

INTERVIEWS WITH UNITED NATIONS SECURITY OFFICERS

Several members of the United Nations Meditation Group conducted interviews with members of the different units of the United Nations Security and Safety Service, in order to obtain first-hand accounts of their day-to-day experiences, as well as some of the unusual incidents that occasionally take place on the job. Following are some excerpts from these interviews.



Raising the UN flag

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Interview with Assistant Chief Cecil Redman

Question: How long have you been with the U.N.?

Chief: Well, I have been with the United Nations for twenty-six and a half years, to be exact.

Question: Since your office is involved with supplying escorts and bodyguards to the Secretary-General on a day-to-day basis, I was wondering if you could tell me what distinctive qualities you perceived in Hammarskjold, for instance, which allowed him to become such an inspirational force here at the U.N.?

Chief: Mr. Hammarskjold was the second Secretary-General that I worked under, and I got very close to him in the Congo in 1960, when I was assigned there as the Chief of Security for the United Nations. The reason why I think Mr. Hammarskjold has left so much for all of us in the world is because he had something very special to offer to the world. He did everything in a very different way. He made you feel as a staff member that you were not really working for a salary or for your country, but for all the countries of the world — to assist and do something to help them. I saw this very clearly in the Congo when Mr. Hammarskjold was our Secretary-General.

Question: Likewise, can I ask you the same question about U Thant? He was a different type of man. What qualities did you see in him that created inspiration at the U.N.?

Chief: Well, I saw in him what I was looking for in him as Secretary-General, particularly having come from that area of the world where you deal a lot with prayer. He was a very quiet-spoken person. If you want to use the old terminology, you could say that he was a very quiet person but he rode a very big stick below; that is, he did a lot of work. You can't say that he was not a good Secretary-General because he did not show a lot of force. He was a very passive person, and it was basically because he was a Buddhist.

Question: Are you ever struck by the tremendous responsibility that you have protecting the Secretaries-General and the heads of State when they come, and can you relate any striking incidents relating to these experiences?

Chief: Well, I would say that I realised full well from the first day that I came here what an important job it was, and I felt that I had to get myself fully educated with the operations of the U.N. Realising that, I got myself enrolled in police administration in New York University. It was about the first class they had in the subject; that was back in 1953-54. I got my first degree in 1959. I felt that I had to be fully qualified to earn the name of Security Officer at the United Nations, particularly having come from the small country of Trinidad and Tobago. I felt that this young man

from a small country must get himself well endowed with whatever it takes to keep up with the job that I foresaw.

I was not disappointed at all because I ran into my first big experience as Chief of Security in the Congo, having to move around with the then President Kasavubu of the Congo—now Zaire, of course—and with Hammarskjold. While I was trying to be so magnetic in my operation, I got caught by some of Premier Lumumba's policemen. They called me a spy, and put me up before a firing squad on the 19th of August 1960. Had it not been for the visit of the Captain of the Ghanian Army at 2:00 a.m. to ask why there was a shortage of men, I would have been shot. Luckily he did that. They told him that they were executing two men, and that was really my driver and myself. They knew that I was the Chief of U.N. Security, but they felt, "Oh, this is just another spy. Let's get rid of him," and they decided to do it right away. That made me more aware of how important my job was: the fact that they would want to have me executed just for going to take a letter to then Premier Lumumba.

Then when I went to Jerusalem as Chief of Security in 1963-65, having to work with Security Officers in five countries—namely Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel—gave me added responsibility and the added feeling that the United Nations was really doing something that the world depended on. It was not only the meetings at Headquarters that were important; it was the effort of the U.N. going on throughout the whole world to help with diseases and international labour operations and food and agriculture opera-

tions. I felt the same way even in my most recent visit abroad, where I had to advise the Zambian police of the operation vis-a-vis U.N. staff members numbering about 150—people from different specialized agencies. And, of course, here at Headquarters with all the heads of State visiting, you have to have a very strong liaison with all the outside law enforcement agencies in the host country to keep this family of the U.N. in place and to keep things going. You have to pay due respect to the host country and, of course, ask the host country to do their share for the visiting dignitaries here in New York and in the United States of America.

Question: At what times do you feel the most pride in the U.N. Security Service?

Chief: Always after a very special visit, like when Arafat or Castro came here; or when Khrushchev from the U.S.S.R. came and pounded his shoe on the desk. After all of that, we still wound up, as you might say, "smelling sweet". You feel pride in having accomplished that sort of operation in the U.N. Headquarters and having done well. This is, of course, with the assistance of the outside law enforcement agencies who bring these world figures here to us where we secure them, guard them and then give them back to the outside law enforcement agencies; namely the New York City Police, the State Department offices, the Secret Service and the FBI, who all help to keep up the magnitude of this operation. I think all in all we have been very lucky.

Question: One of the Security Officers remarked that the responsibilities of your office are so far-reaching that, figuratively speaking, you have to wake the Secretary-General up in the morning and put him to bed at night. I was wondering if there are any amusing experiences that you could share with us?

Chief: Well, I don't know whether we would want to tell you all the amusing experiences, but any time an officer is responsible for a dignitary, such as the Secretary-General, when you see him up to his house and go and pick him up in the morning and, of course, leave a twenty-four hour coverage of Security Officers at his residence, you become familiar with all the minute details of the man. You travel with him all over the world.

One little story I got a few weeks ago. When I left Zambia I left a paw paw, a sweet fruit, for my lieutenant. But when the Secretary-General and his party arrived, they had need of more breakfast, so they all shared the delicious paw paw. There are lots of other stories, too numerous to even mention, but we *do* take care of the Secretary-General from the time he wakes up until the time he goes to bed.

Question: How do you assess the contribution of the U.N. to world peace and the betterment of human conditions?

Chief: Well, I would like to say that outside of the United Nations, there is no other organization in the world that is promoting peace and can promote peace. In my time, in this generation, I don't think there is any other organization that can do

what the United Nations is doing right now. And I say this with full conviction, having traveled to well over twenty-five countries all over the world in my capacity with the U.N. Yet I am only one of thousands of people who do the same and probably more. These people who are contributing their work, are contributing to the greatest organization for mankind that I think we'll ever see.

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Interview with Officer Herman Thome

Question: How long have you been with the Service?

Security Officer: Seven and a half years.

Question: What do you find most interesting on the job?

Security Officer: You meet all kinds of people. People that you would have never normally met.

Question: The other day Colonel Trimble spoke about pride, and the Deputy Under-Secretary-General spoke about having pride in any situation. If someone works and feels that he is doing a good job, or if something about the job sort of moves his heart, he feels, "This is the place I want to be in," and he's proud. What do you think would be the time you felt that the most, not in the sense of just egoistic pride but in the sense of doing a good job or just being proud to be part of the Service?

Security Officer: We've never lost anybody, any dignitaries that have visited Headquarters, which I think is good, something to be proud of, considering the things that go on in New York. I would say

we do about the best we can. As far as I'm concerned, the fact that there haven't been any fatalities is a lot.

Question: Do you think the U.N. is doing something for the world?

Security Officer: I'll put it this way: they have to have a place to talk. Even though people may not think it is a worthwhile organization, it's still a place to talk. It's better to have a place where everybody can get together and talk than to have them shooting at each other, because in this day and age it only takes one little spark to ignite something, and it could just come to an end. That's the way I look at it. You don't agree?

Question: No, no, I very much do agree. I was just saying to another Security Officer how I believed so much in the ideals of the U.N., ever since I was a little kid. When you are really little, you just wholeheartedly accept it. But when you go to college or whatever, you start thinking how it's not doing the job and this and that. But at least it has a goal.

Security Officer: Look at it this way. You'll always have small wars breaking out here and there, skirmishes, whatever you want to call them. But the ultimate, the big one that involves the whole world, that's it for my children and for my

children's children. If the U.N. saves the world from a complete holocaust, it's worth every penny. That's the way I look at it. Even if they don't do anything else.

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Secretary-General Waldheim with some of the guards (Photo: United Nations)

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Interview with Officer Frank Bobish

Question: How long have you worked as a Security Officer?

Security Officer: This December, or November, will make four years.

Question: Do you feel that the U.N. contributes something to the world?

Security Officer: I would say it's the foremost deterrant against a lot of war. I have faith in it.

Question: What do you think is the most important quality that somebody on the Security would need to be a good Security Officer?

Security Officer: Attitude, alertness. Recognition of personnel when the turnover isn't that great. Patience.

Question: What's your main interest away from the job?

Security Officer: My family. I have a wife and two children. Other than that I like to read, play softball, drive—it's a hobby as well as a necessity. I

also like to watch human nature, and this is a good place to do that.

Question: What tour of duty, or what function in Security would you say you like most and which one do you like least, if I can use that word?

Security Officer: Well right now I'm on rotating shifts as you probably know. I think I'd like to remain on rotating shifts for a while, because it breaks the monotony. This job does get monotonous, but that's why the Security Service has a good record. If it wasn't monotonous, then we wouldn't be effective. As far as specific functions, I would say I prefer roving patrol because it provides you with more leeway to just move around and explore areas that you think are weak on your own.

Question: Is there any person or group of persons at the U.N. who you feel are worthy of respect or that you see doing their job well, because of, say, something about the way they work here that's caught your attention?

Security Officer: Well, I would say the Conference Officers or the messengers. That's probably because they do a lot of physical moving around. I notice that they're moving all the time as opposed to somebody who sits all day long.

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Interview with Lieutenant Maurice Clement

Question: How long have you been with the Service?

Security Officer: Twenty-five years.

Question: What service outside of Headquarters have you been involved in?

Security Officer: Well, I began in 1952 and I was assigned to the Middle East where I remained for four years. That covers, of course, Jordan, Israel, Egypt and Lebanon; and also Greece and Cyprus. It was very interesting. Then I was transferred to Headquarters, and later I went to Southeast Asia, Laos, with some other colleagues of mine. I also went to the Congo and Switzerland; we in Security travel from one place to the other.

Question: I think that's something that many people at Headquarters may not really know.

Security Officer: Oh, I think they do; I hope they do. It would be nice for staff members to know what we're doing in Security. I think they are aware of it.

Question: What are your duties at the other duty stations? How do they differ from your duties at Headquarters?

Security Officer: When we go overseas to any sort of station, we create a new little Headquarters. And we have to operate the same way. We have to adapt to the outside circumstances of course, but the duties are the same as they are here: the protection of the U.N. property, staff and delegates. But of course overseas can be quite different from here, you know. There are danger areas which make it very interesting, especially when you're young.

Question: Can you request to go to a certain duty station?

Security Officer: Of course you can ask, but according to your contract you are supposed to go where you are told. One can always ask for a transfer but basically you go where you are supposed to go.

Question: Are the officers allowed to travel with their families?

Security Officer: In some places, yes, when it is considered a longer assignment, for one or two years, and if the area is not considered dangerous, families are allowed to go; but that is the exception rather than the rule. If one goes for two months to

Lebanon, for instance, he will not take along his family. Other colleagues of mine travel much more often and much more continuously, actually, than I have. Some of the high ranking officials are on the go all the time.

In the Security Section which operates from the Middle East, there is a system of rotation. Everybody goes everywhere at one time or another. They go to India or Africa for periods of six months to two years. In that part of the Section, in the Middle East, we have not only security men, but we also have radio operators and a big pool of other specialists. It's very interesting.

Question: What are the instances that you found the most interesting since you've been with the Security Service?

Security Officer: Everything is interesting. Like all my other colleagues, I have had some very tight situations. The fact that we have been near or with or working for high ranking heads of state has become ordinary for us because it's a part of the normal routine; but we have been involved in some dangerous events. We have been caught in wars and revolutions, and shootings. To single out one element out of all that is very hard. All those things were special.

Question: Were there ever some amusing things that happened?

Security Officer: I would say that none of these things were amusing per se. No, amusing is not the word; interesting, yes, and dangerous.

Question: How do you feel about the U.N.? Do you feel it's really contributing something?

Security Officer: Well, I have proven it. I have contributed twenty-five years. I have enjoyed it, and I feel that I have certainly contributed to the U.N. in general, and to my section of course. I have been rewarded for it by having a good job, I agree, but apart from that, apart from the material things, there are other things, like a personal satisfaction and a sense of belonging, of course. And the Organization has, I think, treated us well—not only Security, but the other staff as well. I know many staff members, especially those who are called the “old timers,” people who began their careers when the United Nations began. These are the true believers. I'm still one of them. As the years go by, you acquire a sense of belonging and of having served.

Question: The U.N. in general is trying to do something. Do you feel the U.N. itself is making a contribution to the world?

Security Officer: Well it's obvious, of course. I'm not completely non-political. Therefore I wouldn't discuss what I think the U.N. has done in the matter of international problems and things like

that, but a very important thing that I have noticed, that I have seen in the field, is its humanitarian work. I have seen the refugee camps in the Middle East and in other places. They have done a job there. Even if during all these years they had saved just the one life of one child, they would have achieved something. And they have saved thousands: this I have seen. I speak of the Middle East all the time, because I was there, but they have also helped the development of new nations. Not politically; I'm not talking about that. But they have created new industries or taught them to use their land, their resources better. This still goes on, and this is a very concrete thing. This I admire. They have done that. I have seen them in action.

Question: Do you think the people that are in touch with these programmes in the U.N., and who aren't just reading about them in the papers, get a different view of what the U.N. is?

Security Officer: If you see what it does, where it does it and when it does it, then you understand much more than reading articles about it. I think that people are not sufficiently informed about the U.N. But perhaps at the beginning they had hopes that the U.N. would solve every problem in the world. This was right after the war. People needed a thing like that. So perhaps they hoped too much. But as far as the humanitarian work is concerned, as I said, they have done something and they're still doing it. I have seen places, going back after fifteen years, blooming with healthy children, the

people well fed, where say fifteen years ago there was marsh and sickness and death; and that's an achievement. And the people that work in those areas deserve whatever salaries they get; they deserve their compensation because it's hard work. They throw you out in the desert with five or six local inhabitants to whom you have to teach everything. You have to fend for yourself for two, three or four years. I think I'm too old to do that now, but I remember when I was younger, I would have liked to go.

Question: Do you think that most of the people who came to work here, when the U.N. first started, came with that feeling too, with dedication?

Security Officer: Absolutely. I still know many of those people. They're still staff members. They haven't retired. They are still working. They still have the old spirit. Oh yes, they are true believers. Perhaps they don't show it as much as they should.

Question: I think that it is important for some of the younger staff members to know and to remember.

Security Officer: Yes. But you see that the younger people, thank God, didn't have to suffer through the second World War, after which this was created. The people that started the U.N. were coming fresh from the war and devastation, so they were idealists automatically, as a result of those

horrors. Whereas the people that are coming to work for the U.N. now are certainly as able or even more able as before, but they haven't had the chance to compare or to suffer. Some of them may look at this Organization only as a place to work, without anything special attached to it.

Question: What do you feel is the most important quality for someone in the Security Service?

Security Officer: Well, there's no such thing as the most important quality; there are several. They must be reliable, number one. Reliability is the most important, basically. Reliability, and a reasonable amount of diplomacy, because we are in contact with people of various cultures, backgrounds, races. So we have to be absolutely devoid of discrimination, for whatever reason. You must be absolutely neutral. Otherwise you cannot function. We have never had any trouble as far as that is concerned. That does not exist, which is very good. It's a sign that we are functioning well.

Of course, Security Officers need professional qualities; they must be trained. They all come from the police force or a branch of the service, and they are trained by us. And they are recruited from all over the world. In our section I am certain that we have at least twenty-five to thirty different nationalities and certainly fifteen to twenty different languages, which is very useful in case of emergencies at night. For instance, I can go

through my squad and I can find French, English, German, Indian, Italian, Spanish and Polish.

Question: That's if there were a difficulty of some kind?

Security Officer: Yes, but not only that. It helps if we have to deal with an ambassador. We know them all, and of course all ambassadors speak not only their own language but also the traditional diplomatic languages: English, French and others, but the Ambassador of Poland, for instance, would certainly be happier to be spoken to in his own language, in Polish. Automatically it establishes communication. Whenever I have an ambassador on the phone from any African country which was part of the French Colonial Empire, I speak French with him. They prefer it that way, and this brings in automatic co-operation from both sides. It's one of the small things, but it's very important. And of course many of us follow the language courses at the U.N.

Question: What types of things are the most difficult to do in a security job?

Security Officer: We have to be ready at all times for emergencies. This is our main job. When things go well, it is a routine function, but you have to be ready for any sort of emergency that

may happen and you have to be able to deal with it quickly. Suppose it's nine-thirty at night. Perhaps at ten o'clock an incident will happen, let's say in Africa. After hours, this is the control centre. We get everything that's concerned with the U.N. And a complaint will be made if the incident is bad enough for a meeting of the Security Council. The Security Council will have to meet at three o'clock that morning, within five hours. In an emergency, we might have to raise and alert about eight hundred people within those five hours. The ambassadors and their staff have to be informed and all the functions of Headquarters which are needed to cover a meeting of the Security Council must be put into operation. And internationally, we have to call overseas, we have to receive calls, and we have to be ready for an emergency. We've had it many times. We know what to do blindfolded, I assure you. We have had serious emergencies, but we never had any real malfunction. And it's not luck; it's because we know the job. And then we may have riots on the outside or riots inside, or car accidents. Or they may call us, as they have done in the past, at twelve hours' notice and say, "We want five men to go to Geneva at seven o'clock tomorrow morning." That's what makes it interesting. I hope that answers your question.

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Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld standing beside Gen. S. McKeown, Commander of the U.N. Force in the Congo, and Dr. Sture Linner (wearing glasses), Chief of U.N. Civilian Operations.

[Photo: United Nations]

Interview with Officer Edward Lutz

Question: What is the quality you feel a security person needs to have most?

Security Officer: Patience, patience, a lot of patience.

Second Security Officer: And humility at times.

Security Officer: And a lot more humility. You have to grin and bear it, that's it.

Question: Do you feel that the U.N. is contributing something?

Security Officer: Oh yes, I do. I mean, we might have had World War III without this place. You don't know what would have happened without it. I really do think it contributes. I talk to people on the outside all the time. I never thought I'd be making alibis, sticking up for this place, but I do; the world might be a mess without it. Who knows? Nobody knows. As far as keeping the peace, it's so so. But they are doing a lot of other good things and I'd say they might have prevented big wars.

Question: What do you think is the hardest tour or the most enjoyable part of your work?

Security Officer: It's the days that are the busiest; it's more hectic. The nights, midnights especially, are rough. I feel like I should be going to bed when I get to this place. It's rough to get accustomed to the hours. I don't know what day of the week it is sometimes unless I look at my watch. It gets your system mixed up.

Question: You're a family man?

Security Officer: I have two kids. I get off at 12, I come home about one, have supper, go to sleep about two. And of course I won't see my kids, because I go to work at three. And so I have to get up in the morning to see my kids, so I get about five hours' sleep. If it's raining, I drive them to school at eight o'clock. When I come back, I can't go back to sleep. Rotating shifts it's kind of hectic. Everybody else has three days off on the big weekends; we are working. They pay for it—night differential. It's nice having days off during the week, too.

Question: Everybody works nights?

Security Officer: No. They have straight day work, which is the Conference Platoon, and they have the Tour Platoon, which rotates around the clock.

Question: If someone wanted to stay on straight night shifts, would they allow it?

Security Officer: No, I don't think so. Everybody rotates; nobody works a straight night shift.

Question: What is the most interesting part of the job here?

Security Officer: I think the most interesting part, the part that I like, is seeing important people. Nixon was here. Ford was here. Kissinger, Haile Selassie, some of the astronauts, Willy Brandt. Seeing some of these people, I go home and say to my wife and kids, "You know who I saw today? Hirohito!" You know, I was a World War II kid. Hirohito was one of our enemies, but today he is a respected world leader.

Question: Did they ever talk to the guards?

Security Officer: Very seldom. I have never spoken to any outside important person. Shepherd, the astronaut; Shirley Temple. You are not supposed to talk to them. When they go by, you can't just go over and talk to them. They might pass by and say, "How are you," or something like that, but basically, for an average security man, you don't get involved in things like that.

Question: The other day the Chief was talking about pride, and so was Mr. Muller, the Deputy Under-Secretary-General. They said that this was a valid thing. What do you think was your proudest moment, the time when you felt the best about being a part of the Security Guards?

Security Officer: I don't know. Not the boring jobs. When I have accomplished something, like when I helped find those bombs that day. Or when we grabbed two muggers in the garden. I went home feeling, "Boy, I really accomplished something; I did something good." Basically it's a boring job, but I feel very good about those kinds of things. Otherwise it's just another day.

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Interview with Officer George Baldwin

Question: What kinds of things could happen if a Security Guard were not alert?

Security Officer: There was one embarrassing situation, but it did not involve me. One of the honour guards was in front of the Secretariat waiting for a Head of State and the wrong car came, the wrong delegation came. So they got up and saluted the wrong party.

Question: How did they know?

Security Officer: Oh, they figured it out.

Question: What do you think are the main qualities that somebody in Security needs?

Security Officer: I think one of the basic qualities is to be able to get along with people. You have to be an extrovert. You have to really extend yourself. You have to be able to enforce the rules or discourage someone from breaking the rules with a smile on your face. You can't be really stern and strict without being courteous; it may cause an incident if you are dealing with the delegations or even if you are dealing with the Secretariat members. You are dealing with people from different countries,

and sometimes it is difficult to approach them. As long as you smile, or you do it in a courteous way, they seldom take an offense.

Question: What type of things would they be likely to take offense at?

Security Officer: Well, I find that it could be anything. You may say certain things to one person that you may not necessarily be able to say to another person because of his cultural background. Since you are not really knowledgeable about all different cultures or customs, you have to have a basic type of approach that you feel would not affect anyone. People generally don't feel offended if the approach is in a friendly manner, rather than in a forceful, domineering way. I think that many times you can be forceful in a humble way. If you make them feel that they are the aggressor, they feel embarrassed and they apologize to you. So I think you should have a basic concept of psychology.

You have to be able to portray a feeling of certainty. In some countries a uniform is a sign of authority; in other countries it is a sign of service. In a lot of countries they don't trust the police—they don't trust uniforms. So you have to appear as though you are on the job, you are conscious of what is happening, and you are in full control at all times. Whether you are or not, you have to show that certainty. As long as it appears that you are conscious of what is happening, that you know what is going on, it is a deterrent to trouble in many cases.

Question: Do you ever have to use force?

Security Officer: We try to solve things by talking to people to find out exactly what's going on. As far as physically restraining somebody, that is probably the last thing to do. You would have to be prepared to use force, in case the situation arose, but it is very seldom that you might have to use it. Again, this is a peace organization, so you don't want to show any signs of force, of power. That's why you don't see any pistols or guns around, or any type of forceful weapons.

Question: I know you are on duty a lot on the 38th Floor. What are the particular difficulties on that post?

Security Officer: I guess it's knowing people. You have to know delegations. If the Secretary-General is expecting an Ambassador, you have to know who the Ambassador is. The first person he meets when he walks off the elevator is you. If he is walking with five people, you have to address them all in the correct manner. You have to show prestige, protocol. You have to approach the right person and address him before the rest of the delegation. If he is with his Foreign Minister, you address his Foreign Minister first; then you address the Ambassador. Then you direct them to the Secretary-General's executive personnel, where they receive them until the Secretary-General is ready to see them.

You have to know the staff members—all the different people that get off the elevator—and you have to know somebody who's legitimate and somebody who's not legitimate. It may be someone who wants to serve the Secretary-General with a summons! He can come out well-dressed, with an attache case, and say, "I want to see the Secretary-General." The thing for you to know is that he is not a U.N. member, that he is not in a delegation. You have to find out exactly who he is and what his purpose is up here. After you find out exactly who he is, you may have to call someone to escort him to the front gate.

So you are the final person between the outside and the Secretary-General. If, by some means, they pass by everybody else, it's up to you. And it doesn't have to be a peaceful mission, either. It could be a plot to kidnap; it could be anything. Even if somebody just wants to shake hands with the S.G., this is still an unwanted invasion. Or it may be a staff member whose boss screams at them and all of a sudden they want to tell the Secretary-General. If it is a staff member, you have to be conscious of whether they are up there on personal business or if they are on official business.

Question: Did you have previous experience that's helped you here at the U.N.?

Security Officer: When I was in the military, I was on the mobile riot squad. They sent us wherever there were armed riots. It was during the

Kennedy Administration and there were riots in Mississippi and places like that.

Question: Do you think that the U.N. is doing anything for the world at large?

Security Officer: Yes, because I feel that it is necessary. Therefore, the fact that it is necessary means it is doing something just by existing. It is a forum where people can get together and at least try to iron out their grievances. Unless an organization like the U.N. were called in, one country would never know if the other country actually did say something that they disliked or did something that they disliked. This is the last step before another war. As long as there are third parties that can mediate things and keep both sides talking; or go between the two parties and say, "Listen, they didn't really say this. They meant this," we can keep things more or less on an even keel. I think it is necessary.

Question: Is there any group of persons, or any individual here that has inspired you, as far as their being in tune with the goals of the U.N.? Any of the Secretaries-General you have known, or members of delegations?

Security Officer: There are, there are. There are people that you see from afar. What you really know about them is from the press, from reading outside papers and the news media. I try not to get involved in the political aspect of their work. I feel

that that's where I run into problems. If I approach a delegate, we talk about everything but politics. We talk about sports. But I stay out of politics, because if you get into the political aspect you start drawing sides. It is difficult to stay neutral.

Question: And they probably respect that, too.

Security Officer: This is true. The important thing is that if I have to extend a courtesy to any delegate, whether he is from South America, or Latin America, or whatever country, I treat everybody equally. My job is not to show favouritism, my job is not to approach somebody with a political attitude. I keep away from this.

Question: What are some of your interests outside the U.N.?

Security Officer: Oh, sports—every type of sport you can imagine. This is a way of relaxing for me, to be involved in some type of competitive sport. That way I keep in tune with myself and drain off some of that excess energy in a peaceful way.

Question: Where were you born?

Security Officer: I was born in Alabama. I came here to New York when I was three years old. I went to school and grew up in New York, in Brooklyn.

Question: Have you been away from Headquarters at all on official business?

Security Officer: No.

Question: Have you traveled at all on your own?

Security Officer: Yes. I have traveled on my own, which has helped a lot. You see people in a different light after you've been to their country. You become a bit closer, I guess.

Question: You can talk to them about their country, too.

Security Officer: Right. You can talk about their country, and you can understand. You're able to communicate with them on a different level. You can see their basic lifestyle. They're here; they see *your* basic lifestyle. They know, basically, the type of person you are, the different changes you go through. But what you know of them is limited if you haven't been there. Maybe you've seen a tourist brochure or you've heard things in the news media. But by going there you are in touch with the people. It makes it easier to approach them and to talk with them. And also it makes it easier to be friends with them, basically. When people meet with intentions of being friends, it helps a lot.

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William Ruscigno is seen at the Security Post on the 38th Floor.

[Photo: United Nations]

(66)

Interview with Officer Garret Price

Question: How long have you worked with Security?

Security Officer: Eighteen years.

Question: Tell me, what is the most exciting incident that has happened since you have been on duty?

Security Officer: Many incidents have taken place while I have been here. One day a chap robbed a woman of \$650, and I chased him and held him. I got a citation from the police. I did that with great danger to myself, chasing a robber. I didn't know if he had a gun.

Another incident that took place was in the Security Council. The Congo was being debated and they brought in chains. One fellow got a fractured skull. That was one of the biggest incidents. One of my colleagues had an incident like that, a run-in in the lobby.

Question: What is the quality you feel is most necessary for someone who is a Security Officer here?

Security Officer: Well, I think what he needs most is a sense of awareness. He must always be aware of what is likely to happen. He must always be alert. He must have a good memory. He must remember faces, at least to know who is a delegate. You may not know his name, but you don't want to stop a delegate everytime and ask him for his pass. You should check him once and always remember his face and most likely remember the country he is from.

Question: The other day when the Chief spoke at the programme, he spoke about pride, and so did Mr. Muller, the Deputy Under-Secretary-General—feeling that there is a good sense of pride in what you are doing. What do you think was the time you felt the most pride to be a part of Security?

Security Officer: I think the visits of the heads of states. When I saw Khrushchev, MacMillan, Nehru, Kadar, Eisenhower, Castro and these other heads of states, I had pride in being a Security Officer, in being a part of the U.N.

Question: For you, what is the hardest tour, and which might be the most enjoyable?

Security Officer: Everybody has their own likes and dislikes. I may say that I do not like the mid-night to eight shift, while some men like that. I think the hardest part of the job is standing for eight hours. Your feet get tired.

Question: Do you think the U.N. is contributing something to the growth of the world?

Security Officer: Oh, sure. I think if the U.N. was not here many of us would not be alive, for we have had, as you remember, many international incidents which the U.N. has taken care of. And everything went out smoothly.

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