



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Happy holidays! Once again it's time for my periodic invitation to take advantage of the many opportunities to contribute to the *Journal*.

Occasionally friends will tell me that while they enjoy reading the magazine, they wonder why we decided to devote an entire issue to a topic that they don't find particularly relevant or interesting. But somehow, I don't think anybody will feel that way about this month's focus on the Middle East and, specifically, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute!

Of course, that is not to say that our treatment of this thorny subject will satisfy everyone; in fact, I'd be willing to bet it won't. But as always, we have tried to put together a range of commentaries and analyses from a variety of perspectives, including several contributions by authors from the region. So whatever your stance, we hope you will at least find our coverage thought-provoking.

I also hope you will share your reactions, positive and negative, not only to this issue but to what you read every month, by contributing to our **Letters** section. Just bear in mind that, as with all periodicals, the briefer and more focused your letter, the more likely we'll be able to print it in full. (In general, 200 to 400 words is a good target.)

Each issue of the *Journal* features a **focus section** examining various facets of an issue related to the Foreign Service or international affairs. We commission most of these

There are many ways you can share your insights in our pages. Let us hear from you.



articles, but warmly welcome contributions from FS personnel.

On the next page you will find a list of the focus topics our Editorial Board has identified for the coming year (subject, of course, to revision). Most of these themes relate directly to Foreign Service professional and lifestyle issues, so I hope many of you will consider sharing your insights and expertise.

Do note, however, that because of our lead time for publication, and the requirement for Editorial Board approval, we need to receive submissions at least two months (and preferably longer) prior to the issue's release date. Thus, we have already lined up authors for the January and February issues, but there is still time to submit manuscripts for later months. Submissions should generally be between 2,000 and 3,000 words, though shorter pieces are always welcome.

If those choices don't grab you, or if you feel we have not devoted enough space to a professional concern or functional issue, please con-

sider writing a **feature** article (also generally 2,000-3,000 words long) on a topic of your choice.

Our annual **fiction** contest is now in its second decade. As we did this summer, instead of devoting an entire issue to it (as in past years), we will publish the *winning* story in the July-August 2007 double issue, and the runners-up in other issues throughout the year, space permitting.

The rules and timing are basically the same as before, with one important exception. Entrants are still restricted to *one* story of 3,000 words or less, which must be e-mailed to *Journal* Business Manager Andrew Kidd at kidd@afsa.org. However, the deadline for submissions is now **March 1** (not April 1 as in past years). For more details, see the ads elsewhere in this and the next several issues, or contact Andrew directly.

We invite those of you who expect to publish a book between now and next fall to send us a copy, along with promotional materials, for inclusion in our annual compilation of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors, "In Their Own Write." **Sept. 1** is still the deadline for inclusion in that roundup, which will run in November as our main feature. For more information, contact Senior Editor Susan Maitra at maitra@afsa.org.

Share Your Insights

We take seriously our mission to give you "news you can use" — e.g.,

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information about how to advance your career; tips on dealing effectively with the bureaucracy at State and the other foreign affairs agencies, especially when you are trying to resolve a problem; and updates on how AFSA is working to improve working and living conditions for Foreign Service employees and their families.

Much of that coverage is found, of course, within the pages of **AFSA News** (now part of the magazine's "white pages"). That section offers many different ways for members to share their experiences, thoughts and concerns regarding professional issues, including the following departments: Family Member Matters, Of Special-

***The Speaking Out
department is your
forum to advocate
policy, regulatory or
statutory changes to the
Foreign Service.***

(ist) Concern (a forum for specialists), Where to Retire, The System and You, Memo of the Month and The

Lighter Side (FS humor). Contact *Journal* Associate Editor Shawn Dorman for more information at dorman@afsa.org.

Another place to look for such items is our periodic **FS Know-How** section. We welcome contributions on topics ranging from managing one's career and cutting red tape to parlaying one's professional skills in retirement, as well as financial information and guidance for Foreign Service personnel.

There are many other ways you can contribute to our pages, of course. The **Speaking Out** department is your forum to advocate policy, regulatory or statutory changes to the Foreign Service. These columns (approximately 1,500 words long) can be based on personal experience with an injustice or offer insights into a foreign affairs-related issue.

Our **Reflections** page features short commentaries (approximately 600 words long) based on personal experiences while living or traveling overseas. These submissions should center on insights gained as a result of interactions with other cultures, rather than being descriptive "travel pieces." Note that we are also pleased to consider poetry and photographs for publication, either in that section or as freestanding features.

Please note that all submissions to the *Journal* must be approved by our Editorial Board and are subject to editing for style, length and format. For information on how to submit a column, article or letter, please contact us at authors@afsa.org; we will be delighted to respond. For other inquiries — changes of address, subscriptions, etc. — e-mail us at journal@afsa.org.

Let us hear from you. ■

FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL 2007 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

JANUARY	"Best & Worst Posts" survey (cover story)
FEBRUARY	Prospects for Bush administration foreign policy in final two years
MARCH	Militarization of the FS (Iraq War's impact) (PLUS: AFSA Annual Report)
APRIL	Russia
MAY	The FS career life-cycle
JUNE	Iran (PLUS: semiannual SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT)
JULY/AUGUST	Promoting nonproliferation: controlling WMDs & delivery systems (PLUS: Summer fiction winner(s) and AFSA Award winners)
SEPTEMBER	Human Rights & the "Global War on Terror"
OCTOBER	The U.S. borders (Mexico & Canada posts and related issues)
NOVEMBER	Non-foreign affairs agencies at overseas posts (PLUS: "In Their Own Write"— annual roundup of books by FS authors)
DECEMBER	Religion and diplomacy (PLUS: semiannual SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT)