

Central American countries—tell us about that in your own words, how it came about, and what you did.

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. Well, I started explaining that already, that it is not a new idea for me. I said before that 20 years before, Roderick MacArthur and myself set out on a limited trip of this type, when we were both young men in Mexico.

And I have always been interested in Mexico as a very rich country mining wise, and I thought that it would be very interesting and useful for me to take a trip along the old trails of the miners of the Spaniards as they went through Mexico during the days of the Conquistadors.

You see, the Spaniards went to Mexico for the purpose of finding mines, and the routes they made in Mexico and through Central America are all directed toward certainly logical prospects, certain mines. And I started collecting through the years—I started collecting information on routes of the Spaniards in Mexico.

But I never thought I would really be able to do it, until came the time in 1900 when my boy died, and I was in very—practically out of my mind, because this was my only son. And I said to hell with all that—I had some money saved up, and I said I am going to stay away from my work and from the civilized life for a year, and I am going to follow the trails of the Spanish Conquistadors, all throughout Central America, and possibly all the way to South America.

And to do it the hardest possible way, because I believe in physical therapy for your mental problems.

And my wife, fortunately, also, loves the outdoors, and agreed with me that that is something we should do.

We gave up our apartment. I gave up my office, and we set out from the ranch on the border of Mexico and the United States.

Mr. JENNER. What ranch?

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. This was—that is the ranch which belongs to a friend of ours. It is called the—it is Piedras Negras. It is on the Mexican side of the U.S. border. On the American side you have a little town called Eagle Pass. On the Mexican side you have Piedras Negras.

There we have some very close friends who own a big ranch. Their name is Tito and Conchita Harper. They have—they are half Mexican, half Americans. They live on the ranch nearby, and in Piedras Negras.

By the way, when I was visiting them, at the time I was visiting them, a few months before, we heard about the death of my boy, right in their house. We were sitting in their house when there was the long distance call from Canada that my boy had died. They are very, very close friends. They also advised me that it would be a good thing for me to take a trip like that, knowing my interest in Mexico and my interest in the outdoor life.

And that is what we did. We started off at the first 200 kilometers—Tito took us in a plane to cross the first range, a very difficult range, and the rest of the trip was made on foot, all the way to the Panama Canal.

Mr. JENNER. All the way to where?

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. The Panama Canal.

Mr. JENNER. Tell me what countries you passed through.

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. We passed through the whole of Mexico, in the longest trajectory you can have. Then the whole of Guatemala, the whole of El Salvador—El Salvador, rather, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama.

And on the way there we stopped occasionally in towns, received our mail, through the American Embassy and consulates, visited some of the friends we have out there. In other words, we led a life close to nature for a whole year.

Mr. JENNER. Were you in Mexico City during this trip?

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. No; because our route kept us away from Mexico City.

Mr. JENNER. At any time during that trip was Mikoyan in Mexico?

Mr. DE MOHRENSCHILDT. Oh, yes. That I have to tell this incident; that is interesting. This is completely a different incident.

I went to Mexico City, I guess, with—a year before that, on behalf of—

Mr. JENNER. Just a minute.

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