

THE WORLD BANK GROUP ARCHIVES

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH

CONSTANCE A. BERNARD

Interview By: John Heath

Washington, D.C.

October 20, 2016

[Transcribed from a digital sound recording]

The following is a transcript of an interview conducted for a special oral history project on the McNamara years. The project, led by John Heath from 2016-2018, was a partnership between the 1818 Society and the World Bank Group Archives to capture a social history of the experiences of staff during President Robert S. McNamara's tenure (1968-1981).

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*Connie Bernard
October 20, 2016
Verbatim*

INTERVIEW

HEATH: So, let's get started. It's Thursday, October 20, 2016. This is the World Bank Group Archives in Washington, D.C. My name is John Heath, here on behalf of the Special Oral History Project of the McNamara years.

This is the third of our interviews in the series and I'm very pleased to be here with Constance A. Bernard, Former World Bank Director and -- Ombudsperson or Ombudsman?

BERNARD: Ombudsman.

HEATH: Ombudsman.

BERNARD: It's Swedish.

HEATH: It's Swedish. Okay. All right. May I call you, Connie?

BERNARD: Please.

HEATH: Connie had a long and distinguished career with the Bank spanning 35 years from 1979 to 2014. Is that correct?

BERNARD: Actually, 1976.

HEATH: '76?

BERNARD: Yes.

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HEATH: Wow, all right. So, that's great. Although most of your career in the Bank was after the McNamara years, there are certain trends, or themes, or programs that were set up under McNamara, which I would particularly like-- we can reflect back on their longer-term impact, if you like, in the later ... So, I'm thinking -- let me run down the list. I'm thinking of the 1972 reorganization, which obviously was before you joined; nevertheless, there is a continuity with the subsequent reorganizations of '87 and '96 under Wolfensohn. Then we have, you worked in QAG [Quality Assurance Group]. QAG of course wasn't set up by Wolfensohn -- I'm sorry -- by McNamara, but OED [Operations Evaluation Department] was, and so I'll be asking you about OED and QAG.

Then of course there's all the substantial rural development stuff where you and I actually share a similar background. You indicated that you worked on Northeast Brazil and rural poverty programs. They were a throwback, in a sense, to the Integrated Rural Development of the 1970s.

BERNARD: Yes.

HEATH: You probably have thoughts about Training and Visit Extension, which was another legacy of the McNamara period. Then there's the environment of course which, as we know in 1972, McNamara appointed the first Environment Advisor. I'll be interested in your perspective as a Resident Mission in Bolivia, what that was like. That's roughly to give you a sense of where I hope we can go.

In addition to those things, as I said at the beginning, I'm particularly interested in your perspective as a woman in the Bank. As an Ombudsman, you obviously have a reputation, a tradition of conflict mediation; so I should be asking you about areas of conflict that you perceived in the Bank over the years, and how they ebbed and flowed. Mentoring is also a topic on your CV. That's something which I have a particular interest in; I'll be asking you about, how

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effective, in your career, the Bank was as a mentor. So, a lot to talk about. (Laughter)

BERNARD: Yes. This is all being recorded?

HEATH: It is. Yes.

BERNARD: I need to choose my words.

HEATH: Let's begin with a very simple question. How did you first become aware of The World Bank? At what point in your career?

BERNARD: Well, I'm embarrassed to say this, but I had graduated from college and I didn't know what to do with myself. My father was out on Guam, so I was out there for a while.

HEATH: Your college was Harvard, or college was George Washington?

BERNARD: It was Harvard.

HEATH: Harvard, right. You did your Bachelor's there in International Relations.

BERNARD: Then I came out to Washington with a friend, and I had a variety of weird jobs. Then an old classmate saw my -- I actually posed for a picture. I'm actually embarrassed to tell you this, but there was a photographer, who used to have an office on Pennsylvania Avenue. He wanted a free model, so I said I would do it, so he could put my pictures up around. An old classmate came in and saw me; had lost touch with me, and said, oh that's Connie, and got my telephone number.

She told me that they were hiring at The World Bank; and I said, what's The World Bank? She

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told me a little bit; -- I turned in an application, because I was, you know, trying to get a direction in life, basically.

HEATH: This was an application to the Young Professional Program?

BERNARD: No; as a Research Assistant.

HEATH: All right. Okay.

BERNARD: The person hiring was Murray Ross. He took me to lunch, and he completely sold me on The World Bank. I thought, this is heaven, this is what I want to do. This is the best thing I've ever heard about. I would love to work here. It was a two-year assignment. I didn't think I'd be here longer than a year.

HEATH: Right. This was after your MBA at George Washington?

BERNARD: No. It was before. It was before.

HEATH: Right. Okay.

BERNARD: I was sort of halfway. I worked -- I'm not sure. Yeah, I had started it, but I hadn't finished.

HEATH: And this was in '76 that you were offered this two-year assignment, you would say, or a one-year?

BERNARD: In '76, correct.

HEATH: In '76. All right. Okay.

BERNARD: I was so happy. I loved it. I loved the place. I was a very idealistic person; I saw this as the solution to poverty, to all the problems of the world, and I happened to be here. I felt very humbled to be there.

So I spent '76 through '78, or '79, I was a Research Assistant there. Then I had finished my MBA, and my mentor, Murray Ross, who was very kind to me, said, apply for a job. So I did. I think I --

HEATH: So, which part of the Bank was Murray Ross working in?

BERNARD: He was a Senior Economist in the equivalent of the LAC [Latin America and Caribbean] Region.

HEATH: Right. Okay.

BERNARD: He was very close to retirement, and he was actually heading up these -- I don't know if you remember the Consultative Groups?

HEATH: Yes. Sure, CGIAR [Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research], yes.

BERNARD: Yes. Well, my immediate boss was Gonzalez-Cofino. It was his idea; he started the first one in the Caribbean. So, I ended up working on those. We would put together these economic reports for St. Lucia and Grenada. I learned all about public finance, not all about it, but I learned something about it. Murray kept giving me things to read, et cetera.

HEATH: Tell me what you remember of your first day on the job? How did you dress? What

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were you wearing?

BERNARD: What was I wearing? I would have been wearing a dress, I think. I was in a dress, and heels, and stockings. You know, it was much more formal then.

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: I remember who I met. I met Mahmood Ayub on my very first day. He was a Young Professional in the group that I was going to be working with. The second person I met was Asif Faiz. I was what, 26, and they were also very young. I was so naïve, but I was so completely thrilled with the idea of working with people from other countries. Yes, I was just so excited. They put me in an office, in the old A Building, with a window onto the -- Do you remember when it was a courtyard?

HEATH: Yes.

BERNARD: And it was open. So, I had a window onto the courtyard. Murray brought me stacks of stuff to read. I was reading all this stuff and absorbing it. Now I can't remember the first assignment I had, but very shortly thereafter, I was going on missions, on these Consultative Group missions, and first putting together the "public finance" part of the reports. Then later on, I would do the reports with one other person, within a couple of years.

HEATH: Just to be clear. These Consultative Groups, they weren't the same as the CGIAR, the international --

BERNARD: No. They were completely different. Sorry. I misunderstood you.

HEATH: Yes. I see.

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BERNARD: The Consultative Groups, the purpose was to raise aid or assistance --

HEATH: Yes. Right.

BERNARD: -- for a country, or a group of countries in the case of the Caribbean.

HEATH: Yes.

BERNARD: Our role is to provide documentation, and to sort of essentially support the country. Then they would culminate in a big meeting where all the donors would come, and they would commit to providing a certain amount of aid. It was a little bit of dog and pony show, because obviously the commitments don't work that way; they work over time. It was a way of showing support to the countries, and certainly advertising for them. The idea was to -- I think also it was a new idea in terms of the kind of role the Bank had, as a sort of a broker.

HEATH: Yes.

BERNARD: It was an interesting time, because this was sort of the tail end of the McNamara years. What I remember was how completely terrified we all were of making a mistake on any of the documentation, because he would go through and read the most obscure cable at the end of -- you know, the 50-page statistical appendix. And he'd say, there's an error in here; this adds up to two or not, you know, it's rather -- maybe it was a compound and rounding error, and maybe it was just a typo. He would find them. Then there will be hell to pay (crosstalk).

HEATH: Sure.

BERNARD: We read, and we read, and proofread. That's what I remember, is reading these reports, sitting with one of the then Secretaries, now Assistants, reading aloud so that we

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wouldn't miss any little typo in the thing.

HEATH: Right. What was the office technology in those days?

BERNARD: There was a big computer room, and we were running very simple public finance models with these little countries.

HEATH: So was this a main frame for the whole Bank, or just for your --

BERNARD: It was a main frame for the whole Bank, and you would bring your inputs. This was just basically consistency model we used to do projections. It seemed like we were always projecting 5 percent growth for some reason, I don't know why. You would bring your inputs to this big room, which was sort of overheated because this huge machine was thrumming away. You bring it in on green sheets; then the computer would take it, and it would take about four days, and it would produce the --

HEATH: So, was it a card-based system, where you had these Hollerith punch cards; or it was later than that?

BERNARD: That's a good question. I think it was later than that. Or at least I wasn't involved in the punching, so I don't know who did that.

HEATH: And the secretaries who worked with you, I mean, what sort of machines were they using?

BERNARD: They had the Selectric typewriters, with the white tape --

HEATH: Right with the (crosstalk).

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BERNARD: Right. That was considered really cool, because we could erase. (Laughter)

HEATH: That's right.

BERNARD: And they did all the typing, there's much more of a line between, you know. There was need of administrative staff, and they had particular jobs.

HEATH: Was there a pool of typists, or were they assigned to staff?

BERNARD: Essentially there were a number of -- they weren't really typists. They were called secretaries at that time, but they were assigned to two or three people. Each was assigned to maybe two or three people and was responsible for helping them.

HEATH: Would they get you coffee?

BERNARD: Did they get me coffee? That was beginning to be an issue, as I recall.

HEATH: Right. Yes.

BERNARD: And I never dared ask for any -- particularly because I was young and new.

HEATH: But what about your male, maybe older colleagues, were they still used to --

BERNARD: Oh, absolutely.

HEATH: -- getting their cup of coffee?

BERNARD: They were disgusting. Excuse me, sorry. (Laughter) Yeah, they still expected a certain amount of service from the secretaries, which was not a source of goodwill.

HEATH: All right. And that must have been a lot of smoke in those days. Yeah?

BERNARD: Everyone smoked. In fact, the person who hired me, Murray Ross, smoked a pipe. If you can imagine. I could always tell if he was looking for me, because there would be trail of pipe ash. It would be right in front of my desk; I would see the trail, and that it would stop right in front of my desk. Oh, he's looking for me. It reeked to high heaven. You know, it was very - I don't know what kind of tobacco he used. That's a huge change in the Bank; nobody smokes obviously. But everybody smoked then.

HEATH: Yes. Tell me something about your first mission. Where was that to?

BERNARD: My very first mission. It was to the smaller Caribbean countries. I remember very vividly, because we went to the Netherlands Antilles, that was one of the stops, and they got very excited about the Bank Mission. So when we arrived, there was a limousine waiting for us on the tarmac, and we had all of these, you know, facilitators. They even -- I was the only female, and they had provided a date for all the men, and they provided a date for me, too. It was hugely embarrassing.

HEATH: A date? Do you mean, an escort, perhaps?

BERNARD: Maybe yes, an escort would probably be a better word. So you would have a person of the opposite sex who was sort of looking -- I don't know what that person was doing, but (laughter) --

HEATH: That's an amazing story.

BERNARD: I think my Mission Chief had said, thank you, but you don't need to do that.

HEATH: Definitely don't do that--

BERNARD: That as on the first day. Then we had our first meeting, and we explained how we couldn't lend to the Netherland Antilles, because it wasn't a -- you know, it wasn't independent. Car was gone, facilitators were gone the next day; nothing. I remember that it was kind of humorous at the time.

HEATH: How many people were on that mission?

BERNARD: There were about, I think, four or five people. It was a big mission.

HEATH: You were the only woman? Or there were other women?

BERNARD: I was the only woman, yeah.

HEATH: Right. How did that work out being the only woman on a mission like this?

BERNARD: It was very different then.

HEATH: Did you feel patronized? Did you feel that you were made to do things that you wouldn't have wanted to do particularly? I mean, anything like that?

BERNARD: No. I didn't feel that way. I felt they looked after me. I felt that the Mission Chief, José Chappo (phonetic), I think was the Mission Chief. I remember one of our counterparts. I think it was in St. Vincent, I went to get statistics from him, and he said I had to

go out with him, or he wouldn't give me any statistics. So, I came back and said, José, what should I do?

He said, oh, that's terrible. Ignore it. There are some things you don't have to do. So I said, he's going to come by the hotel. They were all there with when he came by to the hotel, we invited him to dinner. He was really mad, and I never did get those statistics.

I think what was interesting- for me this wasn't a big deal, you know. José wanted to send me home, because he felt that he couldn't protect me. In a way that was a very kind thing, but it also meant that I couldn't do the work. After that I shut up. When that kind of thing happened, I just tried to figure out a way to handle it myself.

HEATH: Did it happen quite a bit on other missions?

BERNARD: Yes, it did happen quite a bit. But some of it -- mainly from colleagues. Mainly, it was like, you were the only female; or maybe there would be one other, and you were sort of like, lunch.

HEATH: Sure, right.

BERNARD: But again, it was -- they were basically nice men. So, I would pretend not to get it. Somebody said, why don't you stop by hotel room tonight? And I would say, oh, the lights are bad in the hotel room, why don't we work together in the lobby. I would -- everybody had a way out without, you know. I think it had -- that was the experience of most young women working at that time. You also had the sense; you don't want to make an issue with this.

HEATH: Right. Do you think if you had made an issue it would have had repercussions?

BERNARD: Yeah. There was no mechanism to deal with it. There was -- nobody had ever said this to me, but I just had the sense people would perceive me as somebody who couldn't handle herself. As somebody couldn't -- who was complaining, you know.

HEATH: Is this an issue that you talked about with your female colleagues, your friends?

BERNARD: I had almost no female colleagues at that time. They were just starting to bring in women in the Young Professional Program. By that time, I was already, believe it or not, within a year, I was leading missions to these little countries. I'm sure my counterparts were horrified. Who is this twelve-year-old all of a sudden, (inaudible) but --

HEATH: So, by then you would have been what; in your late 20s?

BERNARD: I would have been in my late 20s. Either I was in a position like a team leader, a sort of position, and it wasn't really appropriate. I hope that people felt they could talk to me if they were uncomfortable, but it was something we didn't really talk about. You know, was just sort of part of the landscape.

HEATH: Is that an issue as an Ombudsman, at the end of your career you addressed? Or was that not within the remit of the Ombudsperson's role?

BERNARD: No. Absolutely, we addressed it.

HEATH: Okay. We'll come back to that a bit later.

BERNARD: Yeah.

HEATH: Let's focus on some of the -- as I said some of the quintessential McNamara initiatives

which probably had, you know, longer-term repercussions, extending beyond his presidency. The most obvious place to start is the poverty agenda. By the time you joined the Bank in 1976, maybe one of the reasons you were impressed by the place was that there was this clear commitment, on McNamara's part at least, to eliminating or alleviating absolute poverty, and a particular interest on rural development. How did you perceive that at the time, when you entered?

BERNARD: It wasn't so clear-cut. What impressed me was--the image I had, that was created in my mind was that this was the best place in the entire world to deal with development issues. That the people were the smartest people, and that it was doing good in the world. So it was that combination of excellence and motivation that was very compelling for me. Then it was also the international environment that was just something I always wanted.

Then as I worked there, I was also very inspired by McNamara. At one point, I think it might have been right before I came, he was at the Annual Meetings, and he began to weep over the fate of the world's poor, at an address. Do you remember that?

HEATH: Well, I know his speech in Nairobi in 1973, that was the first one where he laid out --

BERNARD: I think it was Nairobi, yeah.

HEATH: -- laid out the plan to address absolute poverty.

BERNARD: What I remember is his sincerity, this intense desire to do good. Of course, at that time we were very fresh out of the Vietnam War, and he was a very controversial figure.

HEATH: Did you ever meet him one-to-one?

BERNARD: I did; (laughter) and I blew it. I walked into the elevator one day coming up from lunch; and there he was, all by himself. It was him and me. So, I said, oh, hello? He nodded at me and looked very distracted. We rode in silence up to the eighth floor, (laughter). So, I blew my opportunity to have a real conversation with him.

HEATH: Well, Connie. I mean this is an amazing fact that you actually managed to find him on the elevator, because according to the histories he always took stairs deliberately to avoid --

BERNARD: To avoid running into -- That's probably why he had this encounter with me, and he thought, no more.

HEATH: Right. Because various people have said that he was essentially a very shy man.

BERNARD: He was extremely shy, and there was -- and he was also a figure -- to some extent of fear, because there were all of these -- his raising of these somewhat petty points, on documentation, et cetera. So you just had the sense, it was like being called at the principal's office; you are like -- you might have made some mistakes somewhere, and you were going to hear about it.

That kind of management style filtered down, so I had also a rather terrifying Director. I had a very nice Division Chief. I don't know if you remember Enrique Lerda.

HEATH: No. Before my time.

BERNARD: Okay. He was a brilliant guy, and absolutely savage in his management style.

HEATH: And who was your Director?

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BERNARD: Sorry?

HEATH: You said the Director was a source of --

BERNARD: Enrique Lerdaу was the Director.

HEATH: That was the Director. Okay.

BERNARD: Enrique Lerdaу, and he was -- I'm trying to think. There was a person who was, I think VP who retired right before him, before I got there, Gene-something. I can't -- It would come -- if you said it I would recognize it.

HEATH: And who was your Division Chief at that time?

BERNARD: Roberto Gonzalez-Cofino.

HEATH: I see. All right.

BERNARD: To give you an idea, once a week, Lerdaу, and this I think was the -- to some extent the management culture that was set by McNamara, looking back. Lerdaу would call in the whole division, and he was an economist, Gonzalez-Cofino was an economist, and he would proceed to grill Roberto in front of all of us and make fun of him. Basically, humiliate him. We would all sit there terrified that we were going to attract his attention.

I remember asking Murray Ross, like I said, why does he put up with this sort of banter. He said, he goes home, he has some scotch, and he gets on with it. Actually Lerdaу had a -- he was kind -
- I don't know. He was also very nice to me, a few times when I was kind of out of my depth.

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I remember once I ended up at the end of the summer acting, and the Research Assistant ends up being the acting for the whole unit. Okay I was acting. There was some sort of emergency, he wanted me to prepare some kind of document that had to be done overnight. He said, you need to prepare this such and such. And I had only been there about nine months, at this point. I said, what should I do, what should I do? Finally I just said, what's the such-and-such? And he looked at me, and instead of lambasting me, which is what I expected; he said, it's the such. He helped me.

It was -- just going back to sort of the female thing. When I came and went to my first staff meeting, which was chaired by this very fearsome guy, Enrique. It was all black suits. I remember that I was there. I was only the female in the room. I was the youngest person in the room, and I was terrified to say a word. I just sat there like a little mouse.

It took me a full year to work up my courage to make a comment. Finally I thought, this is ridiculous. I have to say something. I practiced at home. I thought, I'm going to make a comment, and I'll just see if I can fit it in. So, I practiced and practiced. Then I can't even remember what it was, but I said something, at the next meeting, and everyone looked at me like: she speaks. (Laughter)

HEATH: So, they would really all wore black suits?

BERNARD: Yes.

HEATH: And they must have been smoking furiously?

BERNARD: They must have been. I had forgotten that part of it, but they were all smoking and--

HEATH: So, they were white shirts?

BERNARD: White shirts, and they were very harsh to each other?

HEATH: All right.

BERNARD: It was a, no feel-good management here. It was a little bit savage. It was very scary, coming in you would see somebody rip somebody else apart.

HEATH: Did they speak in a sort of code, let's say, using baseball or some other sporting metaphors? Or was there --

BERNARD: (Laughter) I didn't notice that.

HEATH: I see.

BERNARD: I sometimes had trouble following what they were saying. That's partly because I was new, and I was learning, on a very steep learning curve. It felt clubby. It felt that they were also laughing -- it seemed they were usually laughing at somebody else. It wasn't a nice -- it wasn't very convivial.

HEATH: These were people, men who were from different countries. They were from all over the world, is that right? Or were they mainly American? Or what was the mix?

BERNARD: Mainly, I would say, European and American.

HEATH: Right. Okay.

BERNARD: Very -- I'm trying to think Gonzalez-Cofino was -- well he was American, he was Cuban, of Cuban background. Enrique Lerdaу also Cuban background, and McGray (phonetic).

HEATH: No black faces around the table?

BERNARD: Oh, no. Are you kidding? Nothing. Zero.

HEATH: Okay.

BERNARD: No females. No blacks. No people really from developing countries.

HEATH: Would there be a secretary in the room taking notes, or how --

BERNARD: I don't re-- There must have been. I think probably Enrique's assistant must have been there, his secretary must have been there doing it. I don't remember seeing minutes for the meetings, to tell you the truth.

HEATH: There was no icebreaking, no jokes, no sharing of gossip. Or was there?

BERNARD: If there was, it went over my head.

HEATH: Right. I see. Okay.

BERNARD: I didn't -- you know, there would be -- again you had the sense this was an in-group. I don't know what the people are talking about, and I don't know the incident they are referring to.

HEATH: Of course.

BERNARD: I would just sort of wait quietly, you know, to try to catch the threads of the conversation.

HEATH: It must have been a very intimidating environment.

BERNARD: It was. (Laughter) But it was in a way, a good exercise; and I had a good mentor who had had his own challenges there.

HEATH: Let's talk about that a bit, the mentoring theme. Often it's said that, you know, when Bank staff begin their careers, precisely what's missing is that sort of mentoring, especially more recently in the Bank.

BERNARD: Yeah.

HEATH: What's your experience with that?

BERNARD: Actually, he was somebody who had had a long career at the Bank. Before the Bank, he had been in the OSS [Office of Strategic Services], you know, [William Joseph] Donovan's group.

HEATH: Yes. Right.

BERNARD: He was of Russian-Jewish extraction, and had had a very checkered, a very difficult family history. He had come over as a small child, after great persecution.

HEATH: So, Office of Strategic Services.

BERNARD: That's it. Yes.

HEATH: The forerunner of the CIA?

BERNARD: Yeah. He was a very interesting man. A very rational man. He acted like a father to me, actually. He was very interested in my intellectual development. He gave me lots of things to read. I was his student, basically. I will be forever grateful to him, because I was really kind of directionless at the time. I loved that.

HEATH: You could go and knock on his door, whenever you wanted, and you would have coffee together?

BERNARD: Whenever I was scared. Whenever I wanted to go to a meeting, I'd say do you think I could say this in the meeting? And I remember he said, let's wait a little bit before we put you out among the sharks. (Laughter) That was a very easy person; he was easy for me to talk to. I remember I interviewed for one job, and I blew it. I was saying, I don't think it went well. He said, you blew the interview, didn't you? And I said, yes. (Laughter) Then he said, okay, let's try this strategy. He helped me a lot in terms of getting a job in the end.

HEATH: Why did you think you blew the interview, what went wrong?

BERNARD: He asked me a question. I still remember it, about the relationship between the cost of capital and interest rates, and I couldn't answer it. He was a PhD economist; he wasn't too impressed. Now I could answer it, but now that person has probably passed on.

HEATH: Do you remember the name of the chap who interviewed you?

BERNARD: No.

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HEATH: Okay. Now this mentoring arrangement, it was entirely informal?

BERNARD: Completely. Well, he had hired me, but again with a very impermanent kind of job. They hire research assistants all the time. There wasn't a very elaborate process for selection; or I probably never would have been hired. It was also a time the Bank was growing. There was lots of work to do. So, there are many, many opportunities to actually take on more than you could quite handle. That was the other thing I loved about it. I was constantly being terrified and challenged. They say, you know, would you take this mission, and I said, I've never taken a mission. I don't even know what you are supposed to do.

HEATH: Right, right. It must have been fascinating.

BERNARD: Yeah.

HEATH: Was there any formal training of yours to start as a member of the Bank? Did you get any -- I don't know, were you sent leadership training workshops?

BERNARD: No, no, no. Nothing like that. Or I wasn't considered a potential leader.

HEATH: I see.

BERNARD: Yeah.

HEATH: Even though you were being asked to lead missions, you weren't considered a potential leader?

BERNARD: It would have helped me probably. Usually I was with people that were less

experienced than I was. It's like, I've heard this said about medical; you know, the first time observe, second time do it, the third time teach. That was kind of how it was. It was a little bit amateur. I think I would do it differently now. It was a great way to learn, because you were constantly thrown into the deep water.

HEATH: You were never a personality typed using a Myers-Briggs personality inventory?

BERNARD: Oh, I think they did one. They did those a couple of times, and I always had the weird personality that didn't fit in with everybody else.

HEATH: The standard type is the INTJ. You don't remember what your type was?

BERNARD: Yes, I do. I was INTP, INTP, yeah.

HEATH: All right. Okay. The P types are those who like to leave things open; who don't like to come to closure.

BERNARD: That's right.

HEATH: Who like to float a bit?

BERNARD: That was me. (Laughter) I'm still trying to figure out what I'm doing when I grow up. What was interesting, and I do remember one of the trainings this was probably five- or six-years in. There was a fairly sinister facilitator, and he was giving feedback to all the individuals in the group. When he came to me, he said, you are very genuine; you can use that. (Laughter) It always made me laugh. (Laughter)

HEATH: Right. There must have been some point where you -- I mean you started as a

research assistant; I mean these days in the Bank, there was a problem with the glass ceiling. It's often quite difficult to move from that position to a regular staff position. When did you actually become a regular staff?

BERNARD: I think it was about three years. I think they extended me for one year. At that point I had -- people had begun to perceive me as sort of Murray Ross's "girl". I realize now, looking back, that some thought that we had some kind of personal relationship, which was not the case. I had sort of thought, well, maybe this isn't my future here. So, I started interviewing with a completely different attitude, which was, I thought well, I'll try; but it's a big world out there. Soon as I was ready to leave, and I was starting to look outside, then I started getting job offers.

HEATH: Because you had your MBA by then, right.

BERNARD: I had my MBA --

HEATH: That must have given you a lot of confidence.

BERNARD: Well. It's kind of a stupid degree, but.

HEATH: Okay. (Laughter)

BERNARD: You don't really learn how to do anything.

HEATH: I see.

BERNARD: It was a marker. It was a marker. I was sort of ready to do something else. I didn't want to hang around forever as a research assistant hoping to get a job. I was ready to walk. I

often, later on, in later years, I told people, you need to think beyond the Bank. It's not the only place in the world. There a ton of interesting things going on everywhere.

Then I did get a job, and I kept thinking, well, this is just for another few years. Here I am. But it's such a fantastic place to work. The work was so interesting, and you have this opportunity of completely switching, every few years, and doing something completely different. Learning about new countries, new subjects, new themes. You see what's happening in the intellectual world, or on stuff you are working on. You can't take it all in. I thought, this is the perfect place for me. I may not be perfect for them, but they were perfect for me.

HEATH: I just wanted to go back for a couple of minutes for the poverty agenda. I'm interested to know how broadly that agenda was shared by your colleagues in the Bank. Did you come across people who still believed in trickle down, even though McNamara had said, he had actually said doesn't work, and what we've got to focus? The absolutely --

BERNARD: I'll tell you an interesting story.

HEATH: Yeah. Right.

BERNARD: Murray was guiding me for my interviews, you could say. We did a few practice interviews. He said, okay, so why do you want to work for The World Bank? I said, well, I really want to help people, and I want to do good in the world. He said, don't say that. Whatever you do don't say that.

I thought that was indicative, because that would have considered naïve. He said, what you should say instead is, I want to work with the best. So, I don't think there was buy-in to McNamara message, and at least to the -- certainly the poverty agenda. That was considered new. I think there has always been a tension, throughout the Bank's history, between the engineers and the economists. At the time I was there, the engineers were very dominant.

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HEATH: As late as the late 1970s?

BERNARD: Absolutely! '76, '78.

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: The type of project preparation we did was very different. We actually did project preparation. You had the financial analysis. We did economic analysis. That was checked. You would do it, and somebody would look at your work, and say, yes, that's right; no, I don't think the assumption is right. You had to support everything you said. That was actually what discussed at decision meetings, what's the quality of the project preparation. That just went out the window in the '80s.

HEATH: Right. Yes. Would it be fair to say that people focused more on growth than redistribution in the '70s when you were --

BERNARD: They did focus quite a bit on growth. I would say there was no focus, except for a few outliers. Like there is this group of people working in urban, those were new. The perception, I'm trying to think of the timing of this, it was that Rural Development had been a failure. I think it was an incorrect perception, because if you read actually the work on it, that we -- but people were terrified to get into Integrated Rural Development. I think that was probably also in the '80s, that there was a perception.

HEATH: Yeah. I suspect that you are talking more about, yeah, I mean, Integrated Rural Development too off in --

BERNARD: It might be late '80s.

HEATH: -- sort of '74, thereabouts, in Kigoma, Tanzania, and places like that, and then Brazil. You worked on Brazil subsequently; but I think it was the '80s that had been discredited essentially.

BERNARD: Yeah. For me I loved working at -- now this is many years later, but I loved working on Brazil. I just got thrown into the Rural Development, by the way, by my then Director, Gobind Nankani. He did a reorganization and said, you are in charge of rural. I said, I don't know anything about rural. He said, you'll learn. I was afraid --

HEATH: This would have been, what year would this have been?

BERNARD: Sorry?

HEATH: What year would this have been?

BERNARD: That would have been --

HEATH: That's when he became Chief of Rural Development, Latin America and the Caribbean?

BERNARD: Right. That's the one.

HEATH: '94 to '98?

BERNARD: Yeah.

HEATH: Right, okay.

BERNARD: Actually, that was much later.

HEATH: Let's talk a bit about, now Integrated Rural Development. What was your perception about why, I mean, were people right to, say, that it did not work, or was that --

BERNARD: It's much more nuanced than that. What was not working was the reliance on central institutions and top-down approaches. Particularly in the countries that we worked with, where you had widespread corruption you had very weak institutions, and when we are trying to, you know, push money through these systems, which were in very bad shape. I was -- actually, the greatest point intellectual development for me was working in Bolivia, and Hans--

HEATH: Binswanger?

BERNARD: Yes. He came through Bolivia, and he turned my world upside down.

HEATH: This was in 1989 to -- right, '90 to '94 you were Res Rep in Bolivia?

BERNARD: Yes.

HEATH: Okay.

BERNARD: We went to see some villages, and I had never really thought until then about -- I thought they were the poor people, and we were trying to help them. Hans really opened my eyes. We were also doing some work, Katherine Marshall had been leading some work in Bolivia, with these social funds they were setting up. The theme was the same, which was, you empower people at the local level, and they know better than we what they need. What you need to do is make sure you have the systems in place. The kind of discipline you use is peer pressure, transparency, community involvement, et cetera, et cetera.

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So I went to see all these little projects, and I was so impressed. I don't know. After you sat in the meeting with the Minister of Health's brother-in-law, who is trying to figure out how to scam. It was so depressing. Then you would go see these people come alight with enthusiasm in their own community, solving their own problems.

HEATH: Could you say the problem with earlier model was top-down, and relied on?

BERNARD: It was top-down, relied on weak institutions, but the idea --

HEATH: Trying to coordinate all these different line ministries and so forth and bringing them together was very difficult. Nothing disbursed, et cetera.

BERNARD: It needed to be bottom-up. Bottom-up really worked, and we had all of these examples, but you could not use - what I told everyone was: do not use the phrase Integrated Rural Development, because people have a knee-jerk reaction to it. But that's what we were doing; and it worked. It worked better than anything I'd ever seen.

HEATH: Then you subsequently had exposure to the experience of Northeast Brazil where they actually -- they reinvented the program, didn't they?

BERNARD: Yeah. And that was such a fantastic program.

HEATH: Tell us something about that.

BERNARD: It was a program that I inherited when I took over. Luis Coirolo was the --

HEATH: Your predecessor must have been Tia Duer?

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BERNARD: She was, yes. She's a good friend of mine now. She was also a big supporter of that program. I think I would have been -- I could have just gone from village to village. I would have been perfectly happy to see what was possible. There were all these permutations and ramifications and different sorts of problems, and depending on the area -- I mean, there are all sorts of issues that are connected with this. By the time I started working in India, we were into the second and third-generation issues. But again, this theme of empowering the community, and in a sense, getting some of the institutions out of the way was -- really changed the way I thought about the whole thing.

We also, we pursued that model in India, where we had the best -- we've tried it in a number of states, it was with degrees of success. The one that was very successful was Andhra Pradesh. When I was having a bad time, and a lot of internal politics in the Bank. I'd go home at night and I'd think: yeah, but we helped 10 million women in Andhra Pradesh, and I'd feel better.

HEATH: What we are talking about is community-driven development essentially?

BERNARD: Yes. Basically, yes.

HEATH: Some people say that CDD [Community-Driven Development], if you ask people in the villages, the people on the ground there, they always give -- generally give a good report, they are very happy. But what about long-term sustainability? I mean, some people say that one of the problems of these programs is that you create parallel channels to the local government, and in the long term they are not sustainable, because once the project ends that's it. And these groups that have been formed, they fall apart.

BERNARD: Well, I think that there's some truth to that. That was very much an issue in India. In fact, we had -- I remember my first staff meeting, when I took over at the World Group.

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People were almost at each other's throats over this controversy, because there was a local government contention, and a community development contention.

However, there are not so many things that work, you know. It's like this panoply of instruments in front of us, and we could try this one, and try this one. There's absolutely nothing wrong working with local government and trying to get them going. However, if you wait, particularly in a country like India where things are very top-down, and most of the money seems to get skimmed off, before it gets to anybody, and where the real poor are basically left out, they didn't get infrastructure -- they get nothing.

I'm perfectly happy with the inconsistency of working both ends. I think if you work only at local governments it would take a while. It's much harder to get the transparency controls, the peer pressure, et cetera. So, for me, it was very important. I wanted to see some kind of impact in my life, not just one -- I wanted to say something about the 10 million, you know, think about the 10 million women. You don't want to think well, probably in 30 years from now. No, we'll get to those 10 million women. But I think it's a dilemma.

The other thing is, I have lost the faith that we, the World Bank, the external governments have the ability to create institutions, or address what are fundamental problems of political organization; that we are going to fix those. We don't know how to fix them. We try by training, et cetera, and then you know the whole cast of characters shows up. Anyhow that's a long answer to your question, but that's how I worked it out in my own mind. So, yeah, typical- Connie; yeah, you are both right. (Laughter)

HEATH: Taking you back to what some of your colleagues in the early '70s, the mid-'70s, the people who were skeptical about poverty. They would probably say, well, these programs, they are okay, they get people together and so forth, and maybe they help to build institutions. But what about, do they really reduce poverty? Do they really generate growth?

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The reason I say this is because the Northeast Brazil projects, I mean, went through a series of cycles. I think in all, the Bank invested about \$1 billion in these various states. Yet there's very little hard evidence to show that poverty was reduced.

BERNARD: Well, Northeastern Brazil is a good example, because what was striking me when I went there, was a lot of these communities were essentially older people. Most of the human capital for growth, they had left for the city because there were no opportunities there. I guess a part of it was, what kind of social support system do you need? Is this a good social support system? Is there something better that you could do to make sure these people have something; you know, to survive?

In India, I think there was growth generated, but I can't prove it. I would see at the micro level; I would see somebody who had a cow, who didn't have a cow before. In fact the women organized, they wanted to set up their own women's bank, in Andhra Pradesh. They got incredibly well organized, and it became a political force.

It depends on where you are and what the environment is. If you have huge constraints to growth, this won't fix them. However, it will help maybe even things out a little bit, if there are some opportunities. Certainly, that was the case in India; Northeastern Brazil, maybe less so.

HEATH: Okay. Another McNamara Initiative, I don't know if it was directly him, but certainly under his tenure, Danny Benor, and Training and Visit Agricultural Extension.

BERNARD: Oh, right, right, right. I've forgotten that name. Yes. He was very controversial.

HEATH: Tell us something about your impressions of that.

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BERNARD: Well, I sort of came in after, but he was a big proponent of T&V [Training & Visit System].

HEATH: He was the architect.

BERNARD: He made it work, when nobody else could seem to make it work. He had the drive and the personality and the forcefulness, I think, so that there is always a question about replicability. But again, I think T&V works if you have the institutions that can do it. That's the challenge of development, it all comes down to what's the capability. It even comes down to what -- is there political consensus in this country.

That's where I think we kid ourselves a lot in the '70s or '80s, where you rarely talked about institutional development. Or if you did, you were talking that you should have a training program. The fact that, you know, the whole staff of a particular institution would change every time there was an election. Or that everybody was on the take. Or that, they were considered -- all the jobs were considered, you know, political -- what do you call it --

HEATH: (Inaudible).

BERNARD: Right. Exactly! We didn't really factor that in. I didn't get that until I went to Bolivia. I remember my first meeting at the Ministry of Mines, and they showed me this chart. It was just the way they did things. And they said, well, here are all the new people, down to the drivers that are coming in with the change of government. And I said, well, how do you function? Well, the answer is, we don't function. They don't function. It was just a different mentality.

I think one of the dangerous things in the Bank, I think it's probably human nature, is people tend to not analyze closely what's going on. It's like the Integrated Rural Development. These

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projects didn't work, therefore the whole idea is bad. I think that was kind of the thinking. I couldn't even say the words without somebody fainting. But the concept is not a bad concept; of course, you have to deal with all aspects of a particular problem. I think, people rapidly became religious about particular points of view. The same thing with the community development versus the local government.

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: Why are these things in opposition; they are not in opposition?

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: There were almost fistfights over this. Then people would develop, you know - you have a sense of groups developing. It was very interesting to me, about the way groups develop around particular ideas. There was a personal element to it. Those guys think that -- you know; we don't like that.

HEATH: Around the time you became a formal staff member, about '79, there was a transition in the Bank towards structural adjustment and policy-based lending, around the time of the second oil crisis, the response to that, and so forth. Some people would say that the emphasis on poverty went away at that point. What is your perception of that period?

BERNARD: I'm not sure there was a strong emphasis on poverty beforehand. I think that was McNamara. I think he brought in some people with some new ideas, i.e. urban and rural development. If you think of things in terms of dominant discipline, I think the dominant then disciplining was engineering. So, these old -- and many of the people in senior positions, were engineers, or also very growth-oriented economists.

HEATH: But there was a tradition of belief in state-led growth, shall we say, which disappeared with Anne Krueger, and after '81. McNamara, used to have five-year plans, I mean and --

BERNARD: That's true. He did, didn't he?

HEATH: The project appraisals of the 1970s they wouldn't distinguish between private goods, and public goods. There were never discussions about, you know, they were focusing on the economic rate of return, without really questioning whether resources were being allocated in an efficient way. They weren't talking about the policies, they were talking about the rates of return, and without thinking about, you know, you have a price system might prevent these returns being realized, because they weren't the incentives.

BERNARD: Right. I think you are right about that. It wasn't so apparent to me at the time. But of course, you are the frog in the water, so you sort of accept what you are told. I do remember when structural adjustment lending came in. Look, with every new thing that came in, there's lots of murmuring, among, this is really not a good idea; this is the Bank, it's going to destroy the Bank.

What I do remember as sort of a conflict between the people that liked big, very well designed, well-crafted projects; bridges, highways, things like that. Then I think what also came in, in the '80s, was a sort of a very changed role of government, that I do remember. I think that was the first time I heard that joke about the two economists walking down the street. One sees a \$20 bill. I'm sure you've heard this joke.

HEATH: Dollar bills on the sidewalk.

BERNARD: Yeah, right. If it had any value, somebody would have picked it up.

HEATH: That's right.

BERNARD: There was a lot of murmuring. A lot of people felt, first that it was sort of a Reagan /Thatcher, driven kind of kind of thinking; sort of the latest trend. There was a slightly faddish element to it. I think some of the people that have been there a while felt that this was, again, black and white; you know, public, private, never the twain shall meet.

There also was a perceived sense of failure about some of the publicly driven programs that we have supported. That tension between the engineers, and sort of the generalist, economists, I had the sense throughout the Bank, throughout my time there that there was sort of a -- it used to be projects and programs, and that there were certainly --

HEATH: Well, that's what I wanted to ask you about now. I mean, another area, the 1972 reorganization, McNamara came in with a deliberate intention of reducing the power of the central projects, relative to the area departments. That trend was, in a sense accentuated in '87 and '96, the same direction of travel was maintained. What are your reflections about that? That tension between the area departments and the project departments? The implications, for example, for projects, for quality controls for, you know, the pace of lending, and so forth - these sorts of things?

BERNARD: I think, first of all, I would say that that is a tension in the Bank's work, and the organization that has continued, that will continue; it's sort of built in the organization. It's probably a healthy thing. But yes, I was very aware of it. At the time I think the project guys felt they were losing a powerful position in the institution. The economists were happy, because certain country programs seemed to be coming on. That's what I remember, and I was working on country programs, so I was happy.

There's always this sort of duality of who really decides. Is it the country program that drives

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things? Which is sort of where we came out with the CASs [Country Assistance Strategies], et cetera? Or is it excellent project work? Which is what it was very much when I joined the Bank.

HEATH: Were you aware in the '70s of lending pressures of --

BERNARD: Oh, absolutely, yes. That's been a constant.

HEATH: That's something which began with McNamara. There was a sense that he wanted to have these ambitious lending programs. To get the Bank a place at the table in a sense, to make it a more an influential organization, I think partly. Was there a conflict in terms of the tradeoff between quantity and quality? Did the pressure to lend mean that there was less attention to quality of projects?

BERNARD: Again, I was working on country programs at that time. The pressure that I felt was that everything had to be perfect. It was very common, you know, back in the days before people had home computers, we would all be in the office all the time. Weekends looked just like the weekday.

There had been a lot of things that have now been computerized, but just checking things all the time, checking, checking, check. Trying to make sure it's absolutely perfect. Even though, sometimes the data that went in was probably garbage. You can imagine doing economic reports for St. Lucia, and they had no statistical base, so we are kind of making it up.

HEATH: You didn't have Excel --

BERNARD: But it has to add up.

HEATH: You didn't have Excel spreadsheets, so therefore you had to check everything did add

up. Yeah.

BERNARD: Well, we did it by hand.

HEATH: By hand, right.

BERNARD: I still remember that little consistency model. It was actually helpful for me in learning.

HEATH: Did you have, let's see, an adding machine. Or did you have a HP --

BERNARD: It was T, it was HPT. That was so hot thing then. I didn't qualify or want one first in that.

HEATH: Reverse (crosstalk) --

BERNARD: Everyone was desperate to get one.

HEATH: Right. Yes.

BERNARD: Finally, I got one. I was so happy.

HEATH: Yes, yes. I'm sure. Yeah, right.

BERNARD: But we would do the -- That was the other thing I used to do, is the investment programs, for these COSTAB groups. So you would write down the project, how much money, et cetera, and you do it on the big, green sheet. Then you'd add it all up, and make sure all the columns balance. But it was very arduous.

HEATH: You must have had a typewriter with an enormous carriage on it, yes? To accommodate that?

BERNARD: No. It was by hand. It was pencil.

HEATH: Oh, I see. Right, it was pencil.

BERNARD: Yeah. I still remember these big green sheets, and --

HEATH: Right. Yes. Another thing which McNamara set up was Operations Evaluation Department which got its own Vice President, I think by about '73, or thereabouts. It became, as you know, independent of the President, reporting to the Board. I'd like to talk for a bit about your perception of the effectiveness of OED in terms of, again, learning project quality. And then go on to talk about QAG, which you had a role in.

BERNARD: Right. Well, I think you have to have OED, and I think that was a very positive step. I think some of this -- I have had so many operations who didn't always agree with the OED Reports, as you can imagine. I would also- when I was a manager, I would see my staff just go ballistic sometimes over it. I think OED was a very necessary--.

I would have liked to have seen it to be more active in setting standards for people and doing training; sort of more part of the institution in that way.

HEATH: Did it make a difference? Did people actually read the reports?

BERNARD: Oh, they read them, and they would be very upset if --

HEATH: Can you think a particular --

BERNARD: But did it change their thinking? That's another question.

HEATH: Yes, right. Exactly.

BERNARD: Did it change their thinking?

HEATH: Can you think of a particular report that sort of ruffled feathers, shall we say?

BERNARD: Well, I remember the reports on Community-Driven Development, because that was my-- and OED was never very positive about that. I think they had some valid points; in some cases they didn't. I did have the sense, well they didn't really understand what was going on here. Actually, almost every report, I think was -- unless it was glowing, which didn't happen very often, would upset people that had worked, say, 10 years on something. That's okay; that's a natural tension in the institution. There was a feeling that this is a report card, and this reflects on me. That's how staff felt, which is not too surprising.

You have to have some accountability in the institution. In some cases, people felt that maybe they'd hire a consultant to do the work. There's also a sense that OED didn't have enough of a budget to do a good job sometimes, that they would do a kind of cursory job.

And then they were implacable in terms of not taking any feedback. I guess because they didn't want to seem like, every time somebody complained they would change the assessment.

HEATH: So, your previous person, I was interviewing said the exact opposite.

BERNARD: Is that right?

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HEATH: That rather they were too quick to back down when confronting operational staff who had the misgivings about the report.

BERNARD: Ha. That's interesting. I guess -- you know, different experiences.

HEATH: What about lessons. Some people would; there are two functions already, that are accountability and learning. Some people would say, the problem with OED is that, you know, essentially was behind the -- they arrived too late, we already learned the lessons before they tell us the lessons sort of thing. I mean, did they have anything new to tell us?

BERNARD: Well, I think there is value in reflecting. Perhaps after some time has passed, and maybe emotions have died down a little bit, and everybody has got their new job. Or they are working someplace else, so it's not quite as -- It's possible to have a more balanced look. I think that was an issue, because the staff doing supervision were constantly trying to fix things as they went wrong.

I think the other problem, which I never really figured out how to solve, is to really do a good job of looking at success and project analysis, you need to have a good database to begin with. You need to figure out what you are going to measure. Usually setting that up is a four to five-year job at least, and that was impossible to do on the Bank timetable. So you would go in, and you would be setting up the database as part of the project.

By the end, and maybe you'd be somewhat successful or maybe not. Usually it's pretty hard to do that. So, by the end you are sort of, what you were measuring was always kind of muddy, because you could never quite catch up.

HEATH: You should have a baseline to start with.

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BERNARD: Yeah. But I don't know what the answer to that is.

HEATH: Was it an issue of incentives? Were the staff for the task team leaders were not really pressured by their managers to make sure they had good marshalling evaluation in the --

BERNARD: I think what would happen is the pressure to lend would overwhelm the need to set up a baseline, always. The reality is to do it, really required quite a lot of time. And the budget, which was -- Unless the budget was going towards project delivery in the next two or three years, you weren't going to get any money to do it. I think that, the sort of original model, where we just sort of move money out the door, that the client in theory prepares the project. And we say, yes, that's a good project, and we move money out the door.

It just doesn't; it's an unreal model. We know that that never happened, except maybe in China. I think that was a fundamental problem with either the Bank, or the evaluation. And I think QAG to some extent was trying to solve that, but it had its own set of problems.

HEATH: Tell us a bit about that.

BERNARD: Well, it was --

HEATH: It was said after Wolfensohn -- Wolfensohn initially tried to get rid of OED, but he was told he couldn't do it, because it wasn't within his power.

BERNARD: Oh. I didn't know that.

HEATH: Yes. Yes.

BERNARD: He wanted to get rid of it? Why?

HEATH: Because he found that -- you know, they weren't singing his praise -- well, actually, I shouldn't say this, but --

BERNARD: He is sort of Trump-like, isn't he?

HEATH: Maybe in some ways. But I think QAG was partly created around about -- was it '96, it was set up? I think it was thereabouts.

BERNARD: It was, yeah, around '95. It was right after that big reorganization.

HEATH: Yes. That's right. And I see you were Advisor from '98 to 99?

BERNARD: Right.

HEATH: Okay. So tell us something about what QAG gave you that OED didn't give you?

BERNARD: Well, the idea was that we would evaluate projects in the preparation for early-on supervision, with providing feedback to teams in a more collegial and sort of less-judgmental way. That we would bring in all of the Bank knowledge. In other words, we would -- The idea was to bring to bear the best information in the Bank. You would bring people in who had worked on similar topics in other countries, or maybe you bring in a consultant from outside that has special knowledge, et cetera.

Some people said they found it a valuable experience, although they might have said that to be politic. Others really resented it. Again, I think there is this problem of evaluation, which is, people feel they are being graded. The QAG reports were written up and provided to managers,

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so staff felt they had to defend what they were doing. The QAG reports could sometimes help staff by saying, we need to provide more budget for this, or this is being neglected, or whatever. The smart staff would sort of see this, sometimes as an opportunity to get more of what they needed.

That was a concept, and that did happen, and then I think maybe something similar to OED begin to happen. There is pressure to do a lot of reports. The quality began to fall off in my -- this is my perspective, I'm not sure everybody would agree with this. QAG started to rely on a small group of consultants, who were there all the time but were, again, more generalists. So, after a while, you've sort of lost the --

HEATH: The cutting-edge technical skills, maybe.

BERNARD: -- this idea of bringing in the best knowledge.

HEATH: Right. I see. Yes.

BERNARD: That was the concept. I think also staff, sort of over-evaluate it. You know for god's sake, leave us alone. You are spending money on this, but I can't get enough money to do more than two supervision trips. I guess you sympathize with them.

HEATH: I suppose that the defenders of QAG would say, at least it was more like a real-time experience. Unlike OED where, you know, OED comes in sometime after the project is finished, whereas QAG is there from the start.

BERNARD: No. That's exactly right, and that's what was intended.

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: Again, it was intended to be collegial. You know, this is what -- Except because there was a written report that went to managers, you couldn't quite get that collegial feeling. Occasionally what happened is that; it's not as if staff didn't know who knew who had worked on different things, so you would run into these factions. That so and so hated this kind of project and it was well-known that -- had nothing but bad things to say about that kind of project. And maybe your -- you know, that they would be the person selected to make -- maybe it's useful to have somebody like that. We want you to, you know, shoot this down as much as possible so we can fix it

I think it was a good thing. Was it the best use of our resources? That was a question in my mind sometimes if -- as I was there. I believed in the idea and I supported it, but I don't know if it was --

HEATH: Let's talk a bit about accountability for results; for results on the ground, as they are sometimes being called. I mean, OED and QAG, I mean, ultimately that was part of their function, no? To try and ensure that there is some accountability. But in the Bank, is there real accountability for the final outcomes of projects?

BERNARD: That's a good question. I actually. No, I would say. Although it's difficult to see. First of all, if our *modus operandi*, which is, the government prepares the projects and runs it, and we just provide financing. If that's true, then are we accountable for making bad choice in the beginning? Or, you know, what exactly are we accountable for? What's our responsibility? What's their responsibility? Number one.

Number two, as you know the Bank is an institution of consensus. We don't make a move, nobody makes a move, without making sure everybody agrees, or is willing to support it, whatever it is. So everybody, to some extent, not everybody in the whole Bank, but to some extent, people involved and in particular operation, they are -- complicit sounds too negative,

but--

HEATH: When they closed ranks, that they were sort of --

BERNARD: It's not that they closed ranks. It's just that, you know, let's say you are the Director and the project comes to you, and you give some feedback. Then there is a quality group, and the VP's office, and then get some feedback. The poor task manager is trying to put this all together. Then somebody, you know, one of your colleagues in another group, they don't really like this kind of project. They feel like it should be run by their group, or whatever. They provide some feedback.

You have maybe 30 people, 40 people involved in the actual decision process. And if you are the Task Manager, maybe you make some changes to try to accommodate; yes, we paid attention to your comment. I'm sure-- yes, we changed the line in the text, or we did this thing. It's up --

HEATH: You are saying the responsibility is so diffused --

BERNARD: It is very diffused.

HEATH: -- that it's hard to hold any one person to account.

BERNARD: It is. I do think everyone is well-intentioned, and is trying to do their job, but the culture of the institution, people are actually afraid to make decisions by themselves. You're way out there alone, and somebody is going to come criticize you afterwards. The way you solve that, is you go around, and you get everybody's permission first. I think it's very hard in that culture to hold one person accountable. And it may not make sense, because the projects you work on are complex animals.

HEATH: The other dimension is that people don't hang around long enough to be brought account, because after they have taken a project to the Board, they rarely --

BERNARD: Expected to move.

HEATH: Expected to move?

BERNARD: Yeah. If you sit in the same unit forever you start to get a reputation as, kind of stuck in the mud.

HEATH: Right. What's your thoughts about the -- You probably remember the Wapenhans Report [*Effective Implementation: Key to Development Impact*] that came out in '92.

BERNARD: Oh. I do remember that, yeah.

HEATH: One of their conclusions was that the balance between project preparation; the approval culture they talked about that. There wasn't enough focus on quality of supervision. That tension between lending and supervision, what was your perception of that?

BERNARD: I think that he was dead on. I don't think it was ever completely solved. It really struck me, when we were working in India. We had a very active client, very decentralized, the other states wanted their own stuff. So we would do multi-state projects, at great pressure. Then you get two supervision missions for six people all told; that was it. It was this huge universe that people were trying to manage.

It was ludicrous. What was hilarious about it, is that in every decision meeting, somebody would dutifully say, this is very complex, and we may need to beef up the supervision budget. Everybody said, yes, yes. But did it happen? No, never. Or you might get one extra week, or

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something like that. There wasn't any connection between the budget process and the needs of supervision, or lending often, but this was very apparent in the supervision.

I think staff paid the price for that when you talk about work-life balance. I would see people go through these incredible machinations, trying to cover what could not be covered. Also this terrible sense of exposure because you should really go to Uttar Pradesh, but I can't because I only have this much money.

In theory you shouldn't be doing all the supervision. You should be supervising the supervisors on the country-level, but that didn't work. People were blamed even though that, in theory, was the model. I'm thinking, what was that case? We had a very controversial case in South Asia where -- or they found it was a health project where they -- I think it was a health project or was it education. Do you know the one I mean?

HEATH: When?

BERNARD: Oh, this happened 2008, or something like that.

HEATH: Oh, this was when Wolfowitz was there.

BERNARD: When Wolfowitz was there. What they discovered was that some of the things we were financing didn't exist. Their hospitals were fictional, et cetera.

HEATH: Right.

BERNARD: The poor Director, and then staff got beaten up, and I thought, but nobody gave him any money to actually do this work. You know, they were trying to do it from Washington.

HEATH: Do you think it's primarily a budget problem?

BERNARD: It's the consistency; it's as if we are two different organizations. It's the consistency to -- Our money is not where our mouth is. Where the money goes reflects where the institution's true powers are, from my perspective.

HEATH: Right. It would be nice to think that the results framework of the project, the PAD [Project Appraisal Document], was not a template set in stone, but could be updated, modified, in the light of changes, in the course of implementation. That, this idea of supervision being a chance to always revisit the initial assumptions and to make corrections where necessary. To what extent did that happen in practice?

BERNARD: I think it happened quite a lot, actually. It was a little bit, again, too bureaucratic, because if you changed it too much you'll get in trouble with OED. If your original objectives shifted, which sometimes happened, it sort of occurred to you that you are doing what's completely not working.

So, yes, it did happen. It was bureaucratic in that you had to -- it was about preparing our little project again, and it would have to go through the same internal processes. Also sometimes even the same -- you know, some of our rules were very difficult. I remember talking to the Indians about applying our indigenous policy in a state that had indigenous people, but our indigenous policy was based on the Latin model and didn't fit India. They would look at me like I was insane.

They said, well why don't you guys write what you mean, which is what we ended up doing. It didn't make any sense to them at all, and didn't make any sense, because their indigenous people were mixed in with everybody else. There wasn't such a clear line, and they weren't -- they were poor, but everybody was poor. They weren't more poor, they weren't discriminated against. There wasn't -- they weren't ethnically different. But since the word indigenous was in there we

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had to, you know, jump through these hoops.

Those kinds of inflexibilities around some of our policies that - applying apples and oranges, sometimes made it difficult.

HEATH: I'd like to talk now a bit more about cultural issues in the Bank. Today people talk about work-life balance. When you joined the Bank in the '70s, and what's changed in the purview of time in the Bank. Was there a perception as early as the '70s that this was an issue, or people simply didn't talk about it?

BERNARD: It wouldn't. It was not discussed. It was - The prevailing ethos which I very much bought into, was you should work like a dog, and everybody worked like a dog. Well, except there were these guys. There were a few people -- they somehow had gotten into trouble with someone, so they would get a little office and a secretary, and they weren't actually given any work to do, but they were never fired.

You would see them, and you went: what's so-and-so doing? They were basically some even taken out of chain of command because they had had some kind of conflict of some kind. I always wondered about those guys. Then they disappeared. Finally, twenty years later we stopped doing that, but it was --

HEATH: So they were still being paid, but they weren't, as you say, in the chain of command, or they were out or something like that --

BERNARD: Basically, they didn't have a job.

HEATH: Didn't have a job?

BERNARD: No.

HEATH: But they were still being paid?

BERNARD: But they were paid, yes. They had a great life, except they didn't because they felt isolated, I assume.

HEATH: How long back is this? Are you talking the '70s, the '80s, what period are we talking about?

BERNARD: '70s and '80s.

HEATH: Right. I see.

BERNARD: I mean there was a classic case. You've probably heard about this, at the time. There was a guy who showed up, went into the Bank, took over an empty office, and used it as his base of operations. Everybody walked by and wondered who he was. Nobody asked. He bought a car, he got an apartment, based on the fact that he was in the Bank. He got his name in the phone book. He didn't work here, no connection (laughter). Did you ever hear about this guy?

HEATH: No. I didn't.

BERNARD: It was completely -- he was there for about six to eight months before anyone figured it out. At time we didn't have ID cards or things like that.

HEATH: Right. This was the '70s or the '80s?

BERNARD: Ah! When was it? I think it was early '80s.

HEATH: Right. Okay.

BERNARD: It was a great case, because he was kind of a conman. Then he -- finally they cottoned on to him, but he was very relaxed. It was great. Nobody worried about budget. We worried about delivery. That's what you worried about. I remember someone saying, don't worry about overrunning your budget, you can overrun your budget, but make sure you get it done.

HEATH: Right. I mean, in your case, did you have a family at some point?

BERNARD: No. I was single.

HEATH: Single?

BERNARD: And traveling quite a lot. It was very difficult to have a private life to tell you the truth.

HEATH: So you worked most weekends, you came into the office?

BERNARD: I worked most weekends; I worked till late at night. I didn't hate it -- I kind of loved it, you know, or I guess, or else I wouldn't have done it; but it was expected. And I did have the sense, now the place is filled with women. At the time there weren't many of us, and I had the sense that I was sort of representing the gender, so I didn't want --

HEATH: To let the side down.

BERNARD: Exactly. I didn't want it to be seen that I was somehow contributing less than

others because I was female.

HEATH: When did that, if it did change, when did it begin to change?

BERNARD: It changed pretty late, in the '90s I think. I'll tell you a story. When I was in Bolivia, I think the second female Res Rep [Resident Representative], and I got sick. At that time Americans had to sign an agreement that you were going to stay out of the country,

HEATH: Right. This is '90 to '94, you were in Bolivia?

BERNARD: Right. So, I signed this agreement saying I would only spend 30 days a year back in the U.S., and I needed surgery, and it was female surgery. So, I called the health people. The Health Room I guess, but I can't remember who it was. I said, is it possible to get permission. I need to spend about two months in the U.S. for health reasons, and I don't want to have this surgery in Bolivia. And she said, well, you have to your Vice President and get his permission. Now the Vice President was Shahid Husain, and the thought of going up to Shahid Husain and explaining my female problems, actually probably he would have been fine with it, but it was terrifying to me. I just couldn't imagine the conversation. I ended up arranging to have it done in Canada, but that was -- Again it was the feeling, like: oh, that's the problem with women, they have these issues.

HEATH: Sorry. How did having it done in Canada make it any easier?

BERNARD: Because then I wouldn't violate this policy. If I had come back to the States and was resident, I would trigger the --

HEATH: Oh. I see.

BERNARD: I would trigger the tax, then I would owe taxes on the money that the Bank paid me.

HEATH: I see. Okay.

BERNARD: The Bank was picking that up.

HEATH: Yeah, I see. Right, right.

BERNARD: It would have been at the -- now I realize it would have been inconsequential. At the time I thought, well, that's a lot of money, he's going to hate me and never put another woman in a job like this. That was very unfair to Shahid, I'm sure that that was not the case. It's also such an embarrassing conversation to have.

HEATH: You must have compared notes about these issues with other women in the Bank. I mean, was your perception generally shared, do you think?

BERNARD: Not until the '90s really, did I really compare notes. I was so --

HEATH: That's interesting, there wasn't really that female solidarity then, to sort of talk to?

BERNARD: There weren't very many of us. I remember Katherine Marshall was sort of the leader, and she was -- I remember talking to her about a job at one point, and I remember she was very kind. She gave me some career advice. But some of the other women were like sharks, they were terrifying people. Marianne Haug or -- So it wasn't as if, you know, it was all sisters together. It wasn't like that at all.

HEATH: So the women, in some sense, felt pressure maybe to be tougher than the men, is that?

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BERNARD: They probably did. I think that I felt that. You know, I think if I had been a male with a similar health problem, I wouldn't have hesitated, you know, but you didn't want to -- Like, well, women always have babies and that screws everything up. Maybe, to some extent, I bought into it. I said, well, I'm not going to be that kind of employee, I'm going to be the one that you can always count on. It was a little inhuman. It wasn't too different, I think, from corporate culture, in general, in the U.S. at that time.

HEATH: Did you come across cases in your career of women being bullied by their bosses or by their peers? And then, what was the recourse they had?

BERNARD: I think bullying, it wasn't women in particular, but there was, particularly in the '70s when I came in, I witnessed quite a lot of bullying.

HEATH: How did it manifest itself?

BERNARD: Mainly somebody more senior in the management stream would -- it was kind of no-holds-barred. They would make humiliating remarks against somebody, embarrass them in a staff meeting, for example, or make sarcastic remarks to them. I think I told you what happened with my boss at that time, and it was -- I don't know how he managed, he was very relaxed throughout the whole thing.

HEATH: But that would be inconceivable today, I think (crosstalk).

BERNARD: It would be. Yeah, it would be. Thank goodness.

HEATH: Yes, yes. (Inaudible).

BERNARD: It's more - you have to be more subtle now. (Laughter)

HEATH: How about, you know, if somebody was confronted with that bullying, whether it's a man or a woman, and they blew the whistle, so to speak. How would they blow it? Who would they go to? I mean, particularly there in the '70s, I mean early?

BERNARD: In the '70s there was nowhere to go.

HEATH: Nowhere to go.

BERNARD: You would go to your manager. To give you an example of a story I heard, one of the rural staff was harassing one of the secretaries. The assistants were the most vulnerable, because many of them were here on visas, on limited visas, they needed the money. There were a lot of single moms, and so they were desperate to keep their jobs; whereas the professional women had more options.

HEATH: Right, right. So, do you think there was a lot sexual harassment of the assistants?

BERNARD: Oh, absolutely. Oh, absolutely. I heard stories. The worst story I heard was someone who was harassed by one of the staff, so she went to the manager. And he said, do you know what he said to her, he said, he is much more valuable to me than you are. So basically, don't bother me with this. Then after I became Ombudsman I heard -- and this is after many things had been done to improve the atmosphere, but I still heard some terrible stories.

HEATH: You were Ombudsman from 2009 to 2014?

BERNARD: Yes. At least then there was a way of dealing with it, and people had some options. There was also, there had been a shift in culture, and where people knew you weren't

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supposed to do that. Whereas when I came in, it didn't occur to anyone that this wasn't okay.

HEATH: When was the Staff Association set up, do you remember?

BERNARD: Oh. It existed when I came in.

HEATH: Right, I think it was the early '70s.

BERNARD: Yeah, yeah.

HEATH: Were they any use in terms of somewhere you could go if you had a problem with your manager, or of being harassed?

BERNARD: There might have been. I have to say, it would never have occurred to me to go anyone except my manager. Even then it would depend on what my relationship was with him, and it was always a him.

HEATH: So it was a lonely place to be. Especially if were a woman at that time?

BERNARD: It was. Looking back, you had the sense. I think everybody had the sense, I've talked to so many people since then who said: I don't know, I feel so fortunate to be here, and I feel like I'm going to be found out I'm a fraud. It took me probably 10 years, I still remember it was a seminal moment. I was always -- I was afraid to admit ignorance quite a lot in the early years. I would sometimes pretend I knew something I didn't, and then I'd go scurrying around trying to figure it out. If somebody used an acronym I didn't know. Then I was afraid, only a few people I could ask, or they would know that I didn't know. So, I'd be doing that. Then for some reason I just got tired of it. I went to a meeting, and it was kind of decision meeting, and they were presenting a project, and I said, I'm sorry I don't understand this. And I

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really meant, I just don't get it; I can't follow what you are saying. And all around me, people said: yeah, I don't understand it either. It was this tremendous feeling of - oh, I'm not so different from everybody else. But people were afraid to expose -- and it's too bad, because questions needed to be asked.

Now after that, I asked all the time, because I thought, well, maybe it's because you are stupid, but maybe it's also because nobody gets this, so have the courage to just be honest. It took me a while to maybe feel comfortable enough or work up the courage. Or at least get tired of, you know, pretending that --

HEATH: Connie, which part of the country do you come from?

BERNARD: Well, I was born in Minneapolis, but I grew up in a family that was a military family, and we moved around all the time.

HEATH: And you arrived in D.C. for the first time in '76, or thereabouts?

BERNARD: In '73, actually.

HEATH: '73?

BERNARD: Yes.

HEATH: What was your perception of Washington at that time?

BERNARD: I was out of school. I was young, there was tons of stuff to do. Full of young, interesting people; so it was great. I was very happy.

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HEATH: All right. I mean, a lot of people refer to the terrible tensions in Washington at that time, especially after '68 and the riots, and so forth. Did that side of things come home to you at all?

BERNARD: Not at all. I was aware of it, concerned about it, but it didn't affect me personally.

HEATH: Would you agree that the Bank staff tended, by and large, to live in a sort of bubble, where they weren't really interacting with the broader community, and they were not really -- maybe they didn't have friends with people outside the Bank? Was that your experience?

BERNARD: I had a number of friends outside the Bank that I've met through different ways. There was certainly a white bubble, and we lived in the suburbs, and --

HEATH: Where did you live?

BERNARD: I lived in Northern Virginia. I lived in group house on Welcome Lane. And what I remember, parties and, you know, having fun.

HEATH: Was it just black -- sorry, just white?

BERNARD: Absolutely just white. I didn't know any black people. I was a little afraid of them. I was a very, you know, I had good intentions; I wanted to have black friends, but I didn't know how to do it. I was very naïve. In fact, I eventually moved into the city in 1985, and I live on Capitol Hill now. At that time, I wanted to have a more -- I didn't want to be sort of ghettoized. I didn't want to be in a little white enclave of upper-middleclass people.

HEATH: Were there many African-American working in the Bank in the '70s?

BERNARD: Zero. Maybe a few of the secretaries.

HEATH: Still a fairly limited number, I seem to recall, right, mainly --

BERNARD: Yeah. I can't think of one, to tell you the truth.

HEATH: Right, right, yes. Sorry. Did you belong to any societies or clubs in the Bank?

BERNARD: Did I? I don't think I did, that I recall.

HEATH: Could you get a decent cup of coffee in the 1970s in the Bank?

BERNARD: (Laughter) I'm not that much of a coffee drinker but there was a cafeteria, as there is now.

HEATH: Right. What was the food like?

BERNARD: I have no memory of it to tell you the truth. I guess it wasn't delicious, or I would have remembered that. I think it's better now, in more options. I remember eating at my desk quite a lot. You would go down and get a sandwich and bring it up. It was a very unhealthy life, actually. I remember in the winter you would go for weeks without seeing the sun. You would get in before it was light, and then leave after it was dark. I remember many times I slept over.

HEATH: Slept in your office?

BERNARD: I slept in my office. Yes.

HEATH: Under the desk, or your brought in a --

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BERNARD: (Laughter) That would startle some people.

HEATH: Did you actually bring in a mattress or something like that?

BERNARD: No. No. I would just fall asleep.

HEATH: At your desk?

BERNARD: Or I'd go to the ladies' room. It was a well-kept secret, but so we have -- there was this couch in the ladies' room.

HEATH: Ah! That's something which the men's rooms never have, couches.

BERNARD: I know. And it was a source of great bitterness.

HEATH: Indeed. Yes. (Laughter)

BERNARD: We love our couches. Of course, they are all about -- they are all disgustingly filthy. They are all about 100 years old, but.

HEATH: Sure, yes. Looking back, what is the thing that makes you happiest about your Bank experience?

BERNARD: The people. The broadening of my world, the broadening of my thinking. Constant intellectual stimulation; for an INTP, you know, this is heaven. The ability to travel, and it got a little bit old after a while, but the Res Rep experience was a fantastic experience. It was great then, because there was no communication with Washington. Now it's much more controlled,

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but at the time-- I went to my Director, and I said, what do you expect of me as the Res Rep? And he said, it will emerge. (Laughter) So, clearly, he had no expectations; to have a Res Rep there, and that was it.

I got to meet -- In Bolivia I was friends with the President, and I was friends with the cleaning lady. I saw the whole country, and I saw the whole society from this vantage point. It was such a huge privilege, to -- And I didn't get, before I was in Bolivia, what it was truly like to live in a country with very weak institutions. It was my first experience. Sorry, stop me if I'm taking you off track.

HEATH: Right. No. Please, please go ahead.

BERNARD: I had been there about three months. The house I rented used to belong to a drug overlord, named Max Fernandez, who since has died in a plane crash. The phone rang one day, and somebody said, "*veinte minutos habrá una bomba.*" Do you speak Spanish?

HEATH: Yes, I do. Yes. "In twenty-minutes time there will be a bomb going off."

BERNARD: Right. So, I thought, oh, that's not good. I had this big dog at the time.

HEATH: This house, it must have been rented by the Bank for you. They knew they were renting from a drug lord?

BERNARD: Well it was - actually, I rented it. They found it for me, but I was sort the responsible party which became relevant later, because it didn't belong to him, he used to live in it.

HEATH: Yes.

BERNARD: But later on, there was some sort of bankruptcy issue, and I had two people asking me for the same rent, so I ended up living in escrow. I had to figure that all out myself.

Anyhow to tell you the story; so I think, what should I do? I'm a good American, so I called the police. (Laughter) So I called the police and I said in Spanish, I just received a bomb threat, and I just thought I should let you know. They said, you did? I said, yes. And I said, could you send someone? They said, well, you'll have to send a car for us. And that was sort of, oh. Then they said you have to pay.

HEATH: Right, right.

BERNARD: So, I thought, oh. Then I said, okay, I'll call you back, and I hung up. I thought, well, this doesn't work the way I expected it to. So, then I got under my bed with the dog, and I thought; and no bomb went off. I thought that would be some protection at the moment. I just said, maybe someone is waiting for me outside, which is one of the safest places you can imagine. Then somebody else had gotten a bomb threat the week before, so I imagine it was somebody just making mischief.

HEATH: Having worked in a Res Mission, you must have some insight into the position of local staff. What sort of tensions would arise there, possibly between the local staff and the international staff? And how has that issue changed?

BERNARD: Oh, there were so many tensions.

HEATH: Right. How has that changed over the years, in your experience?

BERNARD: Well, at the time - first I had a very small office, so it wasn't a huge problem for me. There were existing local staff, and the only people that you could find were usually, at least

in Bolivia, they were very much aligned with a particular political party. There were those like the sports teams or tribal organizations -- everybody knew who was -- with which political party they went back generations.

It was very difficult, and that was one of the things I worked on. I think I only had one professional staff, who was rabidly for a particular political party. I remember the first thing I asked him, I said, could you write a summary of the opposing party's speech. So, he wrote this with commentary at each -- this is really stupid because -- I said, no, just the translation. (Laughter) But he didn't get it. This was so much in -- and a very smart guy, it wasn't that, it was just -- again, it was a different culture. That was one issue, it was kind of -- there was no way to avoid it. It was very hard of people to be objective. Then I brought in some people from, just very young people from outside, and I --

HEATH: Where did you recruit them from?

BERNARD: I recruited just Research Assistants.

HEATH: From local universities?

BERNARD: No. I called Washington and said, this is -- do you know anybody who would be interested. It was very informal actually. We were really having trouble with the supervision. At that time, it was a real issue because the project people didn't really -- there wasn't a clear role in their mind for what the local staff would do. I could clearly see that we weren't being responsive in a number of projects. So I said, this person is to help you.

HEATH: Yes.

BERNARD: I brought in very young people, but they were from very good universities. They

were very well trained, and there was a lot of -- there was tension. Eventually everyone ended up friends, but there was a lot of competition and tension in the sense of, who were these outsiders? The office was too narrow otherwise. Then there were also -- I had a driver that would show up drunk. There were -- I'm sorry, I'm losing track. The question was, in terms of the relative roles in the local, yeah.

HEATH: For example, one of the issues would be, do you think that the local staff, the professionals among them, whether their knowledge, for example, the political economy, whether that's leverage, was it as effective as it could be? You know, whether these people were treated seriously by the international staff, and so forth.

BERNARD: Well, here is the problem; and I ran into this problem over and over again. When I came in, and this was also true even for the local staff that reported to me later on in my career. There would be a contingent of staff that had been there for years. They were very -- they worked usually in a sector. I'm thinking in the office people were -- they are good, very smart, very narrow experience; also very resentful if anybody else was involved.

So this relationship between the -- maybe you'd have some staff that had been there forever, and then you'd have -- maybe you'd be bringing in somebody, that hadn't been there forever. That's kind of why you wanted them. You wanted maybe a different perspective. Managing that relationship was very difficult, and you could see why. When I became Ombudsman, I saw many, many examples where it really did screw up, to tell you the truth. People would arrive in the country with the expectation they would be managing X, Y and Z, and there would already be somebody there managing X, Y and Z, and nobody told him.

You waste these resources, and also create this terrible feeling among people that need to work together. It is usually management failure. Nobody, you know, sort of thought of people as chess pieces. There was also the sense where -- the local staff aren't really staff. It's the international

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staff that are really staff.

HEATH: Right, right. And that was an issue that came up often when you were an Ombudsman.

BERNARD: It came up quite often. In part because, at that time there was a -- there had been a push to make more local. Make supervision more local, which is I think correct, good, but there is this issue of -- I'll give you an example. I was actually taken to the Ombudsman -- no, taken to the Internal Justice System once by a staff member in India. I'm trying not to speak out of terms, in terms of what was confidential, but he had been working for many, many years, on a program, a particular program. There was a decision, it was my decision, but also a decision of the VP, et cetera, that we should get out of that program. I offered him various things, I said, do you, if you want can we train you to work on these other things, because there is always tons of work. Didn't want that. They wanted to work on his issues, where he the special training and experience.

In the end, I said, then I'm going to let you go. That never happened, and in the office he was terribly -- actually he was angry at my poor Division Chief, and it was all my decision; not my Division Chief, the Sector Manager. I kept saying, it's me, be mad at me. Anyhow everything happened it was okay, I felt backed up by the internal justice system, and he did fine. He got different type of work, and he's doing fine.

That's an example, that because of the staff you can get stuck. The emotions of letting somebody go, when there are not that many alternatives. India there are alternatives in other countries there weren't so many. That can drive a program, and it's just quite amazing.

HEATH: Yes. I want to ask you about they experience that everybody goes through, it's the Annual Performance Evaluation as a staff member. What are your reflections on how -- what that

*Connie Bernard
October 20, 2016
Verbatim*

was like when you first joined the Bank?

BERNARD: It was very casual. I would spend days writing on my little thing.

HEATH: You had to write an essay about yourself in those days, didn't you?

BERNARD: Yeah. How wonderful you were, and all that needed to be done. You still sort of do. Probably because I was so low on the totem pole, but the -- had said, you are doing a good job, keep it up. That was my evaluation.

HEATH: I see. Okay.

BERNARD: I have to say, I, never in my entire career, had a very thoughtful or thorough evaluation. I often had the sense people had no clue what I was working on. But that wasn't so bad, really. Sometimes I felt I was over-praised, and sometimes I felt I was under-praised, but I never felt this person is really paying attention to what I'm doing.

HEATH: It was never a time of anxiety for you, the prospect of going through this evaluation?

BERNARD: Well, it was a time of anxiety, because it's always kind of scary to sit with somebody and have them -- I think my second evaluation, because I was nervous, I postponed it, so I was late. I remember Enrique Lerdaud said, put it in the evaluation, she was late turning it in. So, he did. There's a line there, 1978. I was horrified, because this is on your permanent record.

I honestly didn't pay too much attention to it, because I really liked the work. That was the thing about the Bank; yes, there's this big bureaucracy, but you have the sense you could sort of do what you needed. You could do what you wanted, within this framework. There was a tremendous freedom of action.

*Connie Bernard
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Verbatim*

HEATH: A lot of niches; the different niches, and so you've -- to move into, yeah. You never had a female boss, is that right?

BERNARD: Well, Kathy Sierra was my boss. She was my network boss briefly, but other than that, no.

HEATH: I wanted to get a sense of whether you are dealing with a female boss, how that was different from dealing with a male boss. Perhaps it wasn't, I don't know. Was there any difference you could perceive?

BERNARD: I couldn't generalize. Kathy is a wonderful person. She's, you know, full of life. I didn't have that many interactions with her.

HEATH: All right. I see.

BERNARD: Oh. I worked for Isabel [Guerrero] at the end.

HEATH: You did?

BERNARD: Right, right. And that was a less positive experience, but I think it boils down to the person. It's very hard to make these gender generalizations.

HEATH: Right. Finally, we've spoken for almost two hours. You can either choose an embarrassing, an absurd, or a funny situation in the course of your career. Think of something that left a mark on you, one of those --

BERNARD: Ah?

HEATH: A funny, absurd, or embarrassing.

BERNARD: Funny, absurd, or embarrassing. Hmm? I think I've told you what they are already. Let's see.

HEATH: I think maybe in the future, I should have to ask people to think about this before they come to the interview so that they can. Although, sometimes it's good to get off-the-cuff reflections.

BERNARD: Nothing comes to mind right now, I'm drawing a blank. I'm sure, there are many, I'm sure. I do remember early on, when I was this 28-year-old taking missions to the Caribbean. I was taking my assistant or my then secretary, the person that worked with me out to lunch. One of my male colleagues said, that must be very awkward for you. I said, why would it be awkward? And he said, you would have to pay for her, right? In his head, I guess, he thought it was very weird for women to have to pay. I also remember, it was a two-person mission, myself and a young woman, YP [Young Professional]. Somebody said to me, do you think it's okay for two women to go by themselves. I said, why wouldn't it be okay? But I had sort of funny feeling about it myself but, you know, obviously, you are going, of course it's not funny.

I remember at the time thinking -- Now you would never think about it, but at the time it seemed very unusual

HEATH: Right. Well, I think you've given us a very funny incident, which was the one about the escorts when you arrived in the Netherland Antilles.

BERNARD: Oh, right. (Laughter)

HEATH: That's a classic. I've never heard anything like that before.

BERNARD: Everyone was so embarrassed. That's what I remember. It was this person, and it was a vaguely sexual (inaudible).

HEATH: Yes. Of course, yes. Connie, it's been a delight talking to you. I've learnt so much, and I know that the archives will be very grateful to have your input.

BERNARD: All right.

HEATH: And I'd like to thank you very much, for this --

BERNARD: Okay. You're very welcome. Thank you.

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