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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW OF

RICHARD JOLLY

BY

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THOMAS G. WEISS: This is Tom Weiss interviewing Richard Jolly at The Graduate Center on 20 July 2005, the penultimate of our interviews that began in 1999. Richard, I am going to start at the beginning. We have known each other for a long time, but I don't know anything at all about your parents' background and what their own religious values and employment backgrounds were, and how those sifted themselves into your life today.

RICHARD JOLLY: Let me start with my father. My father was an accountant in England, of a long line of seafarers. Except for my father and my grandfather, the family, as far as we know, were captains at sea. We have a picture in the home of the early nineteenth century of their brig *Shannon* sailing from Genoa, with Captain Richard Jolly at the helm. But my father's own father died when he was thirteen, so that was the termination of any hope of university. So my father became an articled clerk and went into accountancy all his life.

I suppose relevant for the sort of values I may have absorbed, my father was very much into local community service in Hove. He was chairman of this, chairman of that, chairman of the bench, chairman of the Youth Advisory Council, founder of the Rotary Club, all these sort of things, always at the scale of the town. As far as I know, there was very little international, except he did attend one or two international conferences for Rotary. But the idea of service, and voluntary service, to the extent that accountancy enabled him to do that, was very much my father's life. He also helped build the local church. He was a keen Presbyterian.

My mother—the thing that makes me extremely proud of my mother is that at the beginning of the First World War, my mother, who already knew how to drive, drove a Daimler lorry down from London to Cornwall. For a woman in her early twenties to drive a lorry at that point was extraordinary. She apparently found it difficult even to climb up to the top. She went

with her sister. She drove at that time and subsequently she taught everyone in her family to drive. She was much more earnest in her religious beliefs. She was involved with Moral Rearmament (MRA), which is interesting because, as I've learned, some of the members of MRA, as it was called, had quite a lot to do behind the scenes at the time of the San Francisco conference. Archie MacKenzie, a British diplomat, is one example.

From my parents, I absorbed certainly a sense of service and a formal Christian religion, and I became very earnest about that later, at least for three or four university years. Other than that, it was growing up in Hove and going to school in Brighton when I was ten. But as you may know, during the war, I was evacuated along with 16,000 or 17,000 other young Brits to Canada, though I ended up in the United States.

That perhaps has a link with my father, because he played such a prominent role in Hove. There were questions, I think, in his mind about what would happen if the Germans did invade Britain, which was very much on the cards in 1940. And if they had, might the Germans have used his three children as leverage in one way or another, as now emerges was done in the Channel Islands? I mention this because my two sisters, both slightly older than myself, and I found it difficult to understand how our parents could send their children so far away during the war to live with people without any family connections. We went through the Rotarians, but we didn't have any links beforehand with any of the people we went to live with during the war.

TGW: Did you feel abandoned?

RJ: I don't remember any of that myself. I remember living with this couple. They didn't have any children. They'd always wanted children. I very rapidly started calling them "mom" and "dad." If there is any real surprise, I think it is how quickly in April/May 1945, when I went back to the UK, how quickly I adjusted back to the family in Hove and lost my

American accent—within two months. I know that because the school wrote a little play for us 10-year-olds to take part in, and I was cast as the American. When I joined the school I had an American accent. But by the time the play came along two or three months later, the other kids were having to teach me to talk “American” because I didn’t know how to do it.

TGW: What was it like getting back together with your sisters? You hadn’t seen them for five years?

RJ: No, I had seen my sisters about once a year because they lived in Canada, as I did when I first was evacuated to Windsor. But my uncle, who was a very successful Canadian chemist in a pharmaceutical company, was promoted, so we went within three months to Detroit, to Grosse Pointe, and three years or so later, to Bronxville, New York. He was employed here in New York.

TGW: Did you have any sense for Detroit’s, what later became, racial problems? Or was Grosse Pointe so isolated from everything else? Did you run into any black people while you were there?

RJ: Well, we had a black maid—Beulah, I think. I vaguely remember at the time of the Detroit riots they sort of entered my consciousness. But I don’t remember my uncle nor my aunt—as I now call them—nor Beulah making me aware of the sort of issues that now I would be much more concerned with.

TGW: I am going to skip ahead a little bit to come back to something you mentioned earlier. You used the word “earnest” in relationship to your father’s Christianity and your mother’s clear devotion, I suppose, directly through Moral Rearmament. But your own religion, I intuit from what you said, is more sort of formal and not deeply felt. But you then said later, during university years, it became much more intense.

RJ: If we take that as a whole, I used to go into Bible classes and things like this when I was a teenager. I taught Sunday school—lots of things which the mainstream in the Presbyterian church did. We used to have a very good discussion group with the young guys and the young girls on Sunday evenings and things like that. So the church provided very much a frame for life. But I became much more serious about Christianity in the university, Cambridge University.

There was what was known as CICCUC, the Cambridge Intercollegiate Christian Union, which at that time had something like 10 percent of the university undergraduates, and had a very strong tradition. I got very much involved, so much so that virtually every Saturday evening I would go along and participate in CICCUC meetings rather than other activities which young people, even in those innocent days, might embark on. And that continued right the way through my university career and led indeed to my deciding that I should become a Christian pacifist.

With hindsight, it was the decision to become a Christian pacifist that sowed in it eventual disillusionment with Christianity, at least in terms of a formal faith. I found myself making the decision to become a Christian pacifist and going to court, which was required at that time if you said you were becoming a conscientious objector (CO). You had to get court permission. The permission I had—there is much more to be said on this, but the decision of the court was to support me going to work in Kenya. I went to Kenya and found myself working in an area where the Christian missions were evangelical fundamentalists. Seeing them at work in a totally different cultural environment—Baringo District in Kenya—made me question this sort of faith. I saw my own Christianity and the Christian operations of the mission society and everything else in totally cultural relative terms. I wasn't particularly won over by them. Far from it, it led me to question all sorts of things.

I also started reading Bertrand Russell's *Why I am Not a Christian*. And after about a year or a year and a half, certainly, I found myself no longer a Christian believer. It did raise a question in my mind. Having gone to court, should I go back to the war office and explain that it was all a big mistake? By then, Britain had invaded Suez, so I was not feeling that I had made a mistake. I was rather saying that by the grace of God, might I have gone to fight in Suez. So I took a very pragmatic decision and said no one would be pleased if I started trying to redo this again.

I finished my time in Kenya in early 1959. What was significant is how it had totally changed my mindset, not just on religious matters, but in terms of what I wanted to do. I found myself totally fascinated by development, and totally committed, if you like, to some of the ethical issues of ending global—though I didn't see it quite as global—inequality. I saw it as the enormous differences between life as it was then in Britain and the situation for most people in Kenya. So I found myself going to Yale to study development, as opposed to going to Harvard Business School, which had been my earlier intention.

TGW: Before I get to Yale, were your parents more displeased that you had ceased being a Christian, or more displeased that you were a conscientious objector? My father actually disowned me when I became a CO.

RJ: It actually came in phases. My father was disappointed, I think, but he had a certain glow about his son who had gone to university. And when I was in Kenya for the two years, 1957/1958, I am told by the family that he would tend to blur the reason: "Oh, Richard is in Kenya doing good things." Community development had certain connotations of doing good things in a slightly benighted part of the world.

When I came back as a nonbeliever, I did make that clear and my parents certainly were disappointed. As I found with my sister, they don't necessarily believe it when you say you are no longer a believer. But you are right about the conscientious objection. My grandmother, who was of course older generation, was particularly nasty on a personal basis when I decided to become a conscientious objector, and offered nice comments such as, "I knew you were yellow from birth."

More serious actually, in terms of my thinking, was the fact that my Christian friends at Cambridge, including a number of really quite close intimates, could not understand why I was making that decision. We shared so much of Christianity together, including our belief that the Bible set out guidelines for one's life. I kept saying, "Jesus said, 'Though shalt not kill and a number of other things.'" They could not get their minds round this. I remember a number of them saying, "But going into the army, Richard, is a great opportunity to witness." To which I would usually say, "I'm sure that if I went to a brothel it would also be a great opportunity for witness."

But it was that realization of the inconsistencies in beliefs that I now would say we all have. We can believe in some things and be inconsistent. But at that time when very earnestly one was trying to be consistent about Christian practice, I found these inconsistencies deeply worrying.

TGW: It sounds as if this was religion leading to anti-war or pacifist feelings. Did memories of being separated from family—because you didn't experience the war in Canada or Detroit, but coming back presumably and seeing destruction in Britain—did any of this enter into your decision?

RJ: Interesting question. I don't recall this affecting my thinking at the time. Brighton and Hove did not suffer much bombing. The bombing was concentrated both in London, of course, and then further north in some of the industrial cities. There were a few buildings bombed, because many of the fighters and bombers would fly over the Brighton area on their way back from London, and occasionally if they had not released all their bombs they would drop a few on the remaining ones just for good measure. But father played a community role in the Second World War. He had been in the army in the First World War, but he never particularly talked about that.

The views we absorbed of the Second World War were mostly the humorous stories. I suppose that happens for some people with war. It gets filtered through all sorts of mechanisms that hide us from the horrible realities.

As regard to myself, my pacifism at the time—conscientious objection, certainly—was not only because of religion. I had been at the university involved with War on Want and some of us were concerned then with nuclear weapons. But much of my real concern with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) came later, after Kenya.

TGW: You mentioned, vaguely, inequality, or the difference between “them,” presumably the black folks who were there and you as an outsider.

RJ: In Kenya?

TGW: In Kenya. What was it like to—I don't know if you were part of the colonials, so to speak, but what did it feel like at that point? I mean, I have these imaginings of people in shorts and pith helmets and what have you. This was a professional service, after all. Did you have a sense that these were people you might emulate, but kind of turn it on its head? What were your reactions to the colonial civil service and its role in a colony?

RJ: First, when I got there, I had a level of ignorance that is breathtaking. I think I knew I was going to East Africa, but I wasn't very sure of anything about Kenya. So I was learning as I went. But as I say, my level of ignorance was breathtaking. Kenya at the time was still emerging from Mau-Mau. I knew about Mau-Mau, and indeed that was the reason why I had offered to go to Kenya, dare I say it, but it's a fact, to work in the Mau-Mau camps in what I saw as welfare and rehabilitation. Very fortunately, by the time I reached Kenya, the camps were diminishing in numbers and the service that ran rehabilitation of the camps was the same service that ran community development outside of the Mau-Mau areas of Kenya. So I was put, from the moment that I finished learning Swahili, into Baringo district, which was an area not affected by Mau-Mau. I was put to work there as a community development officer.

So sticking to your question about what did I learn, I struggled to make sense of a totally different society. What could be done by someone in community development, in what was a totally new ministry? It was the only ministry of the government at the time that had an African minister. I had met a few other community development officers in the course, learning Kiswahili and so forth. But it was very difficult to operate within this district. Baringo district was very remote. It was only a couple of hundred miles from Nairobi, but literally the mail came the last fifty miles by runner at the time. There was no regular bus service or anything like that.

But I was very lucky because there were two community development assistants—a man, Samuel Bore, who had been in the British army during the Second World War, and liked the bottle. So I didn't actually find him of great use, although like a good sergeant in the army, if I ever had to make a great speech or do anything formal in my pretty haphazard Kiswahili at that time, he knew exactly how to make sure that I got that right.

But infinitely more significant was the other community development assistant, a woman, Grace Mahboob. She was very well-organized. She had been a CDA, I think, for a couple of years, like Samuel had. The community development operation was rather new. And Grace very rapidly got me involved in working with women on all sorts of most operational and practical things. For example, we worked to put in water springs. We ran literacy classes with the best part of 1,000 people enrolled towards the end. We used to have competitions for improved housing. We had simple nutrition classes, and so forth. And Grace was the one who got me started on this. I'd get different support from the ministry. We wrote three little booklets. One I wrote in Kalenjir, the local language. I didn't do the translation, but we made sure that it had good hygiene messages. To be honest, I'm quite proud of that, in 1957 or 1958.

Now how did all this relate to the colonial administration, as it was called? That is an extremely interesting question. Many books have been written about this. The essential point is that the colonial administration ultimately was there to keep law and order. They were the elitist service—not all that elite now, with my slightly broader experience of life. It was usually people of rather third-class degree from university who would end up going into the colonial service if they couldn't get into the foreign office or the treasury, or things like that. Many of them were perfectly reasonable people within their roles. But of course, their role ultimately was to keep law and order. So the colonial officers spent most of their time operating rather formally with the men, holding what was known as *barazas*, or meetings.

TGW: The end of empire was approaching. Obviously India and Pakistan were several years before.

RJ: Amazingly unaware. I have friends who went to Zambia even a year or two after this. They were getting trained in Oxbridge and being told that there might be twenty, thirty,

fifty years before independence. In Kenya at that time, [Jomo] Kenyatta was still in detention, and the governor of the time referred to him as “this leader unto death and to darkness.” I think it is right to emphasize that, because ultimately the administration with law and order was imagining that the colonial world would continue, particularly of course in Kenya, because Kenya, unlike many of the other African colonies, had this relatively small—4,000 white farmers, but still the dominant economic, and to some extent racial power and influence on both the government there, and perhaps even more on the government back in Whitehall.

I would like to make one other point about community development. Those of us in community development were seen as the “softies.” There were only perhaps two or three dozen community development officers in Kenya at the time. There must have been many more, perhaps 100 community development assistants. I don’t know. But we were the softies. We were in some senses much closer to local people at the time—when the colonial administration was much more skeptical. An example: I started taking color photographs of what was going on in the district, and then showing them in the evenings as a little news service when I was traveling and camping around the district—because you camped most of the week. So I would show people in the north of Baringo and the south, or whatever, what other people were doing elsewhere, including how they had undertaken water projects or whatever was going on.

Probably six months or so after I had been in Baringo, the district commissioner, who was the big cheese of the colonial service, said to me, “Richard, why are you wasting your time? These people wouldn’t understand even if the slide was upside down.” Well, fortunately I had picked up enough slides to try it out. So that night, I remember very clearly putting one slide upside down in the projector. Two or three hundred people would attend these showings, and immediately one shouted “turn the picture the right way up!” It’s probably a very minor

example, but in my own psyche it actually showed very clearly that the so-called colonial administration, with all their elitism and experience—which was not that great, but still was felt—did not have a clue on many things that were going on. And perhaps, to put it worse, they were not really as interested. In fact, I did find myself getting passionately involved in local development and have been ever since.

TGW: At what point between returning to Hove in 1945 and leaving Kenya and going to graduate school, did the United Nations come onto your screen? This became part of your life later, but do you recall, was the founding of the UN of any consequence? Or did you hear about it in school? Or was it mentioned in the context of decolonization? Or was it just not there?

RJ: All these are questions which an intellectual history keeps asking people, and I think the embarrassing answer from my side, as a young Brit, in spite of some limited international contacts before I went to Kenya, was I don't really remember anything. It didn't make a big impression. However, when I was at university from 1953 to 1956, I was involved with War on Want and other groups like Food for Hunger. I remember within one of these groups, we would have one day a week where we would not eat our lunch and put the money we saved into one of these funds and eat bread and cheese. It was a minor thing. So probably in that context I became somewhat aware of the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organisation) or some of the UN bodies, but not much.

However, I did do one thing which is worth recording, because it did have a useful effect on part of my life. This was in 1956, just as I was leaving Cambridge and beginning to think ahead to this period in Kenya. As a summer vacation escapade, I went with three close friends across the Alps, pursuing Hannibal's route. It is too long a story for full elaboration, although I did perfect a lecture of an hour or so when I was later at Yale. It used to raise a little money for

my graduate studies. Anyway, we followed Hannibal's route in 1956 and formed a theory as to which way Hannibal went when he crossed the Alps. And in 1959, when I had come back from Kenya, we did the expedition again—this time with an elephant. My friend, John Hoyte, who has written a little book about this expedition called *Trunk Road for Hannibal*, did most of the early organization. Then when I was back from Kenya, I became the secretary of the British Alpine of Hannibal Expedition. One of our purposes, apart from having fun and putting our theory to a test, was to raise money for World Refugee Year. We did raise £500 and brought a refugee boy from Austria to study in England.

TGW: This was after paying for the elephant's feed?

RJ: The elephant's feed and the truck were provided, courtesy of Senor Terni of Turin Zoo.

TGW: How did you get to Cambridge? I am sort of getting at the extent to which you and anybody in your position only would have thought of one or two places to go to university, even though you had been in the United States? You were back in Britain. Did Cambridge seem like the logical place to do something mathematical?

RJ: Actually, it was maths and physics that I had specialized in at secondary school. And like many of the other people that we have interviewed, at that time I had a good academic record. So the school, Brighton College, a public school, more or less said, "You ought to go to Oxbridge." Remember, this was 1956, and although there were a number of other universities, Oxbridge was the elite and dominant one. If you had a chance, which everyone assumed I had, it sort of fell out like a piece of cake.

That said, I did have a family link. I had a distant cousin, Arthur Ramsey, who was a distinguished mathematician at Magdalene College, Cambridge. So that is how I went to Cambridge and to Magdalene College.

TGW: What attracted you toward economics, or why did you abandon mathematics and physics in favor of economics?

RJ: The Christian dimension explains a lot at that time. I did math for the first year and never considered doing anything else. I didn't get a First at the end of the first year. I got a 2-1. But suddenly, it became clear that mathematics to me was not a subject that was linking me with other people. I found it a very isolated, personal endeavor. So I decided, very rapidly and not very clear why, that I should move to something else, either economics or law.

One of my good friends recommended that I should read the opening chapter of [Alfred] Marshall's *Principles of Economics*. A.S. Marshall was one of the three truly great economists in Cambridge, along with [John Maynard] Keynes and A.C. Pigou. And Marshall's first chapter says there are two great forces that have influenced the evolution of society. There is the economics of everyday life, with its steady imperatives. And there is the much more intense influence of religion. So my friend said, "Richard, you have spent all this time on the Christian side, you had better learn some economics on the other side."

I did find economics for the most part interesting. Cambridge economics at the time was extremely strong, very confident and self-centered. With Keynes and Marshall and Pigou, Cambridge believed itself to be the center of the world for economics. And there were a number of others, like Richard Stone, who was there in the Department of Applied Economics. The man who first taught me economics was a very right-wing economist, Michael Farrell. He was

extremely good, and tragically died young from the aftermath of polio. He was a wonderful friend and a supporter and taught me a lot about tough analysis.

His close friend was Peter Bauer. When I later was at Yale, I came back to see Michael. I remember Peter Bauer being in the office at the time and saying, “What are you doing in Yale?” I said, “I’ve just been working as an intern in the UN over the summer.” And Peter Bauer said to me, “What do you want to work for the bunch of fakirs for?”

Economics I found very interesting. I did, I suppose, fairly well. I got my first class degree. I got to know a number of other people. Michael Farrell asked me, when I came back to England after Kenya, to work for him for six months before it was time to go to Yale. So I worked actually on statistics on the British coal mining industry, but using EDSAC II, one of the world’s first experimental computers, with radio valves in a very large room. Those were my Cambridge links, which meant that later, before I went to IDS (Institute for Development Studies), I went back and for two years did research and some teaching in Cambridge in the late 1960s.

TGW: When did you start whistling?

RJ: Not so much whistling, but singing. I’m told that when I was aged two or three, I used to hum.

TGW: You told me it was when you were thinking statistically, so—

RJ: Yes, when I do statistics, I still find myself less inhibited about singing, or whatever. But I think I started doing it in bed when I was two or three.

TGW: As a result of the Kenyan experience, you eventually moved on to graduate school. But from the kind of work you were doing and the literacy books you were writing, did

sociology or anthropology or something “softer” come into your thoughts as a possibility? Or did it just seem that you wanted to go back to what you would enjoy?

RJ: I think neither, quite. I never considered an alternative to economics, on the grounds that that’s what I had started in. In a slightly more British than American style, if you begin in one subject and have done well, you should perhaps do more of it. I think this is why I went to study economics in Yale. This said, I did take one or two courses in Yale in sociology and anthropology as well—more anthropology than sociology.

TGW: What was the distinguishing feature of the decision between business and economics as a result of Kenya? Did you see somehow that economics would be more useful? It seems to me that you might have made the other argument?

RJ: I thought of business school. It was my uncle in the pharmaceutical industry that was keen to see me do graduate studies in the U.S. He was the one saying, “You should go to the Harvard Business School,” and so forth. But to me, Harvard Business School meant business. Graduate study in economics meant being able to carry on with development. Now whether in fact that was fair, it was my perception at the time. It was a strain in Yale. I got there, and even though Yale had a number of development people, they weren’t that strong in development but they were building it up fast in what became, a year after I got there, the Yale Economic Growth Center.

So I took the various courses in development. But my perception at the time was that Yale economics had a strong focus on training people to be teachers of economics. This was not my interest. I was trying to relate my economics to the situation in Kenya, to what I had seen on the ground. I found “blackboard economics” very disillusioning. After my first year, I tried to leave and go off to Oxford. There were also big differences between British and American

education. I remember some teacher in Yale scrawling on one of the essays I wrote on Keynes, “We don’t care what you *think* about the Keynesian system. We want to know if you can describe it.” I found myself, when teaching a few years later back in Cambridge, scribbling on an essay, “If I want to know about Keynes, I can read the book. I want to know what you *think*,” underlined.

I’m sure, like all caricatures, this is a bit overdone. But I felt it emotionally. But more seriously, I felt during my first year that I was somehow not relating in my studies to what I had seen and what I thought were the issues in Kenya. Part of that was my lack of understanding, I’m sure. But it did mean in my second year, after I tried but failed to go to Oxford—because I had applied too late—that I was saved from my frustrations by the arrival of Dudley Seers, who turned up in 1960 as a visiting fellow in the economics department in Yale. He spoke a language and introduced a type of analysis that, to me, was real-life development. I thought it was wonderful and it really made me believe in the subject again.

TGW: How many other students were there in the cohort, or normally per year? And how many of these people really were interested in a kind of hands-on, or real, or dirty fingernails economics that you and Dudley were interested in?

RJ: I suppose there were about twenty-five entering economics each year in the graduate school. There were, of course, other groups too. There was a foreign office course, more concerned with policy. If you start identifying individuals, when I look back I met a number of development economists for whom I have enormous respect.

Gerry Helleiner was one. He was a year ahead of me. There was Reg Green, again a year ahead of me. Mahbub ul Haq had come and gone, and also Ponna Wignaraja. T.N. Srinivasan was there, I think, also a year or perhaps two years ahead. But now, when I look

back, apart from Gus Ranis and people who have been on the faculty more or less since then, it is not difficult to identify ten or twenty people at Yale at the time who had serious interest in real-life African or Latin American or Asian development. Gerry—even at that time we were good friends and interested in what was going on. And of course, there were others, too.

TGW: Bauer had expressed his great “admiration” for the UN. Were people on the faculty at Yale aware of the kinds of things that we have now discovered in relationship to kinds of analysis, kinds of thinking, or kinds of data that were being generated? Or was this world organization just not part of graduate studies?

RJ: Certainly some people had close links with the UN. Richard and Nancy Ruggles, who used to teach national accounts, had been very much involved in the setting up of the SNA, the System of National Accounts, about which Michael Ward has written. There were others, too, who had their contacts. I remember Mahalanobis coming in and giving us a talk, the only time I heard him speak. [Simon] Kuznets, of course, came, and Hollis Chenery, who became vice-president of the World Bank under [Robert] McNamara in the 1970s. He came as a visiting fellow and I took a course from him one term on project evaluation.

So I think the more balanced judgment is that there were a number of faculty and visitors at Yale at the time who really were pioneers and leaders in the development arena. But somehow the dominance of the Yale economics department was not given by the two or three specialist courses in development, but more by courses in economic theory, general statistics, money and banking or otherwise. I remember having to read books about the American banking system. It didn't switch me on in a deep way. Now, when I read about Enron and other corporations, it was useful to have some more objective sense of that dimension of American economic life.

TGW: Who was your own mentor? Who were the people on the faculty—you mentioned visitors—the core group who supervised your dissertation and whom you felt close to?

RJ: Lloyd Reynolds, who played the key role in setting up the Economic Growth Center, was both the chairman of my thesis committee. Perhaps even more important, he became aware quite early on in Yale that I was going out with Alison Jolly—at that time Alison Bishop. When it came to my thesis, for which I was going to travel around to several countries in Africa, he had found me some money to do this. I had told him that I was also proposing to include Madagascar in the list of countries, and he managed to find an extra \$150 for me to go to Madagascar. It ended up with Alison and I getting engaged and married soon after.

TGW: The concrete benefit!

RJ: Concrete benefit. So that was very useful. And also, he played a role, I'm very sure, in getting me a nice sinecure in my second year at Yale. I was the associate Chubb fellow, which gave me a suite of rooms and several thousand dollars to look after my living arrangements while doing graduate studies. For this, I had to organize four visits during a year of distinguished people, one of whom was Herbert Mathews, the *New York Times* journalist, which was how I came to go to Cuba the first time. And lots of other things followed from that.

But you asked about other people. I was never really close to James Tobin, but I developed enormous admiration for him—not only for his intellectual brilliance, but as someone who used his economics in a very direct, semi-popular policy-oriented way. The Ruggles I've mentioned. William Fellner initially was very nice to me, until, I think, he thought that I wasn't really so interested in the finer points of theory. By a large margin, the person, though, who had most influence on me was Dudley Seers.

TGW: Dudley stayed there a year or two?

RJ: Dudley stayed certainly a year, but I think it was more like a year-and-a-half. The extra half-year was spent when he was writing up, with support of myself and Andres Bianchi, a Venezuelan economist, this study that we had undertaken in post revolutionary Cuba. Then Dudley went off to Africa, to the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and undertook the first major economic survey of African economies. Dudley was in ECA for a year-and-a-half, perhaps two years, before he was called back by the new Labour government to be the first director-general of what was then the new Ministry of Overseas Development, which today is called DID, the Department for International Development.

TGW: I was just going to go back just a hair. Your dissertation was on education planning. What got you interested in the economics of education?

RJ: A great misunderstanding of my experiences in Kenya. I had the simple view that the only reason why I was doing what I was doing in Kenya, and most of the Kenyans in the district were not, was because I had a good education and they had had much less. At the time I was in Baringo, there was one intermediate school only. I taught the first person in the district to obtain two A-levels. In the house in the evenings, I used to give him coaching in economics. I was very proud when he did get an A-level in economics and an A-level in British constitution.

But I now think this was a deep, deep misunderstanding of the importance of education. I wouldn't say it was a total misunderstanding. But remember, at that point my economics had not emphasized very much radical literature of, say, underdevelopment. I had the dominant western view, more from Yale than from Cambridge. But Cambridge was still promoting the idea that development was a process of increasing investment and building up capital and advances of that sort. Inequalities of economic relations globally, which I would have picked up if had been studying history, or perhaps even international relations. I think that was a gross set of

misunderstandings. At any rate, because of that I decided that I would like to do some work on the economics of education. The economics of education was all the rage at the time, focused more on industrial countries and the returns to education literature. I had read much of that and thought it was very deficient. So I focused my thesis on education in Africa.

But even then I was really interested in policy. So the title of the thesis was “Planning Education for African Development,” and quite a lot of it had a strong normative stance, not just a positivist one.

By then I had gone with Dudley Seers and two others to Cuba. This may be the moment to explain the significance of Cuba. In 1959, when I turned up at Yale, the Cuban Revolution was hot. Every day, the newspapers were full of reports of Fidel [Castro], initially more positive than anyone now would imagine. One of the people whose visit to Yale I had to organize was Herbert Mathews, a *New York Times* journalist who had visited Cuba and had interviewed Fidel when he was in the Sierra Maestra. Mathews had written three very influential articles saying that Fidel was not a communist, but was fighting oppression under Fulgencio Batista and so forth.

This got me interested in Cuba. I went briefly to Cuba a couple of times. I was there at the beginning of the great literacy campaigns of 1961, when Fidel closed the secondary schools, mobilized the teachers and lots of secondary students to teach the million people who were enrolled in this major literacy campaign.

Having run literacy classes in Kenya for 1,000 people, the numbers impressed me—though it wasn’t sheer numbers that bowled me over. It was realizing that the motivation for literacy is enormously given by the whole social, political context. If a country makes illiteracy not a point of shame, but a reason for explaining how illiterates have been deprived,

and then the whole country dedicates its efforts to expand literacy in a very organized, very exciting manner, the whole enterprise becomes utterly fascinating. Interestingly, most of the literacy books were written by American Marxists then working in the Ministry of Education in Cuba.

So I found the literacy campaign very, very exciting. But I only had a glimpse of it. But then Dudley Seers visited Cuba early in 1962 and met one of his own students, Regino Boti, who was then minister of planning. Regino Boti asked Dudley, “Why don’t we work together and calculate an index of price changes since the revolution, because the actual index understates the increase in prices.” Dudley was quite impressed that the minister of planning should see that this was not helpful. So they worked in a very objective way and produced a better index.

Dudley then said, “What would happen if I came back with a team from Yale and we did a study of the Cuban economy, and indeed of the economic and social revolution?” Regino Boti said, “Splendid. I’ll be happy to help you in any way I can.” So Dudley, back in Yale, put together a team and the finance with the help of Richard Ruggles. This team was Dudley, myself, Andres Bianchi—who is currently ambassador of Chile in Washington—and a fourth person, Max Nolff. We went to Cuba for six or eight weeks—perhaps it was a little more—in August/September in 1962. When we got there, Regino Boti had been moved. He hadn’t lost power totally—though he did later—but he was clearly under threat, and he was not able or willing to give us the *carte blanche* that we had expected. However, he did say, “Look, you can stay. But I can’t take you into the ministry and give you access to all the files and economic data.”

So we did stay. We traveled all over the country, and we wrote this book that was, at the time, one of the few non-polemical books, neither anti-Castro, nor pro-Castro. We tried to make

it an objective study of what happens in a poor country that was trying a socialist path for development. And actually, the *American Economic Review*, for example, gave a very nice review about the book, as did *The New York Times*—not Herbert Mathews, but other people. However, in some of the other U.S. newspapers, the book was not so much panned as utterly distorted. Some southern U.S. newspapers described in detail how we had been to brainwashing sessions in the U.S. to make us violently pro-Cuban, based on alleged facts which bore no relation to reality.

The book played a modest role in trying to give an overview of what was really going on in Cuba. When we returned, I resumed a temporary job working in the UN on African budgets, mostly as a way of earning some finance. Within less than one month, the Cuban Missile Crisis had broken. I realized that the one place in Cuba where the Cubans had been rather sensitive was about us just wandering around was San Cristobal, which was where the missiles had been discovered. In the UN, the Security Council was meeting daily and the ticker-tape was flying. It was a very, very emotional period, and I was very much caught up in the emotions, because I was highly sensitive to the risks of nuclear weapons. I could see, as now McNamara says, that we were “that close” to releasing the weapons.

What made it extremely emotional for me was not merely all this, which was enough, particularly for anyone working in the UN every day. But it was also the fact that we had seen Cuba’s economic and social development—literacy, health services, all the other things the revolution was doing, many in a very creative way, although economically in a very confused and inadequate way, as our book says. Forty years ago, our book said the Cuban economy was a mess. Health and education and literacy were just brilliant, but the economy was being grossly mismanaged. But the fact was that most of this information wasn’t available to anyone in the

U.S. Whether more information would have led to any great change is another issue. But I had this intense feeling that we had seen so much of what was going on that was important for and related to this desperate crisis and just no one knew. I would wander the streets of New York just wondering how could one get any of this across. Because we were writing the book, I didn't write what probably I should have done—a broader, more general, more emotional thirty-page piece.

TGW: With Cuba and development and your own interest in Africa and your UN internship—and I presume what must have been the excitement of an intellectual president in [John F.] Kennedy—do you recall the First Development Decade? The speech we now look back on I think was important, “Launching the Development Decade: the Alliance for Progress.” Was this a normative item that was discussed at the coffee shop at the UN or not?

RJ: The speech was September 1961, when I was in Yale, before our study in Cuba. I was starting my third year in economics. Our study in Cuba came at the end of my third year. So although I had done my coursework, in the American phrase, I was starting on trying to write things on education and to decide on what should be the focus of my thesis. But it is awful to admit that the Development Decade, to the best of my memory, passed me by, even though I now make speeches about it. Indeed, I made one this afternoon in the hall of the General Assembly, saying that I hoped all the NGOs (non-governmental organizations) listening would remember one of the great events in this great hall at the UN was the speech by President Kennedy launching the Development Decade in 1961.

I don't keep a diary. I do keep all the papers of my undergraduate and graduate years. I haven't actually looked back to see whether any of that did enter into formal or informal discussion. But I have a terrible feeling that it was the shooting down of the U-2 that had more

impact. That does say something, doesn't it? How is it those of us, like myself—totally a development economist at the time, interacting with Dudley Seers and others—somehow seem to have missed this great event?

TGW: My own recollection of the discussion of the media at the UN in the early years—the 1950s and 1960s—was that the media, all media, took UN events—security and economics—far more seriously. *The Times* had six or seven correspondents there, and if you fast-forward, they now have a half, or something like that, a full-time journalist. I'm sort of curious as to how somebody who would be absolutely passionate about a set of issues might have missed what we now look back on as a really critical speech.

RJ: I suspect, if I looked at *The New York Times*—and I'm sure I was reading it every day then—they would have reported Kennedy's speech. Although I'd remind you that, when [George] Marshall launched in Harvard the Marshall Plan, it only got a couple of paragraphs in his commencement address, which again many might have missed at the time. But still, I take the point about missing Kennedy's proposal to launch a Development Decade.

TGW: How did Alison come into the picture here? Was it your joint interest in Africa?

RJ: She was studying zoology. She decided not to pursue the recommended topic for her doctorate—after three months of working on sponges. Was it the life cycle of the sponge or some minor point of the sponge's life she found not very winning? At any rate, she moved to study the lemurs of Madagascar and, as it happens, Yale at that time had just received a collection of something like fifty or seventy lemurs—the basic prosimian from Madagascar. We had just met when I gave one of my lectures on Hannibal to the women's dorm. She came along and we ended up in the Elizabethan club. Because I had been in Africa and she was interested in lemurs, we started to interact—I suppose not just discussing lemurs, but that was certainly a

point. She was ahead of me. She got her doctorate in 1962. She was a fast mover. Then she was going to Madagascar for field studies, which was when I decided to add Madagascar to my own studies on education.

TGW: How did you choose those countries?

RJ: Well, the first countries I chose were pretty straightforward. I had worked in Kenya. Tanzania was interesting and so was Uganda. The three were in East Africa and went together. Then, I suppose, I chose Ghana because it was already independent and, I had imagined, far ahead in respect of education. Come to think of it, I had thrown in Senegal as a country I would visit partly because once I had put together a grant I thought I would visit several countries, including a Francophone on the west coast.

Madagascar was actually very interesting. Perhaps I should mention it here because I had, at the time, an extremely limited view of exploitation, even of colonialism, in spite of my personal involvement in Kenya and writing some essays in Yale about colonialism. But it's funny how these things take awhile to get deep into one's intellectual frame. And when I turned up in Madagascar to collect data for my thesis, focusing on planning education for African development, I had a certain view, of course, that with colonialism education had been greatly retarded. But I found that Madagascar in about 1880 or 1882, fifteen years before they were colonized, had passed legislation requiring universal primary education in the country. This was barely four or six years after France and Britain.

And what's more, I found that many school enrollments in Madagascar at that time had been something like 160,000. Then, after they had been colonized, enrollments fell to 40,000. This had a very profound effect on my views. And indeed, since then, I have learned a lot more about Madagascar. I now think the dynamic period of modern economic development in

Madagascar was really the nineteenth century, before they were colonized, when they were ruled by three strong queens and an extraordinary prime minister, who were very skillful in obtaining technical assistance from Britain and France while playing off the two to prevent getting entrapped by either.

TGW: Was there any direct impact of Alison's work on yours, or do you have two separate spheres? You're obviously fond of each other. You've been together for a long time. But was there any direct influence?

RJ: I think Alison has had a major impact on me. Of course, we talk an awful lot about what we're doing. But initially, her view as a primatologist placed much more importance on genetics and, if you like, the long evolution of life. *Lucy's Legacy* is a recent book only done five or six years ago, on the evolution of the first cell right the way through to the beginnings of prosimian life and then, two million years or so ago, something that begins to look like homo sapiens.

So Alison is always looking at this long picture, speculating on where do we get our social relationships from. The animals she studies are highly social—for that matter, female-dominant, but rather stupid in terms of intelligence tests. Although it is very far from development, it gives a great relief from thinking only about current politics over the last fifty or 500 years. So that, to me, is a great relief.

I do know some people who married someone they knew in the same graduate department. It has always struck me that I needed someone who would take me out of economics all the time, or even the UN all the time. But that said, she has been totally supportive in all of my work. When I go to a country for a conference, she says when I come back, "What did you see?" Or if we go somewhere together, we end up seeing some museums or

visiting some parts of the country, as when we go to Madagascar. So she makes me much more conscious of this broader world out there.

TGW: What do you recall now of all of this coming together? Africa suddenly is independent. Five years before, people were preparing for at least twenty or thirty years of colonialism—some thought even another 75-100 years. All of a sudden, the job market dries up in 1961 to 1963.

RJ: The job market dried up?

TGW: For colonial officers. Africa was totally independent.

RJ: That didn't really happen. This is a trivial point, but many colonials simply re-treaded themselves as technical assistance experts. But that's not the question you're asking.

TGW: No, I was just curious as to what the flavor was all of a sudden, in thinking about these countries and where they were headed, and how this then filtered into your own work. Clearly you felt education was going to be important, presumably. And in independent African countries, it was going to become even more important. Was there a new excitement among your cohort, or on the team in Cuba, or the interns at the UN? How did this major development of what we now think about as probably one of the most major UN contributions, the most major development in creating 100 new countries, how did this enter into conversations or your own thinking at that time?

RJ: Well, certainly the experience of independence made me realize the flimsy basis on which so much conventional wisdom in Britain, and perhaps other industrial countries, had been built. Five years after the governor had described Kenyatta as a "leader unto death and to darkness," Alison and I were married and living in Uganda. I remember switching on the radio. The Duke of Edinburgh was described coming down the steps of the VC-10 aircraft in

Nairobi—greeted by Kenyatta pinning an Uhuru freedom badge on his lapel. And I remember saying, “Well, if I predicted when I had been in Kenya that in five year’s time that that’s going to happen, the colonial administrators would have laughed me out of court.” So I had a certain feeling of being on the right side, even if events had advanced far faster than I had expected.

Independence, and working in either newly-independent countries, or countries about to become independent, was very exciting. At that time, Alison and I were married. We were at the East Africa Institute of Social Research in Uganda, with a very dynamic group of African and expatriate social scientists. I don’t remember the exact numbers, but I would have thought it was one-third Africans from East Africa and two-thirds expatriates. It might not have been quite so unbalanced. But still, it was a very dynamic group with some very wonderful people. The late Philip Ndegwa, who later became one of Kenya’s most distinguished economists, was there. Samei Nyanzi, a distinguished Ugandan statistician, was there. Ali Mazrui was also at Makerere. There were lots of really superb intellectuals, and people who later played active political or policy roles.

And there was this feeling that development was now what would and could be done. And of course, it wasn’t just what could be done, it was what already one was seeing as being done. The East African economies were doing moderately well. Many other countries, like Zambia where we then went for two years, were doing fantastically well. It had a 13 percent real growth rate per year over the late 1960s. And ECA, the Economic Commission for Africa, was in its early phases. It had been going four or five years, with again a very interesting bunch of internationals, led by Robert Gardiner and Mekki Abbas. Hans Singer was there.

It was very exciting. And from my own personal point of view, that was when it all began to come together. Until then, I had been studying education enrollments in Cuba, which

of course was real-life events, and real-life international politics. But this was still the graduate student view. The future was still to happen. But once I got back to Africa, and got there again with Dudley Seers, I was part of the story, part of planning and action, which was extremely exciting.

TGW: But you hadn't yet finished your dissertation. So you're still gathering data?

RJ: Yes and no. I hadn't finished my thesis. My plan had been to complete it in June/July 1964. Then I got a request, in December 1963, when we were still in Makerere, to go with Dudley Seers and join a UN mission to Zambia. It was called, initially, the UN/FAO/ECA mission to Northern Rhodesia, because Zambia was then both part of the Federation of Rhodesia, and also before its independence. That was very exciting. It was the first time I had experienced anything like a mission—a very impressive mission. I wrote an article summarizing it with retrospect. It was led by Dudley. It was a big contrast to the many World Bank-led missions of the time, to Uganda or others, which were beginning to be part of the literature.

It was also interaction with the government, the new-formed government. Perhaps I should go on and just continue. We turned up in Northern Rhodesia. The cabinet had just been elected under the then prime minister Kenneth Kaunda, not yet president. They had four separate all-day meetings with the cabinet, which shows the closeness of the link between the UN and the government. These close links had been mediated, if my memory is right, by George Ivan Smith, who was the Secretary-General's special representative for Southern Africa. He was based in Lusaka. To go on a mission to a country in which you meet four times with the whole of the cabinet, under the prime minister, is a slightly different relationship than you would expect to get in most cases today.

Our first meeting with the cabinet was both to hear from them, but also to give our very first impressions of the Zambian economy, the situations the government was just beginning to adjust to, because they had just got elected. The second meeting, about two weeks later, was our analysis of some of the key issues. The third meeting, after about six weeks, was our beginning to suggest lines of policy for post-independence strategy. Of course, this was all before the government had an independent country.

In the final meeting, we actually tried out bits of wording on sensitive issues. For instance, what attitude would we recommend with respect to the mineral royalties? The British South African Company, going right back to Cecil Rhodes, had agreements for which it had received, by then, something like £200 million pounds. It had received this sum for doing absolutely nothing. They didn't run the mines. They just owned the royalties, so they just received the royalties. So one of the issues was should our mission recommend taking over the royalties, with a little compensation or with no compensation? All these things were discussed.

My first impressions—I was a young economist, just out of graduate school. I had never been on a mission. I had no idea what to expect. We turned up. We were housed in a few rooms of a building. I was there, sitting at a desk, reading books and reports, trying to get some perspective on education in Zambia, which was what I had been asked to look at, and at manpower, in an economy with big mining industries. The mission had a number of economists and other experts.

I was sitting at a desk when in comes the person who had been nominated by one UN agency—I don't remember which—to be the industrial expert. He came straight from the airport into the offices and announced, in a British-like accent, "I am going to the hotel. I'll come back at 2:30. I'd like to have a stenographer waiting." So someone who could take dictation was

there. I was there, too, with my head down, reading or pretending to read. This expert started to dictate. It flowed in these wonderful, rolling phrases, interrupted with occasional new paragraphs. As I was listening, I realized he was dictating his report, straight off the plane. After two days, he had dictated his whole industrial strategy for the economy of Northern Rhodesia/Zambia.

I didn't know whether to be impressed or appalled. But after a week, following a few interviews, he made a few minor changes to his dictated copy and left it behind with Dudley and went. I remember going to Dudley and saying, "So, what do you make of this?" Dudley threw it in the wastepaper basket and said, "Now, we have to work out who is going to do the section on industry. He is no good at all." That restored again my faith in economics and that the UN was actually about trying to analyze real-life situations, not simply spreading pre-cooked policy recommendations.

TGW: When you said that you wrote a short article distinguishing this effort from what had become the dominant IBRD or World Bank undertaking in the literature, what precisely was different?

RJ: The Zambia mission involved, I thought, a much more original take. If I remember the article, I identified a number of points in which it was. First, it said that the issues of inequalities in Zambia were some of the major and extreme challenges for economic policy which the government would face—inequalities, of course, between the mining and the non-mining sector, inequalities between the rural and urban areas, and of course enormous inequalities between white and black. Zambia was a highly unequal economy. That, in itself, was a great contrast, both in focus and substance with many of the World Bank reports of the

time which were much more mainstream. Even then, Bank reports focused on growth but not inequality. The tone of the Zambian report was also more colorful, less technical.

Dudley was also a more political figure and didn't hesitate to write it in a more political manner. So our report began quite strongly with, "Zambia is one of the more unequal economies of Africa today." I contrasted that with the World Bank report of Uganda, which had come out the year before, which, I seem to remember, began with something like, "Visitors to Uganda arriving by plane are struck by the green, lush vegetation that you see even as the plane is landing." It was that sort of contrast between external view and real-life major, major problems to be grappled with.

There were also other points where Dudley was extremely creative as a statistician. The Zambia report modified the national accounts framework for Zambia and presented a greatly simplified form of national accounts. Michael Ward talks about this in his book, *Quantifying the World*, as one real innovation. On the education/manpower side, I was able to prepare a manpower plan and map out a logical basis for accelerating university, as well as secondary and primary education in Zambia. Some people said the report was weak on the agricultural side, which probably was true, although not, I think, so much conceptually as in the expertise we had or lacked.

TGW: Was it obvious in these initial missions that a comparative advantage was emerging for the UN? Was it a reflection of the fact that the UN had virtually no money in relationship to the World Bank? UNDP (UN Development Programme) had already got off the ground, but was it flailing around at the tail with the small Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA). Did this seem like an activity that would make sense for the UN to concentrate on, or was this just an interesting experiment?

RJ: I don't think I would see either of those as the real issues. I think what made the mission distinctive as a UN activity was its close relationship between the government and the UN. Remember, Zambia was somewhat on the frontline, even though it wasn't called the "frontline" at that point. You had Rhodesia just to the south, and of course soon after this event you had the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and all of that politics. Then beyond Rhodesia, you had South Africa, Namibia, and Mozambique—miles behind anything in terms of independence. And you had the leadership from [Julius] Nyerere in Tanzania that was very important at the time and grabbed so many of the headlines.

George Ivan Smith was the Secretary-General's representative for Southern Africa, which I think meant that he focused on was these countries and some of the political problems further south. That meant the UN, meaning him, had very, very close relationships with Kaunda and other key leaders. The UN made many efforts, of which this mission was one. There must have been other points of technical assistance. So I think that set a general frame for relationships that was very positive. Come to think of it, the Economic Commission for Africa also set up a regional office in Zambia. And of course there were refugees coming up north from South Africa and now Zimbabwe. So Lusaka had quite a lot of refugees.

The fact that the UN would not be in a position to provide masses of aid, did this affect UN operations? Actually, our report was much less a justification for more aid than a setting out of a strategy for development. In general, this was the approach we adopted and one which was, given the considerable resources of the copper industry, realistic. I don't remember offhand whether we made estimates of aid requirements. We probably did put in some smallish notional amounts, but they would have been concentrated mostly on technical assistance. The bigger questions were how should government try and allocate its own resources.

TGW: Was there any negative spillover from the Congo? That is, many Africans—at least in my reading of the history of that period—thought that this was one of the UN’s worst moments. They took sides. They did this, that, and the other thing, and never again. In fact, there wasn’t another UN peace operation in Africa until Namibia, over twenty-five years later. I just wondered whether this embarrassing moment had any impact on these kinds of activities, or were they seen as totally separate?

RJ: I think they were seen as considerably separate, but not totally. We were very conscious that Congo had come to independence with only seventeen people with university degrees. I calculated, partly for my thesis, and then brought it into this UN mission, that in the case of Zambia it was 100. Well, is seventeen and 100 very different in a country that is employing in the copper industry almost 4,000 university trained professionals? So the whole set of issues relating to localization, Zambianization, Congolesization, or whatever it was, and the likely instabilities if you got it wrong, those were very much in our mind.

Then a major issue on copper mining strategy, which we presented, was what should be the Zambian policy vis-a-vis other major copper producers, which of course included the Congo/Zaire, Chile, and Peru. That, I think, was again another interesting and original part of the report. It was saying that Zambia ought to relate to the copper producing interests of these other countries and try to develop a common front.

A few months after the mission, I was invited back to Zambia. I worked two years in the country, in government, following up the mission. It was one of the areas where the difference between the Francophone and the Anglophone world created serious problems. There were virtually no senior Zambians in the copper industry in Zambia who spoke French. So there were closer links with Chile and Peru than with the Congo, even though it wasn’t a very long drive up

the road to reach the Congo. Such were some of the longstanding differences between the French and the English-speaking worlds of Africa.

TGW: It's time for supper. This is the end of tape one, on the 20th of July.

TGW: This is 21 July, 2005, tape number two of Richard Jolly being interviewed by Tom Weiss in New York at The Graduate Center. We left off in Zambia yesterday evening, but I had wondered why Bwana ya Wanawake decided to return to IDS rather than staying in Africa.

RJ: Well, it was actually returning to Cambridge. When I was in Zambia, I was actually on a four-year assignment as part of the Department of Applied Economics in Cambridge under a scheme that was set up for people to spend half time in developing countries and half time back at the university. So that's why we went back to Cambridge, and I was there as part of the Department of Applied Economics for the next two years, writing up, in the end, not much related to my work in Zambia, although some of it was. It was more on education. Actually, I was working on education and manpower planning at the time.

I stayed in Cambridge and imagined that I would be doing that at least for some while and going abroad again. But then in 1966, the new Labour government proposed to create an Institute of Development Studies (IDS). Dudley Seers was already in the ministry as director-general and then he moved to Sussex. He resigned his position as director-general to become director of IDS. Then, because of our close links already, he said I had to come. I was offered a fellowship at Cambridge, at my old college, Magdalene, three days or so before Dudley asked me to come to IDS. But IDS, a specialist institute for development, was an offer I couldn't refuse. So I finished my obligations at Cambridge and then went down and joined the new institute.

TGW: What was it like being on the ground floor? Or maybe the question is what was the intellectual atmosphere in Sussex? How did it compare with Cambridge and Yale? What were the differences, and were they important?

RJ: Well, you need to answer both IDS and Sussex University. Sussex University at that time was very high-profile. It was one of the new universities of several set up in the UK. It was consciously multidisciplinary. It was reaching out to new topics and new subjects. It had got a dynamic vice chancellor and so forth. All of that had played a certain role in IDS being set up in Sussex. The founding committee for IDS, set up by the minister, Barbara Castle, had actually voted forty-eight to two that it should go to Oxford. It was one of the interesting things as to why IDS was consciously put in Sussex. But it was basically, "Let's put IDS in a dynamic new university, not in one of the old established ones."

IDS came into Sussex much more focused directly on development issues. It was the Institute of Development Studies. It started with a bang, with very good funding on a five-year basis. So it was totally under the control of Dudley and the fellows. We were a small gang, all of us very interested in issues of developing countries. There was also a very progressive stance, progressive in intellectual terms, though we had people from several different persuasions in economics. Dudley Seers was what I would call a structuralist. He believed that each developing country needed to be analyzed in terms of its own situation and particular structure. Was it a mining economy? Was it a large agricultural economy? Was it an African economy with very limited human resources? Whatever were the key structural dimensions, in that context one needed to conduct the analysis.

In fact, Dudley had written a very influential piece at the time, called "The Limitations of the Special Case," looking at the teaching of economics of developing countries. Dudley was

extremely critical of two textbooks at the time: [Paul] Samuelson's *Economics*, and the Soviet Union's main textbook of political economy. Samuelson's *Economics*, Dudley said, was not about economics in general but about the most industrial country of the world in the mid-twentieth century. The Soviet Union's book on political economy, he said, was actually about the British economy in the mid-nineteenth century. But he was not complimentary about either. He said, "How can economists refer to these topics with such a general name as 'economics.'" He said, "It's a bit like someone calling a book on horses 'zoology,' and then saying in the preface, 'It is true that it's mostly about horses, but in fact I like to think that the key elements of horse anatomy are equally applicable to other parts of the animal kingdom.'"

In contrast, in "The Limitations of the Special Case," Dudley said we needed to identify the structural elements of what sort of economies we were looking at. That was one very important element for many of us in IDS. As I say, not all. We had some classical economists. We had Ronnie Dore, Professor Dore, who was a great expert on Japan and a very leading British sociologist.

So the IDS started with a bang. We also started with a strong, challenging perspective on development. Even when he was in the ministry, Dudley was concerned that the Ministry of Overseas Development should not be a ministry of aid, but a ministry concerned with relationships with developing countries from the point of view of what could be done to assist and enable the process of more rapid development in developing countries. So issues of trade, issues of agriculture, and so forth were very much part of the story. And IDS had something of that radical approach, particularly from a mainstream British government perspective.

TGW: Who else, exactly, was there at that time? I was wondering whether there were any tensions between the institute and the university, between people who were bouncing around

and doing applied work and not in the classroom, and those people who were in the stacks? Was there any direct feeding into the university community?

RJ: There was quite a lot of tension, partly because we were seen as being treated very well. We were a research institute. We very consciously resisted claims from the university that we should be engaged in undergraduate teaching. We said, “No, we weren’t set up for that.” We did do some graduate teaching, in response to the university and as part of university courses. But for the first five years, the main teaching that IDS did itself was special courses lasting six weeks or three months for civil servants from developing countries. I say civil servants. It was a variety of people, but many of them were government servants.

Again, the Ministry of Overseas Development, in its original plan, had emphasized the need for “practical training” for people in the former colonies. They even felt we should be training fireman and policemen and things like that. Well, Dudley’s line was a much more radical, progressive one. These short courses were the mainstream to start with. And we ran them on some very interesting topics. I remember one was on corruption. It was actually in 1975, run by Bernard Shaffer, a political scientist. We depended on the Ministry of Overseas Development to provide the scholarships—airfares and so forth—to bring people to Sussex. So there was some questioning in the liaison committee as to whether corruption was a suitable topic.

It amuses me to think that, given all the emphasis on corruption today, that the Ministry of Overseas Development argued to us at that time that corruption was not a subject worthy of any study. Bernard at that point brought out six great textbooks. The ministry officials said, “Well, it’s not a topic for practical study. It’s just embarrassing. We shouldn’t talk about these

things.” Bernard said, “But Nigeria has set up a national commission to try and tackle corruption and so forth.”

The classic case was a year or two earlier than that, actually, when we ran a study seminar on the subject of the public sector. In the brochure that we sent round to interest people to come, the brochure said, “One of the issues for policy is how big should be the public sector? When is there a case for nationalization of foreign property? In which case, how do you minimize compensation?” This had been circulated around the British embassies, which was one of the channels for informing people of the courses at IDS Sussex. One of the ambassadors read this and noted that IDS was running courses to teach people how to nationalize property and minimize compensation. So a question or two got asked in the House of Commons about that.

In the long run, actually, it was healthy, because after a lot of tension in the short run—by which I’m meaning two or three months—it made clear that IDS, to be credible, had to be an independent institute operating like all good university and independent research institutes. It couldn’t in any sense be dishing out ideas and advice as the British government would choose.

But all of this I think illustrates that IDS was about development in developing countries in different parts of the world. It was very much about international relations—economic, social, political—between developing countries and the industrial world, including Britain, and taking an independent and progressive stance on that.

I say “countries,” and Dudley’s own interest was very much on countries. There were others. Michael Lipton, another economist at IDS, had a very creative idea at the time. He argued that for many people living in developing countries it was the village and the structural characteristics of the village that mattered most for their living standard, welfare and so forth. Was it a rice growing village? Was it an irrigation-dependent village? Was it a rain-fed village?

So he assembled somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 village studies, analyzed the data and tried to generalize about these different village worlds.

So there were those points of innovation and creativity. But the studies that put IDS on the map in the 1970s were, in fact, the operational missions that IDS got engaged in with ILO (International Labour Organization)—the so-called World Employment Programme and the missions to Colombia, Sri Lanka, and Kenya of 1970, 1971, and 1972. Those three missions were the first of the World Employment Programme. The first two were led by Dudley Seers. The last, to Kenya, was led by Hans Singer and myself.

The missions adopted a very progressive, free-thinking approach to what was seen as the great development problem. The great problem was unemployment. At least in 1970, at the beginning, there was a tendency, perhaps stronger in ILO than elsewhere, to think of the unemployment problem as a lack of jobs. And certainly there were lots of complaints of people in urban areas, in many parts of the world, saying that the development that had occurred in the 1950s and 1960s had not produced enough jobs for school-leavers, or university-leavers, or whatever.

But first to Colombia, and then to Sri Lanka and Kenya, the missions went and analyzed what was being called the employment problem. We in fact identified three employment problems, as we've summarized in *Ahead of the Curve* and *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*. But to put it in its essence, we said there were three related but distinct problems. One was the problem of inadequate incomes. Another was the problem of low productivity employment. A third was the problem of frustrated job seekers. These three didn't necessarily go together, but needed to be analyzed separately. Then, in all three cases, the analysis of how these problems were arising was taken back into the structure of the economy. I

would argue that all three reports were structuralist in their methodological approach. They weren't short documents. They were quite long—200 to 300 pages. I think the Kenya report was perhaps 400 pages by the time you added all the annexes.

So there was something quite robust about the analysis of the reports. And ILO, because of Louis Emmerij who was running the World Employment Programme, did promote the documents. The Kenya one, for example, sold 20,000 copies. It made quite an impact. And as I say, it was written and analyzed with a robustness that was much quoted in the literature for both its analysis of a mainstream problem, the so-called employment problem, in quite an important economy, Kenya, which was one of the handfuls of economies that development people were looking at.

There were also original components in the analysis. There was the informal sector, which although it had actually been written about by Keith Hart the year before, was first given high billing in the Kenya ILO report. There was Hans Singer's own contribution to the strategy of redistribution from growth. Income maldistribution had been made a major part of the analysis in the Colombia report. Incidentally, that part had been done by Andres Bianchi, who had been with Dudley and myself in the Cuban mission. There was a lot of Dudley gathering the reliable experts, or so-called experts—before called students—and involving them.

But speaking of the Kenya report, Hans Singer had the brilliant idea of using redistribution from growth as the integrating strategy. I have told this story in one or two places before, but it's worthwhile telling again on the nature of creativity. It was a big mission. There were almost fifty of us at different times. We spent almost three months in the country, so this was not a dash-and-run. Indeed, I was very proud that half the members of the Kenya ILO

mission were Kenyans or people who had lived and worked in the country for two or three years or more. So there was an enormous amount of expertise which, I think, was correct.

Anyway, there was, of course, with all these missions, an inner core, and IDS tended to provide two or three or four or five of us who were often an important part—not the only part, but an important part—of that inner core. So a core of eight or ten of us would meet regularly and try and discuss the mission as it was progressing. What were the key themes that were emerging? How should we analyze them? We were searching for what should be the integrating theme for the policy proposals we came up with.

Hans came down, I remember one evening, and said, “I think I’ve got it. We should have redistribution from growth as the integrating theme.” Hans illustrated this with a very simple mathematical example. Let’s assume the capital output ratio is one. Let’s assume Kenya saves 20 percent of its income. He had a few other assumptions like this, all clipped totally from the air. And every time he came up with an assumption, we would burst into laughter at the absurdity of this oversimplified strategy. Dudley Seers was with us at that time. He was with us briefly for the mission, not for the whole time. As I said, Hans and I were the directors. But Dudley had a particular laugh, a big throaty, chesty laugh. We really all joined. We subjected Hans to about ten or fifteen minutes of hilarity. We couldn’t control ourselves. And that was the end. We all went upstairs to bed.

We all came down the next morning and said, “You know, that idea of Hans is utterly brilliant.” I often think back to that, because for several reasons with intellectual creativity there is a sort of leap that is often involved. The first vision of it is often extremely simple, crudely simple. And the first reaction of many of us to it is to dismiss it. It doesn’t sort of fit into

something we're calling rather mainstream, or the mainframe of our analysis. So it needs a second or third or fourth talk.

Often, in my own experience, I have found collective creativity very important. There are some people who certainly have made some of their great contributions sitting quietly, alone, and writing the complete paper. But in my experience—perhaps we're the second rung of intellectuals, rather than the great pioneers—I would say the same of the *Human Development Report*, it's a collective effort. Absurdity is an important part of it. You can't take it too seriously and you certainly can't just write it all up on a blackboard in advance.

Indeed, having yesterday said I was very disillusioned with blackboard economics, I suppose one could say, "Wasn't this an example of back-of-the-envelope theorizing?" Perhaps it was, but to me the context of being right there, right in the middle for three months of analyzing a particular economy, with people looking at agriculture, industry, trade, government budgets, education, health. We were looking at all the sectors. As I say, there were fifty of us. So it wasn't a detached, blackboard, back-of-the-envelope calculation. It was trying to distill a core that made sense of all that we had been looking at and discussing every day.

TGW: Interesting indeed. When you say that this put Sussex on the map, what do you mean? Does this mean that there was an uptake of the ideas that were there by international institutions? Does this mean that other academics picked up some of the ideas? What do you actually mean?

RJ: I think both of these and more. At the beginning, the World Employment Programme had turned initially to Hans Singer and Walter Galenson to advise what it should comprise. Again, Louis might say no, but I always loved the idea that in 1969, when the ILO reached its fiftieth anniversary, they announced that there would be a World Employment

Programme. And having announced it, they turned to ask, “What actually would that mean?” So they turned to Hans Singer and Walter Galenson for an answer. It’s a separate story, and I don’t know it all, but Walter Galenson dropped out fairly rapidly. Dudley Seers was then asked to lead the first mission to Colombia. He made the important condition of his leadership that he would be glad to do so, but only on condition that the report would be finally issued under his own personal responsibility. It would not be an ILO-approved document.

That condition was one that released the creativity of that Colombia report, but also all the other reports. So they were issued as ILO reports, but with that element of independence and the ability for great free thinking. Indeed, there were some comments circulated in ILO about the first draft of the Colombia report, that it should in no way be published. It would be deeply embarrassing to ILO, in part because it violated many of ILO’s conventions in its proposals. For example, the report argued that minimum wage legislation was inhibiting the growth of employment in Colombia. That was very non-PC (politically correct) from the point of view of Colombia. But there were lots of other examples.

So sticking to your question, IDS became somewhat known as the leader through Dudley Seers, the leader of the ILO Colombia mission, that had made a big theme of income inequality as intimately linked to the problem of employment in Colombia, and needing to be tackled as an important part of the solution. The Sri Lanka report similarly followed, again with Dudley’s leadership. It was mentioned, I think on the back, that the director was Dudley Seers, director of IDS Sussex. By the time the Kenya report came along, with some of the innovations that I’ve mentioned, and others, IDS was being associated with these reports. From the point of view of those of us in IDS, these were the most high-profile productions of the new institute. For those who wanted to see the IDS not just to be an academic research institute, but a research institute

that could analyze and speak in very direct policy terms to problems in developing countries, of course it was a superb example of that.

So we used to list these as semi-IDS productions, which was fair. As I say, there were usually five IDS people involved in these missions. And particularly the Kenya mission did achieve a lot of attention in the literature. There were many, many citations, because of a number of its innovative features. Then it led on to the joint IDS-World Bank volume on *Redistribution With Growth*, which builds on the core theme of the Kenya report that Hans had created. It became itself quite an important semi-theoretical, semi-analytical document of the 1970s.

Part of the origins of that was not just the theme of redistribution. It was the fact that several of us, including Dudley, felt that the econometric core of the three missions was less robust than ought to be. And indeed, Paul Streeten used to comment on the ILO report to Colombia that Dudley, who after all was very much a statistician and quantitative economist in some senses, had said, "You should construct a development plan focused on the employment and the welfare of people, not on the basis of growth rates." You can see, even today, the echoes of many of the debates with the World Bank. Today, the World Bank says that economic growth is the critical condition for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Well, as a structuralist I always was against that, starting with growth. The point was that you should construct your plan to tackle employment or basic needs or whatever, and then *deduce* the implied growth rate from that.

Anyway, when someone did deduce the implied growth rate in the Colombia report, it seemed to come to 8 percent a year, which was a certain acceleration from what Colombia had achieved before. So Paul Streeten made much of that, and slightly mocked Dudley for it in good

humor. But it was a serious point. So Dudley, and to some extent myself—I was then the director of IDS—went to Hollis Chenery, who was a good friend, and said, “Why don’t we team up together and look at this issue of the core econometric frame arising from these employment missions, and one that would put basic needs, employment, distribution at the center, and in the lead, and then build an econometric frame in support?”

So we started on that. We had a wonderful meeting in Bellagio, where some of the early papers were discussed. Dudley became somewhat disillusioned by the heavy hand of the World Bank. I stuck with it. Clive Bell was also there, and Hollis and Jack Duloy. Of course, Montek Ahluwalia, who has been the chief economist and head of the planning commission in India, was also there. The book came out in 1974. For a World Bank publication, it was really quite progressive: *Redistribution With Growth*. From an analytical point of view, it was an important advance on redistribution from growth. Essentially, it took the redistribution from growth strategy of Kenya as a special case of a range of policies that would combine redistribution with growth. But all of them built on Hans’s insight that if you look at redistribution in a static sense, then you are filled with difficult trade-offs. But if you look at redistribution over time in a growing economy, then poorer people of the economy can gain without the richer communities or vested interests actively losing.

Redistribution With Growth dealt with this. I was also, though, slightly unhappy with the abstract generality of the analysis. I persuaded them of two things. One was to have some case studies at the end of the volume about countries that had actually combined redistribution with growth in different ways. So we had case studies of Taiwan, India, Cuba, Tanzania, and Sri Lanka—a nice brief mixture at the end. And second, it’s only a small part, but I tried to bring in the structuralist approach, and said, “There are different ways of looking at all of these issues.

You can look at them through the neoclassical economic frame. You can look at them through a structuralist frame. You can look at them through a neo-Marxist frame.” I argued that from the point of view of policy, one could try sensitivity analysis and look at the different policy conclusions you would reach if you analyzed whatever it was from the point of view of these three analytical frames. And if you come up with the same conclusion by all three analytical frames, you are onto a winner. If you come up with radically different conclusions for policy, then you’ve got to make some choices.

TGW: Why had the Bank become interested in these mushier or softer issues? Had you noticed a change when McNamara arrived? Somewhere on your c.v. you talk about the Pearson Commission, which was commissioned by the Bank. How were the relationships between the Bank and the team? And did you notice a willingness for an uptake of these kinds of issues which, in stereotypical terms, had always been ignored by the Bank?

RJ: Let me leave out the Pearson Commission, important though it is. But Hollis Chenery, of course, was a brilliant and much more free-thinking economist. He was a structuralist, and indeed he wrote a brief piece in the early 1970s about structuralism. I don’t know what personal friendships he had established with Dudley from Yale, but certainly he was a friend and also someone who, in his position as vice president of the Bank, followed what was going on in IDS.

In particular when it came to the ILO Kenya mission, when ILO would organize a discussion of the final draft report, with all UN agencies invited to come along, Hollis himself flew over from Washington and joined in the discussion. I remember that. He was not only excited by it, probably because I think he genuinely saw lots of interesting, original issues, but then he became a sort of promoter of it. In one way or another, I forget exactly how, he said that

when I came to Washington I ought to give a presentation on the ILO Kenya mission to the Bank, which I did. Remember, I wasn't close to Hollis, but I had done a paper at Yale with him as a supervisor on the term papers, so I knew him a bit.

Anyway, I got to Washington and was all set to give my presentation on the broad outlines of the ILO Kenya mission. McNamara came to that. I was enormously proud because Namara at the end came and asked if I would come and talk to him a little bit more about it. I was given nine intervals of his three-minute diary—twenty-seven minutes. Well, for a young person to meet the great McNamara was very flattering, as it seemed.

When I went down to the other floors afterwards to see people I knew in more mate-ish terms, far from being delighted, they were outraged with jealousy. I remember them saying, "If McNamara would spend just three minutes with us on floor four, rather than with you guys coming in from abroad, it would be a big advance!" That was one of the points of criticism.

But you were saying, I think, how did we look at the Bank. We looked at the Bank with a great deal of suspicion. Now I would make much more distinction—with the benefit of the history of the World Bank and lots of other experiences—between key characters. McNamara was certainly one, and Hollis was another. Of course, Mahbub was there by then, although I don't remember him joining in that discussion of the ILO Kenya report.

But what the history book shows is that McNamara's outspoken leadership, particularly in using the bully pulpit of the Bank, was phenomenal. He joined in. He led the way, in many ways, on issues of population, environment, the poverty strategy. Poverty in Kenya was, of course, a major concern of his. He devoted one of his—I think the World Bank meetings of 1972 took place in Nairobi, and he drew, I'm fairly sure, on the ILO Kenya report for his speech. I think the sequence made that possible.

So there was always this positive side. But what history shows was that McNamara's leadership was very much by bully pulpit. The World Bank history says the staff were not convinced, and indeed poverty issues were treated by many Bank staff as the toys of McNamara and Mahbub. So I think we at IDS picked something of that up. We, with our own structuralist, multidisciplinary, more radical stance on many issues, particularly international trade issues, tended to see the Bank as more a bastion of neoclassical, somewhat conservative analysis.

TGW: Somewhere in this chain of events, you became the director of IDS. What circumstances led to your appointment, and what goals did you have in mind when you said yes?

RJ: Oh, those were not the days when you had goals. To the extent that I had a goal, it was to continue IDS very much along the tracks that Dudley had started. I mean, we had only begun five years earlier. We had lots of drive, many, many programs still to complete and push forward.

How did I become director of IDS? It is, in its own way, an interesting story. We were a tight-knit fellowship in IDS. What were we, twelve or eighteen fellows? We operated very much like a fellowship of a Cambridge college. To take one example, we instituted an internal income tax on any additional earning by fellows taking part in international advisory consultancies. We voted that 50 percent of such earnings would go to IDS and not to people individually, in part because those who didn't do so many consultancies didn't have such advancement. But that gives you one feature.

Another was that the fellows voted together against tenure. That was Dudley's leadership. Dudley said tenure is always leading universities to get people locked into positions, and then they stay on forever. That shouldn't be IDS. So initially, even positions of fellows that had been there five years were nationally advertised to see if there would be anyone else

applying who would be better than the present incumbent. Well, when that happened with Dudley himself, and people outside got to know that Dudley's own post was being advertised, people complained in other parts of the UK, saying that this was absurd and unfair, there was no real competition.

So there was this radical element in IDS, and there was this very coherent group of fellows. When Dudley announced after five years that he would not continue for another period as director, we were really distraught. I had a particular voice, so I was appointed to try to persuade Dudley otherwise. Dudley was adamant that he was not going to continue, but eventually I persuaded Dudley that we would continue jointly. He and I could be joint directors of IDS for five years. This wasn't just a fudge or a compromise. This would make possible spending more time in developing countries by one or the other of us, which was necessary if you were going to have an institute based in Britain but working in developing countries. At any one moment in the five years, one of us would be director and the other would not. The directorship would be rotating every six months or a year depending on the overseas assignment and so forth.

Well, this led to us making a joint application to the governing body. They were deeply thrown by this and said it was absurd. Dudley was not actually very convinced, to be honest. I was, because I was very hesitant and somewhat shy in this context. Eventually, I was interviewed on condition that there would be some situations in which I would consider being an individual director and not just co-director with Dudley. The governing body did say that they had never heard of an institution run by two directors, and I said, "Well, what about Rome? It was run by two consuls." Then they said, "But Rome fell." I said, "But will IDS last 500 years?"

The short answer is that the governing body interviewed four candidates—and appointed Sidney Dell as director, not myself. Sidney was one of the candidates, along with Angus Maddison. Sidney was appointed. Sidney, in the end, did not accept because his wife was teaching in remedial schools in New York, and she didn't want to leave New York. So he declined. I then was appointed and became director for just over nine years, and happily so. I think I gained vision and a clearer sense of direction as we went through. It certainly wasn't the classic appointment of a CEO with management vision who was going to kick ass. That wasn't the IDS style. That style, to my mind, is inappropriate. We were considerably influenced by Ronnie Dore, who had the view that great intellectual institutions are made of very bright people and most of the trick is to allow them to do their own thing.

TGW: What happened to IDS over time? I think it would be fair to just briefly talk about your own tenure and then fast forward, because when you returned there, where you are now, you were disgruntled. If I recall, your reaction defined the changed atmosphere from a fellowship to a consulting firm. What happened?

RJ: I suppose the main thing that happened was that gradually, beginning with the Mrs. [Margaret] Thatcher era, the core grant on which IDS had been built was whittled away. When IDS was set up in 1966, the universities in Britain all received core grants on a five-year basis from the government. Universities made bids for money and set out a plan. But once the money had been provided by the University Grants Committee, that finance would be provided with total academic freedom. IDS was set up on the same basis, except that the finance came from the Ministry of Overseas Development.

Then in the 1970s, it started fading. The core grant system started fading for universities. It continued for my second term, but the core grant was being cut down a bit. Then, towards the

end of my term, when Mrs. Thatcher had come in, some evil machinations were undertaken by some people in the Ministry of Overseas Development, and we got classified as a QUANGO (quasi-NGO), which meant initially we wouldn't be receiving any government money.

We had to fight back. Jim Grant, incidentally, was one of the people who wrote in strong support of IDS. A number of distinguished developing country leaders also wrote to the ministry and said this it would be tragic if IDS was left without any support. It is one of Britain's best contributions to development. By the dye was cast. Over the 1980s, the core grant and funding from the British government was cut down very considerably, which meant that IDS had to turn not only to Ford, Rockefeller, and other institutions for a higher proportion of funding, but more and more to consultancy earnings and things like this. That considerably has continued. It would be wrong, though, to overstress the consultancy as opposed to research. It certainly has become a more important part of IDS, but the amount of mainstream research is still the dominant part of IDS, not writing short-term policy papers or consultancy reports.

After myself, Mike Faber was director for five years. Then John Toye was director for nearly ten. That took us to the mid-1990s. The IDS was in a very difficult state financially. Then Keith Bezanson came in for seven years and made some very tough financial decisions that essentially meant that all IDS fellows have to generate their own salary and the same amount again from one source or another. So it is quite a tough regime.

But IDS has survived. Actually, it has grown now. With the present director, Lawrence Haddad in place, IDS seems now to be combining a viable financial mode of operation and a stronger intellectual frame. Lawrence Haddad is no mean intellectual.

Let me comment on another important change, starting during my time. We started graduate teaching, which was a big point of debate during the early 1970s. Should IDS itself

start a development course, an M.Phil. or an M.A. course? We started with an M.Phil., and now we have a number of courses, including the M.Phil. and an M.A. in governance, an M.A. in gender and so forth.

This had, with hindsight, an enormously positive impact on IDS, much more than we expected at the time. It made us much more conscious of the historical perspective of development. We had to decide for the curriculum for the M.Phil. on development for our teaching purposes, “When did development begin?” It began in 1492 in the IDS curriculum, with the expansion of empire from Europe, and all those issues related to international relations. So it was very much that perspective.

Because of Dudley and others of us, the M.Phil. had very much a structural perspective of looking at contrasting country experiences. So we would look at India and China, or Brazil and Mexico, Chile and Argentina, Kenya and Tanzania, and so forth. I think it became a very creative course, and of course students asked their own very good questions. One of the questions that the second M.Phil. course asked was, “Why are we always studying other countries? Why don’t we study Britain?” This led to Dudley leading the M.Phil. group to Scotland to look at the impact of oil on Scotland, using the same tools that we’d use if we were looking at Venezuela, or Nigeria. Then Scarlett Epstein took a bunch of Third World students to do their training in fieldwork—interviewing in a men’s club in Manchester or Birmingham. Again, they came back fascinated, impressed that it was easier for a bunch of Third Worlders from all over the developing world to interview tough, hardened, working men, skeptics of any academic or highfalutin student than if they had been a bunch of British students. So we learned a lot.

Now, the M.Phils. play a major role in the institute, including there is always an annual pantomime, a sort of Christmas take-off or skit of whatever the development theme, of the year is. I remember in my time the theme was redecoration with growth, as opposed to redistribution with growth. I was played as the director, and the person who was applying to IDS was a fellow whose name was Dr. K. Marx. It was up to me to try and work out how I would say no. Dr. Marx was pretty well-qualified. He had more publications than any other fellow and he had a big following, but somehow he wouldn't fit—I had to explain all that—within IDS. He was a fundamental rebuilders, and what we were looking for was a redecorator who would give some whitewash to the development process. So truths, or half-truths of this sort, came into the IDS with a good deal of humor.

TGW: Actually, this is the end of tape number two.

TGW: This is the beginning of tape number three, 21 July, in the morning, here at The Graduate Center, Richard Jolly and Tom Weiss. Earlier, we mentioned the Pearson report (*Partners in Development*), and in much of our writing we've taken a look at commissions as vehicles to get ideas into the international arena. Tell me everything you know about the Pearson report, both as an event for your personally, as a source of ideas for development, and as a generic type of vehicle for the dissemination, if not the creation, of ideas.

RJ: Well, the link with the Pearson report and IDS was the starting point. The Pearson report, of course, had been set up by the World Bank, with McNamara inviting Lester Pearson, the former prime minister of Canada, to lead this effort to look at aid and failing political support for aid. The report came out at the end of 1969, entitled *Partners in Development*. One informal title was *The Grand Assize*, and one title for some of us was *The Grand Illusion*. Barbara Ward, whom I didn't know at that time, although I had heard her give a seminar in Uganda long before,

came to Dudley Seers and said, “I’d like to organize a major international conference in the U.S. to discuss this Pearson report. We don’t want all the old hands, we want some of the young Turks. Dudley, could you suggest names?”

So in one way or another, Dudley and several of us put together the names of what seemed to be the next generation. Of course, our names were listed too, so we found ourselves going off to Williamsburg to start with, and then to New York for another two or three days, to discuss the Pearson Commission report. I think we were all asked to write papers but not given particular themes.

I remember struggling over what seemed to me the fundamental contradiction in the report, the opening sentence of which was “The widening gap between developed and developing countries has become a central issue of our time.” Then it went through lots of other bits of analysis and at the end gave some projections. I sketched out in an idle moment how these projections would affect the widening gap. All they would do was to widen them further—by multiples over the next ten or twenty years. I remember struggling to say, “Is this just a fact of life and it’s not relevant, or is this a fundamental contradiction?” After all, the report opened with the phrase, “This is a central problem of our time.” Then, at the end of the analysis and recommendations, the problem just gets worse.

So with enormous hesitation—I can’t honestly describe the sensitivity—I wrote this up. That was most of the theme of the paper I had produced: the widening gap. With great hesitation in Williamsburg, I gave my paper on this. To my surprise, people absolutely seized on it. It became a dominant theme in the conference. Barbara Ward then came to me and said, “Richard, I think you should gather a few friends and draft conclusions of the conference.” So a number of us—Gerry Helleiner, I think Mahbub, certainly Sartaj Aziz, about six of us—met. By then, we

had moved to New York, so we met in a hotel bedroom in the early hours of the morning and drafted this radical statement saying that the report that had talked about the widening gap had not dealt with it at all adequately.

Having been the leader, at Barbara Ward's suggestion, of the drafting group, I was the one elected the next morning to present our conclusions to the conference. I remember presenting it, I suppose, with tactful language. Then we had sheets and little boards for people to sign saying whether they agreed with it or not. Almost every one in the conference signed. It was rather democratic. Most conferences end with a slight fudge about whether concluding statements really represent participants' views. We didn't at all think we were representing people's views. We thought we were representing the renegade young radicals. But all but about six people signed—I think Hollis Chenery said he would have signed but he thought it was inconsistent with his position as a vice-president of the World Bank.

Then there was a publication by Barbara Ward on the widening gap, which summarized these papers. There was a wonderful paper by Mahbub ul Haq which is still worth reading, and a wonderful paper by the late I.G. Patel, who died just last Sunday.

TGW: We're now up to eight persons whom we've interviewed who have died.

RJ: Indeed. I.G.'s paper on technical assistance and technical cooperation made some wonderful, very real points—and about the humiliation of going for aid, with conditionality and so forth. Anyway, that was the Pearson report, but it did mean again that IDS had played a role there and were more visible. Personally, it also meant that I had this slightly high profile role. It meant that a number of us had gotten to know Barbara Ward, including Sartaj and Mahbub, and also a number of those of us who had met in the upstairs room. Michael Bruno was another, who later became the chief economist of the World Bank.

TGW: This is now called “networking.”

RJ: Yes, it is now. So a lot of networks—this was not necessarily the first time we had met, but the first time we met professionally, not just as students. Many of us stuck together thereafter, particularly through SID, the Society for International Development, and through the North-South Roundtable, NSRT, which was created as part of SID. Perhaps I should just summarize.

TGW: Actually, that would be a useful addition.

RJ: SID, I think, is an example of one of those non-government groups, a formal organization but actually serving as a network. Many of us, like Mahbub, Sartaj Aziz, Maury Williams, Jim Grant, and so forth, really found the meetings of SID and of the North-South Roundtable a major—and I mean a major—influence on our thinking. I will illustrate this later, if I remember to come back to it.

How did some of us get involved in SID? In my own case, in the mid-1970s, SID was somewhat running out of steam. It had been started, I think, in 1957 in Washington as a bunch of people interested in aid issues who would meet over lunch in the Brookings Institute cafeteria or somewhere. This became the Society for International Development, and over the 1960s played an important role in bringing people together, but mostly people from industrial countries, and particularly focused on aid rather than broader development issues in a major way.

Dudley Seers became president of SID in 1969, as I recall, and found himself landed with the World Conference of SID that was going to be held in Guatemala, in the wicked old days. Dudley objected to holding the annual conference of SID in a country ruled by some pretty bloodthirsty dictators. So there was a big contretemps. This was the beginning of a certain

debate within SID that it wasn't tackling many of the broader political issues that were part of development.

Then there was a feeling that SID was far too dominated by industrial country perspectives and not enough by developing countries ones. This meant that in the 1970s, two small commissions were setup at SID. One was led by Chief [Simeon Ola] Adebo. He gathered together half a dozen or so people and made recommendations as to how SID's structure could be changed. Paul-Marc Henry, who was then deputy administrator of UNDP, was involved as a member of SID. Somehow—I wasn't present, but I think he chaired the meeting when the Chief Adebo report was presented. There was uproar—again, total division. I heard from Dudley that Paul-Marc Henry very skillfully handled the uproar by saying, “What I think we ought to do is to accept the report but have an implementation committee that will look at how we take these ideas and see how they actually should be applied.” Dudley always thought that that was a very skillful way of defusing a most hostile debate.

But it led to me being selected, along with Jim Grant, Sartaj—I'm not sure now who else—as the implementation committee under Ismael Sabri Abdulla. We met two or three times over the next year and came up with proposals on what would be needed for making SID more democratic and more balanced. One proposal was that elections should be held in different regions of the world, which would produce a governing body of four to six persons from each of the regions of the world—North America, Europe, and the four developing country continents. I think we also came up with the idea of having a North-South Roundtable, built on the idea of the Trilateral Commission. Certainly Mahbub had a major impact on thinking about this—that dealing with many of the North-South issues should not be left to periodic conferences, but, like the Trilateral Commission, have a standing group of members that would not try and solve all the

problems at every meeting, but would take on the individual issues of trade or debt or whatever it was, and have a focused meeting of a selection of North-South Roundtable members looking at that, consciously looking at the North-South set of international political issues.

Anyway, these proposals were accepted. I got much involved with SID. Sartaj Aziz, I think, became president of SID. Barbara Ward became chairman of the North-South Roundtable. In network terms, a core of us really became very close and began to discuss a lot of development issues. In terms of ideas on development in the 1980s, the 1990s, this network was actually very significant. When you look back, with hindsight, many of the issues of human development grew out of North-South Roundtable meetings held in the 1980s, sponsored by UNDP.

To move to a different example—I got to know Jim Grant through this SID network and then, when Jim Grant became executive-director of UNICEF (UN Children’s Fund), he asked me whether I would be willing to come and be his deputy executive-director. I became close through this with Mahbub, and I’m sure that link and our shared views on many issues of development was an important reason why Mahbub, when he left *The Human Development Report* in 1995, recommended to Gus Speth that I should take over as his successor in *The Human Development Report*.

So many things followed from SID’s network—from the friendships it created and from shared thinking, and, in this case, intellectual discussion of international issues. I think it needs to be recognized that there is, of course, a potential corruption in recommending friends. And in the case of WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research), when Lal Jayawardena was director of the UN University (UNU) in Helsinki, there was much criticism that he had employed too many of his friends in the early work of WIDER. But as many of us

said, “If your friends consist of Professor Amartya Sen, Professor Steve Marglin, and many other universally acknowledged leaders of the economic or development professions, and those are the friends you have, you can’t be blamed for that.” I would say that one needs to always have checks and balances to make sure that it is not just being driven by friendships but if you are using these networks, you are generally subjecting your judgments to peer review in other ways.

TGW: It strikes me that one always reaches out to friends, but you have to ask them about their younger, and older, and non-male colleagues. I think this is a constant challenge. You said this about the North-South Roundtable, and SID was helped along. Some conferences were sponsored by UNDP, but all of these conferences and generators of ideas actually happened outside of the UN. Did this strike you as strange, or did this seem a sensible way to proceed?

RJ: It seems to me an extremely sensible way to proceed. I could give a number of examples, but the point I would stress is that it wasn’t totally outside of the UN. Many of the persons I have been mentioning—Jim Grant, of course, became executive-director of IDS. Sartaj Aziz, during the period we are talking about, had already masterminded the World Food Conference and then had been appointed as a vice president of IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development). Mahbub ul Haq was there in the World Bank as a key advisor to McNamara, and so on and so forth.

TGW: Perhaps I should have said as outside of the *intergovernmental* UN context?

RJ: Yes, but if, as we do, talk about both of the second and the third UN, the second being the formal Secretariat members, and in my view, at least—perhaps, Tom, you will now join me—there is a third UN of people closely associated, perhaps from academic positions, perhaps from inside, but who meet in such networks as SID closely concerned with UN issues and policy. I would say that members of SID in that sense are part of this third UN.

But let me come to examples of why I think this is positive and extremely important. I will give you a specific example. In September 1982, Jim Grant had been at UNICEF two-and-a-half years, and I had been at UNICEF nine months. Jim was wanting to have a discussion on mainstream priorities and strategy for UNICEF over the 1980s. Of course, he already had some ideas in relation to concentration on health for children and high priority actions that would help reduce child mortality. And very consciously, Jim discussed with me how we would have a small North-South Roundtable meeting in UNICEF, entirely supported by UNICEF from a financial point of view, and inviting twenty or twenty-five people along.

Now, if that had been—and this was Jim Grant's concern—if that had been a normal UN consultation, he would have had to have invited formal representation from WHO (World Health Organization), from UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), and from other UN organizations—and to accept whoever they sent. What Jim wanted was to handpick a group of people that Jim knew combined knowledge of different parts of the UN in a very specific fashion with qualities of intellectual creativity, experience, adventuresomeness, all of this. So we could do this by calling it and indeed making it a North-South Roundtable meeting. It was held over the weekend—Saturday and Sunday. But it ended up on Sunday at lunchtime by defining UNICEF's GOBI FF strategy, what became the *Child Survival and Development Revolution*, what over the 1980s helped put UNICEF absolutely high in public profile and led to a wonderful reduction in child mortality from 15 million people dying a year to 12 million by 1990.

I mean, we had a very creative, freewheeling discussion that had a major influence on UNICEF. I think it probably wouldn't have taken place if we had not had that mechanism. I can think of several other examples which influenced how UNICEF later tried to work with the

World Food Programme in tackling child nutrition in refugee camps and so forth. We had several of these North-South Roundtable meetings, and of course later UNDP held a number of North-South Roundtable meetings when Mahbub was chairman. For that matter, Maurice Strong was chairman for some of them, looking at issues of debt relief, looking at issues of trade, finance, technology and laying the foundations for much of the work on human development.

To jump ahead, when Sadako Ogata was appointed as High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), she asked me, “Richard, could we not hold a North-South Roundtable meeting on policy towards refugees?” She funded it from UNHCR. We invited twenty-five or thirty people for a two-day review of issues of high importance for the work of UNHCR. And we produced a little booklet. It wasn’t a hidden operation, but it was a select group.

To choose a less successful example, we had a meeting in 1993 on reform of the Bretton Woods institutions. I was by then chairman of SID. Mahbub ul Haq played a major role. I don’t think the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) were quite as influenced by our recommendations as we would like. We had people participating from the Bretton Woods institutions, although probably not as many and not as committed to the present policies of Bretton Woods as they might have liked.

TGW: I want to go back to Pearson for a moment, because you mentioned that one of the results of the Pearson Commission was putting an idea about gaps into the public policy debate. This is one kind of impact of a commission, and you’ve just mentioned another—to “revitalize,” or whatever the word would be—SID. There’s a different kind of impact. Over the years, between 1969 and 2005—we have just had a High-Level Panel report on *Threats, Challenges, and Change*—this vehicle has often been one used by the members of secretariats to push out ideas. What do you think makes a difference with these reports? When do they have the most

impact on the world of ideas, on the first, second, and third United Nations—the arena of states, the Secretariat officials, and hangers-on in NGO civil societies who make use of these ideas? What have been the best of these reports in terms of content? And when have they had the most impact?

RJ: I am not sure whether I have either a clear view or even the confidence to say which ones have even made the biggest impact. Of course if you put them in a class which also includes consultancy reports, some consultancy reports may be focused on much more limited elements of management and in some sense may have been more implemented. If you list all the specific recommendations and say a year or two years later, how many of these have been put into practice—so the test of simple implementation is not to my mind a very good test.

Certainly for the bigger commissions, I suppose what one is looking for—at least I would be looking for—are reports that change thinking and ideas. This, of course, is what the UN Intellectual History Project (UNIHP) is about. Our own perspectives on this—how do ideas influence action—show that assessing impact is a much more complicated process as well as a longer-run process.

For instance, take the V.K.R.V. Rao report on SUNFED (Special UN Fund for Economic Development) and all that long, tortuous debate in the 1950s, trying to make the case for the UN to create a Special UN Fund for Economic Development and then, bang, it was created in 1959 in the World Bank and still runs today. So perhaps that is an example of a report that should be given some praise for implementation. I think the North-South Roundtables had some quite good ideas. I mean, certainly that little one—because it was a little weekend meeting—on *Child Survival and Development*, you could say that was enormously implemented by UNICEF in the 1980s. Of course, that in a sense was set up by Jim Grant precisely to give him advice. I would

hope that *Threats, Challenges, and Change* would also have impact. I think it is one of the best reports on many aspects of the UN in general. I think it is a very exciting and well-written report, the one that was just written last December.

I think it would be a great mistake to judge the implementation of its 101 recommendations by the fact that its recommendations on the reform of the Security Council are not likely to lead anywhere. But there are another 100 recommendations for establishing a Peacebuilding Commission or the idea of special action to get rid of fifty or 100 senior positions filled now by people who have become deadwood. There are lots of other elements. So history may show that's been a good example. But I don't think I've got any sense about what makes these commissions successful, and which would I say have proved over the long-run to have been the most successful.

Indeed, I would say it is a great mistake to identify two or three at the top of the list and then say all the rest did not have any impact. I think I am more impressed, particularly as an academic or as a researcher, with the gradual drip-drip of ideas that change thinking over the long-run. To be lucky enough, or brilliant enough, to write the general theory that produces a Keynesian revolution is very unusual. But those of us who haven't ever aspired to such ambition should not be too discouraged by realizing that we may have contributed a few drops to the drip-drip over the years.

TGW: Actually, while I was in Tehran I was given a report from the Finnish Peace Research Institute in which they had commissioned four papers to look at commissions. They identified exactly this tension between how you measure success, and what are our criteria, and we can't really tell now anyway because we need to look over a longer period of time. They

didn't use that terminology, but it seemed that their central conclusion was "drip-drip" as opposed a fire hose of ideas.

During your time as director at IDS, one of the assignments you took on was at OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development), and you label this "North-South issues." I just wondered how this compared with your earlier work that focused a lot on hands-on individual country experiences—spending three months in Kenya and pulling this apart, et cetera—

RJ: Or going to Abu Dhabi, and trying to get back to Cuba—well, we've been back to Cuba—Colombia, and so forth. As Dudley led me to believe it was very, very useful for development to have in mind this diversity of different economies, different structural economies. Dudley wrote a very influential piece, called "The Life Cycle of a Petroleum Exporting Economy," which illustrated again his structuralist approach. He was thinking particularly of Trinidad and Tobago, I think. But looking at a particular economy, its dominance defined by its main economic activity—and tracking rise and fall over time, not only in terms of oil production, but of all the distortions and political involvements and political influences of an economy like that.

Dudley said in his final book that the world is simply too big for any individual to work substantially on all the different economies of the world, by which he meant spend more than a month or more on a solid piece of professional work. He said, "I have only myself reached thirty-five or forty." But that sort of perspective has always influenced me—particularly all the different sorts of economies, the Abu Dhabi oil exporting, the Kenya and Zambia copper, and Sri Lanka and Kenya and so forth with the employment missions. I never reached anything like Dudley's collection. But still, you were on to a different issue.

TGW: A different issue, namely what are the payoffs—we've spoken a lot about looking in depth at Kenya or Abu Dhabi—from generalizing? The assignment at OECD could hardly have been broader: North-South issues. I am just wondering, on a personal level, what attracts you to one versus the other? And what makes a person capable of doing good policy analysis, good academic analysis across cases and generalizing to the planet? Dudley said it wasn't possible, but you obviously tried.

RJ: I think it was a simple mixture of realizing I needed a sabbatical to get away from IDS. That was my condition for my being renewed for a second term as IDS director, that I could take a year's sabbatical. Then serendipity, to use your phrase—somehow the opportunity came to work in OECD. Of course, I had a young family also of four kids and Alison, so we had to go somewhere where all the kids could go. But also, I was conscious of not knowing enough at all about developed country policymaking. That was the specific attraction of spending a period in OECD. I was offered the chance to be advisor on North-South issues to [Emile] Van Lennep, who was the then secretary-general.

It was a nice position. I had an office besides Maurice Williams, whom I then really got to know. I had known him slightly through SID, and of course he had been deputy administrator of USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development). In OECD, I was asked to draft a paper for the ECSS, the Economic Commission in Special Session, on North-South relations. This was the committee that met twice a year in OECD, in which the chief economists or ministers of economics would come to OECD and would meet and discuss issues. So it was a very high-level part of OECD.

Suddenly, they announced that they wanted to have—I think it was in 1978—a paper on North-South relations, so I was asked to draft the paper. I remember after I had done the draft,

Maury Williams, who was chairing the meeting, went round the room and everyone in OECD said this paper would not do, it would be far too progressive, or whatever. They objected for one reason or another. And I learned the art of being a tough administrator. Maury Williams with a smile said, "Well, in view of all these comments, I think we should accept the paper as it is." So naturally, Maury became a close friend after that.

The paper was put to the ECSS. I wrote about this in a little piece for a small volume that Gerry Helleiner put together on the making of economic policy on North-South issues, entitled *For Good or Evil: Economic Theory in North-South Negotiations*, which came out in 1982. The key point that puzzled me at the time was why all these high-level people, ministers and otherwise, flying in from capitals, could spend so long in OECD discussing North-South issues. I was rather excited to start with, not so much because it was my paper, but because it was North-South issues. Those of us who wanted to get these issues taken seriously, to see them put on the agenda and then dominate the day-long meeting, thought this was wonderful.

The penny suddenly dropped, of course. North-North relations at the time were in a fairly fragile state. The OECD economies had recovered from the oil-price debacle of 1973/1974, so growth was again going, but growth was beginning to falter. There was all this talk about how we needed a locomotive to pull the other countries along. But each one of these views created strains between the U.S. and the leading economies of Europe, strains between the different economies of Europe, and so forth. To discuss North-South relations—all these things which raised big conflicts between the industrial countries, was difficult. It was much easier for them to have a nice little discussion on North-South relations and to agree that they needed to be tough. They liked a few suggestions in the paper from Jolly that they could find some mutual interests in being a bit nicer about it all.

It left me not utterly cynical, because I'm not an utterly cynical person, but I did see it in a rather different way and I tried to summarize that. What was very interesting in seeing the ECSS at work were the obvious body languages of power when the committee met, which you don't see in the UN so easily, for one very obvious reason. If a country that doesn't matter is giving a speech in the General Assembly, you very quietly go out and take a coffee break and talk to your friends. So the minister, or even the prime minister, may not have a very big audience, but at least he has a respectful audience and even the industrial countries would have a second secretary sitting there in the chair and listening.

OECD at that time had twenty-four members with twenty-five seats round the table. The U.S. was given two seats and everyone else had one. But the body language was unbelievable. Either the U.S. spoke first or it spoke later. It didn't matter. Whenever the U.S. spoke, everyone listened, was keeping notes, listening most intently. That was more or less true for Britain, France, the other big power countries. However, after the Japanese spoke, everyone would turn to their neighbor and you could almost hear them saying, "Yes, but what actually was he saying? What did he mean?"

Then when Turkey, or Greece, or then Portugal or Spain talked, it was unbelievable, particularly when Turkey spoke. The others sitting round the table would all talk to their neighbor about whatever interested them—I wasn't party to the conversations—but pay absolutely no attention to this poor man trying to speak and give his views to the assembled group when they were all clearly fully concentrating on something else and in no way listening to him. So inevitably, the person started stumbling and couldn't even keep going with reasonable diction. But that was the power hierarchy of the economic committee in special session.

TGW: You were looking at the OECD, mostly the North. By this time—and I wondered if you could put yourself back where you were in 1978—could you try to characterize how the South looked between the time between finishing your Ph.D. and the first UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development) conference? Somewhat before your arrival at OECD, the NIEO (New International Economic Order) had come together, as a creation, one could say, of the South. How do you recall looking at that group? What did it look like? Where did you think it was going?

RJ: I was enormously influenced by our IDS perspectives. Our IDS perspectives were given by the feeling that the southern voice was given far too little attention in the international system and in international negotiations. So the NIEO, when it came up, was a very exciting development. Equally exciting, perhaps, was the forerunner of the oil-price increase. Many of us in IDS hoped that the shift in world income distribution that followed from the rise in oil prices could be the forerunner of changes in policy among southern countries, so that there would actually be some sharing of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) resources—with what Hans Singer called the NOPEC countries, those that didn't have oil.

I remember calculating at the time that the shift in global income distribution in 1974, following the threefold rise in oil prices, was something like 2 percent of global income that went to the OPEC countries, 1.5 % as I recall from the industrial countries and .5 % from developing countries. So one thought that if the OPEC countries had shared even a quarter of their additional income with the rest of the developing world, there could have been a win-win situation for developing countries in a way that could have been sustained and perhaps could have led to further structural changes of the world economy in favor of the poorer, developing world.

That was not to be. But that, I suppose, was a dominant part of my own thinking. A number of us—SID, North-South Roundtable—discussed some of these issues, not in a romantic sense and not in a totally unrealistic sense. How could various policies be adopted that could indeed be a southern generator of dynamism in the global economy? That theme later came into the Brandt Commission. Remember that over the 1980s and the 1990s, the whole global economy moved to a much slower growth rate, quite apart from the desperate failures of growth in Africa and Latin America during the 1980s.

So there was a hard-core of economic potential for gain in such thinking, if only mechanisms had been devised internationally to make this possible. I think I was hinting at something like this in my OECD paper, but I think it was left sufficiently at a level of generality that no one would be deeply threatened. Anyway, no one was needing to take action. To come back to my earlier theme, OECD could happily discuss North-South issues without having to take any serious decisions about it.

So that was something of my broad perspective. I suppose another element of how I thought about the South in the 1970s was enormously given by a limited number of southerners that I knew—Mahbub, Sartaj, Ismael Sabri Abdulla, and others. The North-South Roundtable and SID very carefully had about fifty/fifty developing country/developed countries participants, perhaps rather more developing country participants. So in my own case, apart from reading and writing about these issues, I was very influenced by the views of people who were friends, particularly about ways forward.

TGW: But at that time, the depressing arrival of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher had not yet taken place, so there was still a certain kind of ebullience that existed that I guess made possible your paper in 1978. Last evening when we spoke about the UN, you laughed and

said that you were kind of blissfully unaware of what was going on. When you were in IDS or in OECD, the First Development Decade switches into the second. Did that framework enter into your and your colleagues' analytical framework or discussions? What impact did that big, broad-brush-stroke, normative statement, have on peoples' work?

RJ: I think the truth is that IDS was made up of a few of us who had first-hand contacts with the UN and many others who didn't. I think it's probably true that those who have not had much impact or direct involvement with the UN could be amazingly unconcerned and skeptical about whether the UN and issues like the Development Decades were really that important operationally. I think I might make the comment that now, in 2005, that this is one of the major achievement of Kofi Annan—the focus on the Millennium Summit and Millennium Development Goals. I would have thought it was difficult for anyone today involved in development not to be aware of and feel the need to take some positions and perhaps even do some research on issues of reduction of global poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. That is a major achievement.

But coming back to 1970s—an important contrast—we were concerned in the 1970s, in IDS, in part through our own direct involvements with these employment missions, in issues that began to be called “basic needs,” particularly after the World Employment Conference in 1976. Basic needs and poverty strategy—income distribution within countries—was high on the agenda of many people, perhaps of research, perhaps not of research, it depends on how much people were really concerned with policy issues. But those were the influences much more than the Second Development Decade. Of course, partly that may be because the decades got filtered through in terms of growth rates and strategies. IDS, for the reasons I've given, never saw the problems anywhere near so much in terms of growth rates.

But this said, Hans Singer was always someone who then, even today—thirty-five years later, how can one believe it, at age ninety-five—still follows almost more assiduously than anyone else in Sussex, the latest proposals of the UN for Development Decades or whatever.

So in 1971, or was it 1972, Hans, reacting more to the reform of UNDP and the Capacity Study (*Study of the Capacity of the UN Development System*), felt very negative towards the proposal that 100 percent of UNDP's money should be spent at country level, following what countries wanted. Hans was totally convinced that that was broadly in the right direction, but he was highly conscious of the need for some global support, for example in the area of global technology that only could be supported at international level. So he organized the Sussex manifesto on science and technology, which I think fed into the Second Development Decade.

I myself, to jump ahead to 1978, after I had had this OECD involvement, was invited to join the CDP, the Committee on Development Planning. I was a member of that for four years. The CDP had been set up in the 1960s by Jan Tinbergen to monitor the First Development Decade. Then, by the end of the 1960s, the CDP, with Professor Tinbergen, the great economist, as chairman, made recommendations for the Second Development Decade. By 1978/1979, we were beginning to play the same role for the Third Development Decade. So I became much more aware of the Development Decades. Writing an article made me more aware of them.

But I think it is a revealing comment that for all the importance given by the UN system—ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council), the General Assembly, some of the UN economists—to these Development Decades, they may actually have had much less impact on even professional development thinking at that time than one would have expected or would have liked. Now that may again be the result of the World Bank never paying attention to them. The fact that the Millennium Goals are treated with such seriousness by the World Bank today

may be the factor that that enables the goals to become part of the realpolitik of developed countries, donor countries, and many developing countries, too—to be taken more seriously.

This said, I don't remember, in any of the countries I visited in the 1970s, being much conscious of the country's Ministry of Finance, or Ministry of Economic Planning, feeling that there was a 5 or 6 percent global goal out there that their foreign minister had agreed to in the UN and they should therefore be taking seriously for their own development. That again is very different now with the Millennium Development Goals. It was also very different with the goals pursued by UNICEF in the 1980s.

Perhaps I should comment here on the Third Development Decade and Jim Grant's own vision. At that point, in 1979, was involved in discussing in the CDP what should be the elements of the Third Development Strategy and the Third Development Decade. I was being lobbied hard by Jim Grant, a close friend but a pest if I may say. Jim would ring me every day in the hotel and say, "Richard, have you managed to build in some goals? Not growth goals, but goals for health or education and children. Jim was pressing for some quantified goals in our report of the CDP as to what should be the frame of reference for the Third Development Decade?

It is worth recording here that the biggest opposition to health goals came, of course, from WHO. There is a slight cynicism in me saying, "Of course." But that so often is the way in the UN. If you have someone of vision, someone of persistent vision like Jim Grant, saying, "This is what should happen in health," at least the bureaucrats of the World Health Organization and other parts are extremely resistant to anyone else coming up with these ideas. But in this case, this happened in spite of smallpox having been eradicated on the basis of a specific goal just a year or two earlier, and in spite of the fact that the EPI, the Expanded Programme of

Immunization, had been jointly adopted by WHO and UNICEF in the late 1970s to follow the great success of smallpox eradication. WHO in the CDP—they weren't a member but they provided expert advice and participated—argued there was nothing like smallpox. They had done the one eradication that was possible. There was no other disease that could be subject to such a clear goal. So measles eradication was not treated as at all seriously. Polio eradication was not treated seriously. They just argued, "No goals."

Every morning Jim Grant would be on the phone, "Have I got an agreement to put in these goals?" We did put in some. Perhaps I need to go back and look at the report and eventually see what emerged from government negotiation with respect to the Third Development Decade. My memory is that some goals did get put into the Decade, although much more tentatively than those adopted by UNICEF when Jim Grant was leader and I was his deputy executive-director for programs.

This struggle to set goals is interesting and I think it is significant. Of course, UNICEF's experience with goal pursuit as a mainstream priority for its national country programs became a dominant feature of the 1980s. It led to the World Summit for Children in 1990 and led on to pursuit of the broader range of goals adopted at the World Summit for Children in 1990s. Then through the global conferences of the 1990s, it led indeed to the Millennium Goals of the Millennium Summit, which still exist at the moment.

TGW: Let's go to goals for a minute. In the tone of your voice and in your description, you are keen about goals, whereas lots of other folks are far more skeptical about their utility. Why do you think that that they are good idea? And what, in your own analyses of goals and objectives, do you think has been their main impact?

RJ: Why do I think they are a good idea? Because I had the privilege of living and working in UNICEF for fourteen years, when we saw how the adoption of specific goals or specific action, in particular the expansion of immunization to tackle some of the major killer diseases of children, focused UNICEF. In its country level work, it led to the Third World achieving a level of about 80 percent coverage of immunization by 1990 of under-one children in developing countries against these major six killing diseases. Goals acted as a focus for country-by-country action in a way that was widely analyzed and accepted by WHO as playing a major role in reducing child mortality by 3 million at a time—from 15 million to 12 million—at a time when child births were increasing. So there was an even bigger proportionate decrease in child mortality rates.

So the fact was that we saw how goals could be used to mobilize not just governments but public opinion, public awareness, practical action for children, mobilize all sorts of NGOs, the churches, religious groups, mosques and so forth. I was lucky enough to live through this very positive experience. And for those who are skeptical of goals, I would say, “Read any management manual and tell me is it great management theory that goals are wrong?” I am sure there are some people who say you mustn’t plan tomorrow, you’ve got to be a poet and react, but it’s an extraordinary view that goals are in principle wrong and shouldn’t be pursued.

This said, are goals panaceas? Are they without risks or costs? Of course not. And I think there were some respects in which the goals pursued by UNICEF were a bit too top-down, even though it certainly wasn’t simply top-down. UNICEF offices at country level would work with governments to adapt as well as to adopt them. But there was a strong pressure from New York to encourage reps to put pretty strong pressure on governments to adopt them.

However, there was, in the case of UNICEF, a country program process that had been in operation since the early 1970s, in which what countries needed to do for their children was a major focus of analysis. With the support of UNICEF, there was analysis of what countries should do to meet their children's needs—where were the problems, in addition to health or education, child abuse, you name it? Those problems came into the country program process, and UNICEF resources were never solely devoted to immunization, or to the promotion of oral rehydration to tackle diarrhea. We always said that 20 percent of a country's UNICEF program resources, at least, should be available for support of whatever particular programs and needs of children seemed of high priority.

I could go on, but the point I am making is that goals have a vital role to play and I think UNICEF experience has shown that this can be positive. And I think that broadly the Millennium Development Goals also can be positive. But there are some very important negatives that need to be guarded against. To jump ahead, I think there is a real risk that the over-simple promotion of the Millennium Development Goals could lead in two or three years to important disillusion in the process. What can be done to avoid that? One priority is to emphasize, much more than is being done at the moment, that each of the goals needs to be adapted to the country situation. A second thing is that global advocacy for goals and global monitoring of goals needs to be focused on country level performance. Instead of saying, "Africa will not achieve the goals"—which I am afraid that on average seems likely in Africa—you ought to say, "With respect to these particular goals, so many countries are on track, so many countries are not on track."

Perhaps the goals need to be adapted to Africa, as we did with immunization. We set a different level of targets for Africa during the 1980s. In these and other ways, I think it is very

important that an element of disaggregation—and an element of more skillful PR (public relations) needs to be brought into the process of goal pursuit. And one shouldn't lose sight of the bigger issues. It is not just a matter of poverty reduction through the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals. We need never to lose sight of the fact that we are trying to strive for a world of greater global justice, less extremes of inequality, more democratic voice for people and for countries in the international system. Goals can disguise that if they are promoted in too simple a fashion.

TGW: We are going to come to UNICEF this afternoon, but I wanted to go back to the CDP for just for a moment as a generic type of expert group. We talked about SID earlier as sort of a something outside of the Secretariat, and CDP is a group of intellectuals inside the Secretariat or sponsored inside it. What are the peculiar advantages of the CDP or groups like the CDP as expert groups within the UN Secretariat, as a way of getting new thinking, whether it's goals or whatever, injected into the discourse and then eventually into the programs of an international institution?

RJ: Well, I think there are very considerable advantages. All big institutions need to discuss and consider where and how do they get expert inputs, expert advice, expert pressures for action and so forth. As you rightly say, the North-South Roundtable was institutionally largely outside the UN, although it had the participation of many serving UN staff members. The CDP was a group of outside experts, but part of the UN structure. The moment I became a UN staff member, I had to resign from CDP. All these outsiders were chosen—interestingly—in their individual right, not as government representatives.

There are also a number of committees which we might discuss at some other time, both totally internal UN committees such as some of those that come under the Secretary-General or

the UN Development Group, for example, in which the only representatives are representatives of UN agencies. Then there are some hybrids—for example, the SCN, the Sub-Committee on Nutrition, now known as the Standing Committee on Nutrition, which I chaired for a while—which have both formal representation of all the UN agencies that are involved in nutrition and also some outsiders in their own right, often distinguished nutritionists.

Talking about the class of all these, in my view they are all very important. In my own experience, I have seen how they generated a lot of creative thinking, not just in mainstream economic areas, as the CDP and perhaps the North-South Roundtable, but in matters of water, sanitation, hygiene, in case of the Collaborative Council on Water Supply and Sanitation or in nutrition (such as the SCN), or in some of the other committees on agriculture or technology or whatever. So the topics can vary. The common point of all of them is that they try and bring in, in different ways, people with real professional expertise on the topic and not just people who are representing the organizational interests of different bodies in the UN.

The additional point I'd make is that I believe that many of these committees are not used as valuably as they could be. The CDP, for example, met two or three times a year to write a report of twenty or twenty-five pages, which was then submitted to the UN and was given little or no attention. It would be much more creative if this bunch of outside, twenty-four, professional economists, some of considerable distinction, were for example to hold hearings in the UN; or for example to look at some of the recent UN reports on the world economy or on some aspect of the world economy, and then give a professional evaluation of this report; or perhaps hold hearing and questionings, a bit like a congressional or parliamentary committee, or some of the UN Secretariat members who had had a hand in that report: "And so, why didn't you

take account of these issues? Wouldn't it have been desirable if you had given more attention to this aspect of Third World or rich country policy or otherwise?"

Such an approach would have introduced a very interesting and appropriate level of professional critique, as opposed to just government critique. If you believe in the importance of a professional voice on many issues, and not just a government voice, or even now a non-government voice, I think this would help strengthen the overall impact of some of the UN's work. So I think that is one of the ways in which these committees could be used in a more valuable way.

TGW: We're obviously fast-forwarding, and I am pushing the reverse button here a minute. I wanted to go back to the 1970s and 1960s for a moment. When you were in the OECD you were, I suppose, in the belly of the beast, an institutionalized Northern voice. I wondered how you recall the institutionalization of the Southern voice or Southern voices. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) sprang up, and we saw UNCTAD spring up as well. And we've seen various products of Southern points of view coming into the UN and out of the UN. How do you look back into the 1960s and 1970s, and the institutionalization of the Southern voice? I think particularly through UNCTAD, and the Group of 77 (G-77), those perspectives eventually became part and parcel of virtually all UN development discussions. How do you recall those years and the emergence of that voice?

RJ: Essentially far too soft a Third World voice in formal bodies at the time and far too many weaknesses in institutionalizing the voice. To start with OECD, at the time the Development Centre in OECD was the one part where there was a serious attempt to bring in Third Worlders. Remember, the Development Centre was a research institute. Was it a mile, two miles, three miles, or four kilometers away in Paris, so there was an almost physical distance

to prevent too much contamination of OECD meetings—not that it was that easy—of the OECD members themselves.

Even DAC, the Development Assistance Committee, when Maury Williams was the chairman of DAC, bravely invited three, or four, or five Third World persons to attend one DAC meeting, as I recall. It was a very special meeting, because they couldn't come to ordinary meetings. I have a feeling it was a bit like some of those early dances in secondary school, when we are all extremely shy. There would be a certain number of girls from a different school, sitting on one side of the room and a few boys bravely going up and asking could they have a dance. Remember, British schools were always more inhibited than American ones in these matters! But it was a bit like that in OECD, even when DAC did invite a few Third Worlders in.

The Development Centre was something different down the road. I think the Development Centre was the only way Third Worlders could participate in OECD meetings at the time.

Now, of course, the UN was totally different. UNCTAD was not totally different, but UNCTAD was taking stances from the beginning and programs of work that were much more concerned with tackling inequalities in trade or finance or whatever from a developing country point of view. And of course in ECOSOC and all the UN meetings—that's the strength of the UN—Third World representatives are there in their own right and with representation as it is.

However, I suppose I would make two points about the 1970s. Those of us in IDS treasured our opportunities to learn about Third World positions from direct contact, from literature, and others. Then, when we took part in more international meetings, we would be drawing on these sources of ideas from outside the meeting, and in many cases feeding them in. Some of us could be attacked for being too much like Third Worlders, or trying to be Third

World representatives in developed country clothing or with developed country nationality. That is an attack that has never bothered me. I have never seen myself as a down-the-line Third World representative. I have seen myself much more as an internationalist, concerned with issues, doing my damndest to think of international perspectives in the interest of people worldwide.

Then, and even today, many of us were concerned with the lack of, or the weakness of, research capacity on the side of the South. There were, of course, distinguished universities and government research institutes in Asia and to some extent in Latin America to a much less extent in Africa. Many of us argued for there to be an OECD of the South. It is one of the enormously missed opportunities that the South never really took this up, either to generate the funding or to generate the organization for this to be. There have been some cases, some efforts, but they have never really led to a great deal. There is the South Centre in Geneva, which Julius Nyerere chaired, of which the present prime minister of India, Manmohan Singh, was director for some years. It has at least done some useful work, but it is tiny, absolutely miniscule in relation to OECD.

Of course, the regional commissions have done important work and have represented considerably the voice of their region. But this still has been different. It has been a regional view rather than a Southern view. Perhaps now the possibility of a single Southern view is less than it might have been twenty or thirty years ago. But if one sees the need for greater solidarity among a core of Southern countries, among the collectivity of Southern countries, I think we have paid the price of not having had a more collective position.

TGW: Actually, the new director of the South Centre, Yash Tandon, from Uganda, was at the meeting where I was in Tehran this week. And I pushed him a little on that, that in fact the

secretariat remains a miniscule group, as you said. But I just wanted to ask you what a Southern view, as you hinted, would consist of given the vast disparities among 130 or 140 countries, depending on how you are counting them? Would it have been possible, even in the 1970s?

RJ: Well, I gave my view of the hopes of OPEC teaming up with NOPEC. At least as I read history, after the first oil price increases, through lack of vision and leadership on the OPEC side, the opportunity for an OPEC/NOPEC alliance faced and became a re-channeling of the OPEC surpluses to western banks worldwide and actually led to the basis for the debt crisis in many Southern countries in the 1980s. I see that as a missed opportunity, whether in terms of realpolitik—one could have seen that operating in a different way. There would have been enormous opposition from the North, from Western banks, and I'm sure from different groups within the South.

But my view, ultimately, of global politics is that there is some room for maneuver. That is where leadership, vision, and intellectual long sight can make a difference. Though whether in that case it could have made as much difference, I don't know. But that is precisely the sort of issue on which, I think, a Southern research institute, a South Centre writ large, with real resources, could have made a difference. They should have looked not just at the grand alliances, but at many specifics within some greater advance for developing countries and explored whether there might be room for maneuver that might have made advance.

If you look at the UNCTAD agenda, the Common Fund proposals were an attempt to try and identify a collective way to support commodity agreements. Possibly then there would have been others. So UNCTAD played something of this role in exploring possible actions based on possible alliances, where the Common Fund wasn't just based on Southern alliances. It was based on something much broader.

That's where it could have been useful. You could argue today that a full alliance of the South is perhaps much less relevant. But an alliance relating particularly to the least developed countries (LDCs), fifty or so of the poorest countries, is one important issue. In a different way, an alliance for sub-Saharan Africa is another. Possibly the small island developing countries, although personally I think they are a much more diverse group, although if you talk to their representatives they would say that there is much more common interest. All of these are examples of issues where some form of research focused on their needs and collective interests, to see the extent to which there are collective interests, some of that sort of research is vital.

Perhaps I will end this comment by saying that what I see in contrast is very unfortunate. If we focus on Africa, I see great and specific and, I think, conscious efforts by the World Bank over the last ten or fifteen years to support research institutes in Africa and individual research workers, who all work within essentially a neo-classical World Bank paradigm of economic analysis, which, by my perspective, is excessively cautious and conservative and supportive of the international status quo. The fact that so much research money now is channeled by the World Bank to such networks—the Global Knowledge Network is one of them—and channeled to people who have matched the test of, “good economics,” by which is meant a rather narrow neoclassical economic paradigm, is extremely unfortunate.

This may be the moment to mention that it wasn't the only alternative. Way back in the early 1970s, there were research networks set up of social science in Africa, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), in Latin America CLACSO (*Conesjo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales*), and the Asian Development Association for Research. That was when IDS, in 1970 and 1971 and 1972, played a role in getting the European Association of Development Institutes (EADI) established. I myself, with the leaders

of CODESRIA and the Asian equivalent—Ponna Wignaraja at the time—held at IDS a very useful little group meeting and produced guidelines for research relationships between North and South researchers. We issued these guidelines in the name of the four or five research associations, precisely to encourage a more independent research on the side of developing countries and respectful relations.

There was an article by William H. Whyte from Cornell, who published “A Challenge to Northern Researchers in Latin America.” He wrote that too often they acted like mining companies, digging up data in developing countries but then bringing it back unprocessed to the university in the North where the data would be processed and the value-added accumulated in terms of doing the analysis and write-ups and all the things that brought glory and publicity to their own selves and to their university. William Whyte provided a vision of a more genuine, equal partnership, which we tried to embody in these relationships.

The point I am really trying to underline in this is that the world has lost, in terms of research deeply embedded in the life and concerns of developing countries, by having such an inadequate balance in terms of social science research on development issues.

TGW: This is the end of tape three.

TGW: This is the beginning of tape number four, the afternoon of 21 July 2005, Tom Weiss interviewing Richard Jolly. Well, UNICEF has come into our conversation already a number of times. But I just wondered what tempted you specifically—because you didn’t resist the temptation—of going to work in an organization and distancing yourself from basically full time analytical work, to at least a mixture of operations and analysis, even if your title said analysis?

RJ: Well, I didn't need much temptation because I had always been a working economist rather than a detached academic researcher. So even before I joined UNICEF, I had spent more or less half my time working for government or working in consultancy or on these missions, and the other half in a more research context, even more than in a university context. IDS was a research institute. We did some teaching and training, as I've explained. So the idea of actually working in UNICEF was very exciting, working with Jim Grant, and frankly being invited to come in for the deputy-director position, deputy-executive-director for programs. So it was an extremely attractive offer, another one I couldn't refuse.

Amazingly, I actually knew much less about the UN than one might have imagined, even though I had had these various involvements with UN agencies—by then a number of short-term consultancies. I had worked as an intern in New York in the UN, and worked in the Economic Commission for Africa for a couple of months. But all of this is very different from actually working within the UN system. Even today, I am a little surprised. Some of the people in development studies who have been observing the UN from the outside for a long time really have very little idea about many dimensions of the UN system, both its potentials in a positive sense, but also some of the difficulties, and some of the just exciting dimensions. When I think of my time in UNICEF, it was just very exciting to work in an organization of 100 or 150 nationalities. You get used to trying to take account of different nationalities, rather than always working within the context of your own culture, your own country, which often is the situation.

So all of this was why I was very pleased to take the chance of working in UNICEF and working with programs. I thought, when I came, that I would bring, of course, something of a research perspective to the job. Perhaps I did, particularly in some of the more high-profile things I got engaged in—of course, *Adjustment With a Human Face*, and before that, a study we

did on the impact of world recession on children and, later, some of the work in relation to the economic dimensions of the goals and child survival and development revolution.

Initially, one of my requests to Jim when I took the job was that I should be allowed a month every year to spend in a developing country, partly because the family was still of an age where I needed and wanted to go with all of them. So I didn't want to just go on my own, if possible. But also, I wanted to keep touch with the specifics of a country situation. I've already stressed that, to me, there are so many differences between countries that the overview from spending a few days here and a few days there was very much less adequate than being able to immerse oneself in a particular country, looking at a particular set of issues for several weeks at a time every year. I think it's actually my own lack of discipline, and to some extent my own lack of persuasion to Jim Grant that I didn't do that.

It was unfortunate, looking back, that I didn't spend more time in country-level work. Perhaps there is even a general lesson. I think more UN people might spend more time in individual countries. I am not speaking of country representatives, because that is the strength of UNICEF, UNDP, and a few agencies where people are really installed for four or five years in developing countries. But many of the people in New York, or in Paris, or in Geneva, actually have too little such immersion.

TGW: You mentioned Jim Grant already on numerous occasions, and you ended up contributing to the book about him that came out last year or the year before. You mentioned earlier that at least one quality was being a pest, in terms of his leadership. What else made the man tick, and what made him such an effective international presence?

RJ: Well, a lot of qualities. First, experience—he was not new to development. He had spent his whole life in development and had been born in China. His father and grandfather had

both worked in China and his father in India, as well. But the real qualities that made him such an important leader for UNICEF, and indeed in many ways an international leader of the 1980s and early 1990s, was his extraordinary vision that combined professional understanding and the ability of a leader to focus on a limited number of key issues and to then to promote them with such dynamism and persistence. Initially, Jim was not a very good public speaker. He could be very American in some senses of that—oversimplifying or using a bit too many Americanisms. There was indeed an initial reaction against him in UNICEF for several years, that he was always saying, “We need to change gears. We need to do more with less”—lots of these metaphors that seem too much like clichés and rather American clichés.

But gradually, his determination, his wholehearted focus on children, his realization that all sorts of people actually feel deeply for children and could be made to support causes for children in a way that reached down to the depths of humanity. Jim really tapped into that wonderfully and then developed a very operational agenda. Sometimes, when he would promote the specifics of simple action, such as immunizing all children or promoting oral rehydration to tackle diarrhea and the several millions deaths a year of young children from dehydration from diarrhea—sometimes when Jim would do that, people would say, “Does he really believe that development is a matter of these specifics?” Well, one of the attractions of Jim was that he did have this depth and range in development. So if he was taken on by UNICEF staff, or journalists, or others, he could always set the specifics of what he was promoting at the time and UNICEF was doing at the time in the context of much broader issues related to economic and social development and the ending of injustice.

Those were, I think, the obvious but very visible qualities. He wasn’t a religious man, but he was very skillful in not parading his lack of deep religious conviction. Indeed, he would

be more likely to refer to his grandfather being a Christian missionary in China. And he was fluent in Chinese, so he would use that, of course, with China. Jim was, I think, the most skillful promoter I've ever met, both in one-on-one conversation and persuasion, and in presenting the case, in terms of the interests and needs and concerns of the person he was talking to. In that, I am particularly focusing on some of his international persuasion. He would never turn up in a country, or visit a head-of-state or minister of health without having a very clear sense of what were the two or three things he wanted to persuade that person to do for children in the country.

He wasn't concerned with UNICEF as such; he was concerned with the bigger cause. That just made donors love him ever more, and no doubt he was perfectly conscious of that. So UNICEF's resources increased three or four times, from \$250 million to about \$1 billion over his period as executive-director. He genuinely and deeply was concerned with the cause of children and development. He taught me that when you are meeting with a head-of-state or senior official, have two or three specifics that are within the power of the person you are talking to do; find out how to present them best to the person; and don't let go.

Jim had this quality of persistence and an organized quality. Jim would have a whole succession of meetings—four, five, six—in a visit to a country. He might only be there a day or two. But before he climbed aboard the plane to leave, he had got the UNICEF representative to draft letters to the all the key people he had met from the head-of-state down. In these letters, Jim summarized not only what Jim had said, but with a very skillful use of language what the head of state had committed himself to do in response. That letter, of course, became something for the representative to build on, the representative to follow up, the representative to show around to other people as necessary.

While I am on the theme, Jim also was a perfectionist in building on people's own pride and concern for their own country. Jim showed me that without any falsification of statistics, you could almost always find some two or three characteristics of any country that could be used to show how that country was making progress for children, as well as a need for more action. So Jim always combined his messages of challenge with a message of hope. For example, he would often say to a head-of-state or otherwise, "Do you realize, Mr. President, that your country is the one that over the last five years has made most progress in this region in this respect, in expanding immunization or in putting more resources for children or whatever?" And of course you have a very large set of potential data to draw from, and Jim was a master of making sure the data were available. We improved the statistics available in headquarters on children worldwide. Jim could do that.

I'll give you another example of Jim at his best. Oral rehydration therapy (ORT) is based on a simple salt/sugar solution, packets of which were made to a WHO formula in lots of modest pharmaceutical operations around the world. Indeed, there were about 200 places where countries would manufacture ORS (oral rehydration salts). Jim had samples from all 200 places all lined up and carefully filed in his office. I remember when an Italian aid minister came to visit, and Jim was saying, "Do you realize that for 10 cents one can save a child's life if we have enough oral rehydration salts?" Jim at that point would take out a packet and hold it up, a bit like a conjuror holding up a playing card and just making sure he got the attention of the person, and say, "This is the packet." Then he would flick it over on the table and it would land there, but upside-down, so where the packet had been manufactured was just visible. Jim, like a good conjuror, was perfectly aware that the packet had been manufactured either in the hometown of the person he was talking to, or at least near enough so the person would recognize the place.

Jim would go on talking and suddenly you would see the person say, “Do you realize, Mr. Grant, this packet is actually manufactured in a town ten miles from where I live?” At that point, there was a slight deceit in Jim Grant’s aside, as he would look surprised, like a good magician. Anyway, that was part of Jim’s skills in persuading all sorts of people to do much more for children, building on a latent concern for children that he and I believed we all have built into us from our evolutionary background, but also mobilizing people, resources, for the cause for children.

I have one more point which I think is very relevant. I thought I would come to UNICEF with an academic’s concern for frank speaking about the political conflicts in development, that some countries, some heads-of-state, some regimes are more concerned with amassing money and resources for themselves than they are for development. First, I was impressed in UNICEF that my colleagues were just as aware as I was of such matters. It wasn’t some wonderful frankness of the academic world or of IDS Sussex. It was common to people who are serious about development. And my UNICEF colleagues were taking account of that. But I learned that the academic world often leaps to an excessively negative conclusion: “There is no hope if you are working in a country like Haiti or some other dictatorship.” Jim and UNICEF showed me that there were opportunities for doing things, particularly for children, even in extremely difficult country circumstances. You certainly shouldn’t just hand over resources in a way that could be distorted and seized for corrupt purposes, but you could mobilize and play on, indeed, the willingness of even relatively nasty politicians to do things for their own children that we judged to be helpful.

The only case, in fact, where UNICEF found corruption so severe that we couldn’t give any money to the government at all was Haiti in the mid-1980s. UNICEF just worked with non-

governmental organizations and channeled all our resources through NGOs. Even then, that didn't prevent us from trying to get Jean-Claude Duvalier to indicate some support for children, but he was such a corrupt, and in some ways deadly, dictator that we were very careful to only go a limited way in using him.

TGW: That is a fascinating list of qualities. I'm not sure how many other people have them. But there was one I was surprised that you didn't mention. Jim Grant went to UNICEF from ODC, which was responsible for producing a large number of analytical reports. What kind of expectations did he have of the staff? What was the intellectual atmosphere, if that is not too vague a notion, within the staff in terms of coming up with new ideas? We will spend a few minutes later on *Adjustment With a Human Face*, but what was the sort of internal academic or intellectual atmosphere within the institution of UNICEF at that time?

RJ: I think pretty weak, is the short answer. Jim came in, as you rightly say, from ODC, which he had founded. Before that he worked as an assistant administrator in USAID. So he was part an operational person and part an analyst. When he came into UNICEF, he initially wanted to set up a research department. Indeed, he went to the board, I think in 1981, with a proposal that "UNICEF needs a brain." Governments on the board replied: "No, UNICEF didn't need a brain." That would be my example of how governments often get themselves in a terrible twist. They love an organization for some quality—say UNICEF's operational practicalities on the ground—and then see the ideal that it needed to have a planning unit or even a research unit as somehow in contradiction with that.

There are too many people who feel that research, intellectual work, careful analysis is somehow against practical effectiveness on the ground, as opposed to being a key step towards it. Perhaps this is less felt today than it was felt then. But still, UNICEF was known for and had

an ethos internally, of being “doers.” This came up even with WHO, for example. The WHO over the years had seen themselves as not only the health organization of the world, which they were and are, but somehow having a monopoly of health expertise. They were the ones to transfer this expertise to UNICEF, and UNICEF, like little birds in the nest with open mouths were just waiting to receive the mixture and then to fly away using it.

In fact, early on, there was a JCHP, a Joint Committee on Health Policy—established to make sure that UNICEF always followed good health advice and principles laid down by WHO. But in the 1980s, when it became clear that UNICEF had developed a great deal of field experience, and more and more capacity to articulate it, we changed the terms of reference of the JCHP. Health expertise and medical expertise in a narrow sense came from WHO, but a lot of the application and experience for implementing this came from UNICEF. So the committee operated to share experience between the two agencies on a comparable and equal basis.

TGW: Before I forget, I just wanted to have you tease out a little bit more your observations about the quality of the people in UNICEF and perhaps elsewhere in the system—you’ve mentioned WHO and FAO. They certainly are multinational staffs. Presumably there are a lot of advantages, but there may be some disadvantages which other people, and perhaps even you, have pointed out. I just wondered what, after all these years, and looking back, what would be your generalizations about the people who worked for you, or for whom you worked over those periods of time?

RJ: I think the points I’ve been emphasizing contrast somewhat with what often are exaggerated explanations of people about weaknesses of UN staff. For example, a lot of times people say, “Well, it’s inevitable the UN has a lot of poor staff because of the quota system.” That was not our experience in UNICEF. There was no difficulty, in my view, in broadly

following some sort of quota, some sort of concern for country or regional balance, and ending up with top quality people. The key point was not to accept from outside, really at all, nominations from particular governments to employ particular people. And we certainly suffered that pressure on occasion. Initially, before I joined the UN, I thought those pressures came from developing countries. My experience in UNICEF was almost as high as nine times out of ten it was industrial countries, donor countries to UNICEF, that would have some favored person that they wanted us to employ, some “suggestions.”

When the Italian government gave UNICEF an additional grant of \$100 million in the early 1980s, they expected us to take on a lot more Italians and gave us lists. It is worth perhaps explaining the process, briefly. UNICEF had long adopted the principle that half the staff should be from industrial countries, the donor countries, and the other half, a reasonable balance, from developing countries. And if a donor gave a big increase in contributions and sustained it over the years, they were thus entitled to more people from their country. However, moving to that higher proportion, we insisted, should be through normal recruitment processes. When we were seeking health workers, or engineers, or whatever, we might send a recruitment mission to Italy or to some other country to see if we could find people fully qualified with relevant experience. But that’s a very different process from accepting nominations. It takes a little longer. It might take a year or two, but it does ensure that a UN agency can insist on quality.

The other point that was critical and very important for Jim’s leadership was that, in terms of the senior appointments in UNICEF, by which I am meaning particularly the appointment of the country representatives—there were sixty or eighty countries—Jim insisted on being personally involved in each of these appointments. Of all the qualities we looked for, experience in UNICEF already was a critical one. Jim above all wanted commitment and

capacity to get things done—commitment to the goals of the child survival development revolution, a sense of real focus, and focus, let's be honest, on Jim's own leadership, but also the capacity to get done.

Jim was a great believer in the American quality, the “can-do” person. Sometimes those of us who were part of the senior staff committee which made these appointments would remonstrate with Jim that a quiet Burmese or someone else from an Asian culture, might have a very calm, external personality, but actually have all those qualities of determination and an ability to get done the things that Jim looked for.

So the process was one that, perhaps in the early years, took a little bit of debate behind the scenes, though none of us disputed Jim's determination to get people who could accomplish and lead. I think that was an important part of UNICEF's pursuit of the goals of child survival and development in the 1980s, and contrasted for example with UNDP. At that time, the UNDP process had much more emphasis on getting nationality representation—sometimes even people who had been ambassadors or who had distinguished country representative experience, but had very little knowledge of the UN system. We gave a lot of weight to UNICEF field experience, which was necessary because the ability to use the capacities and opportunities that country work presented depended a lot on experience, which was difficult to acquire it in just a few months.

TGW: Actually, from the tone of your comments and from things I've read, you feel that UNICEF is different from at least a lot of UN agencies. I wondered if you could tell me a little bit about what you mean by—you might have used the term—“exceptionalism,” which is alas one that I also use to describe the United States. So there are plusses and minuses in that? What made UNICEF different, and could those qualities be replicated elsewhere in the system? You've already mentioned that maybe having people spend much more time in the field would

be a plus. Certainly Brian Urquhart emphasizes that, and Margaret Joan Anstee as well. What made UNICEF different? And could the positive aspects be replicable?

RJ: I think one positive example might be from the response to children's needs in the First World War. The people involved in creating Save the Children said, "Children's needs cannot wait. The ethic of concern for children has to go far beyond national boundaries." The same spirit also greatly influences UNICEF, I think, in today's broader context. Concern for children raises issues of commitment, ethics, willingness to sacrifice, even to the point of one's life, for the sake of children. That goes beyond what a lot of people in the UN, particularly in the more formal processes of international negotiation or diplomacy, have thought.

Coming more specifically to UNICEF, the experience of UNICEF in its first few years was very important when it was providing support for children at the end of the Second World War. That built up a second feature of UNICEF, which was the mobilization of ordinary contributions from people, as opposed to governments. UNICEF's greeting-card revenue, the contributions from people in the countries which received support for their own children at the end of the Second World War, has built up a sense of commitment and concern for UNICEF and awareness of UNICEF. In the United States, support for UNICEF owes much to the "trick-or-treat" campaigns.

So there was always this popular support, and this still remains. There is also very high-visibility. I remember one survey which showed 92 percent positive name recognition in Europe for UNICEF, only 5 percent of it negative. These were high figures even for Europe, in contrast to the rest of UNICEF.

Then there was this ethic for children. At the end of the World Summit for Children in 1990, we referred to the ethic as the "First Call for Children." This is the commitment that in

good times and even more in bad times, children, because of their vulnerability and need, and the fact that their needs cannot wait, deserve a first call, and that that is indeed built into the culture of humanity in all situations except some of the most terrible situations of famine and otherwise. In a few cases, anthropologists point out, these traditional priorities for children get distorted.

There are a few more qualities of UNICEF. One came from Maurice Pate, UNICEF's first executive-director. He would refer to UNICEF being a handful of people with a small bag of money. He would use that to argue both that UNICEF needed to use its resources very creatively and sparingly, so we were never in the business of putting large amounts of money into particular projects. And it influenced even the personal ethic of UNICEF staff members of that time. If some staff member wanted to go on a training course, Maurice Pate would look doubtfully at them and say, "Is it really necessary?" If they would say, "I will learn something so important, it's alright," he would say, "So shall we pay your airfare and you will cover your own costs there, or will you pay your airfare and we will cover your costs." So this was always there. I don't want to say that it has fully survived, but somewhat, and it is very precious.

Then, in the 1960s, UNICEF realized that though it was making strong progress in providing support for country actions for children, it felt it wasn't really getting across children's needs in national planning. This led Dick Heyward, who was then the deputy-executive-director and a very creative person, to say, "We must get some of the world's best economists involved to advise UNICEF on how children's issues can be inserted into the national economic planning processes of countries." This was 1964! They held a conference at Bellagio. Jan Tinbergen was invited. Hans Singer was invited, along with V.K.R.V. Rao from India and the distinguished demographer from France, Alfred Sauvy. They spent a week working out how children's issues

could be brought into national planning. This led a few years later to UNICEF, in 1972, institutionalizing the country program process for its own procedures at country level.

This is worth emphasizing because my understanding is that the country program process only crept into some other UN field agencies in the 1990s. The UNICEF process is still very different from a World Bank process or a UNDP process. First, it consists of an analysis with people in the country—academics or government—of what were the problems of children in the country. Second, after six months of a very careful review, it asks what does the country need to do about those problems? Not what would UNICEF do, but what did the country need to do? Then thirdly, and only as a third and final stage, perhaps a year or a year-and-a-half afterwards, a review of what could UNICEF with \$1 million, \$2 million, \$3 million do to help initiate that second process of speeding up country-level action by governments or by non-government groups or otherwise.

So the UNICEF approach was intrinsically very professional. It was a mobilizing approach for the country to give more attention to children than would otherwise have been the case. Secondly, it was a catalytic approach in the sense of using UNICEF resources not directly to support projects but catalytically to encourage or enable or support national action for children. Finally, UNICEF moved, even by the mid-1960s, to having more than half of its staff living full-time in developing countries—more than they had in New York or Geneva or in any of its other headquarters. That changed the center of gravity and the ethos of UNICEF. By the 1980s, 84% of its staff lived full-time in developing countries. There was always a strong suspicion of people like myself, coming from New York, of what did we really know? You had to learn about UNICEF by being in the field.

I realize there is in fact another very important point, and I think a difference at least with all other parts of the UN. It goes back to the Save the Children example. UNICEF believed that response to the needs of children was a priority that took precedence above normal diplomacy, which of course is an important guiding factor in the UN. So from early days, UNICEF believed that it did not need to get country permission to operate in a country in difficult or controversial circumstances. It believed that UNICEF's mandate for the world's children meant that it could violate rules of national sovereignty.

Now those are strong words. We would never express it as violating national sovereignty, but that is in fact what we were doing in a number of cases and were highly conscious of doing. A pragmatic interpretation of that took place, for example in southern Sudan. We would provide support from Kenya or from Uganda into southern Sudan in support of children who might be under attack from the government in the North. We would never seek approval from Khartoum for this. However, as on one occasion, if Khartoum strongly objected to what we were doing, we would remonstrate quietly with them. And if they insisted, we would stop. I think we did stop our cross-border operations once for two months or so, and then we started again.

To me the significance of this is not only the UNICEF experience. It shows to me the value for the UN of having a diversity of institutions and approaches that are not perfectly coordinated and in some sense—dare I use these dangerous words?—not fully or under the direct instructions of the Secretary-General or in ways that would make him accountable for these activities. I think this dimension of diversity in the UN system is one that people who press for perfect coordination ignore. I don't think one should sacrifice all these points for the sake of a

more effective, more coherent, international system. If one literally means perfect coordination, you would lose a lot of the strengths, of which this is simply one rather creative example.

TGW: Were you looking directly at me when you were talking about perfect coordination?

RJ: It does link to *Responsibility to Protect*, the right to intervene. I would argue that UNICEF has been expressing that right to intervene for a long time.

TGW: Usually, when one mentions the word “coordination,” eyes glaze over, and people fall asleep. But you actually chaired or participated in a number of inter-agency committees. And you have just now articulated a rather loosey-goosey interpretation of coordination. What are the obstacles to closer collaboration? There may be a lot of fruits from letting all the flowers bloom, but there also are clearly downsides—the rise of “fiefdoms” and all the other words that apply to these individual silos that try to protect their turf from someone else. What was your experience in this committee? Were people there because they really wanted to coordinate, or did they really want to protect their turf? I’d like to just tease out a little more this notion of coordination.

RJ: I think the obstacles are fairly well-known, and they’re real. There certainly are the obstacles of fiefdom, not merely the personal ambitions of leaders of different UN agencies but different structures. The specialized agencies have their own directors-general elected by separate boards, and the boards, no matter what people like to say or see, are often totally uncoordinated in terms of the national representatives from, say Britain, operating in FAO or WHO or the UN in New York or the UNICEF Board. Perhaps Britain has one of the more positive examples recently that has tried to get more coordination, but it is still far from perfect.

So there are those structural differences behind the fiefdoms. Let me stick to the obvious obstacles. Over the years, differences in procedures and even accounting systems have grown up and were often pressed again by the different governing bodies. Many of the differences in accounting systems, in my view, are ultimately unnecessary, although the differences in program procedures, for the reasons I've just stressed, sometimes reflect real differences and improvements, such as those created by the UNICEF program process in the early 1970s. UNICEF was just ahead of other agencies. There are times when we were pressed to coordinate our program process. Frankly, UNICEF would say, "If others want to learn the lessons of programming at country-level rather than from New York or Rome or wherever, we would be glad to share our experience. But otherwise we were fighting like mad not to give up our program process because we thought it was the Rolls Royce or Cadillac of the process compared with a Ford T-jalopy. And remember, UNICEF's program process related closely to the country context and country priorities. We never had the problem of trying to get countries to "take ownership" or adopt our view of structural adjustment.

So to some extent, even coordination of financial processes came under that heading. For example, in the 1980s, UNICEF was acknowledged as being much quicker off the mark in responding to emergencies than most of the other parts of the UN. That was because we had given our country rep authority to reprogram up to \$50,000 of country-level resources under his own or her own authority. So the UN agencies would meet with the governments after an earthquake or some other disaster, and the UNICEF rep would immediately say, "Right, we'll provide the support right now, Mr. Minister, or Mr. Prime Minister." At that time, it was taking many other UN agencies two weeks if not more to get permission from their headquarters. Again, it was very difficult for us to say we should abandon decentralization in order to have

common procedures, even though some donors argued that they would sooner slow down UNICEF 10 percent in order to move as a convoy with the rest of the ships of the UN system.

This experience I'm talking about was more in the 1980s and the early 1990s, when I was in UNICEF. What I understand today is that the UN system has moved on, that there has been some movement towards common procedures. Certainly the idea of a UN House has been, even though it has cost some of the UN agencies more, because they had previously had free premises. Now they have had to rent or purchase common premises. Now I am told, just this last week, that because of security threats, the whole policy of putting all the UN in one building together is now under question. Are common premises actually sensible from a security point of view, especially when some international agencies—like the IMF, the Bank or UNHCR—attract opposition or controversy much more than others?

But I am actually making less qualifications than saying that I think UN agencies and funds have now seen that governments as a whole want the UN to work more closely together, even if it does mean a sacrifice of some elements. And certainly UNICEF seems to be very much a part of that process. But I would hope that in doing that, attention will be paid to the important differences that have been created and carefully look at those and not to sacrifice the bits that really represent creative and positive features for the sake of a narrow bureaucratic uniformity.

TGW: The country programming approach, which was highlighted in the Jackson report as a kind of model for the UN system, provides me with a chance to ask for a point of information. Did he draw on UNICEF, or was this something else he had in mind?

RJ: I don't think he drew much on it. After all, the Jackson report was 1969, and the UNICEF country program approach, in the form I described, came in 1972. This said, Robert

Jackson did have a good deal of experience of UNICEF and a lot of admiration for some of the qualities of its hands-on country level operation, the “get on and do it” part of UNICEF, particularly in emergencies and humanitarian action. Jackson wrote a very laudatory foreword to the first history of UNICEF issued in the 1980s. I might ask Margaret Joan Anstee how much, in their proposals for a UNDP-led process, they really went into these issues.

Certainly UNICEF treated the Jackson report in the aspect of recommending a single UN system, including a common funding, as a recipe for death. In the 1970s, and every so often, this proposal came up again, most recently really in 1997, when Maurice Strong proposed that all the UN agencies should be put much more closely together. UNICEF objected. Maurice replied, “I’m not talking about a single set of policies under a single organization, but a bit, as with General Motors, you can have different model cars produced by a single organization.” UNICEF was under great pressure to accept that, including pressure from Kofi Annan. But in the end, Carol Bellamy, the executive-director of UNICEF, came out against it with the full support of the UNICEF board, arguing that it would sacrifice many of the key features of UNICEF, including its funding. UNICEF was always concerned that if you tried to mobilize the \$300 million, now \$500 million, a year from ordinary people for the UN, you wouldn’t get the same response as mobilizing it for children and UNICEF.

TGW: Earlier you briefly alluded to, and I just wanted to spend a moment on it now, the World Summit for Children. We’ve looked at this vehicle of gathering together groups of people for global ad hoc conferences. At the time, this was going to be the mother of all global ad hoc conferences. What made that work? After all, the convention was signed in rapid time. Was it, once again, that children are different from intellectual property or industrial development?

They do seem much more concrete, much more pressing, although there are particular aspects of the UNICEF organization, of leading itself, that contributed to its success.

RJ: I think it was much more careful organization, the vision of Jim, the specific mobilization of a core of governments that made it happen, much less the natural feeling of ethics, positive feeling for children, although I wouldn't say that had no role. Let me set this a little in context. First, in the mid-1980s, Jim thought and led UNICEF to say that if we want to get a major acceleration of immunization and these actions in health for children, we've got to reach above ministers of health. Remember, ministers of health are usually in the bottom quartile of serious politicians in a country.

So Jim was realizing that we needed to bring these issues and get heads of state involved. So in the mid-1980s, UNICEF held a meeting for a handful of prime ministers to mobilize their support for children and actions over the 1980s. I think it was six heads of state who came—Canada, Bangladesh, perhaps Egypt. I forget who else came. Then, with this mobilization at country-regional level, in the mid-1980s Jim and Mike Shower—Jim's speechwriter and key support figure in the front office—got the idea of let's have a summit for children. Since then, the UN has had so many summits that one needs to remember the difficulties in holding the very first in 1990. First, the UN argued that it couldn't be a UN summit. They kept that position until after the summit was held. They said that according to the rules of the Charter that it is not possible to have a meeting in which particular priority is given to the participation of heads of state. All you can do is invite governments to be represented, after which governments alone can choose whether they will send a minister, a head of state, a diplomat, or someone else.

So the UN Summit for Children was not, in fact, a UN meeting. It was held at the UN, but it was held as an invitation of six heads of state—Sweden, Canada, Egypt, Bangladesh, Mali, Mexico—who in their personal capacities invited their peer heads of state to participate. I could go on with the obstacles presented. There were people arguing in the UN that the layout of the ECOSOC chamber, where the meeting was to held, could not be changed. There were endless things. The New York police argued that all participants had to be in the building by 7:00 A.M. if President [George H.W.] Bush was going to attend, because they had to guarantee his security. Jim finessed that one brilliantly. That was a real issue. Jim said, “We will serve coffee for heads of state from 7:00 A.M.” And he persuaded Mrs. Thatcher to come for coffee, and all the other heads of state interested in meeting Mrs. Thatcher could come.

So there were endless points of detail over organization that went into creating the summit. People were initially saying perhaps only a dozen heads of state would come. Indeed, this became such a point of tension as to how many heads of state one should provide for that I moved to running a little sweepstakes for the planners. It was a way of consciously defusing the conflict that arose between the cynics and Jim Grant as to who would come and how many. Anyone was allowed to put \$1 into the sweepstake and make their bid on a little piece of paper which was given privately to me. And Jim was the one who had the highest bid as to the number who would come. He estimated fifty-three people would come to the summit. In the end, of course, seventy-one came. Everyone else estimated less than fifty-three.

But the question then was how would we allow time for however many came to speak? It was said that no head of state could be given less than ten or fifteen minutes, and certainly not be told a maximum time limit. By then, two or three weeks before the meeting, it was clear that quite a large number were coming. So again, we had to devise a process whereby four major

topics would be introduced during the day, each by two heads of state that were given five minutes, and then there would be four discussants for four minutes, and then others could speak up to three minutes. The whole thing passed off brilliantly, so much so that summits then became commonplace over the 1990s. And, of course, we're expecting 170 for the forthcoming summit this September (2005).

But more seriously—not that the above issues were not serious enough—but more seriously, the organization, the wish to mobilize governments and leaders to undertake the commitments of the summit document, was very, very carefully organized, partly by the core of governments that were really deeply committed themselves and partly by, of course, a core in the secretariat of UNICEF. All of this was building on the experience that we had lived through in the 1980s of dramatic acceleration of immunization and other actions reducing child mortality. We already had evidence that child mortality was coming down—could be brought down—in spite of the “lost decade for development” in Latin America and Africa. UNICEF had identified a way to move from international commitments to goals and other declarations, to country-by-county action. We had learnt the need to monitor progress year-by-year and to use the results of that monitoring to mobilize more action country-by-country and to use the UNICEF field system and UNICEF resources for that. This was a very heady and important mixture that combined on the one hand political commitment of governments, and on the other social mobilization of churches, nongovernmental groups, and UNICEF resources. For example, if a country ran short of resources from either its own resources or from its own UNICEF country program, we had created a small global fund—only a matter of \$12 million or perhaps \$20 million at UNICEF headquarters—that could be applied to maintain momentum of the process.

We had moved from planning as a rather detached, long-term process, to more like planning in a military operation in which you needed to be ready to respond to the unexpected. Well, all of that was drawn on in the process of putting together the summit and in mobilizing further commitments for goals in the 1990s. Another small example comes to mind. Remember, the goals of the 1980s for child survival all referred to achievements by 1990. UNICEF said it would be possible to tell in 1990 where we were even with an acceleration of monitoring statistical effort. You have to wait a year or so before most countries have produced all the data. So UNICEF has produced its report on the 1980s in 1991, and what it has achieved for children—this big report *Progress for Children* on the 1990s—in 2001. Moreover, because of 9/11, the conference reporting on progress in the 1990s had to be postponed to 2002.

So that's an example of taking monitoring and statistics seriously. And perhaps while I'm at it, the statistical effort in collecting the data on these various goal-focused items in UNICEF involved a whole new data collection system. We developed the MICS, the multi-indicator cluster surveys, which were very low-cost—\$2 or \$3 or \$4 or \$5 per respondent—which was lower by an order of magnitude than the typical global surveys that DHS or the World Bank was supporting, which were costing millions. We did that in part by using trainee doctors and nurses as the data collection people, as students on vacation. We were very conscious that that was also a way of helping medical health students get real-life experience of the reality of what was going on in rural communities or in urban slums. It is this sort of creative element that kept breaking the mold with UNICEF, but also which motivated the creativity and a very serious element of organization behind the summit in 1990.

TGW: I want to move backwards for a moment. We have written about this elsewhere, and you have paid a lot of attention to the arrival of Reagan and Thatcher and what this meant to

the development enterprise. I presume that this had something to do with UNICEF's reaction, in terms of *Adjustment With a Human Face*. But I wondered whether you could just depict the origins of the idea, of the project, and what your role was—and also Andrea Cornia and Frances Stewart's role. This was, after all, a widely-cited notion. I would just like to hear that story from you.

RJ: I have written in detail about it in an article in *World Development* published in December 1991, because I thought it was important to set down the story, along with Rolf van der Hoeven, Andrea Cornia, Frances Stewart and some others. We reflected on the various aspects of putting together *Adjustment With a Human Face*. The first element was in 1983, when a dozen or so of us, including Andrea Cornia, did a study on the impact of world recession on children, which at that time seemed to be the main problem. That also was published, and showed that often children were suffering worse than others, disproportionately, from the recession, the repercussions of the debt crisis, and other economic difficulties. This was before we really knew what was happening with adjustment.

That influenced our thinking. Then, in the ACC, the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination, which met two or three times a year, the World Bank, in the form of Tom Claussen, and Jacques de la Rosière, the head of the IMF, would participate. The state of the world economy would be reported on by the Bank and the Fund. Different UN agencies would take the chance to comment, usually with a banality that beggars belief unless you have been one of the people participating.

Jim, of course, was not in that group. Jim was always present but he was not in the group of banality. I was usually there behind him. We had no prepared text, which made for a key difference between UNICEF's response and many of the heads of UN agencies. Jim would

respond to what was being said by the Bank, but always he focused on children. He would be drawing attention to the likely impact on children and sometimes, drawing on the UNICEF study on the impact of the world's recession on children, he spoke about the additional needs consequent of the problem of recession. Increasingly, in later meetings, he spoke about UNICEF's suspicions as to the impact of the nature of the adjustment programs that were being adopted at the time with no concern for education or health, let alone other priority issues, such as nutrition or other dimensions of human concern.

It was actually de la Rosière, the managing director of the IMF, who responded, in 1984, by saying to Jim: "Why don't you come down to Washington and we'll talk about this? Bring a couple of people." So Jim Grant, myself, and Andrea Cornia went down. Probably it was 1984 by then. We thought we should take a paper, so with the help of Gerry Helleiner—we paid him, I think it was, \$75 a day to help us draft a paper—we spent two days only drafting the paper. We didn't need more. He paid his own airfare. So for all of \$150—or was it \$300—we had a paper that was very well-constructed. Gerry was a clever guy.

We outlined eight steps that IMF could take, if it was actually concerned with children in the making of adjustment policies. They went from step one, which was nothing more than M. de la Rosière saying, "To protect the situation of children is obviously an important issue." The eighth step, at the other extreme, was if IMF was really to take account of children's needs in all sorts of ways in the framing of adjustment and in the nature of the support they provided. And there was a spread of options in between. This paper was also published in *World Development* in December 1991.

So we went to Washington. I remember saying to Jim and Andrea, as we went into the meeting, that this was a bit like David must have felt approaching Goliath—except we had the

stone of child conscience, let's make sure we aim it carefully. We entered the director's very grand office. The IMF director sits there in the center of a very large room indeed, which goes up in tiers, like the main ballroom in one of the ocean liners. The center of the tier above where the sofa and his desk sit went up three floors. But outside this it rises only two floors, and in the distant parts of the room the ceiling comes down to a normal height. So the IMF director's office is appropriately intimidating.

De la Rosière was there with two or three other persons, including his deputy-managing director, and a young fellow, of course, keeping notes. The three of us were there. I was a little put off initially because Jim did his usual thing, which is to make quite a long lecture—perhaps half an hour—on how you can save a child's life with a 10 cent packet and he threw the packet onto the desk. I was slightly waiting for Jim to pause and say, "Now, perhaps Richard should be allowed to speak about a more human-focused adjustment." We hadn't formulated the idea of *Adjustment With a Human Face* by then, but we knew what we were about.

Probably Jim's introduction, though a little long, was valuable because it started the meeting with a very specific and practical focus on what could be done for children. It showed that UNICEF was concerned with practical action, and it showed that UNICEF was concerned with even 10 cent-a-time action. And of course, the master, Jim, had put it in ways that was mostly talking about things that that the managing director had never, ever heard of before. So he showed a certain fascination.

Then I had had my chance. I summarized our paper, the approach and how you could and should take account of children and people in general in the adjustment process. As I recall, we had plenty of time. The whole meeting lasted about three hours. It was not over-rushed, and we had a good chance to put the case. Monsieur de la Rosière did ask one very good question,

which we were not prepared for: “Give me an example of a country that has done this sort of adjustment.” I told you that I am not religious, but somehow the right thought came into my mind in response to that question. It was totally unexpected. My answer was, “Britain, during the Second World War.” This was actually a very relevant answer in the sense that British policy in the Second World War, in total contrast to the First World War, was to realize that the protection of the nutritional status of the British population as a whole was a vital component of being able to fight the war.

This led [Winston] Churchill to institute a major set of policies focused on protecting the nutritional status of the British population. And indeed, at the end of the Second World War, the nutritional status of the British population was higher than ever before in history because good nutrition had really spread to the whole population. And this had been done at a time when imports had had to be enormously cut back because of the whole shipping problem. The whole of the British industry had had also been shifted to the war effort, so cutting resources in agriculture. And cutting all of this had to be done very rapidly, because people had thought that the war was not actually going to last very long, eighteen months or so, even though it did last as long as it did—five years.

The example was a very relevant one, because it did show that a more human-focused adjustment was possible, even during the exigencies of a major war effort. One of the other interesting points about that example is that it answers so often what does not get answered in development, which is, “Suppose these problems were happening to your donor countries, or industrial countries, what would you do?” And the answer was, “Well, we did it. So why not also in developing countries?”

Anyway, the whole story of *Adjustment With a Human Face* is told in these other sources, but as you ask about the origins, that was the origin. Interestingly, the IMF did some sort of follow-up in the sense that there were follow-up meetings, and they suggested initially that UNICEF work with the IMF in four countries, in order to work together with the country and see how children's issues could be incorporated in adjustment.

In the end, the four countries, and the IMF itself, were not keen to do that with UNICEF. They wanted to retain the monopoly of their policy, and actually we were relieved. We, on reflection, did not want to get tarnished with the IMF brush—or let's change the metaphor—the heavy-handed approach of the IMF. And IMF would not have brought us into the negotiations.

So what it led to was independent studies by UNICEF in Sri Lanka and Ghana. We moved to the same countries that the IMF had originally suggested, though in the end two of them rather than four. UNICEF did studies with government on what in principle would attention to children involve. We also did a number of other studies.

To finish the story, I was asked to give the Barbara Ward lecture in SID in July 1985, after someone had dropped out. So I was wheeled in, but with time to prepare. I wrote the address, dedicated it very much to Barbara, and called it *Adjustment with a Human Face*.

It did make quite an impression in SID, because adjustment was the issue of the decade. The impact was enhanced because Alan Berg, very creative nutritionist of the World Bank, took the speech and kindly circulated it in quite a large number of copies throughout the World Bank. So that promoted the ideas. Afterwards, of course, with Frances Stewart and Andrea Cornia, UNICEF wrote the book *Adjustment With a Human Face* and undertook a number of country case-studies. I think there were ten in volume two. So the whole time we were building not only ideas and principles for an approach to adjustment, but drawing on country experience.

I may relate it to the structuralism of economic analysis that again I have spoken about earlier, emphasizing that not every country is the same. You need to have a set of policies that are adjusted structurally to the specifics of countries, which of course the Bank never opposed in principle. But one of the criticisms of the 1980s was that the Bank and the IMF promoted cookie-cutter adjustment processes that were essentially the same for all countries. The Bank and the IMF endlessly denied this, but I think now they would admit that unfortunately adjustment policies, even without the human face, were far too mechanically applied.

TGW: So Dudley would have been happy with that result?

RJ: Dudley, I think, would have been very happy with the approach and the priorities of *Adjustment with a Human Face*, even though in the earlier 1983 study on the impact of world recession on children he had been unwilling to join the group in Cornell, where we drew on a dozen country case studies. In fact, he didn't join and he died the year afterwards. So we dedicated that set of studies to Dudley. I don't think actually he would have been unhappy with our adjustment analysis. I think he would have respected the efforts over the 1980s of UNICEF in these ways.

TGW: You wrote that the ideas were readily accepted by the Bank and the Fund. How do you explain that? That power of the idea? The embarrassment that children were suffering, this vulnerable group, from cookie-cutters? How do you explain why they were ready to take this idea and do something with it?

RJ: I don't think they were ready. I don't think I quite said that.

TGW: You wrote that "One of the reasons why *Adjustment With a Human Face* was readily accepted by the Bank and the Fund was that it was backed by Jim in UNICEF."

RJ: Well, it all depends on what you mean by “readily accepted.” Basically, I think it was accepted rhetorically and in words. Indeed, de la Rosière did make a speech to that effect in ECOSOC in 1986, but it was carefully crafted. It is interesting that the IMF sent me the speech in draft, or at least key sections, and asked if I wanted to modify it in any way, which does say something about the standing of UNICEF, for whatever reasons.

I think the subsequent changes in policy of the Bank and the IMF need to be treated separately. I believe that over the 1980s, the Bank did not change very much. It continued mainstream adjustment policies with a certain amount of change in rhetoric, with a certain amount of attention to education and health, but not actually that much attention to the broad policies until [James] Wolfensohn really joined in 1995. There is an interesting quote which we both remember from the study by John and Richard Tøye, which said that really until 1989, the imperatives of adjustment to deal with financial instability in the industrial countries was a dominant factor of industrial country policy. So I think there was only limited willingness to see the process of adjustment in developing countries become more flexible until the late 1980s.

By the time Wolfensohn came in, the Bank was under a lot more criticism. *Adjustment With a Human Face* had been emphasized. It challenged them much more. Individual Bank people were making more—and there was more diversity.

My belief of IMF is that the rhetoric has changed. The rhetoric changed considerably with Michel Camdessus, but I personally believe the policies even to this day have changed only in very, very limited ways, if at all. The core of macroeconomic adjustment or rectitude in economic and financial policies still is based, in my view, too narrowly on neoclassical economic principles. This is not to say that “anything goes” would be a good alternative. It is certainly not to say that the wildest levels of throwing off economic and financial constraints would be

sensible policy. No. No one is seriously saying that—only a few real extremists. But I think there could still be more flexibility within the processes of adjustment and longer-time economic, financial policy-making than has been shown.

Let me say here that it was interesting at the end of our first meeting with Monsieur de la Rosière, the young note-taker, as we were leaving the room, whispered to me, “When you were talking about children suffering malnutrition, and how there was no second chance for children, I was thinking of my own two children.” I think I asked him how old they were and, as I recall, he said, “two and four.” I believe that that is an important motivating factor for many people. If one can see these issues, these big, macroeconomic issues and their consequences in terms of one’s own life and family experiences, one may reach a better understanding. That is where this concern, and deep ethics, and commitment to children that we have becomes relevant, at this apparent high level of macro policy. I don’t think this young person changed IMF unfortunately, but he may have slept a little less easily and tried to do something about it.

TGW: I am going to violate one of Mary Marshall Clark’s rules and ask a two-part question. I promise not to tell the answer to the first one to Devaki [Jain]. That is, we are now quite aware of gender issues. You can hardly open your mouth or write a document without making reference to them. So there has been a complete switch from, say, the first women’s conference (UN World Conference of the International Women’s Year) in 1975. But I wondered when you, yourself, came to the conclusion that women were a distinct element that had been ignored or needed to be inserted into development questions? Second, what was the origin of the girl-child, which was UNICEF’s version of making this central?

RJ: The first part may sound a little vain or complacent, but actually I think I really became highly conscious of the role of women in 1957/1958, as a young man working in rural

Kenya. Remember, I was taught the practicalities of community development by Grace Mahboob, who was the community development assistant. She also made me aware that, of the forty officers working in Baringo district at the time, of which I was probably number forty, at the bottom, all of them were spending all their time working with men, for the most part talking at *barazas* of men, gatherings of men, who would listen as the colonial officers would harangue them. Meanwhile, the women were doing all the work—a certain amount of work in agriculture, all the work at home, all the work looking after children, all the work mudding houses, all the work thatching the grass roofs of mud houses, *kibandas*, and so forth.

She persuaded me to work with women. My nickname in the district was “Bwana ya Wanawake,” “man of the women,” which was greatly misunderstood by the big colonial cheese, particularly because I was traveling around in my Land Rover with women in the front seat, sitting beside me, which was not exactly the style of the colonial regime. So I did become conscious of women doing a very large amount of all the things that mattered, in economic terms as well as in other terms. I don’t think I got much of that reinforced in Yale. Later in 1972, we did bring into the ILO Kenya mission report the importance of women. Dorothy Remy was one of the people in particular who worked on women, and she ensured that we had a strong section there on women’s roles.

We did have some strong positions and people working on women in IDS in the 1970s. IDS started programs called “The Subordination of Women,” and I freely confess I found the language a bit challenging and excessive. And of course it was consciously chosen to make that point. But Kate Young was the key person in IDS leading that work and I respected her greatly.

So that is the personal account of my emerging consciousness of the importance of women in the whole development effort. On the CDP, we were lucky enough to have Ester

Boserup as one of the members of the Committee on Development Planning, when I was a member of it. Let me stress that she was a mainstream economist in many ways—a very creative one—and certainly I don't remember her pushing particularly the women's issue. She battled on all the issues we were concerned with.

Coming to UNICEF, the issues and experience of women and how we came eventually to the girl-child program, is extremely interesting and showed us taking a number of wrong paths along the way. We were of course concerned and encouraged to give more concern to women in UNICEF's programs in the 1980s, and no doubt somewhat before. Mary Racelis has written about this in the little book I edited on Jim Grant.

There were two rather separate issues. One was the proportion of women employed in UNICEF. We did a survey in 1982, 1983, or 1984, in fact done by Eimi Watanabe. Not only did we find that the proportion of women, I think, at that time in professional positions was only 25 percent, but that the rates of promotion of women from grade to grade over the preceding ten years had in every single case but one been less than the rates of promotion for men, in spite of the fact that the women were more qualified in terms of formal educational qualifications, years of experience in posts, and ability to speak different languages. That was a bit shocking and surprising to all of us, especially for a children's organization where some people might have said, "OK, you have 80 percent of women employed in professional positions, because women know more about children than men." But actually, 75 percent of the UNICEF staff were men in professional positions, as opposed to women.

The next stage of this story is positive and can be told quickly. We set a target for women's employment in professional positions that we should have 33 percent in professional positions by 1990. Then we set the target of 40 percent by 1995. In each case, the target was to

be pursued without any sacrifice in quality, but just steady pressure to employ more women. Whenever there was a choice between a man or a woman and we had a well-qualified woman, we gave preference to women. We achieved the targets, and it led me to believe that many of these issues of targets, if handled with commitment and leadership from the top and followed through, are much more readily achievable than many times UN experience seems to suggest. That is another example of both Jim Grant's leadership, pioneering UNICEF organization, and so forth.

Now, when it came to UNICEF's programs, we struggled for several years for ways to give more attention to women in UNICEF's programs, country-by-country. We were under pressure from both women in UNICEF and from some governments, the Scandinavian governments in particular, to do so. Initially, we thought the way was to expand UNICEF's programs to provide support for income-generating activities for women. That view was promoted quite strongly by one or two key women within UNICEF. It actually followed from a theoretical position that women's positions in countries in the world and society will never improve until they are brought into mainstream economic activities. They will always be marginalized until women have economic power and are brought into economic activities.

So for three or four years in the mid-1980s, that was our position and we increased support for women. At times there was even a suggestion that UNICEF should expand its mandate to refer directly to support for children and women. Jim Grant had some real doubts about this. But in the absence of some alternative, we weren't really quite sure what to do. So we did pursue it with considerable commitment and resources. We tried to monitor the use of resources that benefited women directly as well as benefiting children, and so on and so forth.

But it never was an easy fit. To my mind, the discovery of the girl-child program and vision was the integration of concern for children and concern for gender that we really were seeking. It was a major intellectual step. I know from interacting with a number of women in the women's movement and other people concerned with some of the women's conferences, particularly in the run-up to Rio (UN Conference on Environment and Development) that this was seen by many women as a genuine contribution. The intellectual logic of it is that discrimination begins at the very earliest moments of life, indeed in the womb, with the differential mortality rates and selective abortion rates that have often been observed when the ability to determine the sex of an unborn child emerged in the late 1980s, particularly in India. There were 8,000 cases of selective abortion and 7,999 of them were of a girl fetus. The one case of aborting a boy fetus led to a court case, in which the family took issue with the person that had wrongly identified the sex of the child.

So the point was made that even in the womb there was selection and discrimination. Then there is lots of evidence that in the first year or two years of life, in terms of health services and nutrition and so on and so forth right the way through to the higher rates of primary education for boys in most countries, ditto in secondary education, right the way through to university—not always, but as a general tendency across most regions and countries. That provided the shocking evidence of discrimination and the vision of how setting this right, dealing with gender imbalance, and moving to gender equality, could never just be something a country or a society discovers at one moment, but had to be something worked on over generations. And that's the vision behind the girl-child, that a society needs to take stock of the biases and discriminations built into its very existence. Then, with a vision of a world free of discrimination, embark on these priorities for the girl-child, not as opposed to the boy-child, but

to offset the discriminations right the way through, right from conception, indeed from dealing with the problems faced by many women before they even conceive, in order to assure equal chances for girls and boys right the way through.

That was a major vision. It came out of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It stirred a lot of positive concerns and programs for children in UNICEF during the 1990. It was taken up and supported very much by the women's movement. It's a very good story. It's also one which links with implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some of the creative work done in giving vision and articulation to the Convention and to the program specifics of it the Convention, serve as an example of how UN agencies—in this case, UNICEF—working with civil society, working with the women's movement, can actually make a major, major difference to how a big social issue is seen and acted upon.

TGW: There is one more event during your UNICEF period that I wanted to talk about, which was the end of the Cold War. I think in lots of our conversations, virtually everyone says, "I was surprised by it." The CIA didn't predict. It doesn't seem now like a question worth asking, but what happened to be the impact, concretely, on UNICEF of the end of the Cold War? What kinds of things did it make possible that perhaps weren't possible before, either in terms of thinking, in terms of pushing out the envelope on programming? Is this an event that helped international peace and security but didn't really play out in the development arena?

RJ: Well, I remember the challenges of transition in the former Soviet Union. UNICEF was very specifically involved in those, as I can explain.

TGW: To give you new clients?

RJ: Well, to give us new clients, certainly to change the nature of the relationships in the board. But much more fundamentally than that, and perhaps I'll get straight to those issues. The

issue was how does this process of transition become “transition with a human face,” and not either economic big bang or gradual economic transition? Remember, this isn’t actually a very happy story in terms of the facts. The Soviet Union, for all its weaknesses in some dimensions, had relatively low child mortality rates, high levels of basic education and so forth. Some of their practices in maternity hospitals, as I saw later, turned out to be pretty old-fashioned and regimented, but by the narrow tests of child health were pretty good.

So we were concerned in that way. What should be recorded and has not been written up is how UNICEF, along with WHO, UNFPA (UN Population Fund), UNDP, and the World Food Programme participated, I think in 1991, in a series of missions to look at what could be done with health in the former Soviet Union. This arose when Jim Baker, secretary of state of the U.S., organized a meeting in Washington with representatives of Europe, Japan and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). This meeting looked at the issues of transition in five sectors—probably industry, also agriculture, perhaps environment. I forget exactly. But health was one issue. A number of UN persons were invited, including Jim Grant.

What followed from this meeting in Washington was that NATO was asked to look at a number of areas of follow-up action. The UN was decidedly left out of all of them, except health. I’m not quite sure what led to the UN being asked in the only case of health to be brought in. We thought it was because Jim had worked his usual magic and made a very dramatic speech about what needed to be done.

It led to UNICEF, working with the others, producing a response, an absolutely miraculous response. It was the UN at its best. Within three weeks of that meeting, in which UNICEF had been asked to put together some assessments of the most urgent health needs—not just children’s needs—within three weeks of that, we landed in Moscow with about fifty people

in a team drawn from UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UNFPA, and World Food Programme. Jim Grant had expressly said, “We are not going to do it on our own. We are going to do it with the others.”

UNICEF was left primarily to do the organization of it, and we didn’t mind. We had a wonderful time. We had a wonderful person, Ekrem Biredinc, a UNICEF staff member from Turkey, who we brought in. I was leading the mission with Marco Vianello-Chiodo, a fellow deputy-executive-director from UNICEF. We arrived in Moscow with the usual doubts and debates and uncertainties.

I remember some of them coming to me from other agencies and saying, “Look, we’re turning up in Moscow, but now what?” There was chaos in Moscow at the time. Aeroflot was collapsing. Two or three people had arrived on an Aeroflot flight, which had been stranded in Kazakhstan for twenty-four hours with no fuel.

People said, “We’re in Moscow now by the skin of our teeth. You’ve managed to get some food for us to meet together.” I said, “Just keep calm, and after dinner I’m going to give you the briefing,” which I did. It wasn’t difficult to give a briefing on how in principle we would all move to different parts of the former Soviet Union for this mission. But the simple issue of logistics—where would we stay, and how would we get some rubles, and was the ruble worth anything? At that point, I turned to my colleague, Ekrem Biredinc and said, “Ekrem, explain to people how this will happen.”

Well, Ekrem, operating outside of normal UN procedures, but using UNICEF flexibility, had hired [Mikhail] Gorbachev’s private plane and private pilot. I think he paid \$12,000 for the lot. He explained how the team would be broken into three groups and the pilot the next morning would fly group one to these three or four countries, then group two, and so forth. That

was the process, with the result that within two or three weeks, our team had spent a week or ten days in each of fourteen of the fifteen countries. We had met, of course, with ministries of health, with other ministers. We had made assessments. We had field visits. It was actually the UN at its best.

Meanwhile, at probably greater cost, NATO had assembled a bunch of people from different health ministries in Europe and the U.S. and had flown around in one NATO plane stopping for three or four hours in each of these countries. Goodness knows what they had learned, but that was their way of doing it. I would say it was defending the position of NATO in trying to find a new role for itself in the aftermath of the Cold War.

Coming back to our missions, we then wrote up a separate report for each country—twenty pages or so focused on priority health actions and how they could be met, what was needed to try to protect what was left of the declining and falling-apart health services in most of these countries. We estimated the need for a budget of something like \$480 million, based on fourteen individual reports and two summary reports—one for the Central Asian republics and one for all of the former Soviet Union. We had these reports within six or seven weeks of this meeting in Washington.

It was truly dramatic. It was the UN at its best. It was inter-agency coordination. It's a story that needs to be told. But then what happened? Well, there were three major meetings held subsequently for representatives from these countries. I attended a couple of them, one in Geneva and one in Lisbon, I think it was, with Jim Baker and equivalent senior representation from Europe and Japan. To put it simply for on this interview, I would say the countries from the former Soviet Union were disappointed and frustrated. They kept turning up. They said, "We like these reports. These are our needs." But the West always replied, "Perhaps we should

meet again in a few more months and discuss what should happen.” I believe that things were allowed to collapse and the will of the NATO countries to provide support was zilch.

The UN had done its bit. Was it a failure for the UN? No, the UN had mapped out a low-cost practical program of action but the donor countries didn’t want to support even \$480 million. Now nearly fifteen years later, we can see the human disaster that was allowed to occur.

TGW: This is the end of tape number four.

TGW: This is tape number five, Tom Weiss interviewing Richard Jolly at The Graduate Center on 21 July 2005. Why did you leave UNICEF and what attracted you to UNDP? You went to UNICEF because Jim Grant asked you; and you just thought, as a young guy, “This is an opportunity too great to pass up.” UNDP would obviously be your last assignment in the UN. What made it attractive?

RJ: Well, I left UNICEF for several reasons: first, Jim Grant died in January 1995. I was a candidate just about to, as one of a number of candidates, to succeed Jim as executive-director. No one took me particularly seriously. The British government did at one point remark that the Finnish candidate was a very strong candidate. I said she was a very nice person, but she had been minister of defense. They said, “Yes, that’s what we mean.” I said that in her c.v.—I don’t want to knock her because she was actually a friend and a very creative person, but she did list that she had spent a week in Tanzania as one of the main points of her Third World experience.

I do not wish to question her candidacy, but the way the international system does not really take seriously the range and issues of experience of people who are appointed to senior positions is an issue worthy of comment. I think the most important need is to adopt the recommendations by Brian Uquhart and Erskine Childers to establish a much more serious

process for selecting senior people at the UN. This still has not generally been undertaken. Appointments should start with a proper definition of the sort of qualifications needed for each of the different agencies, depending on what they are. There is the need for circulation of c.v.'s, and the experience of leading candidates. And particularly there is the need for some form of interview and questioning by different governments of the candidates prior to a decision by whoever it is should make the decision. I think that such a process is vital.

Let me make one more comment, which explains why I think many people don't see the importance of this, quite apart from political interests and those sorts of pressures. Many people imagine the process of selecting a head of a UN agency is not so different from selecting a minister in a government. They say ministers are selected by politicians from all sorts of different backgrounds, so why should the UN have to have a different process? I think that misunderstands many respects in which selecting a head of a UN agency is a very different process from selecting a minister in government. In a good, democratically functioning government, there is a set of policies agreed by the governing party. A minister is usually selected by the prime minister or the president for an undefined period. If the minister is not performing, they can be thrown out. They also know the culture, whereas working in the UN requires sensitivity to a wide range of cultures. There are many differences. Yet, once the selection is made in the UN, the person is there almost always for one term, if not two terms. So I think this question of improving the process of selecting senior UN people is vital.

Coming back to myself, once it was clear that Carol Bellamy had been appointed to UNICEF, I obviously indicated to her that I would stay no longer than she wanted. I forget exactly how it was, but quite clearly I had been acting three or four months as UNICEF's executive-director after Jim's death. I think I stayed a month or so beyond Carol Bellamy's

arrival, enough to introduce or see a process of briefing her on different programs. It was then time to leave.

I actually then went on a sabbatical, which was intended to be a year in Princeton, in which I would have a chance to write up some of my experiences in UNICEF in one way or another. But within a very few months—I think it was four months—Mahbub ul Haq had decided that he ought to go back to Pakistan. There were some pressures on him also to leave because there were some tensions growing about the *Human Development Report*. He recommended to Gus Speth that I would be an ideal person to follow him. So having started my sabbatical, I was under great pressure to end it in order to go and join in the *Human Development Report* towards the end of 1995. That was the period the *Human Development Report* of 1996 report was being produced. It had to go to press about February or March 1996.

So my sabbatical lasted a short time, and I fell willingly and with great luck, actually, into the *Human Development Report*. I had admired it enormously, of course. Mahbub ul Haq, with the help of Amartya Sen had made a great creation. Mahbub had always been nice enough to send copies to myself and to Jim saying, “Thank you for a lot of the inspiration that he had received.” I think the intellectual inspiration had been much more from Amartya’s side, but what UNICEF had done with child survival and development and mobilizing action and *Adjustment With a Human Face*, Mahbub felt greatly in support of and identified with. And indeed some issues, such as the twenty-twenty proposal to fund a lot of the action for the goals in the 1990s and for human development, all that was set out in the 1992 *Human Development Report*. So there had been these links beforehand, and I was lucky enough to be chosen to succeed Mahbub.

There was a mild problem. I learned, being a non-politician, that there were certain compromises I would need to make. I had always been an outspoken critic of the HDI, the Human Development Index, and the fact that it rested on some dubious assumptions about its components and the weighting of these components and so forth. So I had, in a very small way, to eat humble pie to take on that. I had no doubt that the HDI should be supported and I was enormously encouraged, two or three years later, when the great Amartya Sen admitted in print in the HDI that he himself had originally been strongly against HDI but had come to the conclusion that Mahbub had been right in developing the HDI. HDI was “vulgar”—I think that was the word—but, as Mahbub argued, so was GDP and it needed something equally vulgar to GDP in order to displace GDP per capita from its preeminence as the indicator of development.

So I thought if Amartya Sen was going to admit that he had been using the wrong criteria—not so much totally wrong, but the wrong criteria to judge such an important creation as HDI—I was right to have so willingly joined the *Human Development Report*. And With Amartya’s help, we produced in 1997 yet another index, the HPI, the Human Poverty Index.

TGW: Earlier, you had mentioned that certain people believe in individual effort, locking yourself up in the stacks or a closet to make a contribution—

RJ: Intellectual contribution?

TGW: Yes, whereas the *Human Development Report* is quite other. I just wondered whether you could share a few stories or experiences about the process of how it starts, how it’s refined, how it’s finalized each year.

RJ: The process has changed over the years. In the early years, Mahbub used to write a large amount of the report himself, though writing and getting reactions to his writing was very much a collective operation. Producing the *Human Development Report* has always been a very

different process from that of the World Bank and the *World Development Report*. The *World Development Report* has always taken a core of World Bank officials, professionals, and put them aside for a year, sometimes longer. They are responsible for putting together the report in draft. The process of reviewing the draft is a much more formal process in which ultimately the governments of the World Bank have to sign off.

In contrast, the *Human Development Report* has had a team that each year has produced a succession of reports, unlike the World Bank, that every year has a new team. The *Human Development Report* has had the same team with a few variations. Of course, people come and go. In many ways, it is a much younger team, sometimes even a smaller team than the *World Development Report*, and certainly a more multidisciplinary team, although most people have tended to be people with economics in their training. It is noticeably younger and I think this in part explains the free-thinking nature of the *Human Development Report*. It has also been true that it has been guided by a core of friends and professionals who have shared Mahbub's vision. So people like Frances Stewart, Gus Ranis of Yale, Meghnad Desai, Amartya Sen supremely, Sudhir Anand—a colleague of Amartya also in Oxford—and a few others. Lal Jayawardena used to be a member of this group, as well as Paul Streeten.

This group, in a relaxed "Mahbub ul Haq manner," would meet perhaps for two or three hours, or possibly for a couple of days, to keep watch over the whole process of the *Human Development Report*, make suggestions of themes for future *Human Development Reports*, join in discussions of drafts and so forth. Some of them, particularly Frances Stewart and Gus Ranis, would often draft substantive papers of twenty-five or thirty pages that also were an important part of the creative pushing of the concepts of human development into new areas. So in the

early days, though Mahbub would write many of the chapters and certainly the overview, this core group would often write key chapters.

By the time I joined in late 1995, this process was well-established. We were commissioning quite a number of background papers on the themes of the reports. Mostly we used these background papers as chapters, as input into the chapters, while the chapters would be written substantively by one or other of us in the office. It moved under my period from lesser reporting in which Mahbub would be drafting lots of the chapters, to myself and Sakiko Fukuda-Parr drafting the overview and perhaps drafting a key chapter on policy or a key chapter on an issue of analysis.

Amartya Sen continued to play a leading role—not equally for every year, but he did play an important role in the report on poverty in 1997, to help develop the concept of poverty as multidimensional deficiencies. That was the core of the conceptual frame, and then HPI, as a measure of human poverty, based on deprivation along different dimensions, rather than low average income, was incorporated as a key feature. We generated some new statistical data, for example, the proportion of people in each country whose life expectancy was that they wouldn't live beyond forty; this was incorporated into the HPI.

The next report really, where Amartya Sen played a major role, after the death of Mahbub, was the *2000 Human Development Report* on human rights and human development, which in my view was one of the best of the reports. It drew heavily on Amartya Sen's simple but very profound analysis of human rights and human development, incorporating much of his thinking, which had already gone into *Development As Freedom*. More specifically, it focused on what was the value-added that human rights brought to human development, and what was the value-added that human development brought to human rights. This, conceptually was very

clarifying and extremely important. The whole report, which documented some of the progress and many of the deficiencies in the advance of human rights and human development in different parts of the world, was a very important contribution.

Certainly, we had strong support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Bertie Ramcharan in particular, and others. They said to us that they thought the HDR 2000 was an important contribution. There has always been, as we know from our own more general history, a separation between much of the UN's work on development and much of the UN's work on human rights. But over the 1990s and even in the 1980s, with "The Right to Development," these issues had been coming closer together. Operationally, they had come quite close together with CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. But conceptually, they had not really been integrated. That was, I think, both the contribution of the *Human Development Report 2000*, and a good example where intellectual ideas have their own power and importance in general and in the UN system in particular. There was a need to show conceptually how human rights and how human development were different aspects of the same vision and the same process. All power to Amartya Sen for helping us show that in the *Human Development Report 2000*.

TGW: One of the things that, as a student of international institutions, I have said for some time is that UN agencies are hesitant to use plain language to describe fairly obvious situations because of political sensitivities. The *Human Development Report* pushed out the envelope on what was acceptable, or what was no longer was acceptable. There was a lot of dissent from governments because obviously telling the United States that it is as good as it thinks it is, or Guinea that it is not as bad as everyone thinks it is, is embarrassing in an

intergovernmental context. Do you think there is more room for this kind of thing elsewhere in the system?

RJ: Definitely. My experience in the *Human Development Report*, and in different ways in UNICEF, bears that out. What do I mean in particular? Well, the first lesson, which actually came from Dudley Seers in the ILO missions, was that there is a strong case for UN agencies to issue high-profile or important reports in the name of individuals who are people of quality, and thus to distance themselves from taking personal responsibility as an agency for every particular point in their reports. This is vastly more important than many people realize. It is not just a few paragraphs that can be more bluntly written; it is the whole process of preparation that can be more flexible and creative.

I know that Mahbub ul Haq quite specifically learned this from Jim Grant. When he took on the process of creating and producing the *Human Development Report*, he persuaded Bill Draper that should be a reported issued independently of the administrator. A paragraph of disclaimer has always been included early on in the report. Mahbub, of course, was a more provocative personality than myself, and in some ways also a much more subtle and pioneering politician than I have dreamt of being. This both had value, but it did produce some of the problems of the *Human Development Report* by the time we got to 1994, 1995, 1996. The 1995 report on gender, and the 1994 report—which was issued more or less at the same time as the World Summit on Social Development—was used by Mahbub to try to influence these global conferences. That led to some resentments from other UN agencies, and even some criticisms from governments. It also led, in part, to Mahbub thinking it was time to go back to Pakistan, admittedly to join the political process there.

When I took over, at the end of 1995, it was a real issue with governments. How to keep governments in touch with the *Human Development Report*, and support it, without in any sense letting the report become subject to their approval. That's where I drew on UNICEF experience, very much in Jim Grant style: don't make a battle of these things; treat governments with respect; explain what you are doing; don't give way on the principle that you are going to show them the report in advance, but do explain to them what you are doing. To be honest, I had built up, I think, a certain trust and perhaps even reputation with many of the governments on the UNDP board.

So we instituted, during my time, a briefing three times a year for UNDP board members about the *Human Development Report*. We would explain the topic which we were thinking of pursuing. We would at another meeting give some presentation of the issues that were likely to appear. At a final meeting, we would discuss the arrangements for releasing the report and so forth. We were very careful never to bind ourselves to any of their points, without making a big issue of it. And we were certainly very careful never to show the governments anything in draft or suggest that that would be a good thing to do.

This process, I think, worked pretty well, certainly during my time. There were some sensitivities during the year 2000 when we were having the report on human rights. I remember Cuba, Libya, and one or two other governments—all Third World governments—expressing real doubts in public about this theme and their concerns. Behind the scenes I explained to the Libyans and the Cubans, with whom because of my own interests I had pretty good relations, that the United States in 1999 had expressed some real doubts about our report on globalization. I am sure I made that point in public in general that every year someone was not going to be totally happy. But surely, it was more important that the report be issued with “its own

integrity.” That was a wonderful phrase that Mahbub had crafted in part because it was never quite clear what it meant. That phrase struck me as a good one for Mahbub, so why shouldn’t I use it too? But essentially, what we were meaning without quite saying it was the need for our own independence—with intellectual seriousness, of course.

This process was important. I think while I’m at it, I should say that I am disappointed in one respect with the last five years of UNDP, and to some extent, even during the five years when I was in charge of it, from 1996 to 2000. That is that UNDP did not use the report as a frame for their own programs and work, and as a frame in which all the work of different parts of the UN could be set conceptually and analytically. This is one of the strengths of the human development framework: that it is people-focused, it is multidisciplinary, and it is in some methodological sense pragmatic. Those are real virtues if you are trying to present a way of looking at country problems, country priorities, in ways that make sense to people approaching those issues from the point of view of health professionals, or scientific professionals, or development people concerned with inequality.

All sorts of perspectives which the UN as a whole embodies and encompasses can, I believe, find an integrating frame in human development, not just encompassing economic and social development, but cultural development, political development, international concerns with inequality. These issues can, and have already to some extent, been encompassed in the succession of Human Development Reports. The human development perspective is not just a flimsy approach—“this puts people at the center,” but with all the profound intellectual depth and range of a Nobel Prize winner like Amartya Sen.

This was the potential of the Human Development Reports, plus the fact that already over 130 countries had already produced national human development reports within this frame.

Today something like 400 national human development reports have been produced in different countries, many focused on particular themes. I believe that if there had been more courage and leadership from UNDP, the appointed coordinator and leader of the UN system, the *Human Development Report* could have brought together, intellectually and operationally, in one frame of analysis the work of so many parts of the UN. It could have done that in a way that embodied a creative contrast with the much more economistic, neoclassical economic frame of the Bretton Woods institutions. I think the world would have been richer for that.

I'm not sure why UNDP has always ducked this issue. I think I would put it this way. If Jim Grant had been leader of UNDP, he would not have missed the trick of using the *Human Development Report* in that way. In fact, it was suggested at one point that Jim Grant should move to UNDP, I think in 1990. With his standing achieved and having led UNICEF for ten years, rather than serve a third term in UNICEF, should he not take on UNDP and the UN development system? That said, if I remember rightly—and I'm not sure I was privy to all of Jim's thinking—Jim was far too committed both to UNICEF, to children by then, and to the amazing ability of UNICEF to be a strong force for children in so many countries. So far as I know, Jim Grant never seriously considered taking on the much more difficult UNDP challenge.

TGW: If the *Human Development Report* broke new ground—and I think both of us would agree to that—and ought to be replicated elsewhere in the system, the other notion that doesn't come into the system very frequently is a sunset clause. Do you think the *Human Development Report* has outlived its usefulness, and we should stop publication?

RJ: You will have a chance next time to interview Louis Emmerij, who may well say that. I think I remember Louis Emmerij saying that in 1996. Or was it 1998? Louis has a six or seven year horizon built somewhere into his psyche that he shouldn't stay longer than six or

seven years, and that many activities should not last longer than this. I think it is totally wrong in this case. Human development is not just a report. It's a whole new way of looking at development and incorporating all these concerns we've talked about.

As such, I think the *Human Development Report* has still got a long way to go. Should it only be the *Human Development Report* that carries the vision forward? No, and it isn't. There is now an annual Human Development Conference built around capabilities. There is a human development award and prize. There is a *Journal of Human Development*. There are a number of these elements. Mahbub's vision was that there should be six or seven universities around the world where there were chairs in human development. Mahbub was a builder, and I think this is still needed. If this whole range of issues were to develop so that human development became what I believe it ought to be—a real, strong, robust paradigm for development—then one might ask whether the *Human Development Report* in its present form should continue, whether UNDP should have a different publication.

But for the moment, speaking in 2005, the creativity is still there in the *Human Development Report*, and its importance internally, both in the UN and as a university textbook for development, is really very strong and well-justified. I checked not too long ago on how many economics books and business books that touch on development in any major or minor way made any reference to the *Human Development Report*. The answer is that most do! It was the HDI and the use of the HDI as an indicator of the range of situations of many Third World countries that often quoted the *Human Development Report* as a very convenient source. If you abolished the *Human Development Report*, you would need to find some way to keep the Human Development Indices, and all that they mean for providing ways for newspapers, media,

television, as well as textbooks and academic studies, to rank countries in terms of human concerns.

TGW: You asked why I was re-reading the 1999 *Human Development Report*. And before having this conversation I flipped through the portion that you were responsible for. But not only there, I think in much of your work and in our conversations over the years, there really is a flavor of qualified or maybe unqualified optimism that pervades them. Is this something that keeps you going? Is this why you went into the business?

RJ: I certainly am an optimistic person. What roots it has psychologically, or even in my earlier religious days, I am not quite sure. One can speculate on it. I remember two or three more precise experiences, quite a long time ago, before I joined the UN, where I worried from an academic point of view about research, on the many issues where the evidence was ambiguous or incomplete, when looking to the future, or when making policy recommendations, for example. I realized that you can look at such issues and produce a pessimistic result, or you can look at the same issues and produce a more optimistic result.

I did think quite hard for a while about this. Was there nothing out there in terms of evidence, careful research, and deeper philosophy that could enable me confidently to move either to reach a firmer-based conclusion in terms of what the evidence was pointing to—to a more optimistic or more pessimistic outcome? I came to the conclusion that evidence would always be insufficient. So I consciously turned inward and outward. I turned inward and said what sort of person would I rather be? I thought I would prefer to be an optimist. I perhaps have this in my genes. My father was fairly optimistic. And I realized, turning outward, that I much preferred optimistic people—perhaps it was even a touch of my early life in the United States

during the war, that some of the strong cultural influences on me between six and ten were American, something of that can-do spirit of the United States.

So very consciously, internally, I decided for this optimism. And as I often said, when I went back to Britain for short periods, British cynicism and pessimism is a bit of an acquired taste and I'm afraid I've lost it. But then I also have been lucky to work in UNICEF, and we saw—dare I use the cliché?—we saw miracles happen. Wonderful things happened, in some of the ways I've described and many others—at country level and internationally. Following UNICEF's determination to hold a summit, a summit took place. UNICEF became committed to goals when WHO was saying, "No, goals are not relevant." You saw people turn round in response to strong, positive leadership—not bitterness. Jim Grant would never use his position to overrule critics or criticisms. Like a true preacher, he would always hold open the possibility for a conversion. Everyone was a potential supporter for children to be won over and brought in.

It made UNICEF very exciting. It also made a lot of very positive things happen. And we did see many important advances for children in many, many country situations. Not only was there fifteen years of very positive experience to build on, it also gave us all a wealth of ammunition in arguments for people who wanted to be naysayers or negatives. And I must add, coming to the present, I do find that the academic world can often get far too roped into pessimism or perhaps more often just to uncertainty and nihilism—on the one hand this, and on the other hand that. And who can tell? I see an enormously important place for honest, tough-minded analysis. But when all is said and done, if I reach in analysis, or discussion, with colleagues, the point where, "who can tell, on the one hand this, and on the other hand that," then I move into normative mode. If the positivist story is ambiguous or uncertain, why not move to

the normative conclusion of what we would like to see happen and then do our best to analyze what can make the positive outcome more likely?

TGW: That reminds me of the famous quip from Harry Truman about wanting a one-armed economist. If emphasizing the glass being half-full has been a characteristic, nonetheless, over an active and analytical career that has now spanned from 1955 to 2005—fifty years or so—which of the ideas have really changed the most? Where did you really get it wrong, in your personal thinking? I mean, human development wasn't around, so that is new. But are there a couple of thoughts that you were persuaded, thirty years, or forty-five years later, that just appear to you now as—

RJ: Well, in terms of religious conviction, as I explained, I moved away from religious conviction initially to a position of agnosticism—never, I think, strictly atheism, but perhaps very close to atheism. Now I have moved more to a position of tolerance and seeing religious social movements as sometimes very important. I don't see them as God-given movements, but I do see them as more positive. That may not be such an unusual shift of position, but I think actually it's a very important one in terms of personal life, the role of the UN, issues of development strategy and so forth.

But you are not asking about ambiguities, you are asking where I shifted. I suppose on the big issue of socialist systems, I certainly have developed a much more pessimistic view as to what the big socialist experiments achieved. I should stress that although I was sympathetic to the left and still am, I was never in any sense a gung-ho believer. That in part was because of my religious experience. Once I had experienced an intense period of Christian dogma, thinking in it, interacting with close Christian friends, discussing ideas within a Christian frame and so forth—though I was not a fundamentalist in a narrow sense—I could never take on any other all-

encompassing belief system. That said, I did see, through my experience in Cuba, some very impressive advances in the Cuban socialist system. I still believe they did make many of them, though with big failures economically, as I referred to, and with some failures on the human rights side, although I would probably be less critical than many others on the human rights side.

The economic performance of the Soviet Union has now undergone a major revision in terms of even what it appeared to have achieved in the 1950s and 1960s. At Yale, we read CIA reports that suggested that rates of growth were very much higher than now seems to be the case. Perhaps something of that sort may occur with China. So on the performance of planned economies, and the sacrifice of many human rights—democratic issues—certainly I have shifted my positions somewhat.

Have I shifted on the other side to be much more respectful of the market? I don't think I have. There has always been a strong economic part of my approach that sees value in that market. But I today see many limitations just as I did when I worked on issues of education or when I worked on planning in developing countries. So I don't think I've shifted so much on my view of the market. I think that market tools and economic analyses are very valuable tools and approaches, but you need to set them in a broader context of a strong state. There are occasions when the market isn't at all an appropriate institutional mechanism, and indeed that's what the *Human Development Report* stands for.

TGW: One of the things that I had meant to follow-up earlier was the relationship between the UN system and the Bretton Woods institutions. In our conversations, and I was going back and re-reading something you had written earlier, which sort of comes to where we are today: the Bretton Woods institutions obviously have resources. The proposition that you wrote in this book about the UN and Bretton Woods institutions—many of the things that you've

mentioned today about the kind of style, or notions of solidarity, however useful those are, the kind of interactions with government, more kinds of intellectual outputs, ideas, this kind of thing. Is there a division of labor? Should they be kept separate? Should they be pushed together? Where do you see this relationship, which has been obviously fairly tense—although it has improved somewhat, supposedly, recently—where is this going in the next decade?

RJ: I think we hit it pretty well in *The Power of UN Ideas*. Quite early on in that little book, we listed many areas where the UN had not only been ahead of the curve, but had been ahead of the Bretton Woods. Often the Bretton Woods institutions were in opposition to the UN, but five, ten, fifteen years later are agreeing. There are lots of examples in there. I think that deserves to be much more emphasized.

Now, what does that mean for the future? To put it in terms of its three extremes—I think it certainly doesn't mean that the Bretton Woods should be abolished, even if that were in the remotest way for feasible politics. You need international institutions in the area of finance or banking, undertaking those functions. Nor does it mean that those institutions should be integrated in any close sense, with different parts of the UN. They would swamp the UN if they were fully integrated. So I think they should work more closely and more respectfully with different parts of the UN, and I certainly think there should be some rolling back of the extent to which the Bank has moved into so many areas where the UN had originally had the mandate—say health, say technical assistance, so many of these areas. I think the Bank has been allowed to go far too far, and has been funded by the industrial countries in doing so.

A lot of our own work in the UN Intellectual History Project shows the creativity that can exist precisely because of some tensions between the approach dictated by a financial or banking or industrial country perspective, and the broader approach given by a UN perspective based on

quite different representation. So I think there is real value added by having some area of overlap and certainly some area of competing ideas. I think that could be much more creatively built on.

I am not arguing just for a simple status quo. I think more resources should go into the UN parts of analysis. There should be much more funding for key parts of the UN. At the country level, the UN should be brought in much more strongly into poverty reduction strategy papers, pursuing the Millennium Goals, and other current agenda issues. A lot of issues that are greatly underplayed at the moment—such as environment, sustainability, even human rights—could all be brought in much more creatively by the two institutions—if we call them two, the UN institutions, led by UNDP on the development side, and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Some of that has started. But it has a long way to go. It could be very creative, if such partnership was more actively pursued. We did try and suggest something of this at the end of *The Power of UN Ideas*.

TGW: You actually just mentioned the current traveling circus, the United Nations Intellectual History Project. I remember both of us trying to have a conversation with that awful Italian version of Edith Piaf in that restaurant in Torino and we began talking about Sidney Dell's failed effort to get something like this off the ground.

RJ: This was at ACUNS (Academic Council of the UN System).

TGW: That was ACUNS, where you gave the address. But we both asked ourselves a question then—I still don't have an answer to it—which was why has there been so little attention paid to these products of the United Nations? Why is there so little concern with institutional memory, institutional learning, the archives, this whole set of issues that we are trying to make a dent in?

RJ: Well, I have not read a big analysis of this. I was struck in a casual way in a recent meeting with DID hearing people say, “We have so little institutional memory.” Craig Murphy was saying that UNDP seems to have destroyed or thrown away all the papers relating to the Brad Morse era. So I think this may be an institutional failing, rather than a big institutional suppression. It may be given by the nature of bureaucrats and leadership, that we are all, particularly in our younger years, keen to pioneer our own advances, and somehow to think that the past is past. We don’t give history too much attention. If I could make a confession, it would be that when Jim Grant moved into UNICEF and I joined him we neglected somewhat UNICEF’s past, even though we did commission later the first history of UNICEF. Jim then used to ask everyone, “Have you read it? It’s a wonderful story.” Later, then there was a subsequent history, in 1996 I think it was, of the whole period of Jim Grant.

So one shouldn’t allow history just to fade away. One can look quite specifically for the lessons, and I think good management requires this to be done. I think the UN could and should do more of it. As we have seen with the UN Intellectual History Project, by doing it now, finally after fifty-five years, we keep coming up with important points that people don’t realize about the UN’s record.

TGW: What today—not specific instances like the answer to the Hans Singer-Raúl Prebisch question—what kinds of things have you learned that surprised you or that you weren’t expecting when we started this enterprise six years ago? Do any kinds of things stick out?

RJ: Certainly, a number of second-order things. Let me start with those and see if they stir my memory on bigger things. Until I read Michael Ward’s book, and really dug into it, I didn’t appreciate what a contribution the UN made to building up statistical systems in the

economic area so quickly. I vaguely knew about this for a long time, but you see it in a whole new way when you read someone who has concentrated very carefully on the wider story.

I was surprised—again, one of the things I did myself, with the help of Merja Jutila—that when one looked at the goals the UN adopted and promoted over the last forty-five years, how many of them had had quite an impact, or at least been considerably fulfilled. Certainly not one of our own books, but this recent book on human rights showed the important role of the churches in fashioning some of the elements of rights in the Charter and the Universal Declaration. This is also a point that Sarah Zaidi and Roger Norman bring out, the way that it was the NGOs and UN secretariat staff that challenged the humbug and hypocracies of some of the early draft of human rights and made a reality of aspirations which were put forward by governments with mixed motives and mixed convictions.

All these things were important discoveries for me. I have also been amazed at how our first suggestion that the UN was ahead of the curve, and ahead of the World Bank, has been more true than even myself in my most cautious mode believed. And perhaps I have learned from *UN Voices* the boldness of the vision of many of the UN people and early UN intellectual pioneers. This impressed me. The closer one is to having relevant experience of one's own, such as with the *Human Development Report*, the more I have a new appreciation of the leadership of Mahbub ul Haq, Jim Grant, Dudley Seers or Hans Singer, even though I've known Hans for forty years and knew Dudley from about the same period. I am impressed by the builders and their persistence, their vision, their determination, their intellectual creativity. I don't think I am now so surprised. I suppose I am surprised at how outsiders don't appreciate this enough, including academics. I am encouraged how students can be quite inspired by all this.

TGW: It's quite astonishing, really.

RJ: One needn't dissimulate on this story or overplay it, but it is an impressive story. Perhaps many young people are searching for evidence and encouragement in bolder ideas.

TGW: I tried to make exactly that argument with Bill Luers who was also with me in Tehran this week. My impression is that younger people are really looking for models and what have you. While we are not saying, "Do A, B, C, and D," if you look at that book, the evidence that people matter is overwhelming. It would be nice to read about that.

RJ: But if I come back, to make a final comment particularly about my early years at the very beginning in Kenya, that colonial world. I am reminded of one of the quotes that we had in *Ahead of the Curve*, the comment of the professor of colonial history at Oxford, that India was locked into this timeless world of tradition and poverty. Given that, even though that was not the belief of most third Worlders at the time, who were much more balanced, but given that such beliefs dominated many people in industrial countries, the boldness of the people who said "universal human rights, human rights for all," did take some intellectual courage.

Mahbub used to talk about how it is not so much vision and free-thinking that is missing, it is intellectual courage. Perhaps if we went back to the late 18th century, the French Revolution, and Tom Paine, and others of the time, and indeed the founders of the United States, you would see that vision aplenty. Perhaps it doesn't exist very much in the social sciences today—among many of the realists. But I do find such vision, in some people in the UN, just as I found it with Jim Grant, Hans Singer, and earlier models like Jan Tinbergen.

TGW: You used the new buzzword of "non-governmental organization." We have talked about the UN in our own words, where it provides a place for governments to make decisions. We've really focused on the "second UN," the people who work in the secretariats and how ideas emerge. But in this conversation, and in some of our later books, it has been

pointed out how NGOs inject ideas. They lobby for ideas. They oftentimes pick up UN ideas and make them operational. We've mentioned maybe this is a kind of parallel UN, a "third UN," anyways another space. The Secretary-General himself has talked about this, both of business and NGOs in this whole Global Compact, but this whole notion of civil society. Where do you think this will be ten years now in relation to the UN system? How could one take advantage of this energy and make better use of civil society?

RJ: There are many existing ways in which much better use could be made of civil society, more openness. When civil society, non-government groups get more organized, we see more pressure. Look at the recent events built around the G-8 (Group of 8) mobilization for the Millennium Development Goals, for debt relief, "Making Poverty History." This may be more visible in the UK than in the U.S., particularly in relation to UN issues. But it is very strong in the U.K. It is very strong in organizations such as Oxfam and Save the Children. It probably is there in the U.S., but perhaps in a different way. Surely it has been growing enormously in developing countries. There are thousands, tens of thousands, of NGOs in India and so forth.

Where does it go? I am less persuaded that a whole new people's chamber of the UN would be such a wonderful advance. I don't rule it out, but I must say the debates in Europe about MEPs, Members of the European Parliament, is not exactly one where you see a whole vision of Europe moving ahead—and say that we ought to have the same thing at global level. The mind boggles at how many world members of parliament there would need to be before you had three, say, representing Great Britain, and one representing each of many smaller countries around the world.

This doesn't seem to be the way to give expression to either the desperate urge to strengthen the UN as "we the peoples," or to give a greater sense of participation of ordinary

people in global governance. So it may be that a more creative evolution of different special interest groups and special NGOs is needed, representing people and not just corporations as the present big lobbies mostly are, but more representing people. Oxfam has 600,000 people signed up in Britain who really follow a lot of the Oxfam activities and are committed to provide support in different ways for Third Worlders, for development, for the effort of making poverty history.

It may be that a whole variety of different ways in which people can be involved is evolving, again particularly with young people. There is a great wish of young people in the U.K. to relate to these issues. The “Make Poverty History” Live-Aid concerts that took place was some expression of that. It was very different from parliamentary representation on a global level. Perhaps there is a need for and possibility of broadening out such involvement in creative ways.

TGW: I wanted to end up with your current preoccupation, human security. But I wondered where—throughout this interview I have been trying to trace a line from your pacifism to your basic commitment to development, and disarmament—you went off on that for a year or so. None of these things have to do straight-forwardly with bombs and bullets. They have to do with rejecting those things. Human security doesn’t reject those things, but it tries to say, “Well, these are important but this is one kind of security and there are all these other things and we need to think about them at the same time.” Is that correct? What do think are the main analytical benefits from using this concept, and what are the main disadvantages of using it? How can we maximize one and minimize the other?

RJ: The main benefits, I think, are those that follow from looking at the traditional issues of security in a whole new way, focused on people, raising questions about whether existing

efforts to guard against insecurities are leading to gross misallocations of resources and gross misdirection of attention. The present preoccupation with war as a major instrument against terrorism will be seen, I believe, in ten or twenty years time as being a gross error. Terrorism is a real problem, but the throwing of military resources at Iraq, conceivably even at Afghanistan, has actually done more harm than good in the cause of not only human security but in tackling terrorism.

Careful analysis of human security and evidence on formation of attitudes would, I suspect, provide a lot stronger evidence for that sort of view. It wouldn't at all surprise me, in five or ten years, when Iraq and Afghanistan—particularly Iraq—are as far behind as the Vietnam War, that there will be such major rethinking particularly in the U.S., but also in the UK and some other countries. Human security would provide a very good frame for analyzing that. As you said, it is not to say that there is no role at all for armies, but raising questions about different mechanisms, both of the state and of the international world to ensure greater security, and different assessments of the best allocation of resources in an uncertain world, when the different threats are not at all clear and certain. You can do risk analysis of threats and try and allocate budgets in relation to that.

The frame of human security potentially opens this all up, as I've become conscious—perhaps more readily for economists, but perhaps also for political scientists or international relations people who are steeped in traditional views of security. Human security raises immediately a whole subtle frame of new and interlocking analyses that makes it difficult to look at security in traditional ways. Increasingly, I find myself thinking of the beginning of Keynes's *General Theory*, when he said, "The ideas in this book are essentially very simple. The difficulty lies not in the new ideas but in breaking away from the old ones...which ramify

into every corner of our minds.” He said that speaking to his fellow economists about classical economic analysis which most economists of that time had been brought up in.

But it applies also very well to people brought up in frames of analysis of international issues of security and the Westphalian state. What is needed is this fresh thinking, an ability to look at security from the point of view of people, both conceptually and empirically, learning from doing more studies of the insecurities that people feel and experience. All this opened up by this new approach to human security that actually could lead to some very creative developments intellectually, empirically and for policy.

TGW: Actually, that’s an interesting twist. It is not that you should forget studying in depth specific pieces—rockets and armies or feeding or women—but the idea is that in trying to make a sensible decision with limited resources, and in order to pick between A, B, and C, you’ve got to consider B and C and not say A is sacrosanct.

RJ: That is exactly what I said at ACUNS a year ago. For economists, the idea of trade-offs is one of the most basic concepts—alternative uses of resources for alternative ends. Where do you get the best benefits in many senses of the word “benefit”? The concept of human security and trade-offs appeals naturally to economists. The attempt of political scientists to put some issues in some boxes and then say other boxes are quite different is so contrary to what seems necessary to an economist. But it may be, as I say, that the difficulty of breaking away from old modes of thought and old boxes is what makes so difficult the grasping of what is essentially a very simple point. But I feel we’re winning. With the reports on *Threats, Challenges, and Change*, *Human Security Now* and *In Larger Freedom*, an awful lot of people who aren’t professional international relations experts are more and more adopting these modes

of thought—those international relations academics may soon find it easier to join them than to go on excluding themselves.

TGW: This is clearly not the end of a conversation between an economist and a political scientist. But it is the end for today.

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