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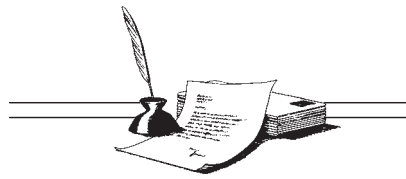
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LETTERS

Diplomats in War Zones

AFSA's recent message regarding its discussions with State management on new assignment procedures makes clear that it sought a reasonable balance between employee interests (particularly the interests of FSOs' children) and the State Department's needs.

But I think a deeper analysis and engagement with State's leadership are warranted. Namely, to what extent will FSOs serve in combat zones in the 21st century? When the U.S. invades a country and proposes to rebuild it in an environment overwhelmed by an armed insurgency — e.g., Iraq — is there really a role forward in the field for the Foreign Service (or USAID's cadre)? Or is that work better undertaken by politically savvy military officers of the type who effectively served the British Empire in its frontier areas (such as the Indo/Afghan borderlands)? They may be rare today, but the U.S. military has them. I have known some of them — warriors with political smarts.

The diplomatic service recruits a different sort of person than the military. Our personnel are loyal and devoted and prepared to accept hardship and some risks, but few are warriors by temperament or training. Thus, they are not well-equipped to operate in largely unprotected hinterland environments where they are prime targets of a well-organized insurgency.

One could also note in this context

the risks associated with Secretary Rice's proposed deployment of one- or two-person posts outside capitals to populous but secondary Third World cities. In today's world, that initiative, irrespective of its substantive merits (which I doubt), is likely either to invite attacks on "sitting duck" diplomats or to sink under the budgetary expense should we deploy platoons of security personnel to protect each lone FSO.

The respective roles of the Foreign Service and the uniformed military need to be re-examined as part of a wider effort at institution-building to better equip America to administer the many protectorates (i.e., occupied failed states) that are likely to come our way this century. Lacking anything akin to the bygone British Colonial Office, we need to develop a modern-day equivalent, however cloaked in politically correct terminology.

Marc E. Nicholson
FSO, retired
Washington, D.C.

Foreign Service and Civil Service Civility

As a long-time Civil Service employee, I appreciated AFSA State Vice President Steve Kashkett's forthright insights into issues related to Foreign Service and Civil Service employees and cultures in the State Department. His thoughtful piece in the September *AFSA News* provided an interesting perspective on these essential yet controversial issues, which receive too little direct atten-

tion at State. This is unfortunate, as getting the Foreign Service-Civil Service relationship right facilitates winning American diplomacy.

Such FS/CS matters have been understood as important to U.S. diplomacy for decades. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson recalled in his memoir, *Present at the Creation*, that the Hoover Commission recommended in 1947 that "the personnel in the permanent State Department establishment in Washington and the personnel of the Foreign Service above certain levels should be amalgamated over a short period of years into a single foreign affairs service obligated to serve at home and overseas and constituting a safeguarded career group administered separately from the general Civil Service."

Acheson reported that this recommendation was not enacted for a number of reasons, including a belief that "to maintain the morale of the Foreign Service, the process of recruitment required both time and painstaking methods to ensure that the quality of the recruits should be high and that it should be recognized as being high."

Nonetheless, in terms of recognizing the contributions of department employees with different careers and backgrounds, Acheson also observed that "not all the arts of diplomacy are learned solely in its practice. There are other exercise yards."

I did take minor exception to Mr. Kashkett's terminology when he referred to Civil Service employees

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being assigned to overseas “excursion tours.” My perspective is that the term is subject to being misconstrued. Such Civil Service overseas tours should be referred to by what they officially are, according to the State Department’s Foreign Affairs Manual: “limited non-career appointments to Foreign Service” tours, or “LNA tours.”

After all, I don’t think anyone would call FS career employees’ assignments “serial excursions,” or call FS employees “serial excursionists.” Calling Civil Service overseas assignments “excursions” and CS employees “excursionists” seems similarly inappropriate.

Mr. Kashkett and I discussed my concern, and he advised me that he only used the term because it is common jargon at State. He also stated that in the future, he would refer to such assignments as LNA tours. That is much appreciated.

*Dan Sheerin
Bureau of Information
Resource Management
U.S. Department of State*

Farewell to a Young Turk

Charles W. Bray — co-organizer with Lannon Walker of the 1967 uprising that changed AFSA from a rubber-stamp organization for the State Department’s management to, in due course, the recognized representative of the Foreign Service to negotiate personnel policies with the management of all the foreign affairs agencies — died on July 23. (See the October *FSJ*, p. 87, for his obituary.) The group was known as the Young Turks, and they won election to the new AFSA Governing Board in 1967. Its mentors were two distinguished Foreign Service officers, Foy Kohler and Philip Habib.

Lannon Walker became chairman (now called president). I was vice president, and Ted Curran secretary-

treasurer. (Other key members in the early months were Bob Houdek, John Reinhardt, Charlie Rushing, Frank Wile and Larry Williamson.) Charlie Bray, in typical fashion, at the outset eschewed an officer position but served as a board member.

Lannon and Charlie made a great team, recruiting the rest of us. Charlie provided much of the intellectual force for the group. He served on the “Committee on Career Principles.” He oversaw the publication by AFSA in early 1968 of “Toward a Modern Diplomacy,” designed to focus the new administration, taking office in January 1969, on some of the reforms needed in the Foreign Service, including unifying the Foreign Services of USAID, USIA and State. (It turned out that Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger had their own ideas about the organization of the foreign affairs agencies, but “Toward a Modern Diplomacy” remained a platform for AFSA.)

Charlie and I testified in 1968, at his initiative, before the Democratic and Republican Party platform committees on Foreign Service reform. (I no longer remember which party each of us spoke to, but I do remember he got a plank added, whereas I did not.) Charlie also sparked a public forum on Foreign Service reform held in the State Department. Finally, our board committed AFSA to running the Foreign Service Club.

In 1970, Charlie became board chair and was the first person to take a leave of absence from the Service to work full-time for AFSA. He assisted the successor board which took the new AFSA further into the roles it plays today.

During his Foreign Service career, and subsequently as head of the Wingspread Foundation and other nonprofit endeavors, Charlie exhibited a remarkable ability to bring diverse people together to chart a positive course. He did this with humor

and patience. He was a fine professional diplomat and a man of courage. AFSA, the Foreign Service and every other institution he touched owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

*Theodore “Ted” L. Eliot Jr.
Ambassador, retired, and a
former Young Turk
Sonoma, Calif.*

The Greatest Statesman

As one who came to political consciousness in the time of Franklin Roosevelt, I was pleased to see the September article on the United Nations by Tad Daley and David Lionel (“Reinventing the United Nations”) refer to FDR as “arguably the greatest statesman of the age.”

It is an apt description, but I would go further and drop the qualifier “arguably.” This is the man who led an isolationist and socially chaotic America through its deepest depression and its greatest war to widely accepted global pre-eminence and a greatly strengthened democracy at home. It was undoubtedly the seminal period of 20th-century America, as were the times of George Washington in the 18th century and of Abraham Lincoln in the 19th. This was recognized in a poll of American historians late in the last century that placed these three presidents in a pantheon of their own.

Some 30-plus years ago (good Lord!), I had a pleasant chat one evening in Manila with then-Foreign Minister Carlos Romulo. Among other things I asked him who — in a long, prominent and active life that had brought him into contact with numerous political, military and other world figures — was the greatest man he had ever met. Without a moment’s hesitation he answered, “Franklin Roosevelt.”

A final note: If there be a Providence that looks out at least occasionally for our earthly fortunes

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(with large and currently obvious gaps of inattention in between), then surely, like the parallel lives and mutual passing on July 4, 1826, in the 50th year of our independence, of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the parallel tenures of the great 20th-century antagonists Hitler and Roosevelt (accession in 1933, death in 1945) — one the embodiment of tyranny, the other of freedom — was another such providential pairing in history.

So, with apologies to the authors, I will drop the “arguably.”

Gunther K. Rosinus
SFSO, retired
Potomac, Md. ■

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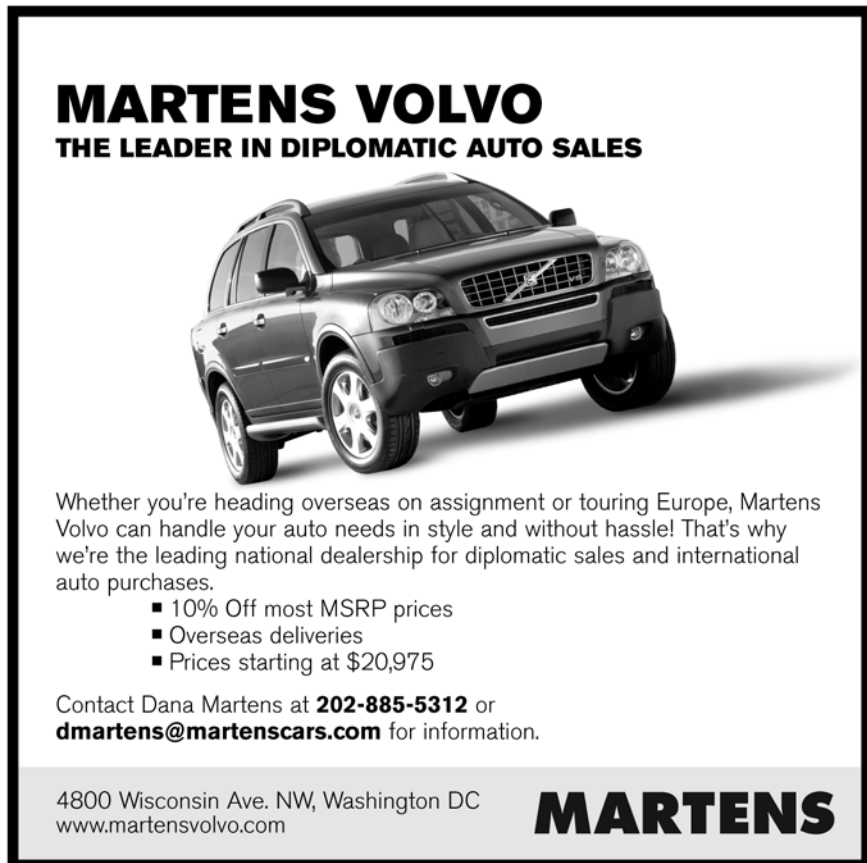
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