going into a resistance movement?” When I grew older, I asked myself, “What would I do if something like that happened? If the Soviets invaded, would I go into the resistance movement?” I think the answer is, “Yes.” It is not because you believe that you can shorten the war, necessarily. It is psychological. You cannot stand the fact that there is this foreign, dictatorial power who imposes upon you.

In October 1942, there was the infamous knock on the door at 4:00 in the morning and my father was taken from his bed. It later turned out that most of the resistance cells were infiltrated by sympathizers of the Nazi movement. So the whole cell was, in one night, eliminated. He went through three Dutch concentration camps, then was sent to Natzweiler, which is on the Alsace-German border. It was what was called a *nacht-und-nebel* camp, night and fog. Once you are there, you disappear. You have no more contact with the outside world. You cannot write and you cannot receive mail.

So from that moment on, we lost all touch with him. After the war, we got the message that he had died in Dachau, the infamous camp, three days after the liberation of the camp by the Americans. Again, I did some research on that later. It was a relatively common thing that as long as the camp was occupied by the SS (*Schutzstaffel*), the prisoners resisted with everything they had. The moment the liberation came, they relaxed and let down their physical resistance and many of them died.

I must say, to the honor of the firm for which my father worked, the director of that firm continued to pay his salary throughout the war, until after the war, until the moment a foundation was set up—the “Stichting 1940-1945,” the 1940-1945 Foundation—that looked after the families of former political prisoners. My father, of course, had been a political prisoner, so we

continued to get money from the foundation. It was not as much as we were used to. We had to change a little bit our habits, but it was fine.

Now, coming back to the war, we had the “hunger winter,” 1944/1945, in the western part of the Netherlands. The Allied troops had come through the South, from Belgium, and [Bernard] Montgomery, whose reputation has been grossly overestimated—Montgomery’s troops were in Eindhoven, in the south of the Netherlands, where the Philips headquarters are. He wanted quickly to take the bridges in the middle of the Netherlands, near Arnheim and Nijmegen. So he conceived a plan to have paratroopers be dropped on these bridges in September 1944. Again I remember, in Rotterdam, on a beautiful day in September 1944, I saw a huge number of planes going east, containing the paratroopers, 80 percent of whom were killed because they were parachuted on top of two *Panzer divisionen*, two divisions of tanks of the Germans that were there to rest, waiting to get back into action. It was a huge intelligence error, if ever there was one.

So the Allied troops went east into Germany, leaving the western part of the Netherlands—Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, and Rotterdam—as a pocket with the Germans there. So the Germans ate the food and we had to get by. My elder brother, who turned sixteen in November 1944, got an illness in his kidneys. It could have been remedied easily in normal times, but these were not normal times. There was no medicine and he died in the beginning of 1945.

So we entered the war as a family of four—mother, father, and two boys—and we got out of the war with two of us, my mother and myself. We later learned from the director of the firm who had been so generous to us by paying my father’s salary until the transition was made after the war, that he had an agreement with my father that after the war they would start their own

company. They would have become independent—one of those paths not taken. What would have become of me had my father and his boss grown a fantastic firm. They probably would have gone into the computer business early. Would they have been able to create a big firm? Would I have been a rich boy with a lot of resources, and would it have made me a lesser person than I have become under more difficult circumstances? So this is about my parents, their background, their courage, and their sufferings during the war years.

TGW: Just two follow-up questions. One, your father was not a Jew, but virtually all of the emphasis on camps has really been placed on the Holocaust. How does that make you feel? Since [Simon] Wiesenthal just died, it seems the moment here to ask this question: besides not wanting to miss lunch or dinner, how do you think that that winter of 1944/1945 changed your approach to the world?

LE: I must honestly say that I get enervated from time to time. We have many Jews in Europe and in the United States as friends, and Vera is very close to many of them. Each time they ask me about my father, I tell in a summarized form what I just told you. They say, “Dachau? Was he a Jew?” I say, “Look, for God’s sake, there were many non-Jews. We make less noise about it, but we were there, too. Maybe I should have asked the German government to give me a financial bonus as well because of that.”

In Dachau, there were many more non-Jews than Jews. There were, of course, camps that were practically all Jewish. Auschwitz was the most horrible example. There were very few non-Jews there. Buchenwald was in-between. But Dachau was very much a camp of political prisoners. So I have become, over the decades, a little bit edgy, as if only the Jews suffered. There were many other people as well. What was the second question, again?

TGW: Going hungry obviously influenced you in a number of ways.

LE: Yes. My father had enormous foresight in that specific instance. In 1941, he had rented from a farmer close to Rotterdam a couple of acres and paid the farmer for five years to cultivate that piece of land with potatoes and to deliver the potatoes—eleven sacks of them, 70 kilos per sack, almost 800 kilos of potatoes—every year to our house. And that farmer did it throughout the war, including October 1944 when those potatoes were worth gold. So we survived in the first instance because of the foresight of my father and the honesty of that farmer.

At the end of March 1945 the potatoes ran out. I was eating potatoes three times a day and I still love them today! But we ran out of food. All around us, people were actually dying from hunger. But in the beginning of April 1945, the Swedish Red Cross got permission to drop food over Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and I was probably saved by that intervention. The Germans knew they had lost the war, and they therefore gave this permission. The Red Cross dropped flour among other goodies, and I remember the first time, by the 10th of April, I saw this loaf of white bread. I got my piece and it tasted like cake. For years afterwards, I asked my mother, “Why does the bread no longer taste like cake?”

Those few weeks, of course, always had a huge influence on my attitude because it taught me about hunger, about generosity. My mother did share some of the food with the neighbors and other people who were knocking at our door. It also taught me about coward-like behavior—people who kept the food all for themselves, and also people who claimed to have been in the resistance when on the 8th of May 1945 the war was finished. All of a sudden, I saw in our street lots of people—twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-five-year-old boys—with something around their arm signifying that they had been in the resistance. I, as a little ten-year-old, knew perfectly well that they never had been in the resistance—so cowards bluffing.

But coming back to the Nazis and the Germans, I have never generalized the Nazi behavior—mainly the SS and the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*)—I have never generalized the horrible behavior of those people to the entire German population. When I, as the son of a war hero, was sent to Denmark to be fed—and as you see, the Danes did a good job on me—I was in the train on September 1945 that rode all the way through Germany into Denmark. I was looking out of the window. I had never, never seen anything like it, and I have never seen anything like it to this very day. There was not a house that stood. Hamburg was bloody hell. There had been the infamous bombing of Hamburg in 1943. There was not a building that was not damaged. It looked like Ground Zero on the scale of 1,000 or one million. I remember saying to myself as a ten-year old, “Whatever the bastards did to my family, nobody deserves a fate like this.”

Also during the war, I met German soldiers, the normal soldiers, the *Wehrmacht*, the regular, professional army. There were many soldiers who were very kind. For instance, we kept rabbits in the garden, in of course an isolated space. Rabbits like a specific kind of plant that grows in the grass. Now since everybody was keeping rabbits in those days, those plants were no longer available. I remember, my brother and I walked to the airport at the outskirts of Rotterdam, occupied by the Germans behind barbed wire, and the soldier who stood guard there asked me to come closer to him and to hand him my bag. So I gave it to him. He went back with his bayonet and within ten minutes he returned the bag full.

So what I learned then was that, first of all, hunger is a pretty nasty thing. Under that kind of duress, you find that the real personality of people will come out. You have nice people and evil people in all classes and in all populations. I think I might have become a more realistic person. But again, I was a little bit surprised with myself that there was no hatred. I never felt a big hatred against the Germans in general. I think that is probably right, although if you look at

the old pictures, they were all saying, “*Sieg Heil*,” including in Austria where the Nazis, I think, were stronger than in Germany.

TGW: Actually, many of your compatriots—or at least to my recollection of being on the German border on the Dutch side—still don’t feel the same way, do they? It seems that there is still an enormous animosity toward the German tourists.

LE: Correct, until this very day. The Dutch, including the young generation, has been the most consistently angry people in Europe, or maybe even in the world, vis-à-vis the Germans. Actually, I know it. I have lived it, because my first real girlfriend, with whom I was very close, was from Saarbrücken. Saarland had just turned German again after a referendum. So she had a car with a “D,” a German plate, and we were meeting in Maastricht, which is now famous—not yet then—and she parked her car in front of the hotel on a marketplace. When we came out the next morning, all these chaps there who were selling goods on the market, said to me, “You bloody German, what are you doing here?” So yes, there have been many surveys in Europe about this and it shows systematically and consistently that the Dutch, from generation to generation, have generalized the attitude of the Nazis to the entire German population, including to the second and third generation. That has not been my case.

TGW: Why did you go to university? You said that other people in the family, except your father, were university trained. He was technically trained. Did you set this out as an objective, or did you just sort of wander into it? And if you wandered into it, why did you wander to France instead of staying at home?

LE: That’s interesting. One of the things I’ve done in my life is to think about the idea of recurrent education. This idea must have come instinctively to me very early in life. I had done my secondary education, six years of it. So I was eighteen when I finished secondary

school. In those days in Holland, if you had been approved physically and intellectually for military service, you had to start doing it during the year when you turned twenty. Unless you were a student, in which case you could do it when you finish your studies, which in Holland was a very lengthy period. So if you were a student you could do your military service at twenty-six, twenty-seven, or twenty-eight.

I decided I wanted a break, a reflection period. I was not sure what I wanted to do. I was not yet really motivated to become a medical doctor or to become a lawyer. I really did not quite know. So I said to myself, "Why don't you go into the military service first?" Since I was born, as I told you, at the very end of the year, I turned nineteen in December 1953, and so a week later the year started when I would turn twenty. I asked for being pulled up from military service as soon as possible in the year 1954, which the Dutch government did. So I was enrolled as a soldier in February 1954.

I was called up to be given the test for officer's training. We spent three days in a camp and had to go through all kinds of intellectual and physical exercises. At the end of these three days, the colonel-psychologist looked at me and said to me, "Soldier Emmerij, it is clear you must either become a general immediately or remain a soldier." That was one of the more perceptive comments I have received about my character. So I remained a soldier.

In those days, a tour of duty was eighteen months. I was sent to a school to become a soldier/administrator. One of the good things of this school was I learned how to type and even do some shorthand. After that period, I was sent to the unit that served the headquarters of the first and only Dutch army. In that unit, we had intellectuals like older students who had not made it to the officers' training, persons like me who had not made it either, and on the other

hand we had drivers, chauffeurs, and mechanics who were driving the generals and the colonels around in Jeeps.

So we had a fantastic mixture of people. Thanks to military service, and to the fact that by happenstance I was introduced into that company, I met there with a sample of all Dutch social backgrounds. I discovered that people who had had only primary education had an innate ability that went far beyond their formal education, which of course I had already discovered with my mother, who was in the same category—only primary education but with an innate intelligence that went beyond it. And I found that it was a pity and a loss that these people had not gone back to school.

In the meantime, I was reflecting on what I wanted to do. I decided that I wanted to study in France. Now, why in France? There were three reasons for this, probably. First of all, there was my grandfather, on my father's side—the man who had a plantation in Sumatra—I was very close to him until he died. He died when I was about fourteen or fifteen. I talked to him a lot. I learned a lot from him. I think it was [Jean-Paul] Sartre who called this "*l'histoire vivante*," or "Living History." People who have gone through things fifty or more years. Of course, I am now on the other side of that.

He was very interested in where the family came from. He had gone through all kinds of archives to find out more about our family history. He discovered that we were from France and that we moved to the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. This was not because we were Huguenots. We came earlier. He was at a loss as to what happened before. So he started reading historical novels. There is a book about a famous battle in 1302, the Flemish and Dutch peasants against the French nobility. There was a long footnote of the French noblemen who had been slaughtered there by the peasants. One of them, lo and behold, was the Duke of Emmerij.

He said, “You see, Louis.” That, of course, has no truth in it whatsoever. But his obsession with France must have been one subconscious reason.

The second reason must have been—these were the 1950s and I had been impressed with Henry Miller and Ernest Hemmingway, all these guys who went to Paris and had a “moveable feast,” in Hemmingway’s terminology.

And the third thing, probably more serious and a more conscious reason, I was fairly hesitant to go into the Dutch system because of the length of studies. We had, and still have, no intermediate level. You can’t do a B.A. or an M.A. You have to go all the way to the Ph.D. orals. So I didn’t enroll there. In the end, I spent at least as many years in university, but that was a more lively affair because I spent them in several countries.

One day, during my military service in that company there, when they asked me, “What are you going to do after your military service?” I heard myself say, “I am going to study in Paris.” I have now tried to rationalize that a little bit, but it can’t be totally rational. It was more of a subconscious decision. But I have not regretted it. I think you may regret a rational decision, but not really from deep down.

TGW: And what were you going to study?

LE: That’s another thing. I was going to study political science. That’s what I did when I came to Paris. I entered “*Sciences Po*,” *L’institut d’études politiques de l’université de Paris*. That was the full title. It was *une grande école*, not as big as the ENA, the *École nationale d’administration*, or the Polytechnic, but it was *une grande école*. When I entered that school, I found out that the French students didn’t only do *sciences po*, they also studied something else besides. I did my *année préparatoire*, the “preparatory year,” and concluded, “The political science thing is very vague.” At least in those days, it was all over the place. I should really do

something more specific. So I decided, as French students did, to do something simultaneously and I did economics at the *Faculté de droit et de sciences économiques*.

It was interesting. I had always been interested in politics, so I thought, “You have to do political science.” That is, of course, silly. You can enter politics with any kind of background. So my first temptation was to do political science, and then after a year I found it too vague for my taste. I did not abandon *sciences po*. I continued, but I did the economic stream as well.

You know who was one of my teachers there? Raymond Barre, an excellent teacher who had written the leading economic textbook in France of those days. There was a series called *Themis*. They were yellow-covered books in a very heavy format, and Raymond Barre had published *The Introduction to Economics*. I still have it. It’s very good. And you know whom I met in *sciences po*? Georges Pompidou.

Sciences po in those days, in spite of its relatively snobbish character, was ahead of its time. It organized seminars for the students which they called *Conférences de méthode*, twice a week. And in the preparatory year, we had one seminar on economics and another on history and international relations. The people who taught these seminars were people from outside the university. They were people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, banks, et cetera.

TGW: Practitioners?

LE: Practitioners. Very interesting and very good. So normally there were two different people who taught these two different *Conférences de méthode*. In the case of Georges Pompidou, he taught them both. And I have been extremely impressed by this man. I find to this very day that his presidency that was cut short, tragically, because of his illness, has been underestimated. He was director-general of the Rothschild Bank in those days (1956/1957) until he was appointed prime minister later by Charles de Gaulle.

The seminars ran from 6:00 to 8:00 in the evening. So he came twice a week, at 6:00. And you saw that sometimes he was tired. But after ten minutes, twenty minutes, it stimulated him. He was a brilliant man—very articulate, very simple, very straightforward. He had an ease of recollection of facts and figures that I found astounding.

When I came back from the United States, I met two people in Paris. One was Georges Pompidou. I had called him up and said, “Look, I want to see you. I have come back from the States and I am looking for what to do next.” He gave me a rendez-vous. He had all his directors around the table for me, little Louis. At the end of that, he took me to his office and he offered me a job in the bank.

The second person I met was another teacher from *sciences po*, who had become the deputy-director of the *Institut d'études du développement économique et social* (IEDES). He asked me to come and join him to work on the economics of education, a new specialization that had just started. I opted for the economics of education, which led me a few months later into the OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-Operation and Development) that had started a program in this field.

What would have happened to me if I had accepted the Pompidou offer and had become a banker? It is again the path not taken.

TGW: Richard Jolly's famous “path not taken”!

LE: Yes, we are each full of paths not taken in our own history.

TGW: If going to Paris was a sentimental decision, or a visceral decision, what made you decide to go to the United States? The systems are quite different. You switched gears?

LE: First of all, you should have asked, “How did you finance your studies?” Because although we were being catered for by this foundation, the 1940-1945 Foundation for Former

Political Prisoners, the money we got was fine but not to finance a stay in Paris, for God's sake. So what happened? Also all thanks to my father. The foundation gave me a fellowship.

TGW: Which foundation?

LE: The 1940/1945 Foundation that financed the families, the widows of political prisoners who had not returned. It gave her a decent living without much more and my mother could not have financed my studies in Paris. That foundation offered me a small fellowship and I could get by. But that was only for the duration of the four years in Paris. I wanted to continue studying economics in the United States. In France, economics in those days was not very sophisticated. It was OK at the undergraduate level, but not really beyond that.

So the next thing for an economist—because I had given up political science by then totally—to do was to go to the United States. In those days, the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University—the main campus is in Washington, D.C.—had in 1955 set up a center in Europe, in Bologna, one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. It was not yet very well-known, and its director was looking for students and gave fellowships. The director there was C. Grove Haines—you may not have heard about him—a marvelous man. He drank too much, including with his students, but that made him charming for us. He came to Paris, to *Sciences po*, actually, and wanted to interview a certain number of students who were promising and who had an interest in going to an American university. I was one of them. I was interviewed and I was accepted.

I spent a year in the Bologna Centre, which was probably the year I learned most, because there was then a young, twenty-seven-year-old professor by the name of Robert Mundell, who was in residence and got the Nobel Prize in 1999! He also drank a little bit too much and loved the ladies a little bit too much, but he was bright and he had all the time for his

students. We were down to a few in his course, because he was teaching a pretty advanced, econometrically-oriented course in seminar format. It was then that I discovered that you better be taught by a young man with a world ahead of him, than by an older man like Albert Hirschman, who was my teacher at Columbia later, who wrote beautifully but was not a very good teacher, had not much time, and had a world behind him.

So I did my year in Bologna and then Columbia offered me a fellowship without even asking. I don't know. Was it Mundell, was C. Grove Haines? But one day I got a letter from Columbia saying, "We have heard you are an interesting person, so come here."

TGW: So you were starting an M.A. at SAIS, but then—

LE: I carried the credits over to Columbia. I needed two years to do the M.A. I think it's still two years, although in Europe we do it in fifteen months but full-time, without interruption. So I was able to carry over the credits to Columbia. They were accepted formally. I wrote and I showed them my credits, the marks I got, and that was accepted.

In Columbia, I had Albert Hirschman and Peter Kennan, a young Peter Kennan. He was an international trade man, one of the brightest kids around. So here was the older Hirschman, who was not a good teacher, *ex cathedra*, but was a wonderful man in seminars. Peter Kennan, the young Peter Kennan, knew all the answers. He was very sure of himself. Hirschman said, "Now Peter, don't you think you could also see it from another point of view?"

So anyway, the reason why I went to an American university was two-fold. First, I wanted to specialize in economics beyond what I had had at *Sciences po*, because there was an economics section there as well, and at the *Faculté de droit et de sciences économiques* and, second, I was offered fellowships both in Bologna and New York. That made it enticing for me.

TGW: When and how did you pick up French and English—in secondary school or on the fly?

LE: In those days, the secondary schools in the Netherlands taught Dutch, German, French, and English and if you were at a gymnasium, also Greek and Latin.

TGW: Actually, I did Latin for four years, but not any living languages!

LE: But again, the interesting thing is, talking about why did I go to Paris, I started French already in primary school at my own initiative. The teacher offered me—paying him a little bit—French lessons. So that French side was very much embodied in me. I had six years of French and the other languages, but that doesn't go very far. I am not really gifted for languages. When you go then to a foreign country and have to work in that language, it took me more than six months to really get up to par. In fact, English was easier at first. For the Dutch, English is an easier language. But French is a difficult language and it has now, for all intents and purposes, disappeared from the secondary schools. It is all English and then one optional foreign language. It can be Chinese or Spanish, et cetera.

You can do *Sciences po à titre étranger*. I said, “Not for me, I will do it with the Frenchmen.” Now each time I had to deliver a paper in French, I got a note that said, “This is very good, but your French has some problems.” So I took the *cours de civilisation française* at the Sorbonne. Now the *cours de civilisation française* is for foreigners, and you get there French literature, French law, but also the French language. So I did this very seriously and it worked.

TGW: How would you characterize the difference between the two university experiences in France and in the United States? Did you respond more strongly to one versus the other?

LE: I'll tell you. In my days, in France, and in particular at *Sciences po*, but also at the university faculties it was all *la forme*. It was all how you presented something. There had to be an introduction, three parts, a conclusion, both in the writing of the papers as well as in the oral presentation. We had a very interesting exercise—*exposé oral*—and it had to be in ten minutes on any topic. So I learned a lot about how to present things. Actually, I learned much more about how to present things than about the contents, if you wish to caricature a little bit.

When I came to Johns Hopkins, and particularly to Columbia, it was all about content. How you said it was less important. The clue is to combine the two positive things. Was it not George Bernard Shaw who was asked by a beautiful actress, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a child together?' He said, 'Well, it could be with your brains and my body, instead of vice versa.'" If you combine the two good sides of it, if you become good both at presentation and in terms of content, it is a wonderful combination to have. But you should not stick to the French method alone, not in those days. At present, French economics teaching has actually become quite good.

TGW: When, in this itinerary between 1945 and 1961, did the United Nations appear on the radar screen?

LE: It was Bandung (Asian-African Conference) actually, believe it or not. Was Bandung in May 1955?

TGW: April or May.

LE: It was during my military service. Since I was in this administrative unit, I didn't have very much to do. So I was reading the newspapers and the weeklies extensively and intensively. The Bandung conference I found an interesting phenomenon. There was [Jawaharlal] Nehru, [Gamel Abdel] Nasser, and [Josip Broz] Tito, who had already, of course,

for me become well-known names, together in Bandung, and Chou En-Lai. I was intrigued. I was twenty. I was intrigued by what that movement meant and by what it could become. So that was the first time that an international phenomenon really drew my attention. Not yet the United Nations, because Bandung was not fully-fledged United Nations. But it was at that point in time, 1955, that international relations—North-South as we would call it later—became important for me. And I have followed it ever since.

TGW: But that was not part of the curriculum, I presume, in Paris.

LE: At the university? Well, Mundell, of course, nothing. He was a scientist. In those days—we're talking about 1959/1960—he was writing the articles that forty years later gave him the Nobel Prize. So if we think that we might get a Nobel Prize for Peace with our present fourteen to seventeen volumes, you will probably just make it and I will get it posthumously. So it was quantitative economics, econometrics, statistics.

With Hirschman it was different. Hirschman had already written his famous 1958 book. That was just three years before I got to know him, in 1960/1961. So 1959/1960 was Bologna, 1961 was Columbia. Hirschman was then doing a critical survey of World Bank activities in Latin America. He was very much Latin America-oriented in those days. So he talked to us about the World Bank, and he did talk a little bit about the United Nations—not very much, but he did. That again I found intriguing and interesting, not that it was in the mainstream of his teaching, but he gave many examples of development economics, which he taught. He gave many examples which were drawn from his past and present activities in Latin America and how they illustrated some of the points he had to make. So during my studies, the UN—but in particular the World Bank—was brought to my attention by him.

Peter Kennan was too young. Peter Kennan in those days—he was twenty-five or twenty-six—was a little bit like Mundell in international trade. That was it. He did not speak about GATT (General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade), or only marginally so.

TGW: Do you recall the civil rights movement in the United States? Were the rumblings going on, or was that only later?

LE: I was there, as I said, in 1961. There was not very much going on. Actually, I had some very good comrades—“black people,” as we called them then. They were probably only half black, were at Graduate School at Columbia, and felt very much at home. I did not travel to the South, although I did travel to Florida on Christmas, 1960, but I never noticed anything out of the ordinary. I feel relatively ashamed if I now see a documentary about the civil rights history in this country. I must have seen in Florida probably that there were blacks and whites, but I never noticed anything. I was sitting on the Greyhound bus from New York to Palm Beach. It took thirty-two hours, and I never noticed any discrimination. Could this be, or was I color blind, or something?

TGW: Or just blind?

LE: Well, there were black people on the Greyhound bus.

TGW: There was no section for them?

LE: There was no Greyhound bus for blacks and another Greyhound bus for whites. So I did not notice that. On the contrary, I found that New York was totally integrated, as far as I could see. I never saw a toilet where it said only for blacks or whites, no. Again, I did not travel extensively to the region where it was in the South. If it was in Florida, I never noticed it.

TGW: How did you keep in touch with your mother?

LE: My mother stayed in Rotterdam, all by herself. In Paris, of course, I visited her regularly. What I did, I went to *Les Halles*, the big market, where many Dutch trucks came with flowers and meat. They came at the end of the day, unloaded, and went back in the early morning. So each time I wanted to go to Rotterdam to see my mother, I went in the evening to *Les Halles*, found myself a nice truck with Dutch plates, talked to the drivers, and said, “What time are you leaving tomorrow morning?” I would give him 10 guilders—it was much cheaper than the train—and he would drive me up to Rotterdam and almost drop me in front of the house. So as long as I was in Paris, I must have been going back every month to see her. From Italy, it was more difficult. I only spent, of course, less than a year there.

The departure for the United States was difficult for my mother. I went by boat. There were these liberty ships. Do you remember those, the liberty ships that were made during the war?

TGW: Yes, right.

LE: The Dutch government had several of these liberty ships to transport Dutch emigrants. After the war, the Dutch government thought that Holland was overpopulated and that therefore it should encourage Dutch people to go to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. So many of the most gifted and entrepreneurial people did just that. Of course, the Dutch government later discovered that overpopulation was a relative concept. It depends on the level of economic development.

So by the time I was going to the United States in the summer of 1960, the flow of out-migrants was diminishing, but these liberty ships were still going. They had space left, and I got a return ticket for 100 guilders, round-trip. I left from Rotterdam, so my mother was there. It was like in the old days, with orchestras and waving.

My mother was born in 1901. My father was born in 1900. She died at the end of 1971, when I was already in Geneva. I came just one day too late. She died the day before I arrived. Probably she let herself die. She was seventy. She knew that I was doing well, which was a great thing for her. She was starting to feel ill. Although the medical doctors never tell you the truth, when I looked at her I sensed, as she lay dead, that she had let herself go rather than becoming dependent. I thought that was a pretty courageous thing. I very much kept in contact with my mother. I was able to introduce her to my first wife.

TGW: When did she come on the scene?

LE: In Paris. My mother met my first wife. She also saw her granddaughter, my daughter, Karina, with my first wife. My daughter still has lots of things which my mother gave to her and she keeps them very nicely. I met my first wife, Gisela. She was of German parents.

TGW: An ecumenical marriage.

LE: Her parents had come to Holland in 1938. They were not Jews, but had come to Holland for business. My then-father-in-law was in the wool business in Hamburg and they opened an office in Rotterdam and so he and his family came to Rotterdam. Now, Gisela is a very bright person. She went to the gymnasium and did everything that I did, plus Greek and Latin. She did the science side, which I also did in my school. She was outstanding in mathematics and physics. Her secondary school teachers all told her to continue at the university in mathematics. "But no," she said, "I want to be involved with living people." So she went to *Sciences po*. I went to *Sciences po*. We married much later—in 1964—and our daughter was born in February 1966. The courtship was a little long. I was here, she was there. After Paris, we were all over the place. She went to Columbia before I did, for instance. When I was in Bologna, she was at Columbia.

But we kept in touch. We found each other back at the OECD (Organisation of Co-Operation and Development), believe it or not, in the early 1960s, where she was starting to work at the Development Centre. The OECD Development Centre started in 1962, as the bridge between the member countries and the non-member countries, particularly the developing countries. And Raymond Goldsmith, a famous financial economist from Yale, became the vice president responsible for research, and Gisela was his assistant. So we resumed relationships then, in the early 1960s, and got married on the 13th of November. I shouldn't have challenged fate, but it was Friday, the 13th of November 1964. That was it. You want me to tell a little bit about it?

TGW: Why don't you continue with that and then we'll come back to the chronology?

LE: Gisela was a feminist *avant la lettre*. She was the Devaki Jain of the Netherlands. She was very interested in this, and I had nothing against it. She bought all these books, these early books about feminism. She looked at them and I read them and became quite knowledgeable about the subject. Gisela could become very emotional and violent. She said, "I am working like you and I am not going to cook." I said, "Fine. I don't want to cook either. So we will go to the bistro around the corner." That's what we did.

After a while, she said, "I am sick and tired of this food in a restaurant." I said, "If you are sick and tired, cook." Anyway, it was not a very healthy situation. We went to Argentina. I will talk a little later about why I decided to go there. She came along with me. Our daughter was born in Buenos Aires, which since then has always raised a lot of questions when she shows her c.v. When I got my offer to come to Geneva, which changed not only my specialization but my life, Gisela said to me, "Look, I have this job in Paris, in the OECD. You are leaving for Geneva. I am not going to follow you for your blue eyes. I have a job. I am an emancipated

woman.” I said, “Yes, Gisela, you are an emancipated woman. You stay here. After all, it’s only a fifty minute flight from Geneva to Paris.”

Well, the first woman I met in Geneva was my present wife. I then discovered the difference between theory and practice. Gisela should have immediately given me a divorce. She was an emancipated woman and a feminist. If you don’t belong together, you can settle in divorce. But it took her a long time to give me a divorce and she has hated Vera until this very day. She never got remarried, so I had to pay alimony for a long time, until the day Karina was eighteen.

TGW: Karina stayed in Paris?

LE: Gisela and Karina stayed in Paris until 1974. In 1974, we had in Holland not only the Central Planning Bureau, but another bureau was opened—the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP), which was by definition more interested in non-economic matters. The SCP had a section on gender studies, or what is now called “gender studies.” Gisela was offered the position of director of that section. Now imagine the chances she has had. When she came back from Columbia, she worked with Jan Tinbergen as his assistant. When she went to the Development Centre in Paris, she worked with Raymond Goldsmith, another top economist, as his assistant. Then she was offered the directorship of this Gender Studies Section in the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau.

She was in charge. She could have changed the face of the feminine part of the Netherlands. But she was always dissatisfied. Tinbergen was not good. Goldsmith was not good. And the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau was not good enough. So in spite of her intelligence, which I rank higher than mine, she had a terribly checkered career because of her emotions. The emotional part of her brain always won over the intellectual part. The intellectual

part was highly developed, but the emotional part has been a great handicap in a career which could have been brilliant if she had been able to turn down her emotions somewhat.

TGW: Were you able to stay in touch with Karina?

LE: Very much. We're very close and I have stayed in touch with Gisela. She can't stand Vera, which I find very silly. Apparently, when I was in Geneva—I went on mission—Gisela came to Geneva, into Vera's office, and made a scene, which was again the emotional side. I have stayed in touch with Gisela. We still have shouting sessions from time to time. And Karina is very close. When I am in Paris, she comes to Paris. I go to Amsterdam where she lives and is doing quite well. From that point of view, everything is fine—no scars in the relationship between my daughter and me and not even between Gisela and me. It is all in the past now.

TGW: You mentioned that after leaving Columbia you had thought about going into banking.

LE: Georges Pompidou offered me a job.

TGW: But you decided that education—once again your feelings determined that you would go to the IEDES.

LE: I told you that early on, when I had finished secondary school, I wanted to postpone the decision to go to post-secondary education because I did not quite know what I wanted to do. I was not really motivated to make a clear career choice. But as I said early in the interview, that is when unconsciously the idea of a period of reflection between the end of compulsory and basic education and the beginning of higher education became an important topic for me.

So when on the Boulevard St. Michel, I met this teacher of *Sciences po*, Michel Debeauvais, who asked me what I was doing and said that he was now working on the

economics of education in this institute, I thought that was interesting for two reasons. I had never thought that an economist could make a contribution to education and educational expansion, structures, and policy nor that education could be seen as an investment in human beings, which is necessary to reach a certain level of personal income and of national income. Until those days, up to the end of the 1950s, education was seen as a consumption good, something you can afford only after you have reached a certain level of income, personal or otherwise. So I thought that was very interesting to me when he explained that on the terrace, drinking beer at the Boul'mich.

But secondly, I saw that if I would enter the field of the economics of education, I could probably expand it to educational policies in general and look again at the possibility of postponing for a while the choice of an educational career without losing your rights. What happens is, youngsters are being pushed into postsecondary education, university or not, because if they don't go it is difficult at a later date to swing back to the educational mode. Now the United States system has always been much more flexible, although even here it would not be easy to start working after high school and then come back when you are twenty-five, or twenty-four, or twenty-six, or thirty.

I worked in the beginning in very technocratic terms. I was working on an econometric model quantifying the link between economic growth and educational expenses. It was a relatively simple model. That is how I really got to know Jan Tinbergen. I spent a month with him at the beginning of the 1960s with him and his assistants, senior and junior. I got to know the whole lot there. And I got to know Jan Tinbergen very well. But it was a pretty technocratic exercise.

It was in my OECD days (as of 1962) that I met another Dutchman, Dennis Kallen, who was a social-psychologist and who worked on the quality of education and the content of education. The two of us got together—I from the economic side, he from the qualitative side—and started working out this for me instinctive idea of recurrent education. Not life-long education, which is a vague concept. Recurrent education is much more precise. It means that after compulsory education—and in our countries the adjustment comes after secondary education—you can of course continue immediately. But if you don't have the motivation, if you don't know what to study, you can start working. You are not losing the right to come back to the educational system when you are motivated, when you have been able to compare yourself with other people on the work floor. It's like these bright people I met during military service who had only had primary school and who were the brightest of the brightest. They would have needed that kind of second or third chance.

I have always been interested and intrigued by the G.I. Bill. I thought instinctively it was one of the brightest ideas. I don't know who proposed it. It existed both in England and in the United States, where the military who had survived the war were given the possibility of going back to school on the G.I. Bill, which was \$100 a month. In those days that was a good amount. The empirical studies which I later studied in the 1960s when I was in the OECD on evaluating the G.I. Bill were terribly impressive. They all showed that all the professors who had been teaching these veterans said, "They are highly motivated. Their results are above average, qualitatively, and they finish their studies earlier than a lot of students." So that shows what motivation can do.

We wrote several publications about recurrent education, published by the OECD. Part of my Ph.D. thesis, which I presented later, is devoted to recurrent education and its necessity.

When I worked in the ILO (International Labour Organization), we discussed paid educational leave, which is an ILO convention. So I put the two together and said, “Oh, this is the missing link, because recurrent education does not make sense if there is no finance, because most of these people who want to return to education at age twenty-five, thirty, or thirty-five, their employers may not necessarily be enlightened enough to pay for them. So there must be a financial mechanism, and that was of course paid educational leave.”

So the two were brought together. When I came back to the Netherlands in 1976, after my ILO period, to take directorship of the Institute of Social Studies, the government of the Netherlands asked me to chair a tripartite committee on paid educational leave, which I did. We started in 1978. We went along fine until the early 1980s, when the whole thing was torpedoed because of the change in policies and in ideology.

It must have been in me, the importance of motivation and the need to be able to postpone decisions until you know what you want. The present education system to a large extent implies that when you are sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen you must be motivated. But people are not motivated at the same time in life. It can come much later.

Now the immediate reaction we got from the average economist, a short-sighted economist, is that if you study later in life, the return over your lifetime is less than if you studied earlier in your life. That is, of course, a kind of truism. But did they calculate what these people were not able to produce and would not be able to earn if they were not able to come back to higher levels of education, even if that is happening later in life?

Another interesting point, I found, is that it is a voluntary kind of thing. During periods of high unemployment in Europe, in these times—and it’s still not over—one talks a lot about reducing the retirement age, reducing the work week, all kinds of measures that are difficult to

turn back when times are different. Now recurrent education is something you can control. So I have made the calculations, including in my thesis, that if you have, say, a 7, 8, 9, 10 percent rate of unemployment—the Germans still have that and the French still have it—the governments in industrial countries pay an enormous amount in unemployment benefits. Now that money is of course not money down the drain, because people can consume and therefore the machine keeps going. But if you could, instead of giving out the money to these people to sit idle, if you could give them that money as a kind of fellowship, as an investment in themselves, and say, “Look, we are giving you X amount of money which was called ‘unemployment benefits’ but is now called ‘paid educational leave.’ If you are interested you can go back to school.”

By doing this you can invest in human beings, in human capital, and it does not need extra money. But I have been writing about this type of thing until about ten years ago, for decades, in all languages, and I have basically hit a wall. People just don’t believe that the switch between unemployment benefits and paid educational leave is possible. So I have given up. I have written books about it. Maybe in the next 200 years it may come true.

TGW: Very interesting. I suppose that the whole notion is at least plausible in Europe. In the United States, except for the G.I. Bill, there is very little public financing for education. So if you don’t take the money from your parents now, they are not going to give it to you later! Take the money and run, so to speak.

LE: I’ve actually never gone through the trouble of finding out who designed the G.I. Bill. In fact, the Marshall Plan and the G.I. Bill were brilliant ideas by insightful and visionary people, which we dearly miss these days.

TGW: So when this OECD opportunity came up, it was an extension of education. When did you decide that you were going to do a Ph.D. and why?

LE: I spent little time at the IEDES, because the OECD had started to give fellowships to twenty bright young people who wanted to work and specialize in the economics of education in the OECD Mediterranean member countries. I was the first fellow—a fellow with a little “f,” I am now a senior fellow with a big “F”—I was a fellow in human resources. There were twenty of us that year and there was this interesting project of the OECD: the Mediterranean Regional Project, which included Portugal, Spain, the Messogiorno—the southern part of Italy—Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia, which was an associate member of the OECD. As you know, in those days Yugoslavia was everywhere.

This was the early 1960s and those were then the less-developed countries of the OECD area. Actually, that was well before takeoff. Spain took off in 1964/1965. So these were then relatively underdeveloped European countries. They were beautiful. The tourist industry was not yet highly developed. It was paradise. I was sent to Spain to help the Spanish team work on the quantification of economic growth over the next fifteen years—1960 to 1975, to establish a link between economic growth and education—educational structures, educational growth, educational expenses.

Now, we had developed in the OECD a method which was the manpower approach. What we did, believe it or not, we would make forecasts—fifteen year forecasts of economic development, sector by sector. In the case of that project, 1960 was the base year and 1975 was the target year. After we made these economic forecasts, we would then forecast the labor force necessary. Once that was done, we would break the labor force down into occupational categories: how many professional people, how many skilled workers, how many technicians. It was rather “wild,” when you think about it, but still. When that was done, we translated these

occupational structures into educational structures: how many people in the professions need university education or secondary education?

In this way we would establish the educational requirements in the target year. In the case of Spain, we forecast a rate of economic growth of 6 percent on average between 1960 and 1975. Believe it or not, I did the post-mortem in 1975. The rate of growth had been higher. We had underestimated!

So this was the manpower approach, and we became very versed in this. I was there in Spain and the Spanish team was—this is all for the record, so I better be careful here—the Spanish team was situated in the Ministry of Education. These were educational civil servants, so they had no idea about economics. We were four OECD fellows there, all economists. We were doing most of the calculations and actually all of the writing of the whole thing.

I was in Spain eight months, and I was in Yugoslavia four months. I was sent to Yugoslavia to get the report when we discovered that the person responsible for it in the Federal Planning Bureau had simply given up. So we found somebody else and he and I wrote the report in four months.

In those days there was a huge controversy between people who believed in the manpower approach vis-à-vis those people who said, “This is all nonsense, we have to adopt the rate-of-return approach.” Now the rate-of-return approach—and I’m sorry to bother you with all this, but this is after all a history of ideas—the rate-of-return approach was formulated by an American economist, by Theodore W. Schultz, whom we have already met in our project earlier on as a member of several of the committees of the 1950s in the United Nations. He was basically an agricultural economist, but became interested in education and pioneered the rate-of-return calculations to investments in educations—human capital.

The rate-of-return approach calculates the private rate-of-return to the individual and the social rate-of-return to society as a whole of additional years of education invested in a person. The findings were that on the whole, primary school in industrial countries has a relatively low rate-of-return contrary to what happens in developing countries, where the rate-of-return is much higher. It pays to go further in education—the rate-of-return in the United States and also in Europe gets higher the further you pursue your studies. So these people thought that you could quantify educational policy directions by undertaking these rather general educational rate-of-return analyses.

Then you had a third school, which is the social demand school. What did people, the individuals, want in terms of education? One would forecast the educational structure and expansion through social demand instead of economic considerations. In Argentina, for instance, we compared the results of the manpower approach with the results of the social demand approach, so that one could balance the economic demand with individual demand.

Another reason why I became interested in recurrent education is that I found out relatively early that the manpower approach—who could forecast fifteen years ahead of time?—was pretty unrealistic, that relying on what individuals want at a given moment is unreliable, and that the rate-of-return analysis is too vague. My conclusion was that you must make the education system more flexible so that it can react to changes in the economy and in society much faster than it can at present.

So that was the Mediterranean regional project. It made some waves. The Ford Foundation, in 1964, offered the OECD \$1 million; that is, \$1 million 1964 dollars.

TGW: That's a lot of money!

LE: To transfer that experience we had had in the Mediterranean region to Latin America. The OECD council debated for one-and-a-half days, because it meant working in non-member countries. In the end it accepted with gratitude the \$1 million. I volunteered as a (still) young man to head the team to Argentina. I spent fourteen months in Argentina—where as I said earlier, my daughter was born—at the planning bureau in Buenos Aires. We did a fascinating two-volume study on Argentina where we combined the manpower approach with a social demand approach, as I just mentioned. It is still an interesting case.

So during all that work, I said to myself, “I have gathered so much information on a variety of countries, why don’t I write it up for myself and do a doctoral?” And since I was in Paris, why not in Paris? So that is what I decided. I did the *doctorat d’état*. In France, there are three types of doctorates: the *doctorat d’état*, which is the highest, and implies you have to produce two theses, the major one and a second more popular one. The second is the *doctorat d’université*, which is alright. Then you have the *doctorat de troisième cycle*, which is not really that tremendous. I did a *doctorat d’état*, and my main thesis was comparing the occupational and educational structures of the labor force in fifty-two countries. This was my last econometric gasp. My secondary thesis was more policy-oriented, including about recurrent education. I published a summary in English. It was called, “Can the School Build a New Social Order?”

It meant a lot of work, but we were in the middle of these studies anyway. So I could use a lot of the material which was not published by the OECD for my thesis. I was piggy-backing. I defended my thesis a couple of months after I went to Geneva. I went to the ILO in Geneva on the 2nd of January 1971. I had finished all the work before I went to Geneva, but it had to be

accepted and put into shape. So I was already in Geneva when I completed everything and defended it back in Paris.

TGW: In the interview that you did for *Development and Change*, you mentioned that development was not your first love. We found out that Gisela was amongst the first, but now development comes on the scene. What made you jump to Argentina? You were a young man. Why not, I suppose. You picked up some Spanish, I suppose, in Spain. Did Argentina just seem different from the Mediterranean? And in *UN Voices* we talked about serendipity, but I suppose something just comes up. You didn't design this. An opportunity presented itself, and you pounced on it. How do you look back at that now?

LE: I did look back, and I asked the same questions as you are asking me. I must have been interested, again maybe subconsciously, in the global problems in development because already when I was in Bologna I read widely on development issues. I read Albert Hirschman, who had just published his 1958 book. I read Paul Baran.

TGW: The Sweezey-Baran?

LE: Left-wing, but very interesting. I read W.L. Lewis, who had just published his own book then. He published it, I think, in 1954 or 1955. Benjamin Higgins was a big name then. He dropped out a little bit. He published a big book in the late 1950s on development. I read them all in Bologna. I got them out of the library of the oldest university in Europe, the University of Bologna—older than the Sorbonne.

Why did I read so widely in this field, when Mundell was not interested at all? Although he became interested as I talked to him. One of the papers I did for him was on Rostow's book—which was then just out – in which he discusses the stages of economic growth. He said, "Since you are so interested in that, why don't you write me a paper on this?" And I did. Mundell told

me afterwards that that was one of my better papers during that year. But if you ask me why did I start looking at the development literature so early on whilst my university studies went not necessarily in that direction, the answer is I don't know. I seriously don't know.

When I came to New York, to Columbia, I was taught by Hirschman, who taught a lot about development issues. Peter Kennan was international trade. Actually, I did a lot of work on international trade at Columbia University. So there I had two teachers—the young Peter Kennan and the elderly Albert Hirschman, who were in that field in which I had become interested in Bologna without having had the teachers there.

When I came to OECD, I was thrown into the less-developed countries of the OECD area in those days, which was right in line with my reading. So when did development come on the professional scene? You may have noticed that I have not spent too much time in any of my jobs. I have had this seven-year itch in my professional life. I also got a little bit bored with the OECD relatively quickly, so I was interested in a change, not necessarily of organizations but of scenery.

When the Ford Foundation grant arrived, I volunteered to go to Argentina. The OECD had decided to have two countries where we would transfer the experience of the Mediterranean to Latin America. One was Peru and the other was Argentina. So I volunteered for Argentina. I got to know Latin America very well. I went to all Latin American countries during those fourteen months, except Paraguay. We organized seminars in most countries, because all those countries were then interested in this approach pioneered by this prestigious organization, as the OECD was then viewed.

So if you look back at this, there was something not well-articulated in the beginning. I was interested in development issues. I was interested in the less-developed countries, including

in Europe. Has the whole thing something to do with my background, with my earlier military service where I saw how inequalities could develop within and between individuals, without it being necessarily their fault, because of their social background? Many had to leave education at an early age, whilst they could maintain a highly intelligent debate and very often have the upper hand compared to the better educated people in that company that served the first and only Dutch army. It must have had something to do with all of these things, that I was from an early age intrigued and interested by the question of inequality—first between social classes, between individuals, and that was later generalized to countries.

In 1970, an offer came from the ILO. I was actually in Mexico when that offer reached me, because I had gone back to Argentina at the invitation of Olivetti Argentina, that financed a meeting on educational policy. I was invited as the main author of the Argentinean report. With Gisela, we went to Argentina, because the spouses were invited as well. On our way back, we went via Mexico to Cuba. In Mexico, this huge telex reached me advising of an interview in Geneva for the World Employment Programme. I said to myself, “Isn’t that fascinating? There is nothing in my work on the economics of education or on educational policy that makes me qualified for this. Why did these people write me?” But at the same time, deep down, I have always been interested, as you now know, in what I immediately perceived as a development program.

So I went for the interview in Geneva in September 1970. I discovered that I was really invited for the wrong reasons. They did not really know what it meant to elaborate an employment policy. I saw immediately that you need an economic and social development policy first and that you then have to introduce special policies for employment. It is a

development problem, but the ILO people saw it basically as a manpower problem. Since I had been working on manpower issues, they thought I was eminently qualified.

Maybe I'm too modest here, but that is how I see it. It was an incredible coincidence. I was offered a job that I instinctively had wanted all those years, all those thirty-five years—because I was thirty-five by then. All those thirty-five years I had wanted something like that. I had been to developing countries, but my specialty was something quite different and more restricted, but they hadn't seen that. I was offered this job for the wrong reasons. It was an amazing thing. It shows that if you want something sufficiently strongly, an opportunity will arise sooner or later.

TGW: I wanted to ask one more question before the tape runs out. I'm going to do what Mary Marshall tells us not to do, but I would like to ask two questions. Earlier you talked about the devastation of Germany. I wondered whether, in your travels around Latin America, you had encountered new scenes of deprivation or devastation that were equally dramatic that pushed you in this direction—your belief in social justice of equality. And the second part of the question is whether during this time in Latin America, you found that any of the *dependistas*—whether this made any sense in that context? You just started reading. Did their analysis make any sense, or did they strike you as being off the mark?

LE: What was it that should have struck me as off the mark?

TGW: The theories of [Raúl] Prebisch, [Celso] Furtado, [Fernando Henrique] Cardoso, all of these people who were writing or beginning to write at that time, did they make any sense?

LE: The first question. I have never seen anywhere the physical and human devastation that I'd seen in Germany in September 1945 and as I came back in early 1946. As I said, you

generalize Ground Zero to the extent of a country and you have Germany after the war. It was the most god-forsaken sight I have ever seen.

Have I seen something like that not on physical but on a human scale? No. I have not seen, certainly not in Latin America, an amount of suffering that could be equivalent to what the German population suffered who had survived the war, even if many people, including my Dutch compatriots to this generation, would say that they bloody well deserved it. I think no people deserves to be punished in the way the Germans have been punished because of their evil and irresponsible leaders of those days, but also by the allied bombardments, not to speak of the atrocities of the Russian troops.

Very often, when I sit in other continents—India, for instance, or in Africa—when I sit around a table with people who may be politicians and they start talking about hunger and suffering, I would say, “Who has ever suffered from hunger around this table?” It turned out I was the only one. Now it may be that I did not go to Calcutta in the 1960s, which is true. Maybe if I had gone there, I would have seen something that could be compared to what I saw in Germany. But I have not. So no, I can be quite clear there. I have not seen living hell like I saw in Germany anywhere else.

Now, of course, I was working in Buenos Aires. I was really intrigued by Argentina, because Argentina was a very interesting case. It had been among the ten richest countries in the world in the 1920s and early 1930s—among the ten richest per capita income countries in the world. That country, when I was there in the mid-1960s, had been sinking gradually. I learned that when you are at the top you can sink for a long time before really horrible things start to happen. I became very interested in the case of Argentina. Why was it that Argentina had been sliding downward for such a long time? There were of course periods where it went up again.

After the war, Argentina came out relatively rich. It had not been ruined by the war. It had been able to sell a lot of its agricultural products and the hides from its cattle.

So then came Juan Perón, and his wife Evita Perón—Evita had died in 1953, very young, and when I was there in the mid-1960s, she was still very vivid in peoples' minds. Perón, of course, was in Spain and still very much alive. Perón, who was in charge of the country after the Second World War, did all the things which you should not do. For instance, he bought the English-owned railways of Argentina for \$500 million gold dollars in 1945/1946 and the English-owned railways were about in the same shape as the railways at present in the U.K. There was a lot of old-fashioned stuff.

Then, of course, Evita, who was a marvelous woman, and certainly very, very attractive, and not stupid at all, became minister of labor. She distributed—she literally handed out money to the deserving poor. There are still some of these people who survive to this day, very old. They still love Evita. They still go to her grave every day.

So what we now call “bad governance,” there was something of that nature. There's no doubt about it. And there were economic policies that were outrageous—not outrageous humanly. What Evita Perón did was admirable, but it was outrageous from an economic point of view.

But I said to myself that there must be something more to explain the Argentinean drama. The man who came for me closest to an explanation was Gino Germani. He was of Italian descent, of course, teaching in Buenos Aires and Harvard. He had written a book about the importance of in-migration in Argentina. Argentina was the biggest immigration destination country in the world, proportionately speaking. It was much bigger than the United States. When I was in Argentina in the mid-1960s, one-third of the population of greater Buenos Aires

was still first generation immigrant. The melting pot never existed in Argentina as it could exist in another big immigration country like the United States, but never proportionately speaking that huge.

So Gino Germani had this interesting explanation. He said the melting pot did not exist. People did not really feel they were Argentinean. They came from the all over, many from Italy, from the Middle East, from Germany, and they remained very much Italian, Middle Eastern, et cetera. I rented a house in one of the suburbs of Buenos Aires, Accasuso, which was owned by a third generation German. He spoke German without an accent, Spanish with a German accent, sent his children to the German school, was a member of the German club. He had remained German. These people tried to get rich as soon as possible, and in a way get out of it again. There was much less national solidarity than there was in other countries. And Germani thought that was an important part of the explanation of the gradual sliding of Argentina.

TGW: I am going to interrupt you here because the tape is virtually out. This is the end of tape number one.

TGW: This is the beginning of tape number two, Louis Emmerij being interviewed by Tom Weiss.

LE: Let me say a few more words about the Argentinean case and the Gino Germani explanation compared to the theories encountered in Latin America when I was there. As I said, this was the middle of the 1960s. Raúl Prebisch had just gone to Geneva, but had left, of course, a huge influence behind him in ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) all through Latin America. I read his 1959 report in Spanish, about import substitution, the Hans Singer-Raúl Prebisch thesis and the center-periphery framework. I thought it was highly interesting. I love people who try to generalize something. I thought it was wonderfully written. It was

extremely clever, but it had no relationship, or extremely little relationship, to the country I was in.

That was at least what I thought. I didn't see immediately the relationship between the case of Argentina and the beautiful framework that Raúl Prebisch was setting. Because what was he saying? That we have to institute protectionist barriers because there is this center and there is this periphery. Those who are at the periphery produce goods that lose out compared to the goods produced by the rich countries, so it is a recipe for an ever-growing downward trend.

Now, I was there, and there was the Fundación Instituto di Tella. The di Tella family had become rich in the automobile industry, which had been set up behind protectionist barriers—import substitution. They had made a lot of money and had, in good time, put their money in a foundation. The man who was leading that foundation in those days was Enrique Oteiza, whom we later encounter as the director of UNRISD (UN Research Institute for Social Development). He was a very bright person and he was heading this huge foundation which had institutes for economics, education and others, and had moreover a marvelous art gallery. I asked him, “What is going on in the automobile industry? Is it going well?” He said, “No, it's not going well at all. They have done exactly what Raúl Prebisch said, but they are now being taken over by General Motors.” I said, “Why?” He said, “Because they are losing out on external competition. They cannot transfer from the national market to the outside market.”

Now, we are telling in our history that Raúl Prebisch later on had been warning that you should not go on too long with import substitution, that you must in time move from import substitution to export promotion. But I never saw this on the ground. This was in the mid-1960s. So Latin America did not do that. But to answer your question, I must say honestly that I thought Prebisch was after something.

When I later started reading into economic history, I was struck by Friedrich List, who was professing exactly that. And indeed, there is no European country that has developed without a period of protectionism. But we, and East Asia, managed to gradually switch in time. I was impressed with Prebisch, even if it did not match what I saw on the ground in those days.

TGW: What about our friends Cardoso and Furtado? Were they floating around in there somewhere?

LE: Oh yes. Fernando Henrique [Cardoso] I have known since then, because I went to Chile quite a bit and I went to talk with the people in ECLA. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who was a left-wing intellectual in those days—and for a long time after those days—had to flee his country (Brazil) when the military took over in 1964. So he was working in ECLA, and actually more in ILPES (Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Progress), the institute that was next to ECLA. I talked a lot with him in those days. He thought then that Prebisch was wrong. He saw much better than I did that he was wrong, because the Latin Americans were continuing too long on that protectionist trend. He knew his populist people better than I did.

TGW: [Enrique] Iglesias called it the “Talmud,” remember?

LE: Yes, the Talmud, and rightly so. Cardoso thought that Prebisch was too soft on the evils of capitalism. But Cardoso was a sophisticated *dependista*. He was a sophisticated man who was writing about dependency theory in a much more subtle way than André Gunder Frank, for instance. André Gunder Frank was like Gisela, too emotional. He got emotional in his writings. Cardoso was always a cool cucumber. He had already written his famous book with [Enzo] Falletto, which was translated and published later, in 1969, in English.

I was mightily impressed with Fernando Henrique Cardoso. He was a sociologist, spoke numerous languages, very clear analytically. When I interviewed Enrique Iglesias, I asked him,

“Isn’t it strange that somebody who is not in a political position thinks A, and when he gets into a position of political responsibility he thinks B?” His answer was interesting. He said, “No, you cannot say”—even if I had not implied it—“that Fernando Henrique Cardoso has really changed his mind. He was in a different situation. He still believes there is something wrong in the political and economic system. But he became president thirty years after writing his book, in a globalizing world. If he would have practiced now what he preached then, it would have led to disaster.”

I have always been intrigued with the discrepancy between what people think *before* and *after* they are in power, and what they actually do when they are *in* power. I was in a meeting in Caracas this summer, in the Development Bank of the Andean Countries. The president of that bank, Enrique García, likes to discuss with intellectuals from time to time. This time, he had a lot of politicians around the table. All these politicians were out of a political job and they all had the brightest ideas about what Latin America should do. I asked them, “Why didn’t you do that when you were president or minister of finance?” They had no answer to that.

But I have always been impressed with Fernando Henrique Cardoso. When I was in Holland, at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), he visited my country. There was a huge meeting in parliament—well, not in parliament itself but in one of the buildings of parliament. It was an open meeting. There were about 700 people there and I was asked to chair. I introduced him, giving his intellectual qualities but also forecasting that he would become president of Brazil. When I came to see him much later when he was elected president, during the transition period, he remembered that. He said, “I would not have known, myself, in those days that I would become president.”

I was impressed with Raúl Prebisch, and I was impressed with Fernando Henrique Cardoso because of their intellectual power, their ability to produce an economic and social framework that made sense. I did not see immediately the relationship with my country, Argentina, but I have seen it more clearly later. The Argentineans just went on too long doing what Raúl Prebisch and others—Friedrich List, for instance—had recommended. If I now read the literature, Prebisch had warned against this as early as 1964. I should have known this in 1965-1966, when I was in Argentina, but I did not.

TGW: When you were in Santiago, what was your impression of ECLA, later ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) secretariat in the sense that, in our own books, and subsequently we look upon them with ECE (Economic Commission for Europe) as a center for intellectual sparks? Was that your impression at that time? Was our recent judgment on the mark?

LE: Yes, very much so, because I was there in the wake of Raúl Prebisch's departure. Don't forget, he left in 1964 for Geneva. But he was a very clever man. He kept a foot in ECLA by keeping the directorship of ILPES. When I came there for the first time in 1964—because after the Ford Foundation grant was accepted by the OECD council, my OECD boss and I made a tour through five Latin American countries to decide which countries we would work in, and Chile was one of them—Prebisch had just left. His successor showed us very proudly his office, which was kept in impeccable and unchanged shape—all these books lining the walls.

The people that were there, like Cardoso, Oswaldo Sunkel, and Celso Furtado were impressive. They had done a lot of research. They knew exactly what Latin America should do and where it should go. They were insightful and intelligent people. I was very impressed and everything that we have said about ECLA in those days in our present books I can underwrite

without the slightest hesitation. It's not that I would have placed a footnote in our books that said, "Louis is dissenting from this view." It was a remarkable place.

TGW: What about the ILO, when you arrived. On prima facia grounds, one would say the thing has been around for fifty years, it must be asleep. But they had just won the Nobel Prize, a couple years before [1969]. How did it compare with ECLA?

LE: The ILO was, of course, created at the Treaty of Versailles, in 1919. It was integrated in but separated—if you can say that—from the League of Nations. It was one big budget, the League of Nations and ILO, but ILO—because it was tripartite—had a separate status. When I joined, the organization had just celebrated its 50^h anniversary, in 1969. David Morse, an American, had been the director-general for more than twenty years. He had been an under-secretary of labor after the war in his country. At the International Labor Conference of 1969, the ILO received the Nobel Prize for Peace; Pope Paul VI, who made apparently a wonderful speech, was there; David Morse launched the World Employment Programme and then quickly packed his bags and disappeared.

When I came on the scene in January 1971, the United States had just stopped paying their budgetary dues. That was in November 1970 because of—

TGW: The appointment of the Soviet deputy!

LE: There was a fight for the succession of David Morse between Francis Blanchard and Wilfred Jenks. Now Jenks was a real intellectual, a very impressive intellectual mind in international law.

TGW: I've got a couple of his books.

LE: A very impressive man, but not very much of a politician. He had promised the Americans that he would not appoint a Russian as assistant-director-general. Francis Blanchard

was supposed to win by two or three votes, but because of this last-minute deal with the Americans—of course, George Meany was behind all that—Jenks won by one vote. The first thing he did after he won was to appoint Mr. Astapenko, a very nice Ukrainian official to become assistant-director-general. George Meany was furious. He had always said, “We are tripartite, but the bloody Russians have three countries represented—the Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia.” They had three so-called tripartite representatives in each, so they had nine “government” votes. There was something in that, but it was a little bit irrational, emotional.

So Jenks started in a very unhandy and awkward way. When I joined, the ILO was borrowing money from commercial banks. All bloody hell broke loose. I was the only one who was recruited because a recruitment freeze had been introduced. An exception was made for me because of the importance of the World Employment Programme (WEP). But when I came, there was this wonderful name of the program—World Employment Programme—but nothing else. There were very few people and even fewer who had a clue as to what was supposed to happen, how we were to turn this program into an operational activity. There was no money, nothing.

I must say, I knew what the WEP implied and should be. Fortunately for me, there had already been the Dudley Seers ILO employment mission to Colombia, which also clarified what was needed. So I could write a program with the two or three people whom I found who were worthwhile. But how to get the money to implement the program? There was a gentleman in the ILO by the name of Kailas Doctor, an Indian, who was ILO representative of the newly-created UNFPA (UN Population Fund) which, in those days—we are in early 1971—had lots of money but not many programs. So this Kailas Doctor had done the rounds of the ILO asking all the directors whether they needed money for activities slightly related to population. They all

said “no.” So he came to me as a last resort. I was the new kid on the block. He said, “Louis, do you need money?” I said, “For God’s sake, of course I need money for my program. What do I have to do to get it?” He said, “Write a proposal on population and employment.” I said, “You’ve got it.”

So I went into the library for two weeks. I became a half-demographer. I wrote this program proposal. Three months hence, two senior people from the UNFPA came along—wonderful people, a Dane and a man from Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav was director of the UN Population Division. It clicked. They loved me. I loved them. And in the middle of 1971, I had more than \$1 million in the kitty that I received from UNFPA. As [Aristotle] Onassis has once said, “The first million dollars is the most difficult to get. Once you have those, everything comes.” That’s what happened. The Swedes gave me \$1 million, et cetera. I could almost open my own bank account.

They all said, “Your program is fascinating. Are you suffering from the American attitude to stop payment?” I said, “Of course, I am suffering. I have this wonderful program I have just written. There is nothing I can do with it because there is no money.” So I received lots of money. I was free to hire and fire anybody I liked. Keith Griffin came along. Dharam Ghai came along. Dick Blandy came along, et cetera. Everybody who has been important in the program was hired by me, and I could give them good positions because I had all this extra-budgetary money.

I was backed up by the number two in the organization, an Egyptian by the name of Abbas Amar. He was a thoroughly Egyptian gentleman from the south of the country, a wonderful man. Without him, I would not have lasted. He backed me up. Otherwise, I would

have been thrown out or gone out after six months or so. But he was very much amused by all these young people doing interesting work.

So I built up my own capacity. I did not find it on the spot. Since I was able to locate the money and get the money, I was able to create an ILO within the ILO. We were of course criticized by the traditional ILO people, that is by most of the organization. There were, for instance, the labor code people. I may have underestimated the importance of that work, but I was so obsessed by setting up my WEP that I had to reject everything else. I didn't reject it explicitly, but I wasn't really interested. They all said, "You have to look at the labor code." I said, "No. I must look at the entire development situation." But today, I must admit that I probably underestimated the labor code, but not by much! Then there were the traditional technical assistance activities concerning manpower problems, agricultural training activities, et cetera. They also did not quite understand what was going on.

So the World Employment Programme was a strange animal. It was covering the whole economic development surface. The traditional people said: "This is not ILO. This is what the United Nations should have done." I said, "Yes, you're quite right. This is what the United Nations should have hired me to do. But they did not launch the World Employment Programme. That was the ILO and David Morse who launched it." Moreover, it is within the terms of reference of the ILO, because its constitution has annexed to it as an integral part the Declaration of Philadelphia, written by Wilfred Jenks—a wonderfully written document. It has this famous phrase: "Poverty anywhere is a threat to development everywhere." It was very well-written.

And since this declaration was written in 1944, when the ILO was in Montreal, and the United Nations did not yet exist, it encompasses a wide field, including international trade and

economic development. However, it was a difficult proposition. I had to create an island in the ILO defended by Abbas Amar and myself. Was that a mistake? Yes and no. I could have done it without becoming an island. What did [Leon] Trotsky say? Trotsky was for the permanent revolution, and [Joseph] Stalin said, “No, we must first build socialism in one country.” Well, I thought I had to build my program in one single department first before moving into the permanent revolution.

I believe that it couldn't have been done without doing it as I did, but at the same time, of course, it was asking for trouble. Even I had stayed longer, the traditional ILO would have won the day, particularly after the end of the 1970s. But it was a great time. We did wonderful work, for example, on the informal sector. It was launched by the ILO Kenya mission with Hans Singer and Richard Jolly as co-leaders. John Weeks, an American economist, was the one who actually put it on the map in writing. It was a wonderful chapter he wrote on the informal sector. I got money to create a new research section in my department to work on the informal sector. We did a lot of case studies with another American in charge, Harold Lubell.

Next to the informal sector, I organized research on income distribution, alternative technologies, population, rural development, emergency employment programs, and others. There was also the growth and redistribution idea that had come out of the Kenya employment mission and out of our research with basic needs as an end objective. Employment is not only an end objective. Employment is in a sense both an end and a means, but it is basically a means whilst basic needs is an end objective. So in a very short time—I spent just under six years in the ILO—we created ideas and proposals that have not really actually died.

[Jimmy] Carter, of course, was elected a couple of months after the World Employment Conference, in November 1976. When he came to power in the White House in January 1977,

the policy of the United States that was against basic needs at the conference turned into a positive stance, and the USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) talked about “basic human needs.”

So in summary, I did not find anything of intellectual interest in that field of employment and development when I came to the ILO as when I visited at ECLA. I did not find the intellectual caliber, but I found intelligent people in other fields. People who were working on the International Labor Code were highly-respected people in their field. There was a Greek by the name of [Nicholas] Valticos, who could have ended up in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Actually, he did end up in the European Court of Justice (ECJ). They were very good people in their own right, but I didn’t find anybody with whom I could discuss economic and social development issues. There was no money, so I had to do it all from scratch in a relatively short period of time.

TGW: I think we are going to come back to this after lunch. I just want to ask one question here, because you mentioned this in the other interview and today, which is the importance of individuals in relation to the bureaucracy. You mentioned Abbas Amar and your own “gang” of people, you called it. To what extent would your experience lead you to think that the traditional trappings of the international civil service—permanent contracts, keeping people around, geography quotas, on and on and on—is the wrong way to go for intellectual development? You emphasized, “I hired who I wanted. They stayed around for a bit. We had money to go to the field. We were a little enclave within the ILO.”

LE: Little? I had 150 people in Geneva and another 150 in the field, including in the Regional Employment Teams in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

TGW: So a big enclave.

LE: I had created a big island.

TGW: But is this the way to go?

LE: When Wilfred Jenks had his heart attack in October 1973 in Rome, he was hospitalized, not yet dead. Abbas Amar flew to Rome and one of the things he said to Jenks was, “We must offer Louis Emmerij a permanent contract.” Now imagine this. The guy was dying, right. He agreed, and Abbas Amar came back and offered me a permanent contract. I refused. I said, “I don’t want a permanent contract.” Now, of course, I could have said yes and I could have left anyway. A permanent contract doesn’t mean you must be there permanently until the end of your days. But it gives you a kind of incentive for laziness. Or it gives you an incentive to ask for a big premium when you leave.

So I have always been against permanent contracts and I have been against tenure, to tell you the truth. Now, you must be a tenured professor by now.

TGW: Yes, I used to be against tenure. I also had a permanent contract with the UN as well, but I resigned as well. Having one does not imply that one has to keep it!

LE: So I refused. Abbas Amar was very, very surprised. But when I explained to him why, he was impressed. So the people I found in the ILO, and whom I found later in the system, all these people had permanent contracts. Those that remain are often the lazy ones or are, on the whole, the less competent ones. There are exceptions, like Hans Singer. He spent twenty-one years in the system and was still as bright and as eager as he was in the beginning. But I have noticed that some of these permanent people can be “woken up.” I would talk to them one on one. I spent a lot of time talking to people, getting them interested. I would get them interested in the program I had proposed and that had been accepted by the governing body of the ILO.

But the bulk of them, they just stared at me. They had even a certain arrogance because they thought I could not do very much. Actually, I did send some of them to the personnel department. I said, “I can’t work with these people. You have given them these contracts. Here they are. I don’t want to see them back, and I have now enough money to hire other people.” But if you don’t have that amount of money, and do not have that success in recruiting, you are nowhere with a bunch of people like this. So I am against permanent contracts. I am also against one-year assignments. I think that is silly. If you recruit somebody, you look at that person, and if you think he or she is OK, you give them three years—not two, but three years to start with. That is what I have asked myself. When I went to the OECD Development Centre as its president, they proposed two years. I said, “No, give me three years.” Then you can do something. And that is what was done.

So the recruitment machine in international organizations and elsewhere—as I said, also in universities you can have the same problem—the recruiting machine is all wrong. You must have nobody on a permanent contract. Let the permanent people die out, and everybody who is recruited afterwards must be recruited on a three-year contract. Now what has happened? They went from one extreme to another. They now recruit people for six months or a year. That is also a recipe for disaster. That is what you very often see, that bureaucracies go from one extreme to another.

As I said earlier, you can stimulate certain people. I “recovered” several people in the ILO, as I “recovered” several people in the Development Centre, where I met with the same problem and where I also got extra financial assistance. But there, I found strange resistance. The council of the OECD, when I came with extra budgetary funds, said to me, “Hey, you are trying to do things beyond our control. We have approved a program and a budget and that is

what you are supposed to do.” I explained at some length that I wanted to do exactly that but they had not used enough money. But again, I got a fair deal of money—not so much as I got in the 1970s, I must say. The reception I got in so many countries, including in Germany, to give \$1 million or \$500,000—never have I seen this again. I got in the Development Centre \$200,000 or \$100,000, a much smaller amount.

So no permanent contracts, not even if you have been there for five, six, seven years. Three years contracts to start with. Two year extensions. Each time, look at the person’s performance. And if the performance is not good after five years or seven years, out they go. Also look at the leadership in these organizations. Get people in director positions who have some experience or some feeling for how you stimulate people. Talk to the people. Even if you find a lot of them, talk to them. I spent an enormous amount of time talking to every single individual when I came to an organization, starting with the secretaries. I worked my way up. Most interesting information comes from the secretaries. They know much more about what’s going on than everybody else.

That is, of course, a tall order. How can you get to this state of affairs? I think it is easier to get rid of the permanent contracts and get three-years than it is to get leadership that has both an intellectual grasp of the problem and has the psychological ability and insight to stimulate people. This is very difficult. I remember in the OECD Development Centre—we will come to that maybe later—I met two or three people who just couldn’t care less. One of them I actually physically threw out of my office and also back to the personnel department. I don’t accept this kind of attitude and it is accepted much too much in the United Nations—and also in Brussels and also in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). So incompetence must be—well, maybe not punished, but it cannot be rewarded.

TGW: We are going to pause here. This is the end of tape number two.

TGW: This is the beginning of tape number three, the afternoon of the 27th of September 2005, Louis Emmerij with Tom Weiss. We are still in Geneva at the ILO. You mentioned something earlier that figures in a lot of textbooks, that I think very few people know anything about, which is the tripartite system. I just wanted to know whether you think it actually works, and in particular, looking at the future, whether similar kinds of mechanisms might help within other parts of the UN to pluralize debate, to bring in some other voices.

LE: I have always thought, right from the beginning when I entered the ILO, that the tripartite structure has advantages. It surely is much more difficult to reach a decision with governments, employers' associations, and trade unions than it is with governments alone. And God knows it is not easy to reach agreement among so many governments; there are 191 at present. So it is more difficult, but it is much more realistic. What is an international agreement between only governments, if at the national level trade unions, employers—and we have today also a host of NGOs—are against it.

I have found the tripartite structure enervating but terribly rewarding once you reach an agreement—enervating because the employers saw ghosts everywhere. As soon as you started talking about income distribution they went through the roof. Trade unions are enervating because they did not represent the unemployed. I had a terrible problem with the trade unions. They don't represent the informal sector. They only represent organized labor. So one of the things Abbas Amar, the number two of the organization, and I tried to do was to teach the trade unions that they should cast their nets wider. Some of them did.

I still remember the trade unions representative of Colombia. We discussed the Colombia report in the governing body when I came into the organization. The trade union

representative of Colombia rejected many of the recommendations the report had made because it went well beyond the organized workers. That man was murdered two years later by an organization—I think it was called M-19. He was murdered and found on a heap of rubbish. When I heard that, I said, “If only he had listened to Abbas Amar.”

So it is enervating, but it is the real world. Governments cannot sell what they agree on at the international level. They cannot sell it at home if they don't take on board the interest groups that are there. In consequence, I believe that in the present day and age there should be a “third UN,” as Richard would call it. We should bring on board, as part of the decision-making process, not only workers and trade unions but also other influential organized groups. As I said, I suffered. An illustration is that during the World Employment Conference, I did not only have the American tripartite delegation against me, but also the European employers. They did not vote against the end result; they withheld from voting.

Another illustration is the ideological angle. Interest groups rarely look at the facts. They had their own ideas well in advance. I had prepared a draft final statement for the World Employment Conference. When it came into the hands of the employers, they made a terrible scandal about it. They said, “How can you write up in advance the outcome?,” which is of course something that needed to be done. In summary, enervating, but in the end it pays dividends if you can get them on the same line.

TGW: Earlier you mentioned the Kenya report. Maybe you could say a little something more about it. But I wondered whether you could mix into the conversation as well what you think you learned from Asia and Africa. Clearly there were a variety of countries at various levels of development in Latin America, but the spread, once you put Africa and Asia over the 1970s into the mix, is enormous. You must have had to develop a few new lenses to look at

these situations. What did you learn from Kenya and in general from these new sets of countries?

LE: Don't forget that the East Asian miracle was still ahead of us in those days. But already then several people—not me, being honest—several insightful people said, “Louis, you must look at Taiwan, because what is happening there is a growth and redistribution thing.” Irma Adelman, a lady economist, very well-known, who worked with us as a consultant, did a paper on South Korea, which she called, “Redistribution Before Growth.” Because that is exactly what happened in Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea.

General [Douglas] MacArthur imposed a huge redistributive reform in Japan. Any documentary you can still see to this day will emphasize that. There was redistribution of land and other assets in these countries before they started growing and that is why, once growth started, it was in an equitable fashion. Actually, their income distribution only started deteriorating when, under the pressure of the OECD and the industrial countries, they threw open their borders for capital inflows, et cetera.

So already in those days—I'm talking now of the mid-1970s—there were people who had told me to look at East Asia. We did, but not in the way we should have done. As I said to Irma, “Your thesis is very interesting, but ‘redistribution before growth’ is not very handy to advocate when growth has already started.”

The Kenya mission was unique as far as I am concerned. The first mission we had was to Colombia, under Dudley Seers. I was not yet in the ILO. The second mission was to what was then called Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. I was there and I went on that mission, again under Dudley Seers. The third and fourth missions were simultaneous—one to Kenya and the other one to Iran, which is an underplayed and underrated mission, the one to Iran. I will tell you why, before

I move to Kenya. In that mission, we looked at income distribution in Iran and found it totally skewed. The mission report warned that if nothing would be done in terms of income distribution, where 1 percent of the population lived in the twenty-first century and 99 percent lived in the fourteenth century, if the Iranian government under the Shah would not do something drastic, it would not be a sustainable situation. Now, of course, nobody talked about [Ruholla] Khomeini, but it was clear that something had to give.

I opted to go with the Kenya mission, because there was Hans Singer, whom I admired, and there was Richard, who was already a friend and a colleague. It was a unique mission in the sense that it came up with two useful ideas—the informal sector and redistribution from growth. When people write about the informal sector, including myself, you always say it was Keith Hart who talked about it first in the case of Ghana. He went for a while to IDS (Institute of Development Studies) Sussex, and that's why the IDS people took the idea to Kenya before we were actually there. That may very well be, but if the Kenya mission had not existed, the Keith Hart thing would have just fallen by the wayside. It was the Kenya report—and John Weeks, the American economist I mentioned earlier in this interview—who put the informal sector on the map. That was one.

Hans Singer, who was then only sixty-two years old, was a young man! He was born in 1910. This was 1972. He had this, to my mind, absolutely brilliant idea. And he had it—nobody else. He had this idea of “redistribution from growth,” as he called it. If you cannot redistribute existing wealth, like land reform, why can't you then redistribute more equitably the future growth? It is a more realistic idea. You don't touch the existing distribution of income, and particularly wealth. Changing the existing wealth structure is of course the fastest way to change income distribution. Land, of course, is an essential element of the existing source of

wealth. But if this is politically unfeasible and difficult in a given country, then why don't you leave that untouched but change the income distribution at the margins? Within a couple of decades, you then have a totally different ballgame.

Like many great ideas, it was a simple idea, really, once you see it before you. The Kenya mission put these two huge ideas on the map which then later, together with the research we were doing in Geneva, led to the concept of basic needs.

The Kenya mission was an inspired mission, because it came up with two ideas that were path-breaking. Where do you find, in the matter of six weeks, two ideas that have lived on to this very day?

TGW: One of the things that you mentioned earlier, and that we wanted to come back to, was the notion of basic needs. We've discussed this before. I wondered if you could just briefly spell out how this came up, where it came up, why it came up, and in particular the ILO's contribution?

LE: Relatively early in our work on employment and economic and social growth, we had the idea that employment is to a large extent an intermediary to something more important. As I said earlier, employment is both a means and an end., because people consider it important to have an income-generating opportunity. But it must lead to something which is an end product—your lifestyle, what you can accomplish, how you can live. So that idea came up relatively early in the ILO-WEP, independent from what happened outside of it. We are speaking of 1973 or 1974.

Secondly, the Kenya mission, as I just said, came up with this important idea of redistribution from growth, which was picked up by Hollis Chenery, who was then the chief

economist of the World Bank under [Robert] McNamara, and he did this very good book, *Redistribution With Growth*.

Now, when at the end of 1974 and the beginning of 1975, it was decided that we would have a World Employment Conference in June 1976, I made Dharam Ghai responsible for the technical team to do the preparatory work for the World Employment Conference. He had been director of research of WEP. He had taken my place as director of research of the program when I became the overall director of the entire program. But when this big idea of the World Employment Conference came along, I took him away from that and put him in charge of the technical team we constituted for the preparatory work.

Now, who said that success has many parents and failure is an orphan? From that point of view, basic needs must have been a huge success because it now has many fathers. I am not a father. I am the architect, to speak in HDR terms! One day, Dharam Ghai came into my office, relatively early on, and he said to me, “Louis, I think we must make basic needs the centerpiece of the report we are going to put before the conference.” I said, “What is that? What is basic needs?” He explained that to me relatively quickly and easily. Within twenty minutes, I agreed to that.

I may not have many ideas, but I recognize a good idea when I see one. Now how did Dharam Ghai get it? One possibility is that he got it from himself. It is possible. But some of the people who worked in the department—and by then it was already a big department—said that they channeled the idea to him coming from the Bariloche Foundation in Argentina, which was working on the same idea. It produced a report in 1976. And the top technical man of that foundation came to visit my people working in the population field. One of them was Michael

Hopkins. Michael Hopkins discussed with him and Michael claims that the idea of basic needs came from that man to him and Michael communicated it to Dharam Ghai.

It's really not that important. But since we have been doing this history, I have been checking left, right, and center, spoken to many of these people who were working with me on that, and I think it must have been something like that. So the first chain was Argentina—the Bariloche Foundation. Their top technical man came to Geneva and is interested in our work on population. We had elaborated a big model on population and development. He discussed basic needs. My man got the message, communicated it to Dharam, who communicated it to me. That's one.

Second, there were people who worked with us as consultants who were involved in the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation work leading to the 1975 report, *What Now?* People also communicated some of those ideas to us. So I had two channels from outside into the ILO, but there was of course also our own work following up on the Kenya mission on income distribution and economic development.

Thus, as far as I can establish, on this 27th of September 2005, the idea came from three directions: Bariloche, DHF, and from within the ILO. We had a first draft of our World Employment Conference report ready in the summer of 1975. That was simultaneously with the *What Now?* report, and ahead of the report of the Bariloche Foundation. But when everything is said and done, let us say it was in the air, like so many times an idea comes up. It is in the air and several people work on it. And it is being discovered or rediscovered simultaneously.

What I find much more interesting is why wasn't that picked up earlier? There is some talk about Pitamber Pant, the Indian economist working in the Planning Bureau there on long-term forecasts. I've known the man well, and he was indeed talking about minimum needs, but

he never had a strategy elaborated that would satisfy those minimum needs. I've also been surprised that the idea of this psychologist [Abraham] Maslow was never picked up, although it was a much more complex system. It is five rungs on the ladder, starting with basic needs as we defined it and ending up with cultural needs at the end of the game.

The idea, therefore, was there already for many decades, but it was not picked up until it was picked up simultaneously by three groups of people communicating with each other through personal channels and personal visits. That is how it is.

TGW: We have taken the stance in UNIHP (United Nations Intellectual History Project) that we actually don't really care who created an idea, but that it's what happens with the idea. Actually, Dharam [Ghai] in his interview went back and looked and said it caught on because in fact it was unveiled at the conference in June. This leads me to ask, "Is this the main utility of conferences, to get people to look at something anew, or launch something anew, which then can be followed up?" Was Dharam correct, and in general what do you think about such global gatherings?

LE: Look, I think a global conference, a world conference, that does not present and/or push policy ideas is not worthwhile. The World Food Conference had an important message. The environmental conference (UN Conference on the Human Environment) had an important message. The World Population Conference had an important message. And the World Employment Conference I think had a very drastic—people would say radical—message, because basic needs implies redistribution. The first part of the question is clear. If you go through the motions and the work and the expense of having a global conference, you better have an idea of which you are sure it betters the world situation and the fate of humankind. We were absolutely sure about that in terms of employment, redistribution, growth, and satisfying basic

needs, including of the 20 percent poorest in the population. It was not the 40 percent of McNamara, but it was 20 percent.

So I think that is one. Why would you otherwise have a conference if you don't have an important message? How can we have a pattern of economic development that creates more employment, higher income, and meets basic needs? That was the challenge. Don't forget that we had come out of a high economic growth period between the early 1950s and the end of the 1960s. There was an average rate of economic growth of more than 5 percent. Never had so many countries grown at such speed for such a long time. And still we discovered that the employment situation in many countries did not improve. The poverty situation did not improve and the income distribution did not improve.

Now, we knew already that if countries would be able to grow for a long period—thirty or forty years at that speed—then of course, yes, employment would increase and poverty would decrease. That was the message later of the East Asian countries. But are you sure you can have such a high-speed economy for so long? And isn't there a strategy that can deliver these goods with a slower rate of economic growth and much faster? Was it again Stalin who said, "You have to sacrifice several generations to reach the goals of socialism?" We did ask the same question. Is it really necessary for so many people to suffer for long if you can find an alternative strategy? That was the message. That was what we delivered.

At the end of the 1970s, I thought that we had made a contribution toward the elaboration of a pattern of economic development that could deliver on employment, income distribution, and basic needs. That did not happen, in spite of the American *virage* after Jimmy Carter became president. It did not happen because of the counter-revolution of the 1980s and beyond,

which went back to an economic strategy which we thought had been discredited, among others by our work. So we had to start all over again.

In summary, I think it is important for a global conference to have an important message. If not, it is not worth doing. I think all the conferences—most of the conferences we have had—had an important message and did advance the cause.

TGW: With an important sound bite: “basic needs.” Why were Chenery and McNamara interested? Maybe I have this stereotypical notion of Mr. McNamara left over from his earlier days, as U.S. Secretary of Defense, but was this opportunistic? Were they generally moved by the notion? What was at work?

LE: You see, nowadays the comparison is made between the present president of the World Bank and McNamara, because they both have a Pentagon background. Although I must say that the present president has very kindly said, “Don’t compare me with McNamara because it would not do justice to him.” I rather appreciate that. McNamara I have known very well, since he became president of the World Bank. He really wanted to find a means to eradicate the Vietnam blame, or curse, that he had on him. He was genuinely interested in economic development. He was genuinely interested in improving the lot of the population. There was his famous Nairobi speech—I think it was 1973—in which he also came close to the idea of distribution and actually even basic needs, although he never mentioned the name.

When we were writing the first draft of the WEC report on basic needs in 1975, I had asked several outside people to be on the writing team. Not only Gerry Helleiner kindly accepted, but also first class people from the World Bank and from the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization). From the World Bank we had Helen Hughes, from Australia. She was pretty high up, director of the research department, I think. She was totally taken by the

concept of basic needs, communicated that to Hollis Chenery, who communicated that to McNamara. I was invited several times before the World Employment Conference (WEC) to Washington to give presentations on basic needs, organized by Hollis Chenery in person. McNamara wanted to see me each time.

I have never been celebrated at such high levels in the World Bank ever since. They were sincerely taken with the idea. And, of course, the Chenery book came close to it already in 1974. You had many, many people in the Bank who wanted to improve economic development policies and who were on that path of redistribution with growth. Hollis Chenery, Paul Streeten, and Mahbub ul Haq all started working on basic needs after the WEC.

It was a sincere effort and not just for the gallery. That's how I felt about it. Hollis Chenery was, for God's sake, one of world's leading economists. I could not touch him. He was just out of my league. He was interested. He believed in the concept. He wanted to know more about it and he wanted to work on it. He put the whole Mahbub ul Haq team to work on the concept.

TGW: If I am not mistaken, the employment missions—and you have just mentioned the drafting of the report for the conference—involved people from other agencies. It sounds as if there is or was more cooperation among at least a few individuals than is commonly the case in what is usually defined as “turf wars” or competition.

LE: These were true inter-agency missions. They were financed by the UNDP (UN Development Programme), not by the ILO. UNDP put up the money. We appointed the chief of mission, Abbas Amar and I—or the chiefs of mission in the case of Kenya—and the chief of mission together with us decided who was going to come. We actually asked for given people from agencies. We did not say, “Oh, send anybody you like.” No, we said, “Send X or Send Y.”

The agencies—I don't want to give them more merit than they deserve—the agencies had nothing to lose. It was a case of one or two people. They would say, “The ILO wants Mr. X? OK, Mr. X goes for six weeks,”—the duration of these missions.

So yes, there was true collaboration, but it did not commit the agencies. They just were “losing” one person for a period of six weeks and a couple of follow-up missions afterwards. Now, that does not mean that there was no impact there. I think the impact on UNICEF (UN Children's Fund) was enormous. The impact on the World Bank was also big. There was some impact on UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organisation). There was impact on UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development). The regional commissions—in the case of Kenya, we asked the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). There was some impact there. However, on the whole don't overestimate the extent to which the agencies were committed to the outcome of a mission because they had a person in it.

The real exception is Helen Hughes, whom I've already mentioned. She was not on any of the employment missions, but she was in the drafting group of the first draft of the WEC report. It was the first time we put basic needs at the center of our attention and as I said, she was so taken with it that she sold it to Chenery and to McNamara who, by the way, were already on the path themselves.

The World Health Organization (WHO) started to work on basic health needs; UNICEF on basic needs for childcare, et cetera. The concept had quite an impact between 1975 and 1980. Then it became a subterranean current. It's never actually ceased to exist and it has erupted again in the 1990s, for example, in the shape of the HDR-series.

TGW: At almost the same time, or a little earlier actually, growing out of UNCTAD and then the special session in New York in 1975, was the so-called New International Economic

Order (NIEO). How do you look back? It certainly wasn't an idea, but a litany of demands. But how did this atmosphere translate itself into your own work and across the system?

LE: It had a positive impact on the attitude of the developing countries. It had a directly negative impact on the attitude of the industrial countries who saw, once this idea of NIEO was launched in 1974—they saw ghosts all over the place, including in the WEC. It was exciting, I must say. I had people on my staff, including in relatively important positions, who were totally sold to the idea of a New International Economic Order. I saw it then and I see it more clearly now as a missed opportunity. It could have been so wonderful had the G-77 (Group of 77) guys had more discipline; if they had more discipline, if they had done their homework better, had they reduced their wish list somewhat and put in priorities.

But it was exciting, because it was an important idea. It was about redistribution—international redistribution. Most unfortunately, the developing countries, who had been very enthusiastic about the idea of basic needs, did not see clearly the complementarity between national redistribution and international redistribution. They saw it as opposing factors. So strangely enough—although one should not stress the point too much—once the World Bank got into the act in a big, visible way, and once the United States of America, or USAID, got into it in a big way, the developing countries were saying, “Have we been taken for a ride by the ILO or did we miss something? We were so much in favor. We thought it was such a good idea. But now that the World Bank thinks it's a good idea and even the United States of America believes it's a good idea, we may have to think again” That was a silly reaction.

It was a very silly reaction, but it was after my days in the ILO which I left in September 1976. If I had been in the ILO and if Abbas Amar had been in the ILO, during the second half of the 1970s, we might have been able to convince these countries that the contradictions they

detected were wrong. So the New International Economic Order was a huge missed opportunity. But there was an important message. It was the same message as Raúl Prebisch had, the same message that Cardoso had, the same message so many people had from the 1950s onwards and probably before, in the League of Nations, that something was amiss, something was wrong in the distribution of economic growth worldwide and the question was what could be done about it?

What could be done to improve this distribution? Prebisch had one way. Cardoso had another way. And the New International Economic Order had a third way. It was mishandled, as I said, because there was never a thought-out strategy. It was just a huge list. It was a little bit like—I hope none of my feminist friends will read this—it's a little bit like many of the women pressure groups. They wanted everything at the same time and that is not always a good recipe for progress.

TGW: As I recall, Dharam was at a university somewhere in East Africa when you picked him up. And you mentioned Gerry Helleiner, who has remained at the University of Toronto. You earlier mentioned Raymond Barre, who actually had his foot in banks and was also teaching. What kind of scholars are most useful in the context of pushing out ideas within international institutions?

LE: I think Georges Pompidou might have been much very useful. He was the bank man. I have, as I said earlier, great admiration for Georges Pompidou. He had a human touch.

Gerry Helleiner, of course, was one of the leading lights in economic development thinking worldwide. In Canada, he was seen as a kind of radical, much to my surprise, because in our midst he was rather a man of the middle—maybe because my team was rather to the left. So Gerry was of tremendous use. He wrote well. He was quick. He was an excellent

commentator on draft chapters and paper. He would just demolish these pieces, but in a positive fashion.

Dharam Ghai was the director of the Institute for Development Studies of the University of Nairobi. He was a big name in Kenya. He was a third generation Indian. He immediately after independence took on Kenyan nationality—he became very popular. He was, of course, very well-trained. So he became the director of the IDS at the University of Nairobi. And he was our main counterpart for the Kenya employment mission in 1972. A small team went ahead of the mission proper. Richard Jolly, Hans Singer, and I went to Kenya for the first time at the end of 1971. The mission took place three months afterwards. So we established a counterpart, a local team, which Dharam Ghai appointed and headed.

I was very impressed with Dharam. I still am impressed with Dharam to this day. I regret that he never returned to his country. Had I known that when I asked him to join the ILO that he would never return, I might have had second thoughts.

The kind of people that were useful, both as consultants to our research work, or to our regional employment teams—we have not at all talked about the regional employment teams that we established in the different regions—and to the employment missions, must be theoretically well-schooled but also have a practical bent. For instance, Dudley Seers, who was theoretically fine but had very much of a practical bent, would be much more useful than Amartya Sen in a mission. Amartya Sen, on the other hand, was outstanding to stimulate research. He produced two books for the WEP, one on technology and the other on famines. Dudley Seers was a hands-on man, much more practical than he was theoretical. And these are the kind of people you need in the field.

TGW: Just to get back to one of our favorite topics—also because our book on gender came out today—to what extent were the ideas related to women’s roles, the notion of gender equality, reflected in statistics and kicked around for the women’s conference (UN World Conference for the International Women’s Year)? Were these at the ILO before? When did you start to become aware of them as a factor? We can excise this part of your testimony!

LE: Actually, because of my early experience with feminists, I was a little bit touchy about this. I had a reputation in those days of being relatively anti-feminist. It is possibly the case, but each time these women pushed an idea with anger and with resentment—I was thinking about my first wife. Why do you need to put it in such a way? Can’t we discuss this in a cool, friendly manner without acrimony? There was too much acrimony in the early days. Mexico was 1975, the first women’s conference. We were working in 1975 on basic needs. Unless I am totally mistaken—and it is now thirty-years ago, of course—we did not take explicit and detailed account of the man/woman divide. We can be criticized for this and I will take all the blame.

But relatively quickly after the Mexico conference, we set up—and I was still there—in 1976 a special section on women’s studies. Young Noeleen Heyzer spent time there. A woman was my successor as director of the program, Antoinette Béguin, a third-generation ILO official whose grandfather and father had been working in the ILO. And she, of course, was sensitive to these issues.

So it was after the 1975 Mexico Conference that we started being serious about gender issues. It is another proof that these conferences had an impact. We knew it was in the air. I knew very much it had been in the air for some time, but it was driven home to us in a big way after the Mexico conference that there was something important there.

TGW: I think it was in the *Development and Change* interview that you mentioned that the World Employment Programme was the highlight of your career. Vera also enters the scene. But in spite of all of this, I guess it was the six-year-itch, this time, came. What made you think that you wanted to go The Hague?

LE: Yes, what would have happened if I had stayed? Don't forget, I left the Netherlands immediately after my military service.

TGW: In 1955?

LE: And I was then twenty years of age. I was going to be twenty-one that December. So I was young. But I had always said to myself, and to those who wanted to listen to me, that I wanted to go back to Holland, to my country, at a certain period of time, and that had to be not later than age forty. Why did I want to go back to my country? I was interested in politics. I had this very nice way of saying it: I wanted to take the political responsibility of the ideas which I had or with which I was associated. I wanted to work in a political way on education, labor market and development policies.

Now, in order to enter politics, you have to go back to the country of which you are a citizen. And as so often, when one wants something, opportunity comes along. In 1975, in the midst of the preparation of the World Employment Conference, I got this telephone call from the chairman of the Curatorium, the chairman of the board of the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), whether I would accept to become rector of that institute.

For me, that was it. But I told him, "I cannot leave in the midst of the preparation for this conference, you must give me a year to finish." He said, "Yes, you have a year." So instead of 1975, I came in 1976. Everybody asked me, "Why in God's name are you leaving that fantastic

program, that marvelous team, which you have single-handedly established?” Well, it was because I wanted to take political responsibility.

I have not been successful in that attempt. I became a member of the Labor Party. But I was naive. I thought that if a fellow of my assets came along, I would be greeted with open arms. But no! I was seen as a competitor, of course. I saw that very quickly, and I also discovered very quickly that if I really wanted to succeed, I had to go into this business practically full-time. And I didn't want that. I was very much at ease at the institute. I wanted that to continue to be my base. I had my heart in the ISS. I think I handled the difficulties of the institute well and the whole thing was evolving nicely. I did not want to leave that base and go full-time into politics. I was not interested in becoming a member of parliament, for instance.

Together with that, of course the labor party was thrown out of office a year after I came back to my country! So the answer to your question is very simple. I left a magnificent department, a fascinating program, a wonderful position, a very good tax-free salary, a wonderful apartment in Geneva, all this to get into a terrible dog fight both in the institute and in the political arena. I got what I wanted in the Institute of Social Studies. I became what is called a very well-known Dutchman. I was very visible. I wrote a lot. I was on television all the time. I was actually relatively popular. But I was not in politics, because I did not really become a full-time politician.

So that is the reason. I did not get what I wanted and I think that there should always be something you do not get. If you would get everything that you ever wanted, it would be very boring.

TGW: Did you teach while you were there?

LE: Yes.

TGW: Did you like it?

LE: Not really. I had negotiated that I would do the amount of teaching I wanted, because I had my hands full, particularly the first year, with several terrible characters I found at the institute. This was 1976. There were still people marching with black and red flags—my students and my staff—in the garden of what is now the Palace of Queen Beatrix. The decision-making was totally cockeyed. May 1968 was still alive. I had to really cut through all this madness, and I did. But I had my hands full.

I am pretty happy that things evolved as they did, because I am convinced that had I become a minister of education, I would have become not only visible—I was already visible—but I would have created enemies. This was the beginning of assertive journalism. They would come after me. My first wife would have come after me. I would have had a difficult time.

TGW: What kind of people did you try to bring onto the staff at institute?

LE: Again, when I came there, there were too many people with tenure. There were quite a few mediocre people who had been there for a decade or longer—twenty years or twenty-five years. There was not very much I could do with them. So I had to increase the budget, get some money from outside, not only from the development cooperation department. What I wanted to have were people like Dudley Seers—people with a good theoretical background but with a very much practical bent. They should know what the hell was going on in the countries.

One of the persons I brought in was a good example of this, Brian van Arkadie. His father was a Dutch burgher. In Sri Lanka, you still have up to this very day Dutch burghers. These are people of Dutch descent. They have Dutch names—van Arkadie is an example. But they have become native people. The first time I came to Sri Lanka with the 1971 Ceylon

mission. I opened the newspaper and on the front page I saw a picture: Pieter Koning, head of the Ceylon Communist Party. In the picture, he looked still very much like a Dutchman.

But Brian van Arkadie was very much the typical example of the kind of person I wanted. He had come out of the academic world, he had had an excellent education in the United States, like Richard—Yale University and a Ph.D. These were the kind of people I wanted, more so than the Tinbergens whom I also had on my hands as part-time staff or like Amartya Sen. Amartya Sen would be too theoretical in those days—no longer. He has also become more practical right now.

I was also able to bring in several of these people in the institute, but the real constraint was the decision-making process. That was the difficulty I solved with a smile on the one hand and a big stick on the other. It all depends on how you do it, how you say things.

TGW: What kind of policy research, idea-mongering, could you do better in The Hague than in Geneva? Or were you doing the same thing?

LE: No, but that was because of the exceptional situation I had created in Geneva. I did much more focused research with my team in Geneva than with all these idiosyncratic, individualistic researchers I had in the institute. And also, the teaching load was very heavy. Don't forget that the institute was very interesting in terms of its student body. We had mid-career people. That was the term we used. It was a graduate institute, so we were catering for people with a first degree, frequently in their own country—a B.A. or the equivalent—but who had already worked for a certain number of years. So these were people who were between thirty and thirty-four.

There was a certain irony for me there, because I didn't get far with the idea of recurrent education and paid educational leave in my own country for the Dutch people. But I found in the

institute a situation which was exactly that. Here we had mid-career people from the Third World coming to Holland on a scholarship for a period of between six months and one-and-a-half years for the Master's degree. It was recurrent education as I had defined it, and it was paid educational leave as I had defined it.

So these were demanding people. These were the kind of people from the G.I. Bill. They did not accept messy, vague kinds of things. They wanted very concrete answers. So the teaching load was probably heavier at the institute than it was at a regular university.

Consequently, for many staff members, the amount of time they had for research was more restricted than it would have been in a normal university. I tried to get a focus for research—maybe again naively, because I did not know the university universe so well. And don't forget, in the institute we had about fifteen nationalities among the teaching staff. I spoke to all the people. I would say to them, "What is your interest? If there were no constraints, what would you love to do research on?" If it was really interesting, I would fit their interests into the research program, which was elaborated by a group of staff members.

I thought I had everybody with me. But no, it didn't work. It didn't mean there was no research going on. But in the end, it was what everybody thought he or she could do and to hell with the overall research program and consistency.

In conclusion: I had much more fun in Geneva. It was a group which I had hired totally myself. They had agreed on a program. They were doing what they loved to do. If they were interested in technology, they worked on technology, or on population, or the informal sector, or macroeconomic policies, or employment policies. It was a delight compared to the ISS. I suffered in the ISS until I discovered that is probably how it is and why would I change? If

individuals want to do what they want, even if I don't think it is very important, as long as their teaching is good.

It was the longest period of my career. I was at ISS for just over nine years. I left eight months before my second mandate was over, and these were five-year terms. You must always leave *en beauté*, when people still want you to stay. I had made the institute a more efficient place. Decision-making was much better and faster. Teaching programs were restructured. I succeeded there. On research, I did not succeed. And probably I was wrong to harmonize or to force people in certain directions in the first place—even if I could give to 85 percent of the people the kind of thing they liked to do. I made the mistake a hundred times over again in the EADI (European Association for Development Research and Training) Framework. When I became president, I tried to have a research program for 130 European institutions. That was, of course, a recipe—not for disaster, but it did not work.

TGW: Now that I think about all of our transcripts, other than a couple of passing references, I don't think anyone has actually focused on EADI and the Society for International Development. What purpose do these consortia serve, and are they consequential for the kinds of ideas we have been talking about that eventually sprout up within international institutions?

LE: Well, you know that I just came back from the thirtieth anniversary conference of EADI in Bonn. EADI is like any other association, like the International Economic Association or the Associations of Political Science. The fact that you have an association is fine because people in the same field feel comfortable with each other. There was no association of development economists. I am talking about thirty years ago. Interestingly enough, the first continent that had such an association was Latin America. CLACSO (Latin America and Caribbean Council of Social Sciences) was founded in the early 1970s and Enrique Oteiza,

whom I have already mentioned as the man who was in charge of the Instituto Torquato di Tella was the first executive-secretary there. I think Asia was also before Europe.

So there was pressure on European institutions to do the same. Dudley Seers was the first president. I was the second. Dudley Seers was sensitive to these pressures. So in 1974, a preparatory conference took place. Dudley Seers was very much behind it. I was not at all in the picture yet. I was working like a madman in the ILO. The association was instituted in 1975. Dudley served one mandate for three years and I served two mandates for a total of six years between 1978 and 1984. The first question I asked myself was the question you put to me.

Apart from being an association where you meet regularly and can compare notes face to face, in a period when there was no internet and no email—you had to write long letters and send it in big envelopes which took weeks to arrive—it was nice to have that. But besides that, what is the use of having a European Association of Developments and Training Institutes?

I had two ideas. One was the naive idea of trying to coordinate research among institutions. Mind you, I got somewhere. I set up working groups on specific issues. The reason I have pushed Olav Stokke so much to produce a book for UNIHP (UN Intellectual History Project), was he became responsible for the development cooperation working group from the beginning—from my beginning, in 1978. His working group was the one single working group that worked and produced about five or six books in a relatively short period of time. We set up working groups on women, on economic restructuring in Europe and the implications for the developing countries, on multinationals, et cetera. We set up about ten or twelve working groups with a convener and with researchers from different institutions involved.

Some of these working groups worked very well. It depended very much on the personality of the convener. It was the same question we already referred to—leadership in the

UN. It is the same thing here. A lot of working groups really got going, others less so. However, on the whole I did get somewhere with these groups, and they still exist.

The second thing I wanted was to take a stand on certain issues. I said: “Look, we are 130 European institutions, including institutions from Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia.” Now, of course, we have the whole of Europe. “It would be of the essence that when we agree or disagree with a certain policy that our governments introduce—a policy we think is detrimental to the interests of the developing countries—that we say so in a collective statement. ‘Policy A is wrong for these reasons and we propose Policy B and it should look like this.’” To me that was the thing to do, because we were not just researchers in religion or in something that had no practical implications. We were in a very practical field. I was told, “We are academics. We don’t want to dirty our hands in politics.” So I failed on that.

These are for me the two reasons why I accepted the presidency. I didn’t ask for it. I tried to introduce these two ideas. I still believe they are important. I repeated this message in Bonn last week. People of this new generation looked at me the same way as the people in the older generation did. In research, actually, through the working groups I got a little bit more mileage out of the association than I had gotten in my own institute.

TGW: Earlier this afternoon, you mentioned the Washington consensus—an idea, or a set of ideas, or approaches and policies that you thought had been discredited earlier. Why did this come on with a vengeance? I presume 90 percent of the people at the institute were undoubtedly not of this view. How did the institute and its staff and you react to the onslaught of [Ronald] Reagan and [Margaret] Thatcher?

LE: The first question is, how did it come about? It came about, as so often, because of certain excesses of the policies that had been pursued in the previous period. These changes

don't fall from the blue sky. There had been monetarist economists in Europe. They had been writing, including in newspaper articles. Nobody listened to them. And we more Keynesian-type economists laughed. Never do that. Never laugh. Always take these guys seriously, because the day may come. And the day came abruptly because of political changes. Mrs. Thatcher, Mr. Reagan—and already before that with [Augusto] Pinochet in Chile—all of a sudden these economists whom we laughed at and whom nobody listened to were in the center of attention and in the center of political action.

There is no doubt in my mind that we had, or our government had, gone overboard. In the case of the Netherlands, which I observed from close quarters, the way we threw away the money we got from our natural gas—have you heard about the term “Dutch disease?”

TGW: Not for the trees. This is—

LE: The term was coined in the 1960s and 1970s as a warning sign to all those countries that had a windfall—Nigeria with oil and Holland with a huge amount of natural gas, which we discovered under the North Sea and in the north of the country. Instead of investing that money in the economic infrastructure and in factories and in technology, we spent it on the welfare state. Now, that was marvelous for the people. It was a little bit like Evita Perón. I never made that comparison, but you can make it now that I come to think of it.

So no doubt we had gone too far in a certain direction—too much distribution and not enough growth. But that certainly was not a reason to go from one extreme to the other, as we did, and to go back to a set of policies, and advocating a set of policies for the developing countries, that had been discredited a long time ago. Why we accepted it—well, we didn't accept it, but why were we so silent? Well, not me, because I wanted the whole bloody

association to come up with a standpoint. I wrote a column every ten days. I was rector. I was president of EADI. I had teaching obligations. But I had time to write.

I wrote in the way that I have just explained—not in total rejection. I said, “Yes, we need to make modifications to the policies we had pushed so far, but not going back to a set of discredited policies.” It is still a mystery to me. I still do not understand why the UN, why the universities, why we as individuals threw in the towel. Now, of course, in the UK, as I think we noted in *Ahead of the Curve?*, there was a declaration signed by 400 plus economists in the early 1980s against the Thatcher policies. But it was like water on the back of a duck. It just dripped off.

But the UN, the ILO—the closest I come to an explanation is that everybody knew that we had gone too far in a certain direction. And once you say to yourself, “Yes, things couldn’t go on like this,” once you say that, you are already on the defensive. It is then very difficult to reject the total package which has taken its place and that goes from one extreme to the other.

So the 1980s wasn’t only a lost decade for Latin America, it was a lost decade in the academic community as well, by not taking a stand documented enough, analytical enough.

TGW: I just wanted to go back for a brief moment to look at an activity that you began earlier and I guess you continue today, which was your involvement in the Dutch Antilles. Why did you choose that? What interested you in this *mouchoir de poche*?

LE: I’ll tell you. I was sitting in my office in Geneva. This was 1976. It had already been announced in the Netherlands that I was going to come back to my country and become rector of the ISS. Jan Pronk was minister of development cooperation in the famous government of den Uyl, of Joop den Uyl. There was this telephone call, Jan Pronk calling just outside the door of a cabinet meeting. He said, “Louis, we are discussing in the cabinet about the possible

independence of the Netherlands Antilles.” That government had given independence to Suriname in November 1975, which did not exactly lead to a success. But that was not yet known at the time that he called me, less than a year later.

In November 1975, the government of Joop den Uyl had granted independence to Suriname with a huge development assistance package attached. Afterwards, the result has been that most of the people from Suriname have become Dutch soccer players. The next question was the Netherlands Antilles. The government wanted to get rid of all these colonies. So a commission was in the making—a mixed Netherlands/Netherlands Antilles commission—that had to look into the economic feasibility of a possible independence of the Netherlands Antilles. Jan Pronk asked me, on behalf of the Dutch government, to become a member of the Dutch section. There were four Dutchmen and four Antilleans. I said, “Yes, wonderful. The Caribbean—light and sun.” But more seriously, I said to myself, “This is madness. These six small islands. They can never be independent. Why would we push them into independence? They are nice people. They have wonderful islands. They do not want to become independent. We love to go there. They speak Dutch!”

So I had my own opinion and I said, “Maybe it is good that I join.” So I joined the commission. We worked for three years off and on. We went twice or three times a year to these islands. And we produced a report in 1979 which is to this very day a kind of Bible. Never since then or before then has there been such an accumulation of facts and figures and analysis as we produced in that report. And it was based, to a certain extent, on basic needs. It was one of the few actual applications of a basic needs development strategy in the context of a real country. I should put real country in quotes, because these six small islands can’t really be considered as a real country.

So I became a person who was well-liked in the Netherlands Antilles, because of course the Antilles didn't want independence at all. They said, "Why do you push us?" The 1979 report clearly came out against it. The economic feasibility was slim. There was no reason to force independence upon people who did not want it.

Since I was one of the driving forces supporting the Antillean section point of view, I became kind of a popular guy. Many years later, when I was already in Washington—it was around Christmas 1995—the minister of defense of the Netherlands, who was also responsible for Antillean affairs, called. But I was not at home, and my brother-in-law—Vera's brother, who was there for Christmas—took the telephone call. He heard a voice saying: "This is the minister of defense of the Netherlands government speaking. Can I speak to Louis Emmerij?" He said I would call back. My brother-in-law was very preoccupied. He said, "Louis, the minister of defense—do they want to send you to Bosnia?" In fact, it was to ask me whether I could go back to the Antilles as a member of yet another commission, the only Dutch member of an Antillean commission that would be looking at the social situation, including employment, housing, education, and poverty.

The Antilles, of course, were no longer a real colony. They had their own government, and the Netherlands was only responsible for foreign affairs and defense. But we put in a lot of money there, relatively speaking. So I was the single Dutch person on a five-person committee with the president of the Central Bank of the Antilles, the president of the biggest commercial bank, the chairman of the trade union, and an NGO representative.

We produced a solid report which recommended the creation of a Fund for Economic Development and Social Policy. The minister of defense and the Antilles funded it to a tune of 100 million guilders. The Fund was established and I was asked to sit on the board. So it all

started, therefore, with Jan Pronk and his telephone call to Geneva. The rest followed from that. I spent seven years (1996-2002) going up and down to the Antilles. After seven years, I said, “*Basta!*” I resigned. I got a wonderful farewell. They gave me a wonderful painting, as I had always told them, “When I go, I don’t want a book. I don’t want a dozen flowers for Vera. Give us a painting from an Antillean painter.” Next time you meet me in Washington, you will see it.

TGW: Well, 1986. Did you regret having taken the ISS job? Or had you not done everything you wanted to do, and something came up at OECD?

LE: Don’t forget, the reason why I took the ISS job in the first place was not because of the ISS. It was because of my political ambition. I saw very quickly that that political ambition was misplaced, because I did not want to become a full-time politician. So I concentrated on the ISS. I would have done this anyway, but I could spend more time on the ISS than if I had been more successful in the political direction. Nine years and four months—that was about it. The institute was going. Actually, it was going better than it is now. I checked in Bonn with the rector who has been in place since the beginning of the year. When he explained to me the decision-making process, I thought I would faint. They have slipped back—

TGW: Back into this 1968 model?

LE: Well, yes. These are secretaries who know how to type who sit on committees to decide on a dean of studies. It is mad! I must go back and change the situation again! So nine years and four months was more than enough. In 1985, all of a sudden again, two proposals came to me. One was rector of the United Nations University (UNU) in Tokyo. The other was president of the OECD Development Centre. I wanted to go to Tokyo, Vera to Paris, and so it was Paris!

I don't know what I could have done, had I stayed. See, I think it is wrong to overstay your welcome. Ten years would be an absolute maximum. I consider it counterproductive to stay longer than that. As I said, the university is not really my cup of tea. The teaching I find boring. I like to give an address alright, but every day, no. I find it tiring and boring and not stimulating.

So it was time that something came along. As I said earlier, when you want a change something comes along, interestingly enough.

So I had these two opportunities. I knew that politically I would not get what I wanted, even if my party would get back in power. At least that is what I thought, and I think my estimate is right. I had done everything I could with the Institute of Social Studies. So I went to another challenge, the OECD Development Centre.

TGW: I am actually going to take a pause here.

TGW: This is the beginning of the fourth tape, the 27th of September, with Louis Emmerij and Tom Weiss. Well, we're back in Paris. I'm not sure many people actually know what the Development Centre is or tries to do. So why don't you tell us? And also, what attracted you—besides Vera's desire to go back to Paris—about returning to "*la ville des lumières*" in this particular context?

LE: The Development Centre was set up in 1962. As you know, the OEEC (Organisation for European Economic Co-operation) changed into OECD in 1959 or 1960. So it was set up relatively early in the existence of the OECD. Thorkil Kristensen was the first secretary-general of the OECD, a Dane—a very kind, learned gentleman. And he saw that this group of rich countries—the "rich man's club," as the journalists already called it then—ran a risk if it isolated itself from the rest of the world.

So he insisted on two things. One was the creation of the Development Assistance Committee, the so-called DAC. Now, the OECD has more than 100 committees. The DAC is just one, but it had not existed until then. So the amazing thing was not that there was a committee, but that he created a Development Assistance Committee with a permanent and full-time chairman.

Now that was development assistance. The DAC coordinated development policies and the amount of money that the member countries were sending to the developing countries. But (Thorkil) Kristensen wanted something more, and I admired that idea. He wanted to have a semi-autonomous center which did not just look at development assistance but looked at the totality of development policies in the developing countries. Thus, the Development Centre became the bridge between the rich countries, members of the OECD, on the one hand, and the non-member countries, the developing countries, on the other.

The Development Centre was supposed to look not only at development policies of the developing countries, but also at the policies of the rich countries—not just development policies, but economic policies, social policies, migration policies—and their impact on the developing world. So it was an extremely ambitious program.

TGW: It sounds like the UN's agenda, no?

LE: More focused though. It was an important initiative, and the president of the Development Centre became the number two in the OECD, which was no longer the case when I became president. The first three presidents were French. The first was Robert Buron, a former minister under de Gaulle of the MRP, the *Mouvement Republicain Populaire*, which had more of a Christian-democratic type of tendency.

Buron was a very charismatic person. I have known him and his wife well. He was one of the three French ministers who negotiated the Algerian independence in Evian. He was the driving force behind the 1962 Evian agreement.

Then, for totally different reasons, his party decided to leave the government of de Gaulle. But de Gaulle had appreciated his services, so they were looking for a nice job outside of the French government. He became the first president of the Development Centre.

The second one was André Philippe, whom I had met as a professor at the *Faculté de Droit et de Sciences Economique*. He was one of those interesting figures, both an academic and a politician. He was a member of the socialist party, the SFIO. André Philippe had been a minister as well. He had been in London with de Gaulle, and he became the second president. He died in office after four years.

The third one—you may have heard about him—was Paul-Marc Henry. He did not agree with the Jackson report (*A Study of the Capacity of the UN Development System*).

TGW: No. He was one of Jackson's "dinosaurs"!

LE: There were two number two's at the UNDP, and he was the more important one. He supervised all the operational activities. He had a computer in his head. He had everything on his fingertips. He was a powerful man. He signed the letters for the ILO employment missions granting the money, as I mentioned earlier. So with the Jackson report, he was probably also looking elsewhere and the Development Centre post became available after André Philippe died.

These were three very powerful and very visible figures, internationally. Paul-Marc Henry was the president when Emile van Lennep was the secretary-general of the OECD. Paul-Marc Henry (who was also a former ambassador) was, of course, very well-known in the developing world, where very few had ever heard about van Lennep. Paul-Marc Henry made the

big mistake of asking Emile van Lennep, his boss, to come along to a series of countries in Africa. So Paul-Marc Henry led the mission with van Lennep. On arrival, there would be the UNDP resident representative waiting for him and the French ambassador. They would kiss Paul-Marc Henry on both cheeks and they would say, “Who is this guy? Who do you have with you?”

That was a big mistake. Van Lennep, a very sensitive man, wanted to get rid of Paul-Marc Henri and in the end he succeeded. He then made the big mistake of asking a relatively weak personality, a Canadian whom we will not mention, to take his place. That was the beginning of the downward slope for the Development Centre.

Just Faaland, my predecessor, took a swing at the Development Centre for three years, and he helped right the situation. So when I came—and I spent seven years—when I came in the beginning of 1986, I found a much better situation than I would have found had he not been there.

Now, for the first time, a woman is responsible for the Development Centre. Most unfortunately, this coincided with the downgrading the post of the presidency. In my days, it was equivalent to between an assistant and a deputy-secretary-general. Now it has become an A-7—which is a D-2 in UN parlance. It is still a beautiful position, but not the same. And the autonomy has all but disappeared.

But the idea, coming back to your question, of having a semi-autonomous center in which you could do certain things without going to the council or to the secretary-general, having a window on the non-member countries, with a president as a kind of minister of foreign affairs of the OECD area to the rest of the world, I think was a brilliant idea. I have worked in the center with great pleasure, and I think rather productively.

In 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell, there was pressure on me to devote some of my resources on activities related to Central and Eastern European countries. I—maybe not very wisely—resisted that pressure, which came also from the United States ambassador, a very nice person actually, Dennis Lamb. I said, “Look, all the attention is now going to Central and Eastern Europe. But the developing world is still there and I don’t want to divert resources away from the developing countries to the Eastern European countries.” I don’t think it was a wise policy. That was when the OECD set up a special unit for Eastern Europe. It was, of course, duplicating—activities elsewhere, particularly in the ECE.

TGW: In this role, it seemed as if the Development Centre had morphed into the entire UN’s agenda—policies of the North and policies of the South. What was the value-added by the Development Centre, and did the UN pick up notions or ideas that you had or vice versa?

LE: I picked up ideas that the UN did not develop sufficiently, which I thought needed to get more attention. For instance, the present chief economist of the World Bank is François Bourguignon, who worked with me in the Development Centre. He was very well-connected in those days to UNCTAD and already to the World Bank. He picked up quite a few things on income distribution, on international trade, on technology, from UNCTAD and UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organization). But the value-added of work in the center to my mind was that we were actually a part of the OECD and therefore we had easier access to what happened in the OECD, including to the data sets. We had an economic and statistical department, which was considered to be the main and most important department of the OECD. They had a huge data bank. So we could access those banks easier than developing countries could. And if we had something to say, we could introduce it into the different committees of the OECD—economic policy, international trade, the DAC, et cetera.

I think the value-added of the Development Centre in my time was that we could bring pressure to bear via the committee structure on what happened in the capitals of the member countries. Now, I don't say that we were very successful in that, but if there was any value-added it was less in the amount of additional work we could do—we were a small center, with about fifty professionals—than in the link we could reinforce between rich and poor countries via the OECD committee structure. In those committees that would meet regularly, the top people from the different ministries from the capitals were present. This was one of the brightest things of the OECD decision-making structure and the center played a role in that structure.

The OECD is basically a think tank, coming up with policy ideas that are fed into the committee structure. This means that the organization can bring immediately the results of its thinking into the national decision-making structures. Therefore, it is more than a think tank because it has this ready access to the decision-making structures via its committee structure—fiscal policies, trade policies, environmental policies, labor policies, education, et cetera.

I told many of the ambassadors to the OECD who said, “I am so bored with all of these committees.” I said, “Look, this is an open university. You can't be interested in everything that is going on, but if you are interested in two or three things, these are the three or four years in your foreign affairs career where you can really learn something.”

It's a fascinating organization, but it's not really a very visible organization, particularly not because it has had a very mediocre secretary-general in the last ten years, a Canadian, a certain Mr. Johnson. His impact is about as big as his name is. Fortunately, his second mandate comes to an end next year and I hope the council will make a better choice then.

Coming back to the selection of top people in the UN or in organizations like the OECD, I have always been intrigued that once a bad choice had been made, you must really be very bad not to get a second term. Boutros Boutros-Ghali is just about the only exception of a top man who did *not* get a second term—and not because he was bad: he was just too outspoken, I suppose. But he is really the exception. They all go through at least two mandates. So an organization is having a difficult time for at least ten years, once a bad decision is made. We know, through the work of [Brian] Urquart and Erskine [Childers], who studied the situation for the United Nations, how simple and bad the decision-making structure is.

TGW: Were governments in OECD more likely to take what you said more seriously than what the UN said, even if you were saying the same thing? That is, were you seen as closer to the heart of the beast—important western governments like the U.S.—and therefore more trustworthy?

LE: Yes and no. On the one hand, I reported directly to the OECD Council, i.e., the ambassadors of member countries. They were briefed most of the time by middle-level civil servants in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for instance. So I often got very mediocre feedback from the capitals through the ambassadors, because the ambassadors were reading what these mediocre characters in the capitals had written to them. Very few would give a personal opinion or would ask for a more responsible feedback from the capitals.

It was much better in the committee structure, because there you did not have an ambassador who had to know everything from the environment to education. They had people who were dealing with substantive development issues. So once you had people who were at a higher level, who were in the same field as you were—in my case in the development business—I could have very interesting discussions and excellent feedback—a two-way street.

TGW: One of the roles that OECD played within the UN relates to negotiations. One typically sees the Group of 77 (G-77) as being a cohesive group—solidarity amongst developing countries. But my impression is that the West—or developed or industrialized countries—oftentimes would help, or the secretariat would speak with something like one voice in international negotiations on behalf of the Western Group? Is that correct?

LE: Absolutely. That is why, particularly during the NIEO negotiations, all these developing countries said that they needed their own secretariat, just like the OECD was the secretariat of the West. When you read Gamani Corea's oral history interview, you will see that he tried to play that role. But he found that during the NIEO negotiations, it was not the developing countries who had ideas. It was the UNCTAD who gave the ideas to them.

But yes, it is absolutely true. The OECD think tank—there were in my day about 600 professionals working in the OECD—it is a powerhouse of thinking and of giving opinions about ideas that come from outside of the OECD. And I find it a great pity that the Group of 77 never had the equivalent of that and never went through even the financial trouble of setting up something that was worthy.

Now, we have the South Centre. It came out [Julius] Nyerere's South Commission, but it is a center of five or six people. It is a bloody shame, whilst you have all these OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) members full of money—in those days and again very much today. The Group B countries were at a tremendous advantage of having the analysis coming out of the OECD. There is no doubt about it. UNCTAD did its part, but why could not the UN Secretary-General or the under-secretary-general of the Economic and Social Department do more. It is now Antonio Ocampo, who is a marvelous man. I met him the other day when we had the farewell dinner for Enrique Iglesias. There were twenty people. By the

way, he loves what we are doing in UNIHP. I am sorry to make this jump, but he is excited about this and he still wants to have lunch with us. He actually makes a lot of publicity in our favor. Anyway, I have never understood why, from high up in the UN, something could not be organized on an informal basis to put some analytical sense into the demands of the Group of 77 when it came to the NIEO and why it became a missed opportunity, as I called it earlier.

TGW: During this period—but I guess it could be any period—you were sitting on the board of UNRISD and a little bit later, at the University of Sussex, the Institute of Development Studies. We can never just compare two institutions. But I am trying to think of these as types. If you were investing money in research, you have UNRISD or UNITAR (UN Institute for Training and Research) or UNU, things that are kind of the UN but not quite in it, or parallel to it. But they are still part of the Secretariat. How do you compare their styles, their productivity, with something like Sussex, a development institute that is totally independent?

LE: In 1985, [Javier] Pérez de Cuéllar asked me to make an evaluation of UNITAR. I did. I took advantage of that evaluation to look at a variety of these relatively small institutions, all more or less autonomous or semi-autonomous, such as UNRISD and WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research). My advice was that if UNITAR had survival capability it should, as the other institutions, come under the umbrella of the United Nations University. I was still optimistic then about the quality of the UNU.

I still think today that a lot could be gained by giving these smaller institutions an overall framework, an umbrella—not taking away their autonomy, but bringing their research together. As you can see, I have pursued certain ideas in my life without much success. I tried to do the same thing within ISS, then EADI, then in the UN. And of course UNITAR has continued to exist to this very day, in Geneva it is now. And the UNU has not lived up to its expectations, in

spite of what Ramesh Thakur may tell us today with this famous Dutch rector they have [Hans van Ginkel]. Nothing has come of this idea of bringing these groups, not together in an institutional framework, but in a kind of intellectual framework.

In Bonn, I met the newly-appointed director of the International Institute of Labour Studies (Gerry Rodgers), a man whom I had recruited thirty-two years ago, who is one of the few people I have recruited who is still there. Actually, he had the same idea. He said, “Why can’t we get together with the UNRISDs and the WIDERs?” I said, “There is a need. Pursue that idea.”

So I agree with John Toye and Richard Toye. They ended their book by saying that there is a big advantage in having the WIDERs and the UNRISDs because they get monies from multiple sources. They are therefore less liable to pressure from a single government. That is true, but it is also true that it is a great pity that there is so much dissipation of effort. It is a great pity and I would still be thinking about means of bringing more harmony and structure into this because it could multiply the research results.

TGW: Why did you decide to go from Paris to Washington?

LE: It was well-known that I had the seven-year itch in my professional life. So Enrique Iglesias, who has been a friend for a long time and still is, wrote to me when I was in my seventh year. He said, “Louis, you will soon have seven years done, which is a long time in the OECD Development Centre. I am trying to set up a social wing in my loan program. I want to put greater emphasis on education, on health, on social security, on employment, on the informal sector. Can you become my special advisor to do this?”

I thought that idea was fantastic. It was time for me to go. Enrique was a friend. He offered me a very nice position. And I said to myself, “Look, this is wonderful because this is

the first time I don't have any managerial responsibility." I didn't become responsible for a department, I was an advisor. I was given a budget which permitted me to set up a small group of people to reflect on how to expand the social sector in Latin America quantitatively and qualitatively, and the amount of money it would take for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to translate this into operational terms.

In sport, when, say a soccer player or an athlete, has reached a certain age, he must not stop immediately. That would be dangerous. So he has to have a period where he continues to train, diminishing his efforts gradually. So I thought that in this case I needed this kind of period to prepare for retirement, a kind of cooling off period.

For all these reasons, I was enchanted with the idea. I accepted whole-heartedly. Of course, there was one thing I forgot. I like to organize and to manage things. If anything, I am a research manager. I am not a first-rate academic, but I am a very good organizer of academic research. And that is what I actually have been doing most of the time in my life.

What I didn't realize, coming to the Inter-American Development Bank, was that my ideas had as much chance to be implemented as Enrique Iglesias decided. It was not me. I gave my ideas to Enrique Iglesias. I gave them, of course, also to the managers (the top people whom we called vice presidents in the World Bank in the IDB are called managers). I gave them to the managers, but the managers were all looking at how Enrique was going to react. That was not easy, I must say. I had some awkward moments there, because Enrique is a very careful person. He always is looking for a balance. He doesn't want to take sides too visibly. But still, it was an interesting six or seven years I spent there. But if you are a manager, if you want to take on responsibilities, don't become an advisor.

TGW: But you did have a lot of time, I think—at least as I look at your c.v.—for putting together groups of people, editing books, convening conferences, what have you. Was the IDB a good place to do that?

LE: Look, the most interesting things I did were getting a feel at the country level. So I did in a less ambitious way, what I did in the ILO-WEP. I organized missions to Chile, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru, and other countries, which were looking on the ground how we could shape social policies. So I had time and money to do that. The results were channeled to the lending departments of the bank and they did with it what they did with it. I got lots of compliments, but my impression was that they did not follow it up as they should have.

Yes, I organized a wonderful conference in 1996—a big one. I had all my friends and colleagues there. I had Hans Singer, Richard Jolly, Gus Ranis. I had Amartya Sen, who wrote a beautiful paper. I had Irma Adelman. I had everybody there, except Mahbub ul Haq, who had died the year before. We looked at economic and social policies for Latin America into the twenty-first century. I had Ajit Singh there, and there was this marvelous moment which I think we have described in several of our books or articles. Ajit Singh had written a paper comparing Latin American economic policies in the Washington consensus period with East Asian policies. His balance sheet was devastating for Latin America and its lack of success. He ended his paper and his presentation asking, “How many more years will it take Latin American decision-makers and economists to say that the Washington consensus policies have been a failure?”

John Williamson, who cooked up the term “Washington consensus,” was there. Andrés Bianci, who was an excellent man in ECLA, hired by Enrique Iglesias when he was the executive-secretary, who is now the ambassador of Chile in Washington—they all said, “Five more years. We need five more years in order to decide whether it is a success or not a success.”

As we know, five years later, in 2001, [Alberto] Fujimori was in exile from Peru in Japan. Argentina was in a financial mess. [Carlos Salinas] de Gortari, the former Mexican president, was hiding in Ireland. Brazil was in great difficulties. I thought that was a great moment: five more years.

I met John Williamson again during a seminar that was organized for Enrique Iglesias's departure. Even John Williamson is now of the opinion that not only should we move from the Washington consensus to the post-Washington consensus, which has already taken place, but to the post-post-Washington consensus.

The book that came out of the 1996 conference, I think, is one of the better books. I edited it, and I had a long introductory chapter in that. It was, and to an extent still is, I think one of the more valuable books that came out of my period in the IDB.

I had lots of time and space. I could do what I wanted. I was well-paid. I had a budget. I created a small team. But I could not impose. I found the Latin American ambience at the Inter-American Development Bank interesting. They would never tell you, "I disagree with you." It was like having a picture. The picture is all white, and they will say, "Louis, what a wonderful picture. It is all white, but could you maybe put a little bit of blue in that corner?" By the time you talked to everybody, the picture had become very colorful! They all thought it was wonderful, but they all wanted a little change.

I found it extremely difficult in the Bank to get through to the lending departments. It was a little bit like McNamara said to me after he had left the World Bank. He said, "Look, I wanted the basic needs strategy to get more importance. I wanted income redistribution to get more importance. I wanted poverty to be attacked more forcefully. But it was like having two Banks. One is the Bank of the presidential speeches and the research department, and the other

Bank is the Bank of the bankers, the guys who do the actual lending.” And he said, “Look, I was a hands-on manager. I would walk into the offices of these directors who were responsible for country lending. I would have these tough discussions with them.” They would say yes, but he said, “I knew that they were trying to avoid it.”

There is a lot of that in the Inter-American Development Bank, except that it a little more suave and kinder. It is a nice bank. There are wonderful people, but they all look to the president. It is all, “*Sí, Señor Presidente; No, Señor Presidente.*” If the president moved his little finger, things moved—more so than in the McNamara World Bank. But Enrique rarely moved his little finger. He believed in consensus, which is probably a beautiful thing to do. But I have rarely seen him calling in a manager to tell this manager, “Do this.” He would not do that. I would beg him from time to time. I would say, “Enrique, please tell this person to move his ass and get cracking on this type of educational product or these types of employment activities. You agree with the analysis, why don’t you tell them.” He would say, “Louis, I will. I will have lunch with him.” I said, “No. No lunch, just tell him!” Amazing.

And now he goes—we had this wonderful dinner the other evening with him. He spent seventeen-and-a-half years as president. The bank was created in 1959. He was only the third president. The first one did a good thing. He spent “only” ten years. The second one, a Mexican, spent seventeen years. And now Enrique spent seventeen-and-a-half years.

I remember the interview I did with him for UNIHP, which was a nice interview, an interesting interview. It was revealing of his warm personality and what he tries to do. When I asked him—now this was towards the end of this third term. I was convinced he was going to retire. My last special advice to him as a special advisor was, “Enrique, please resign when you are seventy. It is an objective age, which was why McNamara resigned when he was sixty-five.

You will have brought the organization into the twenty-first century. This is the time—what will you do afterwards, when you are retired?”

He looked at me and said, “Louis, only God knows. But I will tell you something. I will not be able to live without the tension of a stressful job.” That was after so many decades. He surprised me. I said, in disbelief, “You cannot live without the pressure of a stressful job?” So he took a fourth term and resigned in the middle of his fourth term. And now what is he going to do? The King of Spain, Juan Carlos, called him a half a year ago and begged him practically on his knees—the king—to become the secretary-general of a small secretariat that organizes the annual Ibero-Latin American summit. Once a year, Spain and Portugal organize a presidential summit and talk about what they can do better together. So Enrique, who was of course looking for a way out, and who is very close to royalty in Europe—jumped on the occasion.

When we had a farewell dinner, in the bank, I said, “Enrique, when are you going to start?” He said, “Remember what I told you in the interview?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “My last day in office, I am taking the last plane out from Washington to Madrid. I will arrive the next morning and start work at 9:00 the same morning.” And you know what’s going to happen? There is plenty of money in Spain. You mark my words. Within two years, he will probably have a bigger operation going than the Inter-American Development Bank in terms of generating money for development in Latin America. He has thirty people now. He will have ten times that number in two years, when he will be seventy-six.

Anyway, he is a marvelous human being. And you can’t get angry. Even when I begged him, you can’t fail to love the man. He is a wonderful guy. Vera loves him. He doesn’t like women very much, but he loves Vera.

So this is it. This is the story of the Inter-American Development Bank and its most recent president of seventeen-and-a-half years.

TGW: You were in Washington. Obviously, you had been relating to Bretton Woods institutions on and off for most of your career, but you were living in the same town. I presume that working at the IDB you had more opportunity to interact with and observe them. We ask people how they stack up, how they compare with UN institutions in terms of the people and the ideas that we keep claiming matter. What would you say? Do the personnel and the ideas of the Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stack up with what's coming out of the UN? And I guess secondarily, what accounts for these differences?

LE: Forgetting now about the IDB and talking only about the Bretton Woods institutions, I have been much less impressed with the quality of the work than most other people. Normally you hear how fantastic the quality of research is, particularly in the Bank, because most people do not follow what is happening in the much tighter-organized research department of the IMF. We must read the Jacques Polak interview for that. Polak was for many years the director of research in the IMF.

I have not been impressed, given the amount of money that the World Bank throws at research—given the number of people they have in their research department, more than 100 professionals—I find the output disappointing and interesting ideas very few and far between. I must be the only person, or one of the few persons, who not only gets in the mail all the research papers produced by the research department, but who actually reads most of them. And it is almost a full-time job, because the output, the quantity, is tremendous. These people produce about ten studies a week. Every two weeks I get two big packages full of paper. I am sorry to

say that I have not been able to detect one new idea in these papers. They have been followers, rather than initiators, as I said when we were talking about basic needs.

Indeed, basic needs is an example. Even in those days with a first-rate chief economist like Hollis Chenery, who was really known world-wide and respected. That has not been the case before and after so much, although Nicky Stern was respected. François Bourguignon was less well-known, but Hollis Chenery was a top-notch economist. He recognized a good idea when he saw one, but it didn't come out of the World Bank. Did they do anything in terms of structural adjustment that was new? No. It had to come out of the political world or out of UNICEF.

There is an enormous amount of clever research. The economists there are all trained in the “right” universities, including the Indians, and the Pakistanis, the Chinese, or whatever—all in British or American universities. They may be better-trained economists than Richard or me, but we have ideas. Like Giscard d'Estaing said when the first increase in oil prices happened in 1973, “*On n'a pas de pétrole mais on a des idées.*” However, it turned out that they had neither petrol nor ideas!

Now, I may be too severe. I would certainly like to look back at what a person like Gerry Helleiner had to say on that topic. He was asked that same question. He was probably less severe, but not by much. He would say, “There is a lot going on, and a lot of it is solid stuff. It is the mainstream economics of today.”

I talked with François Bourguignon. We regularly meet in airplanes. He travels first class, I travel economy class. But since I have the Air France club card, we meet in the VIP lounge of Air France. That seems to be the only place I can talk to him. I asked him, “François, what is going on?” He said, “I am just coming back from China.” I said, “Yes, I know,

everybody is coming back from China. But you are the chief economist now. You have this huge research department under you. What are you doing?" He was not doing very much in my mind. He is working on income distribution and he wants to have more work done on income distribution. That is good, but there was already a lot of work done on income distribution before he came. But there is no breakthrough in terms of ideas. We know that the income distribution is getting worse in many cases. They prove it over and over and over again and there is actually an internal debate between these economists in the World Bank: is it really getting worse, or getting very much worse, or is it getting a little bit less badly worse, or is, if you look at it in a certain way, improving?

So there is this debate about how many angels there are on the head of a needle. There is no debate about how we can really get a breakthrough to improve national income distribution and do something about international income distribution. Even they agree, if you take China and India out of the equation, it is bad. With China and India—if you add up 1.3 billion Chinese and 1 billion Indians, where a lot of people are doing well—yes, you get one picture. But if you take them out, you get a totally different picture. And I have not seen, sorry to say, anything in all these papers I read, how this can be improved?

TGW: Why do the Bretton Woods institutions care about history, the two of them, as opposed to the UN? Our notion is that at least they devote some time to documenting what they have been up to and keeping their archives in shape.

LE: In the case of the IMF, it is cutting the grass from under the critics' feet. So they have an in-house historian. I think the present one is number three or something, but they always had an in-house historian. It is also a question of keeping track. We want to know how we did

and why we did it. But it is, in my mind, above all to cut the grass from underneath the critics: “We have done it already, we don’t need another one.”

In the case of the World Bank, I think it is really navel-gazing, to a large extent. They are a pretty happy lot. The first one was after twenty-five years. It was a relatively short thing. It was rather congratulatory, I am afraid to say. Well, that is of course what they say about ours as well, that we are—

TGW: Celebratory.

LE: Well, some French-speaking people have said, “*Nous tirons la couverture à nous.*” The second one, after fifty years, with outside people again, was very well-done, very well-researched, and a little bit more critical. Their evaluation of the McNamara period I think comes pretty close to my own conclusions: there was this interesting work going on but they didn’t get very far in the second Bank, the Bank of the bankers. I think in a way they did it like bureaucrats do: twenty-five years, a silver jubilee; fifty years, gold; sixty years, platinum. But once again, the second one was well-done and more interesting because it was a little bit less self-congratulatory.

The Bank’s second history was a seven-years operation: three guys practically full-time. They didn’t do much interviewing, actually. They came to me. I was already in the Inter-American Development Bank. We had a nice little talk. They didn’t take any notes. There were no microphones, no recording machines. It lasted about an hour-and-a-half. As we talked, I knew that they had already made up their mind about this period. They retained the things which they wanted to hear, which they already had in mind, and that is how it appeared in the book.

The real question is why the UN didn’t do it after twenty-five years and after fifty years and after sixty years? OK, you have certain things that are written. UNDP has taken over

twenty years to do a piece. They had to take one chap off and put another one on. UNICEF has done something. But the question is still why the World Bank and the IMF did it. I think it is clear why they did it. The question really is why did it take the three of us to take on the rest of the UN?

Actually, there is no evaluation of the regional developments bank, as far as I am aware. So in a sense, the bureaucrats of the Bank and of the IMF are to be commended, because at least they did it.

TGW: Did you think that we in UNIHP would get as far as we have?

LE: Yes, of course. Look, I have been impressed with the amount of money we collected. That must be quite an amount.

TGW: About \$4 million. Actually, what I think is more amazing is that donors invested in history as opposed to last week's and next week's news and making everything instantly relevant—which is their usual concern.

LE: What I have been struck by is that practically all the donors asked, "But surely it has already been done." We said, "You are mistaken." They said, "It must be done. If it hasn't been done, it must be done." So once the money started rolling in, yes, I knew we were going to do it. Actually, I had hoped that we would already have finished by now. Next month, it will be six years since I interviewed Francis Blanchard. That was October 1999.

TGW: He was the first.

LE: He was the first, and the most revisionist of all. So I had hoped that we could have done it quicker, and I hoped that our friends and colleagues would have been more disciplined. I know them all. My biggest disappointed has been our international lawyer from the Netherlands. I'm so angry with him that I even forgot his name.

TGW: Nico [Schrijver].

LE: Yes, my great disappointment has been Nico. But I knew that he would deliver, and he would deliver a good piece; but he would take much time. But that he would take a year longer than what is already to my mind a very pessimistic estimate of five years, I would never have thought. I have been in touch with Tagi Segafi-nejad, who claims he has finished the last chapter, chapter eight, but that he is not ready with chapter seven. He claims he should be finished by the end of the year. And he writes quite well, Tagi. This stuff was presented years ago in Uppsala along with Nico.

TGW: At about the same time, yes.

LE: So Nico has been my greatest disappointment. I was happy to hear that when you met him in Iran, he said he is steaming up. I hope so. Olav, I am sure, will do an interesting piece. His journal issue wasn't bad. He even got an article out of Richard Jolly, with the pressure Richard was under. That was something.

So yes, I had hoped that we could have finished by the end of the year. We have not. The thing I have always hated in academics is the lack of discipline. You are an exception. It is not because you are interviewing me! You are well-organized. You do many things in a highly-organized fashion, and you deliver. That is very rare, unfortunately.

TGW: Out of this adventure what surprised you the most in terms of other people or events? Out of our findings, does anything really stick out in your mind?

LE: Of the oral history interviews, what I have found fascinating and what I think others have found fascinating, is the early years. I have known many of these people for thirty years or more, but I found that you do not know a person if you do not know where he comes from, what his first years were, what his major influences were. So the first twenty to twenty-five years of

Margaret Joan Anstee, of Enrique Iglesias, of Gerry Helleiner, of John Ruggie, who still gets sweaty hands when he passes a border, are fascinating. I have been reading most of these interviews, and I was fascinated. That was a real eye-opener and for me at least the big new thing. A lot of the things that these people have done later can to a certain extent be explained by their first years, even if they did not make it explicit during the interview.

The second thing that I find amazing is how Tatiana and you pulled off the book on oral history. I did a lot of work on it, but I did not do the structure. I think we only have had compliments on that book so far. Nobody has said, “This is a silly thing. Why wasn’t I quoted more often?” Even Just Faaland, who is not among the kindest people, said, “You quoted me in every chapter except one, at least once. That’s good.” Although I found the interviews fantastic, I said to myself, “How are we going to present this enormous richness of material?” So I found that you and Tatiana, the two lead authors, did extremely well and have to be congratulated.

Thirdly, I found that we handled the world conferences quite well. I think we showed in several of our publications, including the *UN Voices* book, how these world conferences stimulated certain ideas that were already there but pushed them and enhanced their visibility, whether it be on environment, population, on women, or on human rights. That, I think, was very good.

Finally, I think we can all bring this out even more sharply in the final volume. For example, how development thinking and practice became more complex and more realistic. Speaking as an economist, we started with the Harrod-Domar model, where capital explained everything. If you look at the distance we have pursued since then, when we now discuss the integration of the economic and social development policies with human rights and security issues, it is a huge progress. But there is a price we are paying for it, because in development

assistance policies there is what I have called “the flight forward.” We moved from one issue to the other without having solved the previous ones. We have made more than a big step forward. It is a huge distance we have been able to travel to make development thinking more realistic.

I cannot refrain from saying something again about the EADI thirtieth anniversary conference in Bonn. The title was, not surprisingly, “Development and Security.” The outgoing president, who is a friend and who is the incoming rector of the Institute of Social Studies, has a very nice name, Louk de la Rive Box. He is a very articulate fellow, a good man. But he said something that I found striking in his final speech as outgoing president on the last day of the conference. He said, “What I have taken away from this conference is that we need more contact with the military. And the first thing I am going to do when I come back to The Hague is I will contact my colleague in the military academy.”

Now, I thought that was the oddest idea I had heard in a long time. I told him, “Look, we have some experience. The people who have traditionally looked at security issues are the Clausewitz fanatics. They are interested in military security, state security, rather than in human security. So if you want to work on human security, if you want to enlarge the concept, the last guy you have to talk to the military chap. You will have to push these Clausewitz guys, including the military ones, in the direction of human security because they don’t take it necessarily seriously.

Now, it so happened that the Conference was attended by a general in uniform, a German General Reinhard, who had been involved in peacekeeping in Kosovo. Reinhard -a man with a loud general’s voice—turned out to be a very interesting man. He is already on his way to realize the importance of the human security concept, surely. He doesn’t write about it, but he is the kind of person who would be willing to listen to that.

Then there was this lady in the audience who said, “Oh, the military are actually nicer than we expected. I am an anthropologist, but I am now working with the military. You know, they are not that bad.” I found this naive, although the German youth still have a hang-up with the military.

Neil MacFarlane and the military are quite close. Now you have been pushing, and rightly so, and Richard has been extreme in pushing him to go a certain way towards human security. And I agree with you, that if we get these guys to move, it is taken much more seriously than if we have Richard saying the same thing. Now, would it be even better if a general would say that? I don’t think so. I thought it was naive.

TGW: What I think is also important is that part of the military culture, which I respect, is very different from that of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) or development partners and development ministry people. The military invests an enormous amount of time getting ready, keeping track of things while operations are going on, and then thinking about them afterwards. That sort of “culture of learning,” it seems to me, is something that NGOs and others in our business ought to pick up because it costs money to keep track of what’s going on and to learn for the future.

LE: But how do you know this? Where did you get that knowledge that they are much better prepared and keep track of things, and have better archives and we don’t?

TGW: If you look at their budgets, it is quite clear that they take learning seriously.

LE: Gerard Reinhard said, “When we went into Kosovo, we tried to get into it with the NGOs. We listened to the NGOs. They were very demanding and they insisted on different things. We are willing to listen. We are outgoing, and we don’t get necessarily the responses or the reactions we expect, but that is life.” I was not impressed. I think that is what every

individual in the year 2005 should do. They should be open-minded. They should listen. But would you agree then with Louk de la Rive Box that we should get in touch with the military?

TGW: Yes, absolutely.

LE: Interesting. When your article is finished, even in draft, you send it to me and I will send it to him with your compliments and say, “Hey, look, I was wrong. My interview with Tom taught me I was wrong.”

TGW: We’re almost finished. But I did want to ask one more question. As you said, development has become more complex, or the way that we think about it has become more complex. How would you characterize your own personal itinerary? How did you first conceive of development, and how do you conceive of it now? Is it the same Harrod-Domar for human security? What has changed most in your thinking over your lifetime in this business?

LE: Well, during my student days in Bologna—with my reading of Paul Baran, Benjamin Higgins, Arthur Lewis, Albert Hirschman—I must say that it was already no longer Harrod-Domar. They were already more sophisticated. They did not try to just quantify, but they did not introduce the qualitative factors systematically and consistently.

I have been convinced—maybe because I had worked on education and human resources and human capital - that development is a complex process. Before I got into the development business, I was already aware that it was not only a question of physical capital and the capital-output ratio, and that it was not necessarily true that if you put in three units of capital you will get back one unit of economic growth.

Given that I was already beyond that, and that I already knew that there was physical capital, but that there were also human beings and human capital, I never thought development was such a simple situation. Also, in order to get money from the UNFPA, in my early years of

development in the ILO, I had to become a demographer and look at the impact of population. I realized that we were talking about a knotty interdisciplinary thing and that development was complex.

But what I probably have learned in the UNIHP is the value of human rights in the development equation. I had underestimated the human rights issue. You may remember, when we were writing the first book, *Ahead of the Curve*, and when we were on this chapter of world conferences, you said to me, “Where is Vienna?” I said, “Why do you ask?” You remember? You said, in your nice way—I would have said it differently—“But you realize, it is very important these days.” Five years ago, I would not have made that connection.

I was stupid, and I should have known it. The human security thing is something different. I am probably a little bit closer to you on this than to Richard. I do agree that we have to be careful not to put everything in the same bag. We have already perfectly good names for all these things. However, it probably could lead to some kind of a breakthrough. To connect development with human rights and human security I think is a fruitful approach if we discipline ourselves. That is one of the things that I have learned working with colleagues from different vantage points.

TGW: No. There’s still time for old dogs and new tricks.

LE: And now we have to make sure it comes out in a very short and concise way in the final book, the forward-looking book.

TGW: This is a conversation for dinner, not to be recorded. *Merci*.

INDEX

- 1940-1945 Foundation for Former Political Prisoners, 14-15
- Africa, 38, 50, 55, 65, 67, 86
- Ahead of the Curve*, 21, 79
- Amar, Abbas, 47, 49, 50-51, 54-55, 64, 66
- Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 5, 7, 25
- Andean Development Bank (ADB), 43
- Argentina, 32-41, 44, 59-69, 95
- Arnheim, the Netherlands, 5
- Asia, 42, 50, 55-56, 62, 76, 94
- Asian-African Conference (Bandung), 18-19
- Auschwitz, 6
- Australia, 22, 64, 110
- Austria, 8-9
- Bandung Conference, *see* Asian-African Conference
- Baran, Paul, 34, 107
- Barre, Raymond, 13, 67
- Bariloche Foundation, 59-60
- basic needs, 49-50, 58-66, 69, 80, 95, 99
- Belarus, 46
- Belgium, 3, 5
- Berlin Wall, 87
- Blanchard, Francis, 45, 102
- Blandy, Richard, 47
- Bologna, Italy, 15-16, 19, 22, 34-35, 107
- Bonn, Germany, 75
- Bosnia, 81
- Bourgignon, François, 87, 99
- Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, 89
- Bretton Woods institutions, 98, 100; *see also* International Monetary Fund *and* World Bank
- Brazil, 42-43, 95
- Buchenwald, 6
- Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23, 33, 38, 39, 40
- Buron, Robert, 84-85
- Calcutta, India, 38
- Caracas, Venezuela, 43
- Cardoso, Fernando Henrique, 37
- Carter, Jimmy, 50, 63
- Chenery, Hollis, 58, 63-65, 99
- Childers, Erskine, 89
- Chile, 42, 44, 78, 94
- China, 99-100
- Chou En-Lai, 19
- civil rights movement (U.S.), 21
- Colombia, 46, 54-56
- Columbia University, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25-26, 36
- Corea, Gamani, 90
- Cuba, 36
- Dachau, 4, 6
- Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 60
- Denmark, 9
- Debeauvais, Michel, 25
- dependency theory, 37, 39, 40, 41
- d'Estaing, Giscard, 99
- developing countries, 23, 32, 37, 66, 76-78, 84, 87, 90
and the New International Economic Order, 66
- development, 19, 21, 30, 34-37, 48-50, 55, 60, 62-64, 67, 70, 72, 75-76, 79-80, 84, 89, 91, 97, 102, 104-108
- development assistance, 80, 84
- Development and Change*, 34, 70
- development economics, 19
- Doctor, Kailas, 46-47
- Dutch resistance movement, 3, 7
- Eastern Europe, 88
- École nationale d'administration*, 12
- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 65
- Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), 44, 87
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 40, 42, 44-45, 50, 94
- education, recurrent, 10, 28-34, 74-75
- economics of, 15, 27
- Eindhoven, the Netherlands, 6
- Emmerij, Gisela, 22, 23, 24, 25, 34, 36, 42
- Emmerij, Karina, 22, 24, 25
- Emmerij, Vera, 6, 12, 21, 24-25, 27-28, 31, 52, 56, 59-63, 70, 72-74, 81-83, 91, 94, 97, 104
- Europe, 3, 4, 7, 10, 16-17, 29-30, 33-37, 43, 51, 56, 78-79, 84, 88, 98
- European Association for Development Research and Training (EADI), 75, 79, 91, 105
- European Court of Justice, 50
- Faaland, Just, 86, 104
- Falsetto, Enzo, 42
- feminism, 23, 69
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 63
- Ford Foundation, 32, 35, 44
- France, 3, 9, 11-13, 15, 17-18, 33
- Frank, André Gunder, 42
- Fujimori, Alberto, 95
- Fund for Economic Development, 81
- Furtado, Celso, 37, 42, 44
- García, Enrique, 43
- Gaulle, Charles de, 14, 85-86
- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 21
- Geneva, Switzerland, 22-25, 33-34, 36, 40, 44, 50, 54, 58, 60, 71, 73-74, 79, 82, 91
- Germani, Gino, 39-40
- Germany, 3, 5, 8-9, 37-38, 40, 53
- Ghai, Dharam, 47, 59, 61, 68
- Goldsmith, Raymond, 23-24
- Gortari, Carlos Salinas de, 95
- Great Depression, 3
- Greece, 30, 97

- Griffin, Keith, 47
 Group of 77 (G-77), 66
 Hague, the Netherlands, 5, 7, 70, 73, 105
 Haines, C. Grove, 16
 Hamburg, Germany, 8, 22
 Haq, Mahbub ul, 64, 94
 Hart, Keith, 57
 Harvard University, 39
 Helleiner, Gerry, 63, 69, 99, 104
 Hemingway, Ernest, 12
 Henry, Paul-Marc, 85
 Heyzer, Noeleen, 69
 Higgins, Benjamin, 34
 Hirschman, Albert, 16, 19, 34-35, 107
 Hitler, Adolph, 3
 Holocaust, 6
 Hopkins, Michael, 59
 Hughes, Helen, 63, 65
 human capital, 29, 31, 107
 human rights, 104, 108
 ideas, 31, 58, 61-63
 and economics, 31
 and global conferences, 61-63
 and International Labour Organization, 58
 Iglesias, Enrique, 42, 90, 92-95, 104
 income redistribution, 49, 54, 56-58, 60, 62, 87, 95, 100
 India, 38, 46, 60, 68, 99-100
 Indonesia, 1
 Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), 93, 96-98, 101
 Institute of Development Studies (IDS), 57, 68, 91
 Institute of Social Studies, 28, 43, 70-71, 83, 105
 international civil service, 52-53
 International Court of Justice (ICJ), 50
 International Labor Conference, 45
 International Labour Organization (ILO), 28, 33, 36-37, 45-60, 64-69, 76, 79, 85, 94, 108
 International Monetary Fund (IMF), 98, 100, 102
Institut d'études du développement économique et social (IEDES), 14, 25, 30
Institut études politique de l'université de Paris, 12
 Iran, 56-57, 103
 Italy, 21, 31, 40
 Jain, Devaki, 23
 Japan, 56, 95
 Jenks, Wilfred, 45-48, 51
John Barleycorn, 2
 Jolly, Richard, 14, 49, 55, 57, 68, 73, 92, 94, 99, 106, 108
 Johns Hopkins University, 15
 Kallen, Dennis, 27
 Kennan, Peter, 16, 20, 35
 Kenya, 19, 55-58, 60, 64, 68
 Keynesianism, 78
 Khomeini, Ruholla, 57
 Konig, Peter, 73
 Korea, 57
 Kosovo, 105-106
 Kristensen, Thorkil, 83
 Latin America, 19, 33, 35, 37-38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 50, 55, 75, 79, 93-95, 97
 Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Progress (ILPES), 42, 44
 Latin American and Caribbean Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO), 75
 League of Nations, 45, 67
 Lennep, Emile van, 85-86
 Lewis, Arthur, 107
 Lewis, W.L., 34
 List, Friedrich, 42, 44
 London, UK, 85
 London, Jack, 2
 Luxembourg, 3
 MacArthur, Douglas, 56
 Maslow, Abraham, 60
 Marshall, George, 46
 Marshall Plan, 29
 Marshall, Mary, 37
 Maastricht, the Netherlands, 9
 McNamara, Robert, 58, 61, 63-65, 95-96, 101
 Meany, George, 46
 Mexico, 30, 69
 Middle East, 40
 Miller, Henry, 12
 Montgomery, Bernard, 5
 Montreal, Canada, 48
 Morse, David, 45, 48
 Mundell, Robert, 15, 16, 19, 20, 34, 35
 Nasser, Gamel-Abdel, 18
 Natzweiler, 4
 Nazis, 4, 8-9
 Nehru, Jawaharlal, 18
 Netherlands, 1-3, 5, 10-11, 17, 23-24, 28, 30, 78-81, 102
 Netherlands Antilles, 79-81
 Netherlands East Indies, 1
 New International Economic Order (NIEO), 66, 90-91
 New York, NY 17, 21, 36, 66
 New Zealand, 21
 Nigeria, 78
 Nijmegen, the Netherlands, 5
 Nobel Prize, 15, 19, 45
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 53
 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), 54, 81, 106
 North-South relations, 19
 Nyerere, Julius, 90
 Ocampo, Antonio, 90
 Onassis, Aristotle, 47
 Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), 14, 23, 27, 29-33, 35, 44,

- 52-53, 56, 82-89, 90, 92
 Development Centre of, 23, 24, 52, 53, 82-88, 92
 Mediterranean Regional Project of, 30, 32-33, 97
 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), 90
 Oteiza, Enrique, 41, 75
 Oxford University, 109
 Pant, Pitamber, 60
 Paraguay, 35
 Paris, France, 12, 14-15, 17, 19, 21-25, 33, 34, 82-83, 92
 peacekeeping, 105
 Perón, Evita, 39, 78
 Perón, Juan, 39
 Peru, 35, 94
 Philippe, André, 85
 Polak, 98
 Poland, 77
 Pompidou, Georges, 13, 14, 25, 67
 Portugal, 30, 97
 poverty, 62, 81, 95
 Prebisch, Raúl, 37, 40-42, 44, 67
 Pronk, Jan, 79-80, 82
 Reagan, Ronald, 77-78
Redistribution With Growth, 58
 Reinhard, Gerard, 106
 Rive Box, Louk de la, 105
 Rome, Italy, 51
 Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 1-3, 5, 7-8, 21-22
 bombing of, 3
 Russia, 38, 45-46
 Saarbrücken, Germany, 9
 Santiago, Chile, 44
 Sartre, Jean-Paul, 11
 School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), 15, 16
 Schultz, Theodore, 31
Schutzstaffel (SS), 4, 8
 Segafi-nejad, Tagi, 103
 Seers, Dudley, 46, 56, 68, 72, 76
 Sen, Amartya, 68, 73, 94
 Singer, Hans, 40, 49, 51, 57, 68, 94
 Society for International Development (SID), 75
 South Africa, 21
 Soviet Union, 4
 Sri Lanka, 56
 Stalin, Joseph, 49
 Streeten, Paul, 65
 Stokke, Olav, 76
 Sunkel, Oswaldo, 44
 Swedish Red Cross, 7
 Taiwan, 56
 Thatcher, Margaret, 77-79
 Tinbergen, Jan, 24, 26, 73, 36, 45
 Tito, Josip Brosz, 18
 Tokyo, Japan, 82
 trade unions, 54-55
 Treaty of Versailles, 45
 Trotsky, Leon, 49
 Turkey, 30
 UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 65, 87, 90
 UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), 65, 99, 102
 UN Development Programme (UNDP), 64, 85-86, 101
 UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), 65, 88
 UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), 91
 UN Intellectual History Project (UNIHP), 61, 76, 90, 96, 102, 108
 UN Population Fund (UNFPA), 46, 91-92
 UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 41, 91-91
 UN University (UNU), 82
 UN World Conference for the International Women's Year (Mexico City), 69
UN Voices, 34, 105
 Ukraine, 46
 United States, 6, 14-15, 17, 20, 21, 26-27, 29, 32, 39, 40, 45, 50, 63, 66, 73, 87, 90
 Urquhart, Brian, 89
 Uyl, Joop den, 79
 Valticos, Nicholas, 50
 Vietnam War, 63
 Washington, DC, 15, 64, 77, 81-82, 92, 94-95, 97-98, 15
 Weeks, John, 49, 57
 Western Europe, 3
 Williamson, John, 94-95
 Wisenthal, Simon, 6
 women, 69; *see also* gender
 World Bank, 19, 58, 63-65, 69, 87, 93, 95-96, 98-102
 World Employment Conference, 49, 55, 59, 60, 61, 63, 70
 World Employment Programme (WEP), 36, 45-46, 48, 58, 59, 68-70, 94
 World Health Organization (WHO), 65
 World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), 91
 World Population Conference (Bucharest), 61
 World War II, 2-4, 39
 Yale University, 23, 73
 Yugoslavia, 30-31, 47, 77