

Oral History Interview

with

DOUGLAS ENSMINGER

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Columbia, Missouri

June 16 and July 7, 1976

by Harry S. Taylor, University of Missouri at Kansas City

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TAYLOR: Dr. Ensminger, at the time the inaugural address was made, of course no one knew exactly what the Point IV program would be. Do you remember what a general consensus in the Department of Agriculture was regarding Point IV?

ENSMINGER: Both Stanley Andrews and I believed that Point IV was extending our know-how, but interpreted to mean our know-how in terms of how one solves problems. Very early in the

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interpretation, operationally given to Point IV in extending know-how, meant that we take to the other countries our institutional structures, our approaches to doing things, and in the field of agriculture increasingly over the years, it has meant somehow another taking our agricultural technology.

At that time of Truman's inaugural address in 1948 John Hanna was president of Michigan State University and was president of the Land-Grant College Association. It was in this capacity he sent President Truman a telegram offering the cooperation and assistance of the land-grant colleges in carrying out what he interpreted to be the meaning of Truman's Point IV program. At that time it was Hanna's interpretation, and this was the reason for offering the land-grant institutions cooperation, that Truman had in mind a far more simpler approach

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to Point IV development than the people who related to the European Recovery Program and economists later injected into the program which was economic development. Hanna saw really the role of the land-grant universities in this, going back to their early history and the role they played in helping farmers find solutions to problems, and in helping this nation understand the kinds of policies and programs that we were going to need to have our own agriculture succeed.

This is very much what Hanna had in mind in offering the service of the universities back in 1948, which is to help these countries develop a technology which meets their needs, rather than transport our technology to them.

TAYLOR: Was there any discussions concerning the possibility of transferring the philosophy

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of the American land-grant college of this period to the institutions of higher learning in the underdeveloped world?

ENSMINGER: Well, there was very much of this in Hanna's point of view, because Hanna shared the basic philosophy of M. L. Wilson, whom I was then an assistant to. Wilson was Under Secretary of Agriculture. He is given credit for having designed most of the New Deal programs. M. L. Wilson said over and over again, and this was echoed by Hanna in the early period, "It was

not then, it isn't now, our institutional structures and our advanced technology, that the developing countries need. What we had to offer then is what we have to offer now -- a philosophy of an educational institution helping to find solutions to problems and in helping design programs to solve those problems."

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TAYLOR: Well, do you think that the problem-solving approach of the American university, particularly the land-grant institutions, and as Extension developed around it, do you think this would have been compatible with the English concept of higher education that was quite literally transported into the countries of the Third World?

ENSMINGER: Well, we all found very early that it was practically impossible to build anything that was applied into the existing institutions of higher learning that were from British heritage.

TAYLOR: Historically we'd been involved in several types of programs at the Institute for Inter-American Affairs through the World Bank. Did anyone at that time envision that perhaps Point IV would bring a lot of divergent groups

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together, and perhaps give some simple directions to our foreign aid to underdeveloped areas?

ENSMINGER: I don't think we were that far along in our thinking. At the time Truman enunciated the Point IV program, we were very much involved in the ERP, European Recovery Program. The ERP was a program to provide money as resources. The European community had traditions of doing things, they had leadership, they had the institutional structures and what they needed was massive inputs of money. And that was the Marshall Plan.

Well, I have repeatedly felt that if it had not been for the very recent experience with the ERP, which was a program of money, that Truman's Point IV program would have become quite a different program. But it's interesting that in the very early stages it was the county agents and the vocational

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agriculture teachers who were sent abroad. I used to say that the people who were then looking at the program were talking about sending county agents and vocational agriculture teachers and maybe a pocketful of nickels. In other words, we were not then oriented to massive economic aid in terms of the developing countries.

Well, as I look back on this process in terms of what happened, many of the people who were actively involved in the ERP began to drift home, began to find themselves involved in the State Department carrying out of the Point IV program, and they just couldn't quite see how we could make a contribution to these developing countries unless we really talked in terms of economic

aid. And it didn't take very long for their point of view to prevail. And the interesting thing to me is

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that if you go back to my own experience in India, I went over there in 1951, which was three years after Truman enunciated the Point IV program, and Ambassador [Chester] Bowles came over, arriving there within weeks after I arrived, with a very clear mandate from the President to find appropriate ways to help India with its development.

Bowles was oriented to what he interpreted the Truman concept to be of helping develop people and helping people carry out their own development. It's also of interest, that when India gained independence, out of the colonial period into independence, Nehru and the other political leaders very early began to look for ways and means of keeping your pledge to the masses of the people that they made in the struggle for independence, which was essentially this: "You join us in the

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struggle for independence and freedom and when we become a free nation, I pledge that as your leader, the resources of government will be devoted to improving the conditions of the masses of poor people.

Well, India was moving to formulate programs to really carry out the Gandhian concept: the Gandhian philosophy of village and rural development. So, when Bowles came along, looking at India in the concept of the Truman Point IV, he sought the opportunity for the U.S. to play a role of providing considerable technical help in terms of how do you do something, and limited financial help enough to get started in carrying them out.

So, Bowles jumped on this idea of U.S. aid, tied to community development, and this got a very great response in India, because it was not a U.S. imposed program. The U.S. was not dangling large sums of money in front of

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India to try and influence her to buy a change of policy, but of helping India carry out its own programs and its own commitments to the people.

This started the community development in 1952. The Ford Foundation was also involved in the community development program. We're talking now about Truman and Point IV, and Bowles coming along as the Ambassador with backing from Truman, and the State Department, in terms of U.S. making financial and technical inputs and commitments into helping India carry out its community development program.

This big program was launched on Gandhi's birthday, on October 2, 1952, with national enthusiasm, and continued through the next five years. But increasingly the Congress leaders began to get restless, saying that India

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needed massive economic aid and that community development was too slow, that India needed to put its foreign aid into big economic development projects. And interestingly enough, this began to happen in the developing countries throughout what we called the Third World.

TAYLOR: The period, from '48 to '51 is the period when the Point IV program was floundering in Congress. Why?

ENSMINGER: This is my personal observation that in Point IV we had the very inklings of a stratified organizational approach to foreign aid that never got off the ground.

TAYLOR: But there was such a protracted discussion in Congress for almost 18 months in developing a program, what were the problems?

ENSMINGER: I'll tell you one of the problems

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that came out. I can identify one specifically and it was very widespread. In order to help sell this thing to Congress, one of the tasks that Stanley Andrews was caught with; they were looking for success stories.

Let me tell you one success story that created more problems than it ever solved. There was a man in India by the name of Horace Holmes, who had been a county agent, and he had been recruited to go over there by a fellow by the name of Albert Mayer who was doing their rural development program in a district called Itaoa, and they'd had about three years of experience and really had visible evidence of change.

Well, Point IV persuaded *Life* magazine to send photographers over there, and they did a four-page spread on him. But what did they show, they showed Horace Holmes doing everything, they didn't show the Indians doing

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one damn thing, and when this document came out Nehru and the government said if this is what they are going to do, they'll destroy our people. If the Americans are going to say every time, every place they have a person, they are going to get credit for it, we get this in our effort to sell it to Congress, and we hurt the program tremendously, he wasn't even shown -- didn't even show an Indian plowing and him showing him how to use it.

In our efforts to sell it to Congress we just completely destroyed the very concept we were trying to promote, which was the self-help program, to help the people help themselves.

TAYLOR: The initial appropriations for the TCA, I believe thirty-even and a half million dollars, was that a sufficient beginning?

ENSMINGER: Well, it was a beginning, and at that particular moment it probably was all the

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money they could effectively use, because the orientation in the beginning was developmental.

We were talking about technical assistance with a little money to help get ideas started, that's quite different from now in terms of big development projects and loans. Now we found that you could -- I helped do some of the early recruiting. We didn't have much trouble recruiting in the early period because people wanted to go, it was a part of a great adventure, I didn't have much more trouble recruiting for the early period than you did for the Peace Corps, and then they didn't have all of the bureaucracy in terms of what's involved in recruiting. So more of the responsibility in the early period was placed on back in the countries and India with Bowles having a direct line to Truman, there wasn't very much bureaucracy involved in getting approval of things.

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TAYLOR: What about the influence of the missionary work in terms of self-help and Point IV in this initial stage?

ENSMINGER: Well, very much of the missionary work was drawn on to document that the approaches they were talking about would work. In India, for example, there were several very important agricultural missionary programs sponsored by the YMCA. Spencer Hatch, and there were many others, so that in the early period a country like India would have -- first it had the very great documentation of Tegner and Gandhi's rural development programs, and it had the programs of the missionaries, so they had experience to draw on. And the interesting thing, during that period there was no stigma of drawing on these missionary programs because these were not dictated from outside, these

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were not dictated from outside, these were very much oriented to the people, and the people involved; they were what you call low-key programs. The missionaries were not seeking headlines in terms of things they had done.

TAYLOR: Was there any initial negative response from trying to Christianize Moslems, or to work with them, or similar problems.

ENSMINGER: Yes, but then you see, you get into a different kind of -- one there were missionaries over there who were development oriented, and then there were missionaries who were proselytizing.

TAYLOR: What breakdown would you -- would you give a percentage?

ENSMINGER: Well, most of them were proselytizing and now the countries did object to this once

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they became independent, and India wrote into its constitution a provision against any form of proselytizing for this mass of untouchables, the poverty ridden group, so that missionaries or anybody else couldn't go out there and say that if they were converted to join -- became Christians that all their problems of poverty would be behind them, so there was some problems.

TAYLOR: There was a beneficial help and a hindrance at the same time.

ENSMINGER: That's right, there was a great deal of tension in the early period against certain of the missionaries, and this got misinterpreted back in this country, that India and other countries were against Christianity, or against missionaries, but this wasn't so at all. Prior to 1948 and before the period of

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decolonization, most any church would rally to support any member of their church who wanted -- who simply said, "We feel the call to be a missionary," anyplace in the world they'd raise money to support him.

Well, what we found in that early period an awfully lot of people who are missionaries had no business being over there as missionaries. And just like we found in the recruitment of peoples to go abroad in technical assistance, a lot of people wanted to go shouldn't have gone and later on we found out a little bit more about what was involved and said no to a lot of people. And the churches now are taking the attitude that the people go abroad and they will recruit, therefore have a voice in who should go abroad. An awful lot of missionaries in India got into politics, in the hill areas. So yes, there were positive and negative aspects.

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TAYLOR: When the program was announced you had an outpouring of editorials, many members of Congress were endorsing it, but six months after the announcement there is virtually nothing; and when the proposal reaches Congress, there's a year of indecision. Through this period you were in the Department of Agriculture. Was there any internal strife between the State and Agriculture Departments?

ENSMINGER: Yes, there was strife in terms of who was really going to manage it. Agriculture felt that if this was really going to be oriented to self-help programs, oriented to the people, and since 80 to 85 percent of the population in these developing countries lived in the rural areas and were dependent upon agriculture, that Agriculture should have the leadership for it. And State Department, yes, there was a great deal of bickering on this

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particular issue.

TAYLOR: Did you meet personally with Ben Hardy, who developed memoranda for Point IV?

ENSMINGER: Yes.

TAYLOR: What are your reflections of him?

ENSMINGER: He was like all the rest of them, and here we are 25 years later, still not understanding and accepting that when we talk about the developing countries we're talking about distinctly different cultures. The reason I'm bringing in this orientation is that, in this whole area of giving and receiving aid as related to the developing countries, it would be very easy to document failures, to document mistakes we made. I happen to believe that there was no way through this except to try. Now, my main quarrel has been that the

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things that haven't worked, people have jumped on them as failures, and what we should do is look upon these as experiences. I don't see any more reason why, when you're moving in this whole broad area of human behavior, cultural change, why we have to assume with all the uncontrolled variables, that everything we put together can be made to work.

TAYLOR: What prompted you to enter Government service with the Department of Agricultural Economics in 1939?

ENSMINGER: Well, I would say that it was circumstances and decisions of other people, not mine. When I graduated from Cornell in 1939, the top rural sociologists around the United States were expressing concern because they did not have a rural sociologist in the Department of Agriculture, particularly the Bureau of

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Agricultural Economics. And since the field that I was following, the rural community, was at that time considered to be the heart of the contribution of rural sociology; and since I was being trained under the top rural sociologist in the United States, Professor Sanders of Cornell, they all decided I was going to Washington under a Civil Service appointment. I don't have any regrets that I did it now, but I was upset about it then because somebody else was making the decisions for me. I feel sorry for people who try to work in foreign countries just out of an academic background and without Government experience because they blame everything that doesn't work on that country's government, failing to understand there are certain norms about government.

TAYLOR: You were with the USDA from 1939 to 1951.

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During any period of this time were you connected with the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations?

ENSMINGER: Yes. My last 18 months I actually moved over to OFAR. I was over there in the middle of '48, and the reason I moved over there again was M. L. Wilson. Howard Tolley, then the Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and Stanley Andrews, all prevailed upon me to move over to OFAR and put together an organizational structure to coordinate and manage the training of foreign nationals who were coming to the United States to study agriculture. At the time they asked me to take on this assignment there were about four thousand foreign nationals in the United States, nobody knew who they were or what they were doing. The land-grant institutions complained to Washington: "We just simply can't live with this any longer, a group of ten people which show up in a Dean's office, or a head of a

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department unannounced saying, 'We're going to be here for three months to study some aspects of agriculture.'"

So, I moved over and stayed on this assignment until I went to India. During this period I developed a close working relationship with John Hanna and with Stanley Andrews. John Hanna was in charge of land-grant State Department aid, and a policy committee on training procedures. Together we worked up the policies that said to an institution: "We will pay half the salary of a person to coordinate the training programs on this campus, and we pay a certain amount per diem for each foreign student who was at the institution taking courses either undergraduate, graduate, and we paid the tuition." I then formed a staff and we sent instructions out to the foreign countries before people could leave

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the country to come here for study, they had to send in certain information. We had to know who was coming, what their backgrounds were, the assignments that they were being trained for and how long they were to be here so that by the time they arrived, we had a draft program agenda. We then sat down face-to-face with them, and determined their training and program. On this basis we began to get training programs, coordinated and tailored to the needs of the country and we got the cooperation of the institutions.

TAYLOR: Was this approach in turn reversed when the TCA began to send people to underdeveloped areas?

ENSMINGER: To a certain extent.

TAYLOR: Margaret Meade made some studies in this

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particular period for the U.S. Government in regard to the cultural differences between developed and underdeveloped areas. Did these reports ever reach you and, if so, were they used?

ENSMINGER: I knew Margaret Meade personally and was aware of her efforts. I was always fortunate during my period in Washington working with people who understood culture, for example, Howard Tolley, one of the top agriculture economists, M. L. Wilson, Carl Taylor, Stanley Andrews all were very savvy people in terms of other cultures.

TAYLOR: In the USDA, and more specifically in OFAR, was there any consideration of political objectives in terms of long-range goals in economic development and technical assistance programs? Was there any kind of a unifying goal that could be

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identified in this particular period, 1948 through '52?

ENSMINGER: I don't think so. I think at that particular period the orientation was pretty heavily humanitarian. I think it was then simply recognizing these countries had come into being. They had great poverty and the leaders had great commitments to improve the living conditions of the poor people. I have thought about this a great deal but I never detected that there was any great design. I think if you look at Truman's background he just felt that we needed to offer to help these people succeed.

TAYLOR: In this period was there any concern about the long-range plans that were being formulated for economic development, in particular effecting population growth, or did we look beyond the

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immediate problems that we perceived, that perhaps in solving these problems we might create additional problems?

ENSMINGER: I didn't sense any discussion on population until I went to India in '51, and it's interesting to me since I did have a continuous dialogue with people in India on it, and interestingly enough it was in the middle fifties that I saw an opportunity to help India create a non-government institute on population and family planning. At that time the government of India was in a position to consider it, and send back a proposal to the Ford Foundation. They ducked it. They have been the ones since then who are so strong for everybody to do something about population, but they weren't ready then, nobody was ready on this side at that point to deal with this

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question of population.

TAYLOR: Well, it seems like in '39 through '52 that one should have realized that increased aid, and better living standards was going to decrease the mortality rate, and in some proportion brought this population question to the forefront.

ENSMINGER: We had at the time of Truman's announcement of the Point IV program just coming to the end of our major role in the ERP: a program of money because they had institutions, they had the know-how, and our basic concern was to get them back on their feet for international trade.

Okay, when we looked then over at the developing countries I would say there were very few people who really understood at that particular moment what the implications were, because the people who began to come in on

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Point IV were the people in the ERP. It took us a long time to really understand the gut issues.

TAYLOR: Wasn't some of this problem compounded by the developing countries expecting aid on the level of the ERP?

ENSMINGER: Yes, many of them felt that we were being stingy in contrast with what they knew we spent in ERP. I think that all of us might have faced up to these realities, and much earlier. They didn't have to face the gut issues, we weren't pressing them to face the gut issues.

TAYLOR: While you were in the USDA were you in contact at any time with the SERVICO program of the Institute for Inter-American Affairs in Latin America?

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ENSMINGER: I was very close to them. In fact, I was in the process of being employed by them to be in charge of their agricultural program for Latin America in 1951. The only reason that I didn't join them is that the Ford Foundation hired me a week before I was to transfer over there, so I know a great deal about them.

TAYLOR: Explain their approach and its success or failure?

ENSMINGER: Well, their approach was very much like what had been developed in Taiwan. It was a joint approach. The SERVICO had a representative in a country and the local government designated a person and together they made the decisions. They were not down there in an advisory capacity, they were in a partnership capacity. It was quite different,

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from Africa, Asia, and other areas.

TAYLOR: The State Department appears, on the face, to be a stumbling block on Point IV. Were you familiar with Willard Thorp, who was in charge of the Point IV program? Bob Lovett, Acting Secretary of State had turned down Hardy's memorandum several times. From your view, what was the thinking in the State Department that just absolutely would not let them grasp this concept?

ENSMINGER: Well, I think that one has to answer this with a sympathetic understanding that State Department traditionally was political oriented, not development oriented. And I don't think that the State Department, then nor now, has shown great understanding in terms of the differences in cultures.

TAYLOR: I'm assuming that your saying in terms of

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priorities in foreign policy, that in this period the Third World just received a low priority.

ENSMINGER: That's right. And, the interesting thing is that's still true. We didn't have any great difficulty giving the kind of money appropriated for the ERP because that was our first priority in terms of the world, and if you wanted to really find out how slow we are in terms of recognizing the existence of the rest of the world.

TAYLOR: Was there any consideration of expanding this type of program in the underdeveloped areas of the Third World?

ENSMINGER: Well, there was some discussion, but I can tell you why it never did. You can't imagine how deep were the scars of colonialism in

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these countries emerging from the colonial era until you got inside one of them. India would have been in trouble politically if Nehru would have developed a cooperative program with a country like the United States, a major power, where we were participating openly in policy and program decisions. He just couldn't have accepted it.

TAYLOR: Well, how were we able to effect this in Latin America then?

ENSMINGER: In Latin America you had pretty high percentage of dictators -- they weren't vulnerable to political opposition, it's quite a different political mix from other areas.

TAYLOR: In this period of when the ERP was passed, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation were actively engaged in economic development

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Also OFAR was actively engaged in these types of programs. What was the major problem that the Agriculture Department did not get more input into, not only the Point IV program, but these other programs that were slowly evolving in this post-World War II period?

ENSMINGER: I was in the Office of Foreign Agricultural Services at that particular time. And it's interesting to me that the early implementation of the universities' involvement that Hanna offered to the Point IV program, Agriculture handled. Actually I participated in drawing up the first cooperative agreement between the universities in this country and the universities in Latin America.

Very early there developed a conflict between Agriculture and the Point IV office in terms of who was in charge.

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TAYLOR: Anybody in particular involved in this controversy?

ENSMINGER: No, it was just normal bureaucracy.

TAYLOR: Was it at the Secretary level, or was it at the department level?

ENSMINGER: It was at the top in foreign aid. At that particular time Point IV aid was also struggling for a position of prestige, power, and influence. In the Agriculture Department, we had a very aggressive fellow in the office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, Denny Moore. He pulled for this program over in Agriculture, but it's the old story of those who control the money, more frequently than not, if there's any question who's going to follow the tune, they call it.

TAYLOR: Did Truman or Acheson either one ever intervene

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on behalf of Point IV?

ENSMINGER: I don't think so, I think this was just a strictly bureaucratic struggle and AID [Agency for International Development] won.

TAYLOR: How did OFAR react to the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation's efforts in terms of private enterprise and private capital in the direction of American foreign aid in this very early crucial period?

ENSMINGER: So far as I could determine then, highly supportive, because they weren't a threat in any way to the Department of Agriculture.

TAYLOR: Was there any transmitting of knowledge back and forth, if the Ford Foundation was going to do such and such in India, was the Agriculture Department aware of it?

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ENSMINGER: Interestingly enough in that particular period we carried out cooperative projects to the advantage of everybody. The Ford Foundation for example preceded Point IV aid in India, and we were engaged in providing funds for what turned out to be ten pilot bloc development projects and five training centers to train people to fill these.

When Point IV came along, Chester Bowles was the Ambassador and he wanted to be sure that continued funding was available for India, and he wanted AID to participate in what Nehru considered his priority program -- rural development.

It didn't make any sense to me for the Ford Foundation to say, "You guys stay out of this." They had money and wanted to participate. I worked out an arrangement with the two governments -- where this was a cooperative

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effort, and AID provided people with county agent background who went into these ten blocs and they provided people from extension and vocational agriculture to go into these training centers.

This approach was rejected, and at that time, we didn't have the bureaucracy we have now. I made clear to everybody that these were not the Ford Foundation's projects, these were the Government of India's and so there was a great deal of cooperation.

TAYLOR: Would you care to comment on the transition when the State Department began the Agency for International Development?

ENSMINGER: When we moved away from the earlier Point IV program formation, priorities were more country determined. When AID came along and began to build a big structure, Washington

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increasingly said these are our priorities.

TAYLOR: Now when you say "Washington," you mean the State Department?

ENSMINGER: State Department and AID said these are our priorities, and this is where we'll put our money.

TAYLOR: What were those priorities?

ENSMINGER: They moved the approach into the big development projects. That's when foreign aid began to move into the philosophy of economic growth measured by GNP, on the

theory that the big projects would create a base for increasing employment opportunities by generating wealth, and the effects of this would trickle down to the poor.

TAYLOR: Was this decision by country or area?

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ENSMINGER: It was all over.

TAYLOR: Was there any continents or geographical areas that were excluded?

ENSMINGER: Not that I know of.

TAYLOR: Just randomly by political objectives?

ENSMINGER: Yes. To me it was a real tragedy because in the process by which funds were appropriated on a year by year basis, and many times appropriations never being made until you are half through the year, it was always to me a rather crude process by which programs were imposed upon countries. And I was embarrassed by seeing my own government in a situation where they would drive the best bargain to use the money before they lost it.

But if you had ten million dollars at the end of a year, or 20 million, or 50 million or a hundred million, uncommitted, and then ask

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for a large appropriation next year, Congress would say, "Well, you can't manage the money we're giving you." So it's the old story, if you're going to get money from Federal or State appropriations you better not have money lying around at the end of the fiscal year.

TAYLOR: This leads in turn to a very interesting approach to foreign policy in this period, and I'm speaking specifically of Dean Acheson and John Foster Dulles, who attempted to formulate a foreign policy against communism. In that particular time frame, we had Point IV, and the Technical Cooperation Administration was operating, when Eisenhower takes office the whole emphasis of the program is switched to the Mutual Security Pacts, and at the same time we are still publicly announcing that we want to prevent the Third World from

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succumbing to the Communist threat, but then we're unable to provide programs in terms of outreach. There's a basic inconsistency in this.

ENSMINGER: I saw all this unfold.

TAYLOR: Explain that.

ENSMINGER: Okay, first let me tell you that I went over to India really under Paul Hoffman who had been one of the key administrators in the ERP and took over the presidency of the Ford Foundation, in January '51. When he went to India in August of '51, people said, "Why are you in such a hurry to take the Ford Foundation to India?" And he said, "Well, I know the European community, I don't know the subcontinent, but it's my feeling the peace of the world for generations to come is going to be determined by what happens on the subcontinent.

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And therefore, I want to go there and see if there's a role for the Foundation."

Well, he went there, and he was invited by India for the Foundation to come there. He came back to the U.S., recruited me, and sent me there. Now, during the '51, '52, '53 he came into India at least twice a year, not to see me, but to see Nehru, but because I was there with the Ford Foundation, he always took me along. Why did he come see Nehru? He went to see Nehru to see if they couldn't find some way to keep the John Foster Dulles approach from really blacking out and blocking out mainland China.

TAYLOR: Again, can we carry that to the other nations of the Third World, towards Africa, towards the Mid-East?

ENSMINGER: Okay, but now you see, the John Foster

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Dulles approach, and again one has to recognize he couldn't have done it if it hadn't been a setting where he got a following. As we came out of World War II, we came out of World War II with a psychosis about communism, we also extended this over to anything and everything that had the word "socialism" in it. One of the reasons why we've always had tensions with India, they used democratic socialism, and socialism to us means the same things as Mussolini and Fascism.

Now, the Paul Hoffman, and the Truman approach earlier, was that poverty is the ground on which communism feeds, and if you really want to make the world safe for democracy, and without communism being a threat, you must make it possible for these poor people to achieve some of the essentials of life, and opportunities to earn a living

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free from fear and hunger. That was why Paul Hoffman said if India could do it, other nations would come along. Now, here Eisenhower came along, and John Foster Dulles, with military security pacts. At that point we mixed up, all in one package, economic aid, military aid, and technical assistance. I was in India when India was offered the opportunity for a military pact, to join us, and Nehru said no.

Well, at that particular moment, Dulles and the rest of the people back here said, "Well, if India isn't with us they must be against us." The fact that India wouldn't join us in the military pact, we interpreted as India was against us. Nehru simply said, "We've struggled too long to gain our freedom. If we join any major power in a military pact we're back under colonial rule again, it's still colonialism."

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So, Nehru said no. This was at the period when the Kashmir issue was a red hot issue between India and Pakistan. Pakistan said, "Well, we'll join you in a military pact."

They hadn't the slightest notion, I knew it then, and I know it now, of using our military aid for any other thing than hopefully to settle the Kashmir issue, which history has proven to be true. but we were prepared to put guns and ammunition in the hands of any of these governments that would join us in some sort of military alliance because this was our way of saying the military alliances were going to block off the march of communism.

TAYLOR: Don't you find in John Foster Dulles' activities a consistency with Dean Acheson under Truman, or not?

ENSMINGER: Well, I think there's some consistencies

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there, but my own feeling is that Dean Acheson's understanding of the world, the culture, was considerably different from Dulles'.

TAYLOR: In what ways?

ENSMINGER: Well, Dulles just had one approach to this. I think Dean Acheson saw people. I think Dean Acheson understood Nehru's problem with dealing with poverty, I don't think Dulles did. I think Dulles felt that if you had political leaders that were committed to defending themselves and using our military, this would prevail. But I think Acheson saw something more than this.

TAYLOR: Well, you know, Acheson never was warm to Point IV and in his memoirs he refers to it as "the Cinderella of foreign policy."

ENSMINGER: He was more oriented to the economic

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aid aspect.

TAYLOR: More like Europe.

ENSMINGER: Yes. Now, the thing that has gotten in our way over the years in terms of really being effective in foreign aid, I think one of the greatest disservices to international economic assistance was Eisenhower and Dulles mixing these two together with military, economic, and technical assistance, because we used the economic aid to -- bargained with countries that would take our military aid, give them back economic aid. Look at the amount of economic aid we poured into Pakistan. We simply underwrote their economy to underpin that military establishment. That's exactly what we did.

TAYLOR: Do you see, in that particular aspect,

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an internal consistency in our program that would allow a country to look at economic aid as exploitation, or colonization of another form?

ENSMINGER: Yes. During this early period when we were having trouble getting appropriation through Congress, even for the simplest economic aid, before we got all tangled up with military, U.S. Senators, Congressmen, cables from the State Department went back to Bowles, people went over there, flew over there to talk to Nehru to get Nehru to make a public statement begging, asking, urging, U.S. Congress to pass aid so India could be helped.

I saw Nehru on one occasion and he said, "Ensminger, your country will never understand." He told me of these people that had been to see him, Congressmen, Senators, representatives

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from the Embassy over there, pleading with him to make some kind of a positive statement, publicly. He said, "Look, as the leader of this country with all of our problems and all of our poverty, if I now stand up and say we have to be helped, that doesn't mean we can't -- we don't need help. It doesn't mean I wouldn't be grateful for it, but if I now stand up and publicly plead for help," he says, "I've lost my influence in saying to this country of mine that we've got to learn to stand on our own feet."

And then he gave me this illustration, he said, "It's kind of like this morning," he said, "if I had gotten up this morning and not feeling very well, and had called my doctor and said, 'You bring a nurse along,' and the doctor came over to see me, and if I had said to the doctor, 'Now is it all right if I get up if the nurse is with me?'"

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He said, "My doctor, if he had any sense would say, 'You stay in bed. If you're not well enough to get up, stay in bed.' Now," he said, "if I had done what you people wanted to, then I would be simply saying right off we can't do it without your help," and he said, "the other thing is I would then very quickly find myself having put my country back in terms of a kind of sub-role of a colony, because then we would be saying, 'We are dependent upon you.'"

Well, you see, just to show you how this whole question of how deep these scars of colonialism are, in the early sixties there was a great movement to get India to build fertilizer plants, and the Bechtel Engineering Corporation, one of the finest international engineering corporations in the world, they were motivated to become interested in State Department aid and others, so they sent a big

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staff over there and staffed it out, and were prepared to build eleven fertilizer plants and had the money backed up to do it. India turned them down. And people said, "Well, if we can't help a country on this basis, let them go."

Well, okay, here's what Nehru said, "If any one giant corporation has eleven fertilizer plants, they can control the fertilizer policies, the pricing of fertilizer in India. This is a form of colonialism, and," he said, "we can't live with it."

TAYLOR: But could we on a foreign policy level come down one on one, increase food production on the county agent model in India and overcome this built-in fear?

ENSMINGER: Yes, because, you see, when you're down at that level, in other words, if we'd

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have stayed by the Truman concept it was their program it was under their leadership, and we weren't pouring in enough money, nor did we have any intention in the first period of trying to buy a change of policy.

Let me give you an illustration of what I'm talking about when we talk about buying policy changes. When I first went to Tanganyika, now three and a half years ago, the State Department, and AID in Washington, they told me and the other members of our team in very clear language, "Don't you get over there and get caught supporting that Uganda village," which was a commune type of an approach.

Well, we got over there, and with all my background I looked at this whole thing and said, "Well, okay, here's a country that McNamara talks about 40 percent of the people in the Third World being in poverty, they've

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got about 94 to 96 percent of them in poverty. And what they were talking about in this Uganda village was simply saying that if they followed the traditional approach of big money into industry, that 96 percent of the people are going to be poorer than ever. So they simply had policies, they simply said all the people must be beneficiaries, so we came out in support of it.

Well, the interesting thing was, and we were told then, they were seeking a big loan, they were going to use this loan to buy a change of policy. But when I went over there three years ago in

September, I got a completely different story, in which they said very clearly, "Go there and look at this loan." This was the 11 million dollar loan I was over there evaluating, "This time we want to make clear we're talking about a loan to

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help underwrite the things they want to do, not to use this to change policy.

Now, this was a State Department, in September a year ago, was still anti-Socialism in this socialistic approach. My guess is, if I were back in the State Department now with Kissinger's visit over there, that they are also now in support of what Tanganyika is trying to do in terms of Uganda village, but somehow or another you know we have used military aid to support our policies and influence theirs. And one of the things we do with this big economic aid, is to buy policies, and it's interesting that we were doing it with our food.

Now, Congress has written into the legislation that 70 percent of this food aid has to go to the countries most in need of food. But I tell you, I just think we would have

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a different world scene today if the Truman Point IV program had really been understood as we're now talking about it, and had been implemented consistently through the last 25 years.

TAYLOR: This raises another question, getting back to the 1949 through '51 period when Point IV was in Congress. Was there any input to Congress from the USDA?

Now, what I'm referring to specifically is that the IIAA was funded to extend through 1954, in this period when Point IV legislation was before Congress. Congress enacted that legislation, but did not act on Point IV. Was there any problems that evolved in that action between Congress and the USDA?

ENSMINGER: Not that I could ever determine. There seemed to have been an early acceptance that there

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was going to be one type of a program in Latin America for that commitment, and I never saw any evidence that that was ever challenged.

TAYLOR: How much influence did Nelson Rockefeller have on that particular view?

ENSMINGER: Well, I don't think there's any question but what Nelson Rockefeller had a great deal of influence.

TAYLOR: What about Averell Harriman and Christian Herter?

ENSMINGER: You mean in terms of leaving that program alone? My guess is that Rockefeller had a great deal of influence over them. Rockefeller's motives have never been questioned on terms of what he tried to get out of it personally, and he has always been a very astute public relations man, with a competent staff around him.

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TAYLOR: Did Rockefeller actively support Point IV at the lower level?

ENSMINGER: As a concept, yes. I was never aware that he gave it any push, but he was always highly supportive. For example, one time in '52 when I came back home from India, he had been in touch with the Ford Foundation and wanted to see me. I went up to his house in Washington to have dinner with him one evening. He had his key staff there on the Latin American program. He was openly supportive of assistance in these developing countries.

TAYLOR: Looking back to that crucial 18 months after the inaugural address, who do you think was at fault? Was it in the Executive Branch, was it in the Agriculture Department, the State Department, was it in all of them?

ENSMINGER: Well, I think this came out of the White

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House in terms of the whole period of the Eisenhower-Dulles military assistance, and then, of course, we found that if we were going to give them military assistance I'd say that we had to pour enough into the economies to prop up the economies, and the people who were making the policy decisions simply didn't believe that the world poor were any great threat to the world. You know, there was a -- and there still is -- but it's changing. When I first went to India and began to understand poverty, people always said, "Well, history tells us that the revolutions never come out of the rural areas, they always come out of the urban areas, so you don't have to worry about this."

The interesting thing in these developing countries -- blame is not the issue, it's understanding. The political leaders in these developing countries, while they initially had

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a commitment to the poor people that grew out of their struggle for independence, they very quickly began to find their position of leadership was attached to the things that had a prestige symbol, a big dam, a fertilizer plant, a steel plant, these were politically prestigious. Smokestacks were the symbol of moving toward industrialization. I used to have the very distinct feeling that if we had of talked to India 25 years ago about staying by the bullets and doing more to provide the small farmers a better hoe, they would have thought we wanted to keep them a peasant society. So, we've got to be careful that, as I said earlier, blame is not what we are trying to get at, we're trying to get at understanding.

TAYLOR: Briefly, are you familiar with Nelson Rockefeller and the Rockefeller Foundation efforts in the post-World War II period in

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Latin America?

ENSMINGER: Yes, because I was in the process of being recruited by Nelson Rockefeller to head up his agricultural program in Latin America and would have joined them had the Foundation delayed one more week to recruit me. So, I'm very familiar with this.

TAYLOR: Would you expound on their approach?

ENSMINGER: Their approach was very similar to the approach in Taiwan, where we and the government formed a kind of a joint policy management unit to decide what needed to be done and to share in the decisions in terms of carrying out the programs.

In terms of the way we've operated from the Point IV on, in all these other countries, except in a few cases in Africa, where we did move in to key positions because they didn't have anybody

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to move in, the general orientation has been the countries administer, in U.S. whether it's through the Government aid or the Foundation, or an adviser and consultant to it, but the Latin American was a joint operation. They set up their corporations, and that approach had a lot of merit.

TAYLOR: Rockefeller made a fact-finding mission for Truman when Point IV bogged down in Congress, the Rockefeller report, he didn't win any enthusiastic support, and that was a key period.

ENSMINGER: It is just quite possible though that as he traveled around the country and looked at this, he saw this psychosis about colonialism. What you could do in Latin America and what we were able to do in Taiwan under -- I think one would have to say a semi-dictator type of government -- and what we were able to do in South

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Korea and in Japan really under military rule for a period of time, just couldn't have been done in other countries.

I've been greatly impressed at the way these countries as they developed political parties, had to be very careful in terms of giving an indication that somebody else is calling the signals.

TAYLOR: Briefly, in this post-World War II period, do you think the underdeveloped areas themselves recognized the cultural shock problem?

ENSMINGER: No.

TAYLOR: In other words, we pointed out that our Government didn't understand what the level of foreign aid needed to be. Did the countries themselves recognize this?

ENSMINGER: No, you see, I think the greatest shock

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they came to was this. There was a general feeling in all of these countries and I saw it very clearly in India, a feeling that all of their problems were related to colonial rule. And once they became free to manage all affairs, all these problems would disappear.

What they found, and what became very bitter and disillusioning for them, was to recognize that if anything, their problems became more complex, because the demands of the people became more pronounced and that they had few solutions. And that they were going to have to face up to -- that the problems that they were dealing with were going to be with them for generations, and not something that would go away in a two or five-year plan. Country after country has had to face up to the fact of this phenomenon that someone or another thought that -- and many times I saw their problems

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have been more difficult. Now take Tanganyika, when that country became free practically all of the key positions were occupied by foreigners, and when the new government felt it could not honor their pension, most of them left.

So, from a manpower point of view they were worse off than they were under the colonial period. At times in the past there were eleven people in a country of fourteen and a half million who had some training and competence to carry on agricultural research.

TAYLOR: Well, I think our discussion has led us to a very important point of foreign aid that perhaps has not been given the attention due, and I just ask for your general reflection and take it however you want.

Can private enterprise and government direction, be it through Department of Agriculture or the State Department, can they be united

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into an effective program towards the underdeveloped world? Particularly in that postwar period we've got a tremendous controversy of the role of private enterprise, and I'm thinking specifically of the controversy in the Senate on foreign investment guarantees.

ENSMINGER: Well, this has been an issue. Now, just reflecting back on this, when India made the decision in the second five-year plan which began -- the first plan started in '52, the second

one in '57 -- to move from an emphasis on agriculture to an emphasis on heavy industry, India actually invited help from the U.S. in building the first public government steel mill. They wanted to build two steel mills. Well, this one couldn't be sold back in the United States even though many people tried to.

TAYLOR: They'd go for fertilizer plants but not for

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steel mills.

ENSMINGER: But they didn't want this, when the people kept saying, "We will be building up competition, we'll be further underwriting their socialism, and" -- it was during that period that Brezhnev visited India and while he was in India said, "Oh, you want some help on steel mills, we'll help you."

Well, he began to see how influence and the critical role of our deep commitment to private enterprise as the only approach, and their commitments to socialism. And because we would not help them with the public sector steel mill, this had an effect of moving India increasingly to where they are today, very closely allied with Russia.

This question of socialism is an interesting thing. At one time one of the influential trustees of the Ford Foundation was Donald David, who

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was then the dean of the Harvard School of Business, and was a member of the board of a number of large industrial corporations: General Electric, Ford Motor Company, you name them, he was on their board, and, as you would imagine, a very committed private enterprise man.

Well, he saw what I was doing in India and being so supportive of things the Government was doing, so he decided to come over to India and I think straighten me out. Well, I made up my mind that I wasn't going to try to tell him what to think, I was simply going to show him a cross-section of India.

So, I met he and his wife, new wife, down in Calcutta, and the first day I took them 90 miles north to show them a little village where their industrialization was at the barter level, the blacksmith made a razor, the carpenter

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made a stoop, they exchanged no money.

The next day I took them over to see steel mills, one of the most modern steel mills in the world; let them see a private enterprise. The next day I took him over to Madras and showed him a government operated coach industry, one of the best managed industries in all of India. Showed him public, showed him private, I showed him poverty, I showed him the elite.

In ten days I made an appointment to see Nehru, and he said, "Mr. Prime Minister, if I were the Prime Minister over here, I would support what you are supporting."

He said, "I understand what you are talking about now." He said, "What you're talking about is equality of opportunity, that's what socialism means to you."

TAYLOR: But how do you translate the individual

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understanding that David was able to obtain?

ENSMINGER: You've got to get that back. Yes, but what I'm saying is, here these countries were really -- their commitment was that whatever decisions they take had to have an impact and an influence on the masses of the poor people. And our orientation was free enterprise.

TAYLOR: For the elite.

ENSMINGER: For the elite, but we didn't understand it that way.

TAYLOR: We tried one thing and did the opposite.

ENSMINGER: Okay, but you see, when we got into the period what you call "big economic aid," the whole theory that was, "You don't work at the problems of poverty, where poverty is, you work at building big economic enterprises, these will generate employment, this will increase your

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GNP, and you will have a trickle-down benefit to the poor." Now that was the theory in which we were operating.

TAYLOR: But there was opposition to that theory, with Benjamin Hardy, with Bennett, with Stanley Andrews, but where did we fail to get across from one track to the other?

ENSMINGER: I think one of the most unfortunate things happened to us was Bennett's death in terms of this concept of the Truman Point IV program, because I think most people feel that probably he alone, at that period, understood what Truman was talking about and was committed to it.

TAYLOR: Well, I think the TCA lost thirteen of its top seventeen advisers and policy men in that one plane crash.

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ENSMINGER: Yes and from that point forward, you begin to get the infiltration of the other point of view.

Now, coming back here to our private enterprise, I'm not anti-private enterprise, what I'm simply saying is, we've got to look at it from the point of view of how most of these people are going to be benefited. And you know the people in these countries that we're dealing with, they're not the poor, they're the elitest. And I can tell you this, they do not see their poor people.

I can tell you a conversation I had with -- who was then the Secretary of Finance, B. K. Nehru, who later became Ambassador to the United States. I went in to see him when he was Secretary of Finance simply because one day I had an appointment with him during the lunch hour, I just felt we were getting no support in terms of agriculture programs, and I went

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to see him. And he was stretched out on his divan and said, "Ah, hell, Doug, we're not going to do anything about it until a couple of million people die of starvation, then you can do something about it."

And I got up and said, "B.K. so far as I'm concerned you can go square to hell, I'm not going to have any part of a discussion like this," and walked out.

And several years later he said, "You remember that conversation?"

I said, "All I can say, buddy, you've got guts."

He said, "I've also got to tell you you're right."

Now, I used to ask myself why the elitest who run these governments, the political leaders, don't see poor people. I can only come to one conclusion, they've always been there,

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they're part of the landscape. The things that the political leaders have not seen as different, they are now responsible for doing something about this, before they could blame it on the colonial powers.

And the other thing that's in this picture, and this is why I think that if the Truman approach historically could have been pulled off it would have made all the difference. At the time these countries gained their independence the people in the rural areas, which constitute 85 to 90 percent of the people, they had come to accept what they have today was all they were going to have tomorrow. There was no such thing as hope for mass expectations.

Now, fortunately, it was fortunate this was so, other words you would have had complete mental collapse. But very early in the period

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of independence, these countries began -- these people began to realize this was no longer the case. Now, I can go out, and as I did in the early fifties, and talk to these building people and ask them and said, "Suppose you carry out these new practices and have fifty rupees an acre profit, what are you going to do with it?" We got no answer. But today you ask those people what they want that they don't have and they'll tell you.

TAYLOR: Do you accept the thesis that World War II thrust an advanced technology, specifically in Northern Africa, in Southeast Asia, in the underdeveloped areas, that the mechanization that was shown to people indirectly through World War II created what some authors will call the "revolution of rising expectations?"

ENSMINGER: Well, what one has to realize is

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that they created a revolution of rising expectation primarily for the middle class, not for this group of people that MacNamara now defines as the 40 percent of the people who are living in dire poverty, because those people are still outside all the policies, all the institutions, all the services, and it was this group that we really started out by sending it out.

Let me come back to this military thing again, and also to our policies on economic aid. Because we moved to military alliances and economic aid in big projects, and because we had surplus food grains which we were anxious to make available, and even get rid of, and sold them very cheap concessional rates, the political leaders in these countries in the early period when they could have been forced by circumstances to provide leadership

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for major reforms, didn't have to.

TAYLOR: We're back to 1948.

ENSMINGER: What we essentially did, through the military systems pact, was made it possible for the small elitist to further entrench themselves, to further institutionalize themselves, to further exploit their poor people. And this has also been what has happened in terms of our insistence that the only way to do this is private enterprise.

Now, we think we are greatly enlightened in this country, but we haven't always been. Look at the sweat shops in the garment industries, in the thirties? You go to these countries where we, in this context of the elitist, where we've helped build these great big industries, we have made it possible for a few people to get very rich. And they've gotten rich off the

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back of the poor. It is going to be many times more difficult, short of a revolution, to bring about the necessary reforms in these countries than would have been the case had the Truman approach to this thing been understood and have been institutionalized and have become our instrument for helping these countries.

You see, we were very well oriented to land reforms. And look, the land reforms programs in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, these were ours, but then when we got over in this other method of assisting, my guess is a lot of these leaders said, "Look I'll take your military aid, but you get off my back on land reform."

TAYLOR: Well, it appears that we keep coming to this point, that somewhere between 1948 and 1951 or '52 that the opportunity was present.

ENSMINGER: It was.

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TAYLOR: That we failed to grasp it, and then we have been searching for the last 20 years trying to get back to that. Now, how important in 1948, was it to examine the Institute for Inter-American Affairs? The World Bank was functioning yet, I believe, we had the Export-Import Bank, the International Monetary Fund, Truman eventually gave over to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Committee, we had so many different organizations that we were funding and again I think of Harvey Firestone.

ENSMINGER: Well, you know, there was a great deal of discussion about using the Nelson Rockefeller Latin American approach, which was an independent corporation, the State Department didn't want any part of it, they wanted to manage this thing, they wanted it, because it was a new

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source of power for them.

TAYLOR: Who in the State Department was particularly influenced by this massive injection approach of foreign aid? I think we've mentioned Acheson, and Chip Bohlen.

ENSMINGER: Well, I think Acheson was one of them because I think most people will give Acheson high marks in terms of being an outstanding Secretary of State. Acheson I don't think had any way, in his background to deal with those problems.

TAYLOR: Now, you've touched a very important issue.

ENSMINGER: The ability to identify himself with the poor people.

TAYLOR: Was there anyone in the State Department

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at that time that could perceive the problem?

ENSMINGER: No.

TAYLOR: Where did you lose out? In the Agricultural Department we had these people.

ENSMINGER: Well, this is true, I worked as a special assistant to two of the people in the Department of Agriculture, one was M. L. Wilson, who was under Henry Wallace, the Under Secretary of Agriculture, and the man who designed practically all the New Deal agricultural program. And as early as 1946, I've got a document here, they just found it the other day, he put me in charge of organizing, he said, "We can't call it a world conference, but that's what it'll be." A conference to talk about the contribution of extension methods and techniques to the rehabilitation of the war-torn countries

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in the new independent countries. Well, this man talked culture, he didn't talk economic development, and I remember over and over again in the first period of sending these people abroad under the Point IV program, the county agents and the vocational agriculture teachers, of M. L. Wilson saying, "It isn't our extension structure that we have to offer, it's our philosophy."

In the first speech M. L. Wilson gave when he moved from Under Secretary of Agriculture to Extension Director, was given down in Atlanta, Georgia and the title of it was, "The Cultural Approach to Extension." Well, at that time I suspect half of the extension directors in this country had come into their positions with a background of animal husbandry and they said, "My God, what do we have now, an extension director who is oriented

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to people?"

Well, now here was a man who was people, cultural, Truman Point IV oriented. But when this moved over to State and where State was calling the signals, it really moved very quickly to economic aid.

TAYLOR: Was there ever a movement in Agriculture to get the program?

ENSMINGER: They didn't have the muscle.

TAYLOR: Didn't have anyone that could?

ENSMINGER: They didn't have the muscle to do it.

TAYLOR: You know Hardy put his job on the line to get that memorandum to Truman.

ENSMINGER: But they didn't -- as I look back on this, the Point IV program lost its direction and never regained it with the loss of Bennett, and because

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right after that there was an insurgence for power, and the people in terms of big economic aid approach and then as I say soon thereafter the -- four years later when Eisenhower came in we didn't have the slightest notion what it was all about, or else he didn't care less.

TAYLOR: Well, during the Eisenhower period I would judge that you're saying that we were just aimlessly drifting?

ENSMINGER: Because Eisenhower gave, at least by implication, Dulles felt he had a blank check to say whatever he wanted to say at any particular moment, and he had one orientation and that was to rid the world against communism through military impact.

TAYLOR: But you know, that also carries that economic connotation.

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ENSMINGER: Okay, but I say we found that the countries bargained with us.

TAYLOR: How much impact do you think the Korean war had on our attitude in foreign policy, it was changed from preventing Communist revolutions in the underdeveloped world, and then suddenly over night it became a shooting war. And Acheson, really, his gut reaction was to stop them.

ENSMINGER: Yes. Well, my feeling is that had the same kind of influence in terms of souring us on international involvement the same as Vietnam, of just simply saying, "We've had it, let them manage their own affairs, let's stay home."

TAYLOR: Isolationism?

ENSMINGER: Yes, and again coming back to Paul Hoffman,

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and then you see when he left the Foundation and went to the U.N. and he found, was greatly concerned that following that particular period of Korea that we really wanted to move into a period of isolationism and he spent a great deal of time trying to -- well, of organizing U.N. groups throughout the United States. And he said to me at one time, "If we had 25 people in the United States, of stature, and who really understood the great issues of the world, they could swing public opinion in this country, but," he said, "we don't have them."

TAYLOR: What is your assessment of the U.N. in this crucial period of post-World War II? Did it function as envisioned, or could it have?

ENSMINGER: Well, I don't think it functioned as it was envisioned to function, but I think it's probably its greatest contribution has been,

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and there has always been the forum on which there could be the public debates.

TAYLOR: Does its bureaucratic structure, is it internally able to carry on a significant aspect of economic aid in terms of people to people approach?

ENSMINGER: Okay, let's just take two recent things because I think a couple of things that have happened recently are significant enough in terms of what I see them influencing world history to start our discussion.

I had the feeling that the U.N. General Assembly in September '75 on the new world order, may turn out to be one of the most significant debates that's ever been held by U.N. in terms of what may come of it, because this was -- and that was the only forum in which it could have taken place. That was the

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beginning of the debate in which the developing countries of the world said there's got to be a more equitable sharing of the world's resources.

Now, for the first time, we in this country are beginning to face up to the fact that we can no longer have the world's mineral resources at our price, and for us to exploit as we choose.

TAYLOR: But that raises an interesting point that the way they got their recognition was to take the English colonial model. In other words, they created a cartel in oil, and that's the way they forced the issue back to the developed world.

ENSMINGER: Okay, but that was the oil producing countries, I'm talking now in terms of a hundred and some other countries in mineral wealth.

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Okay, they are simply saying, "If you don't agree we'll form a cartel."

TAYLOR: Yes.

ENSMINGER: Okay, but all I'm saying is, the U.N. is the only forum which out of this could have come. Okay, let's take another one. At the time people were willing to say that the U.N. World Population Conference held in Bucharest, Romania, in August of '74 was just a political

catastrophe. The farther we get away from it, the more we can understand. Out of that, country after country has come to an awareness that they have to face the population issue. India is now moved from voluntary participation to openly urging the states to pass legislation to require sterilization after two or three children, that the World Food Conference, again was U.N. So now, from the point of view of

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economic development I have never thought that U.N. was so effective.

TAYLOR: Were you a participant in the Lake Placid Conference in 1951?

ENSMINGER: No, I wasn't.

TAYLOR: Well, given these massive problems in the underdeveloped world, and the problems that the United States Government had in effecting change whether it be through the Point IV or various other programs. Was there really a chance for the Point IV program to succeed in terms of time limitations? When you go into a country with technical assistance one on one, the results are a slow process of change. Do you feel that the Point IV program as envisioned could have succeeded in that particular period of the early 1950s?

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ENSMINGER: Yes, if there had been a commitment from the top. For example, if Bennett had lived, he accepted and understood what Truman had in mind for the Point IV program, it would not have been a program seeking large sums of money. It would have been a program that wouldn't have been billed to change the world in a short period of time. Where the Point IV got into trouble was the very people who came out of the ERP got into the early Point IV, and their influence got it into economic aid -- TCA. They were operating on this short time frame.

TAYLOR: Like Western Europe?

ENSMINGER: Yes. And they were totally unoriented to the things that were going to take a generation to achieve. Also in the very early period we separated economic aid and military aid, but we got this whole question of military aid to contain communism and economic aid mixed up.

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And then there was the continuous promise out of Congress that these things were for a short time.

I went to plead with people in Washington and said, "I always maintain that Congress is made up of basically of intelligent people;" and if they'd gone over there and testified in the very early period, that we're engaged in something that's going to take us generations, not two years, not

five years, not ten years, and that we're not talking about continuity, that Congress would have responded, but you couldn't get a soul to do it.

TAYLOR: When the Point IV proposal reached Congress, there were two specific parts: the TCA and the investment guarantees for business. This second aspect of the government guaranteeing foreign investments never reached legislation.

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What would you attribute that to?

ENSMINGER: I don't know. I'm aware of the fact that there were large numbers of American industrialists coming to India and working with the government. When the new government announced that its objective was to build democratic socialism, our fear of everything that socialism implied, they just said they weren't going to take the risk without the government guarantees. I don't know the answer to that question though I'm quite aware of the fact that it was there.

TAYLOR: Was private capital ready to move into the Third World?

ENSMINGER: Yes.

TAYLOR: It seems that the success of Rockefeller

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in Latin America would certainly have been of a beneficial consideration.

ENSMINGER: And these countries were trying to avoid anyone (a country or an industry), to get where they had a controlling interest in something, and therefore, could determine policies in the country. There was always a great deal of debate through the whole period in terms of joint venture enterprises. Who was going to have 51 percent of the stock, and who was going to control the final decisions.

In the early sixties the U.S. Government and the World Bank, influenced the Bechtel International Engineering Corporation from San Francisco to interest itself in building fertilizer plants in India. They sent a staff over there, got a favorable response from India, and they came up with a proposal where they were ready

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to commit funds and build ten fertilizer plants. India turned them down, and people were absolutely dumbfounded and amazed. The reason India turned them down was at that point the Bechtel Engineering Corporation would have been in position to control policies with respect to fertilizer in India in terms of prices.

Now, here's the case where the Bechtel Engineering Corporation would have been well advised to have committed itself to three fertilizer plants, and after you get three of them working, talk about building two more.

TAYLOR: I interpret this as pointing to an internal inconsistency in the Point IV program. The specific goal, technical assistance to raise the living standards within countries indiscriminately in the Third World, lacked the wherewithal to affect the kinds of change,

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which the American Government hoped for in this period.

ENSMINGER: Well, we didn't understand how to do it. The major countries really can't get themselves in a position where any other major economic enterprise, government or not, can control policies in that country. They just can't live with it politically.

TAYLOR: Given this situation, was there any chance then for these technical programs to affect the desired changes?

ENSMINGER: Well, one thing I think we should understand, money is not the primary force that brings about change, although you've got to have money. Through the whole period, we could have made a far greater contribution to these countries with the same amount or less money

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if you'd had more flexibility in terms of how you commit it. Specifically, in India's rural development program where we had to commit money year by year, we would have been far better off to use less money and made a far greater impact with that money for certain purposes if it could have been put in escrow so to speak.

With technical assistance, all development in the final analysis takes the place of people, the people's institutions, so that in the process of working with people in building people's institutions that when money is needed it could be drawn upon because it's committed. But the other way around, you started pushing the people to use the money. So, money, we never quite understood how to interrelate money with technical assistance because we were always under pressure to spend money.

TAYLOR: I wonder in the context of the 1950s how much

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of an influence did the congressional debates, the public opinion polls in the United States, have on the technicians and the people that were involved in these programs, be it through the IIAA, Point IV, the World Bank? Was there an awareness that the American people might not continue to support these programs?

ENSMINGER: I think there was, on the one hand the staff in AID throughout the world lived in a continuous environment of uncertainty. At the same time, after a period of time, there was an acceptance that this thing's going to go on, and understanding either the Congress blocked it out, there'd be enough money there to -- for all of them to be safely rehabilitated, And I think the main concern that the people in the field had was a sense of frustration over the uncertainties of when the funds were going to

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be appropriated and how much in this whole, just kind of like a trapeze in terms of your priorities. But I don't think there were very many people who were uneasy that Congress was going to discontinue it. I think the biggest problem was the political leaders in these developing countries were not sophisticated enough to really understand the debates in Congress, and all the things that came out of the hearings.

TAYLOR: What influence did the Korean war have on the totality of our foreign aid program?

ENSMINGER: Well, I don't think there's any question that the Korean war had a great deal of influence in terms of we believed at the end of the Korean war, very much like we believed at the end of the Vietnam, wanting to forget about the world -- withdrew.

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TAYLOR: How did this manifest itself in the AID programs, specifically?

ENSMINGER: I don't think it did. I think this was just a general reaction and large numbers of Congressmen were voting for aid when their constituencies were against it. But it had this kind of effect, that people came home and didn't find very much response to what they'd been doing. Many of them lived pretty simply and made quite a sacrifice but they didn't come home feeling that they had been great heroes.

TAYLOR: Well, what I'm trying to get at is when the Korean war broke out and prolonged itself, was there any initiative within the specific AID programs that you had contact with to speed up the development process?

ENSMINGER: No.

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TAYLOR: It was just pretty much business as usual?

ENSMINGER: Yes. There's no question that it made it more difficult for a government and the representatives of our government to deal with the political leaders in their countries, because they spoke out with considerable feeling and hostility toward us, and this in turn had a great deal of effect in terms of Congress in the appropriations.

TAYLOR: Was there ever any encouragement on the part of the United States Government to bring other countries into a more active participation in AID programs?

ENSMINGER: Yes, I would say that I saw a great deal of evidence of this. As we became more understanding of the sensitivities of these new governments, we ourselves saw and understood that it was easier for many of these

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countries to accept AID if more than one country was contributing to a given project. Again in this question then politically you are not subject to one country to determine your policies for you. And this was particularly true when we got into sensitive areas, it was very true when you move into the area of the whole question of population. The more you could give of an international mix, the better. But you see, in the early period we had trouble as a government using our money to bring in third nations ourselves. I did a great deal of employing as consultants, people outside the United States.

When you run into foreign exchange problems, this is where one begins to find himself in trouble in the use of money. At one time there was some implication that I was going to find myself in trouble with the Ford Foundation for

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contributing large sums of money for third country nationals and bringing equipment in from outside the United States, but it never came to that, at least it was discussed at one point.

TAYLOR: What was the relationship between Point IV and the United Nations as far as USDA was concerned between 1948 through '51 while you were still there?

ENSMINGER: Well, Agriculture played a major role really in the formation of the Food and Agriculture Organization, which was a major accomplishment. I would say many people in Agriculture, myself included, formed working committees, drafted documents, and contributed in other ways.

TAYLOR: Was it an enthusiastic role?

ENSMINGER: Yes, a very enthusiastic role.

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TAYLOR: Later, in 1951, after you went to the Ford Foundation, from the outside could you look back and see that same enthusiasm?

ENSMINGER: No, because once it got created then people began to see what was happening. Practically all the colonial powers used FAO and other U.N. agencies as dumping grounds to find employment for their colonial officers that they were having to bring home as they lost their colonies. And these were very outstanding people, but it's quite a different mentality, and quite

different experience to work as a colonial officer where your job is maintaining status quo, than it is to be trained and oriented and experienced in being innovative, and FAO is suffering under this even today.

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