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KATHERINE MARSHALL

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ZENNI: Good morning. I'm Marie Zenni, senior interviewer for the Bank's oral history program.

MARSHALL: I'm Katherine Marshall.

ZENNI: Today is Tuesday, January 30, 2007, and I'm here at World Bank headquarters to interview Ms. Katherine Marshall. Ms. Marshall retired from the Bank back in August of 2006 as Director of Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics in the Human Development Network where she continues to consult as senior advisor. Welcome, Ms. Marshall.

MARSHALL: Thank you.

ZENNI: I'd like to begin by discussing your background in general, including your educational background, and how you became interested in economic development.

MARSHALL: I went to school in England for secondary school; I was there because my father had moved to Nigeria in 1961, initially to work with the University College, but over time he became very much involved in the development challenges of newly independent Nigeria. He worked primarily in public administration training. So, in many respects, I'm a second generation development person. I then went from secondary school in England to Wellesley College. I am intrigued that quite a few Wellesley graduates, all of them of course women, have been at the forefront of development thinking. I went directly from Wellesley to the MPA [master of public administration] program at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, a multi-disciplinary program; there I focused on social and economic development, since it was clear to me then that this was the field I wanted to work in.

ZENNI: Okay. Prior to formally joining the Bank in May of '72 as technical assistant in the ED's [Executive Director's] offices--presumably, the U.S. ED's offices--you already had a succession of Bank assignments. Please discuss what eventually influenced your decision to join the Bank, and how did this actually come about.

MARSHALL: I did have a series of assignments with the Bank starting in 1968 when I was a summer intern working on public administration issues, in some senses during the very early days when the Bank was thinking about capacity and institutional development issues. After the MPA program, I stayed on at Princeton to work towards a Ph.D. in African and urban history and was doing doctoral research which focused on Morocco and Nigeria. During this period I did a series of consulting assignments (while I was supposed to be writing my thesis) with the Ford Foundation, U.S. AID [Agency for International Development], and also with the World Bank. The focus was urban development and public administration training, and again these were early days as the Bank began to grapple with these issues. Especially in urban development, I had the sense of being involved as thinking took shape, with the attendant excitement and sense of potential.

After I had worked over a period of several months as a Bank consultant, I happened to meet a classmate from Princeton in the street outside the H Building. After a brief catch-up, he said, "Hey, you know what? I'm just about to leave the U.S. Executive Director's Office. Would you possibly be interested?"

So I said, "Sure. I'll look at anything."

I had thought in very general terms about working with the Bank but was still not ready to settle into an institutional home at that stage. So there was a significant element of chance in the events that led me to the United States Executive Director's Office.

ZENNI: Okay. After that assignment, you became a member of the 1973 Young Professionals Program, and for the sake of users of oral history, I'll just give a bit of background on that. The Young Professionals Program, launched in ‘63 in the Bank, was designed to provide a cadre of exceptionally bright and academically well-trained young professionals who would look towards a long career in middle or senior management. So as a member of the ‘73 Young Professionals Program, please describe the nature of the training you received, and how did the experience influence your later career.

MARSHALL: Let me step back a second. The hiring in the Executive Director's Offices at that point was not a regular career hiring in the Bank, nor was it, as it is today, an assignment from the U.S. Treasury Department. Bob [Robert E.] Wieczorowski, who was the U.S. Executive Director at that time, in fact took considerable pride in one of the very first women to join the Executive Director’s offices. It was a fascinating year-and-a-half experience because it gave me an insight and a vision into the Bank at a leadership level, which is very difficult to come by in other ways. So I lived through more than a cycle of the Bank's year--the full cycle in the Board [of Executive Directors]. I had an opportunity to watch Robert McNamara as the President in daily action, the remarkable way that he managed the Board. I also got to know a number of senior managers in the Bank, including Peter Cargill, Roger Chaufournier, Bernard Chadenet, Warren Baum and many of the other leaders who I think we look back on as the greats of that time.

I knew by this point that I did want to join the Bank and was in the ironic position of having quite a few quite specific offers, including to work on the river blindness program in West Africa at its early stages, which I was dying to do, but I ran up against an administrative wall that I could not be hired except through the Young Professionals Program because there was a strict prohibition at that time on people under the age of 30, which I clearly was, joining the Bank by any other route. And so after considerable discussion, I was put into, rather reluctantly, the competitive pool for the Young Professionals Program, and fortunately for me, I was selected and, therefore, joined the Bank “proper.” At that point, I made a choice not to follow up on the jobs that I had been offered earlier but to use the opportunity of the Young Professionals program--which, at that point, involved two separate assignments of six months each--to do things that I had never done before.

And so the two assignments that I did were, first, to work for the country division in Madagascar where I was assigned as the notional loan officer to work on a particularly interesting livestock project in western Madagascar; this village-based project was linked to an ongoing, very problematic ranching project in the midwest region. So almost the day after I joined I was off to Madagascar with a mission that was headed by an Irish livestock specialist and included a Palestinian animal husbandry specialist, a French financial analyst, a Danish livestock specialist and a number of other characters who were also part of the team at different stages. That, my first assignment, has many stories associated with it (the appraisal mission coincided with a visit by McNamara to Madagascar and took place during a turbulent political period for the country).

My second assignment was working for an education division exclusively on projects for Bangladesh. There I was thrust immediately into an agricultural training project preparation that involved close work with the FAO [Food and Agriculture Organization] Cooperative Program based in Rome. So I spent, in that assignment, probably about three months in Bangladesh and a number of weeks in Rome being the liaison with the FAO Cooperative Program.

In both YP assignments I was clearly plunged into day-to-day work. There was no training of any kind at that stage nor was there a real cohort of young professionals and, looking back, I was quite terrified facing my assignments. I was labeled as an economist because that was the only appropriate category, even though my background was plainly multi-disciplinary and, in fact, I had done relatively little economics as part of my master's program. But I learned, first of all, how to learn, got some very good advice from people who became colleagues and friends on how to approach issues. Essentially, however, the training program at that point was learning by doing, first, and secondly, a very important element of mentoring, which was a key part of the role of the people that I worked with.

ZENNI: What are your views on the overall value-added aspects of the YP Program to the institution? And how would you answer criticisms over the years that managers who came through the YP Program were short on practical experience, especially in terms of people management?

MARSHALL: The Bank staff needs to be a mix of people who come from different backgrounds. In fact, one of the leading issues today is how we do define diversity because it should include diversity in backgrounds and diversity in experience as well as diversity in ways of thinking and approaching issues. A Bank entirely made up of Young Professionals would be seriously wanting, but the Young Professionals group is a remarkable way of attracting what is a widely varied, extraordinarily selective group of people.

I served on the YP Selection Committee for a number of years, have mentored countless YPs over the years, have given much input into the design of the program, and I have a number of views on it. I think that it is not sufficiently focused on some of the elements of diversity. It is also, in many ways, a crapshoot, because with the very large pool of remarkable people and the very small number that are selected, it's clear that many wonderful people are passed over. Sometimes the people who are selected tend to be wonderfully qualified on paper and perhaps wonderfully qualified in communications skills but may not have some of the wisdom and feistiness which tends to be rather selected out in the process because one false move essentially disqualifies someone from the process.

I also would say that today's Young Professionals perhaps have less opportunity for the kind of mentoring that I and my colleagues had in the early time. The divisions, the units were more coherent. It was more possible at that time to see a young person as an asset to the institution and, therefore, to invest in them. Today, people tend, in the matrix structure of shifting units and responsibilities, to be thrust even more into the fray than they were in the past.

ZENNI: After completion of your YP training, at a time of great expansion in the Bank and intense focus on agriculture and rural development under then President McNamara, you joined the Eastern Africa Region in September '74 where you remained through early '86, working on projects focused exclusively on agriculture. Please discuss your initial responsibilities as an economist, how your assignment developed and evolved, and what objectives did you set for yourself.

MARSHALL: I joined the division with which I had worked with most closely during my first YP assignment, which was headed by Mike [Michael J.] Walden. At that time, it was one of two agriculture divisions in what was called the East Africa Region, and at that time it was responsible for livestock and agricultural credit and, I believe, irrigation. I continued to work, after I joined, on the Madagascar livestock project which I had worked on the previous year, and it was an intensive exercise. One of my early assignments, which was a remarkable learning experience, was to prepare a completion report, one of the earlier evaluation exercises in the Bank, on the disastrous livestock project in the Tsiroanmandidy region of Madagascar. I had independent responsibility for that exercise, and at the same time that I continued to work on the appraisal of the new, second livestock project.

I also worked on the appraisal of a dairy project in Tanzania that was also memorable. The mission came during a period of two months in Tanzania which essentially coincided with the peak of the period of villagization (when large numbers of Tanzanians were forced into village settlements). We reported these developments, and they sparked lively discussions with the program team which were reluctant to accept the negative aspects of the reports.

Over a relatively short period, I found myself carrying mission leader responsibilities for quite a number of projects in Rwanda, Botswana, Swaziland, eventually Kenya, with an intensive, demanding and varied work program. During that period the mandate of the division, the structure of the division changed. Reorganizations tend to punctuate all of our lives in the Bank. In this case, the division's mandate was changed from functional to geographic, and three geographically-based agriculture divisions were established. These three more classic agriculture divisions had to relate to a central rural development division. These were interesting times indeed.

As you had mentioned, rural development was a key issue for the Bank, but the rural development program was, in fact, run by a separate Bank-wide unit that reported directly to McNamara and was headed by Leif Christoffersen. So two of the issues that I dealt with in varying ways over this period were, first, the rather complex and sometimes tense relationships between the traditional agriculture programs and the effort to introduce a new approach termed rural development and, secondly, the early stages of work on structural adjustment and on macroeconomic reform.

This period from the 1974 through the early 1980s was a time when the course of Africa veered between optimism and a realization that many countries were facing very severe problems. Within the Bank, one of the interesting issues was that there tended to be very different views of what was happening between what were called the programs divisions at the time, which took a country approach, which handled the macroeconomic analysis and dialogue, and the project world. I was very much a project person, working intensively on supervision, preparation, completion, appraisal and sometimes--though in a pragmatic way rather than in a purely economically-based way--on sector analysis, and we tended to see quite a different Africa than many of our colleagues in the programs divisions. So there was--and I became involved in the debates and tensions quite early on.

From my first mission to Tanzania in 1974, the dairy project, where our team became deeply concerned with what was happening with villagization, we were conscious of the dichotomy of views. At that time, both the country division and the rural development division had an ebullient view of Tanzania's management, and its outlook tended to be quite positive about the villagization programs. Our agriculture division, in contrast, saw the enormous disruption on the ground: villages literally bulldozed, people moved to totally inappropriate areas near the main highways. When I came back and told my division chief in some horror these stories, he asked me to write a memorandum about the villagization developments as we had seen them. He had asked me to write this account quite deliberately, knowing the stir that it would cause. It did create havoc and thrust me into what was perhaps not a very welcome limelight as a very young woman in a period when there were almost no women around who appeared to be challenging the accepted wisdom, including the relationship between Mr. McNamara and [Julius] Nyerere, who was then President of Tanzania.

We had quite similar issues in Madagascar where, again, there was quite a positive perspective of what was happening in Madagascar at senior levels, but it was a period after the French were essentially being thrown out of Madagascar (from 1972-3). Many people call it the true independence of Madagascar, and we were seeing an unraveling of many institutions, livestock institutions, irrigation institutions, and the beginning of a visionary perhaps, idealistic perhaps, but deeply flawed process of state involvement in agricultural production which ultimately lead to disaster in terms of the individual projects and the economy as a whole. We also were very conscious, from where we sat, of the deepening xenophobia towards not only foreigners, particularly French, but other foreigners as well, also foreign ideas. Perhaps the most dramatic was the rejection at that stage of the findings of the international agricultural research community--for example, on rice varieties but also on livestock--with an assumption that it was indigenous solutions that would work the best. So we were involved in many efforts, including stratagems to try to encourage what we saw as an essential opening of Madagascar to what was happening in the rest of the world.

But these were very difficult times. This was not apparent in the early days. So the projects that I supervised--including projects that I had prepared myself, but generally projects that I inherited--were often classified as problem projects. We struggled to solve the problems but came to see increasingly that there were two issues that stood in the way of project success, at least two major issues. The first was major issues of capacity and of institutional ability to implement, so that ideas simply were not translated into practice. So we were one of the very early teams in the Bank that became interested in public administration. There were no public administration specialists in the Bank then and in institutional development and capacity. Secondly, we also became keenly aware that nothing could succeed in the kind of macroeconomic environment, that institutions that had taken decades to build, for example, in Madagascar, could effectively be undermined and even eliminated in a period of weeks or months. We saw this happening time and time again.

ZENNI: In April '79, you were promoted to division chief. Please discuss how this came about, what did promotion to a line manager entail in terms of additional responsibilities, and what were the challenges you faced.

MARSHALL: I had played a leadership role within my division, which I credit very much to three people who were my mentors in an intense way during this period. One was Mike Walden, the division chief; the second was Jim [James B.] Hendry, who was the assistant director for projects; and the third was Hans Adler, who was the project director. So even though I was a young woman in my early twenties, almost from the beginning they had assigned leadership responsibility to me. I handled--which was perhaps not a great gift--some of the most difficult issues and problems that the division faced, notably an irrigation project, the Morondave irrigation project in Madagascar, and some other extremely difficult issues. So when Mike Walden was assigned to work in Indonesia, he recommended that I be considered as his successor.

At that time, the selection of the division chiefs was largely within the hands of the line managers of the department. Not, I think, without qualms, but with great hope and, I think, with a real interest in seeing the new face for leadership in the sector and in the Bank, Jim Hendry and Hans Adler appointed me as division chief. Willi Wapenhans, who was the vice president at the time, had considerable qualms about my appointment (I know because he told me so), but he agreed to my appointment. I think they saw it as a very risky and bold move.

I was one of the very first women division chiefs in the Bank at that time, and in an improbable sector because agriculture had really been a bastion of some of the colonial people for whom working with women and seeing women in leadership was truly a challenge. Their doubts started from the very practical level: how, they asked, could you possibly have women on your team since they would demand special favors and would need a special place to sleep? They were afraid that women would not be able to deal with bugs and snakes and hard journeys all the way through. They looked at the demands and wondered whether somebody young could handle them. I had some advantages. Obviously, I had extensive experience at that stage in working in those countries. I was fully fluent in French and, therefore, able to work in the range of countries. It was largely a francophone division at that time. There weren't that many people who could be considered who had my level of French as well as the knowledge. But it was, above all, the faith of Jim Hendry and Hans Adler, who, I think, were shaped by having strong-minded daughters themselves, by seeing the revolution that was taking place in society, and who therefore were willing to give it a try. So I was appointed, to some excitement among my colleagues, to the unease of some, and essentially translated or transferred from being a senior task leader within the unit to having responsibility for what was a very large agricultural division and actually became a substantially larger one over the course of time.

ZENNI: Is there anything you wish to add as to how easy and/or difficult it was to be a woman division chief back in the Bank in '79?

MARSHALL: It was clearly quite difficult, partly because a significant number of people were very skeptical that a woman could handle that kind of responsibility, both within the Bank but perhaps even more, from their perspective, vis-a-vis government officials. What I found was that you had to prove yourself again and again, and that was true in countries with government officials but much more within the Bank. In other words, it proved to be much more difficult inside than Bank than elsewhere. So I and a number of colleagues at that time took what I called my "Annie Get Your Gun" approach, which was anything you can do, we can do. We would never have asked for favors. We were always very clear that we would go anywhere, that I would go anywhere, and the same was true of my colleagues, that we were as tough as anyone else, that we did not make any demands.

This was particularly complex for me because I began, not very long after this started--in fact, before I had even been appointed--the very complex process of trying to have children. I did not know then, but it did become clear over time, that this was not going to be a simple process for me because I had many medical difficulties that unfolded. My later pregnancies were high-risk with various complications which resulted in many miscarriages, including three while I was on mission. Eventually--in fact, in 1979, just about the time that I was appointed--I miraculously carried the baby to full term, but the baby died shortly after she was born. And so I was constantly torn between medical advice, which was to stay in bed for months and months at a time, and my sense of responsibility of what I was trying to do. I was torn also between seeing the realities that women in East Africa faced in childbirth and my own relatively privileged position. The good news here is that, in 1980, I did have a baby, my daughter Laura, who is now 26 years old; 10 years later, after further dramas, I had a son, who is now 16, and I'm now happily retired from that business.

But, again, this was unprecedented, and it put all of us in a difficult position. My view was that whether I worked and traveled was my choice and my responsibility. It was not easy, as we were working with very poor communities where women had nothing, and it was very difficult for me to say, "I'm not going to travel because of a small risk that I might be pregnant or that I might have to take malaria pills," when I was working with people whose lives were so much more fragile. And so I probably took some risks that others would not have taken, but I was very conscious of being pulled in those different directions, so that was a part of life. I should also say, as a historian, that I was married at the time to another Bank staff member, Tom [Thomas A.] Blinkhorn. We juggled our careers, travels, and parental responsibilities quite successfully over many years, though our marriage came to an end in 1996.

The other issue that I came to see is that whereas the image was that government officials would find it difficult to work with women--African senior government officials--there were two factors that were at work that were interesting. First, because I had been working for a long time on the countries, I knew many of the people extremely well, including a number who rose to prominent positions. When I became division chief, they also had more senior positions, so we were very good friends and colleagues and knew each other very well. This was an important element, and I viewed many of the people I worked with as true colleagues. They were quite often in my own age cohort. In other words, they were relatively young, and we had an important experience working together. They came to my house, I went to theirs, and so that was an important element of collegiality. The second was that I found that, whereas there were some situations where it was difficult to be a woman--I didn't play golf, or there were some cases when drinking parties were at issue, or other areas where I would not have fit in because I was a woman and many of my male colleagues might have--there was also, however, a degree to which people confided in me in ways that they would not have confided in male colleagues, that they took me into their confidence, that they shared things with me, that I had insights that others would not. So it is a complicated issue, but it clearly was not the simple scenario of rejection that many had envisaged.

Another element that came increasingly onto my horizon during this period was my involvement in the consultative group process as well as in country policy meetings, for example, at the Annual Meetings. The consultative groups were chaired by the vice president, Willi Wapenhans, and later by Shahid Husain, who was country director--I came, in other words, to work a lot with people who were primarily focused on the country side and became involved in broader issues because the agricultural sector was so important in that broader picture. It was an interesting experience, sometimes very frustrating, because I found, for example, that the agricultural issues were never seen initially as important. But time and time again--for example, during Annual Meetings--I would be called on at the very last minute to come to meetings because the problems came up as critical policy issues and practical issues. And, likewise, I would be pulled at the last minute into consultative group meetings.

The final issue I could mention that was very important was that I learned how to manage from other people, from watching other people, from good examples and from bad. One area that I focused on a great deal, that I enjoyed and care about to this day, was attracting younger people and helping them, working with them. So I had many wonderful people working in the division who play important roles in the Bank now. To cite just two examples, Pamela Cox and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala both were part of the division early in their careers, but there were many others who I worked with very closely who became both colleagues and friends, and we learned from each other.

ZENNI: How would you describe the adequacy of Bank interventions in East Africa at that time, including the adequacy of Bank instruments in tackling the many challenges dealing with governance failures, corruption, et cetera?

MARSHALL: We thought a great deal about those issues. As I mentioned earlier, I and a number of colleagues came early on to a very strong awareness of the institutional weaknesses and capacity shortages that were major impediments to development. They were dramatic in all of the countries that I worked on in the region at that time, and there were very few instruments to help us in addressing them. What I learned though, also--and I carried that conviction throughout my career--was that you could do many, many things that seemed impossible if you had a good idea and you were determined to do it. So, in fact, we did many very experimental things that had not been done before or had been done very rarely during those days in East Africa. I hired a public administration specialist, worked with a variety of consultants, hired anthropologists to try to help us understand the social situation. We were very aware that, in those very fluid fast-changing situations, project plans changed constantly, so we designed projects that had in-built not only mid-term reviews but annual reviews. The projects were structured so that these annual reviews were the basis of real planning and decisions, not simply a check as to whether things were working. The concept was that projects evolved over time and that they were not fixed in stone. We also looked a lot at how you could assess the social impact of programs and measures. We were very conscious of the policy dimensions.

One area which was highly experimental and unusual at the time was an exercise termed the Budget Task Force in Kenya. This was an exercise which aimed at reforming the budget process of the government (and to some extent of donors). It grew from recognition that the project approach of looking at a small geographical area or subsector or institutional issue in the overall context made no sense and could not work. And so in all of the countries or the three major countries of the division--which were Kenya, Madagascar and Zaire--we pushed for public expenditure reviews and budget reform in order to try to set the activities that we were doing in a much broader context. These brought us very closely into the world of the structural adjustment programs which were unfolding at that time, often in a difficult way, and, in fact, also brought us--which was, again, very unusual--into relationships with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). One of my young staff members, Tina Kimes, participated in a Fund mission as an agricultural staff member--again, very unusual. She was asked to participate in the Fund mission in order to address the issues of agricultural parastatals as this was emerging as a major policy and fiscal issue for Madagascar at that time.

Over the period, the depth of the issues became increasingly clear, and in a sense the micro and macro visions began to converge with a new sense of concern for the future course of Africa. Elliot Berg was involved in a major region-wide review of the issues. I was part of the review team that was assembled, rather hastily, to comment on the very controversial report that he prepared at that time [*Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa,* 1981]. In parallel, I became increasingly involved in thinking about technical assistance and its flaws and the issues it raised, both in the region and at the Bank-wide level. We came to see very clearly how the failures of agricultural policy was having effects at the national levels but even more how the failures of national policy was making it almost impossible to deal with agriculture.

ZENNI: Today, again the spotlight is on Africa. What is your opinion of this renewed emphasis, also in the context of lessons learned, and what more do you think still needs to be done? What have we learned today about our interventions back then in Africa?

MARSHALL: We have never, I think, as an institution, fully lost our focus on Africa. All the leaders at the Bank have seen that the work, the reputation, and the moral standing of the Bank depend in large measure on how well it is able to help in Africa and how wisely it sees the issues that face this continent. There has been much learning from experience, much conscious, with clear reports, and also much that is ingrained in the institutional cultures.

In addition to the classic lessons, I would suggest one other, reflected in today's worries that the Bank's work in agriculture has declined so sharply. I see this as in significant measure the consequence of the great difficulty that the Bank encountered in working in agriculture and perhaps most of all in livestock and irrigation, the pain and frustration that resulted from year upon year of difficult and often not very successful effort to support agricultural projects of many kinds—credit, rural development, irrigation, livestock and so on--which went sour. So many projects faced such monumental difficulties, among them the Morondave, Lac Alaotra irrigation projects in Madagascar, the Tana project in Kenya, Gezira project in Sudan, livestock projects in Zaire, Kenya, Madagascar, Botswana, Sudan, difficulties right across the board in Tanzania. All this resulted effectively in the Bank pulling back from many of those approaches. What was unfortunate about that was that, while it clearly made no sense to forge ahead with programs and directions that weren't working, the knowledge that we gained through the interactions was invaluable knowledge, both for us personally but much more for the institution. And I have a sense that because we pulled back, we lost some of the advantage that we had gained then of an in-depth knowledge of people and institutions.

In a sense, we turned our back perhaps just at the time when we were ready to benefit from the lessons.

I just recently was in Davos at the World Economic Forum meeting and attended a lunch that was discussing “new” approaches to agriculture in Africa. It was startling that almost everything that was said, whether by Mr. [Paul D.] Wolfowitz, by the president of Tanzania, by some of the private sector actors, was very little different from what we had thought and said in the 1970s and the 1980s in terms of the understanding of the importance of agriculture, the obstacles, and what needed to be done. I was saddened and rather disturbed by the lack of a sense of the lessons learnt. There was a sense that this was a new insight not that it was a renewal of what had been a major part of the history of development. So I think that, as I look back, there were many lessons that were learned and that the pain and the difficulty led to too much of a pulling back; the merits of what we were trying to do is affirmed by the new focus on these areas.

ZENNI: Okay. How do you look back on this assignment in terms of accomplishments, and what impact, if any, did this particular experience in East Africa have in shaping your future views on development?

MARSHALL: The period from 1974 to 1986, when I moved to Latin America, was a very critical, formative period in my own development and clearly has shaped the way I've looked at development. It has given me a great deal of humility because it was a time when all of our hopes--everyone's hopes: country leaders, the Bank managers, those of us who were in the field--were constantly disappointed. It was, therefore, a period of tremendous learning. I came away from it as a very strong pragmatist or pragmatic idealist or an idealistic pragmatist, something that has never left me. And I still will always approach problems with that very practical, on-the-ground sense that was at the essence of the ethos of the agricultural staff at that time.

I also came with a very keen awareness of the way in which macroeconomic policy and field-level issues do and do not intersect and with a sense that there is a point at the middle where too often they don't meet. I started, to be very honest, with great skepticism about the role of the macroeconomic analysis, because from where I sat I could see how often the analysis that I saw in reports and heard in meetings was fundamentally wrong in its understanding–for example, in how the economists thought that prices were set and the role that real incentives played. There was above all a consistent failure to appreciate the importance of the implementation side of things, how ideas and policies were translated into practice, both politically and administratively. Over time, though, I came to have far more respect for economic analysis as I came to understand the failures of policy prescriptions and their impact on the ground and as the economic teams came to be more realistic over the course of that period. Nonetheless, I still emerged with a very deep sense that interdisciplinary approaches were the essence of what the Bank could contribute.

I also, through that period, was deeply steeped in and involved in understanding what it meant to be a leader and a manager. For many reasons, the early parts were shaped primarily by an understanding of how you survived and practiced in the Bank culture, how you dealt with budgets. For example, I remember someone telling me very early on that you must never give up on a budget issue because if you start giving up, you'll have your resources taken away, the importance of acting in the first part of the fiscal year because of the knowledge that at the end of the fiscal year it would always be a very different picture than at the beginning. So that I evolved through my early years with a sense that very detailed planning was not very worthwhile because plans never seemed to come into reality.

I learned a great deal about people. I was involved in this stage in some of the early management training programs and, overall, benefited from quite a range of formal training exercises, although I don't recall exactly when different management programs were introduced. But through these formal programs, as well as through experience, I gained a lot of insight into my own style which I had not thought about very much before. For example, I gained an appreciation that I was very much somebody who liked broad visions and directions but was not very interested in specific details and structures, that I needed always to have people around me who were much more attuned to the details than I tended to be myself. I learned that I worked far better with certain people than others so that tended to generate polarized views about me. I was struck that whenever I gave presentations--and I was giving many presentations throughout these years, to new staff orientations, to journalists, and so on--that there would tend to be very polarized views of my performance with, frankly, very high evaluations overall, but almost always someone who simply hated me in every group. So I knew that I needed to learn better how to manage the people who did not fit my style, so I developed my ideas and approaches about managing and leading people.

I became interested, very interested in issues of institutional development and technical assistance. We became concerned from what we saw in Zaire, but also in Kenya and Madagascar, about the very complex issues that we saw on the ground around corruption and what we could do about it. So all of these issues which have become central issues now were very present for us in very vivid ways, and they were a central part of what we did.

ZENNI: Moving on to the Latin America assignment. March of '86 you moved to the Latin America Country Programs Department as division chief, where you remained until the mid-'90s. Please discuss the circumstances of your move, including the shift from project to program lending, what were your main responsibilities, and what did you set out accomplish.

MARSHALL: For several years before I transferred to Latin America, I had been told by senior managers, including Ernie [Ernest] Stern, then senior vice president, it was clearly time for me to move. I was less enthusiastic than they were and did not push to move, though I was interviewed for a few jobs along the way. I was very happy doing what I was doing. With my personal issues of childbearing and raising a very small child and managing travel and the craziness of the Bank, I think I had a sense, consciously or unconsciously, that I was better off where I knew what I was doing rather than embarking on entirely new ventures in parts of the world that I didn't know. There were a couple of jobs I would have liked to have had, but in general I thought I was learning, I knew that it was a very critical time in Africa, and I was reluctant to leave my division.

At that time, by the way--and this is parenthetically--there were three very large divisions in East Africa with 30, 40 people in each. We were managing, in my division, the Nairobi group of agriculture staff in the regional office as well as a large headquarters-based staff, so the challenges were growing. It seemed an exciting time. There were three agriculture division chiefs, very different characters but all known as very strong-minded: Chris [Christopher H.] Walton, Steve [Stephen D.] Eccles, and I.

So I did not feel the compulsion to move on. But Ernie Stern eventually told me and told my boss, in fact, that my career was being mismanaged. And I learned, with some consternation, that there had actually been an issues paper prepared on my career with options identified for what could be done to get me moved--I was seen, at that time, as an asset. Because I was one of the few women, I was seen as someone who had potential, but I was also seen as perhaps a little bit out of the mold, which I always have been through my entire career. So Ernie finally put his foot down and basically said, "She's going to be moved, and she's going to be placed, like it or not." The options, as I said, were identified. I was not, of course, consulted in any way on this, and I was informed one day that I was to be assigned to a division in Latin America that was a new division being created under the country director, Andre Gue. I was to be responsible for Bolivia, which was the central core of the new division, Paraguay and Uruguay. I knew a little bit about Bolivia, but I had to look up Paraguay and Uruguay on the map.

I was very uneasy, because my record--at least my written record at the Bank--suggested I had no Spanish, and I knew from working in francophone countries how important language was. The fact of the matter was that I spoke more Spanish than they knew because I had studied it in school, a little bit in university, and at one stage I had been able to speak it, but my Spanish was very weak at that point. So I knew nothing about Latin America, had very limited Spanish, and seemed to have no particular gift or reason for the assignment that I was appointed to. But, as I said, I wasn't given a choice and so I moved on. I'm trying to remember. I think I was pregnant at the time as well, but it was one of the miscarriages that I had because I know I was always aware in a rather ironic way that every time I was promoted, I was pregnant, which my bosses often did not know about, so I had to manage that aspect of my career. So I moved on from the very remarkable learning period, the years that I had spent in Eastern Africa.

The division that I was appointed to had been created by splitting an existing division. The main rationale for the reorganization was the challenge that was presented by Bolivia with its new government that came to power in 1985. The new government was responsible for a country in total disaster with, at that point, 25,000 percent inflation. It had a team of remarkable people under a president who had, in fact, been responsible for a socialist nationalization years before but was now determined in his second chance at power to change and to save his country. So it was seen as a very critical period where the Bank had the opportunity to play a very central role. Paraguay and Uruguay were much less challenging, but they were part of the division during that early period. So I came into the division, determined myself (though I must say without an equal determination on the part of my bosses) to learn Spanish, and therefore entered into a very intense learning period which also coincided with a need to build a division out of almost nothing. I spent, therefore, a number of months in the division in that configuration.

I devoted some time to working on Paraguay and Uruguay. I visited both of them and came to know and understand something about those countries. However, the vast majority of my time was spent working on Bolivia. The country director, Andre Gue, had overall responsibilities, but he was much more occupied with other countries which were also demanding and in crisis at that time. Thus, de facto the challenge of Bolivia was one that fell or that came into my lap.

It was an exciting period also--one that I look back on as one of the most dramatic and most interesting of my career--because of several special factors. First, there was the remarkable team in Bolivia. Goni Sanchez de Lozada, who later became president, was the planning minister; Fernando Romero, a remarkable person also, was deeply involved; Fernando Illanes and a number of other brilliant people. This was the heyday of Jeff [Jeffrey D.] Sachs in Bolivia, and we were often in contact. I was able, with the team, to play very unusual roles in strategic thinking. I invited a Member of Parliament in England--who I had been at a conference in Japan roughly a year-and-a-half earlier, a remarkable conference run by the Japan Junior Chamber of Commerce for what were described as future world leaders, young world leaders--so the Member of Parliament, Colin Moyniahan, who I met there, came to Bolivia to do a strategic review of issues for private investment. David Morowitz, an eclectic economist, undertook an assignment to think strategically about where Bolivia could go after it had lost its tin and natural gas resources. Bowman Cutter, who had worked with me in Kenya and who had been a major figure in the Carter White House and had worked in the Office of Management and Budget, was part of our effort to reform budget processes in Kenya and Zaire, and he also went to Bolivia to look at budget processes. So we were able to bring in some very high-powered thinkers and met a receptive voice at the other end. With Nancy Barry, we became involved in thinking about financial management. With Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, we became very much involved in the municipality of La Paz (which had a remarkable mayor at the time, Ronald Maclean).

We were asked very early on to get involved in an issue the Bank had never been involved in before, which was the drug economy. And since Bolivia was so much involved in narcotics production and it was so controversial with the U.S. government, it seemed a logical thing to do, but that the issue proved to be quite contentious within the Bank. So within months of joining the Bolivian division, I found myself involved in a wide range of what again were very unusual, demanding, and fascinating issues.

So I studied Spanish in the bathtub, on vacation, with tapes, practiced it and came to learn quite a bit, but also focused on the division and the substantive issues on the agenda.

ZENNI: Okay. And I know you spoke a little to this, but I'll ask it anyway. How did your previous experience in East Africa help you tackle the challenges in Latin America?

MARSHALL: I had the advantage of being fairly familiar with how the Bank's processes worked from start to finish because I had, at one time or another, been involved in virtually every type of work that the Bank had done from macroeconomic relations with the IMF, project supervision, project appraisal, project preparation, sector work, consultative groups, et cetera, so that I had a substantial body of experience. I also had quite a bit of experience in managing a division and people, so there were not very many surprises that could come to me from the Bank's policy perspective. I came to the new job with a very clear pragmatic focus on how things worked and a keen interest in the institutional issues, and I had come to have a much better appreciation of how the Bank worked at a macroeconomic level, though that was never my central focus. To me, the economics always seemed an instrument and not the central focus of what we were doing, so I was very much a project person who grew into a country person, rather than an economist who grew into a country leader. There are the different species.

ZENNI: Soon after you moved to the LAC region, the Bank underwent its first institution-wide reorganization under then President [Barber B.] Conable in July of '87. Please discuss your general assessment of the impact on the institution and on your work in particular.

MARSHALL: The 1987 reorganization was a period of great turmoil which still gives many who lived through it shudders. I was not at that time involved, except peripherally, in the thinking about the reorganization. There were groups of people who went off and planned it. I think I participated in a couple of what would be called focus groups or discussions but was immersed in the day-to-day life of Bolivia.

But there were two phases here, or let's say there are three phases that are worth focusing on. The first was the impact of the uncertainties of the period that led up to the reorganization. The second was the actual process of being selected in (or not). And then the third was the very difficult process of rebuilding a new division.

So, first, during the periods of turbulence and uncertainty that surround impending reorganizations, characteristically the Bank tends to focus inwards and a lot of things don't get decided because no one knows what's going to happen. I was fortunate--I think because of the alignment of people and perhaps because of a stubborn streak of character--to be able to use that period of uncertainty to do things that would probably not have been possible at other times. And one of the things that we did was that we moved very rapidly with lending operations in Bolivia, including one that has had far-ranging repercussions, which was the Emergency Social Fund. It was the first social fund project that was supported, explicitly, by the Bank. It came out of insights from several of the strategic exercises I alluded to earlier, from the sense at the time (and concern) that the macroeconomic reform--which Jeff Sachs was deeply involved in and which he and the Bolivian team (Sanchez de Lozada, Romero, and others) had prided themselves on--could not succeed without more explicit and focused attention to its social repercussions. My colleagues, the politician from England, the politician who knows the U.S. White House, and the other strategists, brought that home to us strongly. Jeff Sachs also, who was very much involved in our thinking, came to see social action as an imperative. So the question was, "What should we do?" We knew that we needed to do something that was significant and visible on the social side.

What was remarkable, even wonderful, was that we were actually able to bring a lot of views into the thinking process about what to do. We organized a special brainstorming meeting at MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] with various intellectual leaders reflecting on the kinds of programs that had worked and those that had not. We were able to send people out to Bolivia to think about and explore what could be done. I worked very closely and personally with Fernando Romero, and in what was record time at that period we got approval to support a pilot program which was succeeded six months later by phase two. Right in the midst of the reorganization, we put forward a project which was unprecedented and which is seen still as the first of a very large group of projects that are called the Social Fund Family and generation. So that action and innovation was shaped right in the heat of battle of the reorganization; that historical twist and chance has special importance because I still wonder if it could have been done at another time.

As the reorganization rumors unfolded, I found myself devastated at the quite real prospect that in a new configuration I would not be working on Bolivia. I knew, because of conversations that I had, that the configuration of divisions was initially to have me moving north, but ultimately the allocation of countries to departments was shaped by some of the relationships involved. The Bolivians, who had been perhaps rather skeptical about me in the beginning, had come to see me as a major ally, and so I know that they also sought to have me continue on Bolivia. So what eventually came out of the reorganization process was that I was appointed to a division that included Bolivia, Columbia, and Venezuela under Ping Loh, who I had worked with in East Africa, under the new vice president, Shahid Husain. Thus, the new Latin American management team, post reorganization, included people who knew me and I knew well, so that we were able very quickly to form an effective team in the newly reorganized set-up. It was, in fact, through cafeteria conversations with Shahid Husain that I was able to get an agreement that we would move ahead with the Social Fund project right in the midst of the impending reorganization. It was in conversations with Ping Loh and with Shahid that the actual configuration of countries was worked out, so that I found myself, when the reorganization dust settled, with the Country Program Division or it was the country division that included Bolivia, Columbia, and Venezuela.

ZENNI: How would you assess the Bank's burgeoning efforts at addressing social issues during that period in the '80s, emphasizing the social dimension of development and recognizing that economic growth is only one part of development? And how did the Bank’s focus on social issues--and, you have already spoken a little to that--impact your endeavors?

MARSHALL: For me, the focus on social issues was a complete organic part of development work and it was an interest from the very beginning. It came, perhaps, first from my interest in sociology and anthropology, which I had from graduate school; secondly, my experience in working in agricultural projects and agricultural and rural issues in Eastern Africa; and then the unmistakable evidence of social issues and pressures in strikes and unrest that were part of the reform process in Bolivia. The issues that I was less familiar with at that stage and which were more difficult to cope with were the way in which the Bank was beginning to be involved in social issues as social forces which came, at least in part, through the lens of dam resettlements and the protests that were beginning to coalesce around the Bank's involvement in certain kinds of projects. Those were not my experience simply because of the places where I was working.

In Bolivia, also, the challenges for indigenous populations posed quite murky issues since most Bolivians were indigenous. For example, as we began to focus attention on the development of the eastern lowlands of Bolivia, we encountered criticisms from environmental specialists concerned about the potential damage to the environment, including indigenous cultures in the east because of what was clearly emerging as a development thrust. It was difficult for me to frame those issues in an environment where the tensions between Bolivia's white and indigenous populations were so complex and so deeply embedded in the history and political challenges facing Bolivia. So the social issues that I focused on were very much the issues of the immediate present, including the impact of reform measures on different groups and the broader political repercussions for the government.

The question of how the Bank was perceived was also an issue, but our real concern was that in a framework where reform was so clearly imperative, the Bank needed both to be and to be seen to be responsive to the social welfare issues, to the costs of the transition, the cost of adjustment, you might say. These issues were foremost for us then, more than the issues which, in fact, today are very central in Bolivia: the tensions that are coming out of the rural popular movements.

As I look back on Bolivia at that period and the Bank's role, I ask myself both about "sins of commission"--that is, the things that we did--and perhaps the virtues of commission, the things that we did well and the things that we did badly, but also the "sins of omission," what are the issues that we didn't see, what were the things that we didn't do that we might have done. In the Bolivia of that time of the late 1980s, questions about the education and health infrastructure were ones that were very difficult for us to address because the teachers were so hostile to both the government and to the Bank so that we had great difficulty in becoming as involved as we might have been in those issues, those social issues.

So, in other words, there is a raft of different social issues. The Bank's approach to dividing them today is, in fact, a very atypical one in the outside world. How we define social development is quite unique to the Bank. The issues, the broader social issues, the ones that I saw then, in fact, I continue to see as the ones that I believe deserve our focus, in all their messiness and complexity.

ZENNI: Looking back on your accomplishments in this assignment, how would you assess the evolution of Bank interventions in that region, and what, in your opinion, still needs to be done in the Latin America region in general?

MARSHALL: Let me go back to a part of the reorganization story that I missed in the previous segment: the challenges of the reorganization which involved rebuilding both a division and the relationship, particularly where Columbia and Venezuela were concerned. That was a major focus of the work that I did during the period 1996-2000. Columbia was a complex country then, to put it mildly. One practical aspect was that the upheavals in personnel after the reorganization were particularly vivid there, and several people who had been deeply involved in Columbia left abruptly with much work unfinished, which is a continuing frustration to me. However, the sharp break and the legacies of boxes of unfinished work forced us into a fresh start in looking at Columbia, looking at strategy. So some of the exercises that I was involved in during that period were the early PFPs (policy framework papers) in Bolivia, very complex country-assistance strategy exercises in Columbia, and a renewed relationship with Venezuela, which could be termed a de-graduation. Venezuela had graduated from Bank lending but needed to come back in that period, so it was one of the early de-graduations.

We did a lot of exciting work in the division, and there were wonderful people working with us, among them Peter Miovic and Frank Lysy. Bill [William R.] Easterly was involved in the division at that time. I came to appreciate and value immensely the great skill of economic analysis and the economic hierarchy in the Bank, which had far more relevance and impact here than it had in the confusing days in East Africa. The path or the field of Columbia lent itself to very skillful, sophisticated economic analysis, as did Venezuela, in a way that I had never seen in Eastern Africa where economics was based on much, much weaker data and a much, much different environment. So I came away with a sense of the vital importance of excellence in economic analysis from Columbia and Venezuela, but also two things: the importance of the interdisciplinary approach in our strategy processes, and the importance and potential of taking advantage of targets of opportunity like government transitions.

On interdisciplinary approaches, I could see clearly in the Bank’s work in the countries the real need to bring together the projects and the economic experience. As we looked at the importance of education reforms, for example, the significance of the conflicts in Columbia which were taking place and which were affecting economic performance, we needed the full arsenal of intellectual tools we could find.

As to targets of opportunity, Venezuela presented what seemed then a golden window. We had a unique opportunity there, as we had earlier during the exciting nation building period in Bolivia, and both served as a model for me that I have carried into future work. In both cases, the Bank had the privilege of being deeply involved in intensive reflection with a broad group from government about future strategies and directions. In Bolivia, we spent a week with the entire economic team and parts of the opposition talking about Bolivia's strategy. The venue was the Yungas region, and there we helped to organize a remarkable strategy session that still today echoes the central strategic issues facing Bolivia and many other places. In Venezuela, working with UNDP [United Nations Development Program], the Bank, through Frank Lysy, led an extraordinary futures review of options for a new government that was coming to power with the government, civil society groups, past and future leaders, and a raft of experts from around the world. The team helped to produce an options review for the new government of the policies that they might pursue and the potential design of those policies. The idea that we had a special opportunity as the Bank when there was a change of government to stand in a special advisory role was one that was tested and developed through the Venezuela experience.

So, at last, to answer your question, I went from a situation of knowing virtually nothing about Latin America to a situation where I had lived through an exciting and turbulent period in three countries in particular but also to some extent in Paraguay and Uruguay. I had come to understand the strength of the country as well as the project perspective on development and had been able also to develop my confidence in the potential strength of the Bank as a partner and as an advisor if we used a much wider range of tools than we had traditionally done.

ZENNI: In July of 1990 you were promoted to director of the Africa Sahelian Department where you stayed on until September of '94. Please discuss the circumstances of your promotion, what did it entail in terms of additional responsibilities, and what did you set out to accomplish.

MARSHALL: In the period around 1990, there was another reorganization in the Africa region, and as part of that the vice president for the region, Kim [Edward V.K.] Jaycox, called me one day.

ZENNI: Was that after the '87 reorganization in Africa?

MARSHALL: It followed the 1987 reorganization, and it was part of a major change. The critical point for me was that a shift of country directors took place. The country director for the Sahelian Department, Mike [Michael J.] Gillette, had moved and there was a change in configuration with a number of appointments that were being made. In that new configuration, I got a phone call one day from Kim Jaycox telling me that I had been appointed the country director. I remember this quite distinctly because at that time I was also pregnant with what I knew was a very high risk pregnancy that carried very uncertain outcomes. If Kim had asked me if I wished to be considered for the job, I would have felt compelled to tell him about my rather complex situation, but since he simply told me that I had been appointed, I did not feel that compelled, and since there was so much uncertainty about my pregnancy I went forward and waited until several months afterwards to tell both him and Moeen Qureshi, who was the senior vice president, about it. I wish that I had a photograph of their faces when I told them, because this was also a first in the Bank at that time, the appointment of a woman country director. Ann Hamilton was also appointed at this time as a country director. Once again, it was seen as something that was rather a risky move and one that was uncertain.

As has always been the case, I was very sad to leave behind Bolivia (above all), but also Columbia and Venezuela, which were fascinating and demanding countries but where, in some respects, my role was less prominent and less clear.

I took on the challenge of the Sahelian department with some excitement. It was a department of 10 countries at that time, a department that ran from Mauritania, Gambia, and Senegal through Chad. It was an established department. In other words, it was not a brand new department. Nonetheless, it was facing a number of different changes. These included, at that time, the appointment of Jean-Louis Sarbib as the country operations division chief. I had been country operations division chief in the post 1987 reorganization in Latin America, so I had a quite good appreciation of the complex relationships in the organization at that time of the country director and country operations division chief. There were important differences from the earlier role of the country division chief (the job I took on in 1986). The new juxtaposition put two people together in the country department with an imperative to work closely together because so many functions overlapped. Thus the director and COD had to work together very closely in relation to the team of sector specialists, forming a core management team.

Thus I moved from the Latin America department to a very similar structure in Africa, although with some important differences. One of them was that in the Latin America region, uniquely in the Bank, the department that was headed by Ping Loh had two country divisions because of the large number of Caribbean countries, so that the relationships and the management team dynamic were somewhat different. Still, it was basically the same overall configuration of a country department structure.

Parenthetically, and perhaps moving a little bit ahead, I liked and enjoyed the country department structure more than any other that I have worked in over many years and in many different configurations in the Bank. It offered two important possibilities, to my mind. First, it allowed a group of leaders and managers to focus very intensively but from different perspectives on a finite group of countries in a department that was quite well established and of a manageable size, 100 to 200 people. Second, it was important that the structure encouraged a fundamental skeleton of an interdisciplinary department that had the sector divisions and the country division working so closely together. It brought together those different perspectives in ways that have proven very difficult in other configurations.

In the Sahel Department, we invested a great deal of effort in developing that management team, and that management team worked very closely together in a number of different circumstances, including in our intensive engagement with several governments in the department through what were called the "journees de reflexion," where we spent intensive periods of time in strategic reflection with the full governments of Senegal, Gambia, Mali and eventually Mauritania.

We also came together in a very critical event that was a major part of the Sahel Department experience, which was the devaluation of the CFA [Communauté Financière Africaine] franc, which took place in January of 1994. This was a major watershed for the countries in that department and also in the West Africa coastal department that were part of the CFA franc zone. It was a unique experience that required us to be very intensely involved in relationships with the government, with the donors. There are very few parallels for this experience.

I liked very much that structure and continue to ask myself whether some formulation of it might not be the better of the different organizational options that face the Bank.

In any event, I moved to the Sahel Department, into countries which I did not know. I had visited a couple of the countries but did not know them well at all. I was working with a few people that I knew but generally in a department of people who I had not worked with before, so that it was, in that sense, another intensive learning experience. I also faced the fact that I came in the midst of a very high risk pregnancy and therefore could not travel in the early period. That had two effects. One was that when the Bank's president, Barber Conable, visited the region in the fall, I was, in fact, in the hospital at the time having my baby.

ZENNI: In 1990?

MARSHALL: Fall 1990. Thus Jean-Louis Sarbib was the one who accompanied him and Kim Jaycox. He began, I think, to shine at that early stage. The second effect was that, because I couldn't travel, my entry into the department was rather different than in normal circumstances; I simply could not immediately embark on the classic series of country visits. What I was able to do, therefore, was to meet with every team on every project that came across my desk, every piece of paper. Over the summer of 1990 there were primarily supervision reports, and so I learned a great deal about the people and about the practical issues on the ground. The issues were, of course, very familiar to me from my project background, but the interactions also gave me a very useful grounding in understanding the way things were actually working in a practical sense.

I also should pay tribute to my predecessor in the Department, Mike Gillette. One of the frustrations that I have had in working in the Bank over the years is that we are an institution with a very poor, weak sense of history, and one of the manifestations is that handovers tend to be far from optimal. In the number of transitions that I've been through where new people replaced me, I can remember almost no phone calls from people asking me about issues or circumstances, very limited amounts of time spent with my successors and very limited curiosity on their part about what we had done before and why. There's a tendency for new people to think that they have to start from scratch, which I think is part of an issue that I think is a deep one at the Bank, which is a lack of understanding of the history and priority given to understanding both the Bank's institutional history but also the history of the country and the sectors that we are involved in. Mike Gillette was different, and Mike invested a great deal in working with me and in helping me, and he said--which nobody else had ever done before--that he wanted, above all, for me to be successful. He was excited about my appointment. Whatever doubts he might have had about my experience, he never revealed them. He was gracious and forthcoming in working with me, and I valued that greatly.

I also valued the confidence that Kim Jaycox had in me. He and I had a wonderful, if somewhat complex, relationship over the years, complex in that we sometimes saw issues quite differently. But I think Kim also was prepared to put a great deal of confidence in me, and that made it possible for me to do many of the things that I and my colleagues did in the Sahel Department. As I look back, the Sahel Department period was also one of the most exciting that I had in the Bank and perhaps the one where I felt that I was able to put most into effect the ideas and personal visions that I had for how the Bank could be at its best. It was because of this ability to bring together the sector, the project experience and vision with the relationship with the county and the macroeconomics, which was a daily part of our reality. We had an intensive relationship with our management team that covered every issue. And for everyone the relationship with the countries and the way in which we worked there was the central challenge. For all these reasons, the Sahel Department was a very creative, wonderful department with remarkable people in it. Jean-Louis Sarbib, Birger Frederickson, Peter Watson, Linda McGinnis (who I recruited to be the country res rep [resident representative] in Mali), Albert Osei, Emmanuel Mbi and many others were remarkable colleagues, and we formed a diverse, pugnacious, and creative team.

We also had in the Africa region a remarkable group of country directors who worked quite closely together under the leadership of Kim Jaycox. While we often saw issues quite differently, we also were very much a management team with a determination to do the best that we could for Africa. It was a period, as I think we were discussing before, where it looked very much as it does today, as a period of new beginnings, a period of hope. The old bad old days of structural adjustment appeared to be behind us. There was a strong focus on the capacity issues which we had all grappled with before. Many of the leaders in Africa were keen to work with us, so some of the tense relationships that had characterized the realities of earlier years were less obvious. The tensions, the conflicts were at that time rather less in evidence than they became later. The excitement of the transition in South Africa was having effects all over the continent. The horror of Rwanda and what happened there was only just beginning to unfold, so that it was, in many a sense, a rather heady period for the continent and an exciting one.

ZENNI: If we can come back to the institution during that period, in September'91 [Lewis T.] Preston had just become Bank President and soon thereafter commissioned a task force to examine the policies of the Bank's portfolio and make recommendations. What long-term impact do you think the task force report's recommendations, produced in November of '92, titled "Effective Implementation Key to Development Impact," have in shaping the way the Bank does its work, and how did this in turn impact your endeavors?

MARSHALL: The Wapenhans task force was one among the many task forces in recent decades that clearly had significant repercussions. The central effect was to put a much sharper focus on the issues of supervision, on the issues of performance of the project portfolio, and management of the portfolio as a portfolio (as opposed to a grouping of projects). I confess that for me there was very little that was new in the task force findings. They grew from very much--or resonated very much--with the long project experience that I had had, with perhaps two significant exceptions: a disproportionate focus on aggregate portfolio data linked to reporting through lean forms, and a greater tendency to avoid risks and withdraw when problems were encountered. The report encouraged an emphasis on performance seen largely through the lens of the elaborate set of quantitative indicators; this had good but also negative effects. This focus on forms, systems, and quantifiable portfolio data was eventually to emerge as a central focus on form-based reporting and central focus on performance data, and this has had some very insidious effects. The managerial and public focus on problems in the portfolio encouraged the Bank to withdraw from some of the difficult problem areas, which were indeed difficult but where we stood to learn and contribute so much. I think we were much more cautious, more risk averse in the period afterwards.

I viewed the change to form-based reporting as a very mixed blessing. It meant and continues to mean that a very large part of what we learned from project supervision--which to me was, in many respects, the richest aspect of the Bank's work--was reduced to a very few small boxes which very few people read and sometimes not very meaningful quantitative indicators of performance. In the next years the use of these forms developed and was refined, and it also came to apply to project appraisal and to the earlier preparatory stages.

This trend was shaped, in a sense, from the performance focus that came out of the Wapenhans Report. The only way that you could really find out what the story was for a given project or for a country portfolio as a whole, to learn what was happening to a project and why, the subtleties of lessons emerging, was to talk to people. So the "back to office reports," which had traditionally been an important focus and tool for managers, the premium on sharing findings both at the level of a specific project but also the general environment, came to be lost. So today if you want to find out what's actually going on on a project, there's really no other way than to go and discuss with the task managers.

ZENNI: Okay. From September of '94 to mid-'96, still in Africa, you served as director in the Southern Africa Department. Please discuss how this came about, and how advantageous was it tackling yet another region in Africa in light of your accumulated years of experience in that continent?

MARSHALL: My shift from the Sahel Department to the Southern Africa Department was, at the time, a surprise and quite unwelcome move that was part of a broader reshuffle within the Africa region. Quite specifically, Steve [Stephen M.] Denning, who had been the director for the Southern Africa Department, moved to the front office to work with Kim Jaycox. In an important sense, these developments within Africa were the precursors of a future Bank-wide reorganization, and the moves in new directions led to the reshuffle. In the process, for a complex set of reasons which I was and am not entirely clear about, it was decided that I was best moved to Southern Africa. Just parenthetically, these were countries that I did not know except Botswana and Swaziland (which in practice I never even visited as director because the Bank's activities there were minimal at the time). There were various complications in the reshuffle and in my move.

There were—again--10 countries in the department, including prominently South Africa. I knew two of them reasonably well, as in an earlier era I worked as an agricultural project officer on fascinating projects in Botswana and Swaziland. But the other countries were quite new to me so, once again, I had the opportunity to learn under pressure. But the most complicated aspect was that Steve Denning with a management team in the Southern Africa Department had just, at the time of this reorganization, formulated a new organizational structure which, seen in retrospect, was clearly a precursor of the eventual '97 reorganization of the Bank, the reorganization from a quite clearly structured country department composed of country and sector divisions to a new focus to a matrix structure that cut across the department. And it was motivated by somewhat the same concerns that drove the later reorganization, a desire to have more flexibility and less "boundaries" among units among them. Thus the new Department had--and there had just been appointments to positions--three country managers who did not have staff or had very few staff reporting directly to them, and sector departments which included the economic management sector division plus agriculture, human development, infrastructure, et cetera, all within the same department. Thus, you still had roughly the same number of people but the relationships within the department were quite different.

What was complicated about this was that this was a reorganization based on a vision and a process of which I had not been part and where the characters involved had worked out a series of arrangements. Thus the situation facing me was one where I was not able to have a voice in the way in which the organization worked but had the responsibility for trying to make it work as best it could. And it was an interesting structure, but it did have a number of hiccups. These were accentuated by the fact that one of the country managers faced some significant personnel management issues and left, so that was a complication.

In both the Sahel but also in the Southern Africa Department a feature that at that time was significant, standing out from other parts of the Bank, was that there were a number of important country offices which were somewhat larger than they had been in the past but which were still much smaller than they are today. Thus, managing the country offices in both departments was a significant part of the work.

Overall, the departments presented a quite complex configuration of people. In the Southern Africa Department, I found a situation with relationships and strategies that were very much in place and, in a sense, my job was a more classic director job of overseeing rather than of building, which had over time been my role in the Sahel Department.

I certainly enjoyed the work on the Southern Africa Department. One of the important features of it which, in fact, had been a major focus of my predecessor, Steve Denning, and also his predecessor, Sven Sandstrom, was a very intense involvement in consultative groups, and that occupied a significant part of my personal time. All told, the time I spent there was relatively short (less than two years).

I also, more than in most previous jobs, faced extraordinarily difficult personnel issues during my time in the department. One of them was a very challenging situation in Southern Africa where the country representative became involved in a very serious legal and moral accusation, and therefore I, as the director, had to spend a very large amount of my time in managing that situation to the detriment, clearly, of being able to be more actively involved in the more operational work of the department. But it was, nonetheless, a very interesting period.

These were very interesting times in Zambia with an exciting transition there. Also, there was an exciting transition to democracy with great opportunity in Malawi, and Mozambique was dynamic, complicated and fascinating. We were on a course and continued to build the new relationship with South Africa, which proved to be quite a complex and demanding one. The South Africans were continuously skittish about their involvement and relationship with the Bank and, particularly, were unsure that they wanted to borrow. There were expectations from Bank management that we would be quite actively involved in borrowing in South Africa, but indeed we were not and still have not been. To this day there are very complex challenges in Angola; a much smaller relationship with Namibia, Swaziland, and Botswana and also with Lesotho. So the department presented a very interesting mix of countries with extremes from South Africa to Mozambique, from middle-income to poor, a period of great transition, and a remarkable group of people working in the Department.

ZENNI: What is your overall assessment of the adequacy of Bank interventions in that part of Africa or in Africa in general? How did you see that overall?

MARSHALL: We were, in almost all of the countries, though not all, sitting in the catbird seat. We had a very important role, particularly in the countries where there were major consultative groups. At that time, and perhaps particularly in that group of countries, the importance of country ownership was clearly understood. We were also very keenly aware of the need for aid harmonization. Now seen as a vital issue, the underlying problems and overlap and fragmentation of donor efforts were patently obvious. Again, this was an issue that resonated with me from way back in my early days when the complexity of donor arrangements was clearly an issue, but it had become much difficult on the ground and awareness of its implications for country governments was becoming much clearer. The issues of corruption and of governance were also major topics in both departments, in fact, with much discussion and efforts at action, though our tools at the time to deal with it were very limited. Our willingness to act, though, was taking shape very clearly at that time.

Going back to the Sahel Department, in the Gambia--for a variety of circumstantial reasons, maybe almost random circumstances--our management team and department put a major focus on the issue of corruption, went to the Africa Region management team to get a blessing to address the issue frontally, and after an active discussion in which there were quite different views, we received that blessing and went ahead to try to take effective action at a systemic, country relationship level.

We were also very conscious in those departments of the challenge of HIV/AIDS and very keen to find ways to do more, often frustrated that we couldn't. So I think that the Bank had tremendous responsibilities and were deeply involved in a host of different issues and sectors, often with limited resources and in the context of complex political change in the countries and a complex donor world. As directors we devoted considerable attention then to donor relationships (I was responsible for coordination with the Scandinavian group, for example, and visited there each year).

One issue that I would put on the table from that period was that there were pressures that I would qualify as almost a chronic need to be positive about what was happening, to put forward a positive image that we had turned a corner. So even when we saw evidence of difficulties and were keenly aware that there was much that was not going right, it was sometimes difficult to deal with that in a direct way because we had so much invested in the success of Africa, in the fact that we had put behind us the most difficult times and we were looking forward to a better future. I think that the many staff felt a discomfort with that, so that you sometimes had a polarization between people who were seeing an Africa that faced major difficulties versus an overall framework which was committed to success. I think that was a significant issue. I think we were conscious of the fact that our ambitions and our language about what we were doing didn't match the resources that we had to achieve that, that the problems were immensely complex. As we got into sector-wide approaches, which were being designed in that time and which I was fully behind, we were not very aware or many were not fully aware of how much complexity was involved in trying to have a health sector approach in a country or an education sector approach or even a transportation sector approach. And so often our presentation of what we were doing was ahead of what we were really able to achieve.

Towards the end of my period working in the Southern Africa Department--in fact, just at the time I was leaving--the Africa region was moving towards a reorganization that followed up on the themes of the earlier reorganization of the Southern Africa Department. We had debated the issues at length within the management team in the preceding months and had indeed explored both options and the issues involved. The new reorganization went beyond the model of the Southern Africa department in that it broke down the structure of the six departments into which Africa had been divided. It adopted the model of country directors who had very little staff and who controlled the resources (termed “naked directors”), while the sector departments had the staff but needed to negotiate the resources with the country directors. This meant a much larger group of country directors and the departmental structure largely disappeared. Thus Africa took that route before the rest of the Bank. And as I said, it was modeled on the structure that had been introduced in 1994 in the Southern Africa Department.

Looking back--and I saw and said this at the time--I was not fully convinced that the full complexity of the experience we had lived those two years in the Southern Africa Department was fully taken into account in the decision to move at the broader level.

The issues and trends were much in debate at the time as there were efforts to work towards another major reorganization; this was the focus of a Bank-wide set of task forces which gave considerable attention to the “Southern Africa model.” Their diagnosis of what they thought needed to be done was fairly clearly traced at that point, and the Southern African Department's solution was seen by many within this group as the path of the future, as a way of dealing with what was viewed as the “de-skilling” of the Bank, the need for much larger pools of technical staff, a concern with the excessive power of the country directors, and the potential insularity of the country departments. Those were seen as the problems to which the new systems responded. I too saw those issues, but I was sorry to lose what I saw as the multidisciplinary country focus which was more possible under the country department system as it had existed during those years than I had ever seen it in the Bank before or since.

ZENNI: Shall we break for today?

MARSHALL: Yes.

[End session 1]

Session 2
January 31, 2007
Washington, D.C.

ZENNI: Good morning. I am Marie Zenni.

MARSHALL: I'm Katherine Marshall.

ZENNI: Today is Wednesday, January 31, 2007, and I'm back again at World Bank headquarters for my second interview session with Ms. Katherine Marshall. Welcome again, Ms. Marshall.

We left off yesterday's session as you finished discussing your assignment in Africa which ended in June of '96. Prior to moving on to discussing your next assignment, I'd like to turn to gender issues at the Bank, starting with asking you to please discuss initially, if you would, your collaboration in championing women's issues both within the Bank and within the sphere of economic development?

MARSHALL: I came to gender issues rather organically and have never over my career had an assignment that involved me specifically with gender issues either within the Bank or in terms of gender and development. However, I have had many, many special assignments that touched on these issues and have seen myself as personally having a responsibility to do what I could in this area. I would highlight at least three dimensions. The first is how gender issues are seen in development. And the second was women within the Bank, and that's women at all levels. And then the third is perceptions of roles of women, some seen in a broader global context; thus, more recently, for example, how religious organizations address the issues of women and development.

Taking the first, in the early times when people started talking about women there were two, three reactions. The first is that nobody would come to meetings on the topic of gender and development in pretty much any form unless they happened to be female, with very, very few exceptions. A few very enlightened men were, from an early point, at least curious, and some were committed, particularly those, interestingly, who had strong-minded daughters. And the second reaction was that people were intrinsically skeptical, saw it as a political issue and equated it with feminist women whom they did not hold in favor. The third, which I found interesting, was that people's approach and tone tended to be rather different to issues of gender. And the way that I finally have diagnosed it is that most people--particularly men, of course--tend to approach these issues from a very personal perspective in the light of their personal experience, and therefore they tend to have an emotional view. Thus, for example, they would hear discussion of an issue of law involving gender and would almost immediately think how did that relate to their personal lives, their wives, their daughters. The voice tone changes in discussions of gender, so you have a different composition in people who are participating, but you also have a difference in quality with this emotional overtone.

I have found myself reflecting often on these earlier times in my present work and often use the analogy of working on gender and development and the topic of my current focus, which is religion and development. I find much the same phenomenon when people talk about religion; they tend to come to it with the implicit (unspoken) question, "What do I believe?" not the one that is actually on the table, which is "Why and how is this important for development work and for poor communities?" The same kinds of issue of tone and similar difficulties in moving towards a thoughtful discussion echo back to the early discussions I recall about gender and development.

Now, clearly, on the gender and development, we've come a very long way from those early days of exploring how the issue should be handled. I was myself somewhat uncertain, even dubious in the early days. I remember that Warren Baum approached me when the very first job was created of a position of advisor on women in development to explore whether I was interested in taking on that challenge. I decided at the time that I did not want to do that, partly because it was not my field and I had no special expertise but also because I did not want to be typecast, plus I was very interested in what I was doing (agriculture and a focus on Africa). So at the time I was even a bit skeptical about the new functions, and I thought that it would be a mistake for me to move in that direction. My attitude changed over time, as did that of a number of the other senior women, including Marianne Haug and Ann Hamilton.

I recall that some among the "pioneer" group of women in the Bank at the time took a quite strong view resisting the assumption that they would devote time or even their careers to working on women and development: their argument was that they had their professional field and had no particular call to look at issues for women in development. Others among the group took a different view, which was that if we didn't pay attention to the issues, nothing would happen. Thus, people like Barbara Herz devoted much effort to pressing for more action. Clearly Mrs. Conable was a leader, as was Barber Conable, on these issues. Marianne Haug and several others (myself included) took every opportunity that we found to press forward on the issues.

A significant example which I look to as a turning point was an occasion during the Conable years when Marianne Haug was director in the President's Office. I was very much involved with the President's Office in trying to design an instrument which would encourage or even force country directors to look at strategic issues for women and, therefore, to translate a very general, nebulous statements we were hearing at the time, along the lines that women were important, into something that would be an order of priorities on policy action. This was an intense exercise that met considerable resistance--it had echoes of the efforts to mandate explicit efforts within country planning processes to address issues for the environment and had similar limitations as well as similar opportunities. I recall that in the various papers that emerged it was evident that the knowledge base was extremely limited, that most people simply lacked a clear framework to address the issues, that there was much cynicism, but there were also islands of real commitment and creative thought. Happily, over time, the Bank's professional capacity has grown immensely on gender issues. People like me who were not professionally involved in the research or were not at the forefront of the dialogue have had less important roles. But even so, I found myself again and again over the years and in my very different roles being drawn into issues on gender and development.

The issue of women as staff members of the Bank was, of course, a rather different issue, but as I hinted earlier, there were some fairly strong linkages because it was the women who were the most interested in topics that looked at women. It became increasingly clear that if you did not have a significant portion of women in decision-making and operational positions, it was pretty clear that issues for women were simply not going to come onto the agenda. Plus, we became increasingly convinced that it would be good for the Bank in every way to have not only 50 percent women (which it has almost always had because the support staff was almost entirely female), but going much beyond that and began to press from an early stage for a “mix” both in terms of level but also in the gender balance in operational versus support departments, et cetera. The position of all men at the top and all women at the bottom was unhealthy, plus there was a disproportionate number of women in non-operational work. We had some good allies early on with Ernie Stern, for example, who was very much committed, and a few others, but there were also a lot of real skeptics.

One of the turning points was a special study about the issues. Nancy Barry was the leader on this issue, and it was a Staff Association exercise, and a number of other women (myself included) were involved in an exercise that involved interviewing a large number of colleagues about issues for women. The report that came out was quite startling in revealing and documenting how deep the prejudices were in the Bank.

ZENNI: Specifically, what year was this, late '80s?

MARSHALL: It would have been in the '80s, yes. I do not remember the exact date, but that study was very important as a turning point. There was another time when the four women directors (that would have been after 1990 when the group was promoted).

ZENNI: Who were they?

MARSHALL: Jessica Einhorn, Ann Hamilton, Marianne Haug, and me. We asked for and had a meeting with (I think it was) Ernie Stern on the topic--we also met at a different point with Moeen Qureshi--when they were occupying the positions of Senior Vice President, Operations, and really pressed for some specific actions as well as commitment from the leadership, which we saw as important.

Another significant development during that period was that the women managers, who were, of course, a very intimate group, had regular lunches, and we felt a sense of responsibility ourselves, again in the same spirit, that if we didn't do it, who was going to do it? And so I think we played an unusual role in helping to move the Bank ahead. We did, I think all of us, take special care to work with the younger and newer women to encourage and support them. Even though we were very different personalities, we found a lot of common interest in doing this. And the women’s group was more effective than a number of other what you might call minority groups in the organization because we had coherence--by chance, perhaps. I do not know what the reason was, but we were quite consistent and quite forceful in our advocacy for change.

Beyond these group efforts, I often, if not always, found myself in roles as country director, et cetera, with the responsibility and the opportunity of putting women's issues higher on the agenda. I never have been satisfied that I did enough, but certainly tried on many occasions to ensure that the issues were on the agenda.

ZENNI: So what would be your overall assessment then of the effectiveness of Bank efforts in mainstreaming gender issues in poverty-reduction strategies?

MARSHALL: Plainly, there is a night and day difference between the way things were in the early '70s, when there was no research, no evidence, no leadership, and gender issues were not on the policy agenda, and today when there is a substantial amount of good research, which is very important, and the topic is very prominently on the agenda. I have, however, never been satisfied, and I'm not satisfied now that, in a very real sense, the Bank as a whole puts the kind of priority on changing gender roles that it might and that it should, but that's asking a lot.

ZENNI: How do Bank efforts on gender issues compare with those of other international organizations?

MARSHALL: The Bank, of course, has, in a sense, more capacity to shape the agenda than most other organizations, but not on all topics. UNICEF, for example, has a legitimate base to press for action for girls in areas like trafficking and would normally have a much more prominent role. It's hard for me to assess what their impact has been over time. Some of the bilateral agencies--for example, the Nordic agencies--are much more proactive than the Bank. It's much more visible on their agenda. They have more senior women representing them.

The Bank has not always been either forthright or sensitive. For example, it is striking in the Bank that if you have an all-male lineup in some kind of a conference or whatever, there does not seem to be an instinct that this is maybe not a good idea in this day and age. In other words, if you have a picture with all men in it, no one flinches, whereas in other organizations you can see that they would not let that happen. I remember once when Representative Pat Schroeder, speaking at the Bank, pulled out a photograph with a long line of men and essentially said, “Point proved.”

ZENNI: What, in your view, is proving most effective in helping give women a voice in society and in empowering their role in the development process?

MARSHALL: As always, it's a combination of strong leadership and broader trends at the base. In other words, where the president of the Bank has taken these issues very seriously or some of the senior vice presidents also, the issues rise in importance. That's very important. Also, when you find active groups working within the Bank at the operational level in countries, that too can make a very substantial difference. So it's the combination. In other words, the leadership makes it possible, but leadership by itself can achieve little. But with leadership plus the operational work and spirit, much can happen.

Another very important element is that evidence has been very important, evidence and clear objectives. So, for example, the research on education for girls has had a major impact. And when there is a clear objective of changing a law or changing an education curriculum or ensuring a certain portion of women's representation in certain groups, then you see a big difference.

I learned a lot from an assignment that I had during the 1990s in the Africa management team when I reported regularly on data for women in the region. My colleagues responded both to the changing data that we could report and also to a sense of competition, which departments were doing better and which worse. They began to look to ways to help specific groups of women and to be more active in recruitment and consideration of promotions, special assignments, et cetera. Having the data, reporting regularly, and doing it in public gave far more focus to the issue than might have been the case otherwise.

ZENNI: Meanwhile, after leaving the Africa assignment in June of '96, you had a brief one-year assignment in External Affairs starting in July of '96. Would you like to discuss that?

MARSHALL: This was, in effect, a sabbatical, and because the Bank no longer has any formal arrangement for sabbaticals for anybody, such assignments are worked out on a very specific case-by-case basis. So in this case, I worked it out basically myself (with Sven Sandstrom and Kim Jaycox) and used the year which the Bank supported (for which I was very grateful) to do a number of different things that I had been wanting to do for some years. My attachment to External Affairs was really formal. In other words, I had very little relationship with or support from them, but it seemed the best place to "park" me during a quite unique assignment.

The year had several segments. I first spent some months in Southern Africa (I had just finished my director assignment there) and pursued some ideas, research, writing and eventually participating in conferences. The two main themes were conflict and non-governmental organizations. I focused especially on Mozambique. In my director assignment, I had been involved in a special UN-led effort to reflect on new roles that the Bank and IMF might play in early stages of conflict resolution. It was led by Marrack Goulding, then Under Secretary of the United Nations, and I was involved because Angola was a case study. This had piqued my interest as had the fascinating experience of Mozambique at the time, which seemed to be emerging so successfully from decades of horrible conflict, not to speak of South Africa which was clearly an important case. While I was in Southern Africa, therefore, I explored conflict resolution organizations and issues and visited quite a few NGO activities, deepening my knowledge of NGOs. I spent time in Malawi, South Africa, and Mozambique.

I then spent a very interesting month in Geneva based at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, with several objectives. I was quite interested in shadowing Mrs. [Sadako] Ogata, who was the High Commissioner at that time, but I also was in a sense completing the work that I had done on Mozambique, focusing on the resettlement of refugees and what that case study might offer in terms of lessons. And, finally, I was learning about another organization, in this case the High Commissioner for Refugees, which I found extremely interesting. The organizational culture was so different from the Bank, for example, with a far more explicit focus on ethical issues. I spent time thinking about what partnership really meant. We used and still use the term rather generally, and I wanted to pin down the idea and put forward some proposals on what a Bank-UNHCR partnership might really look like.

I was also able, while I was in Geneva, to do a number of other things which, in the light of later assignments, proved useful. I met people at WHO [World Health Organization] and ILO [International Labor Organization]. It was interesting that I happened by chance to come across the Jesuit advisor to the ILO and got to know him quite well. I did some work with academic organizations, gave quite a few presentations, and generally had quite a varied and intense month-long experience there.

I then did, as all senior managers were required to do at that time, an advanced management course. For various reasons, I went to INSEAD, which is in Fontainebleau in France. At that time, a variety of programs were "authorized," and so I chose the one in INSEAD, partly because it was compatible with my rather complex travel schedule, but it was also, to be very blunt, the only program which was not residential, and since I had a six-year-old, going away and sort of spending six weeks in a residential program was not an option for me.

As a parenthesis, working out personal arrangements for the sabbatical year was complex. Part of my solution was a wonderful student from Denmark who traveled with me and my son Patrick throughout. She had been introduced to me by Annette Petersen, then the advisor on women, and so the three of us spent the year together. In Fontainebleau we had a small suite of rooms in a family hotel where we lived for two months. After the management program I spent another month based in Fontainebleau, essentially working with a number of French organizations, especially NGOs, among them ATD Quart Monde (Fourth World Movement), which I have worked with quite a bit since.

Overall, the sabbatical experience was invaluable to me because I got to know so many people and organizations in ways that I could not as a line manager. Among other lessons, I found that if you are interested in an organization you should go visit them where they are and not rely on simply having meetings that are organized within the Bank or by a government. I thus learned a great deal about five or six different NGOs. I went to meetings in Germany during that period; a meeting in Bordeaux; I went to CERDI [Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Developpement International], a French academic think tank and training organization. In sum, it was a very varied and busy period.

My household, such as it was, then moved to Oxford for two months where I was attached to the Center for the Study of African Economies (Paul Collier's organization), and again I followed a varied program of encounters and research. I also did some things for the Bank's London office, went to a meeting in Ireland, went to a meeting in Cambridge. I gave a number of talks in Oxford.

Another interesting experience was that I shadowed for a number of days the Oxford Analytica meetings. Oxford Analytica produces a daily brief which had intrigued me. I was interested in how they did that and how they worked with a network of a thousand academics around Oxford. David Young, the head, allowed me to sit in on their early morning brainstorming meetings. It was a fascinating illustration of new trends in the use of information and technology. So, in other words, I did a lot of different things. I was doing quite a bit of writing during this period as well.

The final stage of the sabbatical year was a four-month stay at Harvard at the Kennedy School with HIID [the Harvard Institute for International Development]. Again, I was participating in seminars, giving presentations, auditing courses, doing writing; this, too, was a great privilege.

I then came back to Washington in the summer of 1997, right at the height of yet another reorganization where all the rules of the game were unclear and were constantly changing. I had visited the Bank a couple of times, but how somebody like me was to fit into the new environment there was very unclear. I view it as somewhat of a chance with a haphazard element; in other words, that I ended up being assigned to work in the East Asia region. My thinking had been that since I had worked so much on Africa and Latin America in very difficult, very poor countries, it would be quite interesting to work on part of the world where development seemed to be so successful. And so I joined a brand new management team, which formed on July 1st in 1997; I actually arrived from Cambridge about six days later. The reorganization took effect on July 1st with Jean-Michel Severino as the vice president. And of course July 2nd is now marked as the start of the East Asia crisis, so the assignment changed quite dramatically for everyone in the management team, me included.

ZENNI: Yeah. Just to clarify that you joined the regional VP's office, Jean-Michel Severino's office, as regional manager. So what did you initially set out to accomplish?

MARSHALL: I had not participated in a lot of the reorganization thinking because I had been away, so the new assignment was not terribly clear to me (and frankly nor to others in the group). It was evidently to be part of a senior management group, and as I said, it was almost immediately apparent that the roles of many within the group would change because of the storm that burst upon us with the East Asia crisis. But I had a responsibility to oversee general issues of quality and to work on something that was quite prominent in Bank thinking at the time, though frankly rather fuzzy, which was Knowledge Management. So the question was: what was I supposed to do? The team also was being constituted in the early months with many new actors. And so a lot of what I was doing was caught up in crisis management during that first period.

ZENNI: Crisis, the Asian financial crisis . . .

MARSHALL: The East Asia financial crisis.

But to go back to the original concept of how the job was to be designed, I was asked to help translate the notions of knowledge management emerging at the time into practice. This meant overseeing the region's role in the various network councils and sector boards that were taking shape. In addition, there were complex resource management dimensions. There were special funds allocated in a general way for knowledge management. I was supposed to be working with the sector directors who basically just wanted the money allocated to them. There were good reasons for their need--they needed desperately, under that structure, to have some flexible resources and saw this knowledge management money as ideally suited for that. To me, that seemed completely the wrong use for money that I assumed we would later be called to account for. Thus, I found myself trying to argue for a different use of the funds.

I also had an unusual role in respect to the network councils, unique among the regions. Jean-Michel Severino had wanted me to be the region's representative in all of the new network councils, which were brand new at the time. Now, this was almost impossible physically just to be in all of the meetings, and it was also something that went against the spirit of a number of the network directors because they wanted specialists not someone who was representing a region across different sectors, but, nevertheless, I did spend a lot of time in meetings and retreats of all of the network councils. I did therefore gain a rather unique perspective, as I was the only person who actually was seeing all of the different networks in action, with [David] de Ferranti and [Jean-Francois] Rischard and all of the others who were approaching the new organizational system with very different views, but there was no practical way in which my knowledge could be very well tapped. And then, over time, as I started working much more on the social policy and governance issues, I gradually came to represent the region in only some not all of the network councils.

ZENNI: Well, soon thereafter, in March of '98, you served briefly as Director of Social Policy in the social development sector unit, and then you were back in the office of the regional VP for a longer period as Director of Social Policy and Governance.

MARSHALL: I never left the regional vice president's office but took on a succession of different roles within the management team. There was a mutation of titles which reflected at least to some degree changes in responsibilities. I was asked at one stage to act both as "regional manager" and the acting head of the sector unit responsible for social development. The challenge there was both to try to build the unit, which was a very troubled unit, but also to develop the position and functions around social policy and governance.

There, Jean-Michel Severino had a very clear idea of what he wanted to achieve. He wanted to see the chief economist and someone with a similar role dedicated to social policy issues, and he saw governance as a part of social policy issues. His definition of the social, though--which was also close to my own--was quite different from the way that the network structure at that time was defining it. Thus my social responsibilities involved a very difficult role to fulfill because Severino's very concept of the position went against the grain of the way that, for example, the network councils perceived and defined it. But vis-a-vis the outside, the role seemed to make eminent sense. In other words, social policy was clearly understood by people in East Asia and Europe and others as having an overall umbrella role, looking at social spending, at social safety nets, at sociological analysis, at gender issues, at, as I think I mentioned, spending on education and health and governance issues, the institutional side. To people outside, it made sense to have one person exercising leadership across these areas, but since those issues, in fact, crossed every one of the different networks, there was considerable resistance inside the Bank to my role, and it is not a function that has lasted. It did not outlast Jean-Michel Severino because it was his personal vision. I think it should go down as a very interesting organizational experiment which I think has a lot of merit but which did not fit, was basically not compatible with the overall network structure.

ZENNI: In your opinion, how adequate a role did the Bank play in its handling of the East Asian financial crisis and especially the ensuing socioeconomic impact?

MARSHALL: The Bank, I think, did a remarkable job under extremely difficult circumstances. The crisis hit with a brand new vice president who had never worked on East Asia, with a brand new management team which was not even complete for a number of months because a number of directors were recruited from outside and were brand new to the Bank. There was ferocious pressure for the Bank to deliver immediately, and so what emerged, in a sense, was a complete bifurcation in the management group with the vice president and several people working with him, working 18-hour days or even 24-hour days because of the time difference, on the crisis. And meanwhile you had the sector directors, basically, and the teams for a few countries which were not caught up in the crisis (China, Cambodia, for example) operating a more normal Bank, so it was a very, very difficult period. But the Bank did deliver, I think, remarkable support in a number of areas as part of a broader coalition that was put together.

An important aspect that is not very well known is the degree to which Severino really wanted the Bank's role to be focused on the social impact as well as the financial impact. We did a lot to make this a reality. We ran several major conferences, did a lot of work in shifting resources under ongoing projects to go to social programs, did a few very specific operations that were directed to social, and did a lot of monitoring work. The ASEM Trust Fund, which is the Asia-Europe Meeting Trust Fund which was agreed in April 1998, gave us a very significant source of funding that made it possible for us to do a lot of work that would not have been possible otherwise. And I was responsible for the coordination, particularly of the social aspect but also for the overall ASEM Trust Fund.

So all of us worked very hard, and I believe that we worked reasonably well as a team, albeit with frictions and disconnects. There was a lot of tension between Severino and Sven Sandstrom during that period, and eventually Julian Schweitzer was brought in essentially to reinforce the management team, so it was not an easy period for anyone concerned, but I think that overall the Bank delivered in a remarkable way, particularly in light of the handicaps under which it was operating.

Towards the end of the financial crisis period, the attention of the management group came to be dominated by the Western China poverty project, which became extremely controversial with the outside critics of the Bank. There was an Inspection Panel investigation which was very demanding and extremely time-consuming and produced substantial tension within the Bank itself including within the East Aisa management team. I was not directly involved in the crisis itself, but I was asked by Severino to organize a risk review which we called the Special Operational Review, which I did two years in succession. This involved a major exercise in going through all operations of the East Asia region with a view to looking at issues we were not addressing, issues that were of concern, issues that might emerge as risk areas. The review exercise we ran is still seen as best practice. What we did was to bring in an outside panel of wonderful people, and we went through each of the operational units, met with each of them, and produced from the findings overview reports for two years in succession. Many ideas emerged that were immediately relevant.

I still look back on that exercise as one from which I learned an immense amount and which shaped quite a few of my views. Among other issues, it looked at what we might call "sins of commission," in other words, things that the Bank was doing that were raising issues--for example, a lending operation or sector advice that could be controversial--but it also looked at "sins of omission," in other words, the things we were not doing, the issues that we were not flagging and highlighting, and that was very important. An example would be the Bank's non-role--even lack of awareness or sensitivity to an issue like trafficking of women or treatment of migrants within East Asia.

Another area where I got very much involved from 1998 was the newly explosive issues of corruption. The issue was sparked in many ways by the East Asia crisis in all the countries--Philippines, China, Thailand and Indonesia, particularly--as analysis suggested that corrupt practices (for example, in banking) had contributed to the crisis and as citizen groups rallied in protest at corruption in government. I did two very tangible things as a result. The first is that I was asked to head a mission in the summer of 1998 to Indonesia which was to look at the strategic approaches to corruption. It resulted from a crisis situation because of media and political accusations that the Bank had ignored and even contributed to widespread corruption in Indonesia. That proved to be an important, very demanding exercise which we put together in a matter of weeks and which came up with a lot of recommendations both for the Bank itself and, much more generally, for Indonesia and beyond. And, secondly, I organized an anticorruption advisory group to serve the East Asia management team, which is one of the few institutional mechanisms that survives to this day. It involved a group of people who met several times a year with the management group of the East Asia region to discuss how the Bank might be more effectively engaged in the corruption issue and what was happening generally and how, therefore, we might both understand it better but also intervene more effectively.

ZENNI: Staying with the subject of corruption and governance, how well defined, in your view, is the Bank's role on the issue of governance, and what is your overall assessment of Bank efforts so far to eradicate corruption and encourage paradigm shifts within country reform strategies, despite political complexities?

MARSHALL: It was roughly during this period that the annual meeting in Hong Kong involved Jim [James D.] Wolfensohn putting the "C" word on the agenda, and that was important. Before that, corruption was both flippantly and seriously referred to as the "C" word because it was often considered inappropriate to mention it. There were doubts among major shareholders and in the Bank's Legal Department, which were linked to each other, as to whether the Bank should take on a major role in addressing corruption problems, particularly at a systemic level. My view is that the East Asia crisis was instrumental in forcing the issue much higher up the agenda, and so we were at the center of a storm in East Asia that involved corrupt practices and how they were understood at that time. However, it would be, I think, a serious mistake to see the Bank as discovering corruption around that time, either linked to the East Asia Crisis or to Jim Wolfensohn's speech.

I look back to the experience in Africa where from the very first day I set foot in Africa, we were concerned about corruption. The big difference is that in the early days of the Bank when the focus was on projects--which it still was through the 1970s, that was the major instrument--we had a series of tools that we thought dealt with corruption, which were procurement practices, audits, financial management and so on. Even when often we didn't put as much focus on rigorous follow-through with these instruments as we should have, it certainly was our expectation that looking for corruption and dealing with it was our responsibility and that we were trying to discharge those responsibilities. What changed was when we started to become involved in macroeconomic programs and macroeconomic support through structural adjustment or debt issues. We no longer could say that our funding had walls around it because we had to be concerned with how the government as a whole was using funds, and so we were forced into new dimensions of the issues and did not, in the early years, take that as seriously as we should have because it was not fully thought through and we lacked good instruments. But by the time we were involved in the East Asia Crisis, it was forced on us from outside (as it also was in Africa). Once we were involved in structural adjustment lending, we could not ignore the fact that we were putting in hundreds of millions of dollars into government budget support and thus overall levels of corruption were relevant. So we started, first, to treat it as an issue but, secondly, to look for instruments that would improve the situation.

My view is that again the Bank has come a long way. There are a lot of very exciting programs which are country specific, but also generic. The research is important. What WBI does is important--the World Bank Institute. What PREM [Poverty Reduction and Economic Management network] does is important. I'm still concerned that sometimes we take, as we often do, a rather simplistic view towards what are very complex problems, that we don't put it very well into a historic context, that we promise more than we can deliver, and we speak of accomplishments which may exceed what's visible and real on the ground.

Corruption is a very complex issue. It has many dimensions--political, personal, ethical, practical--and I think sometimes we don't highlight those dimensions enough. But, of course, it is now very central to the Bank's presentation of its role, to its strategic assessment, and it would be very difficult, I think, to argue that it's not an important issue. How can we be a major financier of development unless we have the assurance that these funds which we hold in trust are honestly used? So it's a very basic issue.

One of the best analogies of corruption is that it is a cancer, and in that sense, first, it eats away at the effectiveness of development programs. But like cancer, there are different kinds of corruption, and some are more lethal than others. That is something that we need to keep in mind as we work on corruption at various levels. But I think it was the East Asia crisis that changed the general perception from one where many saw corruption as culturally specific, as some people would describe it "grease for the motor," rather than as it has come to be seen, "sand in the engine" that can bring the engine to a halt.

ZENNI: In your view, what are the lessons learned by the Bank as a result of the East Asian financial crisis experience?

MARSHALL: Perhaps a central and abiding lesson is that what seems to be solid and continuing forever may be more fragile than it appears, hence a certain lesson in humility. The crisis highlighted very strongly two separate issues which have linkages. The first was the vital importance of financial sector systems in modern economies and the dangers from weakness in financial sectors and financial sector regulation. And, secondly, it, I think, put new light onto social safety nets and the importance of the social dimensions of development. The shock of seeing so many people suddenly without jobs, without any means of support, was something that I think the Bank has integrated into a lot of its thinking about development and risk. Both elements were very important and had many repercussions in thinking as well as organization and policy.

I think that the relationship with the IMF--which [Joseph E.] Stiglitz writes about at length--presented important and very complex issues. There have been a lot of changes in the way the Bank and the Fund work together that you can trace to the East Asia crisis.

And, finally, I think that the change in the way that we looked at corruption due to the crisis, but specifically to the shattering experience of Indonesia, was very important and has left an important legacy.

ZENNI: Speaking of Bank coordination, how would you assess Bank coordination efforts with the UN, regional development banks and other international organizations and bilateral aid agencies? And, in particular--and you've spoken to that a little--how would you assess World Bank-IMF coordination and collaboration?

MARSHALL: The development partnership has changed radically over my career at the Bank from a situation where, first, agencies tended to operate pretty much in their own fairly clear spheres of influence and, secondly, what was a far less complex world. Development partnerships today are incredibly complex, and this, I think, lies behind today's sharp focus on aid harmonization, which is a very reasonable and important focus.

The Bank's relationships vary tremendously. One thing I have observed is that they can vary a lot from place to place, institution to institution, and person to person. Partnership is a word we use extensively, but we don't define it very clearly; there are very different relationships which may seem to come under that same heading. Some of them, I think, can be very productive. For example, during the East Asia crisis, we invested a lot in trying to deepen our relationships with both the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Japan, and those were important, complex efforts. They took a lot of input. They were very labor-intensive. And, of course, we also developed a complex set of relationships with European institutions tied to the ASEM Trust Fund which I referred to before, and with NGOs, both individually and as a group. We had a number of meetings with NGO groups individually and collectively that, again, I think opened our eyes both to how differently those institutions saw the Bank and to the complexity of the new world that was emerging.

An area that Jim Wolfensohn gave a lot of focus to and that's quite difficult is the Bank's relationship with private sector actors. And again there were a variety of meetings around the East Asia crisis focused on some business leaders, but again our relationships and treatment was very patchy, with wide variations in the real quality of the partnership and the real quality of the engagement.

ZENNI: In September 2000 you moved briefly, until mid-2001, to the office of then President Wolfensohn as director. This was also a significant time in terms of the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals by world leaders at the UN aimed at halving poverty by 2015. Please discuss the circumstances leading to your move and what were your main responsibilities, including the objectives you set out to pursue.

MARSHALL: In late 1999--in other words, while I was still very much working in the East Asia region--Jim Wolfensohn asked me to help him with an initiative that he had started in 1998 with Lord [George L.] Carey, who was then the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was to promote a dialogue between religious and faith organizations and the Bank, in the first instance. There had been a meeting in Lambeth Palace in London in February of 1998, followed by a meeting in Washington in November 1999 with a group of faith leaders and some leaders from development organizations, including, for example, Michel Camdessus from the IMF. The latter meetings had agreed that there should be an organization created, which they called the World Faiths Development Dialogue, which would continue the work that had been started at these meetings. So the initial request to me, working part-time from my base in East Asia still, was to be part of a senior advisory group that was working with Bain and Company, which was a management consulting group that Jim Wolfensohn had asked to provide support, to design and to look at the World Faiths Development Dialogue.

So I was involved in a number of meetings through the early part of 2000. And then in May of 2000, Jim Wolfensohn met with Lord Carey, the Aga Khan, with Jeff [Jeffrey R.] Solomon from the Bronfman Foundation and a couple of other people, and the Bain team presented their findings following the review. And a decision was taken in that meeting to move forward with creating the World Faiths Development Dialogue, and during that meeting I was asked or invited to take on responsibility for that. This was a time when there was a transition in the East Asia region to a new vice president, Jamil Kassum--Jean-Michel Severino had left; I think he left in April to go back to France--and Jamil was very unclear that he wanted to continue the function and the role that I was playing, so it was one of those happy coincidences that the new opportunity came up exactly at the time when I was going to have to start thinking about what I might do next. I did take this on reluctantly because it was unclear to me that I had real comparative advantage in working with the whole world of religion, which was the objective, but I also found it fascinating and had tremendous respect for Jim Wolfensohn's insights and his objectives in launching this, and so I agreed. After a rather complex hand-over period in the East Asia region (because I had a lot of responsibilities and it was not clear who was going to take them on) I moved, and my office, which was a small office, was based in the Office of the President.

The first major activity, apart from working on the creation of this new organization, which involved working with lawyers and financiers and so on--and this ties into the question you asked about the Millennium Summit--was that I participated as part of the WFDD team in an extraordinary summit of religious leaders that preceded immediately the Millennium Summit. It took place in New York at the United Nations in August and early September 2000. And so this was my initial immersion in this new world of religion, and it was fascinating; one of the more fascinating meetings I had ever attended. It involved some 2,000 people in all, and it was foreshadowing many of the issues that eventually came out of the Millennium Summit. At the religious leaders summit I was part of a WFDD group that focused on the poverty dimensions of the faith agenda, and this experience effectively catapulted me into my new role as Counselor to the President and Director on Faith, which was one of my favorite titles over my whole Bank career. For the next period, therefore, I worked as part of the Office of the President.

ZENNI: Okay. In July of 2001 you moved to External Affairs as the newly-appointed Director of Development Dialogue on Values & Ethics. Please discuss--and you've already talked about the circumstances for establishing such a position in the Bank--what did its mandate entail in terms of responsibilities and what were the challenges you faced in making the position operational.

MARSHALL: The story of my transfer and the change in title that took place in 2001 is a fascinating story which I've actually written about somewhat indirectly in several different places. It was the result of an intense controversy that arose over Jim Wolfensohn's initiative on the faith dialogue.

After the meeting in May of 2000 when the decision was made to create the World Faiths Development Dialogue, after it was formally created as an institution in the U.K. in July 2000, I believe, and after the Millennium Summit of religious leaders which took place in August and September, Jim Wolfensohn briefed the Board very tangentially during a regular Board meeting. He reported what he was doing and promised at the time a special briefing. That special briefing created a storm. Jim Wolfensohn said many . .

ZENNI: At the Board?

MARSHALL: At the Board. The briefing was an informal meeting of the Executive Directors. The sequence and history, though, are somewhat complex. Jim Wolfensohn repeated many times over the years that the Board was "24 to zero against him," but he went forward with the faith initiative nonetheless. That's not strictly factual, because there were always a few Directors who were supportive and there was never a formal vote in the Board itself. It was very clear, nonetheless, that there was intense concern from a large number of the Executive Directors about the President's initiative to have a dialogue with faith organizations.

I want to emphasize here that all this took place before 9/11, thus during late 2000/early 2001. During that period, Alex [Alexander] Shakow, who was in the Secretary's Department at the time, and I visited every single Executive Director for discussions about the initiative, what we were trying to do, and about their concerns. There were several results of those interchanges. One was that there was a change in the Bank's proposed arrangements with the World Faiths Development Dialogue. It had been expected that the Bank would be formally part of the governance structure of WFDD. That was of concern to a number of Executive Directors because they saw religion as politically charged and were concerned about the Bank participating explicitly with a select group of religious leaders. So what emerged was the Bank was in the future to be not a director or patron, but an observer in the meetings of the trustees of the World Faiths Development Dialogue. That was a quite significant change.

A second change was that a number of Directors were concerned--Executive Directors--that there was a director with the title "Faith," and they were also concerned that an office on this subject, with a director, was part of the President's Office. So the result of this concern was that my office and I essentially transferred intact, without much change--it was a very small office with about three people in it--to External Affairs. And it was Jim Wolfensohn personally who focused on my title, so my title was unique in the Bank, because it was director. It was not director of anything; it was just director comma, and the unit's name was Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics. Now, you will notice that there's no mention of religion or faith in that title, and the reason was because of the sensitivities of a number of Executive Directors.

The addition of ethics was quite significant because in our discussions a number of Directors were positively interested in the ethical dimensions that were linked to the dialogue with faith leaders. In other words, the ethics around globalization was not ethics in the sense of the staff behavior in the Bank as the Office of Ethics, but the ethics of development, development ethics. And what was promised to the Executive Directors in a couple of memoranda that went forward during that period--I think one of them was April 2001 and another might have been a few months later--was that I would have an exploratory mandate to look at what a function might be in the Bank for those issues.

To jump ahead a little bit, it was a subject of considerable frustration to me that a mandate that I thought was quite interesting never was taken seriously by the Bank's managers, although we had promised the Board that we would come back with a proposal and I wrote many papers and options notes on what we might do. It was never discussed by the Bank's senior managers, and so, therefore, that function has essentially been a personal function of mine, one that has sparked great interest in outside audiences--I'm asked to speak about the topic often--but one which was never defined within the Bank. The Bank is quite uncomfortable in discussions about ethics, particularly beyond the fairly tangible issues of corruption and guidelines to staff on financial propriety. The questions about the ethical dimensions of its development work are not ones that are part of the Bank's language and have been difficult over the years for the Bank to deal with.

So, in any event, I moved over to EXT. Matts Karlsson was the vice president, and he was keenly interested in the issues and, therefore, very supportive. And our unit was a very self-contained, bounded unit within External Affairs.

The next major development was the September 11, 2001, events. Clearly, this had the effect of putting an entirely different spotlight on religion. Our team was very much at the center of a lot of discussion and thinking about what 9/11 and its underlying causes meant for development. In the months immediately afterwards, I did a lot of speaking and was involved in many discussions behind-the-scenes, exploration about how terrorism, stability and religion were linked. This has been a theme that continues to this day. It's a very interesting, obviously explosive, and demanding topic.

ZENNI: Did the events of 9/11 help clarify your mandate?

MARSHALL: No. It did for me, and it did for Jim Wolfensohn, but . . .

ZENNI: Not operationally?

MARSHALL: Within the Bank, if anything, it increased people's unease at having relationships with religious leaders. It is interesting, nonetheless, that our unit gave emphasis to bringing in unusual voices to the Bank, and to this end we organized a number of speakers. We produced a lot of publications, we organized many events, and every time the staff level interest was intense and very keen. But the memory of the controversy and the criticisms from Executive Directors put a tremendous damper on the way that the managers were involved.

Nonetheless, Jim Wolfensohn and Lord Carey forged forward. The WFDD was wounded by the controversy, severely wounded. David Breyer had been recruited as director. He had been interviewed by Jim Wolfensohn and Michel Camdessus and others and had been appointed, but he withdrew. He withdrew when he got wind of the controversy, so WFDD was without a director for a long time. Richard Marsh, who was on the Archbishop of Canterbury's staff, and I carried that role for a long time while I was sitting in the Bank, and eventually Michael Taylor was appointed by Archbishop Carey, not by Jim Wolfensohn, and took on the responsibility.

But meanwhile we organized two major meetings of faith and development leaders, which again comes back to a question you asked earlier because they were organized very much around the theme of the Millennium Development Goals. The first was in Canterbury in October 2002 and proved to be a very exciting and important meeting. It involved Mark Malloch-Brown, Claire Short, and a remarkable group of major religious leaders, Cardinal [Theodore E.] McCarrick among them. It focused on HIV/AIDS, on conflict, on gender issues, so it was a very exciting and seminal meeting that changed thinking of a lot of people. And the second meeting was in Dublin in January/February 2005. So we did a lot of work organized around those meetings.

ZENNI: Why do you think you were chosen for this particular position?

MARSHALL: That's something I've never been able to answer clearly. My suspicion is that Jim Wolfensohn had seen me in operation in a number of settings. He knew that I was curious, that my vision was very much towards the world outside the Bank, that I was multidisciplinary, that I was open, that I was often an effective spokesperson for the Bank, one who was seen as open and willing to listen. I think that he, therefore, thought I would be the best person to do the job at that time.

ZENNI: Going back to the Millennium Development Goals, how did the application of the MDGs, as they are commonly referred to, beginning in 2001 impact the evolution of development efforts in general, especially in the conduct of World Bank operations, and how did this, in turn, impact your endeavors? And, lastly, how would you assess global performance so far towards achieving these goals? It's a loaded question, but . . .

MARSHALL: The overall assessment of the Millennium Development Goals is indeed a large and pretty loaded question, but let me give you my perspective. I think the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration are very important historic events. They represent the first time that there is such a common consensus ever, but especially reflecting the post-1989 world. As Jim Wolfensohn often said, "There's no place to hide," because everyone has agreed that the goal of ending poverty is the responsibility of all nations, that it's front and center. There was quite a euphoric period after the 2000 Summit leading up to the conference on Financing for Development in Monterey in 2002 from which emerged what is described as the “Monterey Consensus.” There's really a sense that we're really going to do it, to achieve these goals. And the goals are very interesting in that they took so many promises voiced time and time again, but they framed them as concrete goals that could be quantified with deadlines and objectives, and from that has developed an immense apparatus of monitoring, holding to account; in other words, a framework of accountability. So all of that is to the good, and it's clearly shaping development thinking in many circles.

That said, first, I think it's important to highlight that those heady days after 2000 and 2001 were really changed forever by 9/11 and then by the Afghanistan and Iraq controversies. But the sense of a unity of purpose that we celebrated then is very sadly absent in today's polarized world. The attention of world leaders has moved so much more towards security issues than to the fervent goal of fighting poverty, evaporating to a large sense what was seen at the time as a real unity of purpose. But even so, there is a tremendous effort from many to mobilize support from world leaders behind the Millennium Development Goals, and 2005 was a turning point, as it was called the year of development, and major efforts have gone into keeping the Millennium Development Goals at the center of attention.

The Summit was very clear in what it touched upon and what it did not. I will echo what I heard in a meeting at Davos last week in talking about the Millennium Development Goals, that they are at the same time remarkably visionary and ambitious in their sense of this compact--the sense of compact, the accountability, the spirit behind them--and pathetically limited in their focus on halving poverty. There are so many issues they do not touch: quality in education, secondary education and so on. I think someone described them as pathetically limited. So there are the two sides.

The second thing that I would comment on is that they are so large they are an architecture, that they're very difficult to mobilize people behind. And I'm seeing this in my own role, that there are lots of efforts now to mobilize faith leaders and communities to support the MDGs, and it's a hard sell. Even when people, politicians among them, are deeply committed to fighting poverty, the Millennium Development Goal framework can be quite difficult for them to communicate, so there are some real issues with it. But when it is seen as an architecture and a framework, that offers tremendous advantages, it is a major asset. As I was mentioning before, I have been dealing with the Millennium Development Goals since 2000, primarily through the angle of the faith dialogue and faith initiative. The Millennium Development Goals are a wonderful framework for arguing that broad partnerships are vital to make it work, and that includes faith communities, that they must be integral partners in implementing the Millennium Development Goals if the framework is going to work.

ZENNI: Okay. Thank you. Although you continued on as Director, Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics, in July of 2004 the position was moved to the Human Development Network. As your last assignment in the Bank, please discuss the circumstances leading to this move. How do you see the continued evolution of this position in terms of future challenges facing the Bank? And, lastly, how do you look back on your accomplishments as Director, Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics?

MARSHALL: The unit was once again moved lock, stock, and barrel from External Affairs to Human Development. It was triggered by a change in the vice presidency in

External Affairs. Whereas Matts Karlsson had been deeply interested and committed to the work, the new Vice President, Ian Goldin, saw much less clearly how the work of this unit fits within the External Affairs vice presidency, and Jean-Louis Sarbib, Vice President for Human Development, saw it as a very interesting challenge for his mandate. The stated objective of the move was to ensure that the work was embedded in Bank operations, and since health and education were critical issues that obviously involved faith communities, as was HIV/AIDS, and those were under the vice presidency, that was the logic that was used. My own assessment is that it was much more driven by personality and by a failure of senior management to decide really where it belonged.

In HD (Human Development), the work has continued much in the same directions. While Jim Wolfensohn was here, my role was very clearly a dual one: I reported to him as Counselor to the President, and then I operated within the HD vice presidency and spent, probably, half my time supporting other parts of the Bank, whether on finance issues or water issues, working with Jim Wolfensohn on meetings, organization, briefing him on the conflict issues, relationships, et cetera, and half really building on the work we had done on HIV/AIDS particularly, but also, on health and education within HD. So the unit had an extremely full plate and operated really in a quite autonomous--or, you might say, isolated--manner. The management group of the HD was never very interested in the work we were doing and never really took it to heart in any way. So the final years, but particularly months, during the transition to the new president of the Bank were, from an internal point of view, extremely frustrating. And it was the more frustrating because people outside the Bank, from the religious community in particular, kept asking what's happening, what's going to happen, and we were never able to answer the question because we didn't know. So it was only in August of 2006, when we were able to follow through with a discussion with the President that was based on earlier discussions with Lord Carey, that the future arrangement was agreed upon with any clarity: the plan was to be that the World Faiths Development Dialogue would carry a much larger part of the work, that it (WFDD) would be based in Washington, D.C., at Georgetown University, and that when I moved to Georgetown University and to the Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, that I would operate from that base but continue to carry some of the responsibilities that I had held as senior advisor to the Bank on a one-day-a-week basis roughly.

ZENNI: Oh, so the position itself will no longer be part of the Bank's organizational structure?

MARSHALL: No. There's a very small liaison function. It is, though, in limbo. As I've said many times, the meaning of limbo is the place beside hell where the innocent but unconsecrated go to await judgment. And we spent, as a unit and me personally, roughly two years in very much a limbo situation without clear decisions by management as to what the future would be, and that was finally resolved in August 2006, and I moved on, on September 1st, to the new function that I now have at Georgetown University.

ZENNI: And you've spoken to this a little, but I'll ask it anyway. How do you look back on your accomplishments as Director, Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics?

MARSHALL: The position was the most interesting and most demanding of all that I had in the Bank. It was interesting because it was charting very new ground. It was a learning experience from start to finish, both for me and for the Bank. The Bank had no institutional knowledge of an enormous world of the religions, both organizationally and in terms of ideas, so that was very exciting. And we remain still at the cutting edge of what is a new field, so that was exciting also. I also will confess that I enjoyed the independence that I had, that I was really not part of the bureaucratic structure, that I was dealing with a very large number of relationships with many people outside the Bank, and that was interesting and exciting. The frustration was in the lack of clarity and the lack of engagement of so many people within the Bank on what I saw and what Jim Wolfensohn saw as very critical issues of our time. So that part of it was very frustrating.

ZENNI: Moving on to World Bank presidents, what is your assessment of the various presidents under whose leadership you served, and, in your opinion, what should be the criteria for selecting World Bank presidents in terms of both their personal and professional attributes?

MARSHALL: The World Bank president is, in many senses, one of these impossible jobs where you're looking for a paragon: someone with visionary leadership but also able to run a uniquely complex, large organization; a person with relationship skills but knowledge of development, et cetera. And, as in all cases, different presidents have filled different pieces of this. I should also mention the importance of the political side, of developing coalitions and relationships.

The two, obviously, strongest presidents of the Bank over my career were Robert McNamara and Jim Wolfensohn. McNamara put an enormous mark on the Bank and is still very much in many people's minds as they think about the Bank and about its ethos and its character. I was able to watch him in his role in the Board and then to see him from more of a distance when I moved into a much more operational position, but his intelligence, his drive, his structure were unique in their character. And, of course, his expansion of the Bank, his designation of leaders really set its mark on the Bank for a long time afterwards.

The other very visionary strong leader was Jim Wolfensohn, who in many ways I knew much better. I knew McNamara fairly well and had a lot of interaction with him, including after he left, but Jim Wolfensohn I clearly had a much closer opportunity to work with him and to admire his many qualities. His extraordinary energy, his extraordinary range of contacts, his drive really set him apart, and his determination to put the Bank again into a different frame and to change its role.

I worked in different ways with [Alden W.] Clausen, Conable, and Preston, who all had important effects on the Bank but who were very different people and who came to the Bank with far less vision and with far less determination to bring change. I think that the most difficult President, and in some ways the most difficult period, was Clausen, whose vision and sense were never very clear. Barber Conable came with a very special gift which no one else has had, I think, before: a sense of his engagement in the political realm, which you saw. His commitment to gender issues was exciting and had an effect, and he was such a decent man that that permeated, I think, the institution in many ways; his sense of decency and of a human face were very important. Preston did not serve very long because he was ill, and he had illness in his family as well during his tenure, so his mark, I think, is much less clear. And again his personal relationships were much less obvious, so he was less accessible, and I think his mark was less clear. And I don't think I would comment very much on Paul Wolfowitz. It's my sense that he's still shaping his approach, his vision, and his relationships, which, of course, are very critical, how he relates to individuals within the Bank, both the senior management group but also staff at the working level, and how they see him. I think that that's a story that's still being written.

ZENNI: Okay. Moving on to reflections, what is your assessment of the Bank's various evaluative mechanisms, for example, OED [Operations Evaluation Department], the Quality Assurance Group (QAG), Inspection Panel, et cetera, in terms of contribution to quality and effectiveness of the development agenda?

MARSHALL: The Operations Evaluation Department, now IEG [Independent Evaluation Group]--is that what it's called now?

ZENNI: Yes. It is now called IEG.

MARSHALL: That's right, IEG. I have worked with them off and on for about 30-odd years because I was involved very early on in my career in some of the early completion reports. And, obviously, when I was a division chief and then programs director and a country director, I probably stood out compared with many other people in the importance that I gave to that work from an early time. I'm a historian in many ways, and I found the processes very important and have always been frustrated by how marginalized the Bank's evaluation work can be. My rather blunt assessment is that all too often the lessons of experience are not taken sufficiently into account. The issue of whether OED is independent, clearly, is important. It's one that a lot of people are focusing on and have focused on from the very beginning. I do share the view that having it as an integral part of the Bank but with special firewalls is probably the best mechanism. I think that the Bank would be very difficult to work on if you didn't have those links, so I favor the current set-up. So I think that OED plays a critical role. While I think a lot of its work is outstanding, some of its work is terrible. I think sometimes it gets it fundamentally wrong, but very--even so, I think that the process is an important one, and it's vitally needed in the institution.

I'm a little bit less familiar with the QAG, the Quality Assurance Group, though I have done actually a couple of QAG reviews over the years. I've been part of review teams, and I have had some experience at the “receiving” end of them. I think it's an interesting approach, and I think it does work well in keeping people on their toes and keeping people very focused on quality. My sense is that it can be sometimes too mechanistic, too focused on formal plans, so that they may miss the living quality of operations and the forces for change that were pressing in significant directions. Sometimes they are not able to see the forest from the trees because they get so focused on individual details. So, again, I think sometimes they get it wrong from what I've seen, but very often they add significant value.

ZENNI: Do you have anything to say about the Inspection Panel?

MARSHALL: I had a lot to do with the Inspection Panel around the time of the Western China poverty project, and that's been my main contact with the Inspection Panel. I think it's, again, an important and interesting instrument. I think it had a difficult birth because of its links to the very complex Narmada controversy. The Western China poverty project review was an immensely costly exercise all around. Whether it could have been done with less pain, suffering and use of pressure is an interesting question. But, again, I think that the Inspection Panel is an organic part of the institution that plays an important role.

ZENNI: What are your views on the systematic learning of lessons in the Bank as an input in the way the Bank does its work; in other words, how conducive is the Bank's organizational culture to learning in general?

MARSHALL: I raised this point earlier in our discussion. Clearly the Bank staff is very intelligent. There are important mechanisms for learning. There is an infinite amount of information that's increasingly available through knowledge systems, but I think there are some important gaps and some important questions that I'm left with in my mind.

One of the gaps is that I perceive an institutional culture of living in the moment. There's not an institutional culture of focusing sufficiently on something that I think is very important for the Bank, that some of our comparative advantage is the depth of our relationships. For some countries we now have a 60-year relationship, but I would hazard that if you asked some of the current managers of those countries, they would not be able to tell you very much about that history or what its significance is for the present. So I think that that's an issue that goes with the kind of organization we are.

I mentioned before my frustration at how poor hand-overs tend to be and, therefore, how new managers tend to reinvent and not to benefit from previous experience.

We've discussed the weakness of current mentoring systems which were the way in which the Bank's knowledge and culture was passed on in the past. I think those systems do not work well now. People come and tend to be thrown into a culture which expects them to act as if they know everything from day one, and I think that's a problem. I think we have a structural issue in the Bank, which again I've looked at for many years, which is that there's a research branch of the Bank which produces countless publications but the operational people in the Bank don't write very much and they write less now than they used to because they don't even write back-to-office reports and coherent prose about what they're doing, so a lot of the real operational experience at the Bank is not part of the Bank's written record.

ZENNI: Are we talking also about some disconnect perhaps between the research and operational side?

MARSHALL: Oh, there's a tremendous disconnect. The two worlds have very little to do with each other in many cases. And the research people are there to publish and to write, but the operational people are there to make things happen and writing is not a central part of their job and certainly not writing for publication. So I think that there are a lot of issues around that, and I think there's a lot of the Bank's experience, therefore, that's not well captured. For me that is a significant gap and shortcoming.

And I would finally mention that one of the things that has bothered me tremendously in the last couple of years and that, again, has been heightened by the experience of working with this very interesting new area of the Bank's relationships, the relationships between development and religion and religion's potential links to the Bank, is what I often find is a striking absence of curiosity, that people don't ask questions and they often don't seem interested. They're so focused on an overburdened agenda that they hesitate to branch out. And, again, for me that's the strength of the Bank: our multidisciplinary character, our position of seeing different sectors and different issues. I'm troubled by that lack of curiosity that I see in so many of my colleagues.

ZENNI: What is your overall assessment of the Bank's staff skill-mix and alignment with strategic priorities and objectives?

MARSHALL: The Bank's staff is remarkable. First, let's be very clear, they are intelligent and have extraordinary experience, so I think we should take that as a given. In looking at the specific question of technical skill mix, I don't have enough direct experience of exactly who does what, whether we're short on economic specialists or engineers or whatever, so I wouldn't comment on that.

There are two issues that I would highlight. The first is--because I do the orientation; I've done the orientation for years, though I no longer do it to new staff, and I give them statistics about the Bank's staff--I've been asking and wanted to know for some time how do we break down between economists and non-economists. It's quite difficult to get an answer to that question, but clearly the Bank's image is that it's an institution of economists, but it's not. So I think that that balance, the multidisciplinary character of the Bank, is something that we don't highlight enough and that we don't value enough. There is an implicit hierarchy, with the economists being slightly better, slightly more equal than the others, to quote George Orwell, and I think that's an issue. It's an important issue. I saw it coming as I "grew up" and came from the project side of the Bank, which was always slightly at a handicap. Prior to the 1972 reorganization, there were equal kingdoms--projects and programs--but following the regionalization, I think that the country economists on the program side got an edge, and particularly after the advent of structural adjustment, of course, they took on an even greater role. So you've seen the ascendance of the economists over time, and the role of other disciplines is not as well regarded from various perspectives. If you look at the country directors today, there are not very many who come out of the project technical side; there's a preponderance of economists, and that has an effect on the way the Bank looks at the world and the way it looks at countries. What I'm for is a mix, a constant mix, and I think that people should work in both programs and projects.

A second issue, and it's a tough one, is that I don't think that the Bank should shape itself as a technical consulting firm with the world's best experts. To me, the Bank's comparative advantage lies basically with its generalist skills and integrating skills. That's what we really do. We need, obviously, people who are very good at what they do, but if we try always to have the world's best experts, I think we'll make mistakes. We can hire expertise, but it's the integration and the analysis that is what no one else can do; that's where we have a special role. So we have in a sense almost defined the generalists out of our criteria for selection, and our structure now, our career paths, push people into the network structures and the career structures, so it's difficult for people to move from one to another. So it's more difficult, much more difficult now than it was in the past for people to have a varied experience like I had and like many others had. So I don't know what the future is going to bring. How are we going to breed people who truly understand the different dimensions of research policy, analysis, country relations, and projects if we don't have people moving around? So this is an open question.

ZENNI: Thank you. In your opinion, how successful is the Bank in handling selectivity in its operations, i.e., divesting itself from areas where other agencies have the lead expertise and focusing more on partnerships?

MARSHALL: The answer is, clearly, not very good. But it's a tricky one. I think that this idea that the Bank's "just says no" and says we won't do this and that and the other is not a very constructive approach. What we need is to combine a focus on certain priority areas with an ability to maintain a knowledgeable and thoughtful approach to the overall issues which means you have to know about a wide range of issues. You don't have to claim to be the world's expert, but you need to know the parameters and understand the framework. So I think that that is an important issue, and I don't think it's discussed in very intelligent terms in the institution. So I think that we need to have the comprehensive approach in our understanding, but not always to think that we're the only ones who can do it, which is really an attitude of mind more than a technical issue.

ZENNI: How do you see the evolving roles of both the IBRD and IDA and their continued relevance on the global stage, also in light of recent debt forgiveness by the industrialized countries?

MARSHALL: I think that it's hard to look in the crystal ball and see what's going to happen at the Bank. Clearly, we're a much lesser player in many parts of the world than we used to be. We're still very respected, we're still substantial, but with the increase in private financing which has dwarfed Bank financing, with the increasing role even of NGOs, with the growing feistiness of the regional development banks, I think it's hard to know where the Bank will go in the future. We might very well become a smaller institution.

The Bank also faces some special challenges as to its role because of the knowledge explosion and revolution in the world. Everyone can use Google and a host of other information sources today, so the Bank's monopoly of knowledge which we had in the past is not easy to foresee in the future, particularly if we cannot respark the curiosity and outreach; that is what we need in order to be seen as real intellectual leaders in the future. So IBRD depends on our ability in middle-income countries to be convincing that we truly offer value and that we're efficient and we're not overly cumbersome, that we're not overly ideological in our approach.

IDA I see as a continuing, very important role for the Bank, but again that depends on our ability to convince our partners, our donors that we can play the role that we've played in the past.

ZENNI: And in terms of its funding, what do you see?

MARSHALL: I see Africa as still the major challenge. Our reputation will be made on whether we do better in Africa in the future. I think we could use additional funds well in today's world, but I'm not sure whether we'll be offered that opportunity in terms of new IDA commitments through replenishments.

ZENNI: In terms of IDA reflows?

MARSHALL: The reflows, I think, we hopefully have that arranged through the agreement, but the question is how well we're able to live up to the agreements. But beyond that we will face challenges in securing funds for new commitments.

ZENNI: What, if anything, in the criticisms directed at the Bank by NGOs and others do you consider legitimate and worthy of serious attention?

MARSHALL: I often use in my various presentations the ancient story of the blind man and the elephant, that when blind men were asked to describe an elephant, touching it in different places, they described very different animals, but as one poet said, with a deep conviction that they were right and with difficulty in understanding how others saw the world. I know from many, many interactions that the vision of the NGOs is, first, coming from a very different place in most cases, and the insight that they often have can be very valuable, and the Bank does not always take that sufficiently into account. We can be very effective as partners, but we also have large blind spots. The NGOs, when they approach the Bank, sometimes I think approach it with some blind spots also. Many NGOs see the Bank primarily as a source of funding for their own operations, and that is not realistic. In my view, it's not desirable that the Bank be a funding organization for NGO work. So, the claims of partnerships that we need with NGOs should not be based primarily on money, and that's been a very difficult shift to work out because so many NGOs want money. They see us as having a lot. They think they can use it better than governments, but as a framework for building a relationship, I think that is problematic. There are a lot of exciting things happening with NGOs that are tangible partnerships, but this sort of overall tension around the role they play vis-a-vis the role we play and the role governments play I think is a common theme in many parts of the world.

ZENNI: Looking back, what have you learned from your journey/experience at the Bank, and what has it meant to you personally serving as unique an institution as the World Bank?

MARSHALL: I've spent more than half of my life working in the Bank and for more than half of the Bank's history I've been here, so everything I've learned in life, a very large part of it has come from my work in the Bank. I would add to that that raising children is pretty close up there in terms of learning about people in life and friendships, but clearly I have lived a life that's been very dominated by the Bank. Friendships, many of my closest friendships are with colleagues and people that I know, my models, my mentors, are dominated by people in the Bank, so that I'm very much a creature of the Bank in that sense. So I've learned, simply, an enormous amount.

First, I would highlight the extraordinary opportunity of being in the center stage of the history of so many countries from where we sit in the Bank, and that, I think, stands out as the most valuable and most intense learning, most exciting, most demanding, often most frustrating aspect of work in the Bank. I think what we used to have, and have less now of, was the intensive interdisciplinary team experience in the Bank which is something that I will never forget. Working with five or six people of different nationalities, different disciplines, and facing a very tangible problem or task was always an enormous learning experience. Clearly, my work over the past seven years or eight now, working on the relationships with faith organizations has opened whole new vistas and fields and has been, both in human terms and in intellectual terms, extraordinarily important, and it's been a very exciting adventure--journey.

Let me mention two other things. I've done a lot of things which don't appear very clearly in the formal record but which have also been very important. I've spent a number of years working on the Appeals Committee. I was a member of the Appeals Committee, which, again, was fascinating. It's sometimes depressing. It's depressing because so many of the issues for the Appeals Committee are problems that reach it much too late to solve in a constructive way. They come at a very late stage. But I learned a great deal about management and about people through the many cases that I handled as a chair of the Appeals Panel.

I also was on a number of task forces which were also very valuable, some of them on country teams. I was on task forces on technical assistance, one led by Bob [Robert] icciotto that was a very important task force on institutional development and issues. I spent a number of years on two related task forces. The first was on support staff issues, which was a very interesting one that was led by Steve Eccles--the Support Staff Action Group, SSAG--but also on work/family issues, and view myself as something of a pioneer there. Our group recommended many things, including the nine-day work week, otherwise known as Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) and a number of other important innovations, really being more proactive about helping spouses to find work, being much more open to families, and so I did a lot of things in that area that were important. I also served on many groups related to women and gender issues, worked with some of the youth issues, and really some of what I consider most rewarding over my career has been working with younger staff and working closely with them as a mentor, as a supporter, as a goad, as a guide. That I think I look back on as one of the most exciting elements of working here as a manager and a leader.

ZENNI: Okay. Of your many contributions to the Bank's mission, which do you consider to be the most significant?

MARSHALL: In first order, I would put relationships with people and working with people both within the Bank, but also in many countries where I've had very intense relationships that have shaped all of us, transforming relationships on both sides. The second is that I think I actually have been a pioneer in many areas, and that's frustrating but it's also exciting. And many of the themes that I see discussed today--and this was highlighted at my farewell party--that so many of those issues were ones that we were working on in my areas 20, 25 years ago. So it's always frustrating that it takes a long time to see institutional change, but it reinforces one of my beliefs, something that I do tell all new staff coming in, that you can do far more in the Bank than many people think that you can. If you have a good idea and you're prepared to be creative and fight for it, you can do a great deal.

ZENNI: Okay. Is there anything else you wish to talk about that I might have perhaps overlooked?

MARSHALL: No. I think that may be enough.

ZENNI: Well, many thanks for a most productive interview and for your invaluable contributions to the Bank's Oral History Program. Thank you.

MARSHALL: Well, thank you.

[End session 2]
[End of interview]