

The little village where I was born, the dirt street. Both sides of the street lined by these little huts, outdoor toilet, no electricity, no running water and when we arrived in Guantanamo, we walked into a cinderblock house, running water, toilet, electricity; it was night and day. Guantanamo is one of the best designed towns in Cuba. The streets are straight so as a kid we were very impressed to see that. This was American living on the base, typical. <<like a country club>> They did as much as they could to stay as long as they could on the base so we saw people that were there that left after two years, shortly after they are back again because of the quality of life, so they lived in Guantanamo, they had their family in Guantanamo, they go on the base, they purchase things for pennies and they come back so these people enjoyed the best of both worlds.

<<What was it like to be on the base while the revolution is taking place?>>

I lived on the base from that summer that we went in <<in '58>> '58 and I was living on the base until we were able to come out in January '61. It was like living in two worlds because there was the highest level degree of effervescent taking place in Cuba at the time as I think it may never be in its history. Everyone was trying to do something; the government was enacting new laws everyday, they were creating new organizations. It was such an active effervescent. I cannot think of any better word than that.

We had a little bit of a heads up that the relations between Cuba and the US was in a nose-spin. Everyday it got worse.

<<When did this start?>>

Even before the Bay of Pigs, we begin to see it coming. The hostility increased in both sides and we are the people who are commuting and crossing that line on a daily basis so we could really gauge the difference.

<<How could you explain why you feel Cuban rather than West Indian or American?>>

Okay, I think that is tied more to Cuba as a country than to me as an individual. I was born in Cuba in a typical English-speaking Caribbean community to the extent that all of our means was Caribbean means. We went to English-speaking school, English-speaking churches, so it was as if we were living in Jamaica but there is something I have never been able to explain that is somehow unique to Cuba. It makes you Cuban once you are born there.

We have the most beautiful sky, the most beautiful river, the highest mountain, so that is where my being Cuban came from and will always be.