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GLOVER, Edward Charles (born 4 March 1943)

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BRITISH DIPLOMATIC ORAL HISTORY PROGRAMME

RECOLLECTIONS OF EDWARD GLOVER CMG MVO RECORDED AND TRANSCRIBED BY IAN-HAY CAMPBELL

IH-C: This is Ian Hay-Campbell for the Diplomatic Oral History Programme recording Edward Glover, formerly of the Foreign Office, for the BDOHP on Tuesday, 6 July 2021 (& Thursday 29 July 2021).

Edward, an obvious first question: what brought you into the Foreign Office in the first place?

EG: Purely an accident, that is to say my father worked in the Foreign Office. He joined shortly after the end of the War when he came back from India and I decided pretty early on, like any rebellious youth, that I had no wish to follow in my father's footsteps. I however again purely by accident, in need of a job, found myself working in the Statistics Department of the Board of Trade at No. 1 Victoria Street. I'd been there a short while when a notice was brought to my attention by my boss Miss Harvey who said: "Look, you ought to apply." Maybe it was because she had thought I wasn't any good at numbers but anyway I applied and the rest is history.

IH-C: So, you went through the usual interview procedure. What part of the Foreign Office were you in when you first joined?

EG: I went to Hong Kong Department and that had an office in Old Scotland Yard.

IH-C: Heavens! A kind of outpost?

EG: It was an outpost.

IH-C: Is that simply because of accommodation problems at the time?

EG: Because of accommodation, yes. It was a rather creepy place but I wasn't there all that long.

IH-C: Hong Kong was still, of course, a British Colony in those days. Busy work?

EG: It was. I can't remember much of what I did except a lot of drafting and I had a meticulous boss who, at the beginning, crossed out almost every other word I wrote but I gradually got the hang of it and that's how it started.

Private Secretary to High Commissioner, Australia, 1971–73

IH-C: Well you obviously did get the hang of it because you were assigned a rather interesting first post abroad I see as Private Secretary to Lord Morrice James, at that stage the British High Commissioner in Australia. What was he like as a boss to work for?

EG: Before I comment on that, I ought to just clarify that after Hong Kong Department I was posted to South East Asia Department in King Charles Street on the third floor, a 'Third Room' overlooking St James's Park and there I was Desk Officer for Cambodia and Assistant Desk Officer for Vietnam. My Deputy Head of Department was Dick Fyjis-Walker who became a lifelong friend. I was there from 1970 up till 1971 when I was posted to Canberra.

IH-C: And thus working to Morrice James. What was he like as someone to work for?

EG: He was a formidable individual. He was tall, burly, silver haired and had a fierce temper. He was a perfectionist and had a charming French wife – Genevieve. He had been formerly British High Commissioner to India. He was the last PUS at the Commonwealth Relations Office before the 1968 merger and he'd been involved in the Rhodesia talks on *HMS Tiger*. I got to know him reasonably quickly. I worked out what it made him tick. I won his trust and he got mine and I became his confidant because beneath that burly, fierce external temperament, he was a kind and helpful man.

IH-C: So, in a sense, when you were trying to acquire these new skills, in a way he was quite supportive of that.

EG: He was. There was one particular occasion early on when I didn't do something quite the way he expected me to do it and he lost his temper but I stood my ground. I apologised, obviously, because I didn't get it quite right but I stood my ground and as a result of that, we won each other's respect.

IH-C: Can you just tell us a little more about the role of a private secretary. You're obviously not the No 2 of the Mission – that's the Minister, the Counsellor, whatever it is – so what kind of role does the private secretary occupy?

EG: I can only speak as it was then. Number One: I was responsible for fixing his diary. Number Two: I would process all his correspondence, all his incoming correspondence. He had a PA and I would draft replies and if he were happy with them he would then pass them to the PA who would type them up. So, I got to know who he liked in the Mission and outside, who he disliked and as a result of the relationship that he and I built up, he and I were able to get to know well a number of the people he dealt with. For example, I got to know extremely well a young man called Graham Fell who was Private Secretary to the Prime Minister and I also got to know some of the other heads of mission. But I also had another role in which Audrey also played a part. We were quite often drafted in at the last minute at dinner parties at Canberra House, the Residence. This sometimes involved quite tricky tasks. I can illustrate that by telling you about one.

Morrice James had organised a rather grand dinner party to which he had invited Professor Manning Clark who was the pre-eminent Australian historian. Manning Clark the night before had been in Sydney drinking with the author and writer Patrick White. Clark arrived back in Canberra in the late afternoon of the dinner party. He turned up at the Residence slightly inebriated and Morrice James said to me that he was disregarding *placement*. He was going to put me immediately to the left of Manning Clark and it was my job to ensure that when the waiter came round to refill the wine glasses, I was to divert Manning Clark's attention so he did not see his wine glass was not being topped up. But somehow or another he drank more wine and when it came to the pudding, Professor Clark became rather too unbearable. Morrice James wrote on the back of his place card: 'Take the man away!' So, I made excuses and when the table rose, ladies to a separate room to powder their noses and men to remain at the table to drink the port, I steered Professor Manning Clark out of the Residence and handed him over to the High Commissioner's driver. The next morning two

parcels arrived at the High Commission. One was a set of Manning Clark's histories of Australia for Morrice James and the second parcel addressed to me contained exactly the same number of books, and with both parcels was a sincere apology. So, that's just one example of the ways in which I helped Morrice James.

IH-C: That's an extremely unusual one, I would have thought! You obviously rose to the occasion. But did it also involve being in on meetings Morrice James had, either taking notes or listening?

EG: There were occasions when I did. There were quite a significant number of occasions when the High Commissioner preferred no one else to be present. Overall, looking back over the two years I was there with him from 1971 to 1973, he taught me first of all how important it is to get on with people. Secondly, how to win the trust of others. Thirdly, he taught me how to judge people. And also, I learned from him how to be discreet. So, many of these traits that I learned from him stayed with me later on in my career.

IH-C: Before leaving Australia, I would like to ask you about Anglo-Australian relations. It was quite a difficult time? There were certain tensions at that time?

EG: There were. There was the prospect of us joining the European Communities as they were known then. And also we had a brewing problem over visas – Australians going to the UK would have to have visas. But the most pressing issue while I was there was negotiating the right of Concorde to land in Australia.

IH-C: Presumably you didn't gain that because those sorts of flights didn't take place, did they?

EG: There were some initial flights but of course it was not just a decision in our favour by the Federal Government; we had to go to the Queensland and Victoria State Governments.

IH-C: This was of course your first time abroad, in a working capacity at least. One thinks perhaps a little bit of 'buttoned up Brits' and casual Australians. How did you relate to the Australians, you - and Audrey, if it comes to that?

EG: We used to be robust. I remember when we moved into our house shortly after our arrival we had a very nice neighbour and he wanted to invite us to meet other neighbours in his garden for a barbecue on a Sunday. We sensed what was going to happen. I mean he dressed for the part – singlet, shorts and a hat on with corks dangling around it. There was a big welcome to the ‘neighbouring Poms’ and all the rest of it. But we got the hang of all this inevitable teasing and responded in equal measure.

Washington, 1973–77

IH-C: You moved on from there from Canberra to Washington. How did that come about?

EG: It was a message from Personnel Department in London, as it then was, simply saying that as I had expressed a wish to move on after two years as Private Secretary, they had decided in the light of my performance to send me to Washington. And that was where we ended up in the autumn of 1973.

IH-C: And this was on promotion, of course, as Second Secretary. But there you also had a certain amount of time as Private Secretary to HMA Washington?

EG: Yes, I had three roles, really. Number one was point man in the Embassy with the Americans on preparations for the 3rd UN Law of the Sea Conference; role number two was to prepare and handle a number of Royal Visits and high level political visits, such as by Harold Wilson, then Prime Minister; but also to stand in from time to time for Jeremy Greenstock as Private Secretary to the Ambassador and I can give you an anecdote about that if you like.

IH-C: Carry on. I’m all ears!

EG: Well, I can’t remember whether this was the first or the second occasion – I have a feeling it was the latter. I went to the Embassy on a Saturday morning in order to go through all the incoming telegrams and to select those to take across to the Ambassador, Sir Peter Ramsbotham, in the Residence. While making the selection, he rang me to say that he had just received a message from the State Department to say that Henry Kissinger had just arrived back in Washington from a trip to the Middle East and wanted to tell the Ambassador

all about it. Peter Ramsbotham obviously asked me to go with him. This was the very first time I was ever asked to take the record at a high level meeting. So, off we went to State Department and I shall never forget what greeted me.

We went up to Kissinger's office. There were four people in the office: Kissinger, Joe Cisco, his deputy and two of Kissinger's private staff, plus Peter Ramsbotham and me. We sat down and the first thing Kissinger said was in his unique accent: "This meeting is only to be shared amongst the people in this room. If I find any record of this beyond the walls of this office, there will be hell to pay. Do you understand?" And that was it. The meeting lasted about an hour and a half. It was a remarkable personal account of his meetings with President Sadat, his meetings in Israel, he'd been to Jordan and to Syria and I took a careful note. In my case, it was a summary record. In Kissinger's case he insisted his staff take a verbatim record. That meeting left a deep impression on me – encountering a man second only to the President in his grip on foreign policy and tightly controlling what information was divulged to the rest of the State Department.

We returned to the Embassy and over the next two and a half hours I carefully drafted half a dozen separate telegrams (as they were then known) – Kissinger in Egypt, Kissinger in Israel. Kissinger in Jordan, Kissinger in Syria and all the rest of it. My drafts were then typed up by the Ambassador's PA, after which I took them across to Peter Ramsbotham in the Residence who read them carefully. He made a couple of minor adjustments and off they went to London.

IH-C: Of course, strictly speaking, he – at least by his silence if nothing else – had given Kissinger the impression that nothing else would happen. But Kissinger must have known that Peter Ramsbotham had to report what he was hearing.

EG: Oh yes, he understood that Peter Ramsbotham would report the meeting to London. But because of the trust he had in the Ambassador's discretion, he knew that Peter Ramsbotham would give each telegram a strict caveat – these were only to be shared at a high level in the Foreign Office and in Number Ten. Kissinger's remark which I relayed was very much that he didn't want the information given out - shared more widely in his own Department. And that I think was a very good indication of what has been a problem over

many, many years in State Department - that information gained at a high level is not always widely shared.

I would just add in respect of Henry Kissinger that the impression that was in my mind as I left was number one - that he oozed power. Number two - he displayed unique political skills the like of which I had never seen before and number three was that he was acutely aware of the power in the deployment of secret information – what you could do with it.

IH-C: You were arriving in Washington, of course, at a very fraught time. It was the latter stages of Watergate, was it not?

EG: It was. I can't remember which day of the week we arrived but the first or second weekend we were there we were invited to a buffet party where we met a young man called John Barker who was Assistant to Archibald Cox who was the Special Prosecutor investigating the Watergate break in. While we were at the party the news came through that the Attorney-General Elliot Richardson, who I got to know later on extremely well, had resigned because he had refused to fire Cox. His deputy, William Ruckelshaus, had also resigned. John Barker told us, the Embassy people at the party, that he had to leave quickly because he wanted to remove some key files containing some of Cox's documents, and hide them in order they were not seized by agents of the Administration. And he did that.

IH-C: Extraordinary! Which again gave you something of an insight into the way Americans – at least at this level – operated.

EG: Absolutely. I was obviously not directly involved in ongoing political reporting from the Embassy. My Head of Chancery was Johnny Graham; my next door neighbour in the Chancery corridor was Pauline Neville-Jones. Also in the same corridor were Anthony Reeve and Richard Samuel. It was a tremendous gang of us but as I said at the beginning, my principal role was to spend quite a lot of time working with the Americans for the preparation of the 3rd UN Law of the Sea Conference and, of course, we had Royal Visits. I handled a Royal Visit by Princess Anne in 1975 and I was one of two desk officers involved in the intensive organisation and conduct of The Queen's visit to America in 1976 to mark the bicentenary of independence.

IH-C: Very exhausting work, I know, from my own experience being involved in a small way with The Queen's visit to Moscow in the 1990s. So much planning goes into these. It's exhausting work, isn't it. Were the Americans co-operative in terms of agreeing a programme and then being able to stick to it?

EG: They were. But the most challenging aspect of it all was the deluge of requests from Americans at the various events – particularly requests to be present at the parties. It was always very hard having to say 'no' and I can remember that was particularly the case in relation to the principal reception at the Residence and also the reception on board the Royal Yacht in New York. Both challenging events.

IH-C: The member of the Royal Family who you presumably had most to do with was the Prince of Wales because you actually travelled around the country with him, didn't you? And I think it was his first official visit to the United States?

EG: It was, indeed. He came to America, if I recall, in October 1977. I put together his programme. Peter Jay was then Ambassador. Peter Jay and I went to Chicago where the Prince of Wales arrived. We had – I think it was – a day and a half in Chicago. From there we went on to Cleveland, Ohio. Afterwards, it was just me and the Prince of Wales and his small team – travelling south, on to Texas and then to California. It was a remarkable three week experience. I got to know him extremely well.

IH-C: And was he easy to work with?

AG: He was.

IH-C: There are so many aspects of this I want to ask you about – not just the Royal Visits – of your time in America. You were there at the time of the handover from one Ambassador to another, with Peter Jay coming in. Now that was, in a sense, a political appointment, wasn't it, if I recall rightly. There must have been a certain feeling in the Embassy about that at the time?

EG: Peter Jay's appointment was announced by Jim Callaghan while he was in Washington. There was great disappointment in seeing Peter Ramsbotham go because we all thought he

had done an excellent job. Peter Jay was a very different kind of person. Peter Ramsbotham had been extremely successful because he had cultivated the famous hostesses of Georgetown like Pamela Harriman. They invited him to dinner parties, he invited them back. He would quite often meet at their dinner parties Americans who he might not otherwise have met or might have found it rather difficult to fix an appointment with. He was able to talk to them over the table, over a drink. So that was extremely successful.

Peter Jay came with the reputation that shortly before his appointment he had been listed, I think in *Time* magazine, as one of the 100 brightest people in the UK. Therefore, when he came his view was that he didn't need to bother with the Georgetown ladies. His own accolade would be enough.

IH-C: And no doubt history would suggest that wasn't always the case.

EG: I think that history judged by and large that he was proved wrong.

IH-C: Peter Ramsbotham had this wide circle of friends. But you and Audrey were also mixing in rather top circles as well, weren't you?

EG: Yes, in particular because of the Greek Ambassador who we'd met in Canberra. He introduced us to the Greek Ambassador in Washington, and through the Ambassador we got to know Lane Kirkland who was head of the American version of the TUC - the AFL/CIO. Audrey and I were invited to many of his dinner parties. There was one occasion attended by Senator 'Scoop' Jackson, Head of the Senate Defense Committee and James Schlesinger, Defense Secretary at the time. There were these occasions when we would meet at these dinner parties people who more senior people in the Embassy, for example at Counsellor level, had not met.

IH-C: Obviously very useful in your job in exploring the workings of American government and who had influence where. But you also talked about the initial negotiations for the Law of the Sea Conference with the Americans. What were they like to negotiate with, what's been your experience?

EG: They were extremely good partners. They were constructive and they found us equally constructive. One of the great strengths of the Brits is multilateral diplomacy – always has been the case. It's because we are practical and extremely good at drafting. So, the Americans frequently looked to us to come up with formulations which we did.

IH-C: Interesting. I can think in my own experience of going to multilateral organisations and somebody singling me out as a British diplomat and saying: "Hey, you can do the draft on this, can't you?" I think it is something we were known for.

EG: Yes, and as a result of the work I did on the Law of the Sea, I got to know Elliot Richardson who, later on after Watergate, became Secretary of Commerce for almost a year from 1976/7. He was also Ambassador to the UK from 1975/76 but from 1977 until 1980 (I left Washington at the end of 1977) he served as Ambassador at Large and Special Representative of President Carter on the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and Head of the US Delegation. And so he and I got to know each other extremely well.

IH-C: And what kind of person was he? What kind of personality?

EG: He was warm, openhearted, clever, a lawyer – he liked Audrey because Audrey was a lawyer so we also had that. He also had a great sense of humour and a great doodler. I have one of them.

Secretary to UK Delegation to UN Law of Sea Conference, 1978–80

IH-C: Now you said you were back in London from 1977 to 1980 and you were Secretary in fact to the UK Delegation to the UN Law of the Sea Conference. A first time working in a multilateral area and seeing how these negotiations can take place in a multilateral sense. You must have learned a lot from that.

EG: I did. Number one - between sessions of the Conference which took place twice a year in Geneva (in the spring) and New York (in the winter) – I had to make sure that the other government departments in Whitehall contributed effectively to the UK position on various issues and on time to the Delegation's briefing. Number two was to make sure there was adequate office and hotel accommodation for everyone attending each session. Number three

was, during each session of the Conference, to make sure all the practical arrangements went well. In addition, I was also the Representative of the UK in the Third Committee of the Conference and there one of our principal preoccupations was negotiating treaty provisions relating to deep sea mining of manganese nodules.

IH-C: With this multi-faceted role, what resources were you given to help you carry these various tasks out?

EG: I largely did it on my own. This is what I had to do. I also had the support and encouragement of a very good Head of Delegation. His name was Sir Ronald Arculus, who was clever, intuitive, had a good sense of humour and who was a wily negotiator. He taught me how important it was to get to know as many other delegates as possible; number two, to get to meetings at the UN early – at least half an hour to an hour early – in order to talk to other early arrivals; and also to go to the interpreters' booths to see the transcripts of speeches that were going to be delivered later on in the day. That way, you would have an early inkling of what others were going to say.

IH-C: Very useful! And most of that took place in Geneva, did it?

EG: As I said, each session of the conference lasted six weeks so we tended to meet in Geneva in the spring and New York in the summer. There was always a strong push towards the end of each session to have New York in the spring and Geneva in the winter because a significant number of delegations wanted to go skiing at the weekends. But other delegations didn't like being in the cold all that much in Switzerland in the winter – they always got their way!

IH-C: Now you've mentioned Sir Ronald's principles which obviously sound extremely useful. By having this whole series of negotiations – it did give you a chance to build up a real rapport and make real friends with other delegates because you were seeing them over and over again, weren't you?

EG: As I said earlier, what I had learned from Morrice James became the basis on which to build a number of skills. And the particular skills I was able to develop here were to get to

know people, to meet them, to mingle with them as often as you can in order to win their trust, to get them to share information with you that they might not otherwise wish to do.

Section Head, Arms Control and Disarmament Dept, FCO, 1983–85

IH-C: In 1983 you then changed to Arms and Control Department. But you were carrying on then more multilateral negotiations for a treaty. That's a very long period if one's thinking of '77 to '80 and '83-'85 of being primarily involved in multilateral work?

EG: I quite liked it, actually. It was a change from Law of the Sea and here I was involved in trying to negotiate a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons. It was more London based, although I went to Geneva occasionally. We were working with the Ministry of Defence and others in King Charles Street and I liked it. There was one particular incident that I remember. There was a leak of some confidential information which was published, I think, in an edition of *The New Statesman* and I recall not long after the leak an official – whether he was a police officer or not, I don't know – came to see me in order to find out if I was responsible for that leak, which I was not. I was able to assure him that that was the case.

IH-C: And then in 1985, was the treaty concluded by that time?

EG: No.

Senate Liaison Officer, British Military Government, Berlin, 1985–89

IH-C: So, in other words you were moving on to your next job while those negotiations were going on. One thing I haven't asked you, Edward, is any ability in languages. And, of course, it has a relevance to what you were about to move on to as your next job. During your time up to this point did you have any other languages?

EG: Only French.

IH-C: Right. So, you were then going to be sent to Berlin and you therefore, presumably, embarked on a German language course?

EG: The story there was that the Legal adviser, Sir Ian Sinclair, had decided to send Audrey to Berlin as Legal Adviser to the British Military Government and the initial view in Personnel was that it would not be possible for me to join Audrey. I would have to go elsewhere. Then a little later Personnel told me that it would, after all, be possible. I would be going to Berlin as the principal daily liaison between the British Military Government and the Government of West Berlin. For that reason, I had to learn German. I had two and a half months learning the rules of grammar in the Foreign Office language laboratory under the care of Ursula Ridgewell, who died a number of years ago. I always remember Ursula, who was German, telling me that she would teach German to me in such a way that I would never forget the rules of grammar.

Then I went to Munich where I spent five weeks with Herr and Frau Klaus. When I got to Munich she said that she wanted to give me lessons indoors but I said no, that's not what I wanted to do. In Berlin I would have to speak German every day. So instead what we did was to be out every day visiting museums, galleries, all sorts of places in which she would put me to the test – asking questions, having conversations with people we met and to describe in German things that I had seen. It was hard work.

IH-C: I'm sure it was. Did you also acquire a distinctive south German accent as a result?!

EG: No, that didn't happen. But later on, I was told that my accent was 'Berlin-erish'!

IH-C: No doubt a compliment, given where you were! When you started the job after all this tuition were you reasonably comfortable operating in German?

EG: It took me six months to feel really comfortable. It was a challenging job. I had an office in Rathaus Schöneberg, which was the headquarters of the West Berlin Government. I had an office down the corridor from the Governing Mayor and near the balcony from which President Kennedy had given his famous "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech. It was a marvellous spacious office. I had a conference room next door. My German secretary had her own office on the other side. And then, just a bit further on, were the offices of my US and French counterparts. It was challenging at the beginning in two ways. Number one: every Monday we would receive in German the agenda and the key papers that would be discussed at the

government cabinet meeting the next morning. So, I had less than 24 hours to read these and to work out what the key points were and what I ought to ask about. Number two was that on the afternoon of the next day there would be two meetings. One would be with the Cabinet Secretary who would report in German what the Cabinet had agreed and after that, perhaps the most interesting meeting of all, which would be with the head of the Interior Department. The reason that latter meeting was important was he would tell us about contacts with the authorities in the eastern part of the city - for example, approaches to him and others by the East Berlin authorities who wanted to repair the Wall on the western side.

So, the first six months was really hard work – getting to grips reading week after week day after day Berlin government documents. Number two, I had to sustain detailed conversations in German with the Cabinet Secretary, his Deputy, plus meetings with the Governing Mayor and members of the Berlin parliament. And after the regular Tuesday meetings, we would then go and have tea and cake with the President of the Parliament. But after six months my German was fluent.

IHC: And the importance of this liaison work was because under the Four Power Agreement, presumably the British Military Government, along with the French, along with the Americans and whatever, would have a certain say in what the Berlin City Government could do?

EG: Yes. It had been agreed at the end of the Second World War that, not only would Germany would be divided into four separate sectors but Berlin as well. So, our job in Berlin was twofold: number one, to everything we possibly could to ensure the continued freedom of operation of West Berlin. Number two was to try to work out ways in which we could give the West Berlin Government as much latitude as we possibly could in the conduct of daily business without compromising the original principles that underlay the Four Power Agreement.

IHC: And how did you find the West Berlin *Senat* to work with? They were responsive?

EG: Absolutely. They were. They always gave us pretty clear accounts of what had been agreed and likewise with respect to the meetings with the Interior Department. I know I was always particularly vigilant because there were obviously people on the staff of the Rathaus

who were possible agents of the GDR and while I was there one particular individual was exposed as an agent.

IH-C: Who did you report to in this job? Who was your boss, as it were?

EG: My immediate boss was Michael Burton who was Minister and Deputy Commandant. But ultimately it was to the Commandant. While I was there it was Major General Patrick Brooking. Brooking was the ultimate head of BMG.

IH-C: Interesting. So here you are as a member of the Foreign Office but you are reporting to a supreme military authority?

EG: Ultimately, yes. But we were able to work out a relaxed, trustworthy arrangement where we went about our business without unnecessary interference.

IH-C: And how much contact did you have with members of the other Four Powers, particularly the Russians?

EG: I had little contact with the Russians. Audrey, as you will know, had more than I did. My principal contact was with my American and French counterparts but occasionally I would receive a phone call from our Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby, who once upon a time had been, like me, Senat liaison officer in Berlin. He would ring me up out of the blue and would say: "My people are telling me this that and the other. Edward, what's it really like in Rathaus Schöneberg? What's going on?" And this in due course led me to write, periodically: '*Letter from Rathaus Schöneberg*' to London which would give who was in, who was out, who was up and who was down.

But there were two particular events that I recall. Not long after being there, I had decided it was important we in BMG should make contact with the Greens, because there was a Green Party in Berlin. And there were two particular individuals in the Green party: Frau Kuenast and Frau Bischofpflanz and what I suggested was that, as *Senat* Liaison Officer I ought to invite them and their colleagues to dinner at my house. This led to a great deal of internal debate in BMG but it was agreed that I should go ahead and invite them. I did, they came –

they came on a number of occasions - and thus began the basis of a friendly political relationship between BMG and the Berlin Greens.

Now this helped later on because in an election in Berlin in about 1987 or 1988 there was quite a prolonged political campaign and I decided I would get out and about. I already knew a lot about the CDU as they were present in the Rathaus but I got to know the leader of the Social Democrats, Walter Momper, and some of his team. And ultimately, to cut a long story short, he won the election. I was with him at party headquarters on the night the election result was announced and I remember going upstairs to his office – I think it may even have been in the Rathaus Schöneberg – and I was in the room when he sat down and said to his colleagues in my presence: “Now we’ve won the election, what on earth are we going to do next?”

IH-C: Just to clarify something you said earlier, when you wanted to invite the two Green Party politicians to dinner, there was a discussion about that. What were the concerns? Why shouldn’t you do that?

EG: Because there was a view that we might put at risk the amiable relationship we had with the principal parties.

IH-C: Understood. And the one authority that you had nothing to do with at all in Berlin was the East German Government because we didn’t recognise it, if I understand it correctly?

EG: No, we didn’t have any direct contact with the East Germans because we always took the view that any matter that we wished to raise in connection with East Berlin should be pursued with the Russians. And ultimately, that posture paid off because the Russians wanted to have continued access to Spandau where Hess was being held and also access to the Soviet War Memorial. But most important of all I would think, they wanted to have continued access to the Berlin Air Safety Centre also in West Berlin. Personally, I had no direct contact with them.

IH-C: Presumably, the closest you would have come to direct contact was when you were exercising your Allied rights of access and making periodic trips into East Berlin?

EG: Yes, the Brits always of course characteristically do it the hard way. The Americans and the French tended to exercise rights of access either by walking across Checkpoint Charlie or driving across. More often than not, because Audrey and I took separate turns but we always went with each other, we either went on the S-Bahn from Berlin Zoo Station to Friedrichstrasse or we would go on the Underground. The S-Bahn was hard enough because on arrival at Friedrichstrasse you came up against the border guards and what they wanted to do was to make you go through normal immigration channels and oblige us to hand over our distinctive orange Allied identity cards. That, of course, we always opposed.

If you went on the Underground, it was even more difficult because you had to go up two or three levels and you were conscious that guards were radioing ahead we were on our way to the immigration hall. The narrow diplomatic channel was on the extreme right. We always had an almost a physical struggle to get ourselves into the diplomatic channel. Once in it, when we came up to the booth, we had to resist all attempts to take the orange cards out of our hands.

IH-C: Were you aware, or did you become increasingly aware in any sense, that this régime in East Germany and, indeed, the Berlin Wall was all about to crumble? I mean, I know it happened after you left but was there any feeling that anything was on its last legs?

EG: We left at the end of April 1989 and I have to say that although we were often in East Berlin, there was no evident indication that it was about to crumble.

Deputy Head, Near East and North Africa Department, FCO, 1989–91

IH-C: So, your time in Berlin came to an end in '89 and it was back to London again?

EG: It was back to London and that was when I was appointed Deputy Head of Near East & North Africa Department (NENAD).

IH-C: And who was your Head of Department then? Who were you working to?

EG: For virtually the whole time it was Simon Fuller.

IH-C: And while you were there, this was the first Gulf Crisis. How did that affect your work?

EG: What happened there was that it was agreed that I would become Acting Head of Middle East Department while everybody else in that department went to form the emergency team.

IH-C: So, in that sense you were dealing with everything other than the Gulf Crisis, as it were. Keeping the show on the road.

EG: Yes, that was when I had my first experience of Iranian affairs plus also of course North Africa. One of the pleasures of this particular period was the AUS I had was David Gore-Booth who was an outstanding AUS and we got on extremely well together.

IH-C: And you mentioned that this was your first dealings with the Iranians. Much in the news, of course and have been ever since. How did you find them?

EG: The amount of time I spent on Iranian affairs was limited so I have really very little indication to offer. But it had helped in that Audrey and I had been to Iran in 1971 *en route* to Australia. We'd been to Tehran, we'd been to Isfahan. My principal concern during the first Gulf Crisis was to make absolutely sure that the people who normally were senior to me were not troubled by unnecessary matters.

IH-C: Yes, that involved, as I said, keeping the show on the road, as it were, but it didn't preclude your visiting the region as well?

EG: No, no, I travelled extensively in North Africa – Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan and I went to Israel, Jerusalem, Palestine, and to Jordan. And it was again yet more opportunities to meet people, to try to understand them, to get information.

I said a little while ago how much getting to know people has been an important part of my career. And I would just like to make this point, if I may.

Between 2014 and last year 2020 I have written and published six novels. All these novels are about human nature and I think looking back over my career I would say that there are three aspects to human nature. Number one is that outward personification that individuals like to display, how they would like to be perceived. Then you have that inner person, if I could use that word, where once you get to know people you have an opportunity to meet them socially away from the office and public events. And that's when you begin to see people from a slightly different angle. But if you get to know a person particularly well, then you realise quite often that there is a part of them that they do not wish to reveal - fears, frailties, and secrets. And I think if you really work hard at getting to know people, winning their trust, you begin to get a good idea of what makes a particular person tick. And I think it's a skill – if I can call it that, immodestly – that's I have developed over the course of my career and of course it has provided an ocean of material upon which I can draw in writing about different characters in books.

IH-C: Suitably disguised, one hopes?!

EG: Absolutely. None of my novels has a composite character that you can identify!

IH-C: Fair enough! On that question of visiting and it's not entirely unrelated to what you've just been saying – in addition to getting a feel of the various countries in NENAD when you were visiting, it was also an opportunity of assessing the strengths, maybe even the weaknesses of our various posts in those countries - how people were doing there, how effectively the Embassies were operating. Would that be fair?

EG: Yes, it was an opportunity to meet the Head of Mission, members of staff and an opportunity to spend downtime with them and it was possible to identify strengths and weaknesses and that stood me in great stead for my next job which is one of the best I have ever had in London – Head of the Management Review Staff as it then was.

Head, Management Review Staff, FCO, 1991–94

IH-C: Why was that?

EG: It was for these reasons: number one, I was Head of a joint FCO/ODA Department; number two, I was answerable directly to the Chief Clerk who at that stage was Andrew Wood and his deputy, Veronica Sutherland. They gave me an immense amount of discretion. I was tasked directly by them – by the Centre – not by the Commands (or Directorates, as they're known now) to review many aspects of the home organisation of the FCO when asked to do so and to make recommendations. So we were not in any aspect in the MRS subject to the control or the whim of individual directorates. In short, it was a phenomenal job because I had a wide free-ranging remit.

IH-C: And what had prompted the setting up of the Management Review Staff in the first place?

EG: I can't give a clear answer on that but what I can say is that I inherited a job which had been designed to enable the Centre – the Administration – to keep a handle on the consumption and organisation of resources. And as I had always been interested in how things were organised, I leapt at this opportunity to use it to be as adventurous and as wide-ranging as I could. There were three key aspects and I'm very happy to elaborate on those.

IH-C: Yes, please do.

EG: Aspect Number One was where we viewed ourselves as the purveyors of best practice in organisational efficiency. And to do that I seized the chance to seek ISO 9001 certification from the British Standards Institution. ISO 9001 is a measure of best practice in the private sector. I would have meetings with BP, British Airways and others because I wanted to explore how they got best value for money. Number Two: as part of the process, I wanted us to demonstrate that if we were judging others in the FCO, others were judging us. And so an early decision on my part was that the MRS should become the first Foreign Office department to become ISO 9001 certified. To explain: it's a quality management system - still in operation in industry – and what the system does is to assure staff in any organisation and its clients that together they can meet a particular project's aims and objectives in the most efficient and effective way. So, it's a clearly defined set of business processes and, together with relevant documentation it defines an organisation's commitment to creating efficient and effective products and services in accordance with a pre-defined standard.

I managed, over a period of months, to knock into shape the way the MRS went about its business and I was absolutely thrilled when the MRS became the very first FCO Department to receive ISO 9001 certification and in my study I have a picture of the PUS – Sir David Gillmore – who came to the MRS and presented us with the ISO 9001 certificate. It meant that if we were analysing and judging the effectiveness and efficiency of other departments in the Foreign Office, we were able to demonstrate that we were going about it in the most effective and efficient way.

IH-C: Did that help you because otherwise, there might have been a traditional resistance to change and was it an impetus to getting agreement from within the Office?

EG: It made it easier because we were able to say that, although we were acting solely on behalf of the Centre, we regarded each review – whether it was a review of East European Department, as it then was, or Personnel Department – as being fair but not necessarily with a result that would please them.

IH-C: And looking back over your time there – three years, 1991-1994 – were there some successes that you could single out?

EG: Yes, we had a number of successes. And there were one or two which didn't come off. I proposed that there should be a crèche in the Foreign Office but that was met with a thumbs down as being too advanced!

One particular study which took up a tremendous amount of my time and in the end produced some success but in other respects didn't quite achieve everything I wanted - I was very struck very early by the problem of long hours. There were people working long hours in different departments and what I wanted to do was to conduct a review of long hours with assistance from Coopers & Lybrand. We were able to demonstrate to different under-secretaries that if they trained their staff to do a particular job in a department or unit, and made sure that each desk officer had the various practical assets to do their job, then it was entirely desirable that deputy heads of department, heads of department and under-secretaries should reduce the amount of time they spent on re-writing product that came up from the desk. In other words, give desk officers more discretion, more freedom. If an under-secretary or a head of department made clear in advance to desk officers what was required -

and trained and made sure that they knew exactly what they had to do – that they were well trained - then there was no necessity for senior members of staff at the end of the day on receipt of a submission or a brief to stay longer hours in the office, re-write submissions before sending them up the command chain. To do so was a waste of time and it was demoralising for desk officers. And I remember in one instance talking to an under-secretary, Christopher Hum. I told him in the most polite way that he shouldn't be in the office at eight o'clock at night re-writing briefs and submissions. He should be at home with his wife and his family. And he took the point. So, we had a reasonable degree of success on that.

Where I was unsuccessful was in another aspect. First of all, Coopers & Lybrand produced an analysis on the basis of a staff survey that people worked better, more effectively and efficiently, in the morning rather than the afternoon. The longer they worked in the afternoon the less effective was their contribution. So, I approached the Private Offices, in particular Douglas Hurd's Office. I said: "Look, why don't you bring forward the deadline for getting submissions and briefs into the Secretary of State's box. Bring it forward from half past five or six o'clock at night and have that deadline earlier in the day. That would improve the quality of the recommendations. Number Two: it would enable the Private Office to have more time to concentrate on other organisational matters". They agreed that we should explore this and what we did over the period of a month or so was to tag all submissions and briefs in a number of selected departments. A desk officer who began a brief or whatever it was, would put the tag on the top of the brief to record when they started, when they ended and when they sent it up the ladder. Everybody in the chain ticked it off and recorded how much time was spent. It was very interesting because it underlined the fact of the extensive degree of re-writing. But however hard I tried in the light of that result, I couldn't shift the fact that Ministers' boxes closed at six o'clock!

IHC: Looking back at this time, and looking back at the time since you've left the Office, you've obviously got this interest in seeing good change come to Foreign Office practices. Do you think looking back on it that the reform process has continued since?

EG: From my desk in King Charles Street as chair of the FCDOA I only see tiny aspects. I think things have gone in the wrong direction in two ways. Number One: when in the MRS we did reviews of departments, we were conscious of the fact that people didn't have enough

time to read the ever increasing flow of e-mails. People were tending to print copies of e-mails in the expectation that they would have time later on in the day or next day to read them. But they didn't. My colleagues and I, when we reviewed departments, tried to explain that when an e-mail is more than 48 hours old, in most cases it's redundant.

Number Two: we said that if you wanted to clear a document with another department – they may just be down the corridor or on the floor below - get up, take your draft, go down, discuss it with them, tell them what you're going to do, get their agreement. That way you would make a small contribution to reducing the number of emails that go between departments and units.

My impression today is that people are still 'sandbagged' by e-mails and by the retention of e-mails that may have become redundant after four or five days. There is this persistence on clearing everything by e-mail. Of course, this doesn't apply in the pandemic. But even pre-March last year [2020], I detected this insistence on everything being put in an email as part of the process of clearing with another department.

The other thing I have noticed is the extent to which decision making has crept higher and higher. So, in other words, more and more decisions, even of a more routine, regular nature, are taken higher up.

IH-C: Have you any reason to suggest as to why that is occurring?

EG: Because I think it's part of the wider process of the concentration of key decision making in the Cabinet Office and ultimately in Number Ten and the wish of Ministers to be absolutely sure that they don't put a foot wrong.

Deputy Head of Mission and Consul-General, Brussels, 1994–98

IH-C: We could develop that at some length! But let's go back at least to when your time in MRS was coming to an end. You were then off overseas again as Deputy Head of Mission in the bilateral Mission in Brussels. What was that job exactly?

EG: I was Deputy to the bilateral Ambassador. Brussels wasn't my first choice but Audrey had gone to Warsaw to head up her own OSCE Mission. It made sense for me to be close to the UK because we had two boys at boarding school and two girls at university. So, it was an obvious place to go to. From the point of view of the family, it was an organisational challenge but the way it worked out was that as a family we all met up in Warsaw at Easter time. The children came to spend part of the summer with me in Brussels, then Audrey and I and the children met up in Norfolk. Then they all went back to school in the autumn term. Then it was Christmas in Brussels and New Year in Norfolk.

But in terms of work, it was a challenging post because there was a blurred demarcation line between us and UKREP. For example, if there were instructions from London to lobby governments bilaterally, then there was a tendency sometimes on the part of UKREP to say: "Well, we'll lobby the Belgian Permanent Representative as we'll be meeting him later on in the day." And so we had to remind UKREP from time to time: "You are the Permanent Representation, we are the bilateral Embassy and if we have an instruction from London to lobby the Belgian Government, we do it and not you."

Number Two: it was important to remember that Belgium was a country of two regions with different languages, politics and pressures. And as Deputy I was also the UK Representative on the Board of the College of Europe in Bruges.

IH-C: How did that work? What was the College's function?

EG: It was to provide educational opportunities, scholarships and courses and events. The Board met, I think I recall, once every quarter. It had no direct management role. The Head of the College when I was there was Jacques Delors. But it was a valuable opportunity to hear what was going on at the College, what its plans were and, of course, to put across the view of the British Government on particular items on the agenda.

But the biggest challenge I had was shortly after I arrived when, and because I had been Head of the MRS, Lady Anthoula Gray, wife of the Ambassador, Sir John Gray, collared me early on to work with her on a reconstruction in 1994 of the famous Duchess of Richmond's Ball which was staged by the Duchess of Richmond on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo. I was

the principal organiser along with her. We had financial input from the great and the good of Belgian society; we had contributors/donors from British industry, Belgian industry and we raised an enormous amount of money for the Red Cross. So, there I was, within weeks of arriving, involved in the final stages of this remarkable, elaborate reconstruction.

IH-C: I take it you weren't having to don an early 19th century uniform yourself?!

EG: No. I had a place at the table but I spent most of the time behind the scenes to make sure that everything appeared seamless.

IH-C: I am sure it did. Well done! There were also various Royal visits during your time there, weren't there?

EG: Yes, if I recall correctly the Duke and Duchess of Kent were representatives of the Royal Family and I was the key organiser of the visit of The Queen to Ypres in November 1998. But I left days before.

IH-C: Oh. So, you had all the business in being a prime mover in organising it but you weren't actually there for the visit itself.

EG: For internal political reasons within the FCO at that stage, the then AUS insisted that I not be present at the event. Not because I had done anything wrong but because of a dispute between him and the then Ambassador, David Colvin.

IH-C: Anything else to report on your time in Brussels before going on to your next post?

EG: Only to say that I did try very hard to get a bigger, obvious presence for the fact that we had won the Battle of Waterloo. It may be different now but in my time in Brussels if you went to the museum on the site of the Battle of Waterloo, you would have thought that Napoleon had won and Wellington had lost. I worked with a charming Belgian lady and we tried our hardest to get a bigger visual reminder of the British victory but whether that eventually came to pass, I don't know.

IH-C: Well of course since then a new museum or a re-modelled museum has opened. But presumably you haven't been to see it?

EG: I have not been – no.

High Commissioner to Guyana and Ambassador to Suriname, 1998–2002

IH-C: Let's move on now to what was an important moment in your career, your head of mission posting. How did you hear about that?

EG: It was a post I did not apply for. I was in my closing time in Brussels and Personnel Department said they wanted me to go to Guyana which had been without a High Commissioner for a number of months. I had intended to apply for posts elsewhere but they prevailed upon me to go and therefore, within a month or so of leaving Brussels, I arrived in Georgetown, Guyana. It's very hard to describe the contrast between Brussels and Guyana but it turned out to be a challenging, demanding but absolutely fascinating job in one of the four countries in the Commonwealth which had, at that stage, continued profound racial unrest.

IH-C: Can we come back to that in just a second? I just wanted to ask you how the family were affected by this move to Guyana. What happened with the family?

EG: Our daughters were still at university. The two boys were still at boarding school. Audrey had left Warsaw but had become leader of the UK Delegation to the UN Human Rights Commission so in the spring of each year she was in Geneva and in the autumn of each year was in New York. So, for roughly six months of the year I was on my own.

IH-C: That must have been pretty tough for you – and for her.

EG: It was hard but we managed it.

IH-C: Coming back to this question which you touched on which was the racial problems in Guyana, can you explain a little more the challenge that presented.

EG: Yes, let me do so in this way. Guyana – previously British Guyana – acquired its independence in 1966. As a result of a last-minute change to the constitution before independence, a system of proportional representation was introduced by the then Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys. This was largely directed at blocking Cheddi Jagan who was leader of the Indo-Guyanese People’s Progressive Party. In terms of population numbers, the Indo-Guyanese were slightly larger than the Afro-Guyanese. The Americans were very concerned to ensure that Cheddi Jagan didn’t become Prime Minister of an independent Guyana thereby risking the creation of another Cuba on the South American mainland.

From 1966 (Independence) until 1992 Guyana was governed by the Afro-Guyanese People’s National Congress. That is to say, the Prime Minister and subsequent President was Forbes Burnham from 1966 until 1985. His successor was Desmond Hoyte. It was in 1992 that the first so-called free and fair elections in Guyana took place and won by Cheddi Jagan who was President until 1997. On his death, his wife, Janet succeeded him from 1997 to 1999. Once Cheddi Jagan became President, there was residual resentment towards the Afro-Guyanese because of what had happened in the past – alleged improper electoral practice. This contributed to political difficulties.

So, when I arrived in Guyana in late November/the beginning of December 1998, there was this residue of bitterness. Janet Jagan resigned in 1999, replaced by President Bharrat Jagdeo, who was President from 1999 until 2011 after I had gone. I was confronted by the situation where – one: there was this deep-seated residue of bitterness on the part of one ethnic community towards another; and two: a poor view of the role of the UK.

IH-C: And of course you were the representative of the former colonial power.

EG: Yes, so what I wanted to do on arrival was to make absolutely sure that I was perceived to be completely impartial. I also wanted to improve bilateral relations between Guyana and the UK; and to play my part in trying to create a greater sense of trust between the two communities. I decided that the best way to do the latter was to concentrate on doing whatever I could to highlight the role of youth.

IH-C: And how did you go about that?

EG: I made it my business to get out and about beyond Georgetown as much as I could and to meet young people, to talk to them, to get to know what was on their minds and to find opportunities where I could perhaps, in a small way, help them. And one of the ways I did this was in culture. Looking back, I broke a few rules but nonetheless it worked.

What I did every few months was to stage a Shakespeare film festival in Georgetown and elsewhere so schoolchildren could see past British productions of plays by Shakespeare. I remember one particular film that was an absolute smash hit everywhere it went and that was Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*. I remember one particular occasion when I hired the cinema in Linden. We advertised it in advance and all these kids came – Afro-Guyanese, Indo-Guyanese and Amerindian. The cinema was absolutely full and they were absolutely gob smacked to see on screen young actors – Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey – perform the role of Romeo and Juliet in costume. And I still say that the Franco Zeffirelli film is the best. It had a phenomenal impact because some of the older children were studying Shakespeare for their exams and of course the blowback was beneficial for the High Commission and my personal efforts. That was one way I did it.

We also had poetry evenings at the Residence where we got young Guyanese poets – Indo-Guyanese, Afro-Guyanese – to come along and read their poetry; poetry either they liked or they'd composed. On one particular evening, there was the President, Janet Jagan, who didn't like the Afro-Guyanese leadership for historical, political reasons, obviously as I've explained. Also present was one of the leaders of the Afro-Guyanese PNC. There they were side by side listening to young Guyanese reading their own poetry. We always had a musical interlude and I can remember on that particular evening in the Residence garden, I played the slow movement of Beethoven's Emperor Piano Concerto No. 5. Everybody was mesmerised, they had not heard that music before. So, gradually over the four years that's what I did.

But the biggest challenge of all was the election of 2001. It was a bitterly fought campaign and there were the inevitable cries afterward by the Afro-Guyanese that the Indo-Guyanese had won it by improper means. There were riots in which people died and I had to make arrangements for the possible emergency evacuation of all British passport holders. Though international observers had passed the verdict that the result was fair, it was evident there had been a number of organisational mistakes. I persuaded London to cough up extra money and I organised an independent, forensic study of the conduct of the election by an international

team who had no connection with Guyana or with the prior international observation team. It concluded there had been no deliberate mismanagement. I was able to say to the President, Bharrat Jagdeo, and to the Leader of the Opposition, Desmond Hoyte – able to convince them - that the conduct of the election had been fair. Yes, there had been one or two organisational mistakes but it had been fair and therefore the result should be accepted.

The other thing I always did as High Commissioner was to make absolutely sure I was perceived by everyone as being neutral. When I invited the President to lunch at the residence I made absolutely sure he was aware that I was going to tell the Leader of the Opposition of the event but said I would not disclose what we discussed. I always arranged, again with the knowledge of the President, a couple of weeks later to invite the Leader of the Opposition to come and have lunch on the same basis. So, there was never any criticism of the High Commission. We were always viewed as being impartial. One other thing I did, whenever I went to see Jagdeo which was quite often because he and I got to know each other very well - when I used to call on him he was alone and I was alone. After we had talked I went back to the Residence. I did my record of the conversation and then sent a copy of it to him inviting him to make any changes. But he always said he was happy with the record. So, if a minister in his government ever rang me up to complain about an issue to do with UK-Guyana relations, which happened once or twice, I was able to say: “I have discussed this with the President and we are utterly agreed on what was said.”

IH-C: What was your relationship like with your American colleague because presumably the Americans still had these doubts about certain political sections of Guyanese society?

EG: I worked closely with the US Ambassador and the Canadian High Commissioner. We were known as the ABC Group. It worked well. I often used to say that we should resist the temptation of uttering any public criticism. It was better to say instead that we were in touch with both sides and therefore avoid the trap of either the Government or the Opposition accusing us of being partial.

IH-C: Inevitably there were statements you had to make to the local media and involvement with the local media. You obviously had to be terribly conscious of the damage you could do if your remarks were in any way ill advised.

EG: Yes – if I ever gave a press conference on any subject – I always wrote out in advance what I intended to say and I would make copies of that available to the media. So, if the media ever got it wrong, I would be able to say to the Government Minister concerned or to the Opposition: “It’s not what I said. Here is a copy of the statement I made available to the media at that time”.

IH-C: During your time in Guyana, did you run into any personal hostility?

EG: No. It worked reasonably well and what I did was within a week or so of arriving I drew up a list of all those I thought it was important for me to meet in the Government, in the Opposition and in the regions. I divided them up into categories – Category No. 1 being the most urgent and all the rest of it. I called on them, I got to know them. I gradually used to invite them to come and have morning coffee or tea at the Residence. I would use that process to win their trust, to convince them that I was impartial and that the purpose of these occasions was for them to share with me what was on their minds.

IH-C: Now you mentioned earlier, particularly during the 2001 election when things were rather fraught, that you were in touch with the British community in Guyana with even a possibility of a forced evacuation. What sort of numbers are we talking about and what contacts did you have with them?

EG: London sent an instruction prior to the Election Day asking me to draw up a list of British passport holders and they envisaged this would be a small number. But I reminded them that there were a significant number of Guyanese in both communities who were holders of British passports. It would be unacceptable on our part in the event of an evacuation for High Commission staff to stand at the foot of the gangway up to the plane selecting those who boarded and those who should not. So, London agreed that whatever the number they would have to be evacuated. In the end evacuation proved unnecessary.

I should add that one other idea I pursued was that it was evident in the run up to the election it was going to be a rather difficult event and possibly violent. So, I suggested that a British frigate, on its way back to the UK from being on station in the Falklands, should come to Georgetown, which it did, for 24 hours. We used the opportunity to get Guyanese children

from both communities to go on board and look over a warship and all the rest of it. Then it left but I arranged for the ship to be on station just over the horizon on Election Day.

IH-C: Now this was your first time as Head of Mission. What was it like? You had your support staff in the Mission and you no doubt all pulled together?

EG: Yes, we did. There were ODA staff – I think they had become DFID by then - they were in the same building as us. I had a mixed Indo/Afro-Guyanese staff. I did my level best to be fair. At times I would go home and pull my hair out – what was left of it! In the end, it worked well. We did lots of other things. Audrey, when she was in Guyana, did lots of work with prisoners. When we had The Queen’s Birthday Party we would get musicians who were serving time in Georgetown Prison to come along and provide steel band music.

We also had a visit by the Prince of Wales in 2000. That was a tremendous boost and he went to the Iwokrama Rainforest. I had visits from Baroness Amos who was then Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the FCO and also Baroness Scotland. Jack Straw who was then Secretary of State came and stayed for the 2002 UK Caribbean Summit. We had lots and lots of visitors.

At that Caribbean Summit on Day Two Jack Straw had to go back to London. Valerie Amos took his place. Audrey, who was in New York at the time, had briefed the residence staff and me on the arrangements for the lunch at the residence for 24 Caribbean Ministers. She had said everything had to be well timed and well organised. Lunchtime came, everybody arrived at the Residence. Everybody sat down. The staff appeared at the door with the trays with the first course. Valerie Amos said immediately to me and the staff: “The food goes back into the kitchen. Food will not be served until I am sure that my fellow Ministers promise me that they have seen and approved of the draft communiqué.”

IH-C: And she got her way?

EG: She got her way. Everybody sat at the table, read the draft. A number of points were raised. There was a junior member of the UK Delegation at a side table. He recorded all the amendments, he went away to produce an amended copy and then Valerie said: “Right. Let’s

have lunch.” So, the lunch came in, the first course, the main course. But she held up the delivery of the dessert because she wanted Ministers to read the amended copy and agree it.

IH-C: An interesting way of working! But looking back on your time in Guyana, you obviously had a very difficult role to play but you must have felt a certain satisfaction?

EG: Yes, I did. The main thing I left with was a greater knowledge of Guyana; the relationship bilaterally had significantly improved. I had a good, friendly, robust relationship with the President and just before I left I persuaded him to reorganise part of the police force. And I think there was a greater understanding on the part of the United Kingdom on the basis of the reporting of our actions. There was also a better understanding of the continuing, difficult nature of Guyana. But I left with my reputation intact primarily because to ensure my reputation for impartiality I made absolutely clear that I was very careful who I trusted. In the end there were only a couple of people I trusted. But I won the trust of many, many people who shared their personal opinions with me and I did not breach their confidence.

Quality and Efficiency Unit, FCO, 2002–03

IH-C: Now, moving on. Your next job was back in London and, again, a slightly unusual one.

EG: Yes, when I got back Michael Jay who was then PUS asked me to conduct a review of overseas diplomatic housing. I wasn't keen to do it but he prevailed and so over a period between October 2002 and March 2003 I visited 23 missions across the world on my own. I visited countless properties, spoke with many staff and families, in particular with spouses. On the basis of what I saw and heard, I decided that the existing system for the allocation of housing was antiquated, unfair and utterly inconsistent. I made a number of wide-ranging recommendations. I won't go into the details but I can give you a couple of examples. Number one: I said that it was important that staff should have a greater say in where they wanted to live in a particular post. If they wanted to be in town rather than on the outskirts of town they should have the freedom to do so, provided it met revised rent levels and where they wanted to go was safe and secure. So, we did that.

Number Two: I got rid of this antiquated requirement that people who were on Grade 9 and above had to have a dining room. The fact was that it was evident in speaking to staff and spouses around the world that the day of the dining room had gone. What people wanted instead was private accommodation, comprising a large family room with a dining table, armchairs. I secured that change. I also discovered to my horror, that if you were below the rank of Grade 9 you were not entitled to a bookcase! That changed too.

IH-C: Wonderful! Can I just come in there because I can recall myself stories – they may not have been true – of someone who might have been in slightly over-scale accommodation for them and as a result, they had a carpet but it didn't actually fill the entire room. It was actually smaller than the room because that size of carpet was all they were entitled to. Maybe that was just a myth?

EG: I think it was but the fact was that if you didn't live in accommodation that was already furnished, you had to take what was on offer from London and what was on offer from London was not always suitable in terms of size for that particular accommodation.

IH-C: And did your remit also cover Heads of Mission Residences because I would imagine that would have been a particularly delicate and sensitive area?

EG: Yes, it did. For example, I was particularly struck by the Head of Mission Residence in Prague. I said it was absolutely absurd that as the Ambassador might probably only use the Residence for lunch or dinner twice a week when the FCO was paying residence staff for five days a week or more. So, what I proposed was that more junior staff, particularly commercial staff and political staff – rather than spend money on a restaurant – should have the opportunity to invite a counterpart to have lunch at the Residence and to my knowledge that was not opposed.

IH-C: Of course, you would need the appropriate live-in staff to be able to do that, presumably?

EG: Oh yes. Ultimately, all these recommendations were in the framework that there should be three bands of accommodation entitlement equivalent to the three current bands.

IH-C: And did you feel at the end of that time and the end of the survey that you had achieved pretty much what you were hoping to?

EG: Yes, I did. I remember saying to Michael Jay when I presented him with my report that there would no doubt be some diplomatic staff who had slogged through the grades and were looking forward to having a grander place in which to live that had a dining room. But I said I had slanted the Review towards younger people giving them a greater opportunity. He agreed.

In the report I also added a longer-term view which was this. The world was becoming increasingly unstable, more dangerous and therefore what we should do is to look at the possibility of giving members of staff an opportunity to decide to let their partner or spouse remain at home in order that the career of their spouse or partner and the education of their children was not disrupted. I said I thought this was a trend that should be borne in mind and it might well come to pass in due course that this would become more standard. And, of course, in the pandemic, that's what's happened. Families have remained in the UK and staff have been in posts on their own.

IH-C: So, at the end of that time, having done the housing review, was that the end of your time in the Foreign Office – at least, at that stage?

EG: At that particular stage yes, it was.

Short term expert on Macedonia, Public Administration International, 2003–05, and Associate Consultant, DFID Support, to Office of Prime Minister, Kosovo, 2006–07

IH-C: So, what happened?

EG: Well, if I recall correctly, within a month or so I was asked by DFID whether I would undertake work in Macedonia which was to go to Skopje, as I did on a number of occasions, to talk to the Foreign Minister and her staff and to sit down and produce recommendations for the Ministry's re-organisation.

IH-C: What was DFID's interest in you? Based on previous experience? A name that had been given to them, or - why you?

EG: I would imagine it was on the basis of what they knew of me and of my record. My apparent expertise in reorganisation.

IH-C: So, Macedonia was the first one, in Skopje. Did you make a number of visits there where you were compiling a report? Or were you tutoring people? What form did this take?

EG: In Macedonia, it was to compile a report, a review, much as I used to do in the MRS and try to convince the Foreign Minister in a rocky coalition government that it would be in Macedonia's interests to do that. But in the end the Government lost an election and to my knowledge what I had recommended was not followed up. The really challenging job – one I enjoyed immensely – was again on behalf of DFID in the Prime Minister's office in Kosovo. I was tasked to work with the Kosovars on producing a corporate plan for the establishment of a foreign ministry to come into effect immediately Kosovo got its independence.

IH-C: And you had an interpreter, presumably?

EG: No, they spoke English. We got on extremely well. I drafted a grade structure; the terms of reference of the Minister of Foreign Affairs; I worked on the potential budget; looked at the way in which staff would be recruited and at recruitment exams. In particular I wanted them to grasp two points: Number One was that when Kosovo became independent it should have one overriding objective, namely to ensure that it convinced the international community that it was able to stand on its own feet as a genuine parliamentary democracy. And after independence, it should focus on trying to achieve that within the first 18 months to two years of independence. The other requirement was to convince them that it was not necessary to spend a huge amount of money on establishing expensive diplomatic missions in London and Washington and Paris and elsewhere. What was important was to have two or three people – staff – well equipped with laptops and mobile phones who would be able to operate effectively out of a hotel suite.

IH-C: Presumably, would one of those missions that did need to be set up abroad, need to be in Belgrade because of the attitude of the Serbs?

EG: At that particular stage, the relationship between Kosovo and Belgrade was very difficult. We were not at that stage planning to set up a mission there. What we wanted to do was to concentrate on the first dozen or so key countries where Kosovo would need to have an effective diplomatic presence.

We did all this work and then DFID decided that it had priorities elsewhere. It pulled the plug on the programme. We had a plan, all agreed and then DFID decided that they wanted to spend the remaining programme money elsewhere and so my particular project ended and I think to some extent it was picked up by the Americans.

IH-C: But it must have been a personal disappointment to you.

EG: Yes, it was.

IH-C: But DFID continued to require your services?

EG: Yes, I did a short spell in Sierra Leone but then of course in March 2004 I was asked by the FCO to assist on Iraq and that was a remarkable experience.

Adviser on Foreign Affairs to Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq, 2004 and to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iraq, 2004–05

I was in and out of Iraq between 2004 and the end of 2005. That was in two parts.

Number One: I was in Baghdad working as part of the State Department team in the US Office serving the Coalition Provisional Authority under Paul Bremer. It was very much an operation run by the US Department of Defense. My boss was Jeremy Greenstock who was then the British counterpart to Bremer. The purpose was this: on behalf of the United Kingdom I was to advise the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hoshyar Zebari, on the creation of a new MFA. Towards the end of that initial period, I received the US Secretary of Defense Medal for exceptional public service. The key part of the citation reads (and this sums up what I was doing): *‘Ambassador Glover worked to establish a transparent and accountable system of hiring, evaluation and promotion, rather than impose a set of new*

government policies, based on his experience in the UK and Macedonia. He began with a set of basic questions and then engaged the MFA senior staff on a daily basis in order to ensure that the final plan reflected their concerns and priorities as well as the good governance principles that formed Ambassador Glover's approach.' So, what I did was to create a corporate management plan.

When the Coalition Provisional Authority ended abruptly on 2nd June 2004, the Minister of Foreign Affairs asked me to stay and to continue to work with his Deputy, Bassam Kubba, and his staff on the implementation of this plan. By the time I left Iraq this plan was implemented and, according to my remaining Iraqi contacts, part of it is still in existence.

IH-C: What was it like working in Iraq under those conditions? It must have been an extraordinary existence in some ways. You were working inside the Green Zone?

EG: It was not easy. I was only allowed to leave the Green Zone up to three times a week. I was not able to tell the MFA in advance when I was coming in order to avoid those outside the Green Zone observing an emerging pattern of regularity of attendance at the MFA. I always went with a Special Forces escort and would go to the Ministry for up to three hours and then I would have to leave.

One of the tragedies of Iraq and a personal one for me was that I got to work extremely well with the Deputy Foreign Minister, Bassam Kubba. After the end of the Provisional Coalition Authority, I think it was either late 2004 or early 2005 I arranged for Bassam to go to London. I accompanied him. We flew courtesy of the Royal Air Force to Kuwait and then on to London by BA. We had discussions with the Foreign Office in London. Then we flew back to Kuwait. He went on to visit the Gulf. I wanted him to talk to HSBC there about organising budgets, banking facilities and all the rest of it. Then he came back to Kuwait. I met him at Jubail Airport and we flew back to Baghdad, again courtesy of the Royal Air Force.

We arrived in the early evening and he asked whether he could borrow my mobile phone in order to call his office staff to let them know that he had returned because they had been unsure when he was going to be coming back. He phoned them and the next morning I received news that leaving his home he had been shot dead. I went to the Foreign Ministry

later that day when his coffin arrived prior to burial. That was a very sad day but it was indicative of the courage of Iraqi staff at the MFA who would turn up every day to begin the implementation of the corporate plan. So, that was a remarkably sad event. We worked on it and despite some staff being killed or threatened or staying away, we were able in the end to produce a viable, corporate plan.

IH-C: And does that give you – I know it's only one part of a wider picture – does that give you some hope for Iraq's future development, do you think?

EG: Oh yes it does. On my birthday I still get messages from some Iraqis who we worked with and who went on with the fulfilment of the corporate plan and who have become heads of mission. And it's encouraging to hear them report that, despite all the difficulties, the MFA continues to operate. Yes, it's remarkable.

And I just want to add one other thing. The Coalition Provisional Authority was shut down at short notice. That was primarily because George Bush Snr was hoping for re-election in November of 2004 and he wanted to be able to demonstrate to the American people that tremendous progress had been made and Iraqis were now able to govern themselves. So, after the sudden end of the CPA we were left with the problem of how the UK going to establish diplomatic relations with the new Iraqi Government. Because of the good working relationship I had with Bassam Kubba he and I met in his office and together we drafted the invitation from the Iraqi MFA to the UK inviting us to establish diplomatic relations. I then took this document back to our Headquarters. Dominic Asquith had by then become Head of the British Mission so we were able immediately to draft a reply accepting the invitation. And thus immediately, all those working at the Embassy, all the security staff, all British military personnel and other security staff in Iraq were thus listed and protected under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. That was done almost overnight and the Americans – I was so pleased about this – couldn't work out how we'd done it so quickly! It was done simply on the basis that during my early months under the CPA I had developed this close relationship with the Foreign Minister and his Deputy, had won their trust as a diplomat and as a result of that, we were able to re-establish diplomatic relations overnight.

IH-C: And just to be quite clear about this, your earlier activities in Macedonia, in Kosovo and in Sierra Leone were under the DFID umbrella but this time in Iraq you had been, as it were, re-engaged by the FCO. Is that right?

EG: Absolutely right. I was on the FCO payroll and, as my Iraq involvement was coming to an end, I could have stayed longer in Baghdad but the overall security situation was becoming increasingly difficult so late in 2005 it was decided that only a minimum number of people like me should go back to Iraq.

Chairman, Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development, 2005–12

Towards the end of that period in 2005, again totally unexpectedly, I received an invitation from the Commonwealth Secretary General asking me if I would become Chairman of the Iwokrama International Rainforest Commission on the recommendation of the President of Guyana and thus to become ultimately responsible for the management of one million acres of rainforest in Guyana that had been donated to the Commonwealth at the Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1989 for the purpose of research into global warming. So, by the end of 2005 I had resumed going to Guyana at least once a year to be responsible overall for the management of the project, for the care of 16 Amerindian communities that depended on that area, but most important of all, to spearhead a huge task of raising millions of dollars to help finance Iwokrama. That's how Iraq ended and how Iwokrama and my return to Guyana started.

IH-C: That activity in looking after that area of rainforest - you were part of a team, you had people working with you?

EG: I had a Guyanese Director of Operations, there were Guyanese staff at the Iwokrama office in Georgetown and at the on-site rainforest centre. There must have been about 30-odd people. And the Patron of Iwokrama was the Prince of Wales who, of course, I'd met in America and met again in Berlin. And, incidentally, it was the Prince of Wales who asked me to write to him periodically from Iraq to give him my observations as to what was going on because he wanted to have an additional point of view.

IH-C: That wasn't a problem, as far as the Foreign Office was concerned, for you to have this extra channel of communication?

EG: They never knew.

IH-C: OK! So, you were Chairman of the Centre for what – 7 years? What happened in the end? You felt you had had enough? It was time to pass on the baton to someone else? What happened?

EG: Under the Iwokrama constitution the Chairman can only serve two consecutive terms of six years. But they asked me to stay on an extra year. It was not an easy task partly because under the original agreement between Guyana and the Commonwealth, which was subsequently enshrined in an act of parliament in Guyana, there was no provision for the annual core funding of the programme. So, my principal task was to lead a huge international effort to raise money. Through various means and with the help of various institutions I helped raise several million dollars.

But I had hoped shortly before I left to do something that had never been tried before and that was to place a value on the ecosystem services of the Iwokrama rainforest. I opened negotiations with the Bank of America and Merrill Lynch in London and with the European Investment Bank (which is now part of the European Bank) and we were 60-65% towards establishing the first ever rainforest ecosystem services bond in which international investors would invest for a period of ten years in return for which they would get an annual return on their investment. Part of the interest earned on the bond would form annual core funding to Iwokrama. But because of internal politics in Guyana and also internal politics at Marlborough House, it was never completed so that by the time I left in 2012 that project was incomplete and has remained so ever since. It was a great shame and I was pretty cross about it.

IH-C: Your time came to an end with the Iwokrama Centre in 2012 but your interest in the environment generally is reflected in some work you do now. But is it an interest in the environment that goes back some way – a concern and a wish to be an active person in it?

EG: My interest in the environment dates back to my time as High Commissioner in Guyana because I took the view – and said this both to President Jagdeo and the Leader of the Opposition, Desmond Hoyt – that Guyana had made a unique gift to the Commonwealth in 1989 in donating for climate change research an area of a million acres of rainforest. It has so far been – and Iwokrama continues now – the only climate change project in the whole of the Commonwealth. It was absolutely essential that Guyana draw attention to this and I promised both the President and Desmond Hoyt I would help. I think that was one of the reasons why the Prince of Wales came to Guyana in 2000 and actually went to Iwokrama. So, I became interested in Iwokrama and environmental issues as High Commissioner and obviously being Chairman of the Iwokrama Commission for seven years made my interest and commitment even stronger. In 2013, I was asked, in view of all my interests and experience, to join the Size of Wales environmental charity which I've recently left at the end of my second and final term as a trustee. So, my interest in the environment had always been there.

When I left Iwokrama in 2012 I wanted to do one or two things that were absolutely out of character. Number One: I thought, I've spent so many years drafting letters, policy, documents, speeches, briefs and all the rest of it, I want to demonstrate to the world that I can actually write a novel. And that led to my first novel *The Music Book* published in 2014. But I also wanted to do something even more out of character. That is why I decided in 2013 that I would train to run the London Marathon in 2014. I trained hard over 12 months. The effort brought back memories of what my headmaster had said at school decades before: "Boys, if you make a promise, honour it. And secondly, to secure anything, you have to work hard." So, I trained very hard and in April 2014 at the age of 71 I ran the London Marathon from start to finish in 5 hours 47 minutes and raised £7,000 for an autism charity and then nine months later I ran the Hampton Court half marathon non-stop in 2 hours and 33 minutes.

I am governed by a remark once made by Dolly Parton – it's better to wear out rather than rust out! That's been my whole philosophy. Keep going and share with others the fulfilling experience I've had. I've learned much from being a diplomat. I joined the Board of the Foreign & Commonwealth Association, now the FCDOA in 2013 – shortly afterwards becoming its Director (Communication) and editor of the Association's magazine, giving me the chance to learn some journalistic skills. And now as Chairman I'm working with Jeremy

Greenstock, David Manning and others in offering to the FCDO in a discreet informal way the experience and wisdom of diplomacy we've experienced during our respective careers.

My career has been a remarkable experience and I think one of the most important things I've learned is this. Almost at the end of his reign Louis XIV commissioned his principal negotiator, François de Callières to write a handbook on the art of negotiation. I wrote in an article at the end of last year [2020] in the FCOA magazine the following: "*de Callières contends that sound diplomacy is based on the creation of confidence which can only be inspired by good faith. Good diplomatic method is akin to good banking, founded upon the establishment of credit.*" I think these words still have a resonance for the practice of diplomacy in today's turbulent and utterly unpredictable world. I've certainly tried my best to apply that principle throughout my diplomatic career.

IH-C: Edward Glover, thank you very much indeed.