

Interview with Max W. Kraus , 1988

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MAX W. KRAUS

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KRAUS' ENTRY INTO INFORMATION WORK

Q: Max, what were the origins of your entry into the United States Government's Overseas Information Program?

KRAUS: The origins really were my military service during World War II with U.S. Army psychological warfare.

I got to Europe — after I had gotten my training in the states in Camp Sharpe which was a sub-camp of Camp Ritchie, the Army Intelligence Center in psychological warfare — by a rather remarkable Austrian-Hungarian refugee journalist, Hans Habe, who had been in the first psychological warfare unit formed in North Africa during the war.

After he had participated in the invasion of Sicily and Italy, Habe was sent back to the states to recruit and train four more psychological warfare units. He sort of — had gotten carte blanche, according to his autobiography, from the Army to select the people that he wanted for these units.

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He wrote out a list of specifications of the talents that he was looking for — people with native fluency in German and French, newspaper or radio experience, but also lawyers and professors and so on. That was all thrown into a computer at the Pentagon — an early sort of a computer, maybe it was punch cards.

Then, the people who dropped out, who answered these specifications — and he said that, in addition to people with certain skills, he was also looking for young people who would be physically up to demands of combat service and could be trusted. I guess my name fell out under that category, because I did not have any journalistic or other skills. But, having been born in Germany, had native fluency.

Then we were trained in Camp Sharpe and then sent overseas where the personnel of these units was parceled out to various psychological warfare units in Europe. Some of them were assigned to psychological warfare at SHAEF Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, 12th Army Group, and each of the U.S. field armies had a psychological warfare detachment.

Q: But, not down to the division level?

KRAUS: Not down to the division, no. Army level was the lowest level. I was assigned to the Psychological Warfare Detachment of the 9th U.S. Army which was originally formed in Brittany. Then I went on line near the German-Dutch border near Aachen in August, 1944.

I did some leaflet writing. Then later on, I was mainly assigned to do surrender appeals over mobile loudspeaker systems which we had and which carried about — under optimum conditions — about one kilometer. When the tactical situation was favorable — in other words, when there was already sort of a predisposition for the enemy to surrender and save their lives — they were quite effective.

I did this combat loudspeaker work from the time when we were still slugging our way up toward the Rhine until the end of the war. I then worked mainly with the 84th Infantry

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Division and went all the way up to the Elbe River where we sat for two weeks waiting for the Russians.

TEMPORARY PUBLICATION OF WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS IN GERMAN

KRAUS: Then, at the end of the war — as we moved into Germany — all the existing Nazi information media were shut down and, until post-war media were established under U.S. control, a series of weekly newspapers in German were published all over the U.S. Zone —

Q: This was an unprecedented activity, so how did you learn to do this job? How did you find the people? How did you decide to create what institutions?

KRAUS: Well, these weekly papers were put out without collaboration of any German editor in each town in which one of these weekly papers was published. They stretched from Munich in the south, to Bremen in the north. There was one American editor and one printing technician — also American — in each city.

The bulk of the copy for these papers was prepared in Bad Nauheim, where Habe had gathered part of the people that he had trained and set up a central editorial office.

There were, of course, no news wires operating in Germany. In Bad Nauheim, Habe had set up a monitoring unit which monitored VOA, BBC broadcasts and any other broadcasts that they could find — transcribe them — and then the bulk of the copy for these newspapers was prepared in Bad Nauheim.

Once a week, a courier — either in a jeep, or sometimes we used light planes — brought this copy to the various cities where newspapers — these weekly papers — were being published. During the interval between the publication of one issue and the other issue, we American editors also had to gather the news to add a local page, or local part to the papers.

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Q: You did this single-handedly?

KRAUS: I did this single-handedly. Then, the local news, that we had gathered in our local papers, was taken back to Bad Nauheim by the courier. That was the basis for the domestic German news for the next issue of all the papers. It was quite an amazing operation.

I had never set foot into a newspaper plant in my life, when Habe sent me to Munich to publish, not one, but two weekly German papers — one for Munich called the *Münchner Zeitung* and the other one for my native city of Augsburg.

The reason why the Augsburg paper was also published in Munich was because, in Augsburg, there was no longer any printing plant that could be used. Whereas, in Munich, we had the plant of the *Völkischer Beobachter* — Hitler's principal paper — and with good presses, good German technicians. So, I put out these two weekly papers which were practically identical.

Also, this is interesting. Since the copy that we got from Bad Nauheim was probably, at least twelve hours old since the time it had been written, our orders were — before we went to press — to monitor a VOA or BBC newscast to make sure that nothing had happened in the meantime that should be put into the paper.

Q: How many pages were these papers?

KRAUS: Four pages. I vividly remember one issue where the lead story was a fire-bomb raid on Tokyo.

Between the time that this story had been written and press time, we had dropped the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Russia had entered the war against Japan and the Japanese had begun to put out peace feelers. So, I had to rewrite the whole front page before we went to press. At the same time, we put out these weekly papers — and, of

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course — we also controlled the radio stations. Ed Schechter, for instance, was one of the people who was running the Munich radio.

At the same time that we ran these weekly papers, other people in military government were looking around for politically spotless people who could be given licenses for the publication of post-war German papers.

Q: Without American supervision or controls?

KRAUS: Without American pre-publication controls. There was post-publication screening, of course. As soon as one of these post-war papers had been licensed, the weekly military government paper was closed down.

DECISION MADE TO LICENSE GERMAN-PUBLISHED NEWSPAPERS

KRAUS: I think that the two papers that I put out in Munich, probably lasted no more than a couple of months. Then, the decision had been made in Berlin that, even after all the papers in the American zone that we had planned on would be licensed, military government would continue to publish an official German language paper of its own.

THE FOUNDING AND BUILDING OF DIE NEUE ZEITUNG

KRAUS: The decision also was made that the paper would be published in Munich, because we had the best printing plant there and, also, the symbolism of putting out this American/German language paper on the same presses as the Volkischer Beobachter — that entered into the decision.

Habe was appointed editor-in-chief of Die Neue Zeitung — as we named that paper. The Neue Zeitung — as we called it — could not be put out exclusively by American and other allied personnel. We would need a German staff.

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Since I was sitting in Munich, I got orders from Habe to recruit the nucleus of the German staff. His orders were: If you can find a man or woman with journalistic experience and an absolutely spotless political record under the Nazis, then hire him or her.

If you cannot find somebody answering that description, then look for some young people with a spotless political record who strike you as intelligent enough to be trained as journalists. I found a few people in the first category.

Q: How did you go about finding them?

KRAUS: We posted some notices on the fences that surrounded the bomb craters in Munich where people kept on posting notices looking for relatives, and offering to barter — I do not know what — for some food and so on. Our notices said that any people with journalistic experience should report to our printing plant and editorial offices in Schellingstrasse 39. Some people came there.

I usually did the first interview and then, of course, they were put through a screening. They had to fill out a long questionnaire, so-called Fragebogen, and were vetted politically by the CIC before we hired them. That is how I found most of the people.

Q: How many, ultimately?

KRAUS: Ultimately, I think there were — during the ten years that the Neue Zeitung lasted — it started in October, 1945 and was closed down in 1955 when we signed the treaty that gave Germany its sovereignty back — there probably were about — I would say at least 300 or 400 German reporters and editors who, at one time or another, worked for the paper. Some of them are still in key positions in German radio and print journalism today — television, also.

Q: So, you chose well?

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KRAUS: Yes, for instance, the first man that I hired was a young man by the name of Robert Lembke, who was half Jewish, who had been evacuated some place south of Munich — I forget where — after being bombed out.

There he was in a village where the Volkssturm — you know, the kids and old men that Hitler wanted to defend Germany until their dying breath — wanted to destroy the whole village. Lembke organized the population to foil this plan and then went and met the advancing American troops with a white flag, because he spoke English fairly well.

First he was assigned to the military government detachment for Munich. He went to city hall and picked out the best office for the commanding colonel. Then he found the best furniture in the city hall and furnished the office. Later he got assigned to the press office.

He used to come over to Schellingstrasse with press releases from military government, Munich. One day he came in while we were already making up the paper and said, in his best school English — heavily accented — “I am sorry I am late.”

My printing technician was a man by the name of Max Klieber, who was a native of Munich, a Social Democrat and trade union man who had emigrated to the states and came back to Germany in American uniform.

Max — when he opened his mouth in English, you could immediately spot him as a native of Munich. So, Klieber looked at Lembke and said, “Late? I should say a hell of a lot of late.” Lembke looked back at Klieber, smiled and said — in German — “You haven't always been an American.”

I decided right then and there that Lembke was smart enough to be trained as a journalist and he was the first man I hired.

Later, Lembke became a very prominent German TV personality. He coordinated the German TV coverage for several Olympic games, for soccer World Cups, and, also, he

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still is — this is now 38 years later — once a week he is the quiz master for the German equivalent for “What’s My Line”, which is carried by German, Austrian and Swiss-German TV. So, that is the first man that I hired.

The second one was a young woman with a Ph.D. in chemistry — also half Jewish. Her name was Hildegard Brucher. She became the science editor of the *Neue Zeitung*. Later she went into politics, first on the local level in Munich and then on the state level. Then — on the federal level — was elected to the Bundestag as an F.D.P. deputy, until her party pulled out of the coalition with the Social Democrats under Helmut Schmidt.

She was deputy to Foreign Minister Genscher. She opposed her party's pull-out from the coalition with the SPD. Of course, she resigned her position in the foreign ministry, but she is still in the Bundestag — sort of the elder stateswoman of her party for foreign affairs.

So, these are my prize recruits.

Q: You should be very proud.

KRAUS: I am. But, the most difficult assignment from Habe was to find an editor for the cultural part of the paper. He said I want somebody whose name was immediately recognizable to any German — you know — one of the big German names in literature.

Of course, he or she also had to be politically spotless. I said, Jesus, how are you going to do that? But then, I had a stroke of luck. Since I was the only — the whole editorial staff of the *Münchner Zeitung* — I was also the theater critic.

The first post-war stage performance in Munich was a political cabaret. I went to see the performance and write a review. Afterwards, went backstage —

Q: This was entirely German?

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KRAUS: Entirely German, yes. Afterwards, I went backstage and interviewed the producer and told him what I thought of the show. He said, well, our next program is going to be much better, because Erich Kastner is going to write some of our sketches.

I said, Erich Kastner, he still exists? You know, Kastner had been one of the great German Berlin writers during the 1930's. His books had been burned and nobody had heard from Kastner again. There had even been an obituary of him in a Swiss paper at a certain time.

But, no, Kastner was still alive. I said, where is he? Is he here in Munich? Lead me to him. So, he led me a couple of blocks away, where — in a boarding house without any window panes — there was just cardboard on the windows — I found Erich Kastner and his lifelong companion, Wiselotte Enderle sitting on a bed surrounded by cardboard suitcases.

I told Kastner the plans for the paper and would he become the cultural editor? He said, yes, of course.

So, this is really how I got into —Q: That was a piece of luck.

KRAUS: It was a pure piece of blind luck — pure piece of blind luck.

Q: You knew what to do with it?

KRAUS: Yes. Yes. So, this is really how I got into the American propaganda business or public affairs, later on.

Q: Now, you say the paper was produced for ten years? Published for ten years?

KRAUS: Yes.

Q: But, how long were you actually participating in this German program under military government?

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KRAUS: In Germany, until 1949. In 1948 — the first two editors of the Neue Zeitung were both European born journalists. There was Hans Habe and, when he went back to the states in late 1946 or early 1947, he was replaced by a man by the name of Hans Wallenberg.

Hans Wallenberg was a Berlin-born journalist. His father had been a leading editor in the Ullstein publishing house in Berlin, which was the biggest publishing house.

Wallenberg had been Habe's deputy and he succeeded him. Under Habe, I was in charge of the domestic German news, but Wallenberg then appointed me his deputy as editor-in-chief and publisher. I was executive editor.

Wallenberg had edited the “interim paper” in Berlin under Habe. When that paper was closed down, following the licensing of a German paper in the American sector, Habe had brought Wallenberg to Munich as his deputy.

Habe returned to the United States at the beginning of 1947. Wallenberg succeeded him as editor-in-chief and publisher of Die Neue Zeitung.

Q: I have heard that Habe and Wallenberg were both highly capable men, but widely differing personalities. Would you care to comment?

KRAUS: Well, there is no question in my mind that Habe was a propagandistic and journalistic genius. But, as editor of the official American German-language paper in Germany, Wallenberg was even better. He was a more profoundly cultured man than the flashy Habe, with an enormous all-round knowledge of history and literature.

Also, he was able to get the best performance from his German and Allied editorial staff. I use the word “Allied” because the uniformed men who held the leading positions, included also German and Austrian refugees from Hitler — who had spent the Nazi years in England — as well as those who had sought refuge in the United States.

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Under Wallenberg, the Neue Zeitung reached its summit. The paper's circulation climbed to 2.5 million copies per issue, surpassed in Western Europe only by the Daily Mirror in London.

The circulation figures were not a true accomplishment, because we could have sold twice that number had paper been available. In the days when Germany operated on a barter economy — where cigarettes, liquor and food were the only real currency — newspapers were among the few products which could be bought for their official price.

Q: You are saying that the circulation figures were by no means the measure of Die Neue Zeitung's influence?

KRAUS: No, they were certainly not. What made the Neue Zeitung, under Wallenberg's editorship, a paper that played a key role in the establishment of democracy in West Germany, were other things.

The cultural pages under Kastner's direction and with Wallenberg's guidance, acquainted German readers with German and world literature which had been banned under the Nazis. Wallenberg introduced an American-style editorial page which is now a standard feature of West German papers.

In 1947, city-wide elections were held in the four-power city of Berlin, where the Soviets had banned all parties except the Communists — now re-named the Socialist Unity Party — while democratic parties still existed in the American, British and French sectors.

When the Soviets threatened to reduce food rations in Berlin, unless their party won, Wallenberg wrote an editorial for the Neue Zeitung entitled “Fuerchtet Euch Nicht,” — Do Not Be Afraid — which is generally credited with having played a key role in the election victory of the democratic parties.

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It is the height of irony that Wallenberg had to defend himself against accusations of left-wing sympathies before the McCarthy committee in the 1950's.

Q: If the paper was so good and influential, why did the Allies decide to close it down?

KRAUS: Well, while the Neue Zeitung reached its high point of circulation and influence under Wallenberg, the seeds of its eventual decline had already been sown. One factor was, distribution difficulties inevitable for a paper distributed throughout Germany, put published in its southernmost large city.

By the time the paper went on sale in Hamburg or Bremen, the local papers, which went to press much later, had more up-to-date news. Another chief handicap was that the Neue Zeitung did not carry any advertising. All eight pages of a standard issue were filled exclusively with editorial matter. Ads are a feature which newspaper readers look for.

I go into all these details, because of the importance of Die Neue Zeitung for post-war Germany. In October 1985, on the fortieth anniversary of the publication of its first issue, the West German TV in Cologne broadcast a 45 minute retrospective of the Neue Zeitung, in which leading German writers and political figures called it the best newspaper ever published in Germany.

But, let's go back to 1947 and 1948. Wallenberg went back to the states in 1948, because he was a very temperamental man. Whenever something happened that went against his grain, he said, I quit.

Well, during most of the time that — the early years of his tenure — the chief of information control at OMGUS, Office of Military Government of the United States in Berlin, was General McClure, who had also been Eisenhower's principle psychological warfare advisor.

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McClure knew and appreciated Wallenberg and whenever Wallenberg had one of his temper tantrums and resigned, McClure let him come up to Berlin, massaged his ego and Wallenberg withdrew his resignation.

But, then McClure went home and he was replaced by an engineer colonel, Colonel Textor. The first time that Wallenberg flew into a tantrum and resigned, Textor said, well, if a man resigns, he has enough discharge points to go home, you accept his resignation — and he did go.

Wallenberg was completely flabbergasted, but there was nothing he could do.

Then, Wallenberg was succeeded by Jack Fleischer. Contrary to Habe and Wallenberg, Fleischer was U.S. born — in Milwaukee — had been at the outbreak of the war, the number two man in the United Press bureau in Berlin — had been interned in Bad Nauheim, together with American diplomats in Europe — until they were repatriated in May 1942 in an exchange for Nazi diplomats in the United States.

Then he went to Sweden as United Press correspondent, then came back to Germany to cover the waning days of the war, and was working again for United Press in Berlin when General Clay or Colonel Textor asked him to take over the editorship of the Neue Zeitung.

Now, Jack, is as nice and as honest a guy as I have ever met. He later joined the USIA and served as PAO in Vienna and Prague. But, Jack was not the right choice for the editorship of the Neue Zeitung, because, while his German was fluent, it was not native fluency and, also, he decided that Neue Zeitung should be run like an American newspaper.

Habe and Wallenberg had used the traditional German way of handling copy — namely, where each department chief sent his copy directly to the composing room without anybody sitting on a copy desk to see it.

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This led, among other things, to a tremendous number of duplications in the copy. Certain items could be under domestic politics or could be economics. Others could be economics or even cultural and so on.

So, when we were standing over the stove making up the paper, we spent a lot of time spotting and eliminating these duplications, also — when the galleys were ready. Jack Fleischer had decided that that was no way of running a newspaper, that there had to be a copy desk and everybody's copy had to be looked at before it went to the composing room.

Quite a number of the German department chiefs thought that this was censorship of their copy and resented it. Also, the cold war had really heated up by that time. I mean — you know — that was the time of the blockade of Berlin and so on.

The Neue Zeitung became, more and more pronouncedly, an American anti-Soviet propaganda paper. It was the natural thing, but some of the German staffers resented working on an American propaganda paper.

Anyway, there were a number of members of the German editorial staff who mounted a conspiracy against Fleischer. They had kind of a co-conspirator in Berlin in the person of chief of the Berlin bureau of the Neue Zeitung, who was an American lieutenant by the name of Enno Hobbing.

Hobbing had been in military intelligence before he was recruited for — or assigned to — the Neue Zeitung. Enno, if you had put him into a Nazi uniform, would have looked like the perfect S.S. man.

So, Enno sympathized with the Germans who were against Fleischer and was their Berlin liaison man. I will not go into all of the details, but, anyway, Fleischer was relieved of his

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duties and sent home. A man by the name of Kendall Foss who was also a correspondent in Berlin, was appointed to succeed him.

KRAUS RESIGNS FROM NEUE ZEITUNG

KRAUS: When Fleischer was booted out, I decided that, if such a precedent had been established, I did not want to work on that paper any more and I resigned at the same time as Fleischer.

I had just had my first child and was not ready to go back to the states — from one moment to the next — so I got a job with the Publications Control Division of Military Government for Bavaria, which supervised books and magazines publishers.

In July, 1949, I went back to the states. Then, in January, 1950, I was offered a job in Washington in the State Department IIA/IIE.

This is my history before — or how I came to the domestic side.

Q: Speaking of the State Department program, had there been any coordination or any relationship between the State Department's post-war activities in international information and that of military government in Germany or were they entirely separate?

KRAUS: No, the State Department gave political guidance to military government. For instance, Bob Murphy was a political advisor to Lucius Clay when he was military governor of Germany. Each military governor of Germany had a political advisor from the State Department.

Q: There was no operational responsibility by the State Department?

KRAUS: There was no operational responsibility. That was all under the military government.

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Q: At what point did that change? When you entered the State Department, IIA, the program in Germany was still administered by the military?

KRAUS: It was still administered by the military, yes.

Q: Seems to me there was a transition period?

KRAUS: I think there was a transition period. There was a transition period, but, since I was back in Washington, I am no longer quite clear when that transition came. You will have to talk to somebody who is not in USIA and never was — Henry Kellermann — I do not know whether you know him?

Q: I knew Henry Kellermann in 1950, when I was in the Bureau of German Affairs.

KRAUS: Yes, well, Henry Kellermann knows the full evolution very well.

Q: Are there any incidents, any particular anecdotes that you would like to recall from that German period? You have given a very good description of the process and your involvement but — interesting stories or —

KRAUS: Well, there are a number of interesting stories, but one sticks in my mind particularly. That was the 1948 presidential election.

Now, we printed in Munich which was at the extreme southern end of the American zone, but we distributed the paper all over the three western occupation zones, including Berlin. That, of course, meant that our early editions had to go to the press very early in order to meet the distribution schedule.

So, like — I suppose — every other newspaper in the world, we were prepared for a Dewey victory. I had my lead editorial all written. We had picked out the picture for the front page and were all ready to go with this.

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Then, as press time approached, it looked less and less like a sure thing any more. We kept on postponing, as much as possible, the start of the press run. In the meantime, I had written a second editorial for the Truman victory.

Q: Just in case?

KRAUS: Just in case. We had picked out some Truman pictures for the front page. Finally, the moment came when we could not wait any longer to go to press.

So, by that time, I had written yet a third editorial which left the outcome in doubt. The big problem was, what main headline do you choose that will not be hopelessly outdated by the time that this paper gets up to Bremen or Cologne and so on — where the local papers could wait until the result was definite.

Q: You did not want to be another Chicago Tribune?

KRAUS: Did not want to be another Chicago Tribune, but, there was in Munich, a licensed paper which actually did go to press with a Dewey victory headline like the Chicago Tribune. We did not want to do this.

So, I wrote a main headline — of which I am still proud. It read: “Truman surprises election experts.” Because, even if Dewey had won, the strength of Truman would have been the story.

Q: That is right. Very clever.

KRAUS: Yes. You see, by that time, I had learned something about newspapering.

Q: Any other incidents?

KRAUS: Yes, the other incident that I recall vividly happened shortly after Wallenberg had taken over the editorship and had appointed me managing editor.

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Wallenberg went on a trip back to the states. I do not know whether it was home leave — because, at that time, we did not really have home leave — but he was gone for several weeks, during which I was in charge of the paper.

While he was away, three foreign governments were yelling for my scalp and asking for me to be fired. The French, because I had printed a map of the German territories which had been lost at the end of World War II.

I included on that map, Alsace, Lorraine and — of course, the French said that was never German during the war. It was just occupied by the Germans, but it was always French. So, they were after me.

Then, I had run an article about the Polish expulsions of the Germans from Libya and the other territories which was quite critical of the brutal methods that they used. So, the Poles were after me.

I have forgotten at the moment which was the third allied government and what I had done, but, anyway, I was very happy when Wallenberg came back and took over again. I survived it.

KRAUS RETURNS TO WASHINGTON

Q: When you joined the State Department Information Administration, that is when I joined, too, in 1950, I was interning in the State Department. What was your actual job?

KRAUS: My actual job was that I had just moved to the other end of the information pipeline in Germany. There was in the press service what was then called the Mission Service Section — you know — this huge Room 240 — of what at that time was still 1778 Pennsylvania Avenue.

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Later, after Ted Streibert became Director of the newly- created and independent United States Information Agency, he conceived the idea of making the USIA address 1776, thus emphasizing the dramatic historic origin of the United States, whose story USIA would tell to the world. He succeeded in causing the Post Office to make the change.

There was a German-Austrian desk which supplied the information control in Germany and which was later to turn into the public affairs office with a special features service designed for Germany. I worked on that desk.

Among the people on my staff was Terry House, at that time still, Terry Thompson, and we had about six people on that staff. George Freimarck was also there. Later he switched over to the State Department. At one point, Madeline Meyer was on the desk and, very briefly, Julia Edwards.

Julia was a war correspondent for “Stars and Stripes” in Germany. She worked on the German-Austrian desk before she went to Japan. Julia is now a very successful author. She has just had a book published about women foreign correspondents.

Q: I knew the name was familiar but I could not immediately recall her.

KRAUS: So, I had some very good people working with me. The — of course — the German-Austrian branch got absorbed into the European branch of IPS and I was the chief of the photo and publications section.

Then I got other assignments in IPS. At one time, I was deputy to Marv Sorkin as the deputy chief of the whole editorial branch. I stayed with IPS until 1956 when I decided to switch over to the Foreign Service side.

KRAUS SWITCHES TO USIA FOREIGN SERVICE First Assignment Rome, then Milan

KRAUS: My first assignment was as program and policy officer in Rome.

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Q: That is a nice place to start.

KRAUS: That was a nice place to start. Walter Roberts was the deputy assistant director for Europe and he — sort of — was my rabbi for much of my career. I think that he got me that job.

In that job, incidentally, I succeeded Barbara White who had moved up to Turin as branch PAO. I, myself, cordially disliked this program and policy officer's job in Rome, because it was a pure paper-pushing job.

I keep on telling people that, unless I looked out my window and saw the palm trees in the embassy yard, I had the feeling I was still in Washington, and somebody had simply switched my in-box and my out-box around.

I never had any contact with Italians other than members of the local staff, except on one occasion when a genuine Italian contact wandered into my office. He was looking for somebody else, but I grabbed him and held onto him for dear life. This was my only real Italian contact.

Q: That must be very frustrating?

KRAUS: Yes, but in 1957 — as you may remember — when Arthur Larson was director of USIA, he had the good taste and judgement of making a statement, in Hawaii, in which he called the democrats, the party of treason — which did not sit very well with Lyndon Johnson who was chairman of the Senate subcommittee that handled State and USIA appropriations.

And, who was the other one on the House side? Oh, Congressman Rooney.

Q: Oh, Rooney, yes.

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KRAUS: Did not sit very well with them and there was the first meat axe budget cut. My job as program and policy officer was abolished. Ned Nordness was my PAO at that time.

Now, Ned was a sweet guy who hated to break bad news to people. He left that mainly to Chuck Blackman, his deputy, who was his hatchet man. Ned somehow felt that this was something he had to do himself and he called me up to his office and said he was sorry, but my job had been abolished.

However, if I was willing to make another move so soon again, he could offer me the branch PAO job in Milan. Well, I mean, I had been in Italy long enough by that time to know that the branch PAO in Milan was the best job in USIS Italy, because, except for the fact that the government sits in Rome, Milan, in every other respect, was the capital of Italy — financial, industrial, cultural, publication, and so on.

Q: Design?

KRAUS: Yes, you name it. It was there. I had a very hard time refraining from jumping up and down with joy and kissing Ned Nordness on both cheeks, but simply said, yes, of course, I would be willing to accept this job.

So, I was transferred to Milan in September of 1956 and stayed there until November of 1961. This, I think, was, in retrospect, probably the most satisfying assignment that I ever had in USIA, because I had an absolutely superb local staff.

Milan was 400 miles from Rome and, as long as I did not pull some outrageous boo-boos which caused screams audible in Rome, I could run my own program just as I saw fit.

Q: And you could certainly deal with the Italians?

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KRAUS: I certainly could deal with the Italians. By that time, I had mastered Italian sufficiently well so that I could even speak publicly without a script and be interviewed on radio and television and so on.

Q: That is quite an accomplishment.

KRAUS: Well, you know, I had, between school in Germany and college, eleven years of Latin. So, that helps a lot in learning Italian. I do have a certain gift for languages which goes along with an absolute inability to cope with exact sciences and techniques. I am one of these people who experiences a mild sense of triumph if he can change a fuse. So, that was a marvelous tour. The best I had during my whole career. But, then —

Q: That was three years?

KRAUS: Four years. From September of 1957 to November of 1961. But in August, 1961, I was spending a week of vacation in Cortina D'Ampezzo.

Q: Beautiful place.

KRAUS: Beautiful place. I had gone for a long walk on a cloudless summer day surrounded by the majesty of the dolomites and came back to the hotel and found a message to call USIS, Rome. I did call USIS, Rome.

TOM SORENSEN EFFECTS KRAUS TRANSFER TO PHNOM PENH

KRAUS: It was during the lunch hour. There was nobody in the office except a secretary. She sort of hemmed and hawed and then in a tone of voice as though she was about to tell me that my whole family had been wiped out in a car accident, she told me that there was a telegram in from Washington with direct transfer orders to Phnom Penh.

Q: Quite a contrast?

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KRAUS: Quite a contract. This was when Tom Sorensen had decided to break up the European club.

Q: Oh, 1961, wasn't it?

KRAUS: Yes, I was branded as a member of the European club, probably because of my

—

Q: Germany and Italy?

KRAUS: — Germany and Italy background. So, you know, when you know that you are coming to the end of a tour and speculating on your next assignment, you kind of indulge in a form of gallows humor and say, well, they will probably send me to Ouagadougou or Phnom Penh. And, there it was, Phnom Penh.

Q: Direct transfer?

KRAUS: Direct transfer. I went on a direct transfer to Phnom Penh as deputy PAO to Darrell Price, originally. Then he left and was replaced by Art Lee. I stayed in Phnom Penh from the end of 1961 until spring of 1964.

Once I got used to — over the cultural shock and the climate — the climatic shock in Phnom Penh — I liked that tour very much. It was one of my most memorable and enjoyable tours.

Q: That was before the tragedy?

KRAUS: Yes, I mean this was when — well, I was sort of in Phnom Penh until the end of, what I would call, the good period for the Americans.

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When we had very good relations with Sihanouk. In fact, in a way, USIS-Phnom Penh was almost the Ministry of Information for the Cambodian government. We put out a monthly newsreel which was distributed by the Cambodian government.

Q: French or Cambodian?

KRAUS: I think it was in Cambodian. Stan Moss was the motion picture officer at that time, and he was very good. Stan and his successor, the late and lamented Ralph White, also did some marvelous documentaries.

For instance, one of them was a film about the state funeral for Sihanouk's father which we called: "A Nation Mourns its King." Stan Moss also did a wonderful documentary about the Cambodian Royal Ballet which earned us a lot of brownie points with the Cambodians, because the Royal Ballet was the apple of the eye of Sihanouk's mother, Queen Kossamak.

These were wonderful pictures. We also — in our cultural center every year — we had a competition for Cambodian artists. The prize winning paintings were then printed in a calendar, which we distributed. I still have one of the paintings.

Things started going sour for us in 1963, after the coup d'etat against Diem in Saigon, because Sihanouk decided that, if we permitted this to happen — and probably even were involved in the overthrow and killing of Diem, our leading ally in southeast Asia — then we were no longer a reliable protector.

Sihanouk and his predecessors had always felt that the once mighty Khmer Empire would completely vanish from the map and be swallowed up by the hereditary enemies, Vietnam and Thailand, unless he had some outside power which played an important role — or dominant role — in Indochina to protect him.

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At first, it was the French, but after Dien Bien Phu, Sihanouk decided that the French had had it and he leaned on us. We had a very big military and economic aid mission there. We had a big English teaching program and had a lot of Cambodian students who went to the states. Jeff Sandel headed the English teaching program.

One of the people with whom I had lunch yesterday at DACOR, Mary Gray, also worked in Cambodia on the English teaching program. She was with the Asia Foundation.

Anyway, Sihanouk decided that he no longer could trust us — after the overthrow of Diem — and that he better look around for some other protectors. He started cuddling up to the Soviet Union and China and things went downhill very rapidly.

There was a “spontaneous popular demonstration” against the embassy and USIS office building and the USIS and British Council Libraries, during which they completely smashed things up. I already had my transfer orders by that time. Again, direct transfer from Phnom Penh to Stanleyville in the Congo.

Q: Another contrast?

KRAUS: Yes. Before I could leave, I sat in the office for a couple of extremely nervous hours wondering whether the mob would break into our building and kill us or beat us up or so on. It never happened, and, in retrospect, I know why — because, this riot was always under very strict government control.

In fact, it was controlled by two cabinet ministers from the control tower of a riot control truck which we had given to the Cambodians and, which was parked out there, still with the clasped hand symbol of AID on its side.

Since our landlord in the USIS office building was the chief of the Cambodian Air Force who was also Sihanouk's personal physician and, since he had just paid to have the

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building completely repainted, he was not going to allow a mob to come in there and ruin his paint job.

NEXT: THE CONGO

KRAUS: But, it was a nervous two hours and when I finally did leave for Stanleyville, I felt I was being pulled out of the front lines and sent to a relatively quiet area.

Q: You thought.

KRAUS: I thought. I was supposed to serve a year in Stanleyville, because of the unfinished tour in Phnom Penh. But, after three months and ten days there, the Simba rebels overran Stanleyville and I was fortunate enough to be able to implement our bug-out orders and get on the last evacuation flight.

I arrived in Leopoldville, the capital, where Ambassador Godley and John Mowinckel, who was the PAO, were waiting for me at the airport and said, we are glad to see you, you are the new press attach#.

The Congo had become, after Vietnam, the principal crisis spot in the world. There were about 100 correspondents from all over the world with nobody to take care of them, except the political section, which was already overworked.

So, I was appointed press attach# and saw the further developments in Stanleyville and the Simba rebellion from that vantage point. Five of my colleagues in the consulate in Stanleyville were taken hostages by the Simbas and remained hostage, together with lots of other hostages which the Simbas rounded up from all over the Eastern Congo for 111 days, until we mounted — together with the Belgians — a rescue mission called Operation Dragon Rouge — where a battalion of Belgian paracommandos jumped over the Stanleyville airport from American C-130 transport planes and rescued most of the hostages.

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It was another very exciting tour. Not as pleasant as in Phnom Penh.

Q: How long were you in Leopoldville then?

KRAUS: Until July of 1965.

Q: What other adventures did you have besides the handling of the Simba rebellion?

KRAUS: One adventure that I had was when I was in Stanleyville at the beginning. Steve Baldanza was the PAO. Shortly after I arrived in Stanleyville, in the Congo, we were more or less the government's Ministry of Information.

We also put out a newsreel. We put out a weekly paper and really, the support of the local government, was the only theme in our country plan that had any relevance to the Congolese. Now, the local government was thoroughly inefficient and corrupt. I think, if I had been a Congolese, I probably would have joined the Simbas, too.

The Congolese had never really accepted the fact that they were independent. They simply felt that we had replaced the Belgians as the foreign power and would pull the strings on the Congolese government. Because the government was so corrupt and oppressive, the anti-government feeling reflected itself on the United States.

Also, after I had seen what was going on for a couple of weeks, I sat down with John Clingerman, who at that time was the consul and said, you know, John, the more active we are, the more anti-American sentiment we breed.

Therefore, if you concur, what I plan to do is to keep the center open, have our daily film screenings there, distribute the weekly paper. But, I am no longer going to send mobile units into the bush to show films and distribute the paper. He said, yes, I agree with you, that is the thing to do. That is what I did.

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However, I made one big mistake. I never got Baldanza's agreement to this policy in writing and on Baldanza's staff was a man by the name of Cliff Hackett — I do not know whether you know him. Cliff Hackett was the field operations officer and his job really was to make sure that we got the materials that we needed — the films, the newspapers, the vehicles, and so on.

He was one grade junior to me. He was an FSIO-4, whereas I was a FSIO-3 at that time. But Baldanza let Hackett write my performance rating, and I was stupid enough not to protest it. Hackett was a man who believed in doing things for doing's sake, whether it really made any sense or not.

Therefore, he wrote an absolutely devastating performance rating of me. I think he rated me one on about six factors. It was during the time when you did not see your rating until you got back to Washington. When I was in Leopoldville as press attach#, —

Q: The bad rating was in Stanleyville?

KRAUS: It was done while I was in Stanleyville. I think the deputy PAO, who was Martin Ackerman, a sweet guy, was wing officer. I think that he registered a mild dissent, but did not want to make Hackett look bad.

Anyway, in the summer of 1965, Big Dan Oleksiw, who at that time was the deputy to Mark Lewis as Assistant Director of Africa, came to Leopoldville with, among other things, instructions to ask for my resignation or otherwise — told me that I would be terminated — not with extreme prejudice, but terminated nevertheless.

Well, by that time, Mac Godley, the ambassador, and Mowinckel, thought I was the greatest thing since sliced bread, the way I handled the press attach# job, and told Dan Oleksiw so. So, Dan never carried out his instructions and I survived.

Q: Isn't that infuriating?

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KRAUS: Yes.

Q: I have been through something of the same sort.

KRAUS: But, it held back my career considerably —that rating. It was not until I was in Paris, where Burnett Anderson wrote an absolutely lyric rating about me, that I finally got my FSIO-2

Q: How long were you in Leopoldville?

KRAUS: From August, 1964 until July, 1965. Then, I was transferred back to Washington. Since my year-and-a-half in the Congo had stamped me as a French speaking Africa expert, I was put in charge of the French broadcast to Africa for Voice of America.

KRAUS AT VOICE OF AMERICA

Q: Tell me about that period.

KRAUS: That was a very interesting period. I originally tried to get out of that assignment, because my whole previous experience in a media service had been in IPS, and I had sort of the standard up-town prejudice against Voice of America. I tried to get out of this job and almost made it because, when I finally decided that I wanted to look at the performance rating that Hackett had written on me, and asked for my file, I was told that my file was out and Mort Glatzer had it. Mort, at that time, was — I think —chief or deputy chief of ICS.

So, I called up Mort, who was a good friend from the Italy days, and said, Mort, what are you doing with my file? He said, well, I think I have a job that might interest you. How would you like to take the Hand Tools, USA Exhibit to the Soviet Union for five months?

Q: That would have been very interesting.

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KRAUS: I said I would love it. So, I was assigned to the exhibits branch and started taking Russian lessons, although that was not an essential. You have these interpreters that accompany each exhibit, but I wanted to learn some anyway.

But then, the Russians had to show their displeasure with what we were doing in Vietnam, and put the whole cultural program in the deep freeze. The Hand Tools Exhibit left only much, much later. By that time, I had decided I was going to take the Voice of America job after all and the two years that I ran French to Africa was, again, a very satisfying experience to me, because —

Q: For one thing, that is one of the best staffs — on the Voice of America.

KRAUS: Yes, in fact, Henry Krieger, who was my deputy, is now the chief of the branch. Running a language service in the Voice is the closest thing you can get to having a field job in Washington, because, again, unless you cause screams from ambassadors, you can put anything on the air that you see fit.

Q: And, you are in touch with the audience?

KRAUS: I was in touch with the audience, very much so. In fact, in 1966, VOA sent me on a six-week trip to 11 African countries to see what the programs sounded like on the receiving end.

That was a very interesting experience. Our programs went over very well. I mean, I started, for instance, the Voice of America breakfast show to Africa.

Q: Worked with George Collinet —

KRAUS: I invented George Collinet — as disc jockey — for the breakfast show.

Q: Maxi Voom Voom?

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KRAUS: That is for sure, Maxi Voom Voom. In fact, during my trip to Africa, one of the stops was in Douala where George's mother ran a nightclub. George had written to her that I was coming, so she invited me to dinner and to watch the show in her nightclub. She had rounded up all the local notables, including Monsieur Le Cure and so on.

George, of course, later on, almost got stuck in Douala when VOA sent him on a goodwill trip to Africa and his mother decided that he should stay there. So, she took his passport and refused to give it to him.

George finally got out of Douala by having his father, who owned a plantation at Cameroon, smuggle him across the border into — I do not know — one of the neighboring countries, and -

Q: I did not know this story.

KRAUS: Oh — and he went to the French Embassy and they gave him another passport and he was able to come back to the states. But —

Q: Is this before you were hosted by his mother or after?

KRAUS: This was after I had been hosted by his mother. But, let me go back for a minute to the Congo and tell you another very funny Congo story.

Charlotte Loris was the executive officer in Leopoldville and she is a marvelous lady. I mean, I think none of the USIS people could have survived the first few months in the Congo without Charlotte. She saw to it that they had an initial supply of booze and food. Because there was practically no food available on the local market, you had to rely on the diplomatic supply houses, like Ostermann Peterson or Peter Justesen.

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Charlotte met me at the airport on the day that I arrived in the Congo for briefings in Leopoldville, before I went up to Stanleyville. On the same day, Bob Franklin had also arrived in the Congo for assignment as branch PAO in Coquilhatville.

In the evening, Charlotte took us out to dinner, together with an American Air Force Major, Jay Meester, who was the pilot of Mobutu's personal plane and who had actually flown me out of Stanleyville — or who was later to fly me out of Stanleyville — because this is the first day I arrived in the Congo.

Charlotte had also invited along two Foreign Service national employees, a young Belgian woman by the name of Mireille Moens, who later married Jay Meester, and a young Greek woman named Marina Stroumtzis, who was the USIS secretary in Stanleyville, but was going back to Greece on vacation.

We had dinner in the only Chinese restaurant in Leopoldville. The story of how that Chinese restaurant started is quite interesting. When the Congo Brazzaville — right across the river — broke relations with Taiwan and recognized Mainland China, the press attaché of the Taiwanese Embassy, in Leopoldville, who was an enterprising young man, brought the Ambassador's cook across the river and set him up in the restaurant business in Leopoldville.

We were sitting in there having our after dinner cognac when two very scruffy Congolese policemen carrying rifles walked into the restaurant and started checking the identity cards of the younger and more attractive female guests. Neither Mireille nor Marina had their I.D. cards along. The two cops said they had to arrest them and identified themselves as members of the Police Pour La Protection de L'Enfant; The Brigade for the Protection of Children.

We protested and said that, obviously, these young women were not children. They worked for the American Embassy. But, no, the cops said they have to come to the police

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station. Charlotte said, under no circumstances will I allow them to go in the police car with these people. She told Jay to go back to Mireille's house and bring their I.D. cards. Charlotte and the two girls and I went in Charlotte's VW to the police station.

Eventually, Meester showed up with the I.D. cards and we all got sprung. In the meantime, however, some guests in the restaurant had witnessed this scene and called up the duty officer at the American Embassy, saying members of the American Embassy have been arrested by the police.

So, Jack Davison spent a sleepless night going all around the various police stations in Leopoldville looking for these two young girls.

Q: These cops were obviously just looking for some female companionship?

KRAUS: That is right, but, I mean, that will show you how Charlotte — who, of course, knew the country — how she operated.

Q: Tough lady.

KRAUS: Yes, Charlotte, incidentally — since I mentioned the visit of Big Dan Oleksiw — when he was supposed to fire me — Dan wanted to see the Congo by night and Charlotte took him to a Congolese nightclub and afterwards took him, after dark, to the Stanley Monument which is on the outskirts of town.

There is Stanley gazing across the river, shading his eyes with his hand, and the standing joke is that he says, I got the Congo up to here. While they were looking at the statue, two other policemen came with rifles and wanted to arrest them and Dan —

Q: Okay, Max, back to the VOA days.

KRAUS: Back to the VOA days.

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Q: You found them rewarding?

KRAUS: I found them very rewarding. You see, VOA — as you well know — has sort of standard program patterns which are sacrosanct. That goes back to the days of the war and New York. There is the news and then there is a commentary and there is the back half and having been in — well — in Europe, I know that the French do not have this program format.

What they do in their newscasts, they immediately go into items which normally would go into the back half. They have commentaries and press reactions and go through one story quite thoroughly from all angles before they go onto the next story.

I said, since we are broadcasting to audiences who are used to the French type of broadcasting, we ought to do the same thing. Being a Foreign Service officer, who was just going to serve a tour in VOA, I was not scared about tilting against sacred cows.

I finally got the authorization to start, in the French branch, what we call our Journal Parle, which follows the —

Q: Journal Parle?

KRAUS: Yes.

Q: This was also the John Chancellor period where experimentation was encouraged?

KRAUS: This is right. That is right. I do not know whether you know Pierre Pouillon?

Q: Sure.

KRAUS: Pierre came aboard during the time I was running French to Africa. Pierre was the ideal man to run this Journal Parle.

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It was a very satisfying period and I enjoyed it. I would not have minded staying on, except for one thing. I was separated from my wife who left me while we were in Cambodia and had moved back to Italy with the kids.

Eventually we signed a separation agreement and I paid child support and alimony. When you come back to Washington — as you very well know — especially from a hardship post — all of a sudden you only have your salary to live on — no housing allowance, no cost of living allowance, no education allowance and so on. Your money goes awfully fast.

I tried to put my younger daughter into a public school in Arlington. This was during the blackboard jungle days in the schools and Debbie heard language that she had never heard in her life. There were all of these hard kids, tough kids, drugs and so on. She came back in tears every day and said she could not hack it.

So, I finally decided I had to put her into a private school. I put her into Flint Hill School in Vienna, Virginia. That, of course, made an even bigger dent in my finances.

I finally went to Russ Cox who was the personnel officer in VOA and said, Russ, either you get me another overseas assignment or the agency may find itself in the somewhat embarrassing situation of a Grade 3 officer applying for welfare, because I am going broke.

PARIS ASSIGNMENT

KRAUS: Russ saw what the situation was like and he got me an assignment to Paris. Even though it was a very expensive post, I did have all of these allowances and I was able to survive financially again.

Q: It is not exactly a hardship post.

KRAUS: It is not exactly a hardship post.

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Q: So, those were the circumstances of your leaving VOA? I had not realized that you —

KRAUS: That was the circumstances under which I left VOA. Otherwise, I enjoyed my tour of VOA and would not have minded staying on until, in due course of events, I would get another assignment abroad.

Q: Russ was very good with the human side of the place. I have always appreciated that.

KRAUS: Yes.

Q: So, you went to Paris as what?

KRAUS: As information officer.

Q: Which involved doing what?

KRAUS: Information officer —

Q: I know, but —

KRAUS: As information officer, I dealt mainly with the French electronic media, radio and television, because we had a press attach# who dealt mainly with the written press. Although I got involved in that, too.

Q: Who was that —

KRAUS: At the beginning, it was Nick King. Then, after Chip Bohlen, who was my first ambassador in Paris — left and was replaced by Sargent Shriver. Sarge decided that Nick King was not the kind of press attach# that he wanted and he started shopping around for a new press attach# and finally settled on Bill Payeff.

In addition to dealing with the electronic media, my information section also did quick overnight translation into French of important documents from The Wireless File and

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distributed it to leading French newspapers — especially Le Monde, which was always interested in full texts.

We also published a magazine called “Informations et Documents.”

Q: Still do?

KRAUS: No.

Q: Paris has dropped that?

KRAUS: Yes, has dropped it on instructions from Washington. I mean, I was already familiar with Informations et Documents, because we used to distribute it in Phnom Penh —

Q: How about in Africa, too?

KRAUS: Yes, it went to all French speaking posts worldwide. I was the publisher of Informations et Documents, but we had two extremely talented French national employees, Pierre Ferenczi and Marc Saporta who actually did most of the editing.

When I came to Paris, Lee Brady was PAO. I had been told in Washington, you may think you are in charge of Informations et Documents, but actually that magazine is run by Pierre Ferenczi and Mark Saporta. They have known Lee Brady forever and ever.

They will deal directly with Lee. Your name will appear on the masthead, but you will not have anything to say. So, I moved rather slowly and did not try to mess with the copy that Ferenczi and Saporta had prepared. Gradually they saw that I knew what I was doing and voluntarily showed me copy before it went into the magazine.

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In fact, the two collaborated on a two-volume comparative encyclopedia of the Soviet Union and the United States, where there were — on facing pages — always articles about the same subject in the United States and the Soviet Union.

Q: Fascinating.

KRAUS: They presented me with copies of this encyclopedia and wrote a dedication in it of which I am still very proud. They said, “To Max Kraus from the authors who only regret that they did not have the benefit of his collaboration and wisdom in the preparation of this work.”

Q: That is mighty flattering.

KRAUS: The other thing that we pioneered in Paris, in television, were the television cooperative projects — where we would make a financial contribution to French networks exchange for direct projection rights of the programs in USIS centers.

The first case where we did this collaboration was in a wonderful series of documentaries called “The Great Battles of World War II,” which was prepared by a team of Daniel Costelle, Henri de Turenne and Jean Louis Guillaud.

This team really pioneered the documentary technique where you take historical film footage and then intercut it with interviews with eye witnesses of the battles that they were treating. Costelle always came to me and wanted my help in locating French speaking American eye witnesses to battles.

Two of the eye witnesses I found for him were Bill Payeff, because Costelle was looking for somebody who landed on Omaha Beach in the first wave on D-Day, and Bill did.

Q: I did not know that.

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KRAUS: Oh, yes, Bill gave a marvelous interview. I mean — things that touched your heart strings — how scared he was wading ashore and so on. I later on accused him of being one of the great method actors of our day.

Q: That was before he developed the belly?

KRAUS: Yes. Another much better known eye witness that I found for Costelle was when he was doing the battle of Italy. Our defense attach# in Paris at that time was Major General Vernon A. Walters who had been General Mark Clark's Aide-de-Camp during the Italian Campaign.

I took Costelle over to Dick Walters' office. Walters immediately started spewing out fascinating anecdotes in absolutely impeccable, accent free, slangy French. Costelle was drooling over this thing.

Finally, he said to Walters — who accepted to be interviewed — General, there is one request I have, either you agree to wear your full American uniform with decorations, when we interview you, or otherwise, try to put on a slight fake accent in French. Otherwise, nobody will believe that you are an American general.

Q: Apparently he speaks several languages just that way?

KRAUS: Oh, yes, he speaks German and Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. He is a fabulous linguist.

So, this was the first TV cooperative we did.

Q: That is an auspicious beginning.

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KRAUS: Yes, and, when they did the Battle of the Pacific — which, of course, required considerable cost in travel — we chipped in. Then, we continued to do other similar projects with French television.

I think the most memorable one was a documentary which was produced by Danielle Hunebelle, a French woman journalist, very experienced and also a documentary producer. Danielle had interviewed Henry Kissinger in the United States and got a mortal crush on him. She later on wrote a book in which she describes with utter candor her unsuccessful pursuit of Henry Kissinger. Danielle had sold an idea to the news director of the second French television network, Jacqueline Baudrieri, who was running a weekly magazine called, “Le Troisieme Oeil,” The Third Eye.

Hunebelle wanted to do a sequence called “La Societe Des Mes Reves,” The Society of My Dreams — where she would pick a young French factory worker and tell him, “You must have thought about countries that might interest you, where you might want to live? I will give you a choice of three countries that you want to see and we will take you there. I will follow along with the camera team and look over your shoulder.”

Q: What an intriguing idea.

KRAUS: Yes. The young factory worker chose three countries; Cuba, the United States and Japan. Danielle had already told us, I will guarantee that one of the countries that he will choose will be the United States.

So, we gave her, I think, about \$25,000 for this project. We could not have asked for a better result, because the young factory worker said in the end, “Cuba, it is just one big jail. I visited a jail in Las Vegas and I would rather be in a jail in Las Vegas than a free man in Cuba.”

Q: So, he went to all three countries?

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KRAUS: Yes.

Q: *Boy.*

KRAUS: He said Japan may be all right for the Japanese, but it is not for me. But, the United States, there I could live happily. I think the reason why Danielle Hunebelle wanted to do this project is because, when she came to Washington, she hoped that she could have the young man received by Nixon and by Henry Kissinger.

Q: *So she could see Henry Kissinger?*

KRAUS: So she could see Henry Kissinger. Well, it did not come off, because Kissinger was not in town. But every time that Kissinger came to Paris, she called me up and said,, you must tell Henry that I have to see him. She finally gave up her pursuit and Henry married Nancy rather than Danielle Hunebelle — but, Danielle tried.

Well, of course, there are lots and lots of other anecdotes about Paris.

Q: *So, let us have some.*

KRAUS: The principal one is the change that came about when Bohlen left and Shriver took over. Because Bohlen was in Paris — you know — when de Gaulle was at the Elys#e in his most anti-American period.

He had kicked out NATO headquarters and withdrawn from the military command structure of NATO and missed no chance of hitting us over the head. There was absolutely no way in which we had of working on common policies with the French.

So, Bohlen, who spoke absolutely fluent French, kept a very low profile, made relatively few public appearances, but kept in touch with the French government and reported his

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conversations back to Washington and briefed the French government on our foreign policy.

Then, Shriver came, who had no diplomatic experience other than the running of the Peace Corps.

Q: Which is not diplomatic experience?

KRAUS: Which is not diplomatic experience. He spoke execrable French, but, he is a communicator. Burnett Anderson, who replaced Lee Brady, said, actually Shriver knew much more French than he let on — that he had told Burnett once — my French is absolutely at the perfect level where I want it. When I speak French, the Frenchmen understand me, even if they speak no English, and Americans understood my French, even if they knew not a word of it.

Shriver decided that he could not operate in the same manner as Bohlen. He very shrewdly decided that he had something which Bohlen did not have and that was the Kennedy connection. The Kennedy's were extremely popular in France. Shriver decided that he would make himself highly visible, do lots of traveling, make lots of public appearances —

Q: Redesigned the interior of the residence?

KRAUS: Yes, that among other things, too, and make himself the crystallization point of the very large reservoir of goodwill toward the United States that still existed in France in spite of de Gaulle's fulminations.

He was very successful in doing that. He would have been even more successful except for one thing. He was habitually and always late for everything, including for parties at his own residence.

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We — working guests — arrived the obligatory fifteen minutes before the party started, and guests would arrive and ask where was Monsieur L'Ambassadeur. We always alibied that he was unavoidably detained in the office by a very important telephone call from the Secretary of State.

It might have worked, except for one time, and that was that the residence in Avenue D'Iena had only one entrance from the street, and, in order to get to the family quarters, you had to pass by the rooms where the reception was taking place —which were open.

About five or ten, sometimes fifteen minutes after the guests had started arriving, you would see Shriver sneaking in, in sweaty tennis clothes and make a dash upstairs to change. That, of course, does not go over well in a country where punctuality is the politeness of kings.

Shriver also was very unorthodox in his — let us say — public affairs programs. In fact, he drove his officers to distraction with some of his far out ideas.

For instance, Shriver had arranged for the American Davis Cup Team to come to France for a series of exhibition matches and clinics. He wanted to kick off this tour of France with a very highly and visible event where it would be covered by the press. He asked Bob Anderson, who was the chief of the political section at that time, to ask the French whether we could mark out a tennis court in Place de la Concord —Q: Oh, my God.

KRAUS: — to play an exhibition doubles match in which he would play. Of course, Anderson was laughed out of the Quai D'Orsay, because, if you would mark out a tennis court, it would have caused the most monstrous traffic jam in history.

Q: Traffic is impossible as it is — of course.

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KRAUS: Finally, he had to settle for playing in the private tennis court of the French Senate in the Palais de Luxembourg, but only after we had made another attempt to mark out the tennis courts in the Place de l'Hotel de Ville.

Lee Brady did not go along with these unorthodox ideas of Shriver. Therefore, Shriver decided that he needed another PAO and Lee was permitted to go back to the states and Burnett Anderson took over.

Q: I do not think Bernie Anderson would be any more sympathetic —

KRAUS: Well, but — he had a better way of handling Shriver. He kind of made Shriver think that he had decided it was a bad idea, but he did some very successful things.

For instance —

Q: You mean Shriver?

KRAUS: Well, Shriver suggested things. For instance, in the 1968 presidential election, we had a big party in the Hotel Talleyrand — an election party. We had converted the Hotel Talleyrand into an American style election headquarters with tally boards and everything else. We decided to invite all the Parisian V.I.P.'s, including show business people.

Shriver had even arranged to have a live donkey and a small elephant in the lobby. This was a wild success. The French television and radio did live broadcasts from the Talleyrand and it was a smashing success. So, Burnett knew how to handle Shriver, which Lee never did — because, Lee is a crusty man who likes to do things according to the book.

The other very exciting thing in Paris was, of course, the events of May and June, 1968 — the student riots on the Left Bank, which coincided with the beginning of the Vietnam negotiations in Paris.

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You had the whole world press. I think it was the first example of media overkill in history — for the beginning of the Vietnam negotiations. That, of course, was more or less a one day photo opportunity when the talks opened.

I was put in charge of accrediting the media for the briefings of the U.S. spokesmen, and, also, to set up a press working room in what is now the restaurant of the Hotel Crillon.

The press came for the opening of the Vietnam talks, but then stayed on to cover what was going on in the Left Bank, until Paris was paralyzed by the strikes. I mean, the airports were closed. The railroads were on strike. The Metro was on strike.

There were no newspapers being published and it got to be increasingly impossible for — especially the television people — to get their stories out of Paris. TV also was on strike.

For a while, they took their tapes up to Brussels by car and sent them from there. Then, gasoline started to run short and that became impossible. They finally went home. It was a very, very exciting period in France.

Q: How long did that period last?

KRAUS: May and June, 1968.

Q: What about some exciting adventures?

KRAUS: There are so many, I do not know where to begin.

Q: It is your choice.

KRAUS: One of the things that happened in Paris was that we had lots of visits from astronauts, who always came for the big Paris air show.

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I was put in charge of their media relations. Later on, we got the first moon rock. Well, the Apollo 11 crew, of course, came over — Borman was the first of the astronauts who came.

The, the Apollo 9 crew came for one of the air shows and then Apollo 11 came. That is a whole long story which I will not bore you with because it is in the manuscript of the book that I have written.

Then, after the Apollo 11 mission, NASA sent a moon rock to Europe, which was first shown in England and then in France. I was sent over to London to bring the moon rock back —

Q: Custodian?

KRAUS: — to France. It was shown all over France. We had made an arrangement with one of the so-called radio peripheriques — you know — the radio stations that have studios in Paris, but their transmitter is outside of France with Europe #1, which had an especially good space commentator.

Europe #1 agreed to co-sponsor and finance the showings of the moon rock outside of Paris. I spent a lot of time babysitting the moon rock around France. Again, that is in a chapter of the book, so I will not repeat it here.

That was another highlight of my stay in Paris. I had a lot of fun.

Q: Is that enough that you want to talk about Paris?

KRAUS: Yes, I think so, because, again, a lot of the other Paris anecdotes are in the book. Lew has seen the manuscript and Jack O'Brien, too. I will be glad to let you read it, too.

I think that I do not have to repeat this all on tape now, because there are lots and lots of fascinating stories.

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GENEVA: THE LAST ASSIGNMENT

Q: Are you not going to talk about Geneva, because you have a book about Geneva, too?

KRAUS: No — I mean — this is really not a book about Geneva. This is a book about my — it is a series of Foreign Service stories that I have been dining out on for years. I finally yielded to the pressure of people who have asked me to put it down on paper and did so. That book is now being published.

The publication date has been postponed and the title is, “They All Come to Geneva: and Other Tales of a Public Diplomat.” It has actually as many stories about Cambodia, the Congo, and Italy in it as it has about Geneva.

Q: Shall we talk about Geneva for a while?

KRAUS: Okay. Let us talk about Geneva for a while.

Q: Did you go directly from Paris there or did you come back to the states?

KRAUS: No, I went on a direct transfer again. I seemed to specialize in direct transfers.

Q: You certainly did.

KRAUS: Geneva, of course, is different from all the conventional USIS posts in the sense that you do not have a country program.

You are accredited to the European office of the United Nations and the other international organizations. Your audience, really, is the media that is accredited in Geneva and the other correspondents who come to Geneva to cover special stories.

My job as public affairs advisor was to act as spokesman for the important delegations that did business in Geneva including, for instance, the SALT II delegation when Alex Johnson

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headed it and the CSCE delegation during the Geneva phase and the whole number of other things.

Let me tell you an anecdote about Geneva. I arrived in Geneva in September of 1972 and succeeded George Wynne. Shortly after I arrived in Geneva, I had to do a new country plan. I looked at George Wynne's country plan and made a few changes and sent it back to Washington.

The year after that, I looked at this country plan again and found that all the things that I thought were going to keep us busy and occupied had not happened and a lot of unexpected things had happened — mainly —in connection with the Kissinger visits to Geneva when he was wheeling and dealing about the Mid-East on his shuttle trips.

Q: Because it is a news connected job?

KRAUS: Yes. So, I decided that writing a country plan for Geneva was really useless and I did not send in a country plan. I never got any queries from Washington about the country plan until I was already officially off the payroll in 1975, when I retired.

Q: When you retired?

KRAUS: Yes, but they had extended me until my successor, Dan Hafrey could arrive. One day I got a telephone call from our desk officer in Washington who said, Max, there must be something wrong with our files, we cannot find an up-to-date country plan for Geneva in our files.

I said I have a very simple explanation for that. I have not submitted a country plan for the last two years. He said, oh?

Q: I hope you explained why.

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KRAUS: I did. The following year the agency decided that Geneva should not do a country plan, because you just cannot predict what is going to happen.

Q: That is a very good story.

KRAUS: After five-and-a-half years in Paris, and three years in Geneva, I still had a year to go on my tour, but I decided that the next assignment would be too horrible even to think about.

Since, including my military service, I had 34 years of government service, and, at that time there was a ceiling on the executive branch salaries, I decided to turn in my suit and see what I could do other than flacking for the U.S. government and retired.

Q: Are there any other Geneva stories that you —

KRAUS: Lots of Geneva stories. Again, they are in the book and you are welcome to look at the manuscript.

Q: Well, now, we have gotten you to the retirement point. Could I go all the way back before you even went in the Army?

KRAUS: Sure.

Q: Did you complete your college? Get your degree before you went in the Army?

KRAUS: Yes. Yes, I did. I had not quite completed my secondary education in Germany. I went to a gymnasium which is a nine-year course. In 1937, I came to the states, because a friend of my family who was living in Boston —who was a very well-to-do man — convinced my parents that, as a half Jew, I had no future in Germany.

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He offered to let me come to the states and live with him and he would put me through college. Then, he said that, when you stand on your own feet, you can send for the rest of your family.

So, I came over in 1937. I immediately enrolled in a prep school in Cambridge — Brown and Nichols — where I completed my secondary education. In September, 1937, I was admitted to Harvard.

Q: That is quite an accomplishment.

KRAUS: Yes. I graduated from Harvard in 1941, tried to enlist in the Army, but my enlistment was turned down, because I was not a U.S. citizen, yet. But, I could volunteer for immediate induction under the draft and did that.

I had planned to go into teaching and was teaching in a small prep school in Boston, called St. Phillips Preparatory School. I found out that you cannot get a teaching job without teaching experience, if you only have a Bachelor's degree.

I was so desperate to get teaching experience that I finally accepted that job at the school — teaching German and Latin — for the royal salary of \$50 a month. That is when I decided to escape into the U.S. Army.

Q: It is interesting that you could not volunteer as an enlistee, but you could volunteer as a draftee?

KRAUS: That is right.

Q: I just wanted to add that little footnote there.

KRAUS: Okay.

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End of interview