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

AMBASSADOR THOMAS H. ANDERSON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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[Note: This transcript was not edited by Ambassador Anderson.]

Q: This is an interview with Ambassador Thomas H. Anderson. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Mr. Ambassador I wonder if you would give me a little about your background? Where you grew up and were educated, etc.

ANDERSON: I grew up in Gulfport, Mississippi and was educated there and then went on to the University of Mississippi where I graduated with a triple major in English, History and Political Science. I very promptly went into the banking world as a career. I was sidestepped there when a very good friend of mine and a fraternity brother decided to run for Congress. When he did he was elected and out of the clear blue sky asked if I would come and be his administrative assistant in Washington, DC. I said I would not do that but would stay in the banking field and in business which was what I really wanted to do. He convinced me that I really ought to take a two year swipe at it. So about sixteen years later...

Q: This was who?

ANDERSON: It was Congressman Trent Lott. He went on to become the House Republican Whip. It was an interesting two years when I came up here. I was 23 years old, his administrative assistant came to Washington without ever really having been here other than as a tourist during a high school senior trip. When I got here I was thrown into really quite an historical era within two year period of time, which was kind of funny to think about.

He was placed on the Judiciary Committee in 1973-obviously a freshman member and the last one as far as rank was concern. But we were thrown right into the middle of all the turmoil that was going on in Washington during that time. I tell people that in a short two year period I would get to the office at 7:00 and leave about midnight because during that period of time we had the inauguration of Nixon, the State funeral of Lyndon Johnson, the return of the POWs from Vietnam. At this point in the Judiciary Committee the actual resignation of Spiro Agnew, the confirmation hearings of Gerald Ford, the impeachment proceedings of Richard Nixon-all of Watergate. From there on, after Gerald Ford became Vice President, the ultimate impeachment of Richard Nixon and then the confirmation hearings of Nelson Rockefeller. All of that was going on in that compact two year period. I got a real indoctrination into Washington and how it works, etc.

Q: Did you later on get involved with foreign affairs at all?

ANDERSON: Quite obviously when Trent was elected as the House Republic Whip in 1980, it put him in a position of being in the leadership which involved us very much in all of the foreign policy the administration wanted to bring forward. I had some involvement there with just dealing with the administrative officials, not with the committee itself, but dealing with White House and State Department folk as they tried to secure the votes they needed on Capitol Hill.

Q: This is designed for someone who is not too familiar with how things were. Here is the House Whip. In the foreign affairs thing you have the White House and the State Department trying to...what sort of things would they ask you as well as your principal to deal with?

ANDERSON: Well, certainly what they have to do...it is an interesting observation particularly after I got to my post and could look back at what took place...it was interesting as to how foreign policy, for instance, is formulated in the Congress. Many times...and it is going to be a different perspective when you are with a leader than when you are with a regular member. A regular member, for instance, has no constituency except possibly back home if there is a particular interest.

Q: And Gulfport doesn't have any particular interests.

ANDERSON: Not really. We have some Yugoslavian third or fourth generations, but they really don't care one way or another. But that is true, the Polish people in Chicago- where you have background and pockets some times members have special interest in foreign policy. Otherwise, if they have no constituency they can pick out their issue and make their decision on how they want to proceed foreign policy wise.

When you are with a leader, the leader obviously tries to take the administration's position because that is obviously the foreign policy that we are under at the time. If at all possible they try to back it up. So if the White House and the State Department, which hopefully most of the time they are in agreement on, come to the Hill for a certain position-monies needed for certain things, whatever the activity is-the leadership is usually the people who are responsible for mustering support for the administration's State Department position. They are called on quite often to shore up votes to make sure that the President's position is basically in tact when they leave. At times it is a little more difficult than at others.

Q: Congressman Lott, of course, would be going after members. But what would you be doing?

ANDERSON: Obviously I would be doing the same thing. In a leadership position, a leader has two constituencies, actually he has three: if his party is in power he has that constituency to deal with; then the constituency of his peers, his colleagues, which he has to deal with; and the constituents back home. All three of those sometimes present him with a very real problem; with not enough time to do what he needs to do. So I ended up interacting with other members of Congress if he was at the White House at meetings. I ended up quite often dealing with members on their concerns on what the administration was doing and how they were proceeding. Basically I tried to emphasize what I thought Congressman Lott would want them to know, his feelings, as to how the administration would size something up.

Q: Did you have any particular foreign policy issue in this period, 1980-82, that really caused a lot of difficulty for you?

ANDERSON: What do you mean? In a personal sense?

Q: About rallying support, etc.

ANDERSON: Certainly the things that were taking place during that period of time-to make sure that there was support for the way the administration wanted their Central American policy developed. There was a constant problem. You had to deal with it and present positions of the administration to members who might be concerned about it. It was a management problem. A flow of information and how you got it out to members so that you could see to it that the policy itself...and I would say that that was probably the big problem at the time.

On the other side of it you had the defense buildup and what they were doing there which obviously intermingled with the military situation. And of course that was a very big time consuming thing during that period of time as far as members were concerned.

Q: Having been on both sides of this business, one hears that another branch of the government has developed. That is the congressional staff. The Congressman is very busy and say they have no particular concern about something but there are staff members on a committee for him who really have almost their own agenda and may become ideologs for the right, left or what have you. Did you find this a factor- you had to deal with a staff member who was almost beating his own drum?

ANDERSON: Most definitely. I think today that this is one of the problems with Congress. To go back even a little bit further, Congressman Lott was ultimately elected to the Senate and after I left for Barbados and came back here I lived up to a commitment and ended up running his Senate campaign. When he was elected nothing would do but that I come back and I basically said I would do so just to get him established in the Senate. I worked up there for another year and a half and basically saw both sides of it. To be certain, staff members, I know from the long years on the House side, definitely have their own agendas, and many times they pursue it unbeknownst to the Member or the principal. It happens all the time. I never ascribed to the theory that John Connally used to have that we should limit terms of members of congress until after having been there for the number of years I have. I think not only should you limit their terms but staff members terms as well because they become institutions as well. Many times, particularly on the Senate side more than on the House side, a Senator has to spend time courting a particular staff member to make certain that his view is heard. As students should take a look at, something can pass the House floor and the Senate floor and may never see the light of day again because when it goes to conference many times the Senators and Congressmen don't have time to go to the conference, or are in and out, or don't stay there the entire time the bill is in conference. If a staff member has a desire to take something out-now this was passed on the floor of both houses remember-it can be done. Obviously if the member is determined that he wants to see it stay there it will. But there is another branch out there along with the press.

Q: Before we leave this, did you go on any overseas congressional trips?

ANDERSON: No, I never did. I took some independent ones. I went to Taiwan and mostly traveled on my own.

Q: What was your impression from people who came back from these things? Did you think these trips were worthwhile for learning what the real situation is? You know sometimes these trips are called junkets, but many of them are very hard working trips.

ANDERSON: Of course, you, yourself, know what a CODEL entails.

Q: A CODEL is a congressional delegation.

ANDERSON: Right. You end up having to deal with it and many times it can put a real hardship on the mission itself. But overall they are very worthwhile and quite frankly I have developed over the years a feeling that one of the reasons that we as Americans haven't done as much international business as we could and involved in international business opportunities is because most people don't experience going outside the continental United States. It has got to be helpful for members of congress, who don't understand business in the first place, to at least get out there and see what the problems are on a first hand basis. It has to be helpful. It is helpful to us in the development of foreign policy. It is good for the exposure of the congressman to enlighten his horizons as well as the country he happens to visit. So, yes, I think they are very worthwhile and we really should have more of them.

Q: In the interviews I have been doing, most ambassadors say frankly they welcome more. Obviously going to Paris, etc. doesn't produce much, but in many of the other countries you really want people to come in on the scene and see what the problem is.

ANDERSON: Sure.

Q: Then we come to your appointment as Ambassador to Barbados, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua...

ANDERSON: And Aruba, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Montserrat. Part of the mission included Grenada after our invasion down there. Our US AID and USIS missions were operated out of Barbados.

Q: How did this appointment come about?

ANDERSON: Quite frankly as I told Senator Tsongas at the hearing, I just hoped that the President recognized talent when he saw it. But, really and truly, about the time I felt that it was time for me to go back into the private sector, a very good friend of mine at the time was head of White House personnel and asked if I would be willing to consider service in a foreign country. I said that I would. He had some thoughts on the matter and the President asked if I would be willing to do it. They knew that I had a very strong desire to get back to business.

They had just come forward with the Caribbean Basin Initiative program and wanted to see it implemented. So they talked to me about doing that.

Q: I take it there was no particular problem with your getting approval?

ANDERSON: Well, as a matter of fact, right after the President had asked me to do this I had gone with another dear friend of mine on a weekend trip down to a place he had in West Palm. We got up on Sunday morning and he was delighted to have on the breakfast table a copy of the New York Times to show where AFSA was going to oppose my nomination.

Q: AFSA is the American Foreign Service Association-sort of the union.

ANDERSON: Right. I came back to Washington and did a little research and ended up meeting with the president of AFSA. We had a luncheon and a long discussion about foreign policy, where we were going, the management of missions, the problems associated therein. He left basically saying that AFSA would not oppose my nomination. So after that was over with, it was clear sailing.

Q: Sometimes you can run into trouble with a member on the Hill. I have just finished this week an interview with Otto Reich who had Senator Helms dumping on him before going to Venezuela. What type of training did you get before you went out there?

ANDERSON: I went through the entire reading that one goes through when you go into a post like that. I went around to...I think I saw every side of Washington DC that I had never seen before and talked to all of the other people that I had never talked to in the Washington area. I went through the Foreign Service Institute's indoctrination two-week course.

Q: How valuable did you find that?

ANDERSON: I found that that was an extremely valuable tool for someone who had been involved in government and realized that you were going into the executive branch looking at it from a different side as to how they viewed it...the way I had always viewed it from the other side. It was interesting to see it. I thought it was very helpful. I am not certain whether it was the right kind of course for somebody who was coming from the hinterlands.

Q: The focus keeps shifting. But, anyway, you felt it gave you...I mean, you already knew Washington, but from what perspective?

ANDERSON: Obviously I knew how agencies worked. From the legislative standpoint in knowing how the laws come about, how they are implemented. I also had day to day contact with the federal agencies so I knew how they worked. I knew how they worked and interacted by helping individuals that needed help from agencies and then what Congress expected of them and what they needed from Congress. I could make agencies work I just never had worked in the executive branch. So it was helpful from the standpoint that I saw it from their side of the equation, if you will. That was a valuable insight.

Q: What were American interests in that set of islands?

ANDERSON: Well, certainly the situation of Grenada had just ended.

Q: Could you explain what that was?

ANDERSON: That was during the period of time, and I assume go back to your interview of Sally Shelton while she was there, there was obviously the Castro presence in the Caribbean and all of those islands were so volatile. They quite frankly are so small that each government is so susceptible to all kinds of outside influences. You take Antigua with 7700 people. You can take a government like that and work your will with it in all kinds of different ways be it undercover black market, etc. We were concerned, obviously with the buildup of communism as it was moving throughout these small Caribbean nations. The fact that the drug situation from South America, we could tell, was moving up through the Caribbean and they were using these as launching places. Of course, Grenada's actual overthrow by the communists became a concern of all the leaders in the Caribbean because they are democracies. They have a very strong background in democracy.

So after we sent our troops in...

Q: We sent our troops in when?

ANDERSON: It was during the time period between 1982-83. As I went down we were doing the reconstruction and rebuilding in Grenada.

There were agricultural interests. Of changing their views and ways they were doing things. They were dependent on sugar and in today's environment, sugar is not the right thing. You have a real problem economically in the area because their whole economy is based around sugar. Tourism, of course, is a major industry. It has overtaken sugar as the largest industry. So, with the President's focus after the Grenada invasion on the area...how can we best help these people to develop the area?

Q: This was the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

ANDERSON: Yes.

Q: This was essentially what?

ANDERSON: This is where we get into disputes as to how it should be carried out. AID certainly had some programs which they allowed business people to participate in both on the individual local level as well as some American business people that we tried to get involved to go in and try to develop a business there. The cut and sew business here in the United States has to do with many of the small factories that hired people started looking to the Caribbean because of the cheaper labor, good working environment for the people, and the steadiness and educational level.

That created problems for Congress on the other hand. They wanted to create the Caribbean Basin Initiative but they didn't want you taking jobs from the United States...to move them down there. So, those were problems.

I always cite the American Airlines situation. The President of American Airlines said that he wanted to do something in Barbados. His team was sent down in January and reported back that it was great. They reported that the people were well educated, it was a beautiful area, and would be a great place to do business. A couple of months later the President said, "You guys haven't done anything. I told you that I wanted an operation down there to take our coupons." The coupons you leave at the gate just as you go to get on the plane are collected by American Airlines and flown up to New York and then would be flown to Barbados where all the keyput information would be put in. They would get immediate credit from other airlines which quite frankly helped American's cash flow. If you are ticketed on Delta, obviously you paid your money to Delta and for American to get their money back they had to be able to show that they got their coupon, so this was a way they figured out how to make money, cash flow wise, come back to American quicker.

Well, the team said, "We didn't really think you were serious." "Yes, I am serious, so you go down there and let's get on with your trying to set something up in Barbados." So they went back in April. They came back to the States saying, "You know this is really great. We have had two wonderful vacations-we came in January when it was cold in the United States, and now we are down in April-but we really don't think we should do this." They wrote a little memo about how they found it would be difficult-they had some electrical problems-and told him all the reasons why they basically felt it wouldn't work.

The president called them back again and told them to go back down there that week and come back with a report on who they were going to implement it. So they came back and reported how it could be done but we still said they did not think it was the right thing to do. This was after the third trip. The fourth trip-he told them to go in August and stay there until they identified a site, and started the actual preparation to move the business there. They did. And it ended up that the efficiency rating after they finally got the business established increased from about 64 percent accuracy to around 98 percent. It provided wonderful jobs for the people there-the environment they had them in, the people liked their work and were satisfied. And it was good for American Airlines.

Q: This obviously took tremendous perseverance on the part of the head of American Airlines which is not the sort of thing you usually get on this sort of thing. Why was he pushing it?

ANDERSON: Well, that is where I had a different view of the policy than what the State Department basically felt and, I think even the President. I did talk with some people about how I thought it should be implemented. This is one of those things that truly becomes a management problem. In business the people who make decisions in business are the chief executive officers. The President of American Airlines. Why he was committed to Barbados I can't answer, other then that he had been there and knew the work ethic of the people. That is the reason that the Caribbean Basin Initiative would have worked better if had we been...the State Department's attitude was that you need to take people down there and show them what you have to offer and that was what they wanted us to convince the people in the islands.

Well, my theory was just the opposite. They should be coming to America. Go to Des Moines, Iowa, or Denver, Colorado, or to New York, or wherever business was that we could have identified, through Commerce, etc., and actually talk with chief executive officers. You could have brought up the prime minister of the country or the minister of finance, someone to go in to talk to them and explain it. Invite the chief executive officer down there and develop it. Those that I was able to convince to do that showed results. They ended up with personal relationships, saw what their businesses needed and how businesses operated in the United States. Wilson Sporting Goods, for instance, in St. Vincent, as well as in St. Lucia, found that the wonderful work ethic of the people was fantastic.

They also needed to target their tourism a little better. During the winter months Barbados targets DC with ads. The same with St. Lucia. If they would pick out another market say like Dallas, Texas and do that same thing, or Denver, places that they don't always get tourists from they would get a new influx of tourists.

The CBI could have been far more helpful and it still can be, if we would have been able to say to the people down there, "Come to the United States and let us set up appointments for you to visit with business people here."

Q: How helpful did you find the Department of Commerce? Obviously this was a major part of President Reagan's policy and what you were after was to develop business ties. Or was it developed to help Americans sell good abroad?

ANDERSON: No. Quite frankly American goods were already sold down there anyway. The Commerce Department, certainly the people that we had in place there were very helpful. I think this is where government causes our foreign policy a lot of trouble when you get out into the hinterlands because it is very difficult when you have to try to coordinate...you have your team in place and everybody is working towards the same goal. There is no doubt about it. It is when it gets back here to Washington that you have the problems with Washington not seeing it the way you do on the ground. You have to constantly massage it trying to bump it up another level in order to get a decision. When you waste your time doing that you are losing valuable time trying to meet your goal. But the people, and once again back to your point about travel, when you got people to come there, be it Commerce folks or State Department folks, could always see your point when they were there and understood more what you were trying to accomplish. The Department was helpful except when people had their own agenda and you spent a lot of time trying to move it up to the next level.

Q: When you got there how did you find the mission, the staff of the embassy-effectiveness, ability to get around, etc.?

ANDERSON: We were very fortunate in that we had an airplane. We let in coordination everybody use it. So people got around to all the islands, ten of them, on a regular basis. Travel is not a big thing in the Caribbean even though there is a lot of water out there. Islanders go back and forth a lot. Travel is not a problem.

The staff was like any place. You had some that you were glad to move on, but by in large they were a great group of people. They were very professional, understood the people, understood what our goals were.

Q: How about back in Washington, did you find that it was hard to get anybody's attention in the State Department which were giving a good deal of attention to Central America?

ANDERSON: That is interesting-yes and no. The focus in ARA was certainly on Central America because of the times and I can't say that the assistant secretary level was as concerned at that moment-they had just focused on the Caribbean during the Grenada crisis-and they were now looking towards Central America, which I think was natural. But the rest of the Department and anyone else you dealt with who had responsibility for the area, you could get them, but it just took time. It was a time consuming thing.Particularly for the mission when we wanted to have a regional treaty with all of the islands. I think that could have been put into effect if the State Department had wanted to focus on that at the time, because we pretty well had most of the prime ministers along with it.

Q: What type of treaty was this?

ANDERSON: It was basically an arms type of arrangement, a security treaty, so that there would be a format for the same type of thing that happened in Grenada. It was something that based on what took place in Grenada could have happened very easily and quickly within the first two or three years after it took place. After that you would never get it put together because they are all independent nations. Once you missed that window of opportunity it would be extremely difficult to put such a security treaty together. It would have facilitated us not to have to go through the same type process that we had to go through the last time in making the decisions that we did because it would have been done on a regional level and the governments would have been directly involved all along the decision process as they asked us for assistance and the type of assistance, etc.

Q: Did you find it difficult dealing with these governments because you were located in Bridgetown in Barbados and could only fly out from time to time? Did you keep an ongoing relationship with the other governments the way you could in Barbados-calling on people and all that?

ANDERSON: Yes. You know there have been views that we need separate missions in every individual island nation, which I don't subscribe to. It just makes it a little more difficult on the mission and certainly the people there, but you can very easily keep up with all of the day to day activities and relationships. They are warm, friendly people and you can deal with them forthrightly. They are accessible. You never have a problem talking to them. By the same token they had no problem calling you up immediately. I think back to when James Mitchell was elected prime minister in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He won by a landslide to the point that even some of the other countries were concerned that after 30 years under the leadership of Mr. Cato there was going to be real problems. Of course, there were none and he became a great dynamic force in the Caribbean. The day after his election he was on the phone to me and I hadn't even met him at that point. He asked me to come down and talk to him. We flew down right away and spent the evening with him at his home. As a matter of fact we spent three nights with him. We had a very close relationship with him. You could do that with any of the Caribbean leaders.

Q: We are always looking at the time that you were there, did you see any problems, particularly with any of these small states? Economic, political, etc.

ANDERSON: You have to bare in mind that this was right after Grenada and we were constantly monitoring very closely the activities that were taking place and taking the pulse of the everyday citizen down there as well as the government leaders about what outside influences were there. That we were very concerned about. It was a very tedious time there in the Caribbean. Their economic situation was one that was not good at that time. They were trying to readjust their economics. There agricultural focus needed to be changed.

Q: For the record, I assume the problem was mostly of a sugar economy when we are moving into an era where people are not using as much sugar.

ANDERSON: Exactly. It was a difficult situation for them from an economic standpoint. What they were trying to do, or what we were trying to do, was to get them to focus on light manufacturing and cut and sew industries to help come up with jobs when they lost them on the sugar plantations. New machinery to cut the decreased sugar also caused unemployment.

Q: A lot of your focus was just on what one could do for these countries?

ANDERSON: Sure, economic development, if you will. That was what we tried to concentrate on. And the opportunities that they had and the things that they could do to make good economic sense and provide jobs for their people.

Q: I was thinking of two sort of major dynamos in that area. Obviously there was Cuba. You also had a situation in Jamaica which isn't very good-a lot of crime and anti-American labor movements, etc. Did you get emanations from these two places?

ANDERSON: Yes, and that was part of what was going on. But in the Caribbean nations that our mission worked with there really wasn't anti-American sentiment. It was a wonderful feeling, they were gratified with what America had done in the region, they were very, very positive about America and things American. It really and truly couldn't have been a better time to be there as far as their feelings towards us. Many of the servicemen would come through and tell you it was one of the first time in their lives where the locals would offer to buy drinks and thank them for what they did.

Q: Did you get reports or concern that the Cubans were trying to continue doing things there?

ANDERSON: Yes. Of course, as I said earlier, that was one of our concerns-Cuba and the aggressiveness that they had in the region. On a daily bases we tried to monitor what was taking place. And because they were such fragile islands in small economies, small governments, the same type thing that would happen in Jamaica with crime, robbery of tourists that were out on the beach...we had those sort of things happen in one of their major industries right there in Barbados. When that happened it hurt the tourism so the government spent a lot of time so that they didn't have crime on the beaches and that sort of thing. Drugs that they felt were basically communist inspired were kept out. They monitored it very closely with lots of our help and they were grateful for it.

Q: How about the drug business? It was somewhat off the main route as far as getting stuff up to the United States wasn't it?

ANDERSON: Yes, but you know if you look at how they come up from Colombia, they ended up...we had pretty well monitored how they were coming and they switched patterns. They moved from Colombia and started moving over to Caracas. Then they would start coming up through the Caribbean chain. I don't think it got as bad as we thought it might, but the pattern definitely shifted. You stamp something out one place and it pops up in another area.

Q: The money is just so overwhelming.

ANDERSON: The money could corrupt a government overnight. They would come in with a $100,000 which is nothing here in the United States, but that is a fortune in a small country like St. Lucia, St. Vincent, or even Dominica. It is just incredible what they could do if they wanted to buy a government off.

Q: Did you have the Drug Enforcement Agency person there?

ANDERSON: Yes. And monitored all of that very closely. But by enlarge there were not real major drug problems. There were small problems here and there that popped up. I think they have more of a problem today than they did back then.

Q: Did you have any major drug busts or anything like that?

ANDERSON: No, we really didn't. About the only thing that actually happened was a neighbor of mine from where the Ambassador's Residence was, ended up killing his wife. They went into his house and discovered all kinds of drugs and evidently he was one of the kingpins of the drug industry there in Barbados and he was only a stone throw away. But outside of that they didn't have problems. It was more up towards the Bahamas that they had most of the major problems. But that was when they started dropping back a little bit too. So fortunately I left about the time they really started moving that way.

Q: What about Grenada? You came in the aftermath. You had the responsibility of overseeing...?

ANDERSON: Well, for the US AID mission and USIS. What they had done when they actually went into Grenada was to take Grenada out from underneath before I arrived at the Barbados mission and operated it separately and there was a Chargï¿½ down there. He coordinated through the AID mission and Information office in Bridgetown and other than that reported directly back to Washington.

Q: Was immigration a problem? Was there a tradition of going to the United States or was that more from Jamaica and other places?

ANDERSON: No, the Caribbean likes to do their shopping in Miami and they go pretty regularly-Miami and New York. There is obviously a very large population of Caribbean people in New York and they move regularly and on a daily basis. Travel for them is like hopping on the subway or metro. They just hop on a plane and take off and do a lot of it. They do immigrate a lot and it was quite a problem.

Q: This must have been one of the major pressures on you?

ANDERSON: Definitely. You couldn't go anywhere that you didn't get confronted with an immigration problem. But I can say that the consular office did a great job down there. They were very good. Even today, I think, that the Caribbean people feel good about the way they are handled, which I think is a credit to the State Department.

Q: How about tourism? Do you get people calling up saying they have missed their boat and you need to do something?

ANDERSON: That certainly, because it was a high tourist area, was a problem from time to time. But not any real problems. We had a couple rape problems that didn't happen while I was there but came back to court while I was there. That was something that you ended up getting involved in that was sort of dramatic from both sides when you would see how their law was going to interact and you would try to explain to American citizens that they were under their laws and would have to operate that way. It was a difficult thing to have to handle American citizens who felt that they needed certain kinds of representation and you could only do so much for them because indeed they were in a foreign country. It was hard for them to understand that. You did from time to time hear from folks that their son was on a sailing trip down there and hadn't heard from him for days and could you find him, etc.

Q: All of it was at the manageable level?

ANDERSON: Yes, I don't think that there were any major problems there.

Q: No great hurricanes while you were there?

ANDERSON: Nope. Had a couple of threats, but fortunately they went away.

Q: One hurricane will ruin your entire day.

ANDERSON: That's right. Having lived through one that hit the Mississippi Gulf coast, I know what that is like.

Q: This has been very interesting in giving us your perspective of this. When you left the islands, did you have much of a chance to pass on the information you had gained to your successor, or was it pretty much like ships that pass in the night?

ANDERSON: No, he happened to be a good friend of mine so I had a very good opportunity to chat with him about the missions, the people that were there, the various prime ministers, their concerns, etc.

Q: What did you come back to?

ANDERSON: Well, I came back to the savings and loan industry. As I told you I had made a commitment to Trent that when he ran for Senate that I would indeed stop whatever I was doing and run the Senate campaign and that all happened within about a three month period. So I ended up doing that. I have been involved in investment banking since I left the Senate side, and own several businesses in and around the Washington DC area. But I am primarily involved in investment banking right now.

Q: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate this.

ANDERSON: Great. You are welcome.

End of interview