

THE WORLD BANK GROUP ARCHIVES

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH

**KATHERINE MARSHALL**

Interview By: John Heath

Washington, D.C.

November 3, 2017

(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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## INTERVIEW

**HEATH:** This is the World Bank Group Archives in Washington, D.C. Today, is November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. On behalf of the special oral history project on the McNamara years, I'm John Heath and this is Interview number 38 in the series. I have with me today, Katherine Marshall, a former director at the World Bank, who was a staff member from 1972 to 2006. Katherine, thank you very much for joining us today. I'd like to take you right back to the beginning and ask you how was it that you came to work at the World Bank in 1968 as an intern, I believe, on urban development?

**HEATH:** Oh, I came to the Bank through several different routes; but the original one, I was at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton. My memory's a little shaky on exactly how it came about, but I was focused at the time on urban issues which was a brand-new area, and so I was hired by, I think, Dick [Richard] Westebbe, to work on a reflection piece as an internship on the urban strategies.

**HEATH:** So, you did your master's and Ph.D. at Princeton, or what did you do there?

**MARSHALL:** I did the master's in public affairs at Princeton and then went on and did work for a Ph.D. in the history department. And it was there that I was working on Casablanca and Lagos.

**HEATH:** Oh, I see. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** So, those, and I never finished my dissertation, but that was what I was working on.

**HEATH:** Right, I see. So, you came to Washington for the first time in '68. Which part of the

country are you from originally?

**MARSHALL:** I'm a bit of a nomad. And my father, in fact, lived in Africa for 17 years, so I spent a lot of time going to school in England and then working and traveling back and forth to Africa. We lived in Washington for a few years when I was between I think 5 and 10 years. I think 6 or 10 or 11 or whatever it was. But that was the only time I lived here.

**HEATH:** So, what do you remember about Washington, coming down here in 1968 to start working at the World Bank, your impression of the first things that hit you?

**MARSHALL:** It was an intense period, 1968. I was at the time living on Capitol Hill, involved with people who were very involved in the politics of the time, both the politics and protests but also, some of the election campaigns, including the McCarthy campaign, then the Kennedy and so forth.

So, my memories are mostly of people and of that era, which was, I think, dominated the next few years.

I was more focused on Africa and on development issues. I did spend close to a year working in Africa between the internship and the consultancy. So, in some sense, I was not as directly involved but lived in a house with people that included both Tony and John Podesta who are in the news these days and some other people. So, that's my dominant memory.

**HEATH:** And did the anti-war movement, was that sort of an important part of the background for you?

**MARSHALL:** Oh, yes, it was very important.

**HEATH:** And did that give you any cause to have second thoughts about wanting to work in an

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institution headed by McNamara?

**MARSHALL:** No. That was not really on my radar screen.

**HEATH:** How did you see the World Bank before you began to work here?

**MARSHALL:** My description of coming to the World Bank, which I invoke when I speak to people who are interested in coming to the Bank today, is that in many ways I tumbled into the World Bank. It was not my dream to work for the World Bank. I didn't know what my dream exactly was. I was torn between academia and the world of real policy, between personal life and the Bank, which is something I think we should come back to at some point because, obviously, as one of the pioneer women in various things, that was something that was never very far from my mind.

**HEATH:** Right.

**MARSHALL:** I mean the actual trajectory is that I was working on my research. I had written a book about Casablanca. So, at the tender age of 20 or 21 was something of an expert in a brand-new field, which was urbanization. I had spent a lot of time in both Casablanca and Lagos or Ibadan. And then did a consultancy with USAID for some time and then with the Bank, again, in the sort of urban field.

The actual story of how I came to become a permanent staff member in an unusual role, which was the U.S. Executive Director's (ED) Office, was that I was walking down Pennsylvania Avenue and ran into a classmate or a friend from Princeton, who said, "Oh, I'm leaving my job to go and raise wine grapes in Virginia. Are you interested in my job?" And in those days, that was basically how it happened, that I met the U.S. Executive Director, who at that time, had the authority to hire directly.

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**HEATH:** And who was that?

**MARSHALL:** That was Bob [Robert E.] Wieczorowski, was the Executive Director at that time. It later has turned into an appointment by the U.S. Treasury Department, the assistants and advisors in the ED's office. At the time, there was just an assistant, and he hired. So, he hired me directly.

**HEATH:** How do you think the position of U.S. Executive Director compared then to what it is today in terms of the influence, the pressures, the general context of the work? What's changed, would you guess?

**MARSHALL:** I'm not terribly up on the current U.S. ED's office. I have had many interactions over the years with the ED's office.

There're some things that are fairly similar, in that the U.S. ED like other EDs has multiple roles. And they discharge it differently according to them as individuals. So, they clearly are in this case the representative of the U.S. government.

So, one of my jobs at the time was to go to the weekly meeting at the Treasury Department on the multilateral development banks. So, there was clearly the direct representation. And some of the positions taken were basically formally agreed on at the Treasury. I doubt that that's very different now. I don't know if the mechanism is the same. The executive director also always had a responsibility as one of the executive body of the Bank.

And then, most executive directors have some kind of personal focus and interest. So, in fact, both of the executive directors that I worked for, who I believe had been Republican appointees, came with business backgrounds, not necessarily with very much knowledge about the development business. And that was part of their interests.

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I remember that one of the things the office did a lot of was tracking the procurement and trying to link procurement to different states in the United States.

**HEATH:** So, it very much tied aid in those days.

**MARSHALL:** Well, no, it wasn't tied aid, it was the World Bank did procurement, and the effort was to identify so that you could go to the respective Congress people and say, you see, this is beneficial to you.

**HEATH:** Right, trying to get business for the United States through the World Bank.

**MARSHALL:** Well, it wasn't to get business but to prove that there was business. I mean getting business would've been another side of it, which if it was going on, as I look back, I was rather naïve at the time. There was a lot that was probably going on that I probably had very little idea of.

**HEATH:** The voting strength of the executive director in those days was greater than today.

**MARSHALL:** Yeah.

**HEATH:** I can't remember the numbers.

**MARSHALL:** But, again, very rare that there was a vote.

**HEATH:** I see. So, I mean there's been quite a bit of literature by people like Robert Wade, you know, talking about the hegemonic role of the U.S. and the World Bank. Do you think that's overstated?

**MARSHALL:** In terms of the actual power structure, clearly, the U.S. has a dominant role that

exceeds the actual weight, or it certainly is not a one country, one vote. Let's put it that way. The Bank has weighted voting, and that has been an issue of governance over many years in many different settings. How that was exercised, varied I think a lot with the individuals.

I think in the U.S. office at the time, the alternate was Hal [Frank] Reynolds, who was a Treasury person. So, he very much took a Treasury position. Whereas the two executive directors that I worked with were much more, I would almost describe them as -- I would not. The word is not an appropriate one -- gadfly. But they were much more independent minded. And they took the balance of their responsibilities.

**HEATH:** So, the second you mentioned is Mr. [Charles O.] Sethness.

**MARSHALL:** Sethness, yes.

**HEATH:** Sethness, right. Okay. Were you aware when you had this job in the office of much interaction with McNamara directly?

**MARSHALL:** There were clearly meetings with McNamara directly. I was not part of them. But I sat at the back of the boardroom for once or twice a week. At that time, I think there were fewer meetings. Very rarely I actually sat in. That happened occasionally with the technical assistance when somebody had to go out. But, basically, I was a fly on the wall at the back and therefore, did have the opportunity. And I've always thought that this was a wonderful introduction to the Bank, to have a sense of what the big policy issues were and the ways in which projects were discussed. The fact that country strategies at that time were not discussed. Where some of the tensions were, you could see tensions between McNamara and Cargill. I still remember once...

**HEATH:** Peter Cargill.

**MARSHALL:** Peter Cargill.

**HEATH:** What sort of tensions?

**MARSHALL:** McNamara was a remarkable chair of the meetings. He would always reframe questions to the staff, and at that time, the decision-making process in the Bank was essentially done on a caselaw basis.

So, rather than talking about a country's strategy, there would be quite a technical discussion in theory about a specific project. But the positions that were taken always reflected the broader policy that a chair was trying to put forward. So, you could never quite tell what issues were going to come up. They came from left field. So, McNamara was a very directive chair and spent a lot of time and was always fully attuned to what he was doing.

There was one time, I am not sure that I even remember what the subject was, I could probably dredge it up. But at one point, McNamara was giving a summary of what someone had said or what the position was, and he turned to Cargill who was sitting in one of the staff chairs and said, "Peter, don't you agree?" Cargill stood up and said, "No, I don't." And then he said "Well, come to the table." So, in a sense, they had a very rare thing at a Board meeting, which was a fairly rare thing, an open disagreement between the two of them about whatever the topic was.

**HEATH:** Right, because one has the impression that most of the possible areas of disagreement were smoothed over before you actually got to the Board.

**MARSHALL:** Yes.

**HEATH:** I imagine there must have been quite a bit of communication between McNamara and the U.S. Executive Director to make sure that they were squared if you like.

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**MARSHALL:** Yes. Well, a lot of it was around expropriation was sort of the hot political issue at that time. Corruption was not an issue that was discussed, but expropriation and procurement policy, particularly, in India, was still I think an issue at that time.

**HEATH:** Which parts of the world was the expropriation going ahead in that time, the late 60s?

**MARSHALL:** Well, the one I remember was Venezuela.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay. So, you were in that job as the technical assistant from May '72 to September '73.

**MARSHALL:** So, I basically went through more than just over one cycle of the annual budget year, the way in which the Board worked.

**HEATH:** Right. Any unpleasant aspects of that first year that you remember, that you think was rather a shock or something -- any? Was it fairly uneventful, or did anything stick out in the mind?

**MARSHALL:** No. Well, there was lots going on in my life, and I was trying to sort out what I was going to do. I was in a sort of organic learning process. In other words, no one ever briefed me. Nobody ever is the usual phenomenon. And I was a bit of an oddball because there was a technical assistant group, but it wasn't particularly closely knit.

**HEATH:** So, how much would you actually see the Executive Director? Every day?

**MARSHALL:** Oh, yeah, we ran a small office. And I think there were two secretaries, me, the U.S. ED, and the Alternate.

I had to look through the documents and prepare talking points. But they were to a significant

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extent, whenever there was anything important, it was in the Treasury meetings that the positions were taken. So, that was my role. I got to know quite a few of the senior staff. That was an opportunity, clearly. Including Eugene Rotberg, Warren Baum, [Bernard] Chadenet.

The fact that I was sort of one of the flies sitting at the back of the room and stood out because I was the first woman I think who had ever been in that job. So, I stood out like a sore thumb or whatever, so.

**HEATH:** Of the people you just mentioned, are there particular incidents you can remember that stick in your mind?

**MARSHALL:** Well, a story that I remember was I was sitting next to some poor technical assistant, and Cargill came up and basically said to this guy, "Go." He sat down and he said, "You're coming to lunch at the Sans Souci." I said, "Well, yeah." He said, "Come to lunch at Sans Souci."

So, I went to lunch at the Sans Souci, which was near the Bank. And came to the restaurant I guess with him. We walked over the block. And his martini was brought to him directly. And the thing that has always stood out in my mind from that odd lunch was that his comment that what's important in life is when Muffy has the measles.

**HEATH:** Muffy.

**MARSHALL:** Muffy. And basically, it was a message that women really should be taking care of children and tending to the household.

**HEATH:** Muffy is his wife.

**MARSHALL:** I think Muffy was probably a grandchild or it could even have been a

hypothetical grandchild. But then, of course, you know, later on, Peter Cargill married one of my successors. And she became Lady Cargill I think. Lady Peggy. I'm not sure what happened exactly to them.

**HEATH:** Right. He was a character, wasn't he, by all accounts.

**MARSHALL:** He was a great character. So, I do obviously remember him.

**HEATH:** Did he offer you a martini, by the way?

**MARSHALL:** I don't even remember, but I would have not had a martini at lunch for sure. And I did not. He was probably throwing out lures to see whether I would be interested in something, but I clearly was not responding to a point that I don't even think I was aware of it, which was one of the ways that I handled those kinds of situations at that time, was being either deliberately or strategically oblivious.

I was, at the time, married to someone who was very involved in politics and then was divorced and then became involved with someone who was working in the Bank, married, who I eventually married, Tom Blinkhorn.

And one of the things that he did that I was also involved with during this period was doing a film on river blindness; *The Plague Upon the Land*.

That interaction with McNamara, one of the early public relations efforts of the Bank around the onchocerciasis program, which in fact, later, I followed that very closely over the years to a point that when I was in the Sahel department it was in my department, so I was running the program.

And then now, Bruce Benton is writing a book about it. So, I'm working with him on trying to remember the story.

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But one of the things that we did that we did, in fact, we had a dinner, this is much later, where McNamara came to a dinner where we were talking about the River Blindness program.

**HEATH:** How did he get onto river blindness?

**MARSHALL:** Well, there's a very specific story on that, which is quite well documented. But essentially, he was visiting Burkina Faso, and a couple of French doctors who had been working in the area approached him, and it was deliberate. And I think there was someone in the Bank who was working on that.

It was a time when the Bank was not involved in health. And the general view, as you know, you know, the Bank moved, in the McNamara years, in expanding the field of activity and education, health, even nutrition, gradually became part of the Bank's portfolio.

And the health issue really came out of the onchocerciasis. And it was partly because these doctors were able to convince him during the visit there that the *simulium damnosum*, the river blindness, the blackfly, which bit people, thousands of times, had forced people to leave the fertile river valleys. And that was the title of the film, which was *A Plague Upon the Land*, which was the idea that only by eliminating the blackfly could you basically develop the areas in very poor areas.

That was one of the efforts I think [Roger A.] Chaufournier was quite involved in that. He was the Vice President for West Africa at the time. He was quite instrumental in making that case, and therefore, opening up the door to World Bank involvement in health.

**HEATH:** So, who made the film, sorry?

**MARSHALL:** It was my former husband, Tom Blinkhorn, who was at the time in External Affairs. He had been a journalist with Jaime Martin [Escobal] who was also there. They

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basically did almost an amateur film.

**HEATH:** Right. Right.

**MARSHALL:** And I was involved sort of informally, shall we say.

**HEATH:** Right. Right. So, tell us about the next phase in your career when you became a young professional?

**MARSHALL:** Well, it was clear to me from a fairly early point in working in the Executive Director's office that I wanted to work as the staff of the Bank, and I wanted to move, but at that time there were quite high barriers. So, even though several people had offered me a job, the personnel department required that I go through the professional competition, which I did, kicking and screaming at the time I think because it seemed a hurdle I was not looking for.

**HEATH:** Do you happen to remember when you entered in May '72 as your first rotation, how many other women were there in your graduation, in your promotion, at this level?

**MARSHALL:** I don't know. There were very few though.

**HEATH:** Right. Did you have friends, particularly women?

**MARSHALL:** Later on, but not then.

**HEATH:** I see.

**MARSHALL:** At that time, I really didn't know. It was a lonely effort.

**HEATH:** Tell me something about the interview process?

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**MARSHALL:** Well, one thing that I remember, I think Tom Tsui was the administrator of the YP program, and there were a couple of other people that I did interviews with. It was not a structured as a process as it is now. But it was rigorous, I do remember that. But I also know that somebody slipped me the file. I knew enough people, well enough, that they did that, which they shouldn't have, of course.

**HEATH:** The file meaning the questions they were going to -- oh, I see.

**MARSHALL:** My file. About what people had written about me.

**HEATH:** Oh, I see, afterwards, yeah, right. Okay. Sure.

**MARSHALL:** Afterwards. Not beforehand, but afterwards.

**HEATH:** Yes. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** But one of the things that people had to do was to rate people's appearance.

**HEATH:** Oh, right.

**MARSHALL:** And one person rated my appearance as fair, which is something I accepted but was something I never quite forgot.

**HEATH:** Your appearance, may I presume, how well you were dressed.

**MARSHALL:** Well, I think it was attractiveness.

**HEATH:** Attractiveness, generally. I see. Okay. All right.

**MARSHALL:** I think that was the general meaning of it.

**HEATH:** It's amazing.

**MARSHALL:** That was the time, and it obviously didn't apply to women. It was general.

**HEATH:** Okay.

**MARSHALL:** It was a general criterion.

**HEATH:** Oh, I see. So, the men themselves would be rated on their appearance.

**MARSHALL:** Yes. I think that went out quite soon because I was doing interviews for other people, and I know that it was not part of the protocol that I had to submit.

**HEATH:** So, do you remember how many separate interviews you had? Were they just one-to-one interviews?

**MARSHALL:** I had one-to-one interviews probably with three or four people, and because I was a peculiar case, I was already a Bank staff member, but in a different category, being with the Executive Director's office, and there was then as I think there still is, basically, a barrier. Some kind of a firewall. So, I did go through that and was then selected.

**HEATH:** Do you have any recollection of the sorts of questions they put to you in those meetings?

**MARSHALL:** No. I think it was usual interview stuff.

**HEATH:** I mean were they technical questions?

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**MARSHALL:** The thing that for me that I guess an issue at the time was that I had been to the Woodrow Wilson School and was very multidisciplinary, with my particular interests in sociology, history, political science. I was much less attracted to economics and had done as little as possible.

**HEATH:** Was that a problem for the interviewers, do you think?

**MARSHALL:** That clearly was something of an issue, and I still remember someone saying to me that because there was no option, I had to be classified as an economist. There was no alternative. And someone said to me, “Well, you just say, I am an economist and with confidence.” And I don’t think I ever did it to that point.

But that would’ve been the subject I would’ve been most concerned about. But, you know, I had spent a lot of time in Africa, and I did have the background in the urban area, which was unusual at that time. It was a bit like now or recently when somebody would’ve come in with the knowledge of environment. In other words, that it was a relatively new area of interest and skills. Plus, I had the experience in the ED’s office, so I was pretty familiar with a lot of the language and so forth. Oh, I know somebody who did interview me. Yes, and this is another story that Rotberg interviewed me.

**HEATH:** Eugene Rotberg, Treasurer.

**MARSHALL:** Eugene Rotberg who was the Vice President and Treasurer at the time.

**HEATH:** What was he like?

**MARSHALL:** He’s a wonderful person. Absolutely brilliant presenter. And sort of a person with many different skills. Every opportunity I had to watch him do presentations, I did. I ended

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up, over the years, doing many presentations to new staff. That was one of the things that I did over the years. He was always often presenting as well, and I learned something from him every time.

**HEATH:** These are the days before PowerPoint, presumably.

**MARSHALL:** Yes, he would tell stories, and he had a very unique prospective. So, I was a tremendous admirer of him.

But he (laughter) --- Again, this gives you a little bit of an idea of what the environment was. Though this one, frankly, is not offensive. This is somebody who was trying to get my goat at the time because I was, I seemed much more confident than I was. Let's put it this way.

But he did an interview, and he sent me a blind copy of the recommendation that he had given me, which had in the middle paragraph something to the affect that I was well rounded and had nice curves or whatever.

**HEATH:** Rotberg said this. I see. Right.

**MARSHALL:** Yes, it was a paragraph. And I went storming to his office and, of course, found that it was a phony one, that he added that paragraph.

**HEATH:** Oh, I see. Right. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** A phony paragraph. I'm not sure that this needs to appear in the interview.

**HEATH:** I think it does definitely need to appear. So, that was his little prank.

**MARSHALL:** Yes, yes, exactly.

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**HEATH:** Right. Okay. And he knew it would upset you.

**MARSHALL:** And he knew it would bring me storming into his office.

**HEATH:** It succeeded, yeah. Okay.

So, urban development, I'm trying to remember when it was that -- was it at Nairobi that McNamara referred to that as a priority, or was it later, I can't remember?

**MARSHALL:** It was emerging as a priority, and I think [Edward V. K. (Kim)] Jaycox was involved and [Callisto] Madavo. But I'm not sure when because when I actually did work for the Bank, came into the YP program, I was in agriculture.

**HEATH:** I see. Right. So, yes.

**MARSHALL:** So, my urban background and skills were employed only in the very early period.

**HEATH:** So, how did that transition come about from urban to agriculture?

**MARSHALL:** Well, my first assignment, and as I recall one had little choice at the time, but my first assignment was to the Country Program Division that was responsible, among other countries, for Madagascar.

My assignment was to go to Madagascar with an appraisal mission that was led by an Irish livestock specialist, called Mike Walshe, who spoke no French. I was the economist on the mission, and there was a French financial analyst [Antoine Marot] and a brand-new staff member, Svend Steengaard, who was also a livestock specialist, and we were to arrive in Madagascar.

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**HEATH:** And you spoke French, I presume?

**MARSHALL:** I spoke French, and this actually did coincide with a visit by McNamara to Madagascar.

**HEATH:** That would've been in what year -- '73?

**MARSHALL:** Seventy-two.

**HEATH:** Seventy-two.

**MARSHALL:** No, it must have been '73.

**HEATH:** Okay. All right.

**MARSHALL:** But it was a very turbulent period in Madagascar when there was, essentially, what people describe as the de facto independence movement where they were kicking a lot of the French out. There was turbulence. And the project that we were appraising was a reaction to a project that was ongoing that we were also supervising, which was the Beef Cattle Development Project.

It was a project in a quintessential sense, the old-fashioned project where people had gone into the middle-west region of Madagascar around a town called Tsiroanomandidy and had seen open-flowing plains and had thought this is ideal for Texas or Australian-style ranching. And that had been the project, and I think it was maybe approved in '68 or something like that.

The project was a total disaster. What they had not realized, among other things, that the villagers thought the land belonged to them and that cattle stealing was a national sport. Sort of your achievement of manhood was stealing cattle.

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So, they had brought in Brahman bulls who refused to perform, who got sick, who died. So, the pastures were burned, which was also the tradition. They tried to fence these farms. The butchers from the city came out, slaughtered the cattle, and put the ears on the barbed wire fence and took the meat back. It was a disaster. The livestock specialists spoke no French. They were Argentinian. They were Australian. So, it was a classic utter Bank disaster.

The project we were appraising was in a different part of the country, and it was called the Village Livestock Project. It was supposed to be based on traditional methods. But it was also supposed to be taking the technical innovation, not that much of an innovation, but people thought it was at the time, of stylosanthes, which was a leguminous grass. And the idea was to try to spread it in the other part of the country so that there would be better food.

So, this mission was a dramatic event, in any event. The Irish livestock specialist, the French financial analyst were at each other's throats.

**HEATH:** For professional reasons or for personal?

**MARSHALL:** Both.

**HEATH:** I see. Right.

**MARSHALL:** I was the only one who could communicate because of the French. The government was hostile because of the earlier project. The research people were hostile to the Bank. And so, we were sort of in this ranching project, which was a disaster, left to our own devices. Then we went west towards the new project site and tried to figure that all out.

We were also with an Italian livestock specialist. An Italian and a Palestinian. And I remember the Irishman, Mike Walshe, saying that they had been raving with fever when they were designing this project. Completely crazy. Well, just crazy. And meanwhile, McNamara came,

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and he visited the livestock.

**HEATH:** The new site or the old site?

**MARSHALL:** The old site and became very excited about the stylosanthes, which apparently was very well known and waving the grass and saying this is the technology that will transform Madagascar.

And so, meanwhile, we were in the classic Bank at the time. Even though I was with programs, it was a project mission. We were sort of trying to do that at the same time that the program division chief was trying to manage the McNamara visit with helicopters and so forth. I didn't see McNamara during that visit, but I heard a lot about it. And so, we were sort of involved in trying to tell the story.

I ended up later one of the first full assignments that I had was doing the completion report, which was a relatively new thing at the time with the -- was it OED [Operations Evaluation Department] at the time?

**HEATH:** OED. That's right. Yes.

**MARSHALL:** The new operations and evaluation. So, that was a sort of first effort. And so, I told the story, and people were fascinated by it. I did presentations on it. I have no idea what's become of that completion report.

**HEATH:** Right. It must be in the file somewhere.

**MARSHALL:** But the story was fascinating.

**HEATH:** Do you think they attempted to whitewash the details about the old project, the

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disaster it was when McNamara was there or were they honest about the failings?

**MARSHALL:** I think it was pretty honest, but it was also a very turbulent period in Madagascar where the Bank relationship, you know, as again, it was the government, which had agreed to the project was the old government, which was still in many ways a colonial regime. The official line was that all land belonged to the government. So, then with the left shift and the eviction of a lot of the French, clearly, the traditional rights became much more important.

**HEATH:** So, was the new project more sensitive to traditional land rights than the old one?

**MARSHALL:** It was more sensitive, but it was also in many ways naïve in assuming that the government was capable of implementing the kind of program that they said they wanted. So, the project, which I struggled with for many years after that, went through many mutations, and one of my conclusions that was and still is important is that trying to design that kind of an operation with a detailed plan for five years in a turbulent political and organizational situation is nonsensical, that one has to have a much stronger presence and to evolve as you go along. But in a sense, that's a different issue.

**HEATH:** Right. I see. Okay.

So, how long were you actually in Madagascar on this first mission?

**MARSHALL:** We were probably there for four weeks.

**HEATH:** You were married at this time?

**MARSHALL:** Yes.

**HEATH:** Did you have any communication with your husband while you were on mission?

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**MARSHALL:** No, at that time and another mission later on because I moved from the six-month assignment with YP and then moved and worked on Bangladesh for six months but then came back, not to the program division, but to the agriculture division. And so, spent many years going back and forth to Madagascar and struggling with the very difficult political, social, etc. regime.

But I remember once I had been way out in a rural area, which, of course, in agriculture, which is what we did, we were gone for a long time and then very far away, and someone came back and said, you know, the astronaut blew up or the spaceship. And then another time somebody said the Vice President resigned. So, Agnew had resigned. And neither time did I believe them.

**HEATH:** Fascinating

**MARSHALL:** It was a time when you had almost no contact.

**HEATH:** So, I still don't fully understand how you ended up in agriculture. You didn't have a technical background in that field. Where there simply no opportunities in urban development, was that the idea or what?

**MARSHALL:** I had gone into the Madagascar job as the country program person but assigned to be sort of the accompaniment on the project. And as a result, I got deeply into the issues. I ended up spent writing a large part of the appraisal report, learning how to do herd projections. And basically, doing the microeconomics. And so, when I was offered a job in that division, it seemed like a good idea.

**HEATH:** Now, one of the choices that people had to make in those days was whether to become a loan officer or become a project economist. Do you remember reflecting on -- I mean you had the possibility of remaining in the program department and presumably becoming a loan officer, is that right? Was that an option that you rejected or thought about?

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**MARSHALL:** I don't think it was quite as conscious as it sounds in the way you frame it. I clearly had been very smitten with Madagascar and the challenges that the country was facing. And the division chief I think courted me quite actively.

**HEATH:** What was his name?

**MARSHALL:** Mike Walden. And the reason was that the agriculture staff at that time tended to be people who had come out of colonial positions. And a lot of them had great difficulty writing and often had difficulty in navigating the politics of countries in turmoil.

You know, the period that I was working on agriculture in Africa was a very difficult period. It started in a way as a period of hope, not that long after independence and you saw in many countries the decline, the disintegration. A lot of the agriculture projects were problem projects. We had the problem project review.

One of the pieces of the story over those years was that McNamara in I guess it was Nairobi speech, did start integrated rural development. And so, there was Leif Christoffersen, and his team had a special sort of rural development. So, you had in a sense, the sort of rival rural development. And from our prospective, they were often quite naïve and lived in a different world. So, we were trying to grapple with this.

**HEATH:** Sorry, who was naïve -- the rural development people?

**MARSHALL:** Yes.

**HEATH:** Right. The Christoffersens, etc. Okay. I see.

**MARSHALL:** But, of course, a lot of what they were doing was very sensible and worthy.

**HEATH:** Why do you think they were naïve?

**MARSHALL:** Well, what I saw in both Tanzania and Madagascar was that they were even less savvy than we were in understanding the gaps between the government's language and what they were -- their capacity.

**HEATH:** Now, when you say, "We were," you mean the old.

**MARSHALL:** In the old agriculture.

**HEATH:** The old agricultural.

**MARSHALL:** The old agriculture division.

**HEATH:** We're talking, essentially, about English people, French people, Dutch people, I presume, mainly. Is that right? The agriculturalists.

**MARSHALL:** Yeah.

**HEATH:** How did they react to the McNamara thrust toward rural development? Do you remember their reactions at the time, the traditional, the old guard?

**MARSHALL:** Well, a lot of them were skeptical about McNamara in general. I mean they were skeptical about, for example, the, and this came a little bit later, about the strong relationship with [Julius] Nyerere in Tanzania. And there you had a bit of a project program split. So, I will tell you a story in a minute.

But the basic thing was that Walden saw that I could write and had at least some capacity to deal in French-speaking countries, that I was at least very interested in the way things were done and

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the political dynamics of what was happening.

And so, we had what for a number of years was sort of as he put it, “I have to get these guys ready to be led around Africa by young girls.” And Pamela Cox who later became a vice president was in the division not very long after, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was there. There were a number of people.

So, you had this sort of odd pairing of people who were able to basically maneuver within the changing Bank.

But coming back to your question, a lot of the old agriculture people as they called themselves in many ways they were savvy and right in seeing the weakness of the administrative structures and the willingness of both the Bank’s management but also some of the economists and loan officers, basically, to accept the way that the government was presenting their capabilities. And we learned the hard way that a lot of things that seemed to be great projects on paper, simply didn’t work.

But an example of that, was I think one of my second missions when I first joined, which was again with Mike Walshe who was the livestock specialist, which was in Tanzania. And it was a dairy project. A parastatal dairy project, which the Irish livestock specialist thought was just totally doomed, that you can’t run dairy projects with a parastatal. But the project also had some traditional elements.

We were there traveling all around the country, all around Tanzania during a time of massive villagization. And what we saw as we traveled was bulldozers pushing down villages and people, basically, being resettled along highways in different parts of the country. So, we were in awe. And it was clearly doomed. It was a disaster.

Meanwhile, the rural development people were talking about Ujamaa villages and so forth. So,

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the program people and the rural development people were very positive on Tanzania. Whereas, the agriculture team that was doing this dairy project, which had been prepared by the FAO cooperative program were very troubled by the dairy project and by many aspects of it but above all, by what was happening to Tanzania.

**HEATH:** So, do you mean to say the rural development people like Christoffersen actually approved of the villagization?

**MARSHALL:** Well, this is where I came into it in a way because we came back, and I told the story of what we had seen to the division chief. At the time, it was Stanley Please was the country program director. Anyway, he got me to write an email describing this.

**HEATH:** It can't have been an email, it must have been a memo.

**MARSHALL:** A memo, yes. The memo. The sort of young, you know, girl who wrote. So, I wrote this description, and he handed it to Stanley. And needless to say, they went ballistic because it did not fit the story of the positive development of Tanzania.

Now, eventually, I think everyone had to recognize what was happening, and the romance with Tanzania sort of declined over time. But that was, in a sense, a rather strict tension.

Now, actually, the head of that mission was David Lomax, was the head of the mission. And it was the only time that I recall where a project went forward that the team really had serious doubts about. This was a time when appraisal reports were reviewed with Hans Adler who was the project department director.

And, you know, you went through sort of word by word almost through the appraisal report with a team. Meetings could take six to eight hours. I think that the mission chief was prepared to go with the recommendation. The project eventually was approved, and I'm sure was a disaster.

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We were reorganized before I had to deal with it.

But in any event, I've always rejected the idea that people only got promotions because they would push money through. I think that's a very over simplistic view of how things worked. It is true that it's much more fun and more interesting to design a new project than it is deal with the kinds of problems we were dealing with, which were, you know, having the wrong people in the wrong jobs and things not happening and so forth.

So, supervision was sort of a thankless job, completion reports were the worst thing that anyone could do unless you had a sort of historian bone in you like as I did.

In any event, that was one project where it probably should not have been approved.

**HEATH:** So, from '73 to '80, you worked as an economist in the East Africa and agriculture divisions, so you were covering Kenya, Tanzania.

**MARSHALL:** Well, no, it was complicated. Initially, you had divisions that were divided by livestock and irrigation and forestry and another that dealt with crops. And then there was a reorganization into three divisions, which were actually very big divisions, which were geographic. So, for example, in the early years, I worked on Tanzania. I worked on Botswana. I did some fisheries project in Sudan, that I was looking at. And then when we were reorganized, I had the Francophone countries, which included Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Comoros, and Madagascar, as well as Kenya. So, the geography changed.

**HEATH:** I understand. Were there large resident missions in East Africa at this time or not?

**MARSHALL:** There was a large resident mission in Nairobi, or it grew over time, the regional mission in East Africa.

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**HEATH:** Did you ever consider you might want to work in a regional?

**MARSHALL:** At the time, very few people were overseas. I had, apart from anything else, of being married and being concerned. I also had through this period, a total of 13 pregnancies. In fact, one child was born and died. I had late miscarriages, and two of those happened while I was traveling. I was in a high-risk category, and therefore, the idea of moving overseas was also precluded for that reason.

**HEATH:** All right. How many children did you finally end up with?

**MARSHALL:** I have two.

**HEATH:** Two.

**MARSHALL:** And I'm happily retired.

**HEATH:** So, who was moving to a resident mission? How was it seen? Was it seen as if you were an ambitious person, that wasn't the sort of place you would go? Is that fair to say?

**MARSHALL:** No. No. Well, and particularly, in agriculture, being in Nairobi was wonderful, and it was as wonderful place to be posted at that time. Much more than it would be now.

**HEATH:** Okay, I see.

**MARSHALL:** And it was a complicated relationship. When I eventually became division chief, that Kenya was part of our country portfolio at that point, and so I was the supervisor of a large part of the staff that worked in that area. And sort of figuring out how we related was difficult. We were big divisions. I think the division was 30-35 people at one point and there were three very different people, very strong-minded people, who were the heads of the three

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geographic divisions; Chris Walton, Steve [Steven] Eccles, and me. And in a sense, the program people were always a bit uneasy about these agriculture people.

**HEATH:** Why do you think they were uneasy?

**MARSHALL:** Well, partly the agriculture project issues were difficult, both at the policy level and at the practical implementation level. Another issue was that the levels of the knowledge that was coming in was different. So, in other words, we were seeing things that were different. And so, because the program people in a sense were the sort of main conduit, main dialogue with the governments, we were dealing with people much more at the field level.

I think the sort of language that we have today about community involvement was not a language then. But you were seeing different approaches. So, it was not unnatural. It was, in a sense, part of the design of the system and healthy that you had different perspectives.

**HEATH:** So, from a poverty reduction perspective, which was, of course, McNamara's concern, if you compare the approach of the old guard agriculturalists with the new guard rural development people, I mean what can you say about the relative merits of the two approaches in terms of poverty reduction?

**MARSHALL:** Oh, it's a question I haven't quite asked myself in that way. In some ways, for example, even going back to the late '40s and early '50s, the idea of the way that you would develop agriculture would have been predominately an irrigation project; tractors, ranches. Basically, those kinds of models. I mean that's in a sense the livestock project in Madagascar. It shows you the evolution. So, it was not necessarily only a McNamara evolution.

The people who were involved, the old agriculture people, thought that they were doing what was best for the countries and that it would be profitable, but also, that it would yield real benefits.

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**HEATH:** Would it be fair to say they didn't have much faith in peasant agriculture? They essentially thought the farms had to be big and commercial.

**MARSHALL:** Well, for example, the Irishman that I worked with had a lot of respect for peasant agriculture. I mean that was his thing. As did the Danish livestock specialist that I worked with. He had worked in the Congo and was (inaudible) feeding of animals. Both of them were basically very favorable to it. But the issue came around how you organize that. And we in the Bank did not have good ideas and good solutions. And I would put both the traditional agriculture approaches and the rural development people in that category.

So, for example, one thing that I struggled with a lot over the years in Kenya was something called the IADP [Integrated Agricultural Development Project], which I don't even know if it was the rural development division or the other, but it was the integrated agricultural development program, which was supposed to bring inputs from different ministries. The idea that many people say, you know, when you go to a village, you have to provide the range of services to people in the villages. And the project was a disaster. Nothing was happening. The money wasn't moving. The results were not coming through even though we would have measured it and described it in different terms at that time.

But one of the ways that we came to approach it was realizing that the budget processes were not in any way geared to bringing together those inputs into a way that would allow money to flow in a way that reflected the overall design of the operation.

**HEATH:** Right, because these weren't demand-driven projects in those days. I mean the idea was you had to coordinate all these line ministries.

**MARSHALL:** Well, in order to get the money, you still have to do that. You don't do that through supply, through demand. So, at some point, you know, if the villagers all say we want wells, and we want a road, and we want a seed farm, and we want this, there was no mechanism

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for that to happen together except through the respective ministries at that time.

Now, nowadays, you might what you would say, ideally you might have a local government. Or the other solution that happened, which was very much the pattern at that time was you had a project unit. And so, you set up the project unit, which had all the money coming to it, which was often expats. And then when they left, the whole thing collapsed. So, that was another part of the phenomenon. And that did reflect, I mean the tension that was there at the time between having very limited faith in the capacity of governments to do the kinds of things that people wanted to do, and the growing awareness that you had to try to build systems in the countries, which was in a sense, the second livestock project was building the systems in the country.

**HEATH:** So, you told us about some of the failings of the Agriculture and Rural Development projects. Are there success stories that you remember from those years in East Africa?

**MARSHALL:** Well, the general story of East and Central Africa was not a success story during those years. What was described later as, you know, in freefall. The economies were in freefall. And it was a progressive pattern of disappointment that was true in a lot of the areas. There was a sense that some people described as the technical packages were wrong. That was not my diagnosis. It was not that people didn't know how to grow cotton or didn't know how to do things. It was the delivery, the organization, that was what was going wrong.

So, there were a few projects that succeeded at the time. I know in Kenya the tea and the dairy were great successes. But then, again, when I started having to deal with this overall portfolio, the Agricultural Finance Corporation, which had done fairly well for some years, turned into a continuing nightmare of lack of repayments, and it just spiraled and got worse and worse.

The Bora irrigation projection was a very large sort of completely idealistic irrigation project along the border with Somalia, that hundreds of million, a hundred million -- but it was never completed. And the general sense is that the desert sands are blowing over the works. It was a

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failure.

One other project at that time was the Group Farms Project, which was one of the legacies of the transition to independence, which was the idea that big white farms would be owned by groups. At one point, they attacked the World Bank supervision mission. It was politically explosive. We tried to work in the Maasai areas on land tenure issues. The government basically made it impossible for Maasai farmers to have any --.

So, these projects ran into quite a series of problems, which were not necessarily intrinsically in the design or the idea, but they were caught in the politics of the time. And it took a long time for the Bank to recognize those issues. I don't know how far you're getting into this, but it was later, I don't know the year, the Berg report.

**HEATH:** That's of interest. Yes.

**MARSHALL:** Which basically brought in someone to take a look at what was going wrong across the whole of Africa. And what was it that should be done. And, of course, the politics and implementation came out as major issues.

**HEATH:** Stanley Please would have essentially found the Berg report music to his ears, I think, yes. I mean he shared probably Berg's skepticism about the quality of the policy framework and the need to change that. Yes.

Was Danny Benor active in East Africa in these years?

**MARSHALL:** Very. And we worked a lot with Danny.

**HEATH:** Tell us about it.

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**MARSHALL:** But I'm not sure when he started. But, no, Benor, was a force of nature. And he was extraordinarily skillful, both in the Bank and in every country. But his basic formula was he arrived in the country, he would go to the field. And that was true also when he went to Switzerland. He arrived in Switzerland, he would go to farms. And he would look around, and basically would say we can dramatically improve the productivity of these farms with relatively simple changes; planting in rows or a time of sowing, etc.

And he made quite a few converts among the staff. There were also some skeptics. And so, there were a number of Benor projects, but there were also people who thought that what he was bringing was essentially nonsense. Where we saw it most clearly was Kenya. So, Kenya was one of the places. And that would've been pretty late, probably in the time that I was working on Kenya.

**HEATH:** Right, because he had a lot of support from Ernie Stern, I understand.

**MARSHALL:** Well, and he did the same thing in the Bank. In other words, what I described is he would come to the country, go immediately to the field, no early meetings, come away with a very clear story and a very clear solution, and then he would go back and see the minister and the president and so forth. And he did the same in the Bank.

**HEATH:** And how much do you think the story varied from one country to another or was he telling more or less the same thing? Was he sensitive to variations?

**MARSHALL:** No, I think he was quite sensitive to that, though there was a common theme in it, which was that the extension workers, who were at the base were very badly used, could be much better used, and that with proper training and regular visits, the T&V system, you could transform the agriculture.

Kenya was interesting because at that time there was a shift, there was a sense that the high

potential areas, there was a sense that they would never yield more than a ton of hectare maize or whatever. And therefore, there was a shift in focus towards the dry semi-arid areas.

And he came, and he said, “This is ridiculous.” The getting one and a half tons, you could get five tons in the same area if you mobilize the training and visit and the farmers in more effective ways. And he set up these demonstrations, which often did demonstrate that that could happen.

And he did have some real disciples, some real converts in the various projects that reflected his views. He did it in a number of countries. I can’t even remember which other countries he was involved in. But, you know, this kind of thing ran up against the politics in many cases and ran up against the overall decline in the administrative apparatus in a number of countries.

**HEATH:** One of the previous interviewees who worked in, was actually based in Nairobi for a time was Kevin Cleaver.

**MARSHALL:** Oh, yeah.

**HEATH:** And he said that T&V [training and visit] worked in the implementation phase because they put lots of resources in, and there was this dynamic of training and retraining and so forth. But as soon as the project ended, the governments simply didn’t have the recurrent budget to keep the apparatus going. And so, it tended to fall apart. Would you agree with that?

**MARSHALL:** To some extent, though I also think that it was never as internalized as people thought. In other words, the level of recurrent budget would’ve been a mechanical exercise. In other words, if you didn’t put the recurrent budget in, it was because you didn’t give it priority.

**HEATH:** Right. I see. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** So, I think it’s a combination. And, yes, there were some substantial successes,

but they were ephemeral. And I think that they really just were caught in the broader... In other words, they might have worked very well in another time and place.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay. Let's change tack a bit now slightly. You made it very clear that you were not really an economist when you joined the Bank, your interests were more in the line of I guess political science, sociology, history. Did you have any co-conspirators, any people who you identified in the Bank around you, who shared, who had a similar set of interests at that time? Were there people at the time, you know, you identified as allies?

**MARSHALL:** To some extent. The trajectory was that I probably did running economic rates of return and herd projections for a maximum of a year and then became a mission leader. At that time, the mission leader was the one who dealt with the way a project was put together; the organizational parts, the country background, trying to integrate what we were trying to do in a general country strategy, etc.

But in the course of those difficult years, I became very convinced that the organization and administrative side, the implementation, was by far the biggest bottleneck that we were facing, and that we lacked professional support in that area. Because, we didn't have. Of course, it's a difficult area because it's what we call governance now; the whole sort of area. Public administration was sort of it.

But I did, when I became division chief, create a position that was the first one I think in the Bank for a public administration specialist. And we recruited for that. And there was at least tepid interest in that, at least enough support that I was able to do it.

**HEATH:** Who became that?

**MARSHALL:** We hired a woman called Len Trong, who was a Vietnamese woman. We hired some consultants who did that as well, as well as we had some, you know, anthropologists and

sociologists who were trying to help us in trying to navigate these very difficult issues at the time. But they never quite were able to get into the full magnitude of the events that were troubling many African countries at that time.

**HEATH:** Right. Right. A question I have is whether the Bank, in those days at least, was it effective in integrating so-called social scientists?

**MARSHALL:** No, it was a very marginal field. And we often knew we needed that kind of advice. And it was in a sense there was sort of a choice. There were sort of generic sociologists, anthropologists, and then there were the people who were very specialized in whatever area you were focusing on, who spoke the language. But finding ways to tap their knowledge was, and I think still is an issue.

**HEATH:** Okay. In an organization dominated basically, by economists, do you think they had difficulty, did they not share? Obviously, they had a different....

**MARSHALL:** I think it went both ways. I would partly blame the macroeconomists. I mean I'm working now on the issues of religion. And as you can imagine for a lot of economists, this is a very strange area to be working in and not terribly interesting or relevant.

**HEATH:** Yeah, I understand.

I want to ask you how you came to be division chief, 1980. Was it problematic in any way? I mean there weren't presumably, many female division chiefs in those days were there?

**MARSHALL:** The division chief who I had worked under, and who I had effectively had become deputy to, left. He went to Indonesia.

**HEATH:** And what was his name?

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**MARSHALL:** Mike Walden. And at that time, the director and assistant director for the East Africa Projects department was Hans Adler and Jim [James B.] Hendry. I'm not sure what process they went through at the time. It was a very different process. It was not similar to the process now. But they offered me the job and were delighted to so and very proud of themselves that they had selected a woman to the position. Both of them had strong-minded daughters, which is one of the main criteria for people who are willing to do that.

**HEATH:** So, there wasn't a competition for the post. You were essentially nominated to the job.

**MARSHALL:** Yes.

**HEATH:** I see.

**MARSHALL:** And the Vice President was Willi Wapenhans, and I think he was more skeptical. I remember once he asked me some time, you know, "How's it going?" or something. And I said, "Oh, I'm having a lot of fun." He said, "We didn't put you there to have fun." I said, "Okay, thank you."

**HEATH:** Right. Let's talk a bit about the culture of the Bank in the 1970s and what it was like being a woman in the Bank, specifically.

**MARSHALL:** Well, you were referring to the phenomenon earlier of the structure of mission work, which I think was very important. The mission teams tended to be relatively small by tradition and for budget reasons. Usually, were made up pretty interdisciplinary with the possible sociologists or public administration person added. You went and you spent quite a bit of time in the country. Lots of problems with that, among them that very often there was a long silence between when a mission left and when the government actually knew what had been decided and telefax and so forth didn't work very well.

But it had some real advantages. One of them clearly was that you focused very intensively on a problem and on a country, and the team was forced to work. It was a wonderful way to have interdisciplinary approaches.

**HEATH:** So, you'd be away for typically how many weeks?

**MARSHALL:** Four weeks.

**HEATH:** Four weeks. Right.

**MARSHALL:** With the appraisal mission.

**HEATH:** Okay.

**MARSHALL:** In agriculture, we were traveling a lot. Very rough conditions often. A lot of people got sick, obviously. But the teamwork experience was something that I came to value very highly. And I think it's missing now. You don't have it. Plus, you had the sort of mentorship and tutorial where you became a division chief. Not, a division chief, a mission chief. And you would not have been a mission chief without having a considerable amount of Bank experience, which I think is no longer the case.

**HEATH:** As a woman, did you feel at a disadvantage in these intensive four-week missions?

**MARSHALL:** There were times when it was very awkward. And I mean there clearly were a lot of people who were not receptive to working with women, and particularly, not to be led by women. Women who were younger. Women in general. They felt that a woman could not deal with government officials. That they were weak. All the prejudices you can imagine. And those applied quite a bit in the agriculture sector. But in my case, there was an environment where there were quite a few people who were more open and receptive.

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So, there were some people who clearly probably never liked me and never wanted to work with me. And some of it was because of the male/female.

I think the first group of women who were promoted to management positions in operations in the Bank, was a small group, and we knew each other very well.

**HEATH:** Just remind us who those are?

**MARSHALL:** Jessica Einhorn, Ann Hamilton, Nancy Barry. Those were the ones that immediately come to mind. Pamela Cox, eventually, but she was younger.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** We had lunch together regularly. And one of the issues, this was more under Conable than under McNamara. McNamara never really focused on it. He was too early for the sort of gender issues. But when that came, you had -- what was I thinking? The group of women decided that the first reaction that we would have when someone would say, "Oh, there's a conference coming up on women in development, can you go?" That's not what I do. You know, I'm not here. I'm not for women. But then, several of us changed our views and said well, if we don't do it, who's going to do it?

And so, the first thing is that we did take on some of those issues of strategy. The second is that we felt quite strongly that we had a responsibility to support women who were coming up in the Bank.

**HEATH:** I just want to be clear about the timing. This was in the 70s or later?

**MARSHALL:** It started in the 70s.

**HEATH:** Okay. Right.

**MARSHALL:** Yeah.

**HEATH:** So, how did you help women coming up?

**MARSHALL:** Well, by recruiting them. The YP program called me and said, “We have a pregnant YP, can you help us?” And I said, “Sure.” And that was Ngozi Okonjo-Iwelea who came to the division and clearly had to go on maternity leave and so forth.

**HEATH:** So, you think if it had a man making the decision, they probably would have said, “I’m sorry, we can’t really take you because you’re pregnant?”

**MARSHALL:** Well, some of the ones wouldn’t.

I dealt with, and this is, again, it’s complicated, because every case is complicated. But there were cases of people being treated badly or having unwanted advances; the kind of thing we’re talking about today. There were also some policies that were crazy at the time about skirts, the length of skirts, that women could wear. Plus, there was a sort of craziness around pregnancy.

**HEATH:** So, how did they define the length? It had to be beneath the knee?

**MARSHALL:** Well, there was Lacy Carter who in some ways was a person who everyone admired.

**HEATH:** She was in the in the YP program.

**MARSHALL:** Not the YP. She was Personnel.

**HEATH:** Personnel, okay. Yes.

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**MARSHALL:** Some people say she did wonderful things for people who were in trouble. But she basically didn't think much of having women in operational positions. And it was mostly the secretarial staff that she put the fear of God into them.

**HEATH:** So, at what point in your induction would you get this instruction that you had to wear a skirt that was lower than a certain level?

**MARSHALL:** I think it probably had largely sort of faded by the time I was there. But it was part of the urban legend. It was very much part of the urban legend.

The one that was specific was that there was a rule that you had to leave work six weeks before your confinement, was the way that it was put in other words before you gave birth.

**HEATH:** Sounds medieval almost.

**MARSHALL:** And then that meant that if you had three months maternity leave..

**HEATH:** You're lost.

**MARSHALL:** you only could be away for six weeks. And there was a general view that that was insane, and people would get doctors to falsify their confinement date, etc. But she was the one who was the guardian of that.

**HEATH:** Lacy Carter.

**MARSHALL:** What is really the risk? Is it that the computer's going to fall on the baby, or wouldn't it be better to give birth in the office than by yourself in your house? So, there was a certain amount of turmoil.

Now, I did, as I said, I had these successive problems with pregnancy. And when I finally in 1980, when my daughter was born, I took I think two weeks, and then I came back part time and basically carried a lot of the responsibility because there was no sympathy at that time.

**HEATH:** This was the same year you became a division chief.

**MARSHALL:** Yes.

**HEATH:** So, you gave birth before you were promoted or after?

**MARSHALL:** It was during -- I don't remember exactly. I don't remember what month it was.

**HEATH:** But you only had two weeks off the job.

**MARSHALL:** Well, it was probably people would've said well that was my choice. But I was very conscious that I was seen as a risk and particularly, being a pregnant risk. And people also knew that I was in a very high-risk category, so they were very sympathetic when the baby arrived safely.

**HEATH:** I'm bound to comment. I mean you had 13 pregnancies. You must have been apprehensive about going on missions, for fear of losing yet another child.

**MARSHALL:** Yeah. Well, it wasn't a cause and effect, but it's more difficult. There's less they can do. And at certain periods, I didn't travel because I couldn't. I had a surgical procedure that made it impossible to travel.

Again, it's a bit of the sort of Bank mentality that when you visit maternity clinics and you see what people go through in the countries, and to say well I'm not going to put myself at that risk, was not really something I could ethically deal with. So, it wasn't until it was really impossible

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to travel.

**HEATH:** I see. Were your male bosses sympathetic?

**MARSHALL:** Well, I think Jim Hendry and Hans Adler were very sympathetic. They weren't terribly helpful in the sense of saying, you know, you can relax, we're going to make sure that everything's okay. It was basically, it's your responsibility, and, you know, you take care of it.

**HEATH:** And were there ever occasions when you were on mission when you had to, you know, an emergency, a gynecological emergency that took you to...?

**MARSHALL:** Yeah, I spent two weeks in a hospital in Nairobi.

**HEATH:** Right. And how was that?

**MARSHALL:** That was very frightening, obviously. I couldn't communicate with anybody at that time, yeah.

**HEATH:** Yeah. All right.

**MARSHALL:** So, anyway, I guess the sort of atmosphere. But I wanted to make sure I made the point that I think that the women who were that first generation were remarkably cohesive and remarkably supportive. Even though we were very, very diverse, very different, came from different roots. And I think that made quite a big difference.

**HEATH:** Right. Were you conscious of yourself being feminists?

**MARSHALL:** Probably would've described ourselves, but we weren't part of feminists' organizations. And in that sense, that was why the sort of first -- well, as I put it, the first

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reaction that we had to, “Well, would you represent the Bank on women’s issues?” was, you know, that’s really not what I do. And then it was only later that we came to the view that it was important that we be leaders on that issue because nobody else would.

**HEATH:** Did you have any experience of people being either lesbian or gay in the Bank in the 1970s and how that played out?

**MARSHALL:** The one experience, but it’s going to be hard to figure the date. But one of the taskforces, I did many different taskforces at different times for various reasons, but one of them was a Support Staff Action Group, SSASG. We could witness already the transformation that was taking place in the secretarial professions. And I was also very conscious that it was hard enough for me who had more income, lived closer to the Bank, was able to get support at home to try to deal with doctors’ appointments and everything else. And I knew that the support staff had much less support and much less sympathy. Or was it the status of women?

Anyway, it was one of these taskforces where somebody who was a senior person in the Bank who was a head of external affairs, [Francisco] Aguirre-Sacasa. It was a time when the issue was on something to do with spouse benefits or travel, and the issue came up. The gay group within the Bank used that taskforce to try to introduce some of those issues, including maybe joint posting.

**HEATH:** There wasn’t a gay group in the Bank in 1970s.

**MARSHALL:** There were people who were lobbying. This would’ve been ’70 maybe early 80s. But in any event, I still remember that Aguirre-Sacasa had no idea that sort of civil partnership and so forth was an issue, even though at the time, the mayor of Washington had protestors because she got married, and they said you shouldn’t be able to get married unless everyone’s able to get married. So, that was an issue that I remember being surprised that he had no idea. He was head of external affairs for the Bank.

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**HEATH:** Nicaraguan, yes.

**MARSHALL:** And had never dealt with that issue. So, it was very new. And it came in through I think the Support Staff Action or one of the taskforces.

**HEATH:** Right. And when it came to cases of sexual harassment, I mean were you aware of much of that going on around you, and how is it typically handled?

**MARSHALL:** Well, it's hard to do a timeline on that. First of all, there was lots of it, all the time. And you put up with it.

**HEATH:** So, I presume it was mainly bosses with secretaries because there weren't that many professional women.

**MARSHALL:** Yeah, that's right.

**HEATH:** Right.

**MARSHALL:** One of the problems is that it happens most to the most vulnerable people; consultants, people who are marginal performers. And they were the ones who were particularly vulnerable people who were some way unbalanced. They tended to be the ones who were most visible. But I remember once, the women's group sort of said what we should do is leave a piece of paper on a Xerox machine with the guys you should never work for and, you know, descriptions of what they did.

But it came under the category of war stories. There was a time when there was publicity on how prevalent the pattern was, maybe around Anita Hill. What year was that?

**HEATH:** Well, that was much later. That was in early 90s. That's right.

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**MARSHALL:** In the 90s.

**HEATH:** Yeah. Sure.

**MARSHALL:** But I mean there was talk of it, and there were awkward situations. I remember one manager's comment to me was, "You know, I'm going to find it very difficult to work for you." This was a direct supervisor. And I said, "Why?" He said, "Because I find you attractive." So, you know, at the time what I did was pretend that I hadn't heard him. I just completely ignored the topic. And it happened in a number of other different ways.

But it was certainly the norm in the Bank. And one of the assumptions is that it would be probably the Pakistanis who were worse. And that's not necessarily the case. It was pretty universal.

Then with Nancy Barry when she was the head of a women's working group, we did a whole series of interviews with people. And I still remember, we went and we talked to people and asked them a series of questions about their attitudes.

**HEATH:** When was this?

**MARSHALL:** When would that have been? Probably in the 80s. But somebody who was my age and went to same kinds of schools I went to, is from a European country, he said, "Well, you know, I would be very reluctant to give a promotion to a woman because the man needs it more. And, you know, I would be uneasy about having a woman going to the minister of finance of, you know, Mexico."

So, in a way, the fact that the attitudes were open at that time, made it easier to deal with then what happened later when people --.

I mean I was aware that you were hearing the same kinds of things with African staff, who felt

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that they were not being selected because of sort of assumptions about how they would behave.

**HEATH:** Yeah, I see.

**MARSHALL:** So, it was in a way, the culture of the Bank.

**HEATH:** Was there much female solidarity around the issue, or was it rather you felt as a woman, you just had to deal with it by yourself?

**MARSHALL:** You had to deal with it by yourself. As I said, people told war stories. I mean there's stories about one vice president who had a mistress in an office. I won't say who it was. And apparently, when he would pick up the phone to speak to his mistress, all the secretaries in the office would simultaneously pick up their phones and listen.

**HEATH:** I see. Right. Fascinating. And that was in the 70s.

**MARSHALL:** I don't recall.

**HEATH:** You can't remember. Thank you. Fair enough.

Let's move now to a bit more about McNamara. You said that at various times in your career, you had meetings with him. Tell us something about your impression of him as a person?

**MARSHALL:** I also had another contact, that his daughter worked in my division.

**HEATH:** Katherine, yeah.

**MARSHALL:** Kathleen.

**HEATH:** Kathleen. We're trying to get to interview, actually. Yes. She's a forester.

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**MARSHALL:** Forester, right.

**HEATH:** Right. Yes. Married to another forester.

**MARSHALL:** To John Spears.

**HEATH:** That's right. Is he English?

**MARSHALL:** Yes, I think so.

**HEATH:** Right. Yes.

**MARSHALL:** There's some stories around that, but I won't tell them. But in any event, obviously, I had the period of something over a year where I watched him in the Board and got to know him there. I knew him by the reputation that he had, by reading his speeches.

My husband at the time was in External Affairs, so he handled some of the controversies around McNamara.

**HEATH:** This is Tom Blinkhorn. Right. What sort of controversies are you thinking about?

**MARSHALL:** Well, when he went to Copenhagen, they had security guards. And the controversies around the Vietnam War at the time.

And then in the River Blindness Program, we looked and wrote quite a bit about the history of McNamara's involvement in the early years of the River Blindness Program. And then later when I was working in the President's office, on the faith issues, which would've been under Wolfensohn, was involved in the preparations for the dinner honoring McNamara that Wolfensohn gave, which was also an opportunity to go back through some of the files.

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I think you may know that I also did a book on the Bank.

**HEATH:** Yes, I've seen it. I have it, yes.

**MARSHALL:** Clearly, through that, I did more reading and so forth about him.

**HEATH:** So, what impressions come across? The good and the bad.

**MARSHALL:** The fact of his extraordinary discipline and the reputation that that had. So, among other things, one story that I can't verify by direct observation, but apparently, when he was sitting scribbling notes in the Board, he would put some notes into one pocket and other notes into another pocket. And one was to be filed, and one was to be shredded. But very systematic.

Somebody, it was Shahid Hussain who told me a story about him, that when he first came, he asked for all of the data about, I think it was Egypt or some country, and immediately sort of went through and asked why certain numbers were the way they were. The way that Shahid described it was that he clearly had a map, and he was describing somebody else who he said lacked. It was a subway system without linkages, in other words. But what McNamara had was a very systematic way of approaching any problem.

Clearly, his reputation for demanding numbers, which echoed in some senses the pitfalls of the body counts. But I remember one example that someone gave that people said, "Well, you know, the time that women save when you dig a well as opposed to having to go carry water from the river, you know, that's something you can't quantify." And the answer was, "Yes, you can. You can quantify that with enough discipline."

And much later, when he gave a speech for the Africa region, and Kim Jaycox was the Vice President, and his staff were preparing a speech for McNamara, McNamara demanded that

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Jaycox personally initial every figure in the report to show that he had verified that he had looked at it.

So, the sort of discipline and systematic approach that he demanded and expected from everyone around him was a combination of fear and admiration for the way of his operation.

Clearly, the impulse to expand was clearly something that people admired and questioned also. Was it a good thing to move so fast? It was a period of optimism. It was a period of expansion, that clearly had positive effects.

Whether it was always a good thing. Whether sometimes it meant that you were rushing ahead.

I think a lot of admiration for his communication skills. And the annual meeting's speech. The effort and the care that went into crafting the messages of the annual meeting's speech. The establishment of the WDRs, the World Development Reports, which, of course, are something that lasts to this day.

What I can't really judge because I wasn't close enough or senior enough at the time was his judgements on people. I mean we all know that that's what really matters is who you choose. And the people who were his assistants clearly had a very special role and had a very special relationship. Particularly, Sven Burmester. I don't know if you've been able to get a hold of him.

**HEATH:** We actually had an interview just a couple months ago near Salzburg with all the assistants, six of them. So, it was a rather special occasion.

**MARSHALL:** Well, I knew Sven very well. We went to Princeton together, so we were friends and knew each other well. And in a sense, some of his admiration rubbed off on me.

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**HEATH:** I see. Right. Were people afraid of McNamara?

**MARSHALL:** Oh, yeah. Particularly, going to a briefing with him was a terrifying experience, particularly, if you weren't totally confident that had all the answers. And, of course, you never knew what questions you were going to get, so.

**HEATH:** Right. Did you yourself have a briefing with him at some point in your career?

**MARSHALL:** At the pre-Board meetings for when I was doing Board presentations.

**HEATH:** Which was in -- when?

**MARSHALL:** I would've been doing Board presentations primarily before '80.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay. Right. Yeah, I see.

**MARSHALL:** And I probably did two or three.

**HEATH:** Yep. So, on those occasions, you would've had a meeting in a small group with McNamara.

**MARSHALL:** Yep.

**HEATH:** Do you remember particular questions he put to you or any incidents?

**MARSHALL:** No. They didn't.

**HEATH:** They didn't live on. Okay. All right.

**MARSHALL:** I mean at that point, one of the things about having done a project appraisal and

presenting is that you had a monopoly of information. In other words, you knew so much more than anyone else because you had been living it for months. Whether you could put it into the broader context is, of course, the issue. And that's I think a big issue for an institution like the Bank, is how you link the specialized, detailed knowledge that people have, from the field level with some of the broader issues, and the trends. I mean what is happening? What's the direction?

**HEATH:** Something I haven't asked you about is the shift towards, you mentioned, the Berg report. The shift toward structural adjustment in the late 70s. What view did you have on that when you were working in East Africa?

**MARSHALL:** The major place that I was involved in that was in Kenya. And in Kenya, there were some very tense issues at that time that did come to the agriculture sector. It was particularly, the grain marketing, and the issues around land reform. There were some land issues, which basically were in our division. And there were tensions with the government.

My sense of the management structure of the Bank, and in a sense, it applied through a lot of my career, is that the detailed issues of what was happening in a country like Kenya were not really on the radar screen of the various senior management. They were largely Jaycox or whoever was the vice president who was handling most of those.

But that was a very tense issue because you had the program view versus the project view. And the government directed its wrath when there were delays in disbursement at the project people. But I don't remember McNamara being involved.

**HEATH:** I see. Right. But if you think about, you know, the findings of the Berg report, the business about, you know, needing to get the policy framework right, and the projects tended to fail because the environment was wrong and so forth. I mean was that an issue that you were very aware of before?

**MARSHALL:** Well, that's what I was talking about. And, yes, a part of the question was, did the Bank have a good understanding of the policy framework and of what was happening? And even of what was happening.

**HEATH:** So, you're saying most people didn't have that sense.

**MARSHALL:** Some of the phenomena that we take for granted, which interestingly, is part of the sort of critiques of the Bank, that the Bank is seen as being the creature of Reagan/Thatcher, and the sort of urge to end the move towards privatization. The Bank is still constantly accused of, I was reading it in two things today, of forcing governments to cut expenditures for health and education and so forth.

And yet, the Bank recommendations in a country like Madagascar, there were economic reports that supported the government's nationalization and the role of parastatals. In fact, it was in many ways through the project lens that we came to realize that the very heavy state involvement in trying to run the economy, including the marketing systems and the irrigation systems, etc., was impossible. And we had discussions with governments.

As I remember one person in the president's office in Madagascar, we had, you know, a three or four-hour discussion about it, and he said, "You know, I don't accept ideologically, that we should divest some of these huge government roles. But we cannot manage it at this stage in our history."

So, it was still the time of the Cold War and some of the countries were flirting with different kinds of -- so, I was part of the group that we were sort of told one day, you know, drop everything you're doing. Go, you know, read the Berg report and discuss it. And I think in some sense is the storyline that you're clearly echoing. It was a much more complicated storyline as to who was seeing what. You know, who was seeing which parts of the elephant,

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and how were you reading differences.

So, there were clearly some countries, which were shaping the overall narrative. But not all the countries fit into that category. I mean there are plenty of things. I mean what were we doing in Zaire? How were we dealing with Zaire at that time? I worked quite a bit on Rwanda and Burundi. And still, ask myself were there things we should've seen that led up to the genocide. What were we missing? What should we have done differently?

Now, you asked about structural adjustment in Kenya. Now, clearly, the structural adjustment loan but also the sort of position was that there needed to be a dismantling of the grain marketing restrictions and dealing with some of the land issues. Both of those were, you know, in retrospect, correct problems. But we also were becoming conscious at that time that some senior government officials had personal interests in some of these areas. So, even though we weren't talking about the C word and the P word at that time, there were clearly in our minds. I mean you couldn't be working in Zaire without being acutely conscious of it.

**HEATH:** Right. Were there any points in the 1970s when you had real doubts about the Bank's mission?

**MARSHALL:** I never had doubts about the Bank's mission. And they were much simpler times in those countries. In other words, what we could offer in terms of financial support for things that were good projects on paper.

**HEATH:** On paper. Because you said there weren't many good projects. Many of them failed, you said.

**MARSHALL:** Well, you're not getting the distinction I made. I said that there was nothing particularly wrong with the design of the projects, which some people would disagree with, but that was my sense. It was far more the way they were implemented and the issue of political

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will. In other words, did the governments that were concerned really buy into the projects, or did they go along with them because of the money?

**HEATH:** Yeah, I see. Later in your life, you became interested in faith initiatives. If that's the right way to put it. Did that have roots in your earlier Bank career?

**MARSHALL:** Not at all. Wolfensohn drafted me to work on a project he had started with the Archbishop of Canterbury. And I was in a bit of a transition period after the East Asia Crisis. And because it turned out to be immensely controversial, I was drawn more and more deeply into it and became fascinated by the topic.

**HEATH:** Are you a religious person?

**MARSHALL:** Not particularly, no. I am fascinated by it, but that is not where I came to this from at all.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay.

In the 70s, did you belong to any clubs or societies in the Bank? For example, did you get involved in the Staff Association?

**MARSHALL:** My former husband was involved in the Staff Association.

**HEATH:** Mr. Blinkhorn.

**MARSHALL:** I became involved later in the Friday morning group.

**HEATH:** That was much later. Yeah, right.

**MARSHALL:** Well, the Friday morning group was 25 years. It was started by Ismail

Serageldin. I think it was started in the 70s.

**HEATH:** The 90s -- 70s, oh, right. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** Oh, yeah. They've had at least a 25-year history.

**HEATH:** So, what did the Friday morning group get up to?

**MARSHALL:** Well, it was a safe space. It was very diverse. But it was a lot of issues that people were concerned about, whether it was travel policy or whatever were discussed. It was a sort of eclectic blend of issues, so. I became more involved later, but it was going at that period. And I was actually interested and intrigued by it. It was an interesting group. It was four people. It was Sven, Ismail, David Beckman, and Ramgopal Agarwala and one other person who basically started it. They wrote a book eventually about their reflections.

**HEATH:** And how many people, typically, in the 70s, late 70s, would've attended this?

**MARSHALL:** I couldn't tell you that. You'd have to ask somebody else who has a better memory than I do.

**HEATH:** Fine. Yes.

**MARSHALL:** I'm trying to think. Well, during the 70s, I didn't have children, but I was working on it. I was traveling sometimes 120 days a year, you know. There wasn't much time for much else.

**HEATH:** Oh, I see. Okay. I mean were you able to go to your boss and say actually, I can't go on this mission for this or that reason, or you would've felt bad about it?

**MARSHALL:** Well, that was one of the things that I was acutely aware of was that by becoming a mission leader or becoming a division chief, which I did very early in my career by the fortune of where I was and who I was working with, gave me much more control over my schedule. And I know that I could not have done it otherwise. In other words, if somebody was saying, as happens, “You have to go to Rwanda on Monday.” I could not have managed my life that way.

**HEATH:** I see. Yeah. Your social life, did it gravitate mainly around people in the Bank, colleagues?

**MARSHALL:** To a large extent, yes.

**HEATH:** Because you were married to another Banker.

**MARSHALL:** Later when I had children, your life sort of also gravitates around your children.

**HEATH:** That’s right. Yeah. I mean do you think that the Bank staff tended to live, in the 70s, live in very much in a bubble without really much awareness of what was going on in the outside world, or is that a gross generalization?

**MARSHALL:** I think it’s a gross generalization. It is a peculiar life because the travel really does drive it. I mean because Tom was in External Affairs, and we did a lot of speeches, I did a lot of speeches. And increasingly, as the sort of civil society protests began to mount, we became more aware of what was happening in the environment outside the Bank. And clearly, that was an important fact of life in some of the countries, was the debates about what the Bank was doing. I mean it started really with the Madagascar mission back in 1973 of, you know, there’s a revolution going on. And, you know, people are being moved. People are angry. So, how one navigated those situations was obvious.

One of the things that I took on when I became a Country Director but that grew out of experience in those early years was, you know, when you're going to a country, the Bank had no real preparation for people. I mean we spent a lot of time doing briefing books. I don't know if I did. I probably worked on briefing books for McNamara. I know I have one other example that I can give.

But there's no sort of sense of how much about a country you're expected to know before you start giving policy advice. I felt quite strongly that there should be country literacy. I mean I now talk a lot about faith literacy, where you really ought to understand how these things work. But that before you go to a country, you should be reading, not only the economic report but also maybe some poetry or some other things like that.

When we were doing briefing books as a Country Director, we put, you know, some things into Wolfensohn's books or into somebody else's just with that spirit. And I did expect staff to have more understanding than was the norm.

No, the other example, this is going way back to McNamara, was that the projects in various countries were very problematic. And this was true in Madagascar where there were big irrigation projects, which were going very wrong: cost overruns, accounting issues, social issues, management issues. You name it.

But one of the projects, which was a particular disaster was the Morondava Irrigation Project. McNamara for some reason knew about it and wanted an accounting of why it had gone wrong and who was responsible. And I was given the job of writing that up. I wasn't a division chief yet.

I still remember the first draft that I did, I gave to Walden, and he said, "You know, I can't even tell you what's wrong with this. You have to start over." So, I did it, and eventually, we did do a memo that was very carefully crafted so that it basically put the responsibility throughout the

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hierarchy so that it didn't point the finger at one individual who made a decision. It was a recognition that there was a chain of responsibility that involved a lot of people. That was what we wanted to convey, and which, of course, we thought was the reality as opposed to finding one person to point the finger to. But that was a case where he had personally asked for that accounting.

**HEATH:** I see. Thank you. Interesting. Because another thing he did was to set up OED, didn't he, in 1972? Why do you think he did that?

**MARSHALL:** I think there was clear pressure from Congress. And it was the constant debate, which is still a debate, can the Bank be evaluated from outside? Well, no, we're too unusual. Nobody would understand us. But if it's from inside, it will be biased. And the incentive structure so that you have the compromise, basically, of the semi-autonomous.

**HEATH:** Did you pay any attention in 1970s to the work that OED was doing?

**MARSHALL:** Well, as I said, I did one of the first completion reports and spent a lot of time on it. When I was a division chief, the first assignment that I would give to someone was to do a completion report because I felt that it was a very good way at relatively low risk to learn about what had happened over a span of time and the way the Bank worked, and the way decisions were made.

**HEATH:** Right. Okay.

**MARSHALL:** But I'm sad. I don't think that it is taken anywhere near as seriously as it should. These reports tend to be done, of course, they're theoretically done by the country but often aren't. They're often done by the most dispensable person in a unit because they are the least risk, etc.

I do remember that [Christopher] Willoughby did this huge report on Colombia that I remember as being a sort of focal point at that time.

**HEATH:** Interesting. Finally, I just want to ask you, the American U.S. colleagues you had in the Bank, did they have a clear political allegiance? Did there tend to be more Democrats or more Republicans, or what was the sense of the political turn of American staff in the Bank in those years, in the 1970s?

**MARSHALL:** I think probably pretty Democratic. I didn't know people who would've been Reagan supporters or Reagan/Thatcher in that particular category. But I'm sure there were some economists who were.

There was still the residual of the protests of the 60s, and the involvement that people had had in that.

**HEATH:** Yeah, I see. All right. Katherine, thank you very much. We've spoken for over two hours and covered a lot of ground. And I really appreciate your coming in and sharing with us these reflections.

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