

INTERVIEW WITH
Robinson McIlvaine

by

Dr. Thomas Soapes
Oral Historian

on

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for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



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This interview is being conducted with Mr. Robinson McIlvaine in his office in Washington, D.C., on July, 7, 1978. The interviewer is Dr. Thomas Soapes. Present for the interview are Mr. McIlvaine and Dr. Soapes.

DR. SOAPES: Would you briefly summarize your career for me up to 1953, the beginning of the Eisenhower Administration?

MR. McILVAINE: Yes. Well, I graduated from Harvard in 1935. I worked in a New York advertising agency for a while. I worked for the Republican National Committee, and then I went into the Navy in 1941. After that, in '46, I bought a country weekly newspaper in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, and I was the editor and publisher of that 'til some time later. In 1952 then Senator Duff of Pennsylvania persuaded me to take leave from the newspaper and help start an Eisenhower-for-Presidency campaign. I was involved in that until General Eisenhower was elected President. I went back to the newspaper. Then I returned later on, and I think it was sometime in early '53, to be Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. Does that bring us to where we want to--?



SOAPES: Yes. What role did you play in the election campaign?

McILVAINE: I set up the headquarters of the Eisenhower-for-President Committee in the Shoreham Hotel in Washington. And

before we even got the furniture in I went off to New Hampshire to try and get an organization going there for the New Hampshire primary. And I interviewed one Sherman Adams and persuaded him to be on General Eisenhower's side, and then we got other people involved and I came back down to Washington and generally ran that office with Wes Roberts, who was a very close associate of Senator [Frank] Carlson. You may recall that at that time there was the committee of three Senators, [Henry] Cabot Lodge [Massachusetts], James Duff [Pennsylvania], and Frank Carlson [Kansas], who had sort of started the official movement.

SOAPES: And with whom did you work most closely in the campaign?

McILVAINE: With Wes Roberts.



SOAPES: With Wes Roberts. Now in this office that was down here you were concerned with what aspects of the campaign?

McILVAINE: Well, it was mostly--it was delegate hunting at first. Well, I did all kinds of nuts and bolts, like running a speakers bureau and other odds and ends, mainly administrative.

SOAPES: What were the major problems that you ran into in the delegate hunting?

McILVAINE: I think the major problem was that within the Republican Party at that time the opposition was the [Robert A.] Taft people, and they had most of the old pros and therefore most of the access.

SOAPES: Access to?

McILVAINE: To party officials--

SOAPES: To party officials.

McILVAINE: --around the country, yes.



SOAPES: We well as to finance?

McILVAINE: Well, oddly enough I think that the Eisenhower appeal certainly was so tremendous that I don't--I was not involved in the financing of the Eisenhower thing, but it is my impression that our financial boys didn't have too much trouble.

SOAPES: Were you then involved after the nomination in the campaign itself?

McILVAINE: Yes. I went back to my newspaper and then came back down to Washington again in, oh, maybe a month after the conven-

tion. I can't remember the exact dates now and worked at the national headquarters and was in charge of a region. I can't even remember which one it was. I guess it was the east.

SOAPES: Did you have much contact then with Adams and Lodge and the other people who were--?

McILVAINE: Well, I did in the pre-convention part. Not much in the post-convention part.

SOAPES: Who were you working with then in the post-convention period?

McILVAINE: Well, let's see, the chairman was then Summerfield, wasn't it?



SOAPES: Arthur Summerfield.

McILVAINE: Yes. And once again I was working with Wes Roberts.

SOAPES: The various issues in the campaign--of course, foreign policy, Korea, and the corruption and communism issues--which of those was the strongest issue that you felt Eisenhower had going for him?

McILVAINE: You mean which did he personally--

SOAPES: Which was striking the most responsive cord in the area in which you were working?

McILVAINE: Oh, you mean which one do I think was most effective with voters.

SOAPES: Yes.

McILVAINE: My personal view is that it was a combination of many, many years of the Democratic Party and time for a change. So each one of those things had a little element in it, but basically the thing that was counting was the fact that there'd been how many years--I've forgotten now--but quite a long time--

SOAPES: Since 1932. Twenty years.



McILVAINE: --since 1932 since there'd been a change in parties. And that plus the fact that you had a national hero as a candidate made it a lot easier. Of course, the reason I was where I was was that I felt that it would take somebody like that to get the Republicans back in.

SOAPES: Had you worked in Republican politics prior to--?

McILVAINE: Yes, I had. And I was the assistant to the chairman of the National Committee from '38 to '40 through the [Wendell] Wilkie campaign.

SOAPES: Had you been one of the Wilkie-ites?

McILVAINE: No, I was secretary to the chairman--or assistant to the chairman--who's name was John Hamilton before Wilkie. But I was very enthusiastic for Wilkie, too, but I didn't come in at that stage. I came in before.

SOAPES: You took an appointment dealing with the Caribbean Commission.

McILVAINE: Yes.



SOAPES: What was the function of the Caribbean Commission?

McILVAINE: The Caribbean Commission was a sort of a tiny little capsule united nations of the nonself-governing territories in the Caribbean. That meant for the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; for the British, places like Jamaica, Trinidad,

etc., and many other islands, including British Honduras way around on the Gulf of Mexico; for the French it meant Martinique and Guadeloupe; and for the Dutch, Surinam and Aruba and Curacao. Let's see, did I mention the--anyway it was an organization of colonies of the French, British, Dutch, and U.S. And it was largely engaged in developmental activities, technical assistance, and so on and so forth. And it met twice a year--once in Trinidad where it had it's headquarters and then six months later in one of the different territories. This was very much a part-time job. I just went to these two meetings a year and had to do some paperwork in between. I did this while I was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.



SOAPES: One of the problems that State Department was facing at that time was the charges of Joe McCarthy. How did you feel that that was impacting on the State Department on the career service?

McILVAINE: Oh, it was devastating. It was very bad.

SOAPES: Did you feel that the State Department was giving sufficient

support to its career officers who were under fire?

McILVAINE: As I look back on it now, I don't think so. No. If you--I don't know whether you--how much you recall that atmosphere, but it was pretty hairy with Joe McCarthy swinging around. I remember, for example, after all I was there as a part of the new régime. I remember a long-time administrative officer in the Department who was working for me came to me about a particular case and said, you know, "This is just rank injustice. Isn't there something you can do about it?" And I looked into it and this fellow had already been suspended, and it turned out that he had a name similar to somebody else who did have communist connections. And, you know, his whole career had been practically ruined. Well, we got that straightened out. I got involved in at least two other similar cases of people suspended because of suspected communist activities, and they hadn't at all. It was absolutely--you know, it was that kind of hysteria going on. And I think this did the service a great deal of damage.

SOAPES: Did you get a sense of how Dulles was responding to this atmosphere?



McILVAINE: Yes, I was quite close to Dulles. He--very interesting man--he was totally absorbed in the problems of foreign policy at the time. Of course, there were plenty then as there are now and always will be, I imagine. He looked upon all these things as an irritant. I'll never forget--I remember we had all the book stuff about U.S. I.S. [United States Information Service] libraries and so on and so forth. And he said to me one time, "Get these libraries out of the State. I don't know why the Secretary of State has to be fiddling around with books--and what books are on the shelves and what books are so and so." But he was absolutely furious. "Get rid of it. Get it out of here."
[Laughter]



And I think he felt a little bit the same way about all these cases of--the classic one. What was his name? John Patton Davies and others who I don't think, as I look back on it now, he gave them their due. He was rather perfunctory, and I think leaned on the side or not giving them a break, which I think was wrong. I wouldn't be surprised if maybe he didn't think that too before he died. Because he was not a malicious man or anything like that, but he was just so totally absorbed in other things that he was very annoyed when these things came up and he had to focus on them.

And, of course, he never had time to really focus on them. Like he just brushed them to one side.

SOAPES: In other words he wanted to focus on diplomacy rather than administration.

McILVAINE: That's right. Yes. Yes. Right.

SOAPES: Now were you working with Carl McCardle?

McILVAINE: Yes.

SOAPES: --in this period. He gave his papers to the Eisenhower Library. He was a rather interesting fellow. Somewhat controversial.

McILVAINE: Yes.



SOAPES: What kind of a man was he to work with?

McILVAINE: Well, he was very difficult, as you obviously know. He was a reporter for the Philadelphia Bulletin and happened to get on the plane with Dulles coming back from Japanese treaty negotiations before the election and got to be close friends.

Carl had a very good ear for public opinion and so on and so forth. He was no administrator and indeed Dulles told me one time that he hadn't really planned to make him Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. He'd meant to have him as his sort of press aid, but it got into that situation and he was Assistant Secretary. It was--that part was much too much for him, but he was brilliant as far as being Dulles' advisor on public affairs and what to say and what to do and what not to do in most cases, I would say.

SOAPES: Was he advising him how to handle the public relations aspect of the McCarthy charges?

McILVAINE: Oh, I imagine so, yes.



SOAPES: But you weren't privy to--?

McILVAINE: I was not, because I wound up running the bureaus-- a bureau of four hundred and some people with I don't know how many divisions and a lot of activities which, you know, was just beyond McCardle. He couldn't organize even an appointment. Often-times there'd be people like Scottie Russ and Joe Olson and other greats of the journalistic world sitting out there for hours waiting to see him. [Laughter] He likely as not would be on a

phone call or something. He just--you know there are some people who can't do anything on time and he was one of them.

SOAPES: I understand his relations with the White House press staff, particularly Jim Hagerty, were not too good either.

McILVAINE: No, I don't think Jim had much respect for him.

SOAPES: Were there episodes where they are working across purposes, that you remember?

McILVAINE: I can't recall any, no. But it wouldn't have surprised me, if they were.

SOAPES: I have seen some comments in Hagerty's papers that were very negative toward McCardle, and they didn't point to an incident. They just indicated that he was upset.

McILVAINE: Yes.



SOAPES: You said that you got to know Dulles fairly well. Were his religious convictions as paramount in his diplomatic thinking as some have tried to make out?

McILVAINE: Well, let me put it this way. I think he obviously had--I don't know whether I've got the right word but--a fairly

puritanical view or approach to the world. Just how religious that is, I don't know. But he was also very pragmatic. And I remember one time him saying, just in an aside worrying over some problem, and he said, "You know, sometimes there are certain diplomatic problems that are better left unresolved. They'll take care of themselves eventually," but he said, "you know it's very difficult in this world. The public and everybody else at you. Every problem has to be solved immediately." He says, "A lot of them would be better off if they weren't solved because they'd probably be solved in the wrong way." Which I thought was rather interesting because that's the sort of remark you don't expect to hear from Foster Dulles. He gave a public impression as being so moralistic in having to solve every problem and on a moral basis also. I don't think in practice he really felt that way, and I think that anecdote illustrates it.



SOAPES: How about his relations with other members of the State Department? Was there a sense of comradery? Was it very stiff and formal? How would you characterize it?

McILVAINE: Well, I don't think he had much relations with the great majority. There was a small group of people who saw him

regularly and upon whom he relied--who became devoted to him. I've seen that with other Secretaries of State. I think it's very true of [Henry] Kissinger, I gather. I've never met Kissinger in my life but--. I think it was true of [Dean] Atchinson; [Dean] Rusk and [William P.] Rogers were much different. They were much more sort of generalists and team workers. But people like Atchinson, Dulles, and Kissinger, who I think probably will go down in history as the great Secretaries of State in recent years, they didn't have much time for the great majority of people. They had a group that worked with them and most of them, those in Dulles' case, were devoted to him. As you well know, I'm sure that the majority of the people in the State Department didn't like him at all.



SOAPES: Would this be the career foreign service officer?

McILVAINE: No, there were career among those who were devoted to him too, but they just happened to be selected for one reason or another to be working closely with him. I think it's that more than anything else. Foster Dulles was no "hail fellow well met," like his brother. Alan was a charmer. Foster, all he could do

to laugh would be "huh huh huh," like that. [Laughter] He had absolutely no repartee or small talk or anything of that nature.

SOAPES: He was an all-business person.

McILVAINE: That's it. Yes.

SOAPES: In '56 you went to Lisbon--

McILVAINE: Yes.



SOAPES: --as the counselor. For the record I have to confess a bit of ignorance. What does a counselor do in an embassy?

McILVAINE: Well, in that case he's--there's another bureaucratic phrase--he's the DCM, or Deputy Chief of Mission, which means number two and the chargé when the Ambassador's gone. That was when I had done what was euphemistically called a bureaucratic lateral entry into the foreign service. [Laughter] I'd become a career foreign service officer, and to do that I dropped down a couple of notches in my grade and salary and was sent to Lisbon in that job. So the Deputy Chief of Mission or the Counselor to the embassy runs the embassy. It's in military terms like Chief

of Staff of a division or for an admiral or whatever.

SOAPES: You're running the administrative thing--

McILVAINE: Well the whole--everything. You see that the economic section is working properly, the political section, the attachés, everything. You write the efficiency reports on all the officers, well, all the senior ones, and you're the alter ego of the Ambassador.



SOAPES: How would you describe the state of our relations with Portugal during that period?

McILVAINE: Well, they were basically excellent. The major problem was then just as it was for years to come, the Azores Base, and the Portuguese were very good at trying to get everything they could out of us for that, mostly in political terms as opposed to money. They wanted to make sure that we didn't do anything in Africa to weaken their grip on their colonies. That was their basic line. I was in on long-based negotiations right away, and that was the thing in the back of their mind then as it was right up until the [Antonio de Oliveira] Salazar regime collapsed, and

they finally gave in.

SOAPES: Well, was there ever any problems from the American point of view in providing them with political support that they wanted.

McILVAINE: Yes, in that I think a lot of people realized that it was getting us in the wrong bed as far as the rest of Africa was concerned. But in the '50s that was not so evident as it obviously became later on.



SOAPES: Was there any active consideration of changing the policy?

McILVAINE: Oh, at times I remember having discussions with military colleagues who say, "Look, we ought to really look at this Azores Base to see how much we really need it, because you know somewhere down the road this is going to be--if the Portuguese go on on this basis--it's going to be very expensive for us in the point of view of prestige in lots of the rest of the world."

Well, at one time I recall that, you know, with new types of airplanes that maybe we didn't need it. But then something else came up that they found that we needed it. You know, you

can't get the military to give up any real estate ever.

SOAPES: What was their rationale, the significance of the Azores? Was it the fact that it was near the Mediterranean, is that the--?

McILVAINE: Well, the main thing was that it wasn't very easy to fly across the Atlantic non-stop. You needed a place to refuel. Also a place for anti-submarine patrol ships and planes to operate out of, and I think a lot of--it probably has other angles in more sophisticated things which have come along since my time having to do with--I don't know--monitoring missiles and that sort of thing.

SOAPES: Was there any concern about the Salazar regime's domestic dictatorial policies--the problems of the human rights, democracy, that sort of thing?

McILVAINE: Oh, well, of course, there were some people who worried about that, but I wouldn't say that was a major concern, no. I remember one time when I was in charge we had Senator Wiley in Lisbon for some kind of an international conference. And he wanted-- let's see he was then Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and he wanted to see Salazar. So I took him around one time,



and he asked the usual question about why didn't they have a democracy, and Salazar said, "Well, you know, I don't know why you all ask that question. But anyhow, it's quite simple. We are different than you Anglo-Saxons, we Latins. We have tried it and it was disastrous. Let me give you an example. If tomorrow I were to decree there would be two parties and I selected ten people to be in each party." He said, "I think I know enough Portuguese to be able to have two parties. One would be a conservative party, and I could give you various ten shades of conservatism. Then I'd have another which would be more liberal, I'd have ten shades there. And I'd say, 'All right, boys, off you go and organize, and we'll have elections in six months or whatever.'" He said, "I can guarantee that within a week each of those two parties with ten members would've split up into as many parties, and by the end of the week we would have ten parties on the conservative spectrum and ten on the liberal spectrum. And probably before the elections we'd have fifty parties." He said, "It just doesn't work the way it does in your part of the world." He said, "So our philosophy is that anybody can say whatever they please." And that was quite true actually. You could



say whatever you wanted to, but--. "We won't let anybody organize a political party because it ends up in chaos with our mentality," he said.

SOAPES: Were there any problems from the American point of view that their--Portugal's--neighbor on the peninsula, Spain, of any conflicting interest between Portugal and Spain vis-a-vis the United States?

McILVAINE: I don't recall anything serious. Of course, Portugal was in NATO and Spain wanted to be and couldn't be because the Scandinavian countries wouldn't allow Spain in. But I don't remember anything particularly serious between the two of them.

SOAPES: In terms of Portugal's support of NATO and how important NATO was to Portugal, what was the significance of NATO towards Portugal?

McILVAINE: Well, put it the other way around, I think the significance of Portugal to NATO is totally geographic. After all, their fleet--in quotes--and their army or air force were not worth much. It's their geography of being located where they are and the Azores. That's what made them valuable to NATO.



SOAPES: What was it that made NATO valuable to them, the reason they were willing--?

McILVAINE: Oh, belonging to a club and being part of Europe. The Portuguese have a--they're sort of at the very end of Europe, as you know, geographically, and an economy that is way below anything in Europe and yet a very old civilization. And psychologically they've always felt out of things and the need for friendship. So NATO was very important to the Portuguese, and you notice that even in the upheavals since the end of the Salazar regime there has been no move even when they were way left to get out of NATO at all. Because I think it's a very important sort of club from the psychological crutch for them.

SOAPES: That was as important to them as well as maintaining their colonial power?

McILVAINE: Oh, yes. Yes.



[End of Tape--Side 2, almost 4 min. of nothing at beginning]

SOAPES: In 1960 you went to Leopoldville in the Congo as a Counsel General. What was the state of the Congo when you arrived?

McILVAINE: I arrived two days before the arranged independence from Belgium, and there were to be big celebrations. The King of the Belgians was coming out for this event, and it was really, I guess, the first of the major African colonies to become independent. Several others actually had--Ghana and Guinea--but nothing as big as the Congo. Well, as we all know, it was very premature and not very carefully planned, because within--I think it was either the fifth or sixth of July, in other words less than a week after independence, it all fell apart. And there was utter chaos for years afterwards. I don't think it's over yet.

[Laughter]



SOAPES: What was the United States' attitude towards the new independent state? What were its objectives in its policy?

McILVAINE: Well, our basic attitude was the "all right, here it's happened." We've always been against colonialism traditionally and being the world's largest power we were there to help in any way that we can--we could. I remember we called on the Government and President [Joseph] Kasavubu [the Congo's first head of state], [Patrice] Lumumba [the Congo's first prime minister in 1960] and all of them in those first days and discussed

various aid projects and so on and so forth. You know in the hopes that not only improving economically but a lot of training was involved to develop people capable of running it because that was the problem in the Congo. They had plenty of the where-with-all. The Belgians left a fantastic infrastructure. If you will recall there were only--I can't remember whether there was ten or fourteen people with a university degree, and no experience in administration above a very low level. And that was the big problem.



SOAPES: Did we have a credibility problem with the navy leadership having been so supportive of the colonial power?

McILVAINE: No, I don't think we had, not at all. I think they looked to us for guidance, help, and so on and so forth. I don't think we were tarred with having been supportive of the colonial power particularly.

SOAPES: Did you have a chance to get a measure of the capacity of Lumumba, Kasavubu?

McILVAINE: Yes, all right, let's take Kasavubu first. He was, you know, he's partly Chinese in origin. When they built the

railroad way back around the turn of the century, the Belgians imported Chinese coolies. Kasavubu was the result of some kind of a *mélange* at that time, and he was rather oriental in his way of looking at things, not given to much talk, and sort of a-- I would say a rather wise old tribal chieftan type. Lumumba on the other hand--Kasavubu was a bit round and pudgy--Lumumba was tall, thin, and rangy and much more active, much more of a rabble rouser. Again, very little experience. He'd been a postal clerk. That's all, but he was very articulate. I remember being absolutely astounded at how he handled press conferences and right away he had all the top press of the world there within no time at all and the place fell apart. He had something like fifty or sixty European/U.S. top correspondents there at all times who knew how to ask very embarrassing questions and he could parry them with the best. He was as good as Churchill or anyone else I've ever seen. And that was very impressive. But you had a situation that really--perhaps the most experienced person you can imagine probably would have trouble handling it. Not only did everything fall apart, but he was being pulled and hauled by all kinds of influences. The Soviets were at him, particularly



the Ghanaians' [Kwame] Nkrumah. The Belgians were at him. Everybody was at him, pulling him this way and that way and every way so that it was not exactly a situation designed for stability.



SOAPES: To what extent had he responded to the Soviets' influence?

McILVAINE: That's hard to tell. I think he had a pretty good idea of how to play this politically, and he played sides off against each other. In those days we had a tendency to think that anybody who even smiled at the Soviets or did a couple of dance steps with them was a communist, and I've spent now eighteen years in Africa and I've learned that that's not the case. They're generally Africans first and rather enjoy playing all of us off against each other, which after all is what they should do in their interest. I don't know. He certainly was not what you would call a right-wing or even center Republican--[Laughter] by U.S. standards. He was an African. I would say definitely on some kind of a socialist thing, but then all the Africans are.

Capitalism in Africa hardly exists because of a thing called extended family, and in most of their cases there's no money economy anyhow. Tribal life is a form of socialism. Everybody

gets taken care of in one way or another. I mean the whole problem with Africa is that they've been moving on to the money economy and sort of the late twentieth century industrial society which is totally foreign to them and it's been a terrible wrench. And our form of capitalism doesn't exist because as soon as you get an educated African who starts getting a salary he immediately gets another relative who comes and lives with him. So he's never able to save and therefore put aside capital to invest. The net result is investing in most of Africa generally has to be done by the state which, of course, is socialism. Since then in some countries in Africa a new African middle class has grown up in places like--certainly in Kenya and the Ivory Coast and in Nigeria. But in those days that hardly existed for reasons I've just outlined.



SOAPES: Was American policy as you look back on it towards Africa in this early period of the emerging nations, at all enlightened and informed, or was it still very much tied to our relations with the colonial power?

McILVAINE: I don't think there was much policy. I think we made it right in the field. And it was sort of ad hoc as we went along. I'd be very much surprised if President Eisenhower, or by

this time Chris [Christian] Herter was Secretary of State, ever got involved in it at all, except when it blew up, which it tended to do in the Congo. So they began, and I'm sure they thought of it as sort of an irritant and why didn't it go away. Americans as a whole knew very little about Africa then, and there just wasn't too much interest and certainly not much informed opinion.

SOAPES: Of course, in the last few years we've heard a good deal about the American involvement in the death of Lumumba-- the CIA's covert operations. I know there's been a lot of testimony given and reports written. Is there anything that you can add to the record from your position there about what the nature of the American concern and involvement was?



McILVAINE: No, I have no specific knowledge on the details of that. I know that Lumumba was considered a, you know, a nuisance, to put it that way, by us and a lot of other people because he was so erratic. Who engineered his demise, I don't know. Well, I think in the end it definitely--it was [Moise] Tshombe [Prime Minister of Congo, 1964-1965] in the end and

whether the Belgians were involved in that I don't know and maybe we never will know, but certainly the inter-African feelings were very high from the Kasavubu camp and others between them and the Lumumbese. And certainly I know enough about Africa to know that when you get these kind of situations, death is not an unheard of happening. Just take relatively civilized Kenya for heaven's sakes. Tom Mboya [Kenya's Economic Planning Commissioner] was obviously the--probably the best known Kenyan outside of President [Jomo] Kenyatta, and in 1969 he was shot right on the streets of Nairobi--dead. Now the reason he was shot is that he looked like a threat to the controlling group if Kenyatta died. Since then another leading Kenyan politician has been killed. So this happens in Africa and it happens elsewhere too. We've lost a few here. Not exactly for the same reasons. Ours have generally been not political killings as much as nuts.

SOAPES: So his death was within the context of--

McILVAINE: In African context it was virtually possible to have been done entirely by them. I don't rule out that somebody else had a hand in it. I don't think the CIA did, but--



SOAPES: Was there a good deal--

McILVAINE: --they might have liked to. [Laughter]

SOAPES: Was there a good deal of communication between CIA and embassy people about what--well was the right hand telling the left hand what it was doing?

McILVAINE: Oh, yes, by the time we got into this thing we had an ambassador, Clare [Hayes] Timberlake, and he and the CIA station chief, I think, had pretty close back and forth and I did with him when I was in charge which was only one really brief period. I was only in the Congo less than a year. Then I was made ambassador to Dahomey, [1961-64] and I left in April of the following year. So I was really there only nine months, June to April. But, yes, I think there was fairly close relationship.

SOAPES: Some of the comment that was made I think in some of the [Frank Church, Senator from Idaho] Church Committee's investigation was that communication was a problem both in country and back to Washington, that the CIA station chiefs as well as State Department people were sort of left on their own and could not communicate or at least did not in some cases.



McILVAINE: This is in the Congo in this period?

SOAPES: Yes.

McILVAINE: We didn't communicate to each other?

SOAPES: Yes.



McILVAINE: I don't know. I left that to the Ambassador. He took charge of that and I didn't mix in it. So I really can't say to what extent there was a gap there. I really can't. But there was certainly on the rest of the embassy staff--I had two junior officers there, both of whom have distinguished themselves. One's Frank [C.] Carlucci. He's now Deputy Director of the CIA and was Ambassador to Portugal. The other was Andrew [L.] Steigman who's just been Ambassador to Gabon and is now, I think, Carlucci's assistant over at CIA. And they were excellent, and you know we were doing the general reporting of what was going on which was a damn busy operation because so much was going on and it was so hard to put it all in context.

SOAPES: Was the Central American concern one of trying to get a stable government?

McILVAINE: That's it basically, yes.