CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

E.N. (NED) BRANDT

Transcript of Interviews
Conducted by

James J. Bohning

in

Midland, Michigan

on

17 June 1992

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Oral History Program
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Oral History Program
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ELLIS N. (NED) BRANDT

1922	Born in Detroit, Michigan, on 16 May

Education

1943	B.A., Journalism, Michigan State University
1943-1946	Military Service, U.S. Army

Professional Experience

1946-1947	United Press International, Detroit, Michigan
1947-1949	Literary Critic, French Broadcasting System; Editor, *Export Import Journal*
1949-1953	Press Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Paris, France
	The Dow Chemical Company
1953-1956	Public Relations Staff
1956-1961	Public Relations Manager, Michigan Division
1961-1965	Assistant Director of Public Relations
1965-1970	Director of Public Relations
1970-1978	Director of Business Communications
1978-1986	Senior Counselor of Public Affairs
1983-present	Company Historian

Honors

Brandt Professorship, Michigan State University
Director, Michigan Chapter, Public Relations Society of America
Chairman, Public Relations Committee, Chemical Manufacturers Association
The Golden Workshop
President, Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education
Chairman, Public Relations Seminar, National Organization of Corporate Public Relations Directors
Committee to Re-Elect the President (Nixon)
The Wise Men
Secretary, Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation
Secretary, Pardee Foundation

Vice President, Midland Foundation
Member, Board of Directors, Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation
Vice President and Secretary, Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation
Council of Michigan Foundations
Chairman, Michigan Division Council, American Red Cross
Chairman, Hall of Ideas Management Council, Midland Center for the Arts
Midland County Historical Society
Historical Society of Michigan
President, Saginaw Valley Torch Club
Rotary International

ABSTRACT

E.N. (Ned) Brandt, company historian of The Dow Chemical Company and a major figure in Dow's public relations activities for over three decades, begins the interview by touching on his family background and early education, before recalling his activities in news writing positions during high school and journalism school at Michigan State. Brandt joined a quartermaster ROTC unit in 1941, went through Officer Candidate School, and in 1944 volunteered for overseas duty. He describes several interesting experiences during the war in France when he was an intelligence officer and a public relations officer. After a brief stint with UPI in Detroit, Brandt returned to France and worked for the French broadcasting system and the State Department at the Paris embassy. He discusses his work in France, art studies in Paris, and travels to Algeria. In 1953 Brandt resigned from the foreign service and joined Dow. This section of the interview includes recollections of Dow's early public relations department and Bud Smith, and work with Bill Schuette as public relations manager of the newly created Midland Division. Brandt next discusses his concerns as assistant director and then director of public relations in the 1960s, including such topics as Dow's global reorganization in 1965, speech writing for Dow's top executives, environmental issues, *The Dow Story*, and outside involvement with public affairs organizations. In describing his activities during the 1970s and 1980s, Brandt talks about a visit to Chile, public relations in South Africa, difficulties with Mark Batterson during Zoltan Merszei's tenure as president of Dow, the TV Hot Box, the origins of Dow's history function and the Dow archives, his own decision to retire, and the Futures Initiative. The closing segments of the transcript focus on Brandt's outside activities, especially for historical societies and foundations.

INTERVIEWER

James J. Bohning, assistant director for oral history at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, holds B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in chemistry. He was a member of the chemistry faculty at Wilkes University from 1959 until 1990, where he served as chair of the chemistry department for sixteen years, and chair of the earth and environmental sciences department for three years. He was chair of the Division of the History of Chemistry of the American Chemical Society in 1987, and has been associated with the development and management of Science History Consultants' oral history program since 1985.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERVIEWEE: **E.N. (Ned) Brandt**

INTERVIEWER: **James J. Bohning**

LOCATION: **Post Street Archives**
Midland, Michigan

DATE: **17 June 1992**

BOHNING: Ned, I know you were born in Detroit, but I don't know when.

BRANDT: May 16, 1922. My father was a farm boy from Michigan and had grown up in Garden City, Michigan where my grandfather had a farm. As a matter of fact, about a quarter of what is now Garden City is the old Brandt farm and there is a Brandt Street or Avenue there. My father had a very tough life. He didn't get much schooling. He was the oldest son of an oldest son. I was the oldest son, which in those old German families was significant. When the time came to go back to school his father told him that as the oldest son he was now going to help with the farm and the younger children would go to school. So his schooling was cut off. Eventually, in Detroit, he married my mother who was a telephone operator from Illinois. That's where I was born.

My grandmother was an interesting person. She grew up in Dearborn, Michigan down the road from Henry Ford. In the early days before Henry Ford had done anything, at a box social, one of the social events in that neighborhood, Henry Ford bought my grandmother's box. As the custom was then, they ate this box full of food, and Henry Ford took her home in his horse and wagon. That was the only date they ever had and nothing came of it. But that particular event was part of the family lore.

BOHNING: This was your father's mother?

BRANDT: Yes, my father's mother. My father set up a farm out in a place called Almont, Michigan, and his game plan was to produce eggs and milk for the Detroit market. This was about sixty or seventy miles north of Detroit. Everything was working out very nicely until one day Bang's disease popped up in the cattle herd, which was promptly condemned. It was an absolute disaster. My father had to give up farming and he went back to Detroit and became a Ford worker. He worked at various automobile plants the rest of his life. He had originally wanted to be a minister and had some notion when I was a kid that I ought to do that. He was a very religious man. It never took very well. [laughter] It wasn't my idea. My great-grandfather, who was a Civil War veteran, had studied phrenology, the science of bumps on the head. He died when I was still a baby, but he had felt the bumps on my head with his

knowledge of phrenology and declared that I would be a great orator. [laughter] I guess that proves what a great science phrenology was.

BOHNING: With respect to the farm that your father set up in Almont, you said that his father had told him he was going to take over the family farm.

BRANDT: Not that he was going to take it over, but that he was responsible to work on it. Eventually my grandfather and grandmother were divorced, unheard of in that social medium. My grandfather lived the rest of his life alone on the farm out there in Garden City and the family moved to Detroit and made its way. My grandmother had six or seven kids. I don't think my grandfather would have let anybody take over that farm; that was his farm as long as he lived. In fact, he was still running the farm into his eighties. At about eighty-four a wagon full of hay that he was driving home tipped over on him and broke him up. I think he only lived maybe a year after that, but he was very active into his eighties.

When I started school at Almont, it was a one-room country school with kindergarten through the sixth grade in one room. That was an interesting experience because by the time I got to school I was able to read. When I was a baby, my father would hold me up to a calendar or something and point to letters and numbers, so I knew my numbers and letters before I could walk. By the time I went to kindergarten I could read. The teacher in this little one-room school didn't know what to do with me. So, she decided that I would teach the other kindergartners and the first graders to read, since I already knew. Looking back on it, that was quite startling. Later on when we lost the farm and moved into Detroit, I skipped a grade. They put me ahead instead of putting me in a grade where I was still learning to read. Throughout my school career, I was always with kids who were older than I was.

Later on we did move out to Garden City when the Depression hit and my father lost his job, as a lot of people did. We moved into a house that belonged to my grandfather and I went to school there. What I remember about that period is the spelling bees. I was very good at spelling, and became the school champion when I was in the fifth grade. Those spelling bees went fifth through eighth grade. In about the seventh grade I went to the state finals and I think was fourth or something in the Michigan state final. I'm sorry if this sounds like bragging.

BOHNING: No, not at all.

BRANDT: I'm just recalling things.

BOHNING: You have just one sister?

BRANDT: No, I have three sisters and I'm the oldest.

We eventually moved to Plymouth, Michigan, and I went to high school in Plymouth. I was the salutatorian of my class. There was an English teacher at Plymouth High School, Edna M. Allen, who was pretty influential on me. I was a sports nut at that age and I wasn't proficient at sports at all. She suggested to me that if I would write up these sports events for the school paper that I might be able to go along with the school team. So I traveled around with the baseball and football teams, and I would write up the game for the high school paper. That was what got me into newspaper writing. I felt that came very easily for me. It was originally my way of getting into these sporting events.

She and the high school principal, a fellow named Claud Dykhouse, took an interest in me and in my going on to college, which was going to be very difficult for my father. Claud Dykhouse suggested that I try for a scholarship at Michigan State, which was his school. This was done by statewide competitive exam, which I entered. Through that competitive exam I won a scholarship to Michigan State. I entered a couple of other competitions for scholarships and I was offered a scholarship at Wayne State, monetarily probably better than the one at Michigan State. But I wanted to get away. Wayne State, of course, is in Detroit, and I wanted to get away from the home environment, so to speak. I really wanted to go to Ann Arbor, but what they had in the way of help for students was not going to be adequate for me. I didn't really know anything about Michigan State at all. I'd never been to the campus. I'd been to Ann Arbor many times, which is not too far from Plymouth. In any event, I took the scholarship and went up to Michigan State University and entered the journalism school.

BOHNING: What year would that have been?

BRANDT: That was 1939.

Somehow I also wangled a job on campus through something called the NYA, the National Youth Administration. This job was to write continuity for the college radio station, WKAR East Lansing, one of the early campus radio stations, particularly for the music broadcasts. That was beautiful from my perspective, because I was going to be able to help earn my way through school doing what I expected to do anyway. I had quite a bit of musical training. My father had put a violin in my hands when I was six and asked me if I'd like to learn to play it. Being young and innocent, I eagerly said, "Yes. " I began violin lessons at age six and began piano lessons as well at age eight and continued taking music lessons through high school. I expected to earn part of my way through college teaching violin, but this matter of writing continuity came up and was much more appealing to me as both a learning experience and an earning experience. I didn't ever expect to go into a music career.

I did quite well at Michigan State. I had to maintain at least a B average to maintain my scholarship and that was no problem. The journalism school at the time was run by Professor Albert A. Applegate. Bert Applegate. Bert Applegate is remembered and revered by just about

all the students who studied with him. There is a group of people who graduated from Michigan State journalism school during that period known as Bert's Boys. For a generation, Bert's Boys ran virtually all the newspapers in the state of Michigan. If you were known as one of Bert's Boys it was really a mark, and our common denominator was that we had learned at the knee of Bert Applegate. He was a very big influence on me early on. He was a bug on accuracy. He was one of these people who would put up signs in the school paper office saying, "Accuracy, Accuracy, Accuracy." So I learned the basics of the newspaper business at Michigan State.

BOHNING: What was the journalism curriculum like? What kind of courses did you take?

BRANDT: It was part of the liberal arts curriculum, and you took a liberal arts course with journalism more or less added on, particularly in the junior and senior years, as one of the heavy components in the last two years. It was a general liberal arts curriculum with lots of English, sociology, psychology, economics, a smattering of science, and two or three years of chemistry. I remember liking chemistry, but not being particularly drawn to it as a pursuit.

I began to pick up jobs at Michigan State and it seems to me, looking back, that anytime there was a writing job that paid dollars, then I got very interested. I became the campus correspondent for United Press. For any news event that happened on campus, I was the United Press correspondent. In my senior year I became the editor of the *Michigan State News*, the campus newspaper, which was printed six times a week by that time. When I started school it was three times a week, and then increased to six. That was a very big learning experience, because you would put out the newspaper working a good part of the night, very often until three a. m. , by the time you put it to press. Of course, you had classes the next day.

By the time I was a senior, I would never sleep on Friday nights. Friday nights I put the school paper to bed at three or four o'clock in the morning, and on Saturdays I was running the United Press bureau in Lansing, which I had to open up at six a. m. I would put the paper to bed, go home and hit the books for an hour or so, and then go on down to the United Press bureau in Lansing. On Saturdays, I was the entire staff. That was another fantastic learning experience. During the week, Monday through Friday, the office would be manned by a staff. On Saturday, anything that was happening was my responsibility. I really don't understand, even now, why they would entrust a college student to do this, but they did. I'd come down from home, open the office, run the office, put out news stories, close the office, and go home again. Of course, I was very cheap. [laughter]

By Saturday night I would be a pretty tired boy. By this time I was in a fraternity, and this fraternity had a Saturday night bowling match, usually with some other fraternity. I would go to these bowling matches and sleep between frames. [laughter] I would get up and bowl, sit down again, and go to sleep. They would wake me up when it was time to bowl again. The fellows in that fraternity took to calling me Rip Van Winkle because I would go to sleep almost anywhere, particularly in the fraternity meetings, which were pretty boring things anyway. I would crawl under a couch or something and respond, "Present," when my name was called and

go to sleep. They all called me Rip Van Winkle, or simply Rip. By the time I was a senior, I was actually sending money home. [laughter] I started out as a freshman just barely scratching, and by the time I was a senior I was sending money home, which I was pretty proud of.

This was the time of World War II, and I had taken the required ROTC training for the first two years of school. You were required to take ROTC for two years. I then dropped it; I didn't like it at all. In the intervening year Pearl Harbor occurred, and that was an interesting event. It was a Sunday morning and we were in the dormitory. We all put on our ROTC uniforms and marched around the campus and threw each other into fountains and stuff like that, because we knew immediately that we would all be going.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 1]

BRANDT: On the Michigan State campus they opened up a branch of quartermaster ROTC. Quartermaster ROTC was an entirely new thing, and it was the only thing that was now available for officer training. I immediately applied for it and was accepted for this quartermaster ROTC training. My father had counseled me many times, if I was going to go into the war, by all means get into it as an officer. He had gone through World War I as a buck private and so he felt very strongly that if there was any way that I could get an officer's commission that I should do so. I got into this quartermaster ROTC unit as a way of getting a commission. It turned out to be a very good thing. They sent an officer, Lieutenant Colonel J. B. Jiskra, to head up this quartermaster school. I still remember him. He somehow contrived to have all of his cadets appointed as buck sergeants in the Army. We were the only unit on the campus that had this distinction. We were given Army uniforms with sergeant stripes. When I graduated from Michigan State I was wearing the uniform of a sergeant in the U.S. Army underneath my cap and gown.

We got Army pay while we were going to Michigan State. So this was an added source of income. They took over the fraternity houses and put us into one of the finest fraternity houses on campus. We continued our other duties. We would sleep in this fraternity house, which had become an Army barracks. They would come and blow a bugle at six a. m. and we would fall out and have a military formation. Then we would go about our ways, to class or whatever. I was continuing all my other jobs including United Press while I was wearing this sergeant's uniform. How Colonel Jiskra finagled this I will never know.

BOHNING: What year was that?

BRANDT: 1943. As soon as we graduated they sent us off to Camp Lee, Virginia, where the quartermaster officer's school was.

They put us through officer candidate school, OCS. It was a very rough experience.

They were training officers for what turned out to be [General George] Patton's Third Army. It also turned out that they had overshot the mark in the number of people they were bringing to quartermaster school. (I believe Fort Lee still today is the quartermaster school. I think there was something like two hundred of us in the entering class, and as the class went on the number of quartermaster officers that they needed kept reducing. It was chopped down to a hundred and fifty and then to a hundred. I think it wound up with something like eighty or ninety. You never knew when you were going to be asked to leave.

It was very rough, extremely competitive, and I have some memories of that that are still vivid. We went to play touch football one Saturday. My bunkmate had a collision with another fellow and it threw his arm out of joint. They flunked him out immediately because he could no longer take on the physical requirements of officer candidate school. One of the drills they had was boxing drills. They marched you out in this parade field and they would line you up according to height, put boxing gloves on you, and they went through a sort of a boxing drill. I'm not a boxer. It's just the least of my talents. But according to height, I always wound up next to this particular fellow who had been a Golden Gloves champion, and who was terrified that he was going to be flunked out and absolutely wanted to shine in boxing drill. You would count out, "One, two, one, two. " I invariably drew him. After this drill they would let you go at each other for a couple of three minute rounds. This fellow would just beat the tar out of me. Unmercifully. I still have the memory of those beatings. There was nothing I could do about it, just defend myself as best I could.

Somehow I survived and became a quartermaster officer and was assigned to basic training. That is, I became an officer in the basic training regiment. The particular training regiment that I was assigned to was at the time training postal units. APO units. During that period they were sending APO units all over the world. We gave them their basic training. This was the typical Army system. Here I was in journalism, and I was training a postal unit. They would bring these overweight, flabby people from post offices all over the country, put them there, and we were supposed to whip them into seasoned, vigorous, marching soldiers in a matter of twelve weeks. We gave them their basic training, then they would go to some kind of specialized training for Army postal work.

That was interesting, but it had some strange aspects. I remember once as we were waiting for a new sequence of training to begin, I was called in. My assignment was to take a building that was out in a distant part of the camp, tear it down and with these materials build a place in another part of the camp where they would store all the firing range material. They gave me a crew of these postal people and me a newspaper man, and told us to do this. We marched down and picked out some tools. This was one of the most ridiculous adventures I was ever involved in. None of us had the slightest idea what we were doing. We had no plans for such a place. We just had our basic raw assignment. I really wondered whether it was the Army's idea of some joke. Somehow, we muddled through. It was probably good training, as it turned out.

There was a lot of misery there because we were training to be part of Patton's tank army. They would take us out for an extended period of time on the A. P. Hill Military Reservation. If

you know Virginia, it was a vast tract of land which that winter was very cold. We would have to subsist without ever going into a house or anyplace that was warm. I've probably never been as physically toughened in my life as I was then. We would take these postal workers on marches of thirty-five miles a day, and this was nothing to me at that time. I sometimes had to carry some extra packs for these postal workers.

I got tired of that very quickly and volunteered for overseas duty. The invasion of Europe was coming up, and I wanted to be part of that. I volunteered for overseas duty and somewhat to my surprise, they accepted that. I was sent eventually to England to be what they called a casual officer. During the time I was en route, D-day occurred. I wound up in England in what was called a repple-depot, a replacement depot which was kind of a surge tank for spare officers. When outfit X was low on officers, they called the repple-depot and said, "Send us some officers. " At the repple-depot I was really gung ho to get into this thing. One day there was a sign that went up on the bulletin board asking for volunteers for hazardous duty. I ran all the way across the camp because I was afraid somebody would get there first, and volunteered for this hazardous duty.

BOHNING: Why were you so enthused about this aspect?

BRANDT: I figured this was really my only chance to see what a war was actually like. I really wanted to do my part. That was a "good" war, World War II. Everybody wanted to do their part. You were outdoing the other fellow to do your part. As I read history, it seems to me that World War II is exceptional in that respect. It certainly was totally different from the Vietnam War, where to get caught in it was a mark of shame for most. I didn't want that war to go by without having done something. I knew it would be remembered the rest of my life, and I didn't want to be ashamed of what I had done in the war.

In this hazardous duty, it turned out that in the landings on the beachheads in Normandy, rumor had got spread around that the British ships, which were running all the ammo over to the beach, were running it all over to the British beach because a rumor had gotten around that the British beach lacked ammo. Consequently [General Dwight] Eisenhower had quickly decided that he had to put escort officers, as we were called, on the ships. They had every manner of ship carrying supplies over to the beachhead. Everything that could float in Great Britain was pressed into duty. I became an escort officer for a British coaler carrying tons and tons of TNT and every other kind of ammunition over to the beachhead. That was kind of fine. It was a little scary, because there were U-boats and everything all over and it would not take very much to set off our cargo. You were really a floating bomb. But these British ships that were doing this were fantastic. My job was to carry the ship's manifest and make sure the cargo was delivered to the proper place.

The first trip over, we were diverted while we were on the Channel to the port of Cherbourg. Cherbourg had just been liberated, so they directed us to go to Cherbourg instead. We may have been the closest ship, I don't know. The next morning we sailed into Cherbourg.

There were dead bodies all over. The battle had just concluded the day before. We proudly sailed into the port of Cherbourg and I went ashore with my manifest to try to find out who to turn this over to. I finally found what appeared to be the headquarters and told my mission. They told me to sit down here, and about five minutes later they began screaming for Lieutenant Brandt. I said, "Yes sir." I thought they were going to give me a medal or something. [laughter] They called me over and this colonel said, "Did you bring this ship in here with thirty-five thousand tons" (I don't remember the exact amount) "of dynamite, right into this port?" I said, "Yes sir." [laughter] He said, "Do you realize that there are still all kinds of Germans around here? One German plane could set that ship off and blow this entire port off the map." I said, "We followed directions, sir." [laughter] "We were told to come here." He looked at me and said, "Go back on that ship and sail it out into the Channel out of sight of land. As soon as you're out of sight of land, you sit there and wait for further instructions. Do you *understand*?" [laughter] "*Yes sir*!" I remember as I went out the door, there was Eisenhower and [General Omar] Bradley standing there discussing I don't know what. I think it was the only time in the entire war that I saw either of them.

So we sailed off into the Channel and sat there. There was this constant thump of shells going off. That was a terrifying night. Eventually we got orders twenty-four hours later to go to one of the beachheads, Omaha Beach, as I remember it. It was an interesting kind of experience, and an interesting war. In the meanwhile, I had been assigned to an outfit and the outfit had been assigned to VIII Corps and I was separated from my unit. So I was scrambling trying to find out where my unit was. That was a whole problem in itself. I remember coming onto the beach at Omaha. This would have been D-day plus thirty-five or forty. I was looking for a place to sleep, and ran into two or three other people who were doing the same thing. One of them was Walter Cronkite, who was a war correspondent. I think it was the first day that they had allowed war correspondents to come across on the beaches. Cronkite and some other correspondent, whose name I've forgotten, and myself wound up sleeping in this haymow on our first night in France.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 2]

BRANDT: I finally found my unit. We had been assigned as port headquarters, and were headed up by then Brigadier General (later General) William M. Hoge, who was later the hero of the Remagen Bridge battle. As soon as the Allies had captured a major port on the French coast we were to go in and be the port headquarters. General Hoge needed an aide-de-camp, and three of us were sent down for the general to interview to pick an aide-de-camp. The general talked to me and looked at my credentials and said, "I don't think you'd be a very good aide-de-camp, but I think you'd make a hell of a good public relations officer. I'm assigning you as the public relations officer of this outfit." I said, "Yes, sir." I got to know the fellow who became his aide-de-camp fairly well. Later on, when they marched into Cologne, a sniper took a shot from a cathedral tower at General Hoge, hit his aide-de-camp, and killed him. I always thought, "Gee, that could have been me." [laughter]

When the orders were cut, there was a great deal of confusion, and the orders were cut making me the intelligence officer. Another officer who was intended to be the intelligence officer was assigned as the public relations officer. The colonel who had made the orders out said, "Okay, we'll correct it, but for the moment you're the intelligence officer" (meaning me) "and you're the public relations officer, and we'll get it straightened out. When we actually take over at some port we'll get it straightened out." So for the interim few weeks, I was an intelligence officer. [laughter]

What that involved was also pretty interesting. There were a lot of French citizens who claimed to have been supporting the Allies, but were being thrown into various jails as collaborators with the Germans by the FFI and the other French underground forces. There were cases where they would appeal to the Americans to intervene to prevent their being shot, or whatever. As the intelligence officer I had to look into a series of these cases. I've forgotten the details, but it was an absolutely fascinating piece of human dynamics that you were looking at. Trying to decide, is this person lying? Where they really collaborating with the Germans as these French underground people say? Or was somebody trying to even a score? I only did that for a few weeks, but it was another fascinating assignment.

Eventually the port of Le Havre was liberated and we were sent there. This was the first part of September of 1944. We were shipped up to Le Havre to be the headquarters for the port of Le Havre. This was my first big public relations challenge because the Germans had holed up in the port and it was just pounded to powder. The Germans kept telling the local French that it was the Americans who were doing this and that they really had no reason to bomb the place. If they wanted a battle, they just had to come in and the Germans would fight them. But they were just doing this because they didn't like the French. By the time that we came in the French in Le Havre had pretty well decided that the German version, which was the only version they heard, was correct. We drove jeeps into this rubble trying to find ways to get to the port. The French in their holes would throw pieces of rubble at us when we first came in. They were really mad at us. It was my job as a public relations expert to bring about Franco-American friendship immediately. It was a very difficult assignment.

I'd had a couple of years of French in school, but my French was pretty poor. One of the first things I did was to hire an interpreter. I began to set about figuring out how to develop some communication and rapport between these French citizens of Le Havre and us. This went on over the next year, almost two years that I was in Le Havre. I was in Le Havre until I left in 1946. I had to learn to get along in French very rapidly because I was really a kind of point person working with the French, and particularly with the French newspapers. There were four newspapers in the town. One was Communist. It was always an adventure to go visit the Communist newspaper, because they would look very suspiciously at anything you said. I could always tell that they were trying to figure out what your motives were. We might be telling them that we were going to put such-and-such a private port into operation, such-and-such an activity was going to begin, and we wanted people to know this. There were satellite camps being set up all over the area that were bringing troops in, because it became the major port of entry into France.

I developed some very good friends at those newspapers, because I would see them just about every day. I had to work with them, and tried to explain to the people what the American troops were doing in this place. It actually didn't take very long to convince them that the German propaganda was just that. Once the Germans had left that was a new chapter, and very, very rapidly the French became completely cooperative.

In that period I got involved in all sorts of things. The first day we came to Le Havre there was a fellow going up in a Piper Cub to map the port area, and he asked me if I was doing anything. I said, "No." He said, "Okay. You're going with me. When I dictate this stuff, just take it down." He was a complete madman who took me up in this Piper Cub and we would fly around the port of Le Havre. We would look at this basin or this piece of the port. He would give me the name of the basin and tell me how badly it was blocked off and whether there was a ship sunk there or whatever. I was making these notes and I was completely green. I don't think I'd ever been in a Piper Cub before, and that was an experience.

My first trip to Paris was another experience. There were a lot of electrical fixtures in the town where American light bulbs and the like just were not the same dimensions. They wanted me to run up to Paris where they had all these things of the proper size. As the only officer, I went up there leading a convoy of something like ten trucks, all driven by blacks. In fact, I was the only white and I was the only officer. They gave me a black non-com with all these black truckers. We took off for Paris. None of us had ever been there, although we'd heard of Paris all our lives. I had this list of places that I'm supposed to find in Paris and what we're supposed to pick up there. I'm leading ten trucks and I'm in the lead truck going around trying to find where these places are. Most of them were in the suburbs, where the warehouses were set up. Along toward nightfall we had collected pretty much what we were supposed to pick up, and we were out in some suburb of Paris. These troops were so excited about getting a pass that they could barely contain themselves. They kept begging me to allow them to just spend an hour to get something at the local cafe. There wasn't very much at the local cafes. I finally said, "Okay, we will take off an hour. Go find whatever you can get to eat and meet back here in a hour. Then we're going to drive back to Le Havre tonight because this stuff absolutely has to get there." I've got the whole weight of the war on my shoulders. We need this stuff to get this port operating again. Well, at the end of an hour these troops had almost totally disappeared. [laughter] I think there was my black non-com and maybe one or two others that showed up, but most of them were just nowhere to be seen. To make a long story short, the non-com and I proceeded to make a tour of the local red light district trying to find enough drivers so we could run these trucks back to Le Havre that very night. That was my first night in Paris.

But I assembled quite a staff there. I really thought we had one of the best public relations outfits in the whole United States Army.

BOHNING: Who were you attached to? Was it still Hoge?

BRANDT: Hoge had moved on to a combat assignment fairly quickly, and a colonel had taken

over. His name was Thomas J. Weed. He was regular Army and he was the senior colonel in the entire Army, bucking for his general's star. That was an entirely different kind of situation because he expected me to help him earn that star. He was a pompous little rascal. Nobody liked him very much. So many people had been promoted past him to general, he was extremely anxious in that situation and wanted that star so badly that he could taste it.

I discovered in dealing with him that I could write speeches. He was a very easy person to imitate in his speech patterns. I could write things that sounded more like Colonel Weed than Colonel Weed did. We set up various kinds of things for him. I would always write his speeches or sometimes draft letters for his signature, and that kind of thing. Once we had been waiting for tug boats for this port since we'd been there. You can't operate a port without tug boats. These tug boats finally arrived and all of sudden we had twelve to fifteen tug boats arriving in a kind of a fleet. I guess it was my idea. I thought we ought to have some kind of a marine parade and show off our tug boats and give them new names for the names of soldiers who had been killed in the war. We decided to do this, and it was going to be a big event. We had to set up this reviewing stand with the colonel, and the colonel makes a speech. I wrote the speech. We had Army photographers all over. It was a real big event.

In the middle of that event, some people were looking for me. It turned out to be Victor Mature, the movie star, who had arrived on a Coast Guard ship that had gone through the Panama Canal. I've forgotten the details of how he got there, but Victor Mature wanted his picture taken with us. No problem. We treated him as well as we could. He was in a Coast Guard uniform. Victor Mature then took me aside and said, "Look, I've been on this ship for six weeks. They sent us here and then they sent us there. I have not seen a woman in six weeks. Can you get me a date?" [laughter] That's the only time I can ever remember a movie star asking me to get him a date. [laughter] I had no idea what to do about this, so I asked a couple of people. They said, "There are some nurses in this outfit down the way I think might be interested." I called down to this medical detachment, and they said, "Oh, that would be great. Victor Mature? Oh, yes. That would be great." So Victor Mature and me and two nurses wound up going out on the town. That was pretty wild because in the process Victor got drunk as a skunk. I don't think those nurses would ever talk to me again. [laughter]

But in my public relations outfit I had a fellow who was a columnist for *The New York Post*. I had a magazine editor. I had a fellow who owned a string of newspapers in New Jersey. As the staff artist I had a Navy fellow from the Walt Disney cartooning staff. The artist was a Navy person, but he was put on detach service from the Navy to me to be our staff artist. I began to learn that if you knew what string to pull you could get things done.

BOHNING: That's quite an impressive staff.

BRANDT: As I said, I think we had as good a public relations staff as there was because I would look for these people with the right experience and pull them in. They were invariably just delighted to get into something they knew a little about. The Army with its assignment

system would [sigh] never do it. The Navy man was on some ship where he was doing something that didn't interest him in the least.

BOHNING: How did you find him?

BRANDT: I've forgotten how we originally got hold of him. Harry Richman, the columnist from *The New York Post*, knew everybody. My memory is that he somehow ran into this fellow and recommended him.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 3]

BRANDT: At the end of the war I had my fifteen minutes of fame. At the end of the war, you may remember that the signing by the Germans was witnessed by some war correspondents, all of whom were sworn to secrecy until the announcement of the German surrender could be coordinated between all of the Allies. A fellow named Edward Kennedy, who was the chief correspondent in Europe of the Associated Press, jumped the gun and released the story to the Associated Press. That caused terrible embarrassment, particularly to Eisenhower who had given his word to the other Allies that we would all simultaneously release the information at a given time. In retribution Kennedy was sent to Le Havre. Any kind of a priority to get on a ship was taken away from him. The Army gave him a pup tent out in the woods near Le Havre, gave him access to a kitchen in this same woods, and told him to sit there and wait until the Army was disposed to send him home.

Kennedy got to a phone and called me and said, "I'm in deep trouble. I need your help. They are going to leave me out here in this pup tent," and it was raining and raining and raining, "until I rot, and there's nothing I can do about it. Is there anything you can do for me?" I told him, "Sit tight and I'll see what I can do." I called Paris and asked to talk to General [Frank] Allen, who was Eisenhower's top public relations officer. I was put through to him immediately when I explained that I wanted his advice on the Kennedy case. The general said, "Lieutenant, if you touch that man with a ten-foot pole, if you do anything whatever to help him, I will personally see to it, with General Eisenhower's support, that you are drummed out of this Army in complete disgrace. Immediately. Totally. And permanently. Do you *understand*?" I said, "Yes, sir. I understand." [laughter]

BOHNING: That's pretty clear.

BRANDT: I didn't really know what to do. My first reaction was, "We've got to get rid of this guy quick, because as soon as the rest of the world finds that he is sitting out there in a pup tent, every reporter in Europe is going to want to talk to him and this is going to be such a fiasco as

the Army will regret for years. We've got to get rid of this guy." I went down to talk to the colonel who was in charge of ship assignments and assigning units to go on ships, who was a friend of mine, and said, "Look, we've got this situation, and my best judgment is that we've got to get rid of this guy, the quicker the better. Just get him out of here, get him somewhere else, anywhere else. What kind of ships do you have going out where there might be a spare bunk? Anywhere. I don't care where." He kind of looked at me [laughter] and he looked at his shipping list, and he said, "I've got a boat going out of here this afternoon to Trinidad. We're moving some Air Force people down there and nobody else is going to Trinidad, so there's room on it. Do you think he would want to go to Trinidad?" I didn't even know where Trinidad was. [laughter] I said, "Great. We'll send him to Trinidad. Anything that we can do to get rid of him."

I roared out to this woods in my jeep in the rain, got Kennedy, whipped him out to this ship, put him on the ship, and told him, "Good-bye." He was so grateful you wouldn't believe. It could have been a case that went on for months and months. So all of a sudden he was gone, the ship had sailed and he'd gone to Trinidad. I was very worried that the Army would send me to Trinidad too, right after him. Nothing happened for two or three days. Then Janet Flanner of the *New Yorker* magazine came to Le Havre. She was looking at what the Army was going to be doing to send troops home. I had met her a couple of times, but didn't know her well. I don't know whether you would remember Janet Flanner. She was the Paris correspondent of the *New Yorker* magazine and wrote beautiful, beautiful stuff in the *New Yorker* magazine for years and years and years under the pseudonym "Genet," much of which has been republished in book form. I trusted her and said, "Janet, this funny thing happened the other day," and I told her about Kennedy. I knew it was going to get out some way or another and I wanted it to get out my way rather than by accident and get all goofed up. Janet thought this was hilarious, that Kennedy had been sent to Trinidad. She went back to Paris and told this to the correspondents there, and the story came out that the U.S. Army, as punishment for Kennedy, had sent him to Trinidad. A terrible thing had been done to Kennedy. [laughter] For about fifteen minutes I was on the front pages [laughter] of the world's newspapers as the fellow who had sent Edward Kennedy to Trinidad. To my utter amazement, the way it came out in the press it made it look like the Army had done the proper thing for Kennedy having broken his promise.

Nothing further ever happened. All that really ever happened was that Kennedy got to Trinidad, and all he had to do then was get on a commercial plane and fly back to New York. I got a couple of letters from him later on. He wound up as the editor of a newspaper in Santa Barbara, California. He wrote me how grateful he was and then later he wrote me and said if I ever needed a job or any kind of help that he could provide that I should call him or write him and come to Santa Barbara and he would do whatever it was within his power to do.

BOHNING: That's an amazing story.

BRANDT: It was a very high risk situation. Of course, anything that I did in that situation was going to be high risk.

BOHNING: What did General Allen say?

BRANDT: I never heard from him again. And I didn't call him. [laughter]

I had some other adventures. After that the Army set up a war bride camp in Le Havre. All the Italians, Germans, Belgians, French, whatever nationality, who had married GI's during the war and who were going to the States were brought to this camp and processed to be shipped to the United States. I became the public relations officer for this war bride camp. [laughter] Some of those war brides were pretty harum-scarum young ladies. There were a lot of babies. There was a terrible thing that happened. On the ships that took these brides to the States there was an epidemic of what is now known as SIDS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. On just about every trip there would be babies who were put in some kind of central place on the ship and who would mysteriously die. The Army didn't know what was going on. The Army was hushing this up because they didn't know what was going on. They didn't know what was causing it and they didn't know whether it was some kind of mysterious person who was doing this, or what was going on. I got very upset about that. I think it was the first time in my life that I leaked a story to the press because it became pretty clear to me that the Army was just not on top of the situation.

Having leaked the story, I went on a week's leave to Switzerland for R&R. I thought it would be a good time to not be around to answer questions. When I came back there was an officer sitting behind my desk, and I said, "Who are you?" He said, "Who are you? This is my assignment." [laughter] When I told him who I was he took some orders out of his desk. There was an order assigning me as a train inspector in an obscure French town called Serqueux. No explanation. [laughter] He had been assigned as the public relations officer. So the rest of the war I spent in this obscure place in Normandy. When the troop trains came through they made a stop there. There was a kitchen there and they would be fed and they would get back on the train and the train would go on. (This was the troop trains going to Le Havre, taking the troops back to the States.) While that was going on the train inspector was to climb on the train and inspect the cleanliness, etc. , of the train. That was my job. They also gave me a non-com to help me and they gave me a German prisoner of war as kind of a mechanic. I had a jeep. They had so many German POW's that they didn't know what to do with them. I had a German POW whose sole job was to take care of my jeep. You never saw such a polished jeep, full of gas all the time, because for those German POW's the alternative was to be sent back to Germany where people were starving. I also had one who made my bed, who washed my clothes, who did whatever. I could not throw down a sock without his grabbing it and washing it. [laughter] So it was not all that bad.

While I was over there I'd gotten pretty well acquainted with the United Press people in Paris. I'd reached an agreement with Joe [Joseph L]. Grigg, who was the United Press bureau chief in Paris, that as soon as he could he would hire me for the United Press staff in Paris. The post-war plan at that point was that I was going to come back and be a correspondent in Paris.

The way United Press worked was that they could take the most senior person who had applied for that job in the United States, or they could hire locally. Joe explained this to me and said, "When the job opening occurs, I will give you the high sign. You come over and I will hire locally, which will be you." So I said, "Fine," and went back and went to work for United Press in Detroit, Michigan, waiting for Joe's signal to come to Paris.

BOHNING: When were you discharged from the Army?

BRANDT: In the summer of 1946. It may have been September. When you came back from service you were guaranteed the job you had when you left. Since I'd been working for United Press, even though it was in their Lansing bureau on Saturdays, I was entitled to a job at United Press. So I went to work for United Press in Detroit waiting for the call to move to United Press in Paris.

BOHNING: You once told me a story about Joe Louis. Did that occur at this time?

BRANDT: That occurred while I was working in Detroit. While I was working in Detroit, for some reason I was the entire outdoor staff. I was what they called the leg man. Everybody else was inside the office working on the phone developing new stories. I was the only person outside. I covered absolutely everything in Detroit, but the particular event you refer to involved Joe Louis, who was then the world's heavyweight boxing champion. He disappeared at one point, and there was a great deal of building mystery over what had become of Joe Louis. All the reporters were trying to find out what had happened to him. Where is Joe? In the United Press we had a boxing writer, a stringer we called him, whose only job was to report on boxing matches. When there was a big boxing match this fellow would be at the match and would phone in round by round descriptions of the action to me. I would be sitting in the office running a teletype, doing a running account of what went on. I got quite friendly with this fellow, and one day asked him if he had any idea where Joe Louis was. He said, "Oh, yes. He's holed up with Jack Blackburn," (who had been or perhaps was Joe's manager). "He's got a little apartment and I don't think many people know about it, but that's where he is." I went to this apartment address he gave me and knocked on the door. Jack Blackburn came to the door and I said, "I'd like to talk to Joe." He said, "Joe isn't here." "Well," I said, "I'd just like to ask him about the problems with his wife." There was a funny noise from behind and Jack said, "He doesn't have any problems with his wife." As this conversation went I realized that Joe was there but didn't want to talk to anybody. I was asking Jack questions which Joe was answering. Jack would kind of look over his shoulder and give me an answer. It was a most peculiar interview. I went back to the office and wrote this story about Joe holing up, that his problem was really his wife and they were presumably going to get divorced, which they did.

It was a harum-scarum time because I had no automobile. I look back on it and think, "That's unbelievable." I was running all over Detroit. No matter what celebrity came into

town, I would do the interview for United Press. The big events at the time were the automobile strikes. The great hero in Detroit at the time was Walter Reuther. I was following these strikes for United Press and before long I was on a first name basis with Walter Reuther. I remember all these times when there were going to be long negotiations, and the reporters would be waiting outside, and Walter would eventually come out and tell us what was going on. Because of my piano training, I was very good on the teletypes that United Press had at the time. The way those teletypes worked was that they ran at a speed of seventy-five words a minute, and they ran on tape. I don't know if you've seen them. If you could type faster than seventy-five words a minute the tape just kept going very smoothly. I became very adept at using these teletype machines, and I could actually work on those machines live, so to speak. There were times when I might be on the phone with Walter Reuther and on national teletype line at the same time, typing a bulletin or a news flash talking to Walter Reuther on the phone which is tucked on my shoulder. I look back on that and I think, "How did I get to be able to do that?"

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 4]

BRANDT: Eventually the call came from Joe Grigg in Paris that he had an opening for me and to get over there and take this opening he had. So I said good-bye to my friends in Detroit and took off for Paris. In those days you were still traveling mostly by boat, and maybe three weeks elapsed from the time that Joe called me and I actually got to Paris. When I got to Paris, United Press had launched one of its downhold campaigns and Joe announced to me, arriving eagerly to launch my career as a foreign correspondent, that he didn't have this job anymore. It had been wiped out in the economy campaign. That was a very crushing blow, because I thought I'd been preparing all my life for that opportunity.

BOHNING: How long had you been in Detroit before you went back to Paris?

BRANDT: Probably only nine or ten months. Not really very long. Things moved rapidly in those days. The last thing that I wanted to do was pack and go back to the States. So I instantaneously decided I was going to stay in Paris and find whatever I could. I decided to stay in Paris and I looked around for a news job, obviously. The *New York Herald Tribune*. Well, there weren't any.

The only thing that I could turn up was a job as a literary critic. The French broadcasting system was looking for a literary critic who could critique French literature for broadcast to the North American market. I said, "Can I try? Will you give me a try at this? If I can't do it, you'll know I can't do it, but let me try it." They said, "All right," because they apparently had absolutely nobody who could do this job. [laughter] I remember going home and trying to figure out, "How do you get to be a literary critic?" I went down to the corner and looked at the kiosk magazines. I picked out a couple of literary magazines and thought I would read them and see if I got any ideas. I looked at one of these literary magazines and there was a feature in

it that listed where the French authors were going to dedicate or sign their latest book. I decided, "Gee, that's interesting." I looked for the next one that was coming up and went to this book signing. I developed a kind of a routine. I would buy the book and then wait around until there was a lull. I would take the book and ask them to sign it, and talk with them for two or three minutes about the book, just casual questions about how did you come to write this or whatever. Then I would use that as the basis for my literary criticism. It worked out just beautifully. There was never any question that I could not do this, and to my amazement these people did not know how I could get such material. [laughter] So I began working for the French broadcasting system. That literary criticism was quite interesting and it got me a whole education very quickly in French literature.

That first summer that I was there, I went to the Sorbonne and just went one term. I discovered that my French was army French. So I worked on my French to get it a little more literary. [laughter] That worked out very nicely and it began to lead to other jobs. Before long, I became the chief English language script writer for the French broadcasting system. There were only two English language persons writing literary criticism of the French literature at the time. The other was a Canadian fellow who was writing for the Montreal, Quebec papers. And me! [laughter] It was really kind of a blessing in disguise.

As I said, I began to get other jobs and I remember that there was a big project for a TV show. TV was just coming out at that time. This was to be the first TV show that would be done in Paris for American TV, and Maurice Chevalier was to be the star of it. I was going to provide the local color spot each week, and that was an interesting time. Eventually the thing did not fly. There were too many technical problems and financial problems. But I got involved in that kind of thing.

I also hooked up with the only real authentic genius that I'd ever worked with. This was a fellow named Boris Vian, a French writer who wrote constantly. He wrote plays, he wrote novels, he wrote poetry. He wrote everything. He was involved with the Jazz Club de France, and he did a weekly jazz program on French broadcasting. He would do his script in French and I would translate it into English and then do a little coaching in English so that he could do the program in English. I got pretty well acquainted with this fellow. He died very young, I think at age thirty-nine. Since he died the French have dug out every word that he ever wrote and it's been published. There are volumes and volumes of his writing. You see these things better in hindsight, but I knew he was a very special guy at the time. This guy was literally a genius. You only get the opportunity to see one or two of those in your entire life.

We got involved because of jazz. We both loved jazz, and we would get into big arguments. I remember a big argument about Dizzy Gillespie and his bebop, which was brand new at the time. I thought this was just a will-o-the-wisp thing that would have a week or two in the sun and then disappear forever. Boris saw what Dizzy Gillespie was trying to do and tried to explain it to me. I remember those conversations with Boris, riding around on a French bus somewhere or sitting in the studio waiting for the transcription to be made. As a matter of fact, when I went to work for the foreign service at the U.S. Embassy, I said that I would accept the job that they had for me if they allowed me to continue to produce this jazz show with Boris

Vian. They said, "Fine." We kept going for another six or eight months after I was actually working at the embassy.

One of the jobs I picked up at that time was a little magazine thing published in Paris called the *Export Import Journal*, and I began to write free-lance articles for this *Export Import Journal*. It was run by a fellow named George Halasy, who was a rather wealthy guy. He had du Pont money but I'm not quite sure how, probably by marriage. One night in the middle of the night I got this phone call. It turned out that George had fired his editor in the middle of the night. The magazine was put together at the [*London*] *Daily Mail* presses in Paris. He was going through his address book looking for somebody who could come down and put this magazine together. He had fired his editor in some spat in the middle of the night. By pure luck, I happened to be home. In any event, I went down and put this magazine together. So George hired me as the next editor of the *Export Import Journal*.

I had been doing that in addition to the radio work. During the United Nations session in Paris I wrote a daily report on what was going on at the United Nations for a string of East Coast radio stations. For one full session of the United Nations I was a reporter at the United Nations. One thing I remember about that is that I had an interview with Eleanor Roosevelt. I discovered that she would sometimes accept written questions. That is, she liked to know what the questions were going to be. If you asked for an interview and told her what questions you wanted to ask, she was sometimes willing to do that, particularly if it was something that interested her and was something she wanted to support. So I wrote down some questions and sent them to her and by golly, she was willing to do that. That's a pleasant memory. The only time I ever had anything to do with Eleanor. She was the American star of the United Nations session in Paris that particular year. Andrei Vishinsky, the white-haired old Russian prosecutor, was the Russian star.

So I was having a lot of fun. When the Marshall Plan came along and headquarters for it were established in Paris, I was sitting there as editor of the *Export Import Journal*. They were almost desperate to have people who knew anything about export and import in Europe. They asked me to come on board and work for the Marshall Plan at the embassy in Paris. That began the next stage of my strange career.

BOHNING: Was it then that you joined the State Department?

BRANDT: That was March of 1949.

BOHNING: How long had you been in Paris?

BRANDT: Two years.

BOHNING: You also told me you studied art along the way. I'm not sure when that took place.

BRANDT: That was during the same period and that was kind of a mistake. A good, close friend of mine at the time was Bob [Robert M.] Carrier, who was writing night life stuff about Paris for the French broadcasting. It was more to attract tourists. He was a pretty wild guy. Occasionally we would have parties together, we would jointly give a party. He had a very nice apartment over by the Eiffel Tower. At one of those parties Marcel Marceau was our guest of honor, the mime who later became very well known. After one of these parties, where there was considerable drinking, probably too much, because I didn't remember much about it afterwards, Bob Carrier told me the next day that we had agreed to go to art school together under the GI Bill, which was available to both of us. I found this hard to believe, but since I'd given my word we went down and enrolled in art school. The Academy de la Grande Chaumiere in the Montparnasse area. All of a sudden I was going to art school. This is in addition to all the jobs and everything else.

I loved it. I switched teachers several times and wound up with a dear old man named Emile Othon Friesz. Othon Friesz was one of the original Fauves, the school of painting associated with Matisse, who was probably the most famous of the Fauves. Othon Friesz was in his declining years in teaching. He would come into his class and set up the model, usually on Monday morning. Then during the week he would come in every day or two and circulate around and look at what people were doing. At first he kind of looked at what I was doing and didn't comment. I was pretty bad. I was no artist, but I was having fun playing with colors and juxtaposition and patterns of colors, which I liked. After a while he stopped and said to me, "My son," (he called all his students "my son" or "my daughter"), "you have a very good eye for color, but you will never in God's world be able to draw." That was kind of discouraging. As soon as I gracefully could, I stopped that. But it was a great education as far as art was concerned. I got very interested in art, and still am.

I had a lot of friends in Paris who were artists. A lot of them were over at the Fernand Leger studio, who is one of the modern masters. I used to go over there about once a week or every couple of weeks. Leger would give a lecture to his students. I would go over to the Leger studio and look at what they were doing and listen to Leger's art lecture. There is a very good Leger museum with his work in the south of France now. It's not a style that appealed to me. I didn't particularly care for his lectures. He was very far left in his politics and very often his lectures would be more political than in matters of art. I'm kind of wandering about, but it was a fantastic period.

I got very well acquainted with Art Buchwald at that time, who was a fellow student in Paris. After I went to work for the embassy I would still see Art. In some of Art Buchwald's early stories he refers to his friend Joe, and Joe was a whole bunch of different people. But in some of those I was the friend Joe that's referred to. Probably the most memorable of those Buchwald stories was when a little bit later I went to Algeria. I was doing a booklet for the

Marshall Plan on American aid to Algeria. I was down in Algiers assembling the material for this booklet when Buchwald came into town and I ran into him somewhere. He said, "What are you doing this weekend?" I said, "Nothing." He said, "Let's go down to the first oasis in the Sahara. I'm going down there and start a book." This turned out to be his first book. I said, "Great." On Saturday morning we made arrangements to meet at the bus stop. We got on this bus that's going down into the desert to the first oasis, which is called Bou Saada. Buchwald gets on the bus wearing a fez. This is one of those crowded African buses with people hanging out the windows and sitting on the roof. Crazy! Here's Buchwald with his fez. He got there very late and I'm already sitting in the back of the bus. I hear these Arabs arguing about where he is from. One thinks he's from Lebanon, another thinks he's from Egypt because of the way he's wearing the fez. [laughter] They finally ask him. He thought this was hilarious. We got down to Bou Saada. There were only two small hotels in town, and I get in one and he gets in the other. He comes over to my hotel for dinner because there is a dancing troupe coming in after dinner. This troupe of Arab dancing girls do their thing. The star of the troupe is Princess Zorah.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 5]

BRANDT: Princess Zorah does what is called a bottle dance. She does an entire dance with a bottle sitting on the top of her head. A very talented young lady. Buchwald starts to josh me because he said every time this Princess Zorah sits down she looks at me. He told me, "She has her eye on you."

The troupe announced afterwards that they were going down to their own place where they would do what they called genuine Arab dances, in the Arab fashion, not the usual fashion like they did for tourists. We were invited to go down there with them. Buchwald said, "I've got to go back and start on this book. You go down and tell me what it's like." I went down with a bunch of Egyptian tourists. I don't know if there were any other Americans there. At that particular place they did their dances, how shall I say it, unclothed. Princess Zorah was quite a beautiful lady. After they had done their performance, which is done in a room probably about this size, very small, they go out and come back to where the customers are sitting. Princess Zorah comes directly to me and said to me in French--and these were her first words--she said, "I have always felt that when I get married I would like to marry someone who is dependable, calm, and collected. You look like you are dependable, calm, and collected." Those were the first words she ever said to me. I really didn't know quite what to make of this. I had never had any experience approaching this. We talked about it and she explained to me a little bit about her father. He would have been one of the sheiks of the desert, but he had been killed in a desert fight and left her to fend for herself. She wound up in this dancing troupe. I could marry her if I would pay the fee to the owner of the dancing troupe. It amounted to about seventy-five dollars. She proposed that I do this and that we would live in this oasis. She knew everybody, and would provide me with every kind of help that I would possibly need. We talked about this and I said, "But I'm a roumi," the Arab word for a Christian or a non-Muslim. It didn't make any difference to her. It was quite late in the night and I was then totally

confused. I decided to go over and see Buchwald because I was getting visions of I would do this and I would stay down there a year, write a book and become world famous. As I said, Princess Zorah was something else. So I went back and Buchwald was hunched over his typewriter in his room. Buchwald thought her idea was about the funniest thing he had ever heard of. He would not tell me, "Yes, no, you ought to do this." He said, "I will help, too. I will get you the Coca-Cola concession for Bou Saada." I think that became his theme, getting me the Coca-Cola concession for Bou Saada. That was quite a trip.

The next morning we got up and Buchwald and I decided to rent a couple of camels and go out and see a local soccer game (they called it football) being played out in the desert, out in the sand. So we went out to where this football match was being played and there were about three people for whom they had carried chairs out there in the sand (everyone else stood and watched), one of whom was Princess Zorah. [laughter] Nothing further ever became of that, but I've often wondered what would have happened if I had bought the contract to this dancing star. I'm not sure where we are.

BOHNING: You went to work at the embassy.

BRANDT: The mission chief was Barry Bingham, from Louisville, Kentucky, of the publishing family. A tremendous fellow. A terrific guy to work for. They put me to doing a daily press review of the French press. They needed to know what the French were saying about the Marshall Plan and what the different political tendencies were saying. There were different shades of opinion about what the Americans were doing at that time. It became my job to read the French newspapers and write a daily summary for the embassy personnel and when it was important enough, for Washington, about what the French reaction was on what was going on in France, vis-a-vis America. I would come in and start off the day by reading fifteen or sixteen newspapers, trying to pick off what was critical to the American presence in France and writing a summary of that. As a matter of fact, that is still being done. The last time I was in Paris was about three years ago. A young lady who I suppose I kind of trained, who took over the job from me eventually, was still doing that. She goes in to see the American ambassador every morning--the way it's set up now--and gives him a run-down on what is in the Paris newspapers that morning. That kind of got started there. I can't say I was really an expert, but I became at least a specialist in American aid to North Africa--Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, which were then part of the French empire. I did quite a bit of traveling to North Africa, and I've been back there a little bit, not often enough, but North Africa's a very interesting part of the world.

BOHNING: Did you have many special experiences in North Africa?

BRANDT: I remember once there was a big international conference on tourism. That was in Algiers. At the last minute they asked the United States to send a delegation to this tourism conference. I was going down there anyway, so I became the junior member of the three-person

United States delegation to this tourist conference. I had never done that before. We came into Algiers and all of a sudden we were famous. The Communist newspaper described us as leading American spies. It was kind of an odd delegation in that the delegation head was Colonel [Alexander] Pozzi, who is best remembered as the fellow who sold the U.S. Army on the idea that eating carrots helps your night sight. If you eat carrots you can see better at night. The second member of the delegation was a fellow named Clay Hollister, who was an agricultural expert and whose French was atrocious, from Cincinnati. I don't think he understood very much of what was going on. He kept making speeches about how these African countries had to put better towels in the hotels for American tourists.

There was a strong tendency for the people who were sent into the foreign service to be political appointees rather than people with any knowledge of what they were dealing with. I got kind of fed up with that. I had a Greek friend who was about a third generation removed from Greece, who badly wanted to go to work at the embassy in Athens. The rules were such that he could work in any U.S. Embassy in the world, but not the one in Athens, because he was of Greek ancestry.

When I left there it was under odd circumstances. This will show you how luck enters into a person's life. At the embassy there was a fellow named Robert Blum, a fellow I became quite friendly with. It was decided during that period, about 1952 or 1953, that the United States should establish a mission in French Indochina at Saigon. My friend Bob Blum was appointed to be the chief of this mission that was going to be set up in French Indochina. Bob Blum came to me and said that he was being appointed to this position and that he would like to have me come out and be his public relations chief for this mission. He was going to need somebody to handle press relations and he wanted that person to be me. That sounded pretty interesting. I was freshly married, having gotten permission from the State Department to marry a French girl. They gave me this literature about what French Indochina was like and I was getting ready to leave for Indochina as soon as Bob went out to set up the mission in Saigon. The appointment seemed to be terribly delayed, but that was normal. The way the system worked was that when a new mission was being set up, they would ask for nominees for various posts from various embassies. I became, by way of Bob Blum, the nominee of the Paris embassy for the particular communications post in Saigon. It came time for me to come back on home leave, which I was very anxious to do because my father had had a heart attack. I also wanted to introduce my new bride to my folks.

This appointment had not come through and our plan was to come back on home leave and then leave from the United States to go to Saigon. We finally left Paris, came back on home leave, and I went down to Washington to find out what was holding up this appointment. I spent two or three days traveling around Washington trying to find out who would know about this. I finally found an upstairs office in a back hall in a back street, and this fellow said to me, "Oh, didn't they tell you?" I said, "Didn't they tell me what?" He said, "Well, the person being appointed to that post is Toby" (I've forgotten his name). "He was the nominee of the Bonn embassy." I was absolutely stunned. I said, "Why would they take a man from the Bonn embassy?" "Oh," he said, "he speaks flawless German." [laughter] I said, "But this is part of the French empire." I was completely disgusted and I said, "If they can't run the State

Department any better than this I don't think I want any part of it. I certainly don't want to make a career of it."

I had reached the point where I could no longer be temporary foreign service. This was my classification. You had to go on the permanent foreign service staff or get off. I decided I was going to get off. I came back to Detroit and decided that I wanted no further part of the State Department, and should look for another job. So I began seriously to look for a job here. One of the people I talked to was Tony Delorenzo, who had been the chief of the United Press bureau in Detroit. He came in at the time I left. In the interim he had gone to work for General Motors and become the vice president of public relations for General Motors. I talked to Tony and said, "I've decided I want out of the State Department and I'm looking for a job. Do you have any ideas?" Tony said, "I don't have any openings in my staff at all at the moment, but I was talking yesterday to a guy named Bud Smith who is with a company called Dow Chemical in Midland. He told me that they are looking for people with an international background. It sounded as though you might be the kind of person they're looking for." He gave me Bud Smith's phone number. This was Arthur Smith, Jr., who was the public relations director of Dow. That was my first glimmer of Dow Chemical. I had really never heard much about them. They invited me to come up to Midland and I did. I was quite impressed with the people I met, and I was impressed that they were looking for people with an international background. It seemed to be a better proposition than any of the other possible jobs that I uncovered. Chrysler Corporation wanted me to go work for them, but I decided, "Let's go for Dow."

BOHNING: Who did you talk to when you came here?

BRANDT: Primarily to Bud Smith, because it involved working for him. But I also talked to Steve [Stephen L.] Starks, the famous Steve Starks, and to Gordon Clack. As a matter of fact, when we came to Midland house-hunting, Steve Starks took my wife and me in his car and said, "I'm going to show you a couple of places for rent. See what you think." Steve Starks drove us around town and showed us a couple of places that we might be able to rent, one of which we actually rented. What I didn't know at the time, there were maybe only two places in Midland that were for rent at the time. [laughter] But I was quite impressed with this kind of friendliness and personal concern from a pretty high ranking kind of person.

BOHNING: Were you offered the job the day that you came for the interview?

BRANDT: No. That came a few days later in a letter. That provided me with details of what salary they would offer and what date they would like me to come to work. I came back from the interviews and the offer came, I would say, a week later maybe. I accepted even though, as I remember, it was slightly less money than I had been given at the embassy. In fact, I think I'm the only person that's ever been hired by Dow out of the State Department. I don't know if that's a particular distinction, but that's the case.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 6]

BOHNING: We've finally got you to Dow Chemical. [laughter]

BRANDT: It took a while.

BOHNING: It was excellent. That was 1953.

BRANDT: Yes. October 25, 1953. When I came I had fully expected that I would stay in Midland perhaps a year. Since Dow was just getting seriously involved in the foreign field, they would probably send me to some French part of the world. Thirty-nine years later I'm still in Midland! Everybody else has been sent to Hong Kong and everywhere else, but I'm still here.

BOHNING: What was your "title" when you started?

BRANDT: I don't know that I had a particular title. It was just public relations assistant or something of that sort. Maybe public relations staff, because they were not sure and I was not sure just how I would be fitting in. That's where I got this idea that I'd probably go through some kind of training period and would be shipped out.

BOHNING: How big was the public relations group at that time?

BRANDT: It was thirteen persons, and a rather interesting collection. Most were former newspaper people. There was a news service that put out press releases, and there was a magazine, *The Dow Diamond*. There was an employee newspaper, *The Brinewell*. There were a few people engaged in product publicity, particularly in the agricultural chemicals field. There was more of a need for product publicity about agricultural chemicals than most of the others. It was a fairly small staff. Bud Smith, the director, reported directly to L. I. Doan, who was the president. It was an excellent place to get acquainted with how Dow operated. I went to the sales training course. In my particular case, since I wasn't going into sales, I attended most of the sessions but not all. Mine was strictly marketing oriented. That lasted probably six months and proved to be an excellent way to get quickly acclimated to the company.

The first thing they asked me to do was some work on the employee publication, *The Brinewell*. The editor was a fellow named Danny Smick, who had been a football star at Ann

Arbor. He was brought in during the war and wound up being the editor of the employee newspaper. He had no particular background for it, and his philosophy was to put in the employee paper what he thought would interest the employees. There were lots of baby pictures. He had a photographer and they would go around and take baby pictures. There were all kinds of bowling scores. There was a great deal of activity in the Dow recreation department with organized sports. There was a great deal of stuff about hunting and fishing. Anybody who caught a big fish or a many-pointed deer got his picture in *The Brinewell*. But as a vehicle for employee communications it was not doing very much. My first assignment, basically, was to work with Danny, who remained the editor the whole time, to get some more substantial content into the employee publication. That is, to get more interpretations of what the company wanted people to understand about the operations of the business, and why it was doing this, why it was not doing something else, what its position was on this and that issue.

BOHNING: Was that directive coming from Smith or from Doan?

BRANDT: That was coming from Doan and the rest of the board members. Bud Smith was an interesting fellow and he had no particular background in public relations either. Lee Doan had pulled him out of the sales organization when he became president. Lee Doan had been the marketing director and then became the president almost overnight when Willard Dow was killed in a plane crash. Bud Smith had been selling magnesium anodes up in Wisconsin. He was a bright, personable young man who was pulled in by Lee Doan who told him, "You're the public relations director." At first, that seemed to involve a lot of gofer kinds of things. That is, he would travel around with Lee Doan and make arrangements for this, that, or the other.

But none of it was very serious. At that time it didn't really need to be. The company was not all that big nor prominent. I must say that public relations in the late 1940s, when Bud took over, was a very new thing. It was not yet taught in schools. When I went to school at Michigan State there were no courses in public relations. Ten years later it was just beginning to be a function, and I think the public relations department at Dow is one of the early ones in the chemical industry. It was just very new stuff. I think the people who were in it, such as Bud Smith, were not just sure what you were supposed to do if you were a public relations person. The people who were pulled into it were mostly newspaper people, because a lot of the function had to do with press relations or writing news releases or writing or editing magazine articles and editing magazines. Public relations was a very new thing at that time. Looking back on it, I feel kind of fortunate in that I had been exposed to public relations work and had had some public relations challenges. While I didn't know a great deal about public relations, I knew more than the people at Midland, who were quite isolated from the general world. That was one of the disadvantages of living in Midland. You were isolated in many ways, particularly forty years ago.

When I started out I had an office next door to Bud Smith. I thought, "Gee, that's nice. " He also told me we were going to share the same secretary. And that was nice, too. I don't think it had any particular meaning or significance, but I think a lot of people read it as having

significance. I was the new boy on the block and the hot shot from Paris. I thought I had considerable advantages in going into that situation. The first day I was on the job they gave me all this stuff to read about the company and what it did, all the products. About five-thirty or six o'clock I'm still in the office. I'm the only one there and I'm still reading this stuff when the phone starts ringing off the hook. It rang and rang and rang, and finally I decided I'd better pick that up. I did and it was a reporter from *The New York Times*, who asked me if we were aware that the Dow Chemical Company had been attacked on the floor of the Senate today by Senator Estes Kefauver as a monopoly on magnesium. Were we aware of Senator Kefauver's speech and did we have any comment on it? [laughter] I told him I'd call him right back. I pulled out the list of Dow executives. I started down from L. I. Doan. Nobody home. I went on to the next name. Nobody home. Finally, about the fourth or fifth call, I got Tink [Calvin A.] Campbell, the vice president and general counsel. Tink was still in his office. I told him that I was the new kid on the block and picked up this phone and what the problem was and asked for his advice and what we ought to say to *The New York Times*. Tink kind of grumped and said, "Well, the basic rule here is that you don't get in a pissing contest with a skunk." [laughter] That was the first time I had ever heard that phrase. [laughter] He told me that Estes Kefauver had made this speech several times before and it was probably nothing to get alarmed about. That particular reporter was not aware of that or was just pretending that he wasn't aware of it and was fishing for whatever he could get in reaction from us. We should basically say, "No comment. " So I called the reporter back. That was my first day at Dow.

The next day I was called in and Bud Smith said, "There's a mayor of a French town coming in. He's on some kind of a tour sponsored by the State Department and wants to see Lee Doan. We don't know whether he has an interpreter or whether he's going to be proficient in English or not. We'd like you to go over and sit and help Lee." I went over and sat in a corner of Lee Doan's office. This French mayor did have an interpreter. The basic pitch of this French mayor was that he had read with great interest of the Dow Chemical Company's interest in promoting recreation among its employees and how it had done all sorts of things for its employees, not only in Midland but in Texas, providing them the best in recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc. This was one of the primary needs in his town back in France, and he thought that it would be just a tremendous gesture for the Dow Chemical Company to provide some of this equipment to equip one or more of the playgrounds in his town. This was put very smoothly and very eloquently. I was extremely impressed with the way Lee Doan handled this man. I thought he did as fine a job as I'd been used to seeing ambassadors do in Europe, of politely telling a man, "No, please go away." [laughter] That was kind of my introduction, and right off the bat I was working with the top people in the company. It wasn't particularly planned that way; it just sort of happened.

The first week we were here we had a call from Alden Dow, inviting my wife and me to dinner. So we went over and had dinner with Alden and Vada Dow. Just the four of us. Alden had heard about our arrival from Europe and about my having been connected with the State Department. He grilled me all evening about how the State Department worked. The basic question was whether it worked. [laughter] I was greatly impressed with his eagerness to have knowledge of these things. As I said, from the beginning I was operating with the top people at Dow.

BOHNING: What kind of a person was Bud Smith to work for?

BRANDT: He was a delight to work for. He and I hit it off really from the word go. I think, basically, he understood that in the professional public relations area he badly needed help and I was probably the best source of that kind of help that he had. We hit it off just great and I came to really love that man. I had a great deal of respect for him and enjoyed working for him in spite of his weaknesses in the sense that he was a crackerjack salesman put over into public relations and all of a sudden he had to learn an entirely new set of skills, values, techniques. He really did a tremendous job of learning, and became over a period of time a first-rate public relations person. It was quite a remarkable transition, in my view.

BOHNING: You were working on *The Brinewell* as well?

BRANDT: Yes. I began to revamp *The Brinewell* to give it some serious content and tried to put some purpose in it. We began to revise the internal communication system, which was fairly shoddy. That is, the internal system whereby Dow people would keep up with what was going on in the company. The company was establishing new branches and new plants and there wasn't any very effective system for communicating, so we worked on that.

I became very friendly with Woody, who has been referred to in these interviews from time to time. L. H. Woodman. He was Lee Doan's speech writer. Woody had been a newsman in Freeland, Michigan, where the airport is, and was editor of the *Freeland Star*. He had been hired by Willard Dow and became the head of what was the predecessor of the public relations department, which was called editorial services. That came about during World War II when it became necessary to set up a formal press relations function. Woody became L.I. Doan's speech writer later and became basically a full-time speech writer for Lee Doan when Bud Smith took over the public relations spot. Woody was a fantastic talent, but an alcoholic. Lee Doan didn't worry about it as long as the speech was there when he got up to give it. Woody, knowing that, sometimes would not get the finished speech to Lee Doan until the time he was going to go up and deliver it. But over a period of time Woody became more and more of a problem. There were days when he wouldn't even show up at the office at all. There were other days when he might show up at three o'clock in the afternoon. I became Bud Smith's confidant, I guess you'd call it, because I was probably as close to Woody as anyone in the office. We tried everything we could think of to straighten Woody out, but it never worked. He's dead now, but what a fantastic talent that really went to waste.

A couple years later, in 1955, Bill Schuette, who was to become one of my heroes, was assigned to form the Dow Chemical Company:Midland Division. I had met Bill, who was one of the world's great people. Bill was assigned to set up the Dow Chemical Company:Midland Division of Dow. At that time there was a Texas Division, but Midland was considered part of

the headquarters and there was not any separate organization for the Dow Chemical Company:Midland Division. All of Texas would come in with proposals to build plants and so on, but there was no competition from Midland because there was no Midland organization to provide that. Bill began to put together this kind of hodge-podge of little empires that had grown up in Midland. There was [Charles J.] "Strosacker's department" and [Edwin O.] "Barstow's department" and [William H.] "William's department," and so forth and so on. These people were all powers unto themselves.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 7]

BRANDT: Bill Schuette was assigned to put all this together. He was a much younger man than the Strosackers and the Williams and so on. Where I came into the act was that he decided he needed a public relations officer, a communications officer. There was another fellow who was quite aware of this and applied for the job. His name was [Eugene E.] Gene Perrin, and Gene was kind of a political animal. He had just finished running a very successful political campaign for Lee Doan, who had decided he would like to be a regent of the University of Michigan, his alma mater. Gene Perrin, who had all kinds of political acumen, ran his political campaign very successfully. Gene Perrin and I became the two candidates for this job. Bill Schuette set it up so that we would each go before his operating group and make a little presentation, and then they would make their decision. That was an interesting process. They were just forming this organization, and I didn't think I was going to get it because Gene Perrin was a polished public speaker. He had written some books about public speaking and some pamphlets for Dow people who were going to go out and do public speaking. But they picked me. [laughter] I became the first public relations manager of the Dow Chemical Company:Midland Division and was given the task of setting up a small public relations department.

BOHNING: Reporting to who? To Bill Schuette?

BRANDT: Reporting to Bill Schuette.

BOHNING: So you were a separate Dow organization from Bud Smith's organization?

BRANDT: Yes. I worked for quite a while out of the same office but had a different boss, because obviously we were doing the same thing and had to be tied in with Bud Smith's organization anyway. But we pulled out the employee publication and the internal communications function and what we called community relations. We set up a separate kind of function that would look after the relations between the community and the company and the division. Bill was fun to work for, and I became very close to him. I bought his house when he

moved and still live in it. It was a great tragedy when he had a heart attack and died, because he was scheduled to be the next CEO of Dow.

I remember once when Bill called me over and said that he'd been asked to head up a fund-raising drive for the Midland hospital. He had told them that he would accept it on condition that Ned Brandt would be the publicity chairman. He said, "I think this is going to be mostly publicity, and that's going to be the heavy work, publicizing it. If you'll do it, I'll do it. " I couldn't really say no. [laughter] He said, "All right. Let me walk down the hall and tell Mark Putnam that we're going to do this. Stay right here. I do have to keep Dr. Putnam" (who was his boss) "informed of what I'm doing." A few minutes later he came back from Dr. Putnam's office looking totally baffled. He said, "You know, I walked in there and I said, 'Dr. Putnam, the hospital is talking about a fund drive and they're looking for help from us in running this campaign. ' Putty" (as he called him) "held up his hand and said, 'Bill, you don't have to say anything more. I will be glad to take that on. '" [laughter] "'I know that I've been derelict in my responsibilities to the community, so you came to the right guy. I'll be glad to do it. '" So Mark Putnam became the chairman of the fund drive with me as the publicity chairman. It was the first exposure I really had to Dr. Putnam.

One traumatic thing in that time was in 1958, it was called "Black Friday," when Dow ran into terrible financial problems and the board decided that there was going to be a ten percent across the board cut in personnel. Each department in Dow across the board would be asked to eliminate ten percent of its personnel. At the time that was decided, Bud Smith was on some extended trip out of town. I was in the Dow Chemical Company: Midland Division, but somebody had to do something because the rumors were all over town. I talked to Dr. Putnam and said, "We have to issue a public announcement of what we're going to do." Dr. Putnam was pretty resistant, and said, "This is internal. It's internal to the company and we're doing it our way. We don't like to do it, but we have to do it. But we don't have to explain it to everybody." I finally persuaded him that we should write up a brief press announcement and issue it to the press. He said, "Okay, you go ahead and draft it, but don't do anything with it until I have seen it and okayed it." I quickly drafted a very brief two-paragraph announcement and sent it in to Dr. Putnam. When it came back, he had written here and scratched things out there. He had changed it all around until it was about a ten-line announcement that was pure gibberish. It didn't make any sense whatever. I called him and said, "Dr. Putnam, I'm afraid this doesn't make any sense." "Yes, it does," he said. [laughter] I said, "I don't think we can really put this out in this form." "Yes, we can." Before the conversation was over he told me, "Put it out as a news release in exactly the form that I gave it to you." It was one of the stranger news releases ever released by the company. I went ahead and did it because at least it got the thing out into the public arena, and was no longer something that was going on behind locked doors at The Dow Chemical Company.

He was an old-fashioned type of person. He didn't think anyone should know the figures, the financial numbers of the company. I had some discussions with him about that. I was supposed to be talking to the press, telling them the condition of the company. How could I do this if I didn't know what the numbers were? "Just don't worry about that. There aren't many people who really need to know these numbers. " Later on, Bill Schuette showed me the

numbers. That was one of the reasons he put me on the operating board of the Dow Chemical Company: Midland Division, who were allowed to see the numbers. That situation has changed completely, but that old school that was represented by Mark Putnam really played things extremely close to the vest. Bill Schuette died in 1959 and Mac Whiting immediately took over from him. I had a fine, close relationship with Mac Whiting. That was no problem.

BOHNING: During this time in the Michigan Division, what were your principal activities? Were you a speech writer for anyone?

BRANDT: I was writing a few speeches for Bill Schuette. Making speeches was his weak point. He knew that and he knew he had to work on it, so I tried to help him with that. It was really a matter of helping to put together the Dow Chemical Company: Midland Division as a separate organization with its own identity. Up to then, it had been Midland, but there was no identification of a manufacturing division in Midland as a separate entity. Bill was trying to install all kinds of efficiency systems. He was an innovative manager, probably the best pure manager that I've ever worked with. He was doing all these innovative management things. He was the first one who introduced objectives, goals, and plans. He would carry on appropriate frugality campaigns. He was trying very hard to develop measures of how well or how poorly the division was doing. There were no statistics for the division as a separate entity up to that time. There was no control on the productivity. There had never really been a need for it. He was trying, basically, to install modern management methods in the division.

I remember that he called me in once and said that he wanted me to devise some way of measuring the efficiency of the public relations operation. I said, "It's not that big a piece of expenditure. Why am I going to do this?" He kind of smiled at me and said, "I've been trying to get some of these major managers to adopt these systems. They keep telling me that they have done the work and that it's a useless exercise. There is a lot of opposition. If you, as the public relations manager, can measure numerically the efficiency of these vague things that you do, community relations, employee communication, these people will have no excuse at all for not being able to measure the efficiency of their production operation." I said, "I gotcha." [laughter] I devised some ways of measuring the efficiency of really vague kinds of operations. I had these bar charts, for example. He was glad because then he could show these and say, "If they can do this in public relations, you can do it like rolling off a log." That was the type of thing that went on.

I guess it was 1961, after a couple more managers of the Dow Chemical Company: Midland Division and after serving on the operating board for that time, that I became the assistant director of public relations. The public relations function had been expanding and had reached a point where he (Smith) thought he needed a full-time assistant director. I don't know what other considerations there might have been, but I had been kind of serving as the assistant director at the same time I was running the Dow Chemical Company: Midland Division. So it was kind of a natural thing, except that my title was changed when I became the assistant director of public relations. Part of the reason for doing that was that there were things that

needed to be done that I could do. I don't quite know how to put it. In 1960, Carl Gerstacker became the board chairman, and that led to some things because Bud Smith and Carl Gerstacker could not communicate with each other. It was just one of those things where two people could not communicate with each other. Bud Smith would go in and talk to Gerstacker, the new board chairman, and he would not be sure just what Carl wanted or whether he was properly interpreting what Carl was asking him to do. It very quickly got to be a very bad situation. I had met Gerstacker and got along well with him. Bud asked me if I would mind, when things came up with Gerstacker, whether I would go over and deal with Carl rather than him. I said, "Sure. Fine. " That began a very long association with Carl Gerstacker, that got started for that rather peculiar reason.

In 1962 Ted Doan became president of the company at age forty. Ted Doan had all kinds of ideas about the things that he wanted to do. Some of them involved me. One of the first things that Ted Doan wanted to do was set out in writing the objectives of The Dow Chemical Company. Why we were in business, what we were supposed to do, and how were we going to go about it. The basic mission of the company. I'm not sure quite how he decided that I was going to work with him on this, but over a period of several months Ted Doan and I worked on this sort of mission statement of the objectives of The Dow Chemical Company. One of his strong feelings was that the company absolutely needed this. I would write something and then we'd look at it and hash it over. It was really a very enjoyable experience. He would show it to people and get criticism of it and then we'd have another session. This evolved over a period of six or eight months. We finally came forth with a document that's still used today as the objectives of The Dow Chemical Company. You'll occasionally see it printed and framed and put up on an office wall. That was really the first close working experience I had with Ted Doan. Later that was expanded into International Principles, the guiding principles for Dow operating in places around the world. It had a lot of ethical content and dealt with how the company should treat its employees and how it should treat other governments and the general responsibilities of the company.

In 1961 Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, came out. We didn't really know it at the time, but that signaled a whole new era for the chemical industry. That was the dawn of the environmental age. Bud started to get involved with some of the other chemical companies in dealing with that kind of situation. They set up what they called a truth squad, who traveled around where people were getting excited about Rachel Carson's writings, and we would have representatives of the chemical industry presenting the truth. That was really the first glimmer of this new age, in 1961.

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BRANDT: As the assistant director, I began to be more and more involved with the top managers of the company and with the policies of the company and with the public relations problems of the company. During that period Bud Smith was having a terrible personal problem in that his wife had cancer and was very slowly dying. Bud Smith probably had a

closer relationship with Dorothy than any husband-wife case I can think of. He was absolutely devastated. Literally devastated. After she died, he would see her, talk to her and he didn't know whether he was awake or asleep, things like that. Eventually he decided that he had to get out of Midland or he was going to go bonkers. That was probably true. I was privy to some of this but I had no idea how serious it got until one day he announced that an opening had come up as general sales manager for Dow in Seattle and he was taking it. Within a week he had left for Seattle, and there I was taking over as public relations director. Of course, I'd been prepping for it for roughly four years, so there was no question that I was the nominee. I took over the public relations function in early 1965, and there were a number of things that came together at that period when I took over.

First there was the complete reorganization of the company, which was being carried out by the newly formed troika of Ted Doan, Carl Gerstacker, and Ben Branch. That was activated at a series of meetings of the top management of the company, and I played sort of a backstage role in that. I remember there was one big meeting at East Lansing where Ted and Carl and Ben laid out for the top managers how the company was now going to be reorganized into geographical areas. There would be a Dow Europe, there would be a Dow Latin America, and so forth. For that occasion I wrote speeches for all three of them to be delivered at this management meeting. I think that was partly so that it would be more or less coordinated, that they wouldn't be stepping on each other's toes. Carl used to tease me and still sometimes does that I was one of the most influential people in the company and didn't even know it. [laughter]

BOHNING: When you were writing speeches for these people, and I'm sure you wrote many more, how did you go about doing that? Did you sit down with them in advance and collect their ideas?

BRANDT: Jim, every speechmaker operates a little bit differently, and the first thing I had to do was to get acquainted with the particular person and how he went at this process. There are wide variations, and you had to adjust to the particular person and his temperament and his work habits. Working with a Ted Doan was an entirely different proposition from working with a Carl Gerstacker. Ted Doan is very much idea oriented and he keeps thinking there is some better idea, some better way of expressing the thing, from the time he agrees to give a speech to the time he gets up to give it. I've had cases with Ted Doan where you might rewrite a speech six times, six different speeches. You would sit down with Ted Doan and kick around some ideas and he'd say, "Okay, give me a draft." Then he would take that draft and stick it in his pocket. As he went around he would bounce it off whoever happened to be handy. These people would provide some new ideas and then he would come back and say, "I've got a new idea. " So you'd draft his new version of it. This could go on and on and on, depending on how much time he had between the time he agreed to give it and the time he was actually going to give it. He was the type of speaker who would still be going over his speech text as he was being introduced, trying to improve a word here or a phrase there. I used to scold him because he spent absolutely no time at all on delivery.

Carl Gerstacker went quite a ways in the opposite direction. If he was giving a major speech, he wanted to have it ready sometimes as much as three months in advance depending on his travel schedule and other factors. He would then carry that text around with him and he would rehearse it. If he was in a hotel room somewhere, he would get in front of the mirror and rehearse that speech. By the time he actually gave it, it was a very polished performance. He knew what gestures he was going to make; he knew his text just completely. He was a very polished, effective speaker.

As I said, each person has a different technique or working method. I was never able to work very much with Ben Branch. Ben Branch had a secretary, Gertrude Welker, who was a crackerjack. When he would give a speech, he would talk to Gertrude and she would draft it for him. I only worked with Ben Branch on quite formal occasions, when he was chairman of the board and presiding over the annual meeting of the stockholders or when he was presenting testimony to a Congressional committee or some extremely formal situation where he wanted to literally read what he was going to say. Otherwise, he worked with Gertrude, which was fine. I had enough business without him.

Every one of them worked in a little different fashion. I think the secret of being successful at it was being able to adapt to that person's working preferences. It also helps to be a good chameleon. What I always did with somebody that I was going to try to write speeches for was to study things they had written, letters they'd written, or whatever, anything that I could get hold of, to study how they put words together, what kind of phraseology they used, what sort of thing they liked to do. Some speakers insist on starting out with a joke. Others feel they cannot tell jokes and don't want ever to have a joke. You had to fit it to the particular individual.

BOHNING: Who would you say was the easiest to work with and who was the most difficult to work with?

BRANDT: Probably the easiest for me, because I worked with him for so long, was Carl Gerstacker. Over a period of time, I was able to put speeches together for Carl that sounded more like Carl than if Carl had written them. Who was the most difficult? Well, I've mentioned Ted Doan. That was always difficult because you were always doing it over. Herbert Dow was kind of difficult to write for. There were some people that I really couldn't write for. I tried writing for Paul Oreffice, for example. That didn't work out worth a dime. Paul has a different style entirely, in that he is most affective when he has an outline just of the points he wants to make and gets up and speaks extemporaneously, which is what he prefers to do. He refuses to be tied to a text except on very rare occasions. Paul was very, very difficult to work with. I really didn't work very much with him in the speech writing area. A person like [Robert] Lundeen was a delight to work with in speech writing. I guess during a given period I probably worked with the great majority of the members of the board of directors at one time or another. That was really a little bit later though, when my title changed to director of business communications.

During the period when I was public relations director, there were all these things going on, such as the global reorganization. That meant that the public relations function had to be reorganized globally, and that you had to set up public relations functions in Europe and Latin America, etc. That was a whale of a piece of work, hiring new people, hiring new agencies in countries where Dow was going in.

One of the big battles that I handled is the battle with the advertising department and establishing the peace between public relations and advertising. That's a whole separate chapter, but it was going on at the same time. On top of all this, that was when the napalm ruckus began, in the fall of 1965, a few months after I had taken over. Over the next three years there were two hundred and twenty-six major campus disturbances over napalm. That was such a time-consuming thing that I had really no time to do anything else. I would be working twenty hours a day during that time. It was an extraordinary time.

About 1970, my role had begun very rapidly to change. I worked so closely with the Gerstackers and the Doans and the Branches that I had almost no time to devote to the nitty-gritty of running a department. There was something like a hundred and twenty-five people in the department by then, and it needed a lot of attention. I really reached a kind of a crossroads in my career, where I had to decide whether I was going to be a manager or a specialist. I couldn't be both. That really came to a head in 1970, when Ted Doan stepped down as president. At that point Gerstacker and Branch kind of split up the executive duties. Carl became Mr. Outside for the company and Ben Branch became Mr. Inside. The outside world barely knew that Ben Branch existed. I think that most of the outside world thought that Carl Gerstacker was the CEO, and of course, he had the title of chairman. Carl began going around and giving so many speeches on so many different subjects that he really needed a full-time speech writer. I became that speech writer and we began to talk about whether I could properly do both. It was obvious that I couldn't. I remember when he said, "You need a new title. Your job's changed. You need a new title. What do you think your title ought to be?" After thinking about it a little bit I said, "Gee, I know a couple of other people who do very similar kinds of things and their title is assistant to the chairman. How would that be?" Carl said, "Well, there are a couple things wrong with that. One is that Dow doesn't use that 'assistant to the' kind of title, and I don't want to try to get that started. The second thing is that I won't be the chairman forever and if you get that kind of title, you sort of belong to whoever's the chairman." So he said, "Pick yourself out a title, I don't really care what it is, and that's the title we'll give you." That's where this title of director of business communications came from. I went home over the weekend and put down all kinds of titles. I had no idea what I should call myself, but I had free rein in what I would call myself, so long as it was not assistant to the chairman, which was what I was actually doing.

BOHNING: Before we go on to that 1970 period, there are a couple of things I'd like to discuss. Can you go back and say a little bit more about your involvement in the napalm demonstrations and the obvious input that your department would have had to have dealing with the press and the media, counteracting what was going on, if such was possible.

BRANDT: I don't think that any company has ever been hit with anything quite like the napalm demonstrations, in the sense that there was no pattern for what you were going to do. Up to that point, Dow had been a fairly obscure Midwestern chemical company. We had done a public opinion survey just before they began, which showed that thirty-eight percent of the general public was aware that there was a Dow Chemical Company and the other sixty-two percent never heard of a Dow Chemical. Within the next three years, that familiarity figure had gone up to about ninety-three or ninety-four percent, primarily because of those napalm demonstrations, which were in the news day after day. That is about the same level of familiarity as the number of people who can tell you who is the president. During those three years Dow suddenly became a national name.

We became the target of the anti-Vietnam War protesters. We were here and not over in Asia. The protesters needed somebody they could attack here, not in Vietnam. They seized upon the Dow recruiter going around to the campus doing his recruiting as someone they could get to, and their focus was on the college campuses anyway. The napalm being used in Vietnam tied it all into a package for them. That was chiefly the SDS, the Students for a Democratic Society. The best information I could ever get was that that was decided at a meeting over in Port Huron, Michigan headed up by Tom Hayden, who was then the editor of the *Michigan Daily* and who later married Jane Fonda. They issued something called the Port Huron Statement, apparently deciding that these protest groups should focus in the way I've described. These things began to happen on campuses, and as I said, before it was over the next three school years there were two hundred and twenty-six major ruckuses. Sometimes there were riots where people would be injured, and in some isolated cases, such as Wisconsin, there were people actually killed. Their target was the Dow recruiter. We as a public relations function decided that what was going to be one measure of success was whether they were able to disrupt or prevent the work of the Dow recruiter. We and Dow people should get involved in these campus events and try to explain what the position of the company was. We had to select our situation.

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BRANDT: There were a lot of situations. In fact, the problem was that in the majority of them it was going to be just useless to talk to them. There was such violent feeling against the Vietnam War on the part of college administrators and faculty people that in most cases it was a mistake to try. The emotion thing had just completely obscured the facts of the case. We put together a press kit which we sent out to newspapers and to the campus and anyplace where we had an indication that there was going to be this kind of activity. We used a lot of them, because they set forth the company position and gave the last annual report and provided our position statements on napalm and all the information that we thought these people would need, to know what our position was on the whole thing. In a great many situations where we thought we could do some good, we would actually send a public relations person to that campus to deal

with the media, the school authorities, etc. That was a very adventuresome kind of time.

I was back at headquarters in Midland most of that time, deploying my troops, so to speak, and deciding to which situations we were going to send people, if we were going to send people, and just what we expected from the situation. I didn't do much of it because I'm not a good public speaker, but occasionally I went out when there was no one else. (laughter] During that entire period there was literally no time to do anything else. As I said, I might be working twenty hours a day. We were kind of at the storm center. For example, we began a Dow internal publication which we called *Napalm News*. This was circulated to a list of the Dow people that needed to know what was going on in this particular area, not to employees at large, but to probably fifty top managers and people who were involved in the situation. This publication which we called *Napalm News* gave a run-down of where we were expecting riots, what we were doing about it, who was going to be where, and giving reports of what had happened at the last situation. It was just a running account of this battle. It's one of the more unusual company publications that I know of, but it did the job that we wanted it to do.

BOHNING: Was the company employing any kind of unusual contacts for its sources of information?

BRANDT: No. We depended mostly on the recruiters. On the whole, the Dow recruiters were pretty well-acquainted with campus situations. They had their contacts on campus and we didn't need to do any special thing. Usually the recruiter was an anonymous enough person that the average student would not know the Dow recruiter from anybody else. That worked very much in our favor because the Dow recruiter could walk across campus and nobody would have the slightest idea who he was. There were a lot of efforts to track down that recruiter by various student groups. Many of our recruiters would sign in at a motel or wherever under the name of Robert Miller if they thought that the people on campus had got wind of who the recruiter was coming to that particular campus. So we had a lot of Robert Millers going around. That was the usual name that they gave. This was very often a matter of self-protection, because these people wanted to corner that recruiter, throw him out a window, or whatever. They were held prisoner. There were many cases where they had to go out a window or almost literally run for their lives. Amazingly, no one got injured. I've been amazed by that. Also, the recruitment schedule was never seriously disrupted. We never had a case where a recruiter was not able to go ahead and do his business. That's pretty amazing, too.

Of course, this was around the world. In Frankfurt, Germany there was a bomb thrown in the Dow building. There was a group that marched on our office in Sydney, Australia. In London, England, a radical group somehow got hold of the Dow personnel list in the London office, and they undertook a campaign to try to get Dow's employees in that office to defect. I guess that is the best word. They tried to get them to resign from Dow, issuing some kind of public statement that they did so in opposition to the use of napalm and in opposition to the Vietnam War. They apparently had teams assigned to a particular individual who would track down that Dow individual and try to persuade him or her to do that. It's fantastic to remember

that not one of them did it. Not one of them! Some of the things that happened I'm still amazed at today. Particularly that there were no Dow people killed or injured.

We got into some crazy situations. We tried to pick situations to present our views where we felt people would seriously listen to what we had to say. I went over once to Madison, Wisconsin to the University of Wisconsin, which had been a hotbed of that kind of activity. I was invited to speak to the Madison Press Club, which I thought would be a pretty good thing. I got over there and discovered that the building where the press club met had some work being done on the driveway. There was a large pile of rocky gravel sitting there, a made-to-order source of ammunition for protesters, and there were pickets walking up and down in front of the press club. It turned out they were picketing me because I was going to speak to the Madison Press Club. The president of the press club thought this was a great situation. We're inside having a drink, looking out at these pickets walking up and down. He proceeded to get roaring drunk, and he's supposed to be running the thing. Every once in a while he would go out and talk to the pickets. On one of those trips he came back and told me that he had arranged a debate. I said, "What? I didn't agree to any debate." He said, "Well, with these pickets here, it turns out they're led by this guy who wants to debate you." [laughter] "I thought that would be a very interesting event. So that's what we're going to do. We're going to eat and then he'll come in and you can speak and he can speak." This was exactly the situation I didn't want to get into.

It gradually got worse because he got drunker and drunker. He decided he was going to put the picket leader on the program first. He would make his statement first and then I could rebut. This kid was a socialist who later became the first socialist mayor of Madison, Wisconsin. I've forgotten his name. He was a bright, articulate young man. He got up to deliver his statement and he just went on and on and on and on. I thought the arrangement was that he was going to speak twenty minutes and then I'd speak twenty minutes, but he went on and on and on and on. It was obvious that he loved this platform and he was not going to give it up until they threw him out of there. After he had been speaking maybe three quarters of an hour, some of the press people in the audience (and the place was full) began to yell, "When are we going to hear the other guy?" [laughter] "This guy has spoken long enough." The president of the club is sitting there, incapable of doing anything at this point. It was a terrible situation. These pickets are out there yelling away. I finally got up and gave my statement. As I was finishing my statement, this fellow looking rather official came up to me and said, "Can I see you over here a minute? I'm the sheriff of this county and I'm going to take you out the back door. We have a car waiting for you there because I can no longer guarantee your safety." So the sheriff whips me out the back door and we jump in this car that they've got pulled up and we take off like a bird and leave the whole situation. That was the kind of thing that we got into.

BOHNING: When did the Agent Orange flack come? Is that a little later?

BRANDT: That was a little bit later. They kind of overlapped because napalm went on for years and then Agent Orange came up and that went on and on. It's still going on twenty years

later. I don't know what to say about Agent Orange. That was quite a different kind of thing and it was fought more at the government level and the area of government regulations. It was not as time consuming because it was done with government and not with real live students on campuses.

The one that came in the middle was mercury in the Great Lakes, which was the second one that came up. That was quite a big thing for a year or two. I had an interesting experience with that because Ben Branch got involved and decided he was going to be the Dow spokesperson on the mercury thing. He was then the chief executive. He asked me to write his testimony. We were invited by Senator Hart to state our case. Senator Philip Hart was chairman of the Senate Committee on the Environment or some such committee. In that case there were probably twenty to twenty-four attorneys involved. Mostly it was an attorney thing, a legal matter. There were the attorneys on the U.S. side and on the Canadian side because the particular case happened at Sarnia, Ontario, where Dow was accused of leaking mercury that was being taken up in the fish stream and because of it they had banned any more fishing in the Great Lakes. There were attorneys for all the insurance people on both the Canadian side and the U.S. side, any of the insurance companies that might be affected by whatever judgment was made. There were suits from the fishing interests. I was assigned to write Ben Branch's official testimony. Every morning I would meet with these two dozen attorneys in a conference room at Dow. These attorneys would discuss what ought to be in the statement. At the end of the day I would then go away and put together what I thought I had heard from the attorneys. The next morning we would meet with the attorneys again, pass out what I had written, and the attorneys would have at this statement. They would take it apart and put it back together and tell me this ought to be in, this ought to be out. Largely, they didn't agree among themselves. That kind of situation seemed to go on forever. It was probably two to three weeks, but we did that every day, trying to get all these attorneys to agree on what testimony ought to be made. This was going to then be the key statement, as far as Dow was concerned, in all these suits that were pending. Every day there would be about two dozen attorneys and me [laughter] in this room. I'm surprised I had any attorney friends left. That was an experience. It was an experience working with Ben Branch because off and on I'd have to present this to him and persuade him that this was really what he was going to have to say. It had to be said this way, not some other way. He'd have to read this *precisely* as the lawyers had agreed it ought to be said. It was an interesting experience.

BOHNING: The other thing that occurred before 1970 was *The Dow Story*. You worked with Don Whitehead on that book.

BRANDT: Yes, that was initiated in a discussion between Ted Doan and myself. I think it was in that early period when we were talking about the objectives of the company after Ted had become president. The original project was for that to be published in 1972 for the seventy-fifth or diamond anniversary of the company. I think we decided to start in 1967. I became kind of the key guy in putting that together, in picking Don Whitehead to do it in the first place, or at least nominating him and then working with him through the whole thing. I became very close

friends with Don and his wife Marie to the point where the book is dedicated to me and my wife. Don Whitehead was a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner. When he became available to do this I was just delighted because I didn't know of a better writer. If we had picked somebody else I would have been crushed because we looked at a number of different writers. He had fallen ill and was recovering and was in the market for a job and didn't want to go back into the daily newspaper grind. He had done the book, *The FBI Story*, which had a great deal of success and was the basis of a TV program. We were very lucky to get him. He thought he was going to do the whole thing in a year and it actually took him at least a year and a half. He thought he was going to do the research for a few months and then write it and have the whole thing finished in a year.

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BRANDT: I went through the entire process with him. He had an office across the hall from mine and I had a first-hand look at how a pro would go at this. A pro, a Pulitzer Prize winner, and a tremendous researcher. I was very impressed with the way he went at his research and at the way he involved his wife, who came with him, in the research. We had people who would bring him documents every day, whatever he asked for, and he would study them and would then make notes. Part of that research was that he would list things that he wanted his wife to look up. She was the research part of it, and she would be going to the Midland Library, to the reference staff, looking up various things that were largely relevant to the period that he was writing about. He wanted to put this in context. If he was writing about 1910, he wanted to know what was going on in 1910 in this field and the other field, so that the thing had a context to it. This is what his wife was doing.

BOHNING: Well, we have worked our way to 1970, when you constructed the title of director of business communications. Do have something else in your notes up to that time that you wanted to cover?

BRANDT: One thing that I wanted to add there was that I began to be involved in all kinds of professional organizations and even political organizations. This was primarily because in Midland, Michigan it was virtually impossible to keep up with the public relations situation and the development of public relations, which was a young, dynamic, growing kind of function in companies. I began to be more and more active in national organizations of public relations people. One was the Chemical Manufacturers Association, and I was the Dow representative on its public relations committee for that period. A million years. That was a kind of a key effort in my mind because a convoy only goes as fast as the slowest ship and there were some awfully slow ships in the chemical business in catching up with environmental matters and other matters of public concern about the chemical industry. So working in the CMA was quite important to me.

I got involved in an organization called the Golden Workshop. As a matter of fact, I was one of the founding members. This was an organization that met about three times a year in New York, and it involved the public relations directors of blue chip companies. We would get together, usually just for one day in New York, to talk about common problems and what sort of solutions other companies were developing for these public relations problems that would come up. This ranged all over the lot from contributions programs to working with public television to all the sorts of things that were developing at that period. There were only about twenty of us involved, but this would be people like the public relations directors at Exxon and du Pont and IBM and GE, some of your blue chip companies. We would basically get together to compare notes on, "What are you doing about this problem? How do you see that problem?" That was extremely valuable to me in being able to compare notes with other top companies and how they were dealing with all these problems that kept coming up through this period of time.

I became very active in an organization called the Public Relations Seminar, which is an organization of corporate public relations directors. It has annual usually three-day seminars in public relations problems. The invitation to that was by individuals. That is, you were invited as an individual, not as a company. I was active in that for probably twenty-five or thirty years. I went through all the chairs in these organizations, including chairman.

One that I noted was CREEP. I got active in Richard Nixon's re-election campaign in 1972, the Committee to Re-elect the President. My wife still hasn't forgiven me for that, but this was before Watergate, or actually it was just at the time Watergate had occurred. (I was interested in the newspaper yesterday to notice that today is the twentieth anniversary of the Watergate break-in.) The way that was set up, they organized committees from what were considered to be critical states, the swing states, of which Michigan was one. I was the representative from outstate Michigan. I think there were two representatives from Michigan, which was one of the swing states. We went down to Washington. This is twenty years ago. Our task was to give Richard Nixon advice on getting re-elected. To my astonishment, they actually accepted some of my advice. During that 1972 campaign, Nixon actually made a stop out here at the Tri-City Airport. I had advised him that he didn't really need to spend a lot of time but he really should make some kind of brief stop here. I remember that busing was a big issue in that campaign. I sat down and wrote some advice on what stand he ought to take on busing. When he issued his position statement on busing I thought I recognized some of the language and I was completely dumfounded. Of course, he won in a landslide that year. When we went down to Washington, the meeting was supposed to be chaired by Jeb Magruder. When we got there, Jeb Magruder was nowhere to be seen and there was no very good excuse for his not being there. (He turned out to be one of the key Watergate figures.) But Senator Bob Dole was wheeled in and became the chairman. He was a very gracious and effective chairman for that meeting.

I became a member of an organization called The Wise Men, which met once a month in New York. This was a dinner meeting at which some eminent speaker would come in and speak to a small group. We were usually twenty to thirty members. Those were some interesting meetings. I got involved in something called the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education, in which I was interested. This was an organization involved basically

in doing research on what is public relations and how should public relations people behave, what is the science of the thing or the basis. I went through all the chairs on that, and became president of that foundation in New York. Generally, what I'm saying is I got involved in all of these organizations because of this feeling of some isolation in Midland for a rather specialized activity such as public relations. I don't think that in other functions of the company, law or marketing or whatever, there was anything like the same kind of need for that. But there was so much change and development and it was such a dynamic field at the time that I felt very strongly the need for that.

BOHNING: That must have meant that you did a lot of traveling then.

BRANDT: I was doing a lot of traveling anyway. At various times I had operations reporting to me in California and New York and other places. I was responsible for a lot of those kind of branch operations. It was the kind of job where you could spend a hundred and twenty percent of your time traveling. I tried to keep it to a modest amount. I was doing a lot of traveling during the period of 1970 onward with Carl when he would go give talks and he might occasionally go on a speaking tour. I even went to Japan with Carl. He became the chairman of the U.S. Japan Industry Council, which was set up to promote harmony between the U.S. and Japan industry.

There were a couple of challenging cases in 1975. We had a major problem down in Chile. That was when General [Augusto] Pinochet had taken over. Dow had a major presence in Chile and had built a plastics plant down there to serve the southern core of South America. Human rights became a major theme of the Carter administration, particularly of its foreign policy. There was a lot of pressure on various companies not to do business in countries that were flagrantly violating human rights. Dow was under some pressure to get out of Chile for that reason. The Dow board decided that someone ought to be sent down there to look specifically at human rights and make a recommendation on what action Dow ought to take or not take in that case. I was delegated to be the human rights investigator for Chile. I had never been in Chile, and Chile was a fascinating experience.

The Dow Latin America people arranged interviews with all kinds of big wheels, government people, newspaper people, foreign correspondents, university people. I went down and looked into all this. I talked to all these people, and whenever you mentioned human rights to them, they would look at you rather peculiarly. We came to the conclusion that Pinochet was such an improvement over [Salvador] Allende that there was really no comparison. Although he was in many ways unsavory, his record in human rights was on the whole pretty good, certainly vastly improved over what it had been under Allende. Dow therefore opted to stay in Chile.

That was an interesting period because those insurrections were still going on. I talked to some of the people whose relatives had disappeared. There were some cases where we would go to obscure buildings by roundabout routes and meet someone who had been a former

minister in the government. There was some cloak and dagger element to it. I was convinced that we had very good information about the situation, probably as good as we could have had in an extensive investigation, possibly better. Dow had some armored cars, because executives of American companies were being kidnaped or assassinated. Dow did not have a large number, and they were mostly for the country managers. It is a car that was specially equipped so that it looked like just an ordinary car, but it was actually armor plated underneath. I really felt fortunate in being asked to do that. To me, that was really a privilege. I felt very honored to be asked to do that. That trip led in a way to my getting involved in South Africa as well.

That was another case where there was the anti-apartheid protest, and where the company had to take a position, even though our operation in South Africa was pretty small. I gradually became very much involved in South Africa and for probably ten years I would go down to South Africa about once a year. It became my job to set up the program for Dow in South Africa outside of the marketing and manufacturing, the external affairs program, if you will. One of the first things that I did down there was to recommend that Dow adopt a school. We adopted a high school in Soweto. That was a very rewarding experience. I'd usually go back to that school when I was back in South Africa and see what progress they were making. Once we had a book collection in Midland and collected all kinds of books that could be used by a South African school. We collected something like twenty-five thousand books. It was an enormous quantity that had to be shipped by boat. For months we followed where this shipment of books was. (It was more than twenty-five thousand, but I've forgotten the numbers.) Then the government refused them permission to use the books until they had been viewed by an inspector from the ministry of education, who never showed up. He finally showed up one day when the only person in the school was a young black apprentice teacher who was absolutely terrified in encountering a full inspector from Pretoria who asked to see the books.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 11]

BRANDT: The inspector spent a long time looking at the books, and finally came out in triumph, producing a book in which the word "darkie" was used. He said, "You see, we have to turn this down. We can't possibly put this kind of material in the hands of young black students." We had a long distance fight about it because it had taken us considerable effort to get this enormous shipment of books all the way from Midland, Michigan to Soweto, South Africa. Over the years we put a lot of money into that school. It was the Phefeni School. It was really heart warming to go down there and see the progress they were making. The first time I saw it most of the floors in the school were dirt floors. The first time they showed me their library it was a bookshelf with maybe a couple dozen books. That was their entire school library. Our country manager in South Africa, a Frenchman, Jacques Honorê, took over that situation, became a board member of the school, and spent a lot of weekends out there. He was a great gardener. He would go out there on a Saturday with plants and try to teach these people in Soweto that they could grow things even in this terrible soil in Soweto if they took the proper care of them.

I also got involved in the association of American companies that were dealing in South Africa. I became chairman of the publicity/public affairs section which had to do with putting out various literature pieces on what the American companies were doing in South Africa. I was quite active in that for several years.

Eventually, Dow had to pull out of South Africa like everyone else. Unwillingly. I think it was 1986 that we pulled out. From Dow's viewpoint, because of the napalm ruckus and because Dow had become a favorite target for anybody who wanted to protest about anything (as Ted Doan says, "It looks so neat on a picket sign. Dow. A nice short name."), we knew that if we stayed in South Africa we ran a very high risk of becoming a focal point for the anti-apartheid protesters. That was kind of a sorry situation because we were working as hard against apartheid as anyone. I felt that the American companies were the only force in South Africa that were doing an effective job of preparing the blacks for economic and social responsibility. The American companies were paying the blacks well, training the blacks, promoting the blacks, which was not being done by the South African companies or for that matter, the companies from other countries, which didn't have any of those same social concerns that the American companies reflected. That was an interesting job. I've had some very privileged kinds of positions in my career.

We've kind of glossed over the Zoltan [Merszei] era. [laughter] Did you not want to talk about that?

BOHNING: Oh, yes!

BRANDT: Zoltan is a marvelous person. His public relations director was a person who--I don't know how to put this. His name was Mark Batterson, a very talented, able guy, but without a very pronounced sense of ethics. In the 1958 ten percent cut that I referred to, he was, at that time, the Dow public relations manager in the Dow Chemical Company: Western Division, in California. He was about the first person to be fired by the Dow Chemical Company: Western Division manager when that 1958 cutback occurred. I told Bud Smith that he was one of the most talented guys we had in the organization, and that we shouldn't lose him. So we brought him back to Midland. We rescued him from the West, and that meant we had to let go of somebody else. On a talent level he was very high. He eventually became Zoltan's chief public relations officer in Europe, and a very good one. He had a relationship with Zoltan that was so close. I don't know how to describe it. They had sort of a tacit agreement that they would make excuses for each other.

When Zoltan came to Midland to be the chief executive of Dow in 1976, he brought Mark Batterson with him. Mark almost immediately transplanted those things that he had been doing in Europe to Midland and began to develop a serious amount of dislike among a lot of people. He would go to anyone in the company, like the board of directors, and tell them that Zoltan wanted such-and-such or wanted such-and-such done. Very often this was not the case, but he had Zoltan's ear in such a way that if the person questioned it or went and asked Zoltan,

Mark would get to Zoltan first and say, "By the way, this is what's happening and you may get questioned about it." It was generally known that he was doing this. He was really running his own show on the basis of his relationship with Zoltan.

He had turned out not to be a friend of mine in the sense that I discovered him saying nasty things to members of the board or whoever about almost anything I did. It made a very difficult situation for me. I think almost everyone knew what he was doing and that he was getting away with it during the period that Zoltan was the chief executive. He was sort of Zoltan's alter ego. What had happened is that Carl Gerstacker had stepped down as chairman. In 1976, Ben Branch became the chairman and Zoltan moved in as president and CEO. My situation had changed radically. As Carl Gerstacker left, I began reporting to Herb Dow, and Herb Dow became my boss. I think he may have been my boss for one thing or another before that.

BOHNING: What was Herb Dow's position in the company?

BRANDT: He was the corporate secretary and a long-time friend, socially and otherwise. That was really the nadir of my Dow career. It was the only time in my career that I had seriously thought about going somewhere else. I actually went out and looked for opportunities because I had a lot of friends in various places. I remember that they were looking for a speech writer for Elliott Richardson in Washington, who was the attorney general. I seriously considered that. There was an insurance company in Chicago that wanted a vice president of communications. If I had really seriously taken it up, I would have had no trouble finding a job. I was then fifty-four, so I was really at a point where if I were going to move it was going to be for the rest of my career. I wasn't sure I wanted to move. I loved the company and I loved Midland. I didn't really want to move. And I began to get the feeling that this was not going to go on forever. I was seeing things go on that were unlike the company that I knew, that were different and strange. So I decided I was just going to sit tight. I'm glad I did. But that was really the bottom of my career. I guess if I'd had a shorter fuse I probably would have gone somewhere else.

BOHNING: Did you have to work with Batterson in any capacity, or were your two functions separate?

BRANDT: Much earlier we did. When he came to Midland that was the time it was set up that I would report to Herb Dow. That was a totally separate line. I became sort of generally available to board members or whoever for speech writing at that time and for whatever kind of assignments. Bob Lundeen got involved in the education field, and I worked with him some on that. Things like that. I was sort of generally available, but working with the members of the board of directors. But I was not in the line of fire with Batterson. I knew better than to get into the line of fire.

BOHNING: Were you involved at all in any of those events that subsequently led to Zoltan's departure?

BRANDT: Only in a fringe kind of way. I knew there were a lot of meetings going on, and there were a lot of meetings going on in strange places. I dropped in to see Carl Gerstacker one day and there was a meeting going on there and there were board of directors members there. "Gee, this is odd." Carl ducked out and told me that he was sorry but he had this going on and couldn't do anything. I thought this was odd because Carl was no longer the board chairman. But the situation was such that Carl and Ted Doan and Ben sort of picked up the mantle of leadership again, even though they were no longer officially to do that, and got very much involved in the situation. I knew all that was going on and I heard bits and pieces. I knew that something was happening; I didn't know what it was. The day that Zoltan left, Mark Batterson was told that he could clean out his desk and leave before that day was out, and he did. There were too many people that knew about those shenanigans of his, and were fed up with it.

BOHNING: What kept you hanging in there through that period? Was it the idea that it wasn't going to last, as you said?

BRANDT: I gradually came to the conclusion that it was not going to last. I felt that I was in danger of becoming a corporate gypsy. I knew too many people, especially in the public relations field, who would get on a sort of circuit. They would be the communications vice president of company X and they would only do that until they got some better offer. Then they would go be a similar title at some other company. I didn't feel that I was cut out to do that kind of thing. I think the offer that I had with Elliott Richardson, looking back on it, I'm not sure how long that would have lasted. It may have lasted less than a year. It might have been a very high-paying year and it might have led to some other kind of situation, but I've seen too many people who got into that circuit. As I said, I was then fifty-four. I was in no danger, at least I didn't think I was, of being fired. I'd been around long enough to know how to handle that kind of situation. I had all kinds of things and activities here, and it was very uncomfortable, but it was not unlivable. Carl Gerstacker and I had become very close over the years. It's almost a father-son or brother kind of relationship. At any time I could go talk to Carl and say, "What do you think?" So I decided to stick it out. As it turned out it only lasted two years. It seemed like a long time at the time.

BOHNING: Zoltan departed in 1978. With the simultaneous departure of Batterson, did that change things for you? Did you have different functions from that point? You said you no longer had to write speeches for Carl.

BRANDT: As the dust settled, the public relations group was over in one building and I was

over in the headquarters building with Herb Dow. When Oreffice took over in 1978, one of the first things that he did was to bring in Keith McKennon. Keith McKennon worked very closely with Oreffice, and became vice president of public affairs, appointed by Oreffice. McKennon set up his office to be close to Oreffice. I was then occupying the office next to Keith McKennon. Almost overnight I became again sort of at the center of things, and got to be very friendly with McKennon. We would talk daily about the public affairs problems of the company. I think that was useful to him and I know it was useful to me. He suddenly became in charge of all of these Agent Orange problems and the problem we had with Consumers on that power plant. All these nagging public problems became his bailiwick. I was quite pleased and in a funny kind of way proud when McKennon was drafted into Dow Corning a few months ago. When this breast implant problem came up with Dow Corning and there began to be real problems whether Dow Corning was going to go under, with the weight of all these megabucks suits, what they did was to pull in Keith McKennon to get them out of this situation. He is now the chief executive of Dow Corning. I thought, "He must have picked up something from those conversations we used to have in his office during that period."

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 12]

BRANDT: Keith decided that my title should be changed and so they made me senior counselor of public affairs. This title of senior counselor was being given to not very many people, but people who had a long service of some merit in a particular field. It was quite an honor for McKennon and the company to give the title of senior counselor, as the title is understood in Dow. McKennon began to tell me I that should be doing more to pass on the things that I knew to some of the younger people. For example, I set up a course in speech writing and taught corporate speech writing. We sent out a little flier asking whether people would be interested in such a course and amazingly thirty-five or forty people were interested and took the course. It turned out there were that many people who were called upon from time to time or regularly to write some kind of remarks or speeches for their bosses. So Keith McKennon had me doing that kind of thing to pass on to succeeding generations any knowledge that I had.

Another thing that we got into was what we called the TV Hot Box. That grew out of a suggestion from Carl Gerstacker, who saw some Dow executive out there on television. I think it was on a local level. He was asked about something that had happened and just proceeded to butcher it terribly and obviously didn't know how to conduct himself on television at all. Carl said, "We ought to be teaching these people how to handle themselves on TV. When you get on TV you've got to understand what the rules are and how to do it." So this led to the development of what we called the TV Hot Box. That involved putting Dow executives in front of the TV camera. We had a panel of people who would ask them questions about their particular specialty or area of activity. They would ask them the outrageous kinds of questions that TV people ask. We would videotape this for half an hour and then we would have this person sit there while this was replayed. We would show them where they had gone astray and how if they said thus and so they opened up a new line of questioning which led them into trouble. We told them what they did well, what they did poorly, where they made mistakes.

We gave them a copy of the tape and asked them to look at it once in a while. "See if you're improving and get some practice as often as you can." We began to do that with every Dow executive who was likely to get in front of a TV camera anywhere, or for that matter, make a public appearance on behalf of the company. I was the panel moderator for that project for just about the entire length of its existence, which was maybe ten years. Every week we would have a Dow executive or two in and put them through that kind of a meat grinder. We purposely gave them weird questions, just to see how they would handle them. I think that was a pretty effective program. We had people come and ask us if they could have this training. We had political candidates, for instance, who had no TV exposure. They would say, "Would you put me through that?"

I have to mention the history function. It actually goes back to 1973. In 1973, Dow, in one of the court suits involving 2,4,5-T, was given by the judge what is called a discovery order. A discovery order means that the company is ordered by the court to produce every piece of paper in its possession on that particular subject. With the length of time that Dow had been in 2,4,5-T business around the world, Dow had to institute a search in every one of its offices, plants, etc. , in every one of its files anywhere in the world. It had to train a set of people who for months on end, years as it turned out, did nothing but go through files looking for material on 2,4,5-T. They might spend this month in, say, Peru with this crew of maybe fifteen or sixteen people going through every Dow file in Peru. Maybe next month they're going to Bolivia. They had to systematically train these people, then move them all over. The report came back to the Dow board after a few months that the cost of this had now reached seven and a half million dollars in the first six months. They had made such and such progress in complying with this discovery order. The Dow board just blew its top, because it was obvious that this one court order was going to cost millions of bucks and take all kinds of time. They were producing these stacks and stacks of paper which no lawyer was ever going to be able to go through for years. The board decided what they needed was to eliminate every possible piece of paper on whatever subject. If it was not current business, it's out. They set up a department, the records retention program, to effect this program. When they passed this resolution adopting that position in October of 1973, to make sure that it would be enforced, they specified that the company would keep no historical records, so that there would be no loopholes. People couldn't say, "Oh, those are historical records. May I keep those?"

In 1973 I was protesting, jumping up and down and saying, "That's awful. We're throwing out our history. We're throwing out the baby with the bath water." One of the reasons I went to work with Herb Dow a few years later was that I worked with Herb on rescuing some of these historical records. As the corporate secretary he was very much involved in that. We set up this sort of underground system for rescuing the corporate historical records, beginning in 1973. Any records that were going to be pitched out that I was sure would be historical, we had this arrangement whereby we would put them over in the basement of what they called the Garden House, the headquarters of the Dow Gardens which belonged to Herb Dow. Over the ensuing years we gradually began to fill up this basement with records. It was in 1983 that I went to McKennon and said, "I need a kind of a license to do this more or less officially. " That resulted in my being named the company historian in 1983. Officially I've had some role in it since then, but that was the beginning of the Dow archives in the historical program.

BOHNING: How did you get away with taking things from the company and putting them in the Dow Gardens basement?

BRANDT: Just by doing it without letting anyone know. With Herb Dow's cooperation. Nobody was going to get into a fight with Herb Dow over whether a piece of paper went to the burner or to his basement. We never made a big issue out of anything. And we were just doing it quietly behind the scenes. There was never anything official that we were even doing it until 1983. But that's why great volumes of historical records were pitched out between 1973 and 1983.

BOHNING: Since 1983, what arrangement do you have with the company in terms of obtaining company records?

BRANDT: We now have a working relationship. Legally there is no longer a problem because we've made it clear that the records that are held here are not the property of The Dow Chemical Company. They are the property of the Dow Foundation. The legal problem is with materials that belong to the company, not with materials that belong to the Foundation. In 1983 I became the company historian of a company that doesn't keep historical records. I had to figure out some way to do this. The way that I figured out might not have been the best way, but it's worked so far. That is that the Dow Foundation is the holder of the records. We're in compliance with the wishes of the Dow board as expressed in October 1973, but on the other hand we have the historical records which we felt the company needed. It's kind of a funny thing because all this went back to the legal department and its requirements and the court orders and so forth and so on. Nowadays, when a suit is filed against the company, I discovered that one of the first things they do is that the legal department sends a couple of paralegals over here to the archives to do a little historical research on whatever the suit is about. [laughter]

BOHNING: Sweet irony. How did the Dow Foundation become involved? Did you go after them? You had been working with Herb Dow.

BRANDT: Kind of accidentally. When Herb and I looked for a place to put these records back in 1973, the only easy place we could figure out was the basement of the Garden House, which was a pretty scruffy place. You wouldn't ask anybody to work down there. But it belonged to Herb, or to the Foundation, it was handy, and so that was where we began to put the records. It was accidental that that was on Dow Foundation property. When we decided that we really needed an official archives, one of the possibilities that came up was this school building, this old Post Street School which also is the property of the Dow Foundation. It came up because it was being used by the local artists as a place for their artistic activities. This is where all the

plastic molders and potters and weavers and metal sculptors, all those artists that made messes, came to do their art work. It was rented to them as a group by Alden Dow for a dollar a year. After the Midland Center for the Arts opened, they began to drift away from here and to move over to the Center for the Arts, which was a much, much finer facility. This place gradually became disused, and so we got the idea of using it for the archives because it belonged to the Dow Foundation. We were able to persuade them that they ought to foot the bill for remodeling it as an archives. We began active work on that in early 1986 when I took formal retirement from the company and moved in here September 1987. It's turned out to be just a terrific archives. It happened rather oddly, but I owe a great deal to the cooperation and financial support of the Dow Foundation in being able to do this. I don't know any archives that has been set up quite like this. It's partially supported by the company and partially supported by the Foundation. It's not on company property, but it's quite accessible from the company.

BOHNING: So the company is making a contribution?

BRANDT: Yes.

BOHNING: I wasn't aware of that. And you're still officially the company historian?

BRANDT: Yes. In theory the expenses are split about fifty-fifty between the company and the Foundation. The Foundation takes care of all the building expenses, the heat, lights, lawn mowing, paint, whatever. The company gets more into the personnel costs.

BOHNING: From 1981 on you've been more involved in history than you have been in public relations? Is that correct?

BRANDT: I would say from 1985 and really from the time I retired. When I retired I was retained by the company as a consultant for matters historical, and have been consultant to the company ever since. That's a part-time thing, but enables me to keep running the archives, which is not really a full-time job. Up until the time I retired I was doing many other things. It's only since I retired that I've become a more or less full-time historian.

BOHNING: What brought you to the retirement decision?

BRANDT: I had always felt that I would retire when I was sixty-five. A program was introduced called the Voluntary Transitional Initiative at the tail end of 1985 and it became effective January 31, 1986. My sixty-fifth birthday was going to be in May of 1987. That was

less than a year and a half away, and when I weighed financially the difference, it would actually have cost me money to stay on the payroll till I was sixty-five. Pretty foolish. I did not want to drop the historical thing flat, so I proposed that they make me a part-time consultant on history and I would accept the VTI. They were perfectly willing to do that.

Another thing that occurred during that late period of 1983 and 1984 was something called the Futures Initiative. This was a group that was put together to take a fresh look at Dow's attitude toward the world. Under Oreffice we had been a pretty confrontational kind of company. We were, but Paul Oreffice himself began to recognize that while you could be aggressive, belligerent, confrontational, that there were cases where this just got you in more trouble than less. This group of fourteen or fifteen people was put together to take a fresh look at Dow's general public relations attitude. I was the senior guy on that, because of my longevity, I suppose. We tried to develop some new things that Dow could do to improve its posture and its reputation and the way it was perceived. Probably the most conspicuous result of that was the Dow TV commercials that say, "Dow lets you do great things." That has been a tremendously successful program that grew out of that Futures group. There are probably a good baker's dozen of things that we recommended to the board that we'd change at that time, most of which I think were needed. Basically, the thrust of it was to make Dow more cooperative with the world at large and the protest groups that Dow had been fighting for so many years, and try to work together. You will see news items nowadays about Dow setting up committees of eminent environmental experts to counsel Dow on what it should be doing in environmental areas, even though we consider ourselves a leader. Those kinds of efforts grew out of that Futures thing. I felt pretty good about being a part of that. As it turned out, my parting shot, so to speak.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 13]

BRANDT: In that respect I should mention the name of Richard K. Long, who was the chairman of that Futures effort. Richard subsequently left Dow and is now a vice president of Weyerhaeuser. He was one of those young whippersnappers who I hired a long time ago.

BOHNING: Is there anything at this point about the company that we haven't covered that you think we should add?

BRANDT: I really don't think so. We've covered a whole bunch of things. There's probably more that we could cover, but I think we've covered all the significant points.

BOHNING: You've been involved in a lot of other activities other than the ones you've mentioned so far, and I don't know whether you want to comment about some of those. You were honored with the Brandt Professorship at MSU [Michigan State University] several years

ago.

BRANDT: That is probably the most significant honor I've ever had. As a matter of fact, that is now fully funded. It was on a five-year funding cycle, and the chair is now, as of within the last month, funded down at Michigan State. I just got a letter from John DiBiaggio, the president of Michigan State, acknowledging that and saying that they will now be undertaking a search for the Brandt Professor. They are expecting that he will be in place for the 1993-94 school year. In the next year they will be conducting a search for the Brandt Professor of Public Relations at Michigan State, which I'm very proud of. It's a big communications school, I think the second biggest in the country in terms of student body. It's a great thing to have your name associated with.

BOHNING: You've been involved historically outside of Dow with both the state historical society and the Midland County Historical Society. You were involved with the Dow museum.

BRANDT: Yes, I've been active in the Midland County Historical Society and still am. In fact, I'm the vice president at the moment. I've been on the board of the Historical Society of Michigan for half a dozen years. Those are kind of tough. For example, with the state historical society, they proposed to me a couple of years ago that I get in a position to become the president of it. I really had to turn that down. It kind of hurt to have to turn that kind of prestigious thing down, but I did. But I've not lacked for honors. I had a call from the governor's office last week and they wanted to put me on some historical commission, and I kind of hemmed and hawed about that. They want to know if the governor appointed me, would I accept? I'm not used to getting that kind of call from the governor's office, and I hemmed and hawed, and said, "Gee, I don't see how I can refuse the honor." It's nice to have that sort of thing happen when you're in the springtime of your senility.

I should probably mention my foundation activities because I've been involved in them for twenty-odd years. That got started in 1969 when the Congress passed a provision in the appropriations bill that said that private foundations would be required to tell the public about their activities. In effect what that meant was that private foundations now needed to put out some kind of annual statement of what they do and what they've provided funds for. I think the first one to ask me if I would put out that kind of a report was the Dow Foundation, since I worked with Herb Dow anyway. I began to put together, write, and publish the annual report of the Dow Foundation. There are a lot of foundations in Midland. Carl Gerstacker learned about this and asked me if I would put out the annual report of the Gerstacker Foundation. That was the second one. The Pardee Foundation, which is a local foundation devoted to cancer research, asked if I would do that for the cancer research people. All of a sudden I was doing three annual reports every year for foundations. A few years later, 1973 or 1974, the Midland Foundation was established. That's the local community foundation. At first I became the publicity chairman of it and then I went on the board and then I became the vice president of the Midland Foundation. At one point for several years, I was putting out four different foundation annual

reports every year.

I have gotten into things like the Council of Michigan Foundations and all sorts of activities of that sort through my foundation activities. In 1979 or 1980, I was invited to go on the board of the Gerstacker Foundation. Almost immediately I became the secretary of the Gerstacker Foundation and later on vice president and secretary. Roughly two days a week I become a foundation executive. I think a lot of people don't know that I'm also a foundation executive. That's a whole different kind of activity because it involves giving away money. I had always thought that giving away money was pretty easy, but it's not. I think in many ways it's harder than trying to get money.

BOHNING: As of this year, you're now involved with writing the centennial history for the company as well.

BRANDT: Yes. The first of January I began formal work on writing a centennial history of Dow to come out in 1997. That's now my biggest proposition. It's time-consuming and a very large challenge. It's a three- to five-year project and it will keep me out of mischief for the next three to five years.

BOHNING: You've also been very active with the American Red Cross.

BRANDT: I think I must have been involved with the Red Cross for probably close to thirty years. I was the publicity chairman here in Midland for something like fifteen years. I then became the chapter chairman and then went on the state board of the Red Cross and finally became chairman for the Michigan division council. So there is a long time involvement with the Red Cross.

BOHNING: You were involved with the Hall of Ideas at the Center for the Arts, which is a very unusual and interesting place.

BRANDT: I think it was 1965, between Christmas and New Year's, when I was walking down the hall and Ted Doan came out of his office. I think between Christmas and New Year's we were about the only people in the place. He stopped me and said that Alden Dow wanted to get a group of people together to talk about a core concept for this new Center for the Arts. He wanted somebody to be on it from Dow Chemical and asked if I would be the representative from Dow Chemical. I let Ted twist my arm. [laughter] I didn't know that I'd still be involved with it twenty-five years later. I thought it was actually going to be a couple of planning meetings with Alden. That's been a very interesting experience because we sat down with Alden when he was doing the architecture on the Center for the Arts. He was looking for some

kind of thing that would tie all the musical, artistic, cultural kinds of activities together. He rejected our first recommendation. Alden put together this group and met with them and then he'd turn them loose. Eventually they made up the report and he would accept it or reject it, but discharge the committee. If he rejected it, and the first few he did reject, he would let it lie for a few months and then he would form a new committee. Some of the people would be the same people that were on the previous committee and some would not be. I think, twenty-five years later, I'm the only one that has survived all the transmutations of this group. It's now being run by Alden's son, who is Mike Dow. It's been a long interesting experience trying to put together a cultural museum.

BOHNING: Well, is that it? I think we may have reached the end.

BRANDT: Wow! [laughter]

BOHNING: It's not quite a record, but pretty close. [laughter] Thank you very much, Ned, it's been great. It's a very different perspective again on the Dow Chemical Company than we've had from any of the other interviews.

BRANDT: I think I've had a different perspective. Probably would, because in many of the groups I was working with, I was the only non-chemist or non-chemical engineer. I remember on Bill Schuette's operating board, I was the only non-chemist. "What am I doing in here?" I asked myself. But that was only the first of many situations of that sort. I've sometimes wondered whether I should have gone back to school and gotten a degree in chemistry or chemical engineering so that I could do well in this company.

BOHNING: Thank you again.

[END OF TAPE, SIDE 14]

[END OF INTERVIEW]

INDEX