

INTERVIEWER: Today is October 21, 2010. My name is Karen Arenson. We are speaking today with Donald L. M. Blackmer, professor of political science emeritus at MIT. He served as executive assistant to the director, and then assistant director of MIT's Center for International Studies, which was created in 1951 to aid the United States in its Cold War battle against the Soviet Union. He later chronicled the Center's creation and early years in a fascinating book, *The MIT Center for International Studies: The Founding Years 1951 to 1969* to mark the Center's 50th anniversary.

He also served as head of MIT's political science department, associate dean of its School of Humanities and Social Science and director of its Program in Science, Technology, and Society. Outside of MIT, he served as chairman of the Council for European Studies.

Don, thank you for talking to us this morning. You joined the Center as executive assistant to its first director just five years after it was founded. And then you delved back into its history for your book. Tell us about the Center and its origins-- why was it created? What was going on in America and American foreign policy and at MIT?

BLACKMER: That's a big question. What was going on in America, if you will, that is most relevant to this topic, was that we were at the height-- the beginning but in some ways the height of-- the Cold War. I won't go into its beginnings, but obviously, the US government at that time was deeply engaged in finding ways to fight the battle which was seen as a battle against communism, and against particularly the Soviet Union as the bearer of the flag of the communist world. And MIT was fairly quickly recruited into this battle, partly because obviously, it had done such an enormous amount of work fighting the last war, the real war, by mobilizing its laboratories and so on. And a lot of MIT faculty had been in the war in one capacity or another and continued to be engaged in affairs in Washington after they came back to MIT.

The immediate event that sort of primed the way for the creating of the Center for International Studies was a project called Project Troy. The notion behind the label of Troy was that the government was looking for ways to get information behind the Iron Curtain so as to begin to try to reach the population not only in Russia, but in the other countries that were now Russian controlled of Central and Eastern Europe. And one of the main instruments that the government had for reaching behind the Iron Curtain was the *Voice of America*, which was broadcasting American propaganda and news about the United States and so on trying to present the United States in a positive light to the citizens of all of these countries.

INTERVIEWER: No personal computers or email, yet?

BLACKMER: Nope. No, radio was the principal way to transcend international boundaries. And since travel at that time was out of the question-- we couldn't send personal emissaries except for formal diplomatic connections behind the Iron Curtain, you could not travel there-- so MIT, having been involved in government sponsored research projects all during the war, was called upon-- I don't remember the exact source of the inquiry but that doesn't matter. I think it was probably the connections that MIT had within the State Department-- was asked to put together a group of researchers, scholars who could figure out a way to overcome that jamming. This aspect of it all was a technical question. But at the same time, they were smart enough to consider it more than just a technical problem. Let's assume we can get behind the Iron Curtain and talk to these folks. What is it we want to say? What kind of message are we trying to get across?

So this made it logical to include in this otherwise technically competent group of academics, some social scientists-- and there were probably a couple of humanists, as well-- but people, for example, who knew something about the Soviet Union and life in a communist society. And others who were simply smart and creative, interesting people who might have some views on this question.

That project involved several members of the MIT faculty, including Max Millikan, who had just come back from wartime assignments in Washington into the Department of Economics. And another long time MIT historian, Elting Morison, was also involved who happened to be a good friend of Millikan's. There were others in that company. A lot of these details can be found in the book you mentioned, the history of the early years of the Center, details not all of which are at the top of my memory.

But this experience-- which was a very intensive, I think like a three month study, which was housed in what eventually became the Lincoln Lab, out in Concord or Lexington, wherever it was right on the border between those two towns-- it was a very stimulating and exciting experience. And somehow out of that came the idea that MIT might really continue in that vein and develop an essentially social science study group-- eventually it became a Center-- in order to carry on that kind of work initially oriented towards the Soviet Union problem, but open-ended with the idea that other countries and international issues could be included.

Max Millikan was approached to be the director of that project. And just as it was beginning-- I think beginning to get organized-- he got summoned back to Washington and spent something like six months working on a particular project at the Central Intelligence Agency. During that time, actually, Jay Stratton, who was the provost of MIT, served as the acting director of the Center that had been announced and was beginning to take shape but hadn't yet really got into action. So he was the one who was in charge when the Center's very first project got under way, which was led by Walt Rostow, who was also a professor of economics.

It was a trio of Yale economists. Millikan and Rostow, who were graduate students when an older member of the faculty, Richard Bissell-- always known as Dicky Bissell-- became the thesis adviser for both of them. I'm not absolutely sure, but that was a trio that remained close all of their lives.

INTERVIEWER: Stratton's field was what? It wasn't social sciences. [INTERPOSING VOICES]

BLACKMER: I don't remember.

INTERVIEWER: I don't know.

BLACKMER: I'd have to know--

INTERVIEWER: But he was certainly a good manager.

BLACKMER: I think he was a scientist, not an engineer, but I'm not 100 percent sure of that.

INTERVIEWER: It's interesting that the core of this group were economists. They weren't people who had focused on issues, presumably, of communication or whatever one calls it.

BLACKMER: That's absolutely right. They were professional economists but they both had had a wartime experience that, in a sense, led them to realize that it was international economics and more broadly, the field of foreign policy that would interest them.

Rostow, like so many people who went on to important internationally-related careers afterwards, was in London in the OSS. Charlie Kindleberger, another MIT economist, was also in London in the OSS, and perhaps Bissell was, as well. But there were a lot of people who turned out to be very important in that generation when they got back into the academic world. Who had that particular experience in which they were working essentially on international-related problems of one sort or another vis-a-vis their allies or focusing on Germany or whatever. But that was the crucial experience, I think, that led them into that. Max Millikan was not in the OSS gang, but he was working in Washington. I've forgotten now precisely-- he had two wartime assignments-- what agency he was working for. But it was comparable, it was internationally-oriented. So they were unusual by the standards of contemporary economists. [INTERPOSING VOICES]

INTERVIEWER: So they had been trained as social scientists, but they had some on the ground experience in focusing on the types of issues that the government, at that point, wanted to explore. If one had wanted to assemble a group of experts from around the world or around the United States who knew about these subjects from a professional, academic point of view, would there have been a group? I mean, did this field exist? Were there experts in it or were they inventing it as they went along?

BLACKMER: The field was just beginning. I can speak with some particular knowledge only about the Russian side of it, or the Soviet Union side of it, that being the principal enemy we were concerned with. In the very early 50's, beginning only about 1950, a small group of social scientists began to move into that territory.

My personal experience happened to have had-- let me go back a second here to my post secondary school experience-- I had the chance to spend the summer of 1947 in Europe on a youth hostel biking expedition in which I got my first vision-- particularly on the French, German border in Strasbourg-- of a city that has been devastated by the bombing. And when I then went for the next year as an exchange student at the Harrow School in England, London was still in ruins. So at that point I became much more sharply aware than I had been of the aftermath of the war, Second World War itself. Not the same experience as those of the previous generation who had actually been in the war, but nevertheless it made a difference to me.

When I returned and started my undergraduate education at Harvard, I decided that, having already known I liked languages from doing some French and German, I decided to learn Russian. So I started working there on that problem, or on that language. And that led me to a major in Russian history and literature. I liked history. I wasn't much good at analyzing literature, but I liked history.

And my chief undergraduate adviser was a man named Richard Pipes, who became one of the leading historians of Russia of his day. And he remained at Harvard all his career. And others who had just arrived at Harvard as the first Soviet studies people around. I think specifically of Merle Fainsod whose book, *How Russia is Ruled*, was the famous textbook of the time. And Adam Ulam, who wrote a whole series of other books, Polish originally by origin. And both of them, all three of those people, remained at Harvard their entire careers.

INTERVIEWER: They're saying, Russia is becoming important-- we need to build up our expertise in that area? Or did they bring in good people who said, this is important, here's where we want to turn our attention?

BLACKMER: More than that. Harvard created, in about 1952-- not sure of the exact date-- the Russian Research Center. There was a similar one, a little smaller, at Columbia, but at that time it was the major center for the study of the Soviet Union. It was a little bit similar to what was happening at MIT. There was no Russian expert who was appropriate to run that organization, so they persuaded a leading anthropologist, Clyde Kluckhohn-- working on the South Western Indians and that sort of thing-- to become the director of an interdisciplinary research center, which would mobilize all of the social sciences-- sociology, economics, political science-- those were the main fields, I guess-- to create a center focusing on the study of the Soviet Union and the communist world.

INTERVIEWER: But along more traditional academic lines than the CIS was proceeding along.

BLACKMER: Yes. They started before the Center and the difference between the two institutions is interesting. Harvard obviously had government contracts in the sciences and engineering, I suppose, but nowhere near the extent that MIT did. This was MIT's bread and butter. That was where a great deal of its research was being funded. So MIT was entirely used to working not only for the government, but also on classified studies and secret work for the government which they had done throughout the war, and which carried over into this Troy Project. That was also a classified venture.

INTERVIEWER: So how much influence did the Center for International Studies and its researchers have on national public policy and diplomacy?

BLACKMER: That I can't answer. But let me close the circle because I was trying to explain why the Center got started out of the Troy Project and why it turned into an organization that was really quite different from the Russian Research Center.

The central difference I was getting at was that the MIT Center for International Studies, as it was being formed, did not have Harvard's prejudice against research that was funded by government agencies. And in this case, it was funded, necessarily secretly, by the Central Intelligence Agency. Stratton and Killian and other MIT faculty were worried about that, but they accepted that as the necessary price to pay for getting an institution of that sort together. And the very first project that the Center undertook was Rostow's, which Rostow led, resulting in a book-- title I've forgotten. It'll come back to me-- *The Dynamics of Soviet Society* was what he called it. Was, first of all, an interdisciplinary project in which he did involve people who knew Russian literature, as well as people who were politically oriented. But it was perhaps the first place outside of the government where a group was put together doing a policy-related set of studies on Russia.

INTERVIEWER: You say there was some concern initially about this relationship with the CIA. More so than about the science and engineering work or equally so? In other words, were people thinking, is there a difference between social science and policy research versus science and technology? Or were there concerns across the board?

BLACKMER: That's a good question. I don't know the answer. My guess is that people didn't think about that distinction very strongly. Partly because of the Project Troy experience, where social scientists had been brought together with scientists to work on what was initially, clearly, a technical problem with other dimensions. But it was the technical problem we were trying to solve. So that may have made the transition easier.

But the second thing was that MIT had a whole apparatus. The administrative side of it, people were used to dealing with the government, and Harvard was not.

INTERVIEWER: I think you said in the book that the original desire was, in fact, for there to be funding from other sources-- maybe the State Department-- but that the money didn't exist there, and that was why the CIA stepped up, in fact.

BLACKMER: Absolutely right. Yes, they tried to get money from elsewhere. And they didn't like the idea that accepting money from the CIA meant that it had to be secret.

INTERVIEWER: Because of the covertness.

BLACKMER: Everyone spoke about its being supported by the government, yes. But what the government was was never revealed.

INTERVIEWER: But maybe was widely understood although not enunciated?

BLACKMER: I don't think it was widely understood.

INTERVIEWER: Not in the early years.

BLACKMER: No. Later it became public, yes, but that was 10 years later.

INTERVIEWER: And do you know much about what kind of process MIT went through to get the Center off the ground? Did the Corporation, for example, have to approve it? In other words, did it go up to the board of trustees at MIT? Or was this an executive decision in the president's office?

BLACKMER: I don't know. My assumption is the trustees and other higher bodies were informed, but they probably wouldn't have thought it appropriate to intervene in that sort of thing. In fact, I hope they would've applauded the initiative.

INTERVIEWER: Although, it wasn't very many years later where-- I guess it was MIT felt, in fact-- it was time just to break the tie with the CIA and to say, we can't continue.

BLACKMER: That was a good deal later. After the connection had become public.

INTERVIEWER: But in the 50s, I think. Or I think later. You were here by then, or had it already been broken off by the time?

BLACKMER: No, it was after I arrived in 1956. And the connection wasn't broken, I would say, until the early 60s. It really wasn't until protests against the Vietnam War aroused student, and to some degree faculty, awareness about the Center that it became an issue.

INTERVIEWER: So it lasted that long?

BLACKMER: There was a long ride. But the important thing to add to that is that immediately-- by the time I got there, in any case, in 1956-- there were major efforts to raise funds essentially to endow the Center from foundations. And particularly the Ford Foundation, which gave two major grants, one of like \$4 million and another of about \$8 million, which were not quite exclusively for the Center-- but the primary funds were for the Center-- and the largest fraction of those grants were to endow faculty chairs. Some of them were only endowed for a 15 year period, but still that enabled the Center, which had been growing and expanding beyond the Rostow initial project and into other fields, it enabled the appointment, the tenuring, of about eight faculty members over those years--

Some of them, that is to say, for a certain period of time, but then MIT, having created professorships, had to continue funding them with other assets.

INTERVIEWER: Were there specific projects in those early years at the Center that were seen as especially useful or especially important, either for the government or for the social sciences? In other words, highlights of the work that was done. You mentioned the Rostow book on the dynamics of Soviet life. Any others that come to mind?

BLACKMER: That were seen as particularly important did--

INTERVIEWER: In the social sciences or to the government. In other words, just what stood out among the work?

BLACKMER: In the early years the focus was essentially in two areas. One being communist studies, a continuation of the Rostow project, which expanded into a variety of other fields including some major work done by a marvelous Russian emigre named Alex Korol. A great, fine person and my children and one grandchild were named after him. A very close friend who did studies first on Soviet education and then on Soviet research and development.

The other major field of expansion was one that was labeled International Communication. And this was a large venture which was promoted, sponsored, developed very largely by a man named Ithiel de Sola Pool whom you may have known in your time here-- who came from California. And who, because of some youthful indiscretion or other, could never get a government contract, never had a government clearance. And he was here already. He came in 1955, the year before I arrived, or maybe a year or so before that.

INTERVIEWER: As an academic or a researcher? Did he have a professorial line?

BLACKMER: He had a professorial appointment in an entity that was just beginning-- that is the political science department-- at this stage. Well, if I go back a couple of years before that started, there was one political scientist at MIT, a man named Norman Padelford, whose field was in international relations, and who was a member of a really quite good history section in the Department of Humanities. A history section that gave birth to some first-rate historians. Elting Morison, John Blum, who went to Yale. Alfred Chandler, who ended up at the Harvard Business School. A wonderful bunch. But MIT wasn't strong enough in the humanities to keep any of these people. Elting Morison being the other one. They were all four there.

INTERVIEWER: In other words, they weren't here as students. They came as young faculty and then migrated to elsewhere.

BLACKMER: And migrated to higher, stronger universities in the history field, quite understandably. But they were part of what was I think called the history section of the humanities department. There was another department, which was initially the Department of Economics, created, as I'm sure other people have told you here, essentially by Paul Samuelson. Do you know why he didn't stay at Harvard? Simply because he was Jewish, they let him go.

INTERVIEWER: They didn't know he had done Othello, I believe. He came here and transformed MIT. He was the route by which MIT began to develop serious work in the social sciences.

The economics department was renamed briefly into the Department of Economics and Social Science. I can't remember who else may have been there. There were some psychologists actually, social psychologists, who may have been part of that entity. I'm not sure who else was, but at just about that time the Department of Economics and Social Science began recruiting political scientists. And Pool was I think the first. Lucian Pye came in 1956.

INTERVIEWER: Because of the CIS work? Or was it just a coincidence or because they were trying to build the political science area and they were good people, and then they fit in with CIS?

BLACKMER: I think it was a little bit more, the Center had a little bit more important of a role than that. Because the Center had been created and had quite an extensive panoply of research projects going at that time. And MIT was clearly committed to it. It seemed to people like Pool and Pye and others, as testifying that MIT was serious about wanting to do things in the social sciences and in political science, in particular that there was a growth possibility there.

So they came and joined the Center. And particularly Ithiel Pool, who was an entrepreneurial kind of guy-- he really had visions of a substantial program of research in what was being called International Communication, which obviously had some technical dimensions linked to the Troy Project, but he regarded it very largely as a social science endeavor. But at the same time he was very smart and able to make good contacts with people in the science fields, as well. So he helped let the roots of the political science enterprise grow in a somewhat broader place. But those people I think would not have been likely, couldn't have been persuaded to come from other good universities, as they were, if the Center had not seemed like a promising place to be.

INTERVIEWER: Another one might have been Lucian Pye?

BLACKMER: Yes, I did mention him. Yes, he arrived three months before I did in early 1956.

INTERVIEWER: And aside from the economists, these people were trained as traditional political scientists and then again to push the edges of the discipline?

BLACKMER: I don't think any of them would have regarded themselves as quite traditional. We can't get into the history of the political science department, I mean, the political science field as a discipline. But there occurred, at just about this point, a shift between traditional, old style political science, which was concerned mostly either with history-- the sort of growth and development of government institutions and that sort of thing-- or with political theory, political philosophy of an old fashioned sort, with studying Locke, Rousseau, all the way up to Marx and other more contemporary things. But that was political theory, or political philosophy as it was commonly called. What was being created here was the reflection of a new wave of what was then called behavioral political science. That is, people who were interested in looking at the actual behavior of people in the political realm, at political communications, at elections, at how politicians spoke to people, how both government people and citizens behaved in a political context, relevant to politics.

Pye was someone who had grown up in a missionary family in China. And China was his particular field, but he was as much interested in how China was perceived by Americans and treated in American context. And part of the expansion into the behavioral world was a comparable expansion of the political science fraternity into other countries, into the politics of other countries. The traditional political scientists in this country were all Americanists. If you wanted to study other countries, OK, you could be a historian. Or a journalist or something like that. But the discipline of political science began to attract-- and this really happened only in the very late 40s and 50s-- attract people who were interested in India or China and began to do field work for their dissertations in countries like that.

INTERVIEWER: It looked like the Center was-- before interdisciplinary was a buzz word-- that the Center itself was fostering a kind of interdisciplinarity. Not only did you have your economists, and then some of your political scientists. I think Jerome Bruner, who was a behavioral specialist was there.

BLACKMER: He took part, certainly in Project Troy. He was never formally part of the Center, but he was a very important figure, yes.

INTERVIEWER: So having somebody like that working together with the others maybe rubbed off in terms of saying, open your mind and here are some methods you should be aware of, and here are interesting questions?

BLACKMER: It was a new frontier not only for MIT, but more broadly speaking for social science. And obviously it had everything to do with the fact that for the first time in its history, the United States was suddenly taking on responsibilities which had no boundaries. We were the major power and we assumed-- whether we thought of it then, or not-- we assumed the mantle that the Brits had been wearing for a long time of a Western oriented, a Western managed empire.

INTERVIEWER: And the quantification part of this all, did that have any roots or seeds in the Center? Because I think the MIT political science department or group became known for pushing the boundaries there, too, at one point.

BLACKMER: You're right, but I don't think MIT can claim any of the credit for that. I'm not sure that I know where that started. Ithiel Pool who was trained, I think, in California was the only one in the early stages who had that range of interests. All of the others were behavioralists who were studying foreign countries, primarily.

INTERVIEWER: So that may have come later in the department itself.

BLACKMER: Yeah, and it was--

INTERVIEWER: John Saloma maybe, at some point.

BLACKMER: It was the field of American studies within which that approach took hold. Old fashioned students of American politics gave way to people with statistical and quantitative abilities. So the department did move in that direction, but it--

INTERVIEWER: But that didn't germinate in the Center itself.

BLACKMER: Not at all.

INTERVIEWER: Millikan had a very long run as director from 1951 until his death in 1969.

BLACKMER: Wasn't long enough. He was still a young man when he died.

INTERVIEWER: What kept him in place all those years? What was his magic? What was he like as director? Did he do his own research?

BLACKMER: Start with that question. He did very little of his own research. His economics research had been in the field of housing, and he abandoned that entirely when he came. His government experience had a lot of international dimensions to it. He was a man of broad interests, high intelligence, and very open. Talked with anyone. Warm, encouraging. He had some kind of magnetism. He liked people. He would talk with them for hours. He was just very broadly educated, interested in the world. To the extent that he had any special field within the Center it had to do with India, where he traveled extensively and developed a network of friends. But he was the kind of man who could meet and be on equal terms with people who held power, foundations, in government. He was wonderful, very low key. Not a dramatic person, as Walt Rostow was. Thoughtful, puffed away on his pipe. People developed an intense loyalty to him.

So I don't know. It was a kind of kind of charisma that had to do with who he was as a person.

INTERVIEWER: He seemed, perhaps, to have been a good manager in the sense of knowing how to keep the Center going and funds coming in aside from having a group of people who liked working with him and were loyal to him? Or it was all bound up together? Did they bring in money and he simply brought them in, or is there a way to analyze the dynamics of all that?

BLACKMER: Obviously, if any of the Center people who came wanted to stay, and it was a very brief period, 10 years, when the Center was growing and the money was coming in--

INTERVIEWER: '51 to '61, then?

BLACKMER: Yeah, roughly that. It may have lasted a little longer.

That was the period of opportunity for researchers who were here to transform their status into that of tenured professors. Millikan and Rostow-- can't remember whether Pool may have come with tenure, I'm not sure --but otherwise they were all untenured faculty when they arrived.

His genius was in winning the loyalty of those people partly by letting them do what they wanted to do and encouraging them and being able to talk with them and give them that support. The success of the Center had to do a lot with the fact that good people were hired. But he was unparalleled in his ability to win the confidence of foundation people, particularly those in the Ford Foundation where he had some connections for a while, including his old friend and mentor, Dickey Bissell. And so those connections made some difference. But he was, together with MIT's reputation and the excitement that went along with the idea of helping MIT expand into this territory, that I think, was key in persuading them. But personally, his role was very, very important.

But obviously, the individual program, or project directors, people whose ideas these were, had to do their own persuading and demonstrating of their abilities.

INTERVIEWER: Did Vietnam give the Center a new *raison d'etre*? Were there very many projects connected with the Southeast Asia conflict?

BLACKMER: Not many. Rather than help the Center, it came close to destroying it at a crucial period. Two or three members of the department were standing behind government policy, most particularly Lucian Pye and Ithiel Pool. Both of them worked on Asia. Pye was not involved directly in Vietnam. Ithiel Pool did have some direct connections with Vietnam, but not *vis-a-vis* the government because he couldn't get cleared for that. I've forgotten now how it was. But they were both firm supporters of government policy.

Indeed, one of the rallying points for students in rebellious years came to be, "We won't die for Pool and Pye."

INTERVIEWER: Which seems a little ironic given what you've said about Pool being unable to get government clearance himself, which may not have been widely known, I guess.

BLACKMER: I'm sure it wasn't. But his support of the war was widely known. And almost everybody else-- there were some who were sort of neutral or in middle positions-- but most were not and most of the students were not.

INTERVIEWER: Was there much discussion within the Center of the Vietnam War and of the CIA affiliation? Was there any group of professors or researchers who had their own doubts separate from the protesters outside? Or did Millikan himself think about these things, either analytically-- in other words intellectually in saying, are we in a tough position that we need to get out of?

BLACKMER: Yeah. The book I wrote on the Center's history has a whole chapter on that, which I can't attempt to summarize and I'm sure I've forgotten half of it.

But there was a period of half a dozen years during which the Center was under intense pressure. And this stemmed primarily from the fact that it had become pretty widely known not only that we had government support, but that a substantial amount of that support-- nobody knew how much-- came from the Central Intelligence Agency. It wasn't by any means as large as money from other sources, but the impossibly embarrassing fact was that this connection with the CIA could not be publicly revealed, even though it became quite widely known. This was a secret contract.

And for any academic institution that's intolerable and was one of the reasons why, incidentally, there was a time when at the very origins when Harvard was invited to join jointly in sponsorship of the Center and they declined for that reason, wisely, but pressures grew within the Center, strongly-- pushed particularly by people in the economics department who were not part of the group doing government-sponsored work. Their work was all Ford Foundation or Sloan Foundation, other non-governmental support. And they felt themselves, as members of the Center, under very uncomfortable pressure from colleagues and so on. Why are you associating yourself with this secret government led organization, or government supported organization? And that pressure was really quite strong from the outside, and it grew from within, as well. And when it became a public matter and students and administrators were forced to confront that, it became very clear that the connection had to be ended.

If I'm remembering correctly the end of the fiscal year of June, 1966 was the final end of the relationship with the government.

INTERVIEWER: In terms of the cutting loose from the CIA in 1966, how much came from thinking inside the Center and how much were pressures from outside the Center from other professors or administrators at MIT?

BLACKMER: All sources, actually. The most immediate pressure probably came from economists, some of whom were associated with the Center and some of whom were not. Actually, it was the ones who were associated with the Center who most strongly felt the pressure being put on them by their colleagues. Why are you participating in the Center which is being secretly funded by the government, by the CIA, in particular. And it was the secrecy thing that was by far the stronger, most potent argument. Because nobody at that time of the development of MIT or the world in general-- no academic institution should ever favor, basically should ever allow, that kind of secret work. It's only in a wartime context that you could do that.

And here we were in another wartime context in which the government was no longer looked upon by most of the community, the MIT community, as a benevolent force, but as a government that was on the wrong track. And here we were aiding and abetting that whole operation. And the pressure became so intense that Millikan tried to defend it. He was a believer in government and in good government, and he did not have the kind of prejudices against the CIA, having known it personally and been involved for a short time in its activities. He didn't feel that it was a moral issue, as so many people on the outside came to feel.

And the pressure was also mounting within the administration. They recognized that we couldn't go on like this forever. And they were pushed at a certain point by the Visiting Committee, which came to the conclusion that although they had supported it all these years and understood it and had been given clearances of their own so that they could be informed of this, they certainly came to agree. So when it happened, there were no second thoughts or regrets, I think.

INTERVIEWER: You wrote that the Center's Cold War origins sometimes led it to be as concerned about influencing public policy as with the quality of its scholarship, but that it was important to consider context and degree before jumping in and criticizing, I guess. Tell us what you had in mind. Do you recall? Or how would you think about it now?

BLACKMER: Could I hear that again?

INTERVIEWER: That it was the question, I think, of balancing--

BLACKMER: Which was a question? You're talking about that--

INTERVIEWER: that the work they did at the Center, some of it was driven as much about the concern for public policy impact as for the quality of the scholarship itself, instead of focusing just on scholarship and making us the best. I think you implied that that might be rather damning, but they had to consider both the context and the degree before you jump to any conclusions.

BLACKMER: Well, I think as the Center grew and time went by, the quality of the research came to be absolutely dominant. Not that it was lacking before, but I think in the early years there was a much more explicit desire to influence governmental policy than there came to be later. It's a matter of almost the internal, the psychology of individuals.

I think Walt Rostow, for example, was someone who never lost the impulse above all to influence policy makers. But virtually everybody else on the faculty and within-- faculty as a whole-- and within the Center was much more concerned with the quality of the research. The audience most people were writing for, by the late 50s, was the academic community. And to some degree the public as a whole, but scholars don't write most of their books for the public as a whole. They write in order to make their reputation as scholars and to do the best job they possibly can of representing what they see as the truth about some part of the world.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that distinction was the underlying factor in Rostow's not coming back to MIT after he left to work in the government and then didn't come back here?

BLACKMER: I think that's right. He found opportunities in Washington, which is what he wanted all his life, and he probably understood he was not one of the most highly regarded economists. He had written one very important article, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, which got him a big reputation but which came to be questioned as being an over generalization, perhaps. It was a manifesto in a certain way, and he was good at writing manifestos. But he was at the extreme of the range of the people who worked at the Center. Almost all of the rest were really addressing academic audiences.

INTERVIEWER: You said in your introduction to the book about the Center that rather than trying to cross swords with critics of the Center, that you're going to try to provide quote, "as accurate and concise an account" as you could of the circumstances that led to its creation and founding and their influence on the Center's work. And that you were going to try to give a broad perspective.

Did you have reservations about taking this project on? And what did it involve, and how satisfied were you in the end with what you were able to convey?

BLACKMER: No, I didn't have any reservations. It was the Center's 50th anniversary that was coming up, and I was virtually the only one still on the faculty-- there were two or three of us-- who had been there, more or less at the beginning. And having held the kind of positions I'd had, I was certainly the logical person to try to write such a book. In fact, I enjoyed it. It was fun in the end.

INTERVIEWER: Were you surprised by anything that you learned along the way? You were so deeply involved all those years. Was there anything you hadn't been aware of that you said, gee whiz?

BLACKMER: Oh, discovering a few documents that I hadn't known about from MIT archives and so on about the attitudes and behaviors of MIT officials. But beyond that it was rewarding to me because I witnessed all this experience. And some of it at first hand, and to put it all together was, in a way, like writing a memoir. I was clarifying my own life's experience, that period of my life, in a way that turned out to be fun.

INTERVIEWER: Did the work on the book change your views or understanding of the Center in any way? Or not really?

BLACKMER: I don't think so. It just made explicit what had been latent, and there's a big difference between having the knowledge to know something, and actually knowing it or seeing it as both an insider and an outsider.

INTERVIEWER: Let's back up and talk about you in your early years and how you came to work at the Center. Where were you born and raised? What were like as a child? What was your family like?

BLACKMER: I was born in Andover, Massachusetts, where my father taught at what is formally called Phillips Academy and is otherwise known as Andover. So I grew up as a faculty brat in that institution and went there as a student.

I enjoyed perhaps languages more than anything else. I studied some French and some German and in my senior year an intensive course in Greek just for the fun of it. Thought I'd mention that only because that enabled me not to be intimidated when later on I decided I needed to learn Russian.

When I graduated from Andover, Andover happened to have an exchange relationship with Harrow School in England, one of England's classic public schools, so called. And spent the summer before going there traveling on a bicycle, American youth hostel bicycle trip all around France, which brought me to the border of Germany, where I saw effects of the war. And when I got to England and spent a lot of time wandering around London and saw the remains of the bombing, for the first time I really had some feel for, we'd just been through a war, which hadn't affected my life significantly up to that time.

I think that that whole experience influenced my choice of field to study when I got to Harvard. I decided to major in history and literature, which, particular history, had always been an interest to me. And because Russia was foremost on the world's agenda, or the American agenda, at that time, I decided to start learning the Russian language. Did that and eventually ended up majoring in Russian history and literature.

INTERVIEWER: Had you traveled much before you went to England?

BLACKMER: No. Americans couldn't travel anywhere significantly up to that time. The summer in France and the year in England was my first exposure.

When I finished college I was lucky again and got what is called a Sheldon Fellowship or Sheldon Travelling Fellowship at Harvard, which is one of those rare kinds of opportunities where the only constraint is that you're not allowed to enroll in an academic institution. You must keep moving. I would have been more pleased to have a Rhodes Scholarship, but alas, I'd already married and was not eligible even to compete for the Rhodes. Your next interview, my friend Gene, had a Rhodes at that time and I might have met him then if I had been so lucky.

INTERVIEWER: Was your year at the English school very different from Andover?

BLACKMER: Oh, totally different. Totally different. A very controlled environment, really, but an odd one by American standards in that dormitories were run by the students themselves with a system of the senior prefects and so on. And this was at an age where, if you can believe it, corporal punishment was still used against junior infractors, with the head of the house, a senior student, using a cane or a lash of some sort on a student, which was intolerable. But I lived through it and did my best to show them that not all older boys were like that.

But the education was not as good as what I had had at Andover. The teaching was not as good. All the senior students cared about was the exams they had to take to qualify to get into Oxford, Cambridge, or wherever else they might've been heading, and they didn't pay much attention to the classes, as such. But they were widely read and in some senses perhaps better informed than the American students, but much less rigorously trained.

INTERVIEWER: Better informed do you think because they had lived through the war more centrally or just because the education system included more?

BLACKMER: I think they read more widely somehow, and were less textbookey. Learning was more varied. The quality of the teachers was generally not as high.

INTERVIEWER: Your father taught English literature?

BLACKMER: He taught English, yes.

INTERVIEWER: And he somehow ended up involved in the study of the Harvard curriculum?

BLACKMER: Oh, you know about that. He became dean of the faculty at Andover for a number of years and was a leader of something that was called School and College Study, which had to do with improving the linkages between what students learned at secondary schools and the curriculum at Harvard to make a smoother, more sensible transition. I think there were four prep schools involved and four colleges. Harvard representative being one McGeorge Bundy, who was then dean of the faculty at Harvard, whom my father got to know.

Could I give you one personal anecdote? When I finished my Master's at Harvard and got ready to go to work at MIT-- I didn't have a PhD yet-- I had two lovely job offers. One was from Max Millikan at MIT, who needed an assistant. Francis Bator had left that position. Max Millikan happened to be one of my father's favorite students as an undergraduate when he was at Andover. And the other was to be McGeorge Bundy's assistant. He had just become dean of the faculty at Harvard. So that was a major crossroads in my life, and I'm very glad that I went to MIT.

INTERVIEWER: Because?

BLACKMER: Harvard was, in general, a much more formal place. And my range of motion within the School would have been much more limited by being in Mac Bundy's office in the center of Widener Library, or wherever he hung out. Whereas things were much more open-ended at MIT. Max was a far easier person to work for than I'm sure Mac Bundy would have been.

INTERVIEWER: Let's go back. You travelled around Europe, the Sheldon Travelling Fellowship, after your graduation. Then you jumped into the army, which must have been far more restrictive after you had this year of freedom. Were you drafted?

BLACKMER: Of course. Yes, this was still part of the Korean emergency. I would not have chosen to go into the army, but I--

INTERVIEWER: This was 1953, I believe.

BLACKMER: Yes, it was. But things worked out after a challenging 16 week basic training, which was a painful experience. They decided I wasn't good for anything normal in the army. You know, they give you these aptitude tests and that sort of thing, and they discovered that-- I think they gave me a language test which was in Esperanto or something like that. Having known French, I could diagnose the Esperanto all right.

Anyway, I scored well on that kind of thing and was sent off to Washington to what was called the Army Security Agency, ASA. And after several weeks in what was supposed to be training in Washington-- where they had a trio of us who were supposed to know German listening to telephone conversations intercepted by means of the tunnel that the Americans had dug underneath Berlin which went from West to East Berlin. We tapped into their telephone lines. And they gave us telephone conversations to listen to which were totally unintelligible for--

INTERVIEWER: Because the quality was

BLACKMER: --even for my two companions, whose German was far better than mine was. After that they sent us to Germany. I spent two years in Salzburg. Year and a half in Salzburg, nice place to be. No, I just went to Salzburg first and then we were shipped immediately to Frankfurt. Which is where I spent most of the time doing some intelligence work, which involved sorting out records and making reports on embargoed goods, goods that were supposed to be embargoed to Russia, but which were being taken by ships to Russian ports.

Anyway, turned out when I got to know Max Millikan that the job he was working on in Washington at that time involved trying to kill the very program that I had just spent a year and a half working on. So that was my experience.

INTERVIEWER: He said that would be a good thing to kill?

BLACKMER: The total range of this experience, with one year in England and a couple of, almost two years, in Germany, really led me to feeling the Cold War was something real and something important and led me to go back and continue working in the Russian field.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think of going into academe at that point? Or you simply thought you needed more tools to be useful and moving on?

BLACKMER: Well, I went back to Harvard for a year at the Russian Research Center-- they were training Russian experts-- because I'd already taken half of the courses as an undergraduate. I did the two-year program in one year and then started looking for a job where the clear alternatives were either some kind of research program, or going to Washington, probably to the CIA, which was looking in those years for people just like me. Happily, I found the alternative where I think I belonged.

INTERVIEWER: So you mentioned that when you finished your Master's you had the choice between remaining at Harvard or coming to MIT and you knew Max Millikan through your father--

BLACKMER: I didn't know him. I only knew his name. I'd never met him.

INTERVIEWER: But he knew your name.

BLACKMER: He knew my name, yes. I applied for a research job, actually. And I came to the Center and was told by the receptionist, no, you're not going to see-- Adam Ulam, whoever it was I was supposed to see-- no, you're not to see him. You're to go this way and see Dr. Millikan. Well, I'd never met him.

INTERVIEWER: And what was your reaction, then, to saying, gee, I didn't sign on to be this kind of person. Did this look interesting?

BLACKMER: It looked just perfect for me. I wasn't sure that I wanted to be a scholar. If I wanted to be a scholar I'd have to get a PhD, and I wasn't ready to get a PhD. I needed to earn money. I had a wife and a child at that point.

INTERVIEWER: What were your first impressions of MIT?

BLACKMER: For quite a while, all I saw was my own corner of MIT, at the Center. That was terrific. That was exciting. A whole range of interesting people and I liked my boss very much, and I was perfectly willing to write all the annual reports and the foundation proposals, and I kept meeting interesting people. Millikan was the kind of guy who, when he had an appointment with some distinguished outsider, he would invite me in just to sit in on the conversation. So I got to know them.

Perfect job for a 26 year old not yet ready for a PhD.

INTERVIEWER: When and why did you decide to go on and do the PhD, ultimately.

BLACKMER: I decided that after about five years when it became clear that I would like to stay there or do some other academic job if I couldn't stay there. And that required a Phd. So I did it. The Center gave me leave, continued to pay my salary for a year while I took courses, and then worked my way back in on a halftime basis. In effect, they let me write my dissertation as a Center project.

INTERVIEWER: And the topic was?

BLACKMER: That was the Italian Communist Party and its relations with the communist world. But it combined both how the party behaved domestically, and focused particularly on its international relations.

INTERVIEWER: And was this a topic that you were really interested in? Or was this something on the table that needed to get done and you thought, why not?

BLACKMER: No. I was interested in the phenomenon of communism. At that time it was impossible to get people, who were not yet able to get visas, to go spend a year-- which one would have to do-- a year or two in Russia doing a historical topic-- and besides, I had a family to support and I couldn't take them there. So I looked for a topic which involved the communist world, and there it was. Nobody had written on Italian communism.

I had one friend who was writing on the south of Italy, but no one had written anything about the relationships between the European communist parties and their master in Russia. And it was an interesting story to be told because Stalin had died already a decade or more before, the communist world was being shaken up, there were queries about the loyalty, particularly of the Italians. They had their own political situation, they looked like a party that might, indeed, even come to power because the left was strong enough in Italy. It was a topic that the government was interested in, although they didn't fund me in any way. So it was a natural as a Center project.

INTERVIEWER: Did you add Italian to your list of languages and did you go work in Italy on your research?

BLACKMER: Yes, I did. Several trips, eventually, but not until the book was published did I take the family over. All of us went for a while.

INTERVIEWER: Once you had your doctorate, how much did that change what you did at the Center and at MIT and when did you start teaching?

BLACKMER: By the time I got the PhD, I had entirely left the administrative work. I think I was already teaching before I finished writing the book, if I remember clearly. The book was obviously necessary as you don't get tenure without at least one book.

And I can remember the day when Ithiel Pool, who was head of the political science-- either section or department then, I don't remember which-- asked me for a copy of what was still a mimeographed or draft of a very fat book not yet published. He said, Jerry Wiesner wants to read your book. It was almost, basically finished, but it wasn't a published book yet.

Whether he did read it or not I never knew. But others did. It was enough to get me through the tenure process. And it was probably a close thing because I didn't have much writing behind me. Millikan and I did write a book together on the foreign aid question. The first couple of years I was there I got to help draft that book.

INTERVIEWER: You also became the assistant director of the Center, actually for quite a number of years, from '61 to '68. Did you have administrative responsibilities then of a different sort?

BLACKMER: No, it was basically continuing the same job but with a higher level of responsibility, I suppose.

INTERVIEWER: In the middle of that period in '65, MIT created a standalone political science department. Can you tell us about how that came about and whether its creation made any difference to you or the Center?

BLACKMER: Oh, it made a huge difference. Without the Center, the department never could have been created because that brought a number of people to the Center initially, on a short term basis. But it provided a core group which was strong enough to make it seem plausible that a department should be created out of what was initially only a section of the economics and social science department. And there was a lot of internal discussion about that, but no real hesitation.

That was a major turning point, not just for me, but for all the political scientists who'd been there. And it could not have happened without the Center, particularly because the Center-- with obviously, MIT's strong support-- got the money, largely from the Ford Foundation, for faculty appointments. Some of which went to economics, but some of which went to political science. So that gave enough of a basis of tenured appointments for a department to make sense.

INTERVIEWER: Some of the biggest names in the department at the time were probably Ithiel de Sola Pool and Lucian Pye, but the first chairman of the department wasn't somebody who focused on international studies. It was Robert C. Wood, who had a very different focus, which I think was urban affairs. Was that a conscious attempt to give the department a reputation for something besides Cold War politics?

BLACKMER: I don't think so. I think it was simply because Bob Wood came to the department, I've forgotten--

INTERVIEWER: He was probably at MIT before the Center became freestanding.

BLACKMER: Yes. He came to what was then the political science section of the economics and social science department. Came from Washington probably just after he'd been in--

INTERVIEWER: Well, he became chairman first and then went to Washington in '66 to become undersecretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Then he came back and then he was appointed secretary in '69. So it was actually lot of back and forth, and I wondered how disruptive that was.

BLACKMER: He was not head for long. I think he was simply the most senior guy who was around for some reason.

INTERVIEWER: I think he was head and then there was an acting head, who was Lucian Pye, I believe. Or Pool, it was one of the two.

BLACKMER: Pool was the more plausible one.

INTERVIEWER: And then Wood came back as chair again and then left again, and then ultimately left to become head of UMASS in 1970.

BLACKMER: He may also have had an appointment in the urban studies area, and I don't remember when they became a department. But urban studies, his field, was never a center of the department. I think it was sort of an accident of circumstances that led him to be the head during that brief period. But after that the heads were all Center people.

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of students did the department attract in its early years or as it went along?

BLACKMER: Relatively few undergraduates, and there wasn't an undergraduate major for quite some time.

INTERVIEWER: In the 60s there was.

BLACKMER: Well, there was a PhD even before there was an undergraduate major. So at the beginning, it was just a matter of being part of the Humanities and Social Science requirement of MIT that attracted people. But the very first program developed was a program in international communications, stemming from the various projects that Ithiel Pool and others who were in that field had created.

It was a very bold thing to do because nobody had ever heard of an international communications program within the field of political science. But we attracted an initial group of a dozen-- or something like that-- interesting students who came through even before they could get a PhD. It was only a Master's available at first, and the PhD was added later. But all of that first batch of students were in international communications, which was pretty broadly construed and involved taking courses in various country and areas, related courses.

INTERVIEWER: Besides your management positions at the Center and in the political science department, you served as associate dean for the School of Humanities and Social Science, and then later as director of the program in science, technology, and society

BLACKMER: It's not later, it was simultaneously.

INTERVIEWER: I think you started as associate dean in '73 and then picked up the STS directorship in '77, [INTERPOSING VOICES].

BLACKMER: Only because I was associate dean would I have ever been head of that department, because I had no substantive knowledge or experience relevant to it at all.

That's an interesting story, how the STS program developed. Complicated, and I'm not sure I can give it to you fully, accurately, but I'll do my best.

There were two separate initiatives that eventually came together. One was an initiative started by Harry Hanham, who was my boss as dean of the School of Humanities and Social Science. He came from Harvard and nobody quite understood why. He was very interesting but somewhat flaky, and he would say unexpected things and do unexpected things. But still, a man with imagination and much talent. I enjoyed working with him, frustrating though it sometimes was.

One of his initiatives was to try to attract to MIT a group of people who were social scientists, but interested, in one way or another, in science and technology so as to try to link the School more closely with the main mission of MIT. The School hadn't really done that very well. There was one historian of science there-- I think only one-- a man named Nathan Sivin, who was very good. He was a member of the humanities department. Eventually left. I think he went to Yale because he was unhappy with the STS program when it emerged.

But around Nathan Sivin and a few others there gathered a small group-- I've forgotten whether they were called technology studies program or something of that sort, it doesn't matter-- and Hanham approved the hiring of two or three younger beginning professors. One of whom, David Noble, was under the humanities wing. Another of whom, Langdon Winner, was in the political science department. And there were some already tenured people in the School of Engineering who were interested in these broader issues. Leon Trilling was one. I've forgotten what department he was--

INTERVIEWER: Aero and Astro?

BLACKMER: Aero and Astro, exactly right. And he happened to be interested in Russia and worked with Alex Korol at the Center on those studies. But he was very broad-based guy and was just interested in the social and historical sides of science and technology. And a man named Larry Bucciarelli. I've forgotten what his field was.

Anyway, it was a small program that had some part-time MIT people connected. They were almost all part-time, they were based in some other organization.

INTERVIEWER: And that was one of two--

BLACKMER: Couple of other juniors, but that's not important.

INTERVIEWER: That was one of two?

BLACKMER:

This was a modest venture that Hanham had gotten underway to get his School engaged in social historical links to science and technology or studies thereof. At the same time, Jerry Wiesner and Walter Rosenblith were trying to figure out how we could get some-- well, this had a strange, strange history. It was actually Elting Morison who was a historian of science-- early history-- who'd left MIT, gone to Yale, and was now coming back or being recruited to come back-- I don't know, all those discussions were at a much higher level than I-- who dreamed up a proposal for something he called a college-- I've forgotten what the rest of his title was-- a college within MIT which was independent of all of the existing schools and which would attempt to attract to MIT a superior group of undergraduates who were interested both in science or engineering, and in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Sort of triple-threat or quadruple-threat kind of students. Very special students, and MIT would advertise this and set it up outside the existing framework of the School.

It was a grandiose and totally improbable idea, but the kind of thing that-- you never knew Elting Morison, probably-- he was a very persuasive and attractive guy. Jerry and Walter bought into this to the extent that a Faculty Committee was set up. Oh, that was a separate initiative. Well, there was that idea on the one hand, then there was a Faculty Committee that the dean set up saying, "If we got some money, what interesting people might we find to hire and to bring to strengthen the School as a whole no matter where they belong?"

And somehow from both of these ideas a set of senior appointments were made out of the blue with no attachment to specific departments. One was Leo Marx from Amherst, who was famous for, what's his book called? Must remember. A book about American history and culture. It'll come. A classic book.

Ken Keniston, who was a social psychologist, had been at Harvard, at Yale, widely known as just an interesting guy who'd written a book on Yale students. It had to do with the psychology of a whole generation, somehow, of students. I've forgotten these details.

And eventually added to this mix was Carl Kaysen, who had been at Harvard, was well-known by a lot of people, had most recently been the director of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton, where he'd run into some difficulty with some obstreperous colleagues. That was why he left.

Anyway, all of a sudden there appeared these really high level people, to which was eventually added a distinguished historian of science at Harvard, Gerry Holton So there were four new-- three full-time and one half-time, Gerry took a whole year's leave-- these four people arrived without it being clear at all exactly what their mission was, where they would fit. They had school appointments, not appointments to specific departments. Like nothing else that had ever been seen. But their mission was, in general, to be the nucleus of people whose interests somehow brought together humanities-- history particularly-- and science, or science and technology. And the only field where this had ever been done up to this point, really, was in history, which did have a designated history of science and technology field. There were people out there who did that.

Leo Marx was from literature. His PhD goes way back to Harvard, 1930s in American culture and literature. American culture is the better way to put it. And Keniston, a social psychologist. There was no place for these folks. But they were trying to create a place in some kind of a program.

About a year after I took the job as associate dean, the notion came of creating, explicitly, a program in science, technology, and society that would provide some place for all these people to go. An envelope into which we could shove them. And why, I've never fully understood, but in the summer when I was off on my vacation, Harry consulted with Rosenblith and Wiesner about how we were going to do this and who would manage this and none of those senior people were-- well, Carl Kaysen wasn't yet there. He would have been a perfect manager, but he wasn't yet there. And the others were all relatively junior in this other program.

So anyway, out of the blue they asked me to become director of this new venture in Science, Technology and Society. It seemed crazy to me, but it was clear that there was nobody else to do it and I liked these people, the newcomers, so I bought into that idea. And the first major task, which took nearly a year, was to persuade the seniors to accept this other program and allow the two to be merged into a single program. That was very hard going. They were opposed to the notion, originally.

INTERVIEWER: But it happened and graduate students started to come, and STS has remained and thrived?

BLACKMER: Initially, it was strictly an undergraduate program.

INTERVIEWER: Undergraduate?

BLACKMER: Yes. They were looking to offer courses which would attract undergraduates. I don't even remember whether there was a major. It wasn't clear. But it took a long time. I don't remember when-- maybe you have the figures-- when the graduate program actually started. But it was somewhat later than that. My time as chair of that program was relatively brief, happily. And then Carl Kaysen came and he was obviously the right person to take charge of that program. But its graduate dimension hadn't yet occurred.

INTERVIEWER: Subsequent to that you became head of the political science department.

BLACKMER: Yes, after a semester when I went back to Europe, particularly to France and travelled to Russia and tried to refurbish my academic credentials. That had none of the excitement of the two earlier ventures we have been talking about.

INTERVIEWER: And one final question. We're just about out of time. Did you come back to the study of communism? What did the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR mean for your field and the Center and the political science department?

BLACKMER: Yes, I came back to it, certainly, and taught about it extensively, and wrote a bit about it. But my heart wasn't really in it at that time. And there were, by then, lots of people. Now I continued to follow the European communist parties and to write a little bit about that. But actually at that time, the focus of my attention, largely for teaching purposes, was on Russia itself. Because that was the exciting period. That was what was going on. The Russian system was falling apart. And so I really shifted my intellectual focus entirely to that. I watched, sure, what was happening to the French and Italian parties and how they were reacting to that situation, but this was a time when, for the first time in my entire career, I had to deliver lectures. I mean there were enough students to have a lecture room. Fortunately, that lasted only a year or two and then went back to the smaller seminars, both graduate and undergraduate, that I was much more comfortable with and enjoyed. The discussion courses rather than lecture courses.

INTERVIEWER: Well, thank you for your conversation and your recollections and the very interesting history.

BLACKMER: It's been a pleasure.