

Interview with Louis P. Goelz

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

LOUIS P. GOELZ

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Louis Goelz was born and raised in Philadelphia. After military service he graduated from La Salle College and Georgetown University. He joined the Foreign Service in 1955. His first post was Lima, Peru where he was a vice consul. Visa demand was light at that time. In 1960 he worked in the Special Enquiries branch of the Visa Office fielding questions on visa cases of concern to the White House and the principals of the State Department. His next assignment was to Hong Kong where he was faced with a major backlog of Chinese refugees. Fraud was a pervasive problem. Consular officers developed extensive knowledge of certain Chinese villages to root out citizenship fraud. His next assignment in Brazil had little to do with visas. Then he went to Mexico City where he dealt with the problems of Americans in Mexico, particularly those arrested in narcotics cases. After several short assignments Mr. Goelz went to the Visa Office for a year before being assigned to Tehran as consul general in 1977.

Iran was falling apart and much of his concern was with getting American civilians out of the country. Visa work was heavily oriented towards Iranian students going to the United

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States. In early 1979 the embassy compound was taken over by militants for the first time. Even under such adverse conditions visa work continued.

Leaving Iran some months before the embassy staff was taken hostage for more than a year, Goelz became consul general in Seoul, Korea where he had to deal with pervasive fraud in the visa process. He left Seoul in 1980 and after a short stint in American Services in the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) he became Director of the Visa Office where he served until 1984. His major concerns were to make the visa process more efficient, using consolidation of functions, computers, and better instructions. Politically sensitive visa cases were often referred the highest levels of the United States Government.

In closing Mr. Goelz discusses changes in the immigration laws, the roles of Congress and the State Department. He covers proposed changes in visa issuance to cut the workload at posts abroad to deal with the expanding demand for tourist and business visas. He also deals with the attitude of visas officers towards AIDS, a new phenomenon in the visa business.

Q: Lou, could you give me a bit about your background? Where did you come from?

GOELZ: Originally I'm from Philadelphia, born and bred, went to high school and college there, went into the Service.

Q: When were you born?

GOELZ: February 25th, 1927, which means I'm 65 and just recently retired from the Foreign Service.

Q: Where did you go to school?

GOELZ: As I said, I was born and bred in Philadelphia and went to LaSalle High School in Philadelphia, graduated from there; and went to LaSalle College. I was in LaSalle College from '43 to '45, and then went into the service, returned in '48 and graduated from LaSalle

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College with a degree in political science in 1950. I have studied also in Georgetown University, the School of Foreign Service in their one-year program of 1951.

Q: Then how did you get involved with the Foreign Service?

GOELZ: Well, when I was first in college, my first two years, I was majoring in chemistry and minoring in math. I was going to be a research chemist. After three years in the service, two of which were with the occupation in Japan, I was not about to spend the rest of my life over a test tube. I wanted a job to do with people, and when I went back to LaSalle I took various courses to sort of prepare me to see whether I wanted to go into social work, or to teach, or whatever. I finally decided on political science as a major, and the Foreign Service as my goal in life.

Q: When did you come into the Foreign Service?

GOELZ: Actually I passed the test for the Foreign Service in 1951—the written test.

Q: It was the three and a half day test.

GOELZ: It was the three and a half day test, right, no multiple choices involved. But then that unfortunately was the time when one Joseph McCarthy became very prominent in Washington and the State Department was not hiring, it was firing. Then in 1954 they called me up and asked if I was still interested since they were picking up all of the people they hadn't had a chance to get before. I said I was, I took the oral, security and physical exam and came on duty in the Foreign Service on March 15th, 1955.

Q: Did you have any feel for the visa program? Had you ever thought about visas, or anything like that?

GOELZ: Prior to coming into the Foreign Service, no, never. I probably knew what a visa was, but didn't know much about it other than that.

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Q: What was your first assignment?

GOELZ: My first assignment was in the Department of State, in the Bureau of Intelligence. I had worked for three years in the interim with intelligence for the Department of Air Force, and they brought me in and gave me a job in Biographic Intelligence, I guess now part of CIA, and I worked there for the first two years.

Q: So that would be until '57.

GOELZ: '57, right. In '57 I had my first post abroad. I was assigned to Lima, Peru, and I served there as a rotation officer. However, I had no sooner arrived at post when the consul died, and I was sort of thrown in to take over the consular section which I did for most of the two years I was there.

Q: What was the visa situation in Peru at that time?

GOELZ: At that time it was a lot easier to get an immigrant visa because you didn't have any quota for Latin Americans. So that was really good business. The economy was a lot better then than it is now in Peru, of course, so the non-immigrant visas were not as difficult to get as they are now. The workload was not heavy though, surprisingly, to me then, and especially now, that there were really not that many people overly urgent in their desires to get to the United States.

Q: Essentially what it amounts to, a good experience.

GOELZ: A very good experience as far as I was concerned because it was a heavy enough workload to keep me busy, but not so heavy that it turned into a visa mill operation of any sorts. I also had some excellent assistance. They had the staff corps in those days, and I had several American staff corps members who were assisting in the section, one of whom was an expert in visas.

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Q: You left Lima in 1959?

GOELZ: In '59, and then I returned to Washington. I had picked up amoebic dysentery in the meantime, and they would not allow me to go overseas. I was supposed to go to Thailand, but they wouldn't let me go. So I had several jobs in the Department before I was able to go back out again. I was there for two years, '59 to '61, and I worked at the time in something called the Inspector General for Mutual Security which was sort of a high priced team for which I was the baggage carrier investigating A.I.D. programs around the world. And the second half was in the Visa Office itself where I was in special inquiries.

Q: You were in the Visa Office when?

GOELZ: This would have been '60-'61.

Q: Who was running the Visa Office in those days?

GOELZ: I don't remember now. Auerbach was there at that time, he was the number two or three man. I don't really remember the names. I forget the name of whoever it was.

Q: What was your impression of the Visa Office? Was this a place you wanted to be?

GOELZ: Well, it's the place where I was, and as a stop-gap assignment it was very good. I learned an awful lot by being in the Visa Office before I got exposed to a lot more consular work. When I came into the Foreign Service, of course, there was no such thing as cones. But by this time I was beginning to lean more and more towards consular work as opposed to other work. In Lima I had done part of the tour in the economic section, which was very interesting but to me didn't hold a candle to the consular section.

Q: In the visa inquiries, how were they handled?

GOELZ: In those days they were handled by a whole gang of people. Actually we had a section that dealt with the public, we had a section that dealt with the congressionals, and

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then we had two or three officers—both Foreign Service and Civil Service—who dealt with the special inquiries. That's the office I was attached to. Special inquiries went from the White House on down.

Q: What do you mean by special inquiries?

GOELZ: They were pretty much inquiries that came from the White House, the seventh floor, from anybody who was considered important apart from the Congressional area. Congressional inquiries were regarded as a unit, but there was a group of usually two-three people who dealt with “special inquiries” which were all the VIP, and touchy issues that had to be handled.

Q: How did these work out?

GOELZ: They worked out extremely well. I was the only Foreign Service type in it, the rest were GSs who had been around for centuries, or so it seemed, and who knew all the answers, or they knew where to get them if they had to.

Q: But it was mainly just to answer questions, or to expedite.

GOELZ: It was usually inquiries. Sometimes in the course of the inquiries, and in trying to handle the inquiry, you might have to expedite cases, might have to get in touch with the post abroad, or one of the offices of the Visa Office in Washington. As I say, these people had been in it for years and they knew where to go, what to do.

Q: You went out then in '61.

GOELZ: '61. I went out to Hong Kong. I was assigned to Hong Kong to a consular position and I stayed in Hong Kong until 1966, about that time.

Q: Hong Kong is sort of unique in the visa business. Could you explain what the situation was during this particular period?

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GOELZ: This particular period in the beginning was very unique because we were running a refugee program, as well, and actually it was the consular section that was issuing the papers, and running the program. We didn't have RP in those days, or anything remotely resembling it.

Q: RP is the Bureau of Refugee Affairs.

GOELZ: So we were tasked to handle it. It was a program that had been inaugurated by President Kennedy, and had a lot of urgency attached to it—I believe for political reasons but the idea was to issue as many Chinese visas as was possible. The workload was heavy. We used to have to work sometimes 10 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week to keep up with the workload that was dumped on us.

Q: Where would the pressure be coming from to issue Chinese visas? Because there never had been a humongous voting Chinese lobby the way there was, for example, for Italy.

GOELZ: I agree, but there was some pressure being brought, mostly from California. There was political pressure being brought to bear against the White House, and the White House was responding to it. They wanted that program started, and they wanted it done as soon as possible.

Q: Who were the refugees?

GOELZ: Most people in Hong Kong were refugees at that particular period of time, and anybody who left the Mainland at any time who could qualify at certain dates and circumstances involved. Anybody could qualify; the fortunate or unfortunate part of...the problem was that most of our local employees qualified, and went to the States.

Q: Fraud was not a major problem?

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GOELZ: Oh, it was a very big problem in Hong Kong, and in all Chinese cases. A lot of fraud, of course, concerning citizenship and the issuance of passports, and passport applications. During the time that I was in Hong Kong I spent the first six months to a year in the immigrant visa section working on these refugee cases. After that I headed the passport unit because we were falling behind in our evaluation of citizenship cases. A lot of that concerned fraud, of course, and we had investigative services. We also had there an investigative unit, the only one in the world dealing directly with immigration fraud at that time. We had about 10-12 Chinese investigators who worked for us. We also had what we called "outside men" who were sort of informers and undercover investigators for us. I headed that unit myself for about two years supervising the investigations into fraudulent citizenship, and visa entitlements. It was a very interesting sideline.

Q: Well on this, I've heard stories about raids on peoples' places in order to catch their briefing book, or whatever.

GOELZ: Right. This happened earlier on. By the time I got there and got appointed as chief...one of the reasons I was placed as head of the section was because they wanted to put a new aspect to the whole situation. The local Hong Kong government had been unhappy with what was going on because it violated the rights of those under British authority and even the British nationals who were resident there. They were not real happy. It got to the point, when I took over the unit that we were not allowed to go and visit anybody's place of residence. This was done either by our investigators who got permission from the people they were checking on, or by our "outside men" who would investigate sub rosa to see what the situation was. It was a very interesting time, and the work was extremely interesting because it was very different.

There is one aspect of it that might be especially notable. That was that this particular unit over a period of years had a list of all the villages in Toishan especially, but also in several of the other counties around Hong Kong where most of the Chinese going to the United States came from. In these villages one of the peculiarities was that each village,

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as small as it was, had a particular family name. So if you lived in that village your name should be so-and-so. We had a book that we actually published with the cooperation of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, they provided the money. We provided a list of all of these villages with the family name or names that would name more names that were found in that particular village. It was a most successful tool in breaking fraudulent cases. Because what would happen, somebody would set up a paper trail of one of the persons in a particular village, but try to use their own name. They were caught every time. INS used it, and may still use it as far as I know. It was a very useful tool for them as well.

Q: Were there attempts to pay off, I mean, corruption within the investigating unit?

GOELZ: Was there ever! I had to fire the chief investigator during the two years I was there, and also about five to six investigators who we found out were taking bribes on the side. It's to be expected, though, in something like that unit.

Q: What was the impact of this on you, Lou? Here you're working, you know these people want to get out, and would use any means possible and as you say, we both served in some of the same places. It's very understandable why somebody would do anything in order to get out, and paying officials is a way of life. How did this affect you at that time?

GOELZ: Do you mean did it sour me on visas, and visa applicants? Not really. It was as much a challenge as anything else, me against them to see who is going to win. They won more often than I did, of course. But it was still an interesting challenge. It was something useful. Developing tools to help with the work I thought was especially useful. Just turning down cases because somebody may not be giving you full information, is not really the answer. The answer was to go after the fraud, the deep rooted corruption, and the...well, what do you want to call it, just the various ways they used to get themselves to the United States. The Chinese are very nice people once you get to know them. Although I never learned the language, I knew a little Cantonese but not much. But the Chinese we were

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exposed to in Hong Kong, and elsewhere, turned out to be very nice people. I enjoyed my five years in Hong Kong.

Q: What was your impression...I think a consular officer, particularly over a period of time, gets one of the best feels for how a group of people settle in the United States. Because you're looking at their affidavits and support. What was your impression of how the Chinese were doing during the '60s?

GOELZ: The Chinese were doing quite well, quite well indeed, and were getting to the United States, and especially as you say from the affidavits and support of those who were in the States for those who were coming to join their immediate families or relatives. They started out with nothing, and wound up with everything. We had one local employee who I knew fairly well, in fact I hired him in Hong Kong, who went under this refugee program to the States. He got married just before he left, and he went to the United States on board a ship with his wife and \$100. He landed in the San Francisco area where he had relatives whom he was working with. They raised flowers down south of San Francisco. Today that same local employee is a multimillionaire. He got involved in real estate in San Francisco, and made a fortune. They did well, very well indeed.

Q: It's always encouraging to work with a group like that. You feel that you're putting people in who are going to be marginal. You left about '66?

GOELZ: In '66, yes.

Q: Then where did you go?

GOELZ: I went to Brazil. I was for six months working at the Consulate General in Sao Paulo, and then I went up to be Principal Officer in Belem, Para on the Amazon for two and a half years. It was a very interesting assignment. There in Belem we did not have the visa problem that you would have in a larger post. We had some applicants, of course, but

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most of them local people who we knew fairly well, and there were very few problems with visa applications in that place at that time.

Q: Since I've got you here, what was the political situation there?

GOELZ: In Brazil at that particular time?

Q: And particularly at your post.

GOELZ: Well, in that area there was only one man who counted. We had a governor who was a former military man, but the one man who called the shots all the time I was there was the Commanding General of the Army. There was no doubt about it. The Navy was there as well, the Navy had an Admiral, a very nice fellow; the Air Force had a Brigadier, very nice, very popular, very good people but the General was the one who ruled the roost.

Q: Did you have dealings with him?

GOELZ: Oh sure, of course, as Principal Officer you had to.

Q: Sometimes there's a removed there.

GOELZ: We were not close friends, I was much closer friend with the Admiral, and the Air Force General. They had both traveled in the United States, both spoke English fairly well. The military General had not done much traveling abroad, and did not speak too much English, and did not mix socially with the same crowd as the others.

Q: Did you run across unrest, or anything? Or were things pretty much under control?

GOELZ: They had things pretty well under control in that particular period of time.

Q: This is the period of military rule, wasn't it?

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GOELZ: Yes.

Q: I think at that point you went to Mexico City?

GOELZ: After Belem?

Q: Yes.

GOELZ: From Belem I went to Mexico City in 1969.

Q: What were you doing there?

GOELZ: I was doing everything except visas. I was in charge of all the consular work except visas. Visas were a section, and I had American citizen services, and passports, and federal benefits and all the other good things that we do abroad.

Q: What about the American citizen services? This was the height of the drug scene. I mean particularly for the young people here.

GOELZ: During that particular period of time, I was there from '69 to '72 in Mexico City, the number of Americans who were arrested just mushroomed—a lot of it because of the drug problem. We really wound up with an awful lot of Americans in jail, and it was as I say during that particular period of time is when it all started. We had to sort out activities, and establish relations with various officials in the Mexican government so that we could take care of our people.

Q: Did you find yourself in this situation that so many consular officers have where, on one hand we have a very strong anti-drug stance—we pushed other governments to take a strong stand on it— but then as a consular officer you are sort of the advocate in a way of the American in jail.

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GOELZ: That's it. You are there to represent and to assist the Americans who are in difficulties regardless of what the difficulty is. Some junior officers get to the point where they, you know, all this is a drugs, or he's involved in sex cons, we're not going to do anything for him. You can't do that. Every American deserves your assistance. In Mexico City during that particular period of time, we had an extremely strong DEA unit, and a very strong man in charge of it.

Q: This was Defense...

GOELZ: No, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and his favorite saying was, "I put them in jail, and Goelz gets them out."

Q: Well, there's almost a built-in conflict isn't there between the...

GOELZ: It's not really a conflict, it's just that his emphasis was on one part of the problem, mine was on the other. But there's room for both, and there had to be. There just had to be room for both.

Q: Were there any problems of that had to be resolved? I mean was DEA asking you to not mess with this case?

GOELZ: No, we had very little of their trying to influence anything on the case line. The one thing that I wanted more of was information from them when they heard about Americans in jail. Now, an American could be picked up and they'd know about it, but they might not tell us about it until the Mexicans got around to telling us, and by that time God knows what happened to the poor guy who got arrested.

Q: What were the pressures on you, because later on this got to be quite a problem for our embassy. The fact that we had so many Americans in there and they were being maltreated, and the claim was that the embassy wasn't doing anything about it—in the beginning it hit the sons and daughters of the middle and upper classes.

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GOELZ: Exactly. Americans were becoming aware of the situation they never knew existed before. We had an awful lot of congressional interest, of course. Americans tend to scream at their congressmen, and their congressmen tend to scream at us when we're abroad. But there was a lot. I was there at the time when it started building up, it got to be a lot worse after I left there.

Q: Was there much you could do for them?

GOELZ: No, of course not. You can get them lawyers, you can make sure they're treated fairly and taken care of. We used to take them books, and stuff...

Q: Peanut butter?

GOELZ: Sometimes. In Mexico City there is a large American colony and some of those people would help a lot with prisoners. I can remember somebody who needed a pair of shoes; we got him shoes. I know another person who broke his dental plate, and the American Benevolent Society took care of his dental plate for him. We had to be able to have access to these groups, and to be able to work with them in helping our people in jail. And I think we did a pretty good job on that score.

Q: As an aside, because of the Mexican thing, you had sort of the parallel office to the Visa Office and you must have been getting officers who were coming off from the visa side. What was your impression of how visa work was effecting these young officers?

GOELZ: In Mexico City it was at that time, and I guess it probably still is, one of the world's largest non-immigrant mill and those kids used to be on the line sometimes all day long handling two to three hundred cases, as many as they could be pushed into doing, and for long periods of time. After I got there a new Consul General came in, the head of the visa section and myself and we all got together and established a policy where nobody would be on the non-immigrant visa line for more than six months at a time. We worked out a policy where they served for six months, and then they transferred into either immigrant

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visas, or upstairs with us. And we tried to rotate them, one, so they would be well trained; two, also to break this business because when I got there there were some officers who had been a year or more on the visa line doing this day in and day out, and they were on the verge.

Q: Did you get any feel for what was the attitude of the officers towards the Mexican applicants? I mean, the longer they're on there, did hardening set in?

GOELZ: Well, junior officers, especially in those days, I met so many of them who find that they're able to make decisions that they would never be able to make in any other circumstance, and to me they were sort of playing God. You know, "This is a nice person, so therefore he gets a visa." "This person isn't so nice," or, "he doesn't dress well, we don't want him in the States." That kind of thing that you have to interpret the law, that's what you're there for. There is an immigration law and it tells you who is qualified, and who is not. If they qualify, they get a visa whether you like them or not. But so many of the junior officers get to a point where they figure they're the giver of all visas, etc., etc. Some go one way, giving everybody a visa, others go the other way, they don't want to give any visas.

Q: Again, we'll come to this later on, but at the time did you see how these problems were managed? As a second echelon of the supervisors. Were they able to catch this sort of thing?

GOELZ: As I say, the one thing we did do making it so nobody had to serve more than six months at a time in the non-immigrant visa field—revolutionalized the place—and people had a goal, I'm going in today but six months from now I'm out. Others had gotten there, and gone in, and had no prospects of getting out within two years. So things like that were a big help. Mexico City has this problem because they have so many visa applications, and so many junior officers. At smaller posts you have to make sure they have something else to do, they're responsible for some sort of economic or political reporting, or something of the sort. There's a certain topic that's assigned to them that they

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can research and do, and they have to be given the time and the opportunity to go out... (phone ring). They need something besides just visas.

Q: Then you spent a short time as the Principal Officer in Mexicali from '72 to '73?

GOELZ: I was sent to Mexicali to close it. And I did. I closed the post while I was up there—I was only there about 8-10 months. I closed that post and then moved over to become Principal Officer in Nuevo Laredo.

Q: In Nuevo Laredo, what were your principal occupations there?

GOELZ: Admin. That was the post that brought everything into the embassy into Mexico City for all of our posts abroad. It was very important, and still is a very important post as far as Mexico City is concerned. I happened to be available so they put me into it. It has the usual run of consular work, but the consular district at that time was not much larger than the city of Nuevo Laredo. It had been founded a number of years ago, and I guess it was involved primarily with shipping, the railroad entry point, and this type of thing.

Q: It's the entry point for Mexico City, getting clearances and that sort of thing.

GOELZ: Yes, and shipping things down, and getting stuff back up and all. It's usually an admin post but they gave it to me.

Q: Our focus is elsewhere now. You went from '76 to '77 to what? The NATO college in Rome?

GOELZ: In '76 I had been assigned to go as Principal Officer in Palermo, Italy. But the ambassador at that time objected to having consular officers as principal officers. He wanted a political officer, so my assignment was broken the day I was leaving. I came to Washington and I worked for a year in the Visa Office. At that time Julio Arias was the director.

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Q: What was his style of operation?

GOELZ: You probably know. I think everybody knows Julio Arias. Julio was around for a very long period of time. He was very good about letting you do your own thing, providing you didn't cause any great problems. And I was sort of the head of the operations end of it. We were dealing with the posts, and the problems they have, and this sort of thing. Julio was a thinker, and he was a great man for developing the regulations, the rules, and this type of thing, and that was his forte. So if you were involved in operational activities, as long as you didn't cause problems, you pretty much had your own way.

Q: What were your major operational problems?

GOELZ: The same as you have now. Everybody has problems, you know, you get a new officer in and things change. It's the usual thing, there are more and more visas to be examined, and processed, and fewer and fewer resources to process them with. It's the same thing we have today that we had then. It was an interesting time, I didn't think of anything special. We were always trying to find innovative ways to handle a particular problem. I was only there a year, as I say, and then that's when I was assigned to the NATO Defense College, '76 to '77.

Q: And then you had a real plum of an assignment.

GOELZ: I got the assignment as Consul General in Tehran until '79.

Q: That was good timing, you got out before...

GOELZ: I was there for the first takeover of the embassy which was February 14th, '79 but I got out in April—well, it was November before the hostages were taken.

Q: What was the political situation? And then we'll move to the consular situation in Tehran at that time.

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GOELZ: During the time I was there you could see the government just falling apart. When I was there the Shah was still in power, and he had one government after another, different Prime Ministers trying to solve the problems but obviously they were not doing very well. Khomeini was the important factor. He had been in exile out of the country, and just before the end, I guess December or January, Khomeini came back...well, came back I guess about February and then all hell broke loose, the government fell and Khomeini took over.

Q: Who was your ambassador at that time?

GOELZ: William Sullivan.

Q: Did he pay any attention to the consular side, or were you pretty much on your own?

GOELZ: He was overwhelmed, of course, with the problems of the government and everything along the line. He took an interest in the consular section, but if things went smoothly, then he didn't interfere. The DCM also, Charlie Naas, I think you probably know. Charlie Naas was more interested in what we were doing. We all got involved together, the three of us, in getting people out of Tehran. There were about 60,000 Americans in Tehran at the time things started to fall apart. Now, neither our government, nor the Iranian government, wanted anything done about clearing everybody out. So what we did, we met with companies one by one—well, not one by one, usually five or ten at a time, I would or the Ambassador would, trying to convince them to drawdown the people that they had; that the situation was beginning to deteriorate and the sooner they got out the better everybody was. Not everybody left, but an awful lot of people did.

Q: Was there initial resistance on leaving?

GOELZ: Sure. There was a lot of money in Tehran. All these companies were making money off the Iranian government, and they didn't want to lose it. A lot of people just wouldn't go, they just wouldn't leave. They had been warned, they had been called in,

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the companies themselves were asked to drawdown. And as things started deteriorating, more and more of them went out. From the time we evacuated after the first takeover, we only had about 3500 Americans to evacuate, that's from 60,000. So we had been very successful in drawing down there. There were a lot of other problems—kids in school, all kinds of things.

Q: During this were you involved in the case that's become quite famous again recently because of the presidential candidate, Ross Perot, who is the head of some computer firm, or something.

GOELZ: EDS. Did I know Ross Perot? Yes, I did, only too well. I was the one who had to deal with him primarily. EDS had been in Iran for several years, and they had some contracts with some government agencies. One particular one, the government took—the magistrate, Badgar, took exception to the way it had been handled and brought the company into court and wanted \$13 million refund for monies he said were not properly spent. Now, EDS did not want to pay the \$13 million, of course, they claimed everything was in order. But Badgar arrested two of the principals of the EDS firm who were in Tehran, and confined them, and then was starting to bring charges against them. At that time Perot, himself, came to Tehran against our wishes, and against our advice. But he showed up there and tried to get them out. There was some talk about him paying the money if that's what it was going to take at the very end there. But then, of course, we had the revolution and the jail fell. He was able to get his people out through the country and into Turkey where he flew them back to the United States.

Q: What was your impression of Perot?

GOELZ: No comment.

Q: You're shaking your head.

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GOELZ: Mr. Perot is not the easiest man in the world to deal with. I have to give him great credit for taking care of his own people. Mr. Perot likes things done Mr. Perot's way, not anybody else's way whether it's governments, or individuals, or whatever. He wants his way, and that's all he wants.

Q: What about on the visa side?

GOELZ: On the visa side, one of the things that we did, which I guess we're bearing the results of today is, that there were an awful lot of student visas issued. There were a lot of visas issued of all kinds, of course, but the biggest chunk of visas issued while I was there were student visas. We had a special annex just to handle these cases. We had them by the hundreds every day, people who wanted to go to school in the United States; who were qualified to go to school in the United States, and a lot of them being sent by the Iranian government. Iran was sending more and more people to the United States than any other country for study. They had very previously been sort of oriented towards Great Britain, and then perhaps Germany. But at this time they were all reorienting towards the United States, and not every student, but the majority of the students went to the United States for study abroad.

Q: Did this cause problems? Or is this just a matter of dealing with numbers, or were there a lot of not eligible people coming up?

GOELZ: Most of them were qualified to go in because they were all in the upper middle class. Now the top students did not go because the top ten percent of the government of Iran kept in Iran and educated in their own universities. There were those right after that, the next 20, 30, 40 percent, but most of those went to the United States. Some went on family resources, others went on government grant.

Q: Then you weren't feeling that you were dealing with, during the period you were there, people who were using the student visa thing to flee?

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GOELZ: Not particularly at that time, no, because they had over a period of time been doing this. It was customary for students to come to the United States to study and then return to work, and they had good jobs waiting for them in their family business, or in the government because the government desperately needed technocrats. And anybody who was doing well was just about confirmed in a job when they came back.

Q: Was immigration much of a problem?

GOELZ: Not at that time, no. Later on, of course, the same thing with the students later on, as the situation started to deteriorate, people were trying to get out any which way they could, and not all of them were qualified for the visa they applied for.

Q: Were you there at that time too.

GOELZ: I was there during the period...

Q: Could you explain events as far as your experience when the first takeover came?

GOELZ: We were expecting problems. As I say, we evacuated most of the Americans, got most of them out. We got the dependents out of the embassy and drew down to a certain number of people. We were successful in getting a lot of visas issued and continuing up to just about the very end. Then the Army, which had been protecting us, withdrew one day and sure enough, over the walls came down—Mujahideens, whatever you call them—came over the walls and took the embassy the first time. Not everybody was in there, but some of us were because of the situation. And we spent an hour and a half on the floor with bullets flying over our heads.

Q: Who was firing?

GOELZ: These people taking the embassy.

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Q: Were we defending it?

GOELZ: No, the ambassador was very, very shrewd in handling the situation, and I attribute to him the fact that we didn't have any Americans who died. He kept telling them that he was in contact with the Marines, and had some Marines in one of the outposts and he's saying, "Surrender as soon as you can, surrender as soon as you can." So the idea was, that is, people were moving in over the walls and into the area, and he was telling them not to fire on them, to just surrender. So they surrendered, and one by one they took it. They were around the building. Those of us who were left inside—they took one part of the building—those of us who were still left inside ran the gauntlet up the stairway through the bullets to the vault where we held out until the end in the vault. And then in the vault we had to negotiate with the surrender. We were willing to surrender all along but these guys are firing at you, and it's pretty damn difficult to surrender when somebody is shooting at you. We had a local employee in the consular section who got out front—you've got to give him credit, God he did deserve yeoman duty, and talked to them and arranged the surrender. So we all surrendered, and then they took us to another location in the compound. The compound was completely occupied, and then they eventually took us down. A couple of times we thought we were in deep trouble; they lined us all up against a wall, and we were saying, "Oh, here comes the second Valentine massacre." But it was to protect us because there were snipers on taller buildings who were firing down into the compound and this wall would protect us from those snipers. So they actually had no intention of doing any harm to us after they got ahold of the embassy.

Q: As you were going through this, what was the consensus among the Americans, or at least in your mind, what were they after?

GOELZ: They were after the embassy, they were taking it over, there's no two ways about it. They felt that we didn't belong there, and they wanted it, and they took it.

Q: How did it resolve itself?

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GOELZ: That's very interesting. Nobody, I guess, can swear to it, but it appeared to me that the temporary government allowed these people to do this, or encouraged them. Because then what they did, they came in afterwards, disarmed those people, and stayed to occupy the embassy, coming to be our "saviors". This was on February 14th, I left the beginning of April, and then the compound was still occupied by about four separate groups of guerrillas, some of whom used to shoot at each other at night.

Q: After the takeover, what happened to consular activities?

GOELZ: After that first takeover we got busy to evacuate. We were allowed to operate somewhat in the embassy. They went through the buildings, they confiscated everything they wanted, and they had guards everywhere, and we were in touch with the Department, and the Department arranged for transportation, for planes to come in to take the people out. So we organized a program for the evacuation of those American citizens who wanted to leave. As I say, we had about 3500 of them, including incidentally, other Ross Perot employees—other than the two he took out through Turkey.

Q: You left when?

GOELZ: The beginning of April.

Q: April of '79. It sounds like there was every reason in the world to get the hell out of there. I mean get the whole embassy out of there.

GOELZ: The embassy was reduced to just a few people, and those of us who had been through all this were gradually replaced one by one. They brought other people in, and they were negotiating with the Iranians themselves during this particular period of time, and tried to reclaim, and were reclaiming parts of the embassy for their own use. It was a very unusual situation all the way around.

Q: Were you still issuing visas? Or was that pretty well stopped?

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GOELZ: No, we issued visas fairly regularly—well, not as many visas, but people would come in for visa services and we would take care of them. We weren't doing immigrant visas at that time, we were doing just strictly non-immigrant visas.

Q: How did you deal with your more junior officers? It must have been a difficult time to keep everybody to their tasks.

GOELZ: Well, yes and no. Our Foreign Service officers are remarkable people. I found that over a period of time, and they all responded very favorably. We didn't have anybody who said, "No, I'm not going to go out there and do this, or that." In the evacuation we set up, I took care of the one at the embassy, my deputy and a few other officers were out at the hotel near the airport. So we had two places for these people to report and we would process them and then send them on out. We were getting them out any which way we could, issuing passports for Americans who were going out to document them and we were writing them by hand. We had no typewriters or other facilities. You do what you have to do.

Q: At that point you replaced me in Seoul as Consul General.

GOELZ: That's right.

Q: You were there from '79 to '80.

GOELZ: Right, only 14 months.

Q: I have gone through a period of getting rid of people, and I discovered just as I was doing that a whole new fraud ring was just getting set up. What were your experiences?

GOELZ: Well, the same sort of thing. There was always fraud going on, or at least we knew there was fraud. We didn't always be able to prove it, but we kept trying. And not only while you were there, or while I was there, the people succeeding us still have done

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the same thing. I presume they're still working on it, but that's the way it was, a fact of life. One of those things I call facts of life, that's the way they are, and you've got to live with it.

Q: Were there any major fraud things that you found going on?

GOELZ: Nothing different than had been going on as far as I could tell. We'd get some of our local employees, we'd be able to prove they were taking money on the side and doing all sorts of other things. We just had to fire them and start hiring others to train, and wait for them to go bad. The opportunities were there.

Q: My understanding was in my time I was there from '76 to '79 the going price was \$5,000 per visa and we were paying them \$5000 a year or so salary.

GOELZ: A lot of people made a lot of money, but a lot of them got caught.

Q: One of my main concerns was that none of our American officers got caught into this. As far as I know, there weren't any.

GOELZ: There have been, of course as you know, over a period of time some Americans officers who have been involved but I didn't find any when I was there either. The majority of them are no way near thinking about it.

Q: Lou, how did you find dealing with the Korean government on matters of visa fraud?

GOELZ: It was always very interesting. They were outwardly extremely helpful as best they could because they were interested in the fraud aspects too. These were their government documents, passports, visas, and other items, that were being counterfeited and they wanted to know all about it. However, there also seemed to be a sub rosa feeling that they were glad their people got away with the thing. They were glad to get the people out to the United States.

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Q: Did you have any cases where you pushed them so that they would go to prosecute, or do something like that?

GOELZ: We tried to wherever we had the information, but usually, of course, we couldn't do any investigating locally. It had to be up to them. Whatever they turned up if they chose to give it to us, fine. If they didn't choose to give it to us, we never knew it existed. So they were very much in charge of everything going on in Korea itself.

Q: What were the main kinds of fraud?

GOELZ: Well, the Koreans managed almost every type of fraud that you can think of. They were very adept at changing photographs, doctoring documents, and manufacturing documents sometimes. And then, of course, you had the usual relationship problems.

Q: You're talking about brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, husbands and wives. Can you think of any egregious cases? Any ones that caused you a lot of trouble.

GOELZ: Not right off hand. There were some investigations being made, interestingly enough, on the West Coast in California and Texas, into rings that were established actually setting up a prostitution ring. They were based on mostly wives of GIs who came back, got picked up by these people and suborned one way or another, and put into a prostitution set-up. Some of them came only for that purpose, others, after they were there were suborned into a life of prostitution. These girls would work, say in Texas, for six months or so and then they'd be transferred to another place. They had them in Honolulu, in Los Angeles, and probably several other places around the United States.

Q: A lot of them were involved in those days anyway, what was known as Oriental Massage Parlors.

GOELZ: True. Oh, they had all kinds of friends for these places I understand. But we were never able to get sufficient information to enable them to successfully control the situation.

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Q: When I was there this is one of the hardest things is to deal with the GI marriage because you couldn't really say, "they're not in love," and "they're not going to get married." They would, but it would be often purely a monetary arrangement.

GOELZ: Yes, it was indeed. Also, otherwise the gals were so much sharper than the kids. I was never so shocked as the first time I went out to look at the immigrant visa load of one day, and saw these elderly...I would consider elderly, or at least older, who were marrying young GIs, and going back to the States. You know there was something wrong there.

Q: When I was in Germany in the early "50s I saw the same thing, ladies who were probably servicing Wilhelm the Second's troops and doing the same with American troops, and marrying them.

One of the things I found most interesting there, one of the most successful programs, at least from my point of view, was the Korean orphans who were being adopted at a sizeable rate. How did you find that program?

GOELZ: It continued the same way. You obviously left it very well set up because it worked very smoothly. I didn't see much in the way of fraud in that program. Maybe you did, but I didn't.

Q: No, I didn't. It was set up before my time. I kept looking at it, and thought, "Gee, there's got to be something wrong with it."

GOELZ: ...something wrong with it, but from the looks of it, it turned out to be a very legitimate business all the way along the line. The Korean government had set up certain organizations that you had to deal with, and we were able to deal with them. You paid your money and you got your baby.

Q: Were there attempts while you were there to limit the number of orphans? I know the Korean government made noises about doing this...

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GOELZ: They made noises every year or two. It would come up practically annually during the time I was there. They'd go through working on this business and there would be campaigns in the newspapers, and speeches in their congress. But to the best of my knowledge during the time I was there, it never ever amounted to anything as far as the numbers were concerned. The numbers continued.

Q: I think around 5,000 or something like that. Again while I was there because you followed directly after me, we were playing around with computerized visas in Seoul. We were working on a system that quickly became outdated, the Wang system, on one screen. Did you get involved in the computerization and any developments?

GOELZ: We tried to. We did have an officer devoted to it. At that time we had an officer who devoted his full time to working with the computer and trying to see what we could do with it. We were getting information, well, I imagine the same type of information you were getting when you were there, concerning lawyers. We would check out the law firm involved in the petition in many of these cases. And you could sometimes see a pattern there, or maybe not the law firm but the address to which they were destined.

Q: This is a step farther than we had it.

GOELZ: We moved in that the direction, more towards fraud.

Q: Were you getting much cooperation from the State Department? When I was there they were working out of a centralized computer office in the Department...ISA, or whatever they call it, rather than the Visa Office, and it was a problem. There wasn't much cooperation.

GOELZ: We didn't do too badly during the time I was there. It seemed to work itself out.

Q: You left Seoul in 1980, and from '80 to '84 you were the head of the Visa Office.

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GOELZ: No, from '80 to '81 I was the head of the Special Consular Services Office, DAS in charge of Special Consular Services. Then I put in four years after that from '81 through '85 I was the DAS in charge of visa services.

Q: First, the special consular services. How did you get that job, Deputy Assistant Secretary.

GOELZ: How did I get it? They called me up one day...I'd only been in Seoul I guess about 14 months or so, and they said, "come." So I went.

Q: We may as well cover that time. What were the major problems, considerations, you had to make?

GOELZ: Well, at that time I was, and still am, pretty occupied by the fact that our special consular services are back in the 18th century, or 17th, or 16th, in some of the ways we deal with seamen, and various cases of that type. How we take oaths and things of that sort are very archaic. They should really be revised. I tried in the one year I was there to go back and check everything, and take a good look at everything going on that we were doing there to see if we couldn't do something to bring it up to date. Some of the things we were able to. Some of them, just recently, of ten years now its been in operation since we tried to do something about the report of birth. And finally after ten years, one of mine and nine of other people's direction, they were finally able to do something about the report of birth, making it a new document, making it something worthwhile to have, and also getting American citizenship recognized by the possession of a passport, or a birth certificate of that type. Before that they didn't recognize them.

Q: It was just sort of a government piece of paper. Then you went to the Visa Office. How did that come about?

GOELZ: Well, they needed someone to go to the Visa Office. Actually what happened, I'd been asked if I wanted to go to the Visa Office, and I said I would. And then they called

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back and said, "No, somebody else has been assigned to the Visa Office, we want you to go to OCS, we need you there." "Okay." So after I got there, the fellow they chose to be head of the Visa Office resigned after a year. So they moved me over there. I was there for four years.

Q: In this period, from '81 to '85, what did you see when you went into the Visa Office as your major tasks?

GOELZ: What did I see? Well, again I felt myself that we were still back in the last century in the way we were handling things. There are a number of programs, some of them which are going on now. For instance, consolidations of visa issuances. Why do we have to issue Italy. Have to be posting immigrant visas when they are only issuing 2,000 a year. Its just left over from the days gone by when they were issuing 20,000 a year, and they needed all of those posts. Canadian posts. Why do we need every post in Canada issuing immigrant visas? They're still not consolidated in Canada. This is the kind of thing that I saw, and that's the kind of thing I was trying to do something about.

I also undertook a project which had I known what it was going to turn out to be, maybe I would have done it, but I don't think so. That was the revision of the Foreign Service Manual, No. 9, visa services. That is a tremendous project that still is not, to my feeling, completely finished. It needs another good revision already.

Q: What was the problem with it before?

GOELZ: Well, it has never been brought up to date. There was stuff in the manual that had been there for years. Nobody had gone through it, to start at page one and check it out to see what we needed to bring it up to date. We got V.J. Harper working on it. Of course, V.J. Harper is the authority, the only living authority on the manual.

Q: You might explain for the record the importance of the manual. Every office has got manuals, but many people don't ever look at them.

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GOELZ: I know, but this one is one that was used daily by officers around the world. In fact, the idea was that we hoped eventually in this change, to find a way to change it and bring it up to date easily. Because before, anytime they made a change you had to take pen and ink and write it in, or put a piece of paper in, or something like that. So the whole thing was a collection of odds and ends, and what I wanted was something whereby whenever there was a change, you got a section out of the manual, and you put another section in just that way. And that eventually, when we got around to having computers all over the world which we haven't got yet, we would make the change on the manual in Washington and it would be reflected on all of the posts abroad. To me, the manual was the single most important thing we had in the Visa Office, and we didn't treat it very well.

Q: As we both know, so much of our work is done by junior officers who don't have this in their minds and they have to look things up right in front of the applicant. It really is the bible.

GOELZ: It's better than it was, but its still not perfect.

Q: You had two rather strong leaders at the head of consular affairs in those days, Diego Asencio and Joan Clark. Could you describe how Diego dealt with visa matters, and then how Joan did?

GOELZ: Well, they both tended to, "leave them to me." They knew about visa matters, but they were not experts in visa matters, either one of them. And neither one of them, I don't think, really wanted to become an expert in visa matters. They wanted to go into it in depth. So that's one of the reasons I was there for four years, rather than just two or three as I should have been. But I was there for the four because they wanted somebody there that they felt knew visas, could handle the visa problems as they came along, and who would when there was a serious public relations problem, would send it to them. And I used to be extremely careful in making sure that they were fully aware of everything going on, and especially anything of special interest.

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Q: What would be the sort of thing that would be of special interest?

GOELZ: Mrs. Allende coming up from Chile, the wife of the former president who was killed. On Mrs. Allende there was an awful lot of time and effort put into looking at her situation, and her visa applications as they came in. And depending on the political atmosphere in the United States, whether she got her visa or not, could depend on that particular item.

Q: Did she come in?

GOELZ: Yes, eventually.

Q: Looking at it from the professional point of view, most of these politically sensitive cases...its a hell of lot better to issue the visa right away, and to forget it. This is my feeling because they generate heat of their own, and once they get in these people don't really carry much weight.

GOELZ: You've got a very good point there. I won't say what my own feeling was, but you've got an extremely good point. These people aren't going to hurt the United States anyway...nobody coming in in that type of capacity. As you can see now, the law has been changed. You don't have this anymore that we had before, so things are much more liberal in that regard nowadays than they used to be. But it was one of our biggest problems, was to try to walk the path.

Q: This was, of course, the Reagan administration for most of that time, and a conservative. Did you find that this was reflected in any way?

GOELZ: Yes, of course it was. Because these decisions were not made by us, certainly not made by me in the Visa Office, they always had to be referred up, usually as high as the Secretary of State, or sometimes they went to the White House for a decision because the President sets policy, not us as you well know.

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Q: Did you have any conflict? Can you think of any cases where we said, "the law is this," and they said, "still we don't want it to be done," or something like that?

GOELZ: No, because the law allowed for people to be kept out of the United States, and especially non-immigrant visas not issued to them if there was a question of national security. Of course, that decision is made at the highest levels.

Q: What about cases like the IRA. I recall this was a continuous one because there's a strong group that considers IRA...I mean there are the Kennedys in Boston, and others. They get very queasy about this. These are honest to God terrorist, but at the same time they're Irish terrorists. Was there a problem of any money raisers coming?

GOELZ: Yes, of course. Money raisers especially, that's what the people over here were doing. Money raising, trying to buy arms, trying to buy ammunition, things of that sort, shipping that stuff. But unless you have them dead to rights, and usually you didn't, there was nothing much you could do about it. You know, people are innocent until proven guilty.

Q: But in the visa law that's not true.

GOELZ: No, not necessarily, but you have to have a reason to believe. There's got to be some actual information, some actual facts that are behind your suggestion. You just can't out of the blue sky say you probably think he's an IRA man. But a lot of them wouldn't tell you they were IRA. They were just visitors from Ireland by way of England or some other place, because they couldn't go back to Ireland—or couldn't go back to north Ireland anyway.

Q: Was there heat coming from...I'm thinking of Tip O'Neill, Speaker of the House and known as a strong advocate of the Irish.

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GOELZ: There was always heat from Congress on one thing or another. If it wasn't for that, we have Rostenkowski or some of the others talking about Poles. We had problems with the Central Americans. Some people considered them economic refugees, but if the government was a communist government, they were considered political refugees. There's a lot of nuances in this business.

Q: Were you more just an implementor, or a policy maker?

GOELZ: Both. You made policy at the lower levels, but anything like in the case of Mrs. Allende or something, it went up of course. But otherwise you tried to handle it at the lowest level possible, with consultation to the desks or whoever else were involved in it.

Q: How about the refugees from El Salvador? There's a war going on but we weren't very receptive to it, were we?

GOELZ: There were provisions eventually made to allow people from El Salvador and Nicaragua to stay. Whereas other certain countries were not allowed to stay.

Q: How about Haiti? Was Haiti high on your agenda in those days?

GOELZ: In those days, no. Haiti was not the problem area that it is now. And, of course, nowadays with refugees being processed in Haiti its something brand new.

Q: I assume Cuba it was just ipso facto. Anybody out of Cuba was a good guy.

GOELZ: Well, is supposed to be.

Q: How about fraud during that time? Were there any major problems, or places of problems?

GOELZ: There always have been major places of problems. I can remember my first post in Hong Kong area, we had a big fraud program back there. And during the period of

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time that I was head of the Visa Office we had fraud investigations going on everywhere. There are certain country areas, most of them in the Far East—the Philippines, Bangkok, Seoul—there always have been fraud problems and we had fraud programs to try to stop this the best we could. Mexico is another one, there is a lot of fraud in connection with applications from Mexico. It depends on different times of life, different countries involved.

Q: Maybe I'm wrong, but it was my impression that we seemed to be catching and convicting, or at least trying to convict, more officers on fraud cases in the period you were there, on both sides, than other times, which may only reflect a little more efficiency.

GOELZ: At the time I was there I was also in charge of liaison with SY as it was called in those days, the security, and I had access to some privileged information that other people didn't see, or knew anything about. There has always been some people who have been suspect, always, over a period of time. But it seems to me that more recently there are more than there were before. Maybe that we have more officers, maybe the price is right. I don't know what it is, but there seems to be more.

Q: Well, the spirit of the times with more people challenging government.

GOELZ: But these are our own officers who have been...I knew some of these people. I couldn't believe when I saw the cases against them, that they were that type of a person, but obviously they were.

Q: Probably more than any other officer, Visa Officers can be hit without having the feeling of letting their country down like selling secrets. Its a rationalization, but I can see where that might be a problem. How did you find the computer system when you came there and any developments?

GOELZ: It was just beginning to develop. We were beginning to get AVACS [an automated visa system], and we were getting more complex operations. We didn't have any of the programs that we have today, but they were all being thought of, being looked at at

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that time. It was one of the things I learned very fast is that you don't just decide you're going to do something with computers, and the next day you do it. These things take years to develop, programs that have to be looked at, programs that have to be adapted, equipment has to be adapted. Some of the things we talked about in those days are just now coming to be, the machinery for visas, the immigrant visas, and then the machine for non-immigrant visas that they have now. That's things we were thinking of, and talking about ten years ago.

Q: Was there any effort made to try to develop an overall program to include the immigration service, and their documents?

GOELZ: They have been talking for years and years. We used to meet regularly in my day as DAS with them, and one of the topics of conversation that always came up, that was always on the agenda, was the computer set-up, how we were going to work it, were we going to have joint plans, or not joint plans. A lot of talk, not too much action.

Q: Having served in the immigration service...

GOELZ: Yes, you know more about it than I do.

Q: There didn't seem to be a spirit of cooperation there.

GOELZ: I don't say there wasn't cooperation but they wanted to go their own way, and do their own thing. And if we wanted to tag along, fine, but if we didn't want to tag along, they weren't interested.

Q: As you moved into this computer thing, did you find acceptance, resistance, or were there categories of those consular officers who liked computers, those who didn't, or did you find this?

GOELZ: We had all kinds, of course. The younger ones tended to accept them, and to look forward to working with them in the future. Older officers tended to be sort of wary of

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them. They weren't exactly scared, but they weren't quite sure if you could really trust a machine. You know, will it tell you everything its got in there, or won't it? There was a lot of that for years, I think, before we were able to convince most people.

Q: Also, there is the problem, I suppose, of maintenance abroad?

GOELZ: There has always been problems with maintenance, but we've had mostly Wang equipment, of course, during our history. The repair was good, I'd say. Most of our computer people will tell you it was terrible, but it wasn't that bad. We were able to do things with it and they had people who would come out and take care of it, and bring new programs. We've always had some officers who have never really adjusted to it, and I hate to tell you, but I'm one of them. I still use a standard typewriter.

Q: I live by the computer but its scary because things can happen.

GOELZ: Things can happen but the thing is, that's where its at. This is the way its going to go. This new arrangement that we have which I'm associated with now, the ultimate goal is paperless processing.

Q: Let's talk a bit now—you have sort of covered your career and since this really designed for people who are interested in the immigration process which is very important, and the United States is to a certain extent, what it immigrates. How do you see over the 30- odd years that you were dealing with this, what were the major changes in the immigration process?

GOELZ: Well, the major change, I think, in immigration that I've noted over the years is that in the beginning there was not that much desire to come to the United States. All of South America could have come up if they had wanted to because there were no restrictions on them. But over time the desire to immigrate to the United States, primarily for economic reasons, although sometimes for political reasons, had grown tremendously. It just mushroomed all over the place, and then the United States Congress in reaction to

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all of these people coming into the United States, has tightened up some aspects of the law. And they changed the law from time to time to compensate for whatever they feel is the proper way to handle things. For instance, now we have these lotteries that are going. We have AA-1, and some of AA-1 whereby people can, from certain countries, can apply and a certain number of them will be issued immigrant visas.

Q: Because this is on the historical thing, I mean somebody will ask "lotteries"? Why do we have lotteries?

GOELZ: Because the Congress has felt the last several years that certain countries have been disadvantaged by the immigration law as it is now. Now that seems to be primarily the Irish, the law is in favor of people from Ireland coming to the United States. It is in favor of a group of countries where we have not been bringing people into the United States as immigrants, so therefore they feel they're disadvantaged, and should have an extra opportunity to bring people in. This is about the third or fourth year now, and will continue to go on under the law until Congress decides it has had enough and then cancels it. But Congress changes the law to suit the needs, as Congress interprets them.

Q: What has been your impression of the role of Congress in the immigration process?

GOELZ: Well, Congress tends to listen to whatever the strongest current is at a particular time. Sometimes it's restrictive, sometimes they open it up. So there are these amendments to the law, there have been over a period of time almost every year there is a new amendment to the immigration law of one kind or another. Some are restrictive, others are more liberal.

Q: I almost hesitate to ask the question: but do you see any real plan about immigration? Why we have a particular policy, or is it pretty much an ad hoc?

GOELZ: I think, as of the moment...no, I don't see...there is a policy, of course. It is somewhat more restrictive now, as I said, then it had been in the past so they've been

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closing down. But we've had refugee programs, and things of this sort, that are on the liberal side going on, and we're having some of these lotteries which account for about 50,000 people a year coming into the United States, which are on the liberal side as well.

Q: As you look at the system as a whole, where is the greatest weakness would you think? I'm thinking of the Congressional side, Immigration, State Department, field execution are some of the things that...

GOELZ: As long as you have immigration to come into the United States, you are going to have problems, and problem areas. You have any number of people with their own ideas as to which way they want this country to be. Especially in times of recession there is a growing interest in cutting off immigration. These people are coming in to take jobs that people who are out of work, unemployed, should be given. So there is this general type of feeling. Again, I've seen periods of time when the economy is booming, they're just as happy to get the illegal workers in here and they don't do anything about taking them out. So it all depends.

Q: Do you feel there's a built-in conflict between the Visa Office, the home office, in the field, as far as the Visa Offices may be more susceptible, or more sensitive anyway, to political Congressional pressures out in the field at a post...I mean the officers feel they know the situation.

GOELZ: Well, you always get something along those lines. As long as you've got people the caliber of our consular officers, they have a mind of their own. The one thing that we do have to emphasize, and continually emphasize again and again and again, is the fact that we administer the law, whatever it is, however it is. We administer the law. And Congress in its infinite wisdom changes the law almost every year.

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Q: Dealing with the development of the law in the Visa Office, who in Congress were the key players? Was it the staff, or a Congressman, or a particular Congressman? Were there a few key players?

GOELZ: We, meaning the Visa Office, the CA [Bureau of Consular Affairs] in general, have never really developed congressional relations to the point where they should have been, I think. I think its always a point that we were behind. The persons who are the most responsible for changes in the immigration law over a period of time, was the staff. They're the ones who really know the whole business, and the ones who can take whatever the Congressman or the Senator decide to put into a law, and make it into a law, and make it work. We had some excellent relations with a number of those people, and depending on who was the Assistant Secretary, we had excellent relations with Congress. Asencio was a past master at this sort of thing. He knew them all, and some of them especially well. Mr. Allen Simpson has always been very close to Asencio. Rodino was another good friend of Asencio's.

Q: How about on the staff? Were there some people who were the resident experts who...

GOELZ: Yes, there were a number of them. I can't remember their names right off-hand, but there were some we'd been dealing with for years and years. If you ever have the opportunity to get Dick Scully, he can probably list them for you. He knows them well and has worked with them over the years.

Q: Looking this over, how do you find as of today, Lou, what would you say to a young officer, he or she, coming in as far as a career, concentrating on consular matters? How do you feel about it?

GOELZ: Well, I think it depends a lot on whether if you're person oriented, or issue oriented. If you're issue oriented you're going to be more happy, and probably have a more fulfilling career if you go into economic or political reporting. However, if you are

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person interested and oriented, then consular work is made for you. Consular officers have to be managers, more and more as time goes on. You may find a political officer and a consular officer at the same level in the Department—I mean in their career service—and yet you will find that the political officer has not supervised anybody other than a secretary. Whereas, at that same level, a consular officer will have been administering maybe 20-30 or more people in a very complex situation covering a lot of territory—all of it consular, of course. But hopefully, in the future, there will be more intermingling. Our consular officers should be doing political and economic reporting, either on the side or from time to time to qualify them and to give them a broader aspect. They have access to people that the political and economic section never see. And these people have information which can be of use to the political and economic section, or to the Department of State. So our consular people, I think, can look forward to a very interesting career. Consular officers also tend to have more opportunities to become principal officers, officers who run a post. And that's why they should have political and economic background, because that's all part of being a principal officer. Apart from that, they have a lot of fun.

Q: I couldn't agree with you more. Have you noticed a change in the attitude of the "State Department towards the consular function" in the time that you have been in?

GOELZ: Oh, yes, its changed considerably, I think. It still has a long way to go. My own personal opinion is that we do have Under Secretary for Political, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Under Secretary for Management, why don't we have an Under Secretary for Consular matters? I don't know. There just seems to be some sort of deep rooted feeling that consular officers should be relegated to consular functions, and it's not true. They should be generalists just like everybody else and be able to handle any job that comes along. We have had this cone situation in the Department for a while. It seems to be moving on which I think is probably a good thing because our consular officers are managers, and it doesn't matter what they're managing, whether its political, econ, admin, or consular.

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Q: Well, Lou, I want to thank you very much.

GOELZ: I think there's one other point that we might want to raise with you. Where we're going in the future with some of these visa matters? The non-immigrant visa, of course, we have the visa waiver. Now we have a number of countries whereby we're allowing people to come in without a visa under certain strict regulations.

Q: What is the rationale behind this?

GOELZ: That most of the people would be given a visa anyway if they applied.

Q: Countries like France.

GOELZ: Yes, France, England, most of the European countries, and a few like Japan, some of the others, and that we're spending an awful lot of effort, time, money, or other scarce resources, processing visas for these people who are going to go anyway. So these particular countries where there are very low refusal rates, or very low residual rates, they allow these people to go into the United States on a one-time basis. It's working very well, and it's being expanded. It started out with a few countries and now we're expanding to more. I expect that over a period of time we will see more and more of this.

On the immigrant visa side now, we're trying to do some of the preliminary processing for all immigrant visas in the United States. Because of the economic situation of the dollar, it has become sometimes much more expensive to hire a foreign local, than it does an American citizen. We have now opened, under contract, something called TIVPC—the Transitional Immigrant Visa Processing Center. Immigration Service now sends all immigrant petitions to TIVPC. TIVPC receives them, reviews them, their data entered into the filing system. The separate filing system for all of these is established. Those that qualify, in other words those that can be processed right now, they packet 3-A which gives the preliminary forms and information to the applicant, is sent to them by TIVPC, and the case is forwarded on to the post concerned. Now, if it is not yet qualified, in other words

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it is not ready to be issued at this particular time because it doesn't qualify under the law as yet, then that case is retained in TIVPC until such time as it does qualify, and then the action is initiated. This will allow the immigrant visa issuing post to concentrate only on those cases that are now current, and that should be processed at this time. It will cut out probably 50 percent of the cases they have to handle right off the top.

What we intend to do in the long run also, is to take from all the posts around the world all of their cases which are not current which they have. Some places like Manila and posts in Mexico, and some of the others, have thousands and hundreds of thousands of cases which have never been reached. All those will be returned to TIVPC, and stored in something called CFR—Consular File Registry. This will allow the posts abroad to cut this workload in half again, because they will not have any questions to which they have to reply concerning the status of these cases, they will all be handled out of this organization called TIVPC.

At the present time we have the transitional facility which is Rosslyn, and which has most recently processed well over 500,000 visa petitions that have been received from the immigration service and forwarded them to the posts abroad. They are doing a fantastic job. It's going so much more smoothly than we ever expected it to. There are some glitches, and there are some problems with some of the posts abroad which are not too happy with somebody else handling some of their workload. But the majority of the people abroad who are dealing with immigrant visas have welcomed the TIVPC. It is going to be a permanent installation in New Hampshire right outside of Portsmouth, and there will be something called the Portsmouth Consular Center. We'll have two parts: one is a passport facility which will process US passports, and the second will be the visa building which will process the immigrant visas—the preliminary processing of immigrant visas.

We started October 1 last year, it has now processed over a half a million petitions, and as I said, it's doing a fantastic job. But this is where the future is.

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Q: How will they deal with correspondence in obscure languages and all of that?

GOELZ: The people that we've hired—I don't know how many all together—but 30 or 40, and they speak various languages. We hire them on the basis of language. Everyone hired has to speak at least one foreign language when they're hired. The majority we are interested in, of course, are Spanish speakers because most of our cases are Spanish speakers out of Mexico. But we do have language capability for this institution.

Q: This will still leave the non-immigrant problem.

GOELZ: It will still leave the non-immigrant problem in certain cases, yes.

Q: What is the feeling?

GOELZ: Actually what we have in mind with the IV(?), where we want to go, where we want to take it, and as soon as possible, is paperless processing. We want to be able to get the information from the Immigration Service that we need electronically, process it preliminarily in Portsmouth, then transmit it electronically to the posts abroad that's going to handle it. The posts will process the immigrant visa application as necessary, without paper, and they'll check documents and they'll make notations and whatnot, they will forward the information to the port of entry. The port of entry will process these people as they go through, and if everything goes according to plan, those people are admitted into the United States, and the case goes to file with the Immigration Service. It's finished. Not one piece of paper involved.

Q: That makes absolute sense.

GOELZ: I know it looks futuristic, let's face it. It's going to be a while before this all happens, but we're moving on it, and we're moving together with Immigration Service.

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Q: I was going to ask because I recall when I was...you remember when I was in Liaison Officer over at the Immigration Service, we couldn't get them to use the same type of bar codes that we used in our passports. They had to have something else. I mean we were talking past each other.

GOELZ: Well, they seem to be reformed in their thinking in some of these regards. They're the ones that are actually pushing as much as we are, which is a very unusual situation for the Immigration Service to try to push ahead in these fields. But they're on board with us. We have a memorandum of understanding signed by them indicating that we're going to head that way. We may even take over the petitions for non-immigrant cases. That's still up in the air.

Q: Just one final question. I notice its in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Does this have any relation to the fact that the head of consular affairs today is a political person from New Hampshire?

GOELZ: No, it doesn't, surprisingly enough. In fact she has excused herself from any consideration of picking the place. When the law was passed, and the funds were made available for us to establish these institutions, we were given the choice of two posts. One was in Portsmouth, the other was down in Kentucky. They both had bases that were closing, and so therefore the Congress in its wisdom determined that one or the other. Now the reason that Portsmouth was selected rather than Kentucky was the fact that those buildings were available now. In Kentucky it was going to be 18 months before the buildings would be available.

Q: Also, I think, it being near the Boston area you would have greater access to language ability.

GOELZ: Well, that's one of the considerations too, yes.

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Q: Looking at the situation today because you still are involved with consular affairs, have you heard any consensus on how consular officers feel about people with AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), which is a deadly disease, and getting visas? How does that work?

GOELZ: Well, I don't think people are as perturbed. Junior officers are especially not perturbed by AIDS, something they accept and deal with. Older officers, again, tend to be more conservative, and to shy away from situations like that. But it's not really anything new. I can remember we were issuing a tremendous amount of cases in the Chinese refugee program being handled in Hong Kong when I was there. I had one older lady officer...in those days we worked something like ten hours a day to try to catch up on this, and one afternoon she was tired and I was overseeing the work, and she was sitting on one side, she got up, threw her hands in the air, and said, "My God, I can't do this," and ran out. So we ran after her to find out what was going on. Apparently she had an applicant who had syphilis, tuberculosis, and leprosy, and leprosy got her. She was again, as I say, an older officer and not used to this sort of thing.

Q: If somebody has AIDS, my understanding is, or the possibility of AIDS, if they do develop the full set of symptoms which are fairly predictable, they're going to incur huge medical expenses. What's the present feeling about this? You can say AIDS is no problem, but can you pay for the medical expenses?

GOELZ: Well, of course, the thing is depending, are they going in as immigrants, or are they going in as non-immigrants. If they're going in as non-immigrants they're supposed to be leaving at a particular time. Once they get in who knows whether they're going to leave or not. But you have to be able to show that you have the resources to support yourself while you're there. And again, even more so if you're going in as an immigrant, you have to be able to show if you've got AIDS, you're not going to be able to do it.

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Q: A couple last questions. Looking at the law today, if you could change anything, or any things, in the law, is there anything that you feel you'd like to change? That either isn't working, or is wrong.

GOELZ: I don't know about being wrong. There is no right nor wrong. The law is the law. It reflects what Congress wants, and hopefully Congress reflects what people want. But I would allow many more non-technical, non-professional people to come in, like servants. We have so many illegals coming into this country, and I won't say primarily, but part of their main reason for their being here is because there's a need for people to do these particular jobs that Americans generally don't want to do. So the illegals come in, they get a job, and everybody is happy. If we could make that a more legal situation whereby some of these people can come in as workers, I think it would be better all the way down the line, and would cut the number of people coming in illegally, if they know they can come legally breeding their line. But, I don't know whether Congress will go for that at all. But that's one of the points that I've always over the years felt that we should have done better by.

Q: One final thing. You've been involved with the visa process for a long time, how do you think the systems works as a way of choosing dual Americans?

GOELZ: It works as well as anything else would work. We bring people in, they adjust. People have been coming to this country from day one, and they adjust. If they don't adjust they go back home, and if they do adjust they turn into pretty good Americans.

Q: Talking about adjusting, adjusting to live in the United States.

GOELZ: ...in the United States, not just adjusting status, but adjusting to life in the United States, a new way of life, a new concept, and the second and third generation come along, they're Americans. I think you're going to see more Americans speaking Spanish in the

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future than you have up to now. A lot more. You're going to see a lot more Asians in this country than you have before as part of the melting process themselves.

Q: Okay, I want to thank you very much, Lou.

GOELZ: Thank you.

End of interview