

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
SEYMOUR MAXWELL FINGER

BY

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New York, 30 NOVEMBER 1999

THOMAS G. WEISS: This is Tom Weiss, interviewing on 30 November Max Finger in The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Max, as you know we're going to concentrate today on the period when you were at the U.S. Mission for our intellectual history. But I would like to spend a few moments and go backwards, speaking a moment about where you grew up and how you got to the United Nations in 1956. Could you just spend a minute speaking about your family and its background and your own educational experiences in Ohio?

SEYMOUR MAXWELL FINGER: Yes, my father died when I was three. My mother remarried to his uncle and we moved from the Bronx to Brooklyn where he had his home and his business. And I grew up doing a lot of the Horatio Alger things: I delivered newspapers, sold bananas, and all kinds of odds-and-ends to make a few bucks. I had heard my mother and stepfather arguing about money and I didn't want to make any trouble. So I went out and made whatever money I needed.

Then when I was ready for college I decided I wanted to go out of town. It had to be someplace cheap because I was earning the money during the summer. I had various state universities in mind. And then a guy who was also selling door-to-door with me during the summer had gone to Ohio University for a year and liked it. so I said, "Why not Ohio?" And that is what made the decision. I never regretted it. I enjoyed being in this little town of Athens. I enjoyed the freedom to pursue my own interests. And they had a wonderful library. And it proved to be quite a good choice finally.

TGW: What did you major in and why?

SMF: I majored in American history. And my ambition then was to become a professor of American history. Ironically I did not take any foreign languages in college because I

thought, you know, who is going to need this stuff to know American history? I had three years of French and two of German in high school. That proved very useful later on.

TGW: Later on meaning—you graduated from Ohio University when?

SMF: In January of 1935. I was nineteen years old. And I looked nineteen. Which made it very difficult to get a teaching job in the Depression, which still went on until January of 1935. As a result, first I went back to selling door-to-door, but New York in February is very cold. And my ambition became to get a job where I could make a living indoors. Then I saw an ad for a chain of photograph studios that wanted young men twenty-two to twenty-six to train to be managers. I figured if I said I was twenty-two they would know I was lying so I said I was twenty-one and I got hired. And that became my career for eight years.

I started as a manager in Fort Wayne, then Miami, Atlanta, St. Louis, then Cincinnati, which happened to be the second biggest studio in the chain. By then I had established something of a reputation and I was training managers for the company. And that, in fact, is what led to my diplomatic career.

I took one fellow out to lunch to explain where he was going wrong. And halfway through lunch he said you know you ought to be in the diplomatic service. That started me thinking. My first reaction, well, diplomatic is a little highfalutin for me, but maybe consular.

When I wrote to Washington, it turned out to be one Foreign Service. In the meantime the war intervened and I volunteered for the U.S. Army. I wound up in a French liaison unit. So I really learned French thoroughly, thanks to the army.

Then in Germany I started to revive my German. I became the interpreter for a major who had had AT&T experience going all around Germany checking on repeater stations. You know, these are stations where the sound is reamplified. In those days you had to do it. And with

those thirty-five mile intervals I had time to polish up my German. So by the time the war ended I was fluent in French and German. Very helpful to take the exam. I had also used spare time in the Army whenever I had it, to read up on commercial law, international law, various things that would be useful in the Foreign Service.

Then I took the exam. I passed it. I got appointed. At that time about seven percent of those who took the exam passed and were appointed. It was a combination of written and oral.

My first job was in Stuttgart, much to my surprise. When I left Berlin in November of 1945, I thought I would never see Germany again. And two months later I was back working for the State Department. Then I went on to assignments in Budapest, Paris, Rome and Laos.

In between I had a year at Harvard doing graduate work in economics, which was at my initiative, because I felt that you could not really understand international politics if you didn't know something about economics. And it proved to be extremely useful. It was a great year.

Then sitting at my desk in Laos, after five assignments I assumed my next assignment with the State Department. And much to my surprise it was to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York.

TGW: Before we move to New York, I just wanted to ask a few things about these earlier stints. In some ways the move to Laos was unusual, as part of a State Department career really working in Europe. And as I understand, one tended to concentrate on a region. How did you get plummeted in Laos? And do you recall what it was like being there? This was shortly after Dien Bien Phu. The French had left Southeast Asia and the United States had moved in—I guess much to our chagrin—a decade later.

What was it like in the middle of the 1950s, in what are now called “developing countries,” and at that time I don't remember what they were called. But did this in any way

have an impact on your own ideas about economic and social development once you got to the UN?

SMF: Yes. I went there in 1955, which was shortly after Dien Bien Phu. And I was a victim of Secretary [John Foster] Dulles's traveling habits. He landed in Vientiane and found there was only one person in the embassy who spoke French. He was the ambassador. And he was down with amoebic dysentery.

And of course the educated people in the government all spoke French. So he sent a cable to Washington saying that he wanted a middle level officer fluent in French. He didn't care where he was or what he was doing, he wanted him there right away. And I guess my card fell out when the machines rolled around. And so I wound up in Laos.

Very big change. It is about as far geographically from New York as you can get. And also in terms of the kind of country. I mean I learned there what an underdeveloped country really is. By the way, you know the terminology changed at the UN from "underdeveloped" to "less developed," to "developing." Even though the situation didn't change all that much, the language did. And that was helpful in my later assignments, because I really knew what an underdeveloped country was like. And what its problems were.

And later on when I helped to develop the UN Development Programme (UNDP), as a U.S. initiative, I could frame it in terms of what I could see was needed in Laos.

And in retrospect I realized that my assignment to the UN was in substantial measure due to my economic background. First my year at Harvard and Henry Cabot Lodge and to the Bostonian, graduate work at Harvard.

When I was in Budapest, there was the first analysis of a five-year plan in Eastern Europe that the U.S. Government had ever had. And it became noteworthy in the State Department and

the CIA, as well, and in a way foreshadowed the collapse of the Communist economy because I was able to determine that the steel production, for example, was 25 percent less than the figures they gave out publicly, that their public figures were completely unreliable. They picked them in terms of public relations impact for the Hungarian people. And that had very little to do with the actual situation. At any rate, Lodge was then looking for a senior economic advisor, and I guess all of these factors played a part. And that is why I didn't go to Washington, but went to New York instead.

TGW: If I may, do you recall whether anyone in Europe, I mean, you were obviously present for the Marshall Plan, so I guess I would like to have a few reflections of what it was like to be on the ground in Europe as the Marshall Plan was being implemented. But then second of all, whether in Europe, the founding of the UN was seen as a significant departure. And what was the relative balance in enthusiasm or perspectives about the role of the United Nations versus the role of the United States and the Marshall Plan in, let's say, 1946-47?

SMF: Yes, I was actually in Europe from January 1944 until the summer of 1955, except for that brief interval at Harvard, and I would see what was happening in Europe. I don't think the United Nations was taken very seriously at that time. The Marshall Plan was. And it was an enormous success. You had to be there to know how much devastation had occurred. How low public morale was. I had a feeling that the Russians could have walked in, if they so decided. There was just general despair. And the Marshall Plan actually lifted Europe out of that despair. We spent about \$13 billion. And I can't think of any expenditure of that amount that ever brought so much benefit not only to Europe, but to the United States as well.

We did it mainly to have strength against the Soviet Union. But the effect was enormously beneficial to the Europeans. I didn't hear much talk at all about the United Nations

at that time in spite of the fact that the UN mounted a force in Korea, when the North Koreans invaded, so I would say that the role of the United States, the Marshall Plan and NATO were given far more attention in Europe at that time.

TGW: I found it interesting, the transition via Laos to the United Nations. It was unusual, I think, to go to Laos after beginning in Europe. It also is unusual, I believe, for someone to spend basically half of his career at the United Nations. How do you explain this fact? I personally would like to see more people specialized in multilateral diplomacy. But this is not typical, certainly within the U.S. government. So how did that occur?

SMF: Well, it is not typical, because it is really not rewarding, because when you come to New York, you lose your rent allowance and a lot of other privileges. You don't have a diplomatic plate on your car, you don't get duty-free liquor and various things like that. So it is not a particularly desirable post from the standpoint of living conditions. It is an expensive city and coming in with an immediate need for housing, you can't look around too much. And that is why it has never been too tempting a career for foreign service officers.

Now, why I stayed had a lot to do with my late wife who simply didn't want to get up and move out of New York, and that happened to correspond to Lodge's wishes every time. A couple of times, the State Department requested a transfer for me—once to Ecuador, once to Poland—and he just waved them off, which he could do. He persuaded [Dwight] Eisenhower to run for president. And he was very active in Eisenhower's campaign. He remained very close to the president. He worked directly with him. So when he said “no” to a transfer, that was it.

Also, because of my late wife's feelings, I had to turn down something I very much wanted, a year at Columbia to study Russian intensively. I would then become the first minister

consul for economic affairs in Moscow. And that was a career I really wanted. But my wife was dead set against it. So I stayed.

And then when I wanted—when I was assigned to Rome, I really wanted Berlin, which at that time would be an interesting place. I was interested in Soviet bloc affairs. But because of circumstances beyond my control, instead I became an expert on the UN.

TGW: Before we actually move to the substance of those exciting years, from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, there were two questions that struck me, partially as an American, but partially as a student of history—the UN and American.

What was it like to be in the U.S. Mission in terms of dealing with the residue of the McCarthy period, in particular what happened within the Secretariat? And then the second part of the question really relates to dealing with African ambassadors arriving in New York during a period when our own civil rights history was so much in turmoil. And in fact, Jim Crow laws were still around. On a personal level, what was it like dealing with those two, I would say, “blemishes” on our own historical record at the United Nations?

SMF: Well, actually they were not a serious obstacle, either one. When a survey was done about the way ambassadors to the UN felt about being in New York, the most favorable were the Africans—they really enjoyed being in New York—and also some of the Middle Easterners and Asians. They could get any kind of food they wanted, more ingredients, more restaurants. And they really enjoyed being here. Some of the Europeans were less enthusiastic. And my personal relations with the Africans were very good. It was never a problem for me. I mingled with them quite freely.

Of course, part of it was lobbying to get votes for our positions. Lodge was very much concerned—his main focus was on the Cold War with the Soviet Union. And he wanted votes

from the new countries in support of our political positions. And it was my job to help him in that respect. And I think, as I will outline later, I was able to do so.

Now, the McCarthy investigations of the UN did not really play much of a role at that time. It was never brought up to me, as a criticism. My own personal experience with it, strangely, was when I was at Harvard, and I was up for a promotion in the foreign service. So they sent a security man to do a checkup. And I was in a house where there were two other tenants. And they were questioned as to whether I brought people home, whether they stayed the night, and what sex were they.

They were shocked by this, being, you know, innocent academics. I was not. You know, I expected this kind of thing to happen. And I guess in the atmosphere of those days, the only damaging thing would be if I had brought home men who stayed the night. But that was not a problem.

TGW: I see. Well, shortly after you arrived, it turned out to be a rather exciting time at the United Nations with the invasions of Suez and of Hungary. What was the atmosphere within the Secretariat or on the other side of First Avenue at the U.S. Mission during this period?

SMF: Well, I think the attitude was generally good. And I will say that I may have been the first person in the mission who set out to cultivate members of the Secretariat, because I found them very useful when we were presenting an initiative. And to me it was just carrying on what you do in a foreign country. You learn to know the officials of that country.

I didn't really find any hostility. I dealt with Philippe de Seynes, who was Under-Secretary for Economic Affairs. He was always helpful. And then Robert Mueller who was his chief deputy. I maintained a friendship with him for many years. Henry Bloch, who was their finance specialist, helped me design a very helpful resolution encouraging foreign private

investment. So I never did find the Secretariat to be a problem. It was true, it was almost axiomatic that if you presented a resolution that the Secretariat liked, the financial implications would be low. If they didn't like it, the financial implications would be high. But you learned to deal with that.

TGW: Well, before we get to the stage of cultivating new countries, I would like to spend a moment on the dynamics between the United States and the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s, and in keeping the new countries from becoming members of the United Nations. Or keeping the other team's new members from becoming members of the United Nations. How did Ambassador Lodge or others justify this stance in a body that was supposed to be universal?

SMF: Well, as I mentioned earlier, to Lodge, his primary job was to score points against the Soviet Union. So in his mind you didn't have to justify wanting to exclude a country that was a friend of the Soviet Union's. Then as you know, trades were made, so that a couple of their allies got in, and many of ours did. I remember, the first thing when I was there, we suddenly got sixteen new members, bringing the membership to over eighty.

TGW: Which year was this?

SMF: This was in the 1950s, I forget the exact year. But Lodge never had any trouble justifying that kind of a position.

TGW: But once the membership went from fifty to eighty, how did your life change? Or if you can speculate a little about how the Secretariat's life changed, immediately having thirty more players. Certainly this changed the dynamics of regional discussions or any kind of negotiation. What do you recall about that?

SMF: Well, the main difference for me was that it gave a lot of new people, including a lot of Africans. It made it important to cultivate them in the delegates lounge, over lunches and things like that.

I even got into trouble with Ralph Bunche one time because of these issues. There was a Secretariat member from Upper Volta who was playing with a pistol and shot part of his finger off in the Secretariat building. Well, Bunche was furious and decided this guy had to be fired. A lot of the Africans came to me and would say: "Can you talk to Bunche, can you get him to soften a little bit?" And I went in to see Ralph. And his reaction was, properly, "Well, what the hell business is it of yours?" And of course the only reason I was doing it was to cultivate the Africans. He did relent a little bit. And instead of this guy being fired, he was transferred to Geneva. But we did various things.

Another incident, which in a way is comic, but illustrates the kinds of things that we would do. The ambassador from Senegal at that time, Ambassador Boye, had his Cadillac stolen. It was insured, but because it was now six months old and a used car, the insurance company was going to give him several thousand dollars less than the initial purchase price. And he said, well how can I explain this to my government? We asked who is your insurance company. He gave us the name. And the legal officer, Bob Rosenstock, called up to talk to them. It turned out that the insurance company was owned by Joseph Bonnano whose nickname was "Joe Bananas," a famous Mafioso. He said, "you tell the ambassador he'll have an identical car tomorrow morning." And he did.

I don't know whose car might have been stolen in the interim. But this gave the ambassador a notion that he could come to us with almost any problem. His daughter who was in her early twenties moved in with a black law student at Columbia Law School. And he just

decided that he wanted her out of there. He wanted her home. And he called us about it. And the New York City Police went around. And they found she was very happy where she was and didn't want to come home. And we explained that to him. And he said, "In my country we can take care of it." Of course they could. We couldn't. I got six or seven calls from him, I guess every evening his wife would badger him, then he would call me the next morning. But nothing could be done about it.

As a postscript when I later developed the Ralph Bunche Institute on the UN, we had seminars. There was a young black lawyer who attended one of the seminars and I immediately spotted his name and asked him, "Do you know Ambassador Boye?" He said, "Oh, yes, he's my father-in-law." So that ended happily.

TGW: All's well that ends well.

SMF: You know, we did try very hard to please the customer, so they would vote our way.

TGW: Well, some of the customers were obviously dissatisfied, at least those who gathered in Bandung in 1955. How was the formation of what later became known as the "Non-Aligned Movement" perceived in New York and Washington?

SMF: Well, certainly as far as Lodge was concerned, they were simply a damn nuisance, and he couldn't see why anybody didn't perceive that we were on the right side and the Soviets were wrong. Therefore, non-alignment, in his mind, was just simply wrong. And he asked me one time about India and their taking aid from the Soviet Union. And I said, "Well they are so desperate for help they will take it anyway they can get it." He said, "Well isn't that kind of a whorish attitude?" I said, "Well, not from their standpoint."

So he shifted during the time I was there to being more understanding towards the problems of Third World countries. I developed it because I was in one just before coming to the UN.

TGW: Another momentous historical event was the death of Dag Hammarskjöld during the first part of your career at the United Nations. How was this perceived? I mean, this was obviously part of the Soviet troika proposal that must not have pleased Mr. Lodge or those who followed him. But how was Hammarskjöld seen and how was his death perceived?

SMF: Well, initially Hammarskjöld was viewed with some suspicion by Dulles because of his efforts to deal with Beijing. But from 1956 on, Hammarskjöld was perceived very positively, especially by Lodge. And the slogan, "Let Dag do it," became popular. He was a surprise to the Soviets too, because he seemed to be a mild-mannered minister of finance. And they didn't expect him to be a dynamic Secretary-General, as he turned out to be.

While I'm on the subject of Lodge, some of the remarks I made might give the impression that I didn't have a high opinion of him, which actually I did. True, he was a cold warrior. That is why he came. But he was a superb boss. He knew what everybody in the mission was doing. He praised those who deserved it. He could have a foul temper with those who goofed.

And in terms of his speaking at the UN, he was a superb speaker. He had been a journalist. He had a great sense of timing. He always made his main address to the General Assembly at 11:30 in the morning so that it would get on television that night and the morning newspapers.

If the Soviets attacked us, he was always ready with a rebuttal at once, so that our reply would appear with their story. He was very much pro-United Nations. And during his term, public support for the UN in the United States climbed very steadily. The UN was useful to the

U.S. in 1956, as a club to beat Anthony Eden with, because Eden had organized the attack against Egypt without telling us anything about it. And I think that infuriated Eisenhower and Dulles. So the UN was a place where we could take a slap at Eden.

I remember at the time Lodge saying that we had won the undying gratitude of the Egyptians. Three weeks later when the issue of Hungary came up, they voted against us. So undying gratitude did not last very long.

But then again, in 1960, in the Congo operation, Hammarskjöld was tremendously useful to our objectives in keeping a war for Central Africa—between the Soviet Union and the U.S.—from happening, and putting a UN operation in there instead. Then we wound up, instead of having [Patrice] Lumumba, who was pro-Soviet, with Mobutu, who feathered his own nest generously, but at least was not a problem in that respect. So both the UN and Hammarskjöld were very positively viewed during the last five years of his life.

TGW: This project is about economic and social affairs. But in this country again, I dare say in most western countries, security matters far more than economic affairs. But what in your view is the relationship between an inability to respond positively from a national perspective to Suez or to the Congo, and the United States in this case, willing to enter into economic talks and discussions within the Secretariat? What is the link between those two?

SMF: Well, it was largely a matter of voting and support. I should add here that Lodge and I got along very well, because he thought I knew everything there was to know about economics, which I certainly didn't. And he was proud of not knowing anything about economics himself. So I was never the subject of any tirade.

I might add that afterward when he was in Saigon he wanted me to come out as his deputy. And he chaired the first fund-raising dinner of the Ralph Bunche Institute, which was

many years after. So we maintained a very good personal relationship. His main interest in me was to see to what extent economic issues could be used to bolster our political position at the UN. And I did those things.

First thing was SUNFED (Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development). You know that SUNFED was described in Washington as a fund where the U.S. would put up practically all the money and everybody else would decide how to spend it. So naturally it was not popular with either the Treasury or Congress.

But Lodge was disturbed because the Soviets voted for SUNFED. We voted against it. He felt we were losing support among third world countries. As he put it, he said let's try to get this SUNFED monkey off our backs. And his first thought was to have a baby SUNFED, as he put it, which would amount to \$100 million a year, the United States putting up about a third of it.

I responded the next morning saying that it simply wouldn't fly, because SUNFED envisaged capital projects, bridges and roads which cost a lot of money. The second level on the George Washington Bridge cost \$185 million. So if you had \$100 million to distribute to about a hundred countries and territories, a million apiece, you weren't going to be able to do anything significant.

Then I came up with a notion which became the Special Fund and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It was called "preinvestment." And here my Laos experience was very helpful. The idea behind it was that if we could help countries find their resources, and then train people in how to use the resources, that capital would flow, either domestic or foreign, private or public. But this was the way to pave the way for capital. And we could do it with a much smaller sum, something that was worthwhile and, you know, in Laos, my experience was that it

was a country with an energy supply that depended on burning charcoal. They had no oil, no coal. They were an inland country where importing it would be very costly.

At night the voltage was so low you couldn't read. How could you develop industry if you don't have the energy? And yet, flowing right through the city was the powerful Mekong River with many tributaries, which could provide a great deal of water power. But no one had ever tried to explore where and how you would do it. And similarly during the rainy season you couldn't go over land from the capital to any of the other provinces. The Mekong and the other rivers would have been a good way to get around, but no one had ever chartered the rivers sufficiently to do that.

So that was one kind of thing that the Special Fund would do. The other was training. And there they needed many, many people. When I was there, there were only two trained engineers in the country. One was the prime minister. The other was his half brother who was fighting to unseat the prime minister. So neither one was engaged in any engineering.

How do you train enough people for economic development? They had been sending some trainees to Paris. But that was very expensive. And half the time they would come back with a French wife and they would not be interested in going out into the boondocks.

So the notion of the Special Fund was to have training institutions either within the country or close by, say Bangkok for Laos, which would be easier to train a lot more people. And they would not have such a reentry problem after they had been trained.

Now, that was the basis of what we proposed. The Special Fund with a goal of \$100 million. Now it is over \$2 billion, by the way. But some people doubted that it would reach \$100 million.

And we lucked out in another way. The developing countries were not thrilled with the Special Fund. They really wanted SUNFED. They went to the Russians and asked, "Will you put up \$25 million for SUNFED? And then we'll reject the American proposal."

The Soviets said no way. They wouldn't—and they lost their credibility on economic issues through that one action. And the Special Fund was approved by the General Assembly, and was launched. And I think it accomplished Lodge's objectives in that it made them more sympathetic towards us. It also, I think, did a lot of good for developing countries.

There was another interesting side bit to that. Paul Hoffman was our delegate in the General Assembly in 1956. And he and I spent a lot of time lunching with Canadians and the Dutch and other people. And Paul got to believe strongly that we should do something else through the UN. After the resolution was approved, we had a candidate who had missed out, John Davis, on being elected to head the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization). And he was the American candidate. But there was a Danish candidate named Paul Hoffman that Nonny Wright of Denmark was backing.

Well, because of his reputation as head of the Marshall Plan, because of an article he had done for *The New York Times* magazine, there was enthusiasm all over the place for Paul Hoffman. I went to Lodge and said, you know, this Special Fund is \$15 million and Paul Hoffman will have a lot more clout for us than John Davis and a \$100 million.

We doubted that Paul would take it initially. And Lodge said, "You know, Paul, it may have only about \$15 million." Hoffman said, "I don't care if it is 15 cents, it is the principle." So Paul agreed to take the job.

And I think that was very important for the growth of the Special Fund, because he had a lot of IOU's with the prime ministers of Germany and France, as somebody who had headed the

Marshall Plan. And the fund developed really quite rapidly and very well. Then it merged with the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) to become the UN Development Programme.

We were disappointed with it, in only one way, really. The way we had set it up originally, there would be an advisory board consisting of the Secretary-General of the UN, the president of the World Bank, and the executive director of the IMF (International Monetary Fund).

Our objective was to strengthen the role of the managing director of the Special Fund, so that he wouldn't have to depend completely on the specialized agencies, which largely just shared the pie in the Expanded Program. And it was also to involve the World Bank with the UN more closely.

Unfortunately, even with Paul Hoffman as the head of it, the specialized agencies maintained their hold.

The way the fund was set up, the director was authorized to go outside the UN system and get the most efficient implementer that he could find. But it never happened. Other than that, I think the Special Fund and UN Development Program have been a tremendous success and something that we can be proud of.

TGW: Well, this is very interesting, these debates in the late 1950s and eventually the establishment of the UNDP in the mid 1960s—1966, I believe. How did these discussions within the mission and presumably in Washington and back again in the mission feed into certainly what President Kennedy is most remembered for at the UN, the launching of the First Development Decade? This in retrospect seems like a major rhetorical and actual initiative.

How did efforts within the mission feed into what was going on in New York, or was this driven by New York and then went down the Amtrak line to D.C.?

SMF: Well, the UN Development Decade originated in Washington. Although I think, of course, it was fed by not only the Special Fund, but another program that I helped to develop which was the World Food Programme. That has a funny beginning. When [Richard] Nixon was running for president in 1960, Lodge called me into his office and said, "Max, the vice president wants to do something about food through the UN." And then in usual blunt Lodge fashion, he said, "Of course, he doesn't know anything about either one. Will you cook up something?"

I gave him a two-page memorandum outlining how a food program would work and also bolster our position at the UN. He took it, put it in his pocket, saw the president a couple of days later, gave it to the president, who approved the World Food Program. Now, you know, ordinarily, to get an initiative like that going, you have battles between treasury and agriculture and state. And it goes on and on.

Once the president approved it, then it was not a question of do we do it, but how. And also it gave us quite a boost, and we were helped by a stupid Russian who happened to be in the chair of the Second Committee of the General Assembly when this was being considered. I wanted to maximize the propaganda impact of the World Food Program. So I asked for priority consideration in the Second Committee agenda. And the Russian spoke against it. He said, "What is all the fuss about? People have been hungry for centuries."

So we were front page in *The New York Times* for four or five days. And that again helped with Lodge's political objective. Then one more thing, even if I'm doing a little self-promotion here. Another idea that I cooked up, which eventually was called the "Malayan

Resolution,” was a resolution providing that the Secretary-General inquire in developing countries of what their needs were for capital investment. Then inquire in the developed countries what they were prepared to provide by way of private investment.

And since an American initiative might have been suspect, there was a Malayan (and this was before Malaysia, which was then Malaya) representative who I had cultivated, named Mohammed Soviee. He belonged to the Socialist Party, but he thought it would make him look good in Malayan politics if he could be identified with a resolution on promoting private foreign investment.

So he introduced it as the Malayan Initiative and it became known as the Malayan Resolution. We joined after there were about fifteen other co-sponsors.

But it went on for many years and Hammarskjöld was very pleased with it because he wanted to cultivate support on Wall Street and other money-sectors of the United States. So there was something where we really got a free ride. I mean, it didn't cost us anything, but it was another initiative that built up political support.

TGW: This is a very funny side of the food program. Did any of this play competitively then into the Kennedy speech launching the First Development Decade?

SMF: Well, I think the fact that we had done these things helped. But it is funny, Dick Gardner—he is an old friend of mine—he had been the professor of a course that I took at Harvard on legal aspects of international trade. Dick brought the resolution up and showed it to me. And I said, “Look, there is nothing new in this.” We did it in the ‘charting a new’ resolution of 1958.”

Richard Gardner had the main idea of charting a new resolution and was finding how you could get more bang out of the buck in terms of aid and countries improving their system. And

essentially the UN Development Decade was very broad in its statements. And if someone asked, "Where's the beef?," there really was not any. But Dick's answer was, "No, this is a new administration. This will be different." And I took it, and as a matter of fact, I guided the UN Development Decade resolution through the General Assembly, and we got a unanimous endorsement.

At that time too, Kennedy was enormously popular among other UN delegations, and that, of course, helped. And Stevenson was much impressed by the fact that we got a unanimous resolution through.

TGW: So you had a change in bosses here: Adlai Stevenson, who is reputed to be certainly far more intellectual. I guess would be the kind term in relationship to Mr. Lodge. Could you contrast your relationship to him and Mr. Lodge? Did the tenor within the mission change? What exactly was your relationship with Mr. Stevenson?

SMF: Well, it was much more pro-UN. And certainly he was more intellectual than Lodge. He was not as effective as Lodge, for a variety of reasons. You know, Lodge was very close to Eisenhower. He helped him win the election.

Stevenson was not close to the Kennedys. In fact, Bobby Kennedy hated him, because he refused to announce that he was not seeking the presidency in 1960, and didn't support Kennedy. I think President Kennedy actually thought more highly of Stevenson than Bobby did.

But the other factor was that the inner circle around President Kennedy consisted of Bobby Kennedy, Dean Rusk, Walt Rostow, and Bob McNamara, and they were all hawkish on Vietnam. They considered Stevenson a kind of a liberal idealist. And so he was not in the inner circle making policy the way Lodge was. He was also not as good an organizer, of keeping track

of what everybody else did. Not to take away from the fact that as an intellectual, he was far superior on that score. But we're talking here about impact.

It was very embarrassing. He made a statement denying any American involvement in the Bay of Pigs. And a day or two later the story came out that the CIA had trained and equipped the invaders. However, no one at the UN, as far as I know, thought that Stevenson lied. They all thought that he said what he knew and believed at the time. On the other hand, during the Missile Crisis he was superb. No question about that.

TGW: There is one other, I guess, new frontiersman who at least in my mind is associated with much of UN affairs. That is Harlan Cleveland. Was his presence felt in New York?

SMF: Kennedy's presence or?

TGW: No, Harlan Cleveland's. I mean in the sense that the policy tone or the content of what was going on?

SMF: Oh, yes, I mean we certainly identified the UN Development Decade with Harlan Cleveland. UNITAR (UN Institute for Training and Research), originated in the Ford Foundation and Cleveland was the main proponent of it. We had originally envisaged to be a kind of Rand Corporation for the Secretary-General. But at any rate, we wanted UNITAR to be a group of experts who could advise the Secretary-General on policy and report directly to him.

Unfortunately, that part of it never developed. In part, I think C.V. Narasihman buried it. Dick Gardner and I went to see Narasihman to propose John Holmes or Kenneth Bailey to be the head of UNITAR, because of their academic background and credentials.

TGW: Kenneth or Sidney Bailey?

SMF: There is a Sidney. I think it was Kenneth.

TGW: Okay.

SMF: And John Holmes. But we wanted somebody of that stature. Instead the Secretary-General apparently decided that he needed somebody with under-secretary-general rank from black Africa. And he appointed a guy named Darbusier, who is really a dark-skinned Frenchman—a very nice guy, but he didn't have the standing with foundations of the kind of guy we wanted.

Narasihman said to us straight out, no he can't be from any NATO country when we mentioned John Holmes. So it became really more of a training institute than a research one, which was the opposite of what our original goal was.

The result is that Joe Slater at Ford who had originally talked about \$2 million as a nest-egg withdrew the offer and they put the money from the Ford Foundation into the Hammarskjöld Library. And then the money had to be raised somehow. But UNITAR has not been a favorite of Washington since then.

TGW: Actually you have raised an issue that we'll come to later but I think now might be better. What is your sense about the quality of the international civil service? And what happened over the years to the lofty ideals through the period? And to the sad point that we've now reached, where geographic quotas and other concerns are primordial, rather than the quality of work. What happened?

SMF: Well, I think it was largely due to the efforts of governments to get their people appointed. And then the lack of a strong position by the Secretary-General. It was an easy way for a Secretary-General to buy the approval of governments by naming the people they wanted. I did two articles on that subject.

TGW: I did a doctoral dissertation.

SMF: *Orbis* published them. One was called “The Politics of Staffing the UN Secretariat” and the other was called “the UN Secretariat Revisited.” I laid the blame mostly on governments, but also the weakness of the Secretary-General. I know that [Kurt] Waldheim was disturbed when the report came out. Especially when the newspapers picked it up.

TGW: This was after you had left the mission?

SMF: Yes. I did nothing but tell the truth about what was happening, and how that affected the whole Secretariat.

Now, there were some outstanding people in the Secretariat. Hammarskjöld was one. Brian Urquhart was another. Ralph Bunche couldn't have been better. I thought [Philippe] de Seynes was superb in his job, but there was also a lot who were appointed to curry favor with the governments so that the Secretary-General could.

TGW: The phrase was coined somewhat later, but at what point did the so-called “tyranny of the majority” seem to be a dominant concern within the U.S. Mission? I mean, this was coined by [D. Patrick] Moynihan much later?

SMF: I think it started with John Scali in the early 1970s and of course was brought to full fruition by Jeanne Kirkpatrick and Pat Moynihan.

TGW: What was the reality of the tyranny of the majority?

SMF: Well, the reality is that although the majority can pass resolutions they cannot assure that the resolutions will be implemented, especially if it requires action by the industrialized countries. They can outvote us any time. But it becomes meaningless.

If you head down to the question about the New International Economic Order (NIEO), as far as I was concerned this was not only a useless group of ideas, but a damaging one.

TGW: Damaging in what extent?

SMF: Well, the demands were so extreme, and their willingness to outvote the countries whose cooperation was necessary was so exaggerated that very little was done that was of any help to the developing countries. They could put anything they wanted into the resolution and get majority support. But what did it mean?

TGW: In your view, then, words are important?

SMF: You know, the currency of the United Nations, the meaning behind the words is actually important. But I think the essential lesson is that you can't outvote people whose cooperation is essential and expect to achieve anything. As a result many things that might have been helpful and which the industrialized countries were ready to support never materialized.

I had a similar experience when I represented the United States in the Committee of 24, which was the committee to end colonialism. It was dominated by the third world countries and the Soviet block allies to the point where they could just put forward anything and get it adopted.

I went into it with the hope of trying to make it a place for reasonable negotiation. But we were rejected. And finally I proposed and we did get out of the Committee of 24, because I felt that it would then become a bullfight without a bull and people would lose interest in it. But it was serving no useful purpose whatsoever.

TGW: What happened in the atmosphere between perhaps not euphoria, but anyway, the pleasant reception of the First Development Decade and the New International Economic Order, barely a decade later—twelve, thirteen years later? What happened?

SMF: Well I think what happened were two things: one, a less receptive attitude on the part of the United States, and two, the domination by the radicals of the non-aligned group, so that they were making impossible demands. And as I mentioned once in the Committee of 24, when they become outrageous they make our job easy. We don't have to ask for instructions. We

don't have to reconsider assistance, we just vote no. This kind of thing is not helpful to progress. But this is what happened.

UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development) was one of the things that developed from this desire to rush ahead. We were against it from the beginning. And we finally went along. Our attitude was that we have a World Trade Organization (WTO) then known as GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), we don't need a second one. And I think UNCTAD has been largely useless. I mean, they pass resolutions and things. But unless countries that are called upon to act support the resolution, it becomes meaningless. And those who were willing to play to the gallery prevailed among these third world countries.

TGW: How did the United States go against UNCTAD? What happened in the approval process between 1962 and the first conference in 1964? You described the insertion of the "D" into UNCTAD, the development aspect. What happened to explain the United States going along with this?

SMF: Well, the "D" we added because at that time, not now, the United States could be very proud of the development aid that it was giving. We could be less proud of our policies on trade. So I thought this would balance them out. That is why we added development. And then in 1964 when UNCTAD was established, I actually went to Geneva at Dick Gardner's invitation to try to work something out. And we got what I thought was a pretty good compromise from some of my friends in the Brazilian delegation and others. But Washington rejected it.

However, since UNCTAD was approved so overwhelmingly, I guess Washington decided that we couldn't afford to stay out, but I would put it more or less in the same category, as the New International Economic Order, as an institution that the developing countries could run, but which really did not bring them any benefit.

TGW: This is a two-part question really. What role in this process did the formation of the Group of 77 within UNCTAD have in terms of changing the dynamics of conference diplomacy in New York? Obviously, this was Geneva-based, but my own reading of this is that over time the negotiation structure there permeated potentially all multilateral negotiations. How was that perceived within the mission in New York and how did U.S. negotiators adapt to it?

SMF: Well, it made negotiation much more difficult, because they tended to work out positions within their group, which got to be 128 and now more, which they could easily carry through by majority. And there was much less negotiation. In the days when I was active on economic issues, I had friends among the Yugoslavs, Brazilians, and various Africans, and we could talk things out.

There was much less opportunity to do that after the Group of 77 was formed, which had become a lobbying group for the developing countries. It also had an impact on the way Israel was treated in the General Assembly, because the Arab countries, something like twenty-four of them, are part of the so-called non-aligned group. And so they could get actions taken, trade off their votes for things the Africans wanted for things that they wanted. Which was why you have an office on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. One time when we were able to reverse that, and it was very interesting, was in the emergency General Assembly of 1967, after the Six-Day War.

The Soviets could get only four votes out of the required fifteen in the Security Council. When that resolution failed, even before ours could be considered, they immediately announced that they were going to ask for an emergency General Assembly. They were fully confident that they would get their way. They wanted a resolution that would condemn Israel as an aggressor and call for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal.

We got that turned around. Our U.S. position, and later a majority position, was that you could not ask Israel to withdraw from favorable military positions as long as the Arabs said they were still at war. That withdrawal would have to take place in the context of peace. And that peace must be negotiated among the parties. It wouldn't be dictated from outside. We also changed the language from "withdrawal from all territories," to "withdrawal from territories," which allows some adjustment of the boundaries.

We did that. Goldberg in the first place was both extremely bright and a prodigious worker. We were always the best prepared of any delegation. And during that three-month period I had off one Saturday and one Sunday and that was it. Otherwise we were working. The votes are won not by a speech—Goldberg was a lousy speaker—but by one-on-one negotiation. And we turned enough around so as to wind up with Resolution 242 which was a tremendous improvement.

Well, that was, as I say, one time when we could split the third world alignment, get enough of them to go with us. Particularly the Latin Americans were solidly with us. And to come to a resolution which both the Arabs and the Israelis have accepted as a basis of negotiation.

So it was never—a closed door. In fact, in my articles on Kirkpatrick and Moynihan, I criticized them for being too confrontational, and otherwise just taking the position that these guys are against us and by God we'll show them we can be tough. I felt that we had to continue to negotiate with them as best we could, and never insult anyone except on purpose, which is my definition of diplomacy.

By the way before we leave the issue of decolonization, I believe thoroughly in decolonization. I felt it became inevitable once the Japanese had shown that a colored army

could defeat a white one. The Japanese against the British. And that coupled with the fact that more and more people in the colonial countries had come to the conclusion that colonialism was wrong, and more or more people in the colonies had studied in European institutions and come to the conclusion that they had the right to rule themselves.

So actually by the time the Committee of 24 was formed, something like 99 percent of the people who had lived in colonies in 1945 now lived in independent countries. I think it was a wave that was inevitable. And I think the role of the UN was to make it happen faster and with less bloodshed than would have been the case if there had not been a UN.

TGW: Yes, I recall Brian Urquhart frequently says that the notion was that it was going to take a hundred years for this process. It took twenty-five. To what extent was the power of the idea of decolonization part of an explanation for this acceleration?

SMF: Very substantial. I mean there was no question about it. But the days when the British could rule India with one regiment were finished by that time. I remember a personal note. My best buddy in the army was married to a British girl. Late in 1943 we were living in a joint apartment. And after the Japanese had captured Singapore, I made an innocent remark: I thought the days of colonialism were numbered. And this British woman acted as if I had insulted the queen and thrown mud in her face, whatever. She was furious.

But I think it was obvious from that moment on, and given the idea of change in thinking. When I was in high school, there was a debate on independence for the Philippines. And one of the affirmative speakers said that Filipinos want their independence. The response from the negative was, "Well the inmates of Sing Sing also want their independence, does that mean we ought to give it to them?" But that was the thinking of those days, which has changed completely.

TGW: Ten years later. Extraordinary. We spoke somewhat about the Six-Day War of 1967. The next Middle East war led to a substantial change in power through OPEC and price increases. To what extent did this real change in power infuse the war of words at the United Nations after the oil price increase in 1973? Immediately we had the NIEO. But to what extent was this physical change in power important in explaining the dynamics of what became confrontation?

SMF: I think it was very important, because other commodity producers wondered why not us. They wanted, you know, price support agreements.

Interesting, as a side light, you know the Iranians were encouraged to raise their prices by Henry Kissinger so they could afford to buy more weapons from the United States. But it did show power. And I think it emboldened people on the developing countries side to make stronger demands. It also led to a lot of disenchantment because they felt that the oil producing countries were going to give all kinds of money to them. That did not materialize.

TGW: I'm curious about one report that was done during the 1960s relating to your idea of a UNDP. That is the report done by Sir Robert Jackson which really focused on the decentralized or the centralized nature of the UN system, something we alluded to earlier. Do you recall that report and its reception and the debate surrounding the idea of having a central financial pump versus the decentralized system that we had before and we still have today?

SMF: I recall something about it. I know that it made Paul Hoffman very unhappy. He felt there was an attack on the UN Development Programme among other things. I don't think the U.S. government was enthusiastic about it. Not that it loved the central bureaucracy, but perhaps trusted the regional commissions even less.

And after that, this UN Development Programme was obliged to decentralize more than it had before. And I remember Meyer Cohen, who was a deputy to Hoffman, was very unhappy about it. And he characterized it as, “Whatever Lola wants, Lola gets.”

TGW: Lola?

SMF: That was a character in a musical comedy. We envisioned the UN Development Board as something that would have more power. And we envisioned having an administrator with more independent power than finally developed.

TGW: One of the topics we actually touched upon way back to which I would like to return, just for a moment, is the relationship between the Washington-based financial institutions, and also GATT, and the United Nations. And the ideas floating around in the United Nations and those that are picked up in Washington.

What is your sense about the relationships between this part of the system that is *de facto* and not *de jure* a part of the system? This has been a tension from day one, and it remains so today.

SMF: Well, there is that. I remember there was a guy named Lopez Hebrarte who represented the World Bank at the UN and we were talking about a resolution that had just come forward. And he said, “Oh, the president of the Bank would be furious about that.” And I said to him, “How did you get to Mount Olympus so fast?”

At any rate, the Bank did become somewhat closer, as I mentioned earlier, when the Special Fund was set up. We deliberately wanted a consultative board including the president of the Bank to encourage closer coordination. Now, I myself, I feel that the UN is a great place to develop ideas, but implementing institutions are better left to the Bank, the Fund and GATT, because the countries with the power to do something are well represented there.

As a matter of fact, I left out earlier, but one effect of SUNFED, in addition to our putting forth the Special Fund, was the development of IDA (International Development Association). And that took what I thought was a reasonable direction. The soft loan idea really originated in our discussions in the UN. But I could not imagine Congress or the Treasury providing a UN fund with the kind of money that was needed for soft loans.

IDA, they could do it. But the idea behind IDA actually originated in the UN. And then a misapprehension on the part of Senator Moynihan who became the main advocate of it, he thought we could use counterpart money from the Marshall Plan to finance it. Of course we couldn't. But the idea took hold and that is how IDA was born.

And I think that is a proper distribution of functions. In the same way, I think that the UN Economic Committee and ECOSOC (Economic and Security Council) should discuss trade, but that the actual negotiation is better done in the World Trade Organization, formerly GATT.

TGW: But in this scheme, ideas do bubble up, or notions or concepts come out of inter-governmental negotiations or discussions. How important are those ideas in the ultimate implementation of policy—that is, the SUNFED idea, or very concessional assistance and the eventual establishment of an institution, the IDA—to provide concessional assistance?

SMF: I think that it was very important in that respect. If the developing countries had not made a big issue of it, if Lodge, for example, had not worried about our having, as he put it, the monkey on our back and having to show something else, I don't think people in Washington would have responded with IDA and the Special Fund.

I think the UN can be a very helpful forum for getting us to understand what is bothering the developing countries. How we then move to help them is a matter for our government to decide. But the sensitizing function, I think, is a very important one.

TGW: I have to permit myself one question before we leave the UN part of your life. You eventually wrote a book on Kurt Waldheim.

SMF: Yes.

TGW: Did you have any inclination when he came on board about what he would ultimately turn out to be? There is some sense that the Soviet Union and the United States actually knew about Waldheim's war record. Is there any truth to that allegation?

SMF: Well, I think so. I think probably the CIA knew. Whether they told the State Department, I'm not sure. But it is interesting, Kurt Waldheim, I had put this in my book, was hired in the branch of the foreign ministry headed by Fritz Molden, who was the son-in-law of Allan Dulles. So I would not be surprised if Waldheim worked for the CIA and maybe also for the Russians.

TGW: So that this was a feather in his cap or a way to be in a position to control him ultimately?

SMF: To control him.

TGW: To control him ultimately?

SMF: Oh, well, I think it certainly gave the Soviets some leverage over him. And he also worked hard. As a matter of fact, my own analysis of Waldheim is not that he was someone who hated Jews in his gut, that he was not a vicious anti-Semite. In fact, his family was part of the Catholic party of Austria that opposed the Anschluss. He was beaten up by some Nazi thugs when he was a teenager. But when he wanted to go to law school, and you had to belong to Nazi youth organizations to do it, he joined Nazi youth organizations. That is why the title of my book was *Bending With The Winds*. He bent whichever way he had to, to get where he wanted to go. That was the way he operated at the UN.

TGW: Interesting.

SMF: And the same way, I mean he made secretariat appointments to please everybody. He would have been a good head waiter in a fine restaurant.

TGW: I would love a Linzer tort right now. What was the transition like between the U.S. Mission and becoming a teacher of political science. You mentioned earlier that in 1935 you thought you might like to do this. Well, lo and behold, thirty-five years later, you realize your plan. It is like a Soviet rolling plan! What were the circumstances surrounding your appointment at the City University, and how difficult was it moving from the world of diplomacy to the world of scholarship and the fuzzy-headed world of academics?

SMF: Well, the first part of it, my wife had been banging away at me for years to retire from the mission, because the hours were so long. And she wanted me to be home more. And I had been looking around. As a matter of fact, funny, in ECOSOC in 1962, I would argue with Phil Klutznick on certain positions. And he would say to me, "Do you want to be fired?" And I said, "Please, Phil, do it," because I was then forty-nine, and the only way I could get a pension was if I got fired. Otherwise I would have to be older. But at any rate Phil and I had a good relationship where I could argue with him. So I was looking around.

TGW: Because by now you had been in twenty-five years, which is—you entered in 1945 or 1946, and 1971 is—

SMF: Twenty-five years, yes. It was twenty-six, because it was late in the year. Three years army time and fifteen months of accumulated sick leave. And I was eligible for a thirty-year pension.

TGW: I see.

SMF: At any rate. I saw an ad in the *New York Times*. A branch of City University was looking for professors and I answered the ad. It turned out to be the College of Staten Island, which is where I started my teaching. And I enjoyed the teaching. I enjoyed the give-and-take with the students.

The only painful part of the transition was the cafeteria. I had been eating at Toque Blanche and Périgord places. And the cafeteria was a horror, so I started to bring my own lunch. Other than that though it was delightful. I had twelve hours of teaching per week. The rest of the time I could work at home. And I did. That is when I started really to write. Then after I had been there about a year, I had the idea that City University should have an institute on the United Nations—an idea that in a way I owed to my friend Dick Gardner. Because Dick, when he was at Columbia, asked me whether I would be willing to head an institute on the UN if they could raise some money. And I said yes. But they never raised the money because Andy Cordier was using whatever he could for new buildings.

At any rate, the idea stuck in my head and I came to see Hal Proshansky who was then the president of The Graduate School. And present also was Ben Rivlin who was then dean of special programs. And Ben Rivlin was very helpful in persuading Proshansky that we should have such an institute.

He also was the one who decided it should be the Ralph Bunche Institute, because he had worked closely with Ralph. And that gave me a wonderful opportunity to write, to be connected with the UN still. To be an island hopper, I would drive from Long to Staten to Manhattan, back to Long during the day. But really I enjoyed this chance to teach and to write. It was not a difficult transition.

TGW: I want to just push this a little because, in fact, many people see the world of practitioners and the world of scholars as being quite distinct, almost in hermetically sealed categories. That is not my view. But this is one that circulates widely in the academy.

Did you feel any sort of hostility from colleagues? Were you seen as, you know, a diplomat instead of somebody who had spent his whole life in the stacks? I mean, I'm just curious about the reaction.

SMF: That depends on where they stood on the political spectrum. A couple of the professors who were way over on the left thought that I was a CIA plant and said that kind of thing. Generally speaking though, I was quite well received and at The Graduate Center had no problem whatsoever in being accepted. And I really enjoyed it. As you can see, most of my writing and publishing was done after I became an academic.

TGW: You had not forgotten how to write while you were a diplomat?

SMF: No. While assigned to Budapest, the *chargé d'affaires* said with great ease, here is somebody that knows how to write English.

TGW: I am going to ask for a couple of judgments from both sides of the desk. The desk of the practitioner as well as now a person who has contributed to literature about the United Nations. I would like to spend a bit of time on the notion of ideas and how they bubble up or whether they bubble up and why.

As someone who has been inside a mission, and as somebody who now observes closely what goes on, what role do you believe that special events have had in formulating ideas? Special events like for Stockholm conference (UN Conference on the Human Environment), a special conference, like the Beijing one on women (Fourth World Conference on Women).

To what extent do these global ad hoc discussions, which some people dismiss as jamborees, to what extent have these helped develop ideas, hone ideas, and force governments to take ideas seriously?

SMF: I think the environment conference is a very good example. When that was held, hardly any governments had a minister of environment. And the United States did not have, I think, an EPA.

So the impact was quite substantial in raising the consciousness of governments on the issue of environment. I think there have been some others. The last conference, the status of women in China, I think, had a very substantial impact. Incidentally, the Arab and Israeli women's delegates got along very well. I guess they had a common interest. So I think that conferences can be very helpful, if they are well-planned and have a good idea behind them.

TGW: What about reports from eminent persons, beginning with Willy Brandt (*North-South: A Programme for Survival*) and including the one from Mrs. Brundtland (*Our Common Future*) and the Aga Khan (*Winning the Human Race?*), and the recent one on global governance? Do these reports, some of which are better publicized than others, some of which are better written, et cetera. But to what extent are these useful documents? Are they taken seriously by governments and the media and other persons?

SMF: They can be, and they become important if some government or governments decide that this is an idea that they should capture. I can tell you something interesting about the Law of the Seas conference, which is based on the resources on the sea beds mainly. We proposed that to Washington as a U.S. initiative, and it was turned down. The next year Pardo of Malta presented it as a Maltese initiative. People in Washington suspected that we had handed it to him, which we didn't. He had just been reading the same people that we had been reading.

But because of those academics and Pardo's role, we developed a very substantial Law of the Sea Conference, and a follow-up institution, which I think will have important results.

TGW: The third leg of our stool here, to what extent do ideas from the private sector—the private sector being the non governmental one, but also including academics—to what extent did these ideas matter? And how in your view are they picked up by the Secretariat or by governments?

SMF: Well, sometimes they are picked up because someone writes and somebody in government decides that this is something great, we ought to try it. You know, our U.S. Delegation and General Assembly always includes public members, and they bring in ideas.

Now, I want to mention, backtracking a little bit to the UNDP Special Fund, our delegate, in the year that that program was adopted was Walter Judd, a conservative Republican Congressman from Minnesota, known as somewhat right wing, a Chiang Kai-Shek supporter. When he came to the General Assembly and we showed him the idea for a Special Fund, he was against it. He said I think we even ought to break up the Expanded Programmed of Technical Assistance. You want to give money to FAO, we give it to FAO. We don't need another institution.

Well, you don't argue with a public delegate. But we took him to lunches with the Dutch and the Canadians and the Indians. And he had a great affinity for the Indians because he loved Asia. And he gradually came around to supporting the idea. So much so that when we came late one night to an agreement with the developing countries on how the Special Fund would be set up, he pledged personally to insure that the United States would pay 40 percent. Because he had been thoroughly converted. And he called up the State department to get approval. And Johnny Hanes, who was then the deputy assistant secretary for international institutions, said Congress

won't accept that. And I heard him explode. He said, "Hell I'm a Congressman, I ought to know what they will accept." And that was the end of the argument.

And Judd, because of his reputation as a conservative, was very helpful in getting Congressional approval. And other delegates, you know, we've had many here. We've had Henry Ford II, Shirley Temple Black, bring in ideas which sometimes get accepted. Frank Church was a fountain of ideas who refused, by the way, to speak in any debate on Vietnam while he was a delegate, because he disagreed with government policy. He couldn't state his own views and he was reluctant to state views that he didn't believe in.

TGW: Another theme has come up in many interviews, and I guess we've alluded to certainly within the context of the U.S. Mission. I would like to move across the street. In your view, what difference does leadership make at the head of the United Nations?

SMF: I would say it makes a very substantial difference. I mean, the UN under Hammarskjöld was a very effective institution. I think under Waldheim it was not. Under U Thant reasonably good. And then the man from Peru whose name—

TGW: [Javier] Pérez de Cuéllar?

SMF: Pérez de Cuéllar I thought was very good and it was effective during his term. I think Kofi Annan is doing a good job under terrible odds. But he's sure trying.

TGW: We spoke a little about "rivalry," I think this is probably the right word between Washington and New York. To what extent does rivalry between UN headquarters and UN specialized agencies play a role in the development of ideas? Because we have UNEP (UN Environment Programme), are they more likely to take initiatives on the environment? That we have a Food and Agricultural Organization, are we likely to get a better debate on food and agriculture? To what extent is this a healthy tension or one that is counterproductive?

SMF: Well, I would say that there certainly is substantial tension. I think we spent more time and energy negotiating with Washington than with foreign delegations. Once we agreed on a position, the rest was easier. But, I can't think of any useful idea that was shot down by Washington, except Law of the Sea which emerged anyway. Other than that—by the way, trade preferences was something that really came out of UN debates, and that Washington finally went along with.

Obviously in discussions with Washington we were to a certain extent lawyers for the UN. We want to be successful here. We want to win votes so we're trying to be sympathetic towards the views of other delegations. And Washington much less so, and that accounts for some of the tension. But they had their roles. They are answerable to the president, to Congress. We have a different clientele. But eventually we agree.

TGW: Is there evidence, do you think, from your career about ideas and interest in the political science and sociological literature, ideas are important because they penetrate public policy discourse? Do they also help in refining or redefining national interests?

SMF: Do ideas help in defining?

TGW: Yes. How important are they in your view, in Washington's developing a stance, for example, in helping to change its position?

SMF: I think they are quite important. That is where I think the main role of the UN should be. Not in overriding Washington, which is the spirit of NIEO, but in feeding ideas that Washington can think about and come up with a response. And a lot of good things have happened. IDA happened. Trade preferences happened. The World Food Program happened. And these were all ideas that came from the UN environment and penetrated Washington. It was very helpful to have that Lodge/Eisenhower relationship. That was immediate penetration.

TGW: Once an idea becomes accepted by a government, and then is translated into an institutional change, what happens to these ideas? That is, there was not an environmental ministry, but you said that after Stockholm there was an environmental ministry. Once an idea becomes embedded within an institution, does it take on a life of its own?

SMF: Well, I think, yes, if that institution gets the responsibility for a certain area. Like the UN Environment Programme, for example, is a lobbyist for that. And that takes some of the responsibility away from the UN General Assembly which has too many items anyway. It was better to have them treated there.

By the way, I wanted to mention one other issue. And that is population policy. In 1961, under a Catholic President, Kennedy, we came in with a proposal to study population policy. And we had an uphill battle to get it on the agenda. The Latin Americans in particular were unhappy about it, because of Catholic background. We got it on the agenda by putting it in the Second Committee because they were willing to concede that population policy had economic implications. They didn't want it in the Third Committee, because that would have social implications. But it was our initiative which led to the UN interest in population policy. Now, of course, Congress has turned completely the other way. We're the opponents and the laggards.

TGW: This is taking on a life of its own in a way.

SMF: But I was part of our delegation, lobbying hard, to get a resolution on population policy adopted.

TGW: Extraordinary what a couple of decades means. Anything else that you would like to mention?

SMF: I think we've covered it pretty well. I'll look over my notes. I think we've covered it. I might mention one of my wife's remarks, which is that I was never properly trained for any

job that I did. Because she got her Ph.D. and became a real professor, you know. But I went into the photography business, never having owned a camera, not even a Brownie. I went into the army never having shot a gun. I went into the foreign service without going to Tufts or Georgetown. And I became a professor without a Ph.D. So her point is well taken.

TGW: Actually my wife claims that social scientists spend an entire career taking a long time to say the obvious. So I guess we both have like words of wisdom from our spouses.

MR. WEISS: This is the end of a morning interview on November 30th, with Max Finger by Tom Weiss. Thanks, Max.

MR. FINGER: Okay.

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