

Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz Oral History Interview
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
Administrative Information

Creator: Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz
Interviewer: Phyllis Noble
Date of Interview: June 6, 2015
Location of Interview: Berkeley, California
Length: 19 pages

Biographical Note

Abdullahi Edward (Ed) Tomasiewicz served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nigeria from August 1966 to August 1967 on an agricultural development project.

Access

Open.

Usage Restrictions

According to the deed of gift signed September 3, 2015, copyright of these materials has been assigned to the United States Government. This interview is in the public domain.

Copyright

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excesses of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. The copyright law extends its protection to unpublished works from the moment of creation in a tangible form. Direct your questions concerning copyright to the reference staff.

Technical Note

This transcript was created by Sonix software from the MP3 audio recording of the interview. The resulting text file was lightly edited and reformatted according to a standard template.

Suggested Citation

Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz, recorded interview by Phyllis Noble, June 6, 2015, page #, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

DISCLAIMER

This transcript was generated automatically by Sonix software from the audio recording. The accuracy of the transcript cannot be guaranteed. Only the original audio recording constitutes the official record of this interview and should be used along with the transcript. If researchers have any concerns about accuracy or would like to recommend corrections, they are encouraged to contact the library reference staff.

Oral History Interview

with

Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz

June 6, 2015
Berkeley, California

By Phyllis Noble

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:00:01] You want to test?

NOBLE: [00:00:03] Let's just assume it's going to work, it's a good recorder. So this is today is June 6, 2015. This is Phyllis Noble. I'm interviewing Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Nigeria from August of 1966 to August of 1967 in an agricultural development program, which back then we called Ag-RD. Ed, just tell us very briefly where you live now?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:00:39] I live in Kano.

NOBLE: [00:00:40] In Kano, Nigeria?

TOMASIEWICZ: Kano, Nigeria.

NOBLE: Yeah. And that's an amazingly remarkable thing I have to say. So Ed's in, we're doing this interview on the campus of Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley, because there's a Peace Corps conference going on here this weekend. And Ed's training group paid for him to come over here, which is to all of our delight. Um, let's begin at the beginning. Where did where did you grow up?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:01:12] Waterbury, Connecticut.

NOBLE: [00:01:13] Waterbury, Connecticut. And how big was your family? Did you have siblings?

TOMASIEWICZ: Seven children.

NOBLE: Where are you in the line?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:01:21] I'm the second oldest. I have an older brother and I have brothers and sisters younger than me. One of the last one is now late.

NOBLE: [00:01:31] Sorry to hear.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:01:32] He died in Germany about 20 years ago. So there's six remaining. My parents all died in the 2005 to 2007 period. My father died in 2005. My mother in 2007. I was here for my father's funeral and here to put my mother to rest. Because she waited for me.

NOBLE: Oh she did.

TOMASIEWICZ: Yeah. All my brothers and sisters were there. She refused to die until I got here. Yeah, they called me on Friday. I arrived on Sunday. She died on Tuesday.

NOBLE: [00:02:07] She needed you to be there.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:02:08] I'm her pet, I was.

NOBLE: [00:02:12] How wonderful. And so you seven kids and that's nine people, you couldn't all fit in one car and go someplace.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:02:20] Well, we had a station wagon. Chevrolet station wagon. And people sat on people's laps of course.

NOBLE: [00:02:28] Yeah, you'd have to.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:02:31] Yeah, but we all were and went to the same grammar schools and high school. Some of the high school students were different, but we all went to St. Francis Xavier Grammar School and Sacred Heart High School.

NOBLE: Catholic school.

TOMASIEWICZ: Yes. And I graduated in 1960 from there. I worked two years in a factory before going full time to university.

NOBLE: [00:02:56] Two years in a factory. So before we get into what it was like to work in that factory and where you went to the university, well, let's talk about Sacred Heart High School. Did you were you studying a foreign language?

TOMASIEWICZ: No. Latin. That was it.

NOBLE: Ah, yes, of course. And what sort of extracurricular?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:03:24] There was Spanish.

NOBLE: [00:03:25] But what your language?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:03:26] High school Spanish. Yeah, I don't remember that very well. We use some of it when I went to Peace Corps training because they sent us down to Baja California.

NOBLE: [00:03:37] So you studied both Spanish and Latin in high school?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:03:40] Yeah, but I mean, not much of it stuck. Let's put it there.

NOBLE: [00:03:44] Yeah, yeah. When you get down to Baja, were you able to use it a little bit?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:03:50] I was able to use it, whatever I knew. Wasn't a lot. But the factory I worked in, in Baja, the guy was an American who owned it. I didn't need the Spanish, only to talk to the employees to ask them what they were doing, how long it took them to do this, because I ended up redesigning his factory for him because he had grown so quickly that his production facility was a mess. So I told him and he asked me to redesign it. So I did.

NOBLE: [00:04:28] Now wait, we're jumping ahead here.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:04:30] We're jumping ahead. We were left on languages.

NOBLE: [00:04:33] Yeah, yeah. And at home was English the language?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:04:38] Yes. My father's mother spoke only Polish.

NOBLE: [00:04:43] Did you pick any up pick up any of the Polish?

TOMASIEWICZ: Very little, yeah.

NOBLE: Jak się masz.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:04:48] Jak się masz. Spać. That was my grandmother's. Whenever she got tired of our noise, she would say spać.

NOBLE: [00:04:54] Spać. Go to sleep. Yeah.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:04:57] And she had little patience. So that was about all we understand.

NOBLE: [00:05:00] Yeah. Yeah. And what sort of stuff did you do in high school? Extracurricular?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:05:06] Oh I played football and athletics. I did the pole vault well and in football I played junior varsity because unfortunately for most of my time in high school, I was small. I started out in high school at four foot nine, seventy pounds, and I graduated at five feet and 100 pounds. But I love football, so I had to play and I did.

NOBLE: [00:05:35] One would not know this about you now. You're not.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:05:38] No, I'm not that anymore. I grew after high school. But that's why they gave me the vault because nobody else would do it and I did. The highest height I did was eleven and a half feet, when I was four foot ten. So I thought it was a good achievement.

NOBLE: [00:05:57] No kidding. That's cool.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:05:58] And all always like all-American kids, we played all this baseball and stuff like that. I didn't play that for the high school team. But I did that in university. No, I did play those sports again.

NOBLE: [00:06:16] Before we get into the university, did your family did your family take vacations, did your pile on that car?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:06:22] Yeah, we went to Kansas City where my mother came from. I would say from the time that I was 6 or 8 on our first trip to, um, I was in high school, we went two or three times to Kansas City by road.

NOBLE: [00:06:42] Mm hmm. Stopping along the way?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:06:44] Stopping once or twice. Not much, because every time you stopped it cost you money.

NOBLE: [00:06:49] Yeah. Yeah. No motels?

TOMASIEWICZ: No, can't afford it.

NOBLE: Yeah. But in terms of international travel that was out of the picture?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:06:59] Not at that time. Thank you.

NOBLE: We've just been given bottles of water. I can't open it either.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:07:09] I don't open things well.

NOBLE: [00:07:12] Ok, so summer vacations, when you were in high school, when you had summer break, do you have a summer job?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:07:20] I was a newspaper boy from the time I was 11. I had my own route in the neighborhood. I delivered the morning paper and the Sunday paper.

NOBLE: [00:07:34] So before school, you were on your bicycle running around?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:07:37] Yeah. Or sled, depending on the snow season. But I did that.

NOBLE: [00:07:45] And then at some point you decide you want to go to college. Had your parents been to college?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:07:50] No, no. I'm the first one to go to university in my family. That's why I had to work. Because my father was a radio engineer and he had a lot of kids so I realized he couldn't afford it. In fact, from the second year in high school, I paid my tuition with my newspaper route.

NOBLE: [00:08:09] Your high school tuition at Sacred Heart?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:08:12] Yeah. And then I did one year in the factory and then the second year in the factory, I did night school at Newhaven University of Southern Connecticut. So I worked from 7:00 in the morning until 3:30.

NOBLE: [00:08:27] And what kind of factory?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:08:30] Wheeler Electronics. They made electronical components for other things. And I was in the material handling department, which means I go to the stockroom and get the pieces that people need to make their things. So I was up and down all over the place.

NOBLE: [00:08:45] So you did that for?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:08:47] I did that for a year and realized that I'm only going to get one year. I got a half year of credits going to night school. That means I'll be going to school forever. So I quit and went to full time. So in '62 I started at the University of New Haven, which was New Haven College at that time, but eventually became University of New Haven. And I graduated June of '66. In fact, next year is what, 50 years. Yeah.

NOBLE: [00:09:21] And working part time?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:09:25] All the time. In fact, in my junior year I lived on two hours sleep a day.

NOBLE: [00:09:32] Oh my goodness. So you were working full time hours.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:09:35] Yeah, I worked in Second National Bank of New Haven from 11:00 to 7:00. Then I went to school until around noon or 1:00. Then I worked in the cafeteria for an hour to get my lunch free. Then in the afternoon I was doing cross-country or intramural softball, intramural football, intramural basketball, student, newspaper student government. And then I come back to the cafeteria at 6:00 to work for an hour to get my dinner. And then I went home and went to bed and I slept basically from 8:00 at night till 10:00. And then I had a series of phone calls at 10:00, 10:05, 10:10. The girls from the bank would call me to wake me up so I can get to work at 11:00. And then the ball started rolling all over again. And then on Saturdays instead of sleeping, that was our day for cross-country meets when we go out and run five miles or six miles.

NOBLE: [00:10:34] Incredible. How did you have the strength to do that?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:10:36] I was young and I was in very good shape because I was active in sports all the time. Yeah, and well, I didn't last. I did it eleven months and then I had a problem with my back and that scared me because I couldn't walk for three days. And ended up with, it was just stress.

NOBLE: [00:10:59] Yeah. And it's gone away. You needed a good night's sleep.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:11:05] That's what I needed.

NOBLE: [00:11:05] And so you wound up. What were you studying when you were in school. What was your major?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:11:15] Industrial administration. Business administration mostly had to do with industry administration, methods and motion study, strength of the materials. Production methods, things like that.

NOBLE: [00:11:26] You got a degree in 1966?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:11:27] 1966, yeah. June 19.

NOBLE: [00:11:32] June, and you went into the Peace Corps in August, so what did you do that? Why you decide to join the Peace Corps?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:11:39] Let me tell you why I wanted to join the Peace Corps. In 1962, my first year in university, I was selected to participate in a conference at the University of Maryland, which was sponsored by the United Nations. It was called the Collegiate Council of United Nations Conference on Southwest Africa, which became Namibia. So I went with my school delegation and met with people from all over the United States who had gathered at the University of Maryland. And we had this conference for three days down there and we left somewhat dissatisfied. Because there was control over the discussion and the time was allocated to people who they wanted you to hear. One example I can remember specifically was Senator Allen Ellender from Louisiana, who was the Senate chairman of whatever covered Africa. And I found that amusing, that a senator from Louisiana would be in charge of something that had to do with Africa. And he proved my question of his character when he was given a two-hour time slot and spoke for an hour and 50 minutes and then leave in 10 minutes for questions in which there was no time. And he was talking about nonsense. And he passed out his report, which he had surrendered to the Senate. And it had little silly little inaccuracies in there. Like, we went to see the ambassador in Kenya. And he had a lovely wife. And we had this for dinner. We had that for lunch. No essence of what was going on sociologically in Kenya. And this was the thrust of this 1962 meeting. So in the spring, that was the fall of '62. In the spring of '63, we had the follow-up conference and I was chairman of my school's delegation by this time.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:13:41] And when we got down there, some of us chairmen got together to say, look, we're not having a whitewash like we had last time. Because there are students here from South Africa and Namibia and Zimbabwe, and we want to hear from them. So we called this to the attention of the conference people and they were caught off guard. And so they said, we'll put it to a vote and we got them, because everybody like me wanted to hear from the real deal, not from these politicians. And so we took over the conference and had a much better conference the second time around. But what I learned from these people from South Africa lit a fire in me that how could we in the 1960s have a system called apartheid, run by educated Christians, sponsored by people who are supposed to be reasonably intelligent and supported by my government, because they're not doing anything to get rid of that kind of a thing, when if you follow the rules and regulations of America, they should not support a system like that in South Africa. So I decided that I've got to go to Africa myself. To see for myself if there's anything I could do because I knew I couldn't do any worse than what was already being done. So when it came time and Kennedy invented the Peace Corps, that was my ticket because I couldn't afford to get to Africa. But the Peace Corps opened the door and they selected Nigeria, not me. So I went to Nigeria.

NOBLE: [00:15:10] Were you asked on your application form if there was a particular part of the world you wanted to go to?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:15:14] I think so. I can't remember. It's a little long time ago.

NOBLE: [00:15:18] Yeah.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:15:18] So while all I remember is I had to have a hernia operation. Between the time I finished university and the time I reported for the Peace Corps, because if I reported with a hernia, they would have rejected me. So I had the hernia about two and a half, three weeks before I reported.

NOBLE: [00:15:34] For training.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:15:35] So that they wouldn't reject me.

NOBLE: [00:15:36] Before we talk about training, what was the response of your family to your when you told them you were you had applied to the Peace Corps and you were going to go to Africa?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:15:49] Good question. I can't recall a direct answer, but because I had been on my own going to university, they just figured it was a natural extrapolation of the way I was becoming. There was some question about going into the Army and stuff like that.

NOBLE: [00:16:11] Well, yeah, there was a draft going on. Had your father been in the military?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:16:17] Oh, yeah. But you see, my father, by the time he was drafted in World War II, already had three kids. So he was in the last batches of people to get drafted. So he had no military career to speak of. In fact, his best story was that he was on his way to Europe when the war ended and he said Hitler heard he was coming. So, you know, he didn't have a military career and I didn't either. Well, I'll tell you about that later.

NOBLE: [00:16:46] Yeah. So you.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:16:50] There was no initial or noticeable reaction from them. It was something I wanted to do. I was qualified to do it. Go ahead.

NOBLE: [00:16:58] Yeah. So where did you go? Where was training?

TOMASIEWICZ: La Jolla.

NOBLE: What?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:17:04] La Jolla, San Diego. University of California San Diego campus at La Jolla.

NOBLE: [00:17:10] That's on the beach, isn't it?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:17:12] Well, pretty close, I mean the whole of San Diego is on the beach as far as I know.

NOBLE: Well, La Jolla means the jewel.

TOMASIEWICZ: Well, I don't know. But my uncle, my namesake uncle said, if you get a taxi at the airport, don't say La Jolla, because if you say La Jolla, they'll take you all over the place. So he's the one that told me to say "La Hoya." And when we got to our camp or the university and we were comparing notes, those that said La Jolla paid fifteen dollars for the taxi. Me, I said La Hoya, it cost me \$3.50. So it was a good piece of advice I got from my uncle.

NOBLE: [00:17:52] No kidding. So you show up to training and how many other trainees are there?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:17:57] We were a combined group. The Ag-RD was together with some health people.

NOBLE: [00:18:03] And you were all going to Nigeria?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:18:05] Yeah, but eventually it helped the health people were sent to Mali, I think, or someplace else because of the situation in Nigeria and also because most of them would have been in the southeast. So there was no point. So they sent them to Mali, I believe.

NOBLE: [00:18:19] But when they started training, they thought they were going to Nigeria? When they began training, I think they were thinking?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:18:27] I think so. We were kind of separate. We had our curriculum, they had theirs.

NOBLE: [00:18:29] And when had come together for things like what language?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:18:32] No, we came together for meals.

NOBLE: That's it?

TOMASIEWICZ: And sharing dorms.

NOBLE: [00:18:36] But nothing else. No kidding. Huh.

TOMASIEWICZ: They had their program and we had ours.

NOBLE: OK, so let's hear about your program. How many people, was it both men and women or was it all guys?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:18:46] We were men because Ag-RD was considered to be a male thing. And we were about 50 to 60 in our group and it was subdivided into community development, rural development, and whatever else there. We were business and there were four of us, one in Maiduguri, one in Kano, one in Kaduna, and one in Gusau.

NOBLE: [00:19:12] And so where is that last place?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:19:17] Gusau. It's now in, what's the name of the state now, they changed the state. It's not Kebbi. Zamfara, Zamfara state. The old Sokoto state was carved up.

NOBLE: [00:19:28] And so these are all places in the north.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:19:31] Oh yeah. We were going to the north.

NOBLE: [00:19:33] Yes, you knew that. And so you're, the language you were being taught?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:19:35] We were taught Hausa on printed mimeograph sheets and Hausa instructor, but we didn't get very far. Because one of our group members was the son of a missionary who grew up in Niger, in Nigeria. So everybody is going, [speaks Hausa slowly]. And when it came his turn to read the papers, [speaks rapidly]. So it embarrassed everybody right off the bat. We couldn't match him. So it kind of stifled the development of our language. So we didn't go very far. In fact, I went farther in Tagatu with my Spanish than I did with Hausa in the training.

NOBLE: [00:20:23] And what else did the training consist of?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:20:28] A lot of my specialty was bookkeeping and production control systems and things of that nature.

NOBLE: [00:20:36] Ok, so they were related to the job.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:20:38] Yeah, it was all job related. Because we were going into a program which was set up by the Ford Foundation. The Ford Foundation had a contract with the federal government of Nigeria to institute a loan scheme. They call it the Small Industries Credit Loan Scheme, and they had an outpost in each of the provinces of the north. So when we got to our post, we were in charge of that project and we were also in the bureaucracy of the northern Nigerian government. We were the Two-IZ to the provincial commercial officer. The Two-IZ mean second in charge. The provincial commercial officer was the guy in charge of the overall project.

NOBLE: [00:21:22] And had this had this system, this organizational system been explained to you in training?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:21:27] It was our curriculum, as it were.

NOBLE: [00:21:31] So they included, they talked about how the government was involved?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:21:34] No, they talked about what we were going to do. Not what the government involvement, because they were indicating to us that we were going to be doing it and there was no counterpart from the government. We were under the office of the provincial commercial officer. We were the second in charge and we were in charge because we're going to run the Ford Foundation small industries credit loans. So when we were training, we were trained towards that objective. And then, you know, 1966, Nigeria was in a bit of a problem.

NOBLE: Yes.

TOMASIEWICZ: They just had their second coup at the end of July. And our instructor was sent back to Nigeria to find work for us so that we would have something to do when we got there. So they now appointed me to be the instructor. So I was an instructor and trainee for the second half of our program.

NOBLE: [00:22:29] Had the other trainees had a background similar to yours, had they been to university and studied business?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:22:35] Yeah, they're all grads and I'm sure business grads too. I can remember I could have asked Mike, he just left, but that was basically it. But for some reason they picked me to be the instructor.

NOBLE: [00:22:48] And what sorts of things were you teaching your fellow trainees?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:22:53] Well, I can't really remember. You're talking 50 years ago, and basically it was to make sure you touch all the bases and that you understand what the problems are of the people you're dealing with, not just be dictatorial and telling them what to do, but help them deal with what they had to deal with.

NOBLE: [00:23:13] That sounds like wisdom from someone who's older than you were at that time.

TOMASIEWICZ: Well, I've never been dumb.

NOBLE: That's pretty profound.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:23:23] But I was high risk, high gain, so they did not send me with the rest of the group. The rest of the group left on the 6th of December and I left on the 13th with Pan Am. They had chartered a jet for them, but I went on my own.

NOBLE: Why?

TOMASIEWICZ: Because they couldn't decide if they're going to send me to Nigeria because I was a high risk, high gain candidate, but I got there.

NOBLE: [00:23:48] What did they what do you think they thought was risky about you?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:23:52] They questioned my motivation, which shows you how accurate their analysis of the situation. I was motivated since 1963. And now we're in 1966. Where were you? You know, and they're questioning me. But I got them because what I you know, you had your own psychiatrist, you had the group psychiatrist, and then the overall group psychiatrist. So I booked an appointment with all three of them. I just related this story yesterday to Mike. So it's fresh in my mind. The first guy I went to see, I said, he said, what can I do for

you? I said, I want you to hypnotize me. He said, what? He said, why do you want me to hypnotize you? I say, because you and the rest of your crew, you think I'm a bullshitter and I'm not, and I'd be surprised if I was, but I could never realize that under these circumstances. So I want you to hypnotize me to find out if I was a bullshitter and when I come out, you can tell me if I am. So that took care of that guy.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:24:58] The next guy, he said, what can I do for you? I said, well, I want to know if you can hit. He said, what do you mean, can I hit? I said, well you're going to represent me in the meeting that's going to decide whether I'm going to Nigeria or not. So in a sense, you're pinch hitting for me in that meeting, so I don't know if you can hit. Do you know me? Do you know me enough to represent me at a meeting where you're going to speak on my behalf? So I got that guy. So the third guy, it's escaped me now I don't remember, but it was a similar psychological warfare, which I won. So they ended up sending me to Nigeria and I went Pan Am.

NOBLE: [00:25:48] Before we get on the Pan Am plane, I just want to talk about the whole deselection business which in the 1960s most of us had to endure. Were there people in your group who in fact were deselected?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:26:04] Oh, yes. Oh, I remember the three, I remember the third guy. He was the one who was questioned my motivation. I said, why are you questioning my motivation? He says, because you don't wake up in the morning. I said, I know that's the way I am. It's got nothing to do with motivation. I said I grew up in a house with seven kids. They all had to wake me up. I'm in a dorm now with 25 other guys. There's at least 20 alarms going off between 6:00 and 6:30. I don't hear one of them. If you don't believe me, come there tomorrow morning and see. But I am more motivated than you are. I want to go to Nigeria. Don't question my head, not wake up in the morning as a gauge for my motivation. So I got him too.

NOBLE: [00:26:52] I think a lot of the subtle psychological interviews which we didn't ask for, have been one of several tools for deselecting people.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:27:02] Yeah. You know, surprisingly, there are some university graduates who are very naive and unsocial. They find it difficult to relate inside of groups and some people were deselected because they couldn't meld in with their particular group. So we had no objection to most of the deselections. Not that we had a voice, but we could see why people who were deselected were deselected.

NOBLE: [00:27:33] Yeah. Were you asked to evaluate your peers?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:27:39] I probably think so, but I can't remember specifically being asked to do so. Yeah, it sounds like something they were doing. Because they had all the psychological aspects to it. I don't know if I should give you the WBSI story or not because you're ladies but.

NOBLE: Oh, go ahead.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:27:58] We had this WBSI session, which was Western Behavioral Science Institute, which I think was local to Los Angeles or to San Diego. It was a new concept of group therapy and it was based on the fact that the therapist didn't participate. He didn't instigate, he didn't put the agenda out there, he didn't put the topic of discussion out there, he didn't put the first comment out there. And then you react to it. He just said, OK, go ahead and talk. So this was the concept of Western Behavioral Sciences. So they had two sessions, one with your small group, and then the rest was your whole group. And I could see that this was a weird exercise, so I decided to play with it. And one day I went in there and I said, you know, the way this society is going, don't be too surprised if the word fuck becomes common language in this country. This was 1966. Did I call it or did I call it? And I said, you're going to be surprised.

Somebody is going to someday say, could you please pass the fucking salt? And that's what it's come to. But in 1966, I was just throwing this out as a topic of discussion, and I didn't realize it was so prophetic until later on when I started seeing what was happening in the world. So that was the WBSI. Nobody really took it seriously. You got to attend. If you didn't attend, you were in trouble. And it wasn't a threat to my being selected or not, and anyway.

NOBLE: [00:29:45] That's a great story. So let's so we climb out of this Pan Am flight with you and we're going across that way. Wait a minute. Before you get on the Pan Am flight, did they send you home for a couple of weeks to say good-bye?

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:30:00] I was home for a week awaiting my fate. And then I got a phone call saying that your ticket is waiting, blah, blah.

NOBLE: [00:30:08] Everybody else went over.

TOMASIEWICZ: [00:30:10] Everybody else went and they went on a charter flight direct to Lagos. I went New York to Dakar, Dakar to Roberts Field, Monrovia, and then down to Lagos.

NOBLE: [00:30:20] Alone on a regular flight, a Marshall flight.

TOMASIEWICZ: Yeah, yeah. The old Pan Am.

NOBLE: Yes.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[Note: Due to a technical issue, the rest of the interview was lost.]