

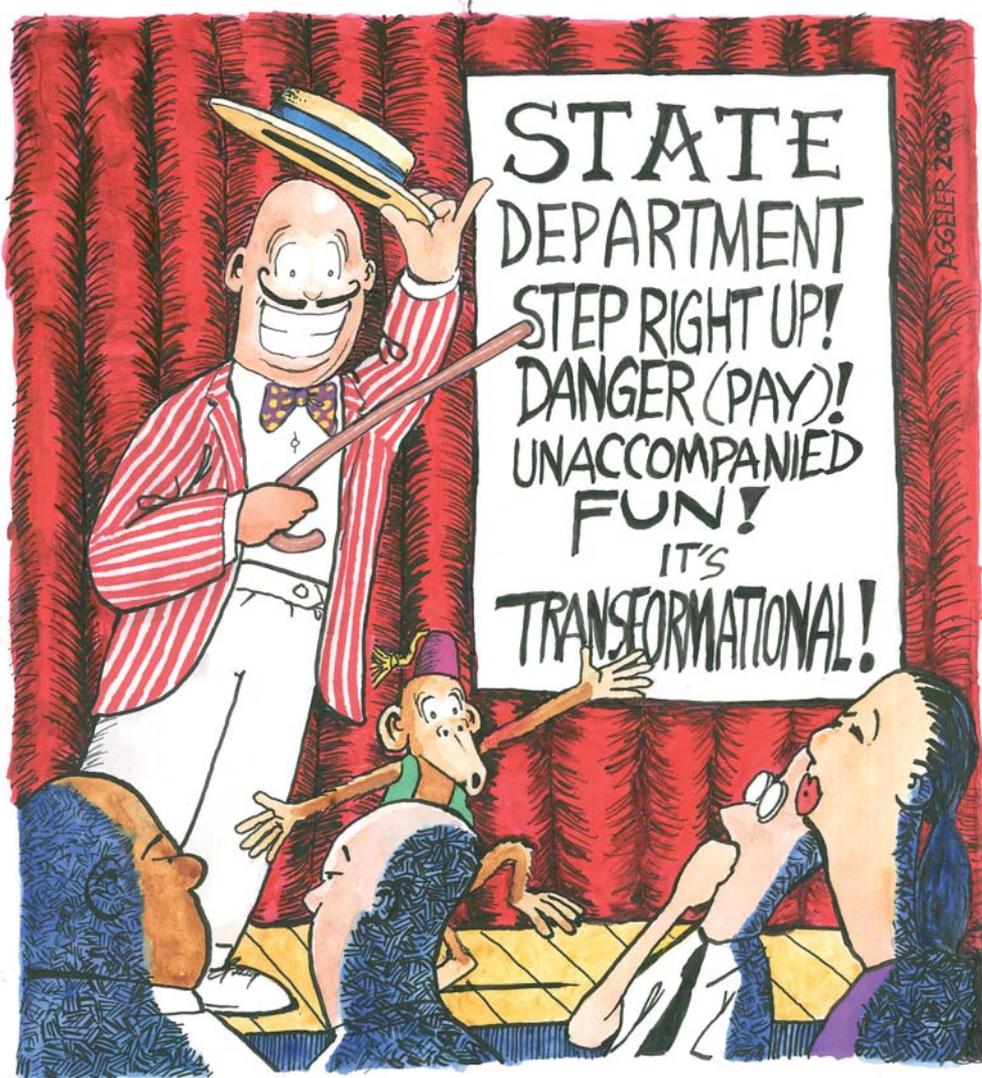
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PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

Closer State-DOD Cooperation: Building on Existing Success

By J. ANTHONY HOLMES

The state of the world today, and for the foreseeable future, dictates much closer cooperation between the State and Defense Departments, particularly at overseas missions. This enhanced coordination lies at the heart of Secretary Rice's transformational diplomacy initiative.



Regrettably, the political-military function in the State Department has become marginalized over the past couple of decades, its appeal as a specialty has waned, and the number of FSOs in the PM Bureau has shrunk markedly. At a time when DOD is playing a much larger role in both foreign affairs and the conduct of diplomacy, it is important that State both increase its understanding of the U.S. military's values and culture and try to impart to our military an understanding of what drives State Department approaches and why we see the world differently than they do.

The reality remains that only the State Department sees the entire fabric of our relations with other nations, and only State is responsible for managing and maximizing the totality of these relationships. While the "long war" may dominate relations with some countries, it is not the only element in any of our bilateral relationships. The other aspects simply have to be factored in as well. One example of this is the significance of Iran and Iraq in terms of global economic and energy interests.

An obvious place for State to focus in order to prepare Foreign Service offi-

J. Anthony Holmes is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

cers for expanded cooperation with our military overseas is the existing State/DOD cooperation programs. Particularly relevant are those offered at the National Defense University, the premier professional military educational institution in the United States. Fortuitously, DOD is in the process of converting NDU into more of a National Security University to strengthen interagency

Promoting a more productive engagement with the military will come with a price tag. But it is one worth paying.

collaboration and increase professional education to more civilians and military officers.

The State Department has long participated in key NDU programs, including the highly valued, but limited, student and faculty slots at the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. With the provision of some modest resources and additional billets, NDU can play a significantly greater role in preparing State Department personnel to meet some of the new national security challenges.

New initiatives worthy of consideration, according to senior State officials presently assigned to NDU, include:

- Doubling the number of FSOs who attend the War College and ICAF;

- Establishing a joint FSI-NDU program to train FS political advisers ("polads") to military commanders before they go to their assignments;

- Assigning State officers to the new 10-month Counterterrorism Fellows program, set up three years ago to bring senior military and civilian officials from around the world to the U.S. to cement contacts and to acquaint them with our interagency terrorism programs;

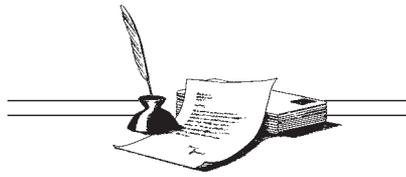
- Setting up a working relationship between the State Department's Office of Stabilization and Reconstruction and NDU's Strategic Gaming Center. NDU's widely acclaimed Gaming Center could prepare, facilitate, and host the strategic scenarios for this State entity;

- Establishing a jointly-run FSI-NDU program to train civilian and military personnel to participate in Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq, Afghanistan and other post-conflict situations;

- Creating closer contacts between NDU's three affiliated regional centers and the State Department by assigning a senior FSO to serve as a deputy director at each; and

- Extending current State Department faculty assignments at NDU to two years with an option for a third.

While the ideas above are a mix of old and new, all of them would increase State/DOD understanding and cooperation. Admittedly, promoting a more productive engagement with the military will come with a price tag. But to advance transformational diplomacy and achieve the results Secretary Rice wants, that price will have to be paid. ■



LETTERS

“The Other Side of the Unaccompanied Tour”: FLO Responds

We were pleased to see the article by FSO Deborah Sisbarro (May *AFSA News*), who served two years in Moscow as a public diplomacy officer and extended for one year while her husband served in Iraq. Ms. Sisbarro noted that being able to remain in Moscow during this period provided continuity and stability for her family; allowed her son to stay in the same school and maintain the same friends and nanny; and enabled her to continue working with supportive supervisors. In addition, it was easier for the family to meet at a halfway point in Europe when her husband was able to take R&R.

However, Ms. Sisbarro expressed disappointment that, as the spouse of an employee serving in Iraq, she was not contacted by the State Department. She and others may still not be aware that the Family Liaison Office has been actively supporting the families of employees on unaccompanied tours since October 2005. That was when FLO hired Nan Leininger as the first “Program Specialist for Unaccompanied Tours,” and began designing a program to support families during the preparation, separation and reunion phases of an unaccompanied tour. FLO sent out an ALDAC message (05 State 196382, sent Oct. 10, 2005) and a Department Notice announcing the program and asking employees to provide us with contact information for their spouses, children, siblings, parents and Members

of Household who are interested in participating.

Once FLO receives the contact information, Nan, a trained social worker, maintains regular communication with family members, providing information, referrals and guidance, developing programs to serve both adults and children, and advocating for services as needed. The goal is to create an interactive “virtual community” of mutually supportive families who share the same situation. FLO has reached out by developing the HomeFrontUS listserv, establishing a 24/7 hotline for referrals and making various relevant publications available online. Nan also presents information on FLO’s support services to the DS Iraq course each week. She recently visited Baghdad and Riyadh to see the physical environments and speak with employees to better appreciate what they are experiencing and to be able to improve the support provided to the employees and family members.

The theme of this year’s Foreign Affairs Day in May was the Foreign Service family. FLO chaired a panel focused on issues and support services available to those separated by an unaccompanied tour. In conjunction with this event, FLO developed and distributed medals and certificates of recognition for Foreign Service children separated from their parents by an unaccompanied tour to recognize their contribution and acknowledge their sacrifice. Over time and through various means, FLO hopes the word will spread of the department’s efforts to help those experiencing this new

type of challenge in their Foreign Service careers. For more information on FLO’s programs in support of unaccompanied tours, please visit our Web site at www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo, or contact Nan Leininger directly at leininger@state.gov or (202) 647-1076.

*Ann DeLong Greenberg
Director
Family Liaison Office
Washington, D.C.*

Support Career Development

As a Foreign Service office management specialist who has been in the Service since 1986, I think the OMS career development plans sound great. However, they don’t help us much if we do not have support from post management and, most of all, from our supervisors. They should be briefed on our precepts and need to understand that when we request training, it is not to go on vacation; it is actually to go to much-needed instruction that is now a requirement for promotion.

Also, with regard to leadership training for entry-level, mid-level and senior officers, they, too, should be taking the “7 Habits” course. This should be mandatory.

*Paula P. Guimond
OMS
Beijing*

Certification Fever?

As a recently hired information management specialist (May 2005), I was confused by Carl Stefan’s criticisms of the training program in the

LETTERS



May Speaking Out, "What Are We Training IMSers to Do?" He condemns the attitude of "certification fever" during new-hire training, saying that racking up IT certifications (A+, Network+, Server 2003) takes precedence over all other objectives. The training program that Stefan describes is not the one in which I participated.

Yes, my class of IMSers all became A+ and Network+ certified, and some of us also passed the Microsoft Server 2003 test. But these courses lasted for just six weeks, out of a total of five months of training. Furthermore, when you consider that all IRM staff are *required* to be A+ and Network+ certified these days, running new hires through these two courses makes obvious sense. We took some other in-house IT training, but none of that was geared toward certification. In all, the portion of training devoted to certifications came to less than a third of the total, and I've found much of it applicable to my job.

Stefan recommends mock-ups of what a new IMS will see at post. But these already exist, and are what we used during our eight weeks in Warrenton. With minor exceptions, all of the hardware and software that I encountered in the Information Programs Center at my first post was the same as what we used during training, down to the combination locks on the doors and the escape hatch in the ceiling. So when I arrived at post, I was already familiar with what I would encounter there.

The idea that IMS is an IT-only job is quickly dispelled during new-hire training, contrary to another of Stefan's criticisms. We took classes in COMSEC accounting, radios, telephones and the diplomatic pouch (including a simulated pouch run at the loading dock behind the building). In fact, we spent more time on these decidedly non-IT subjects than on the

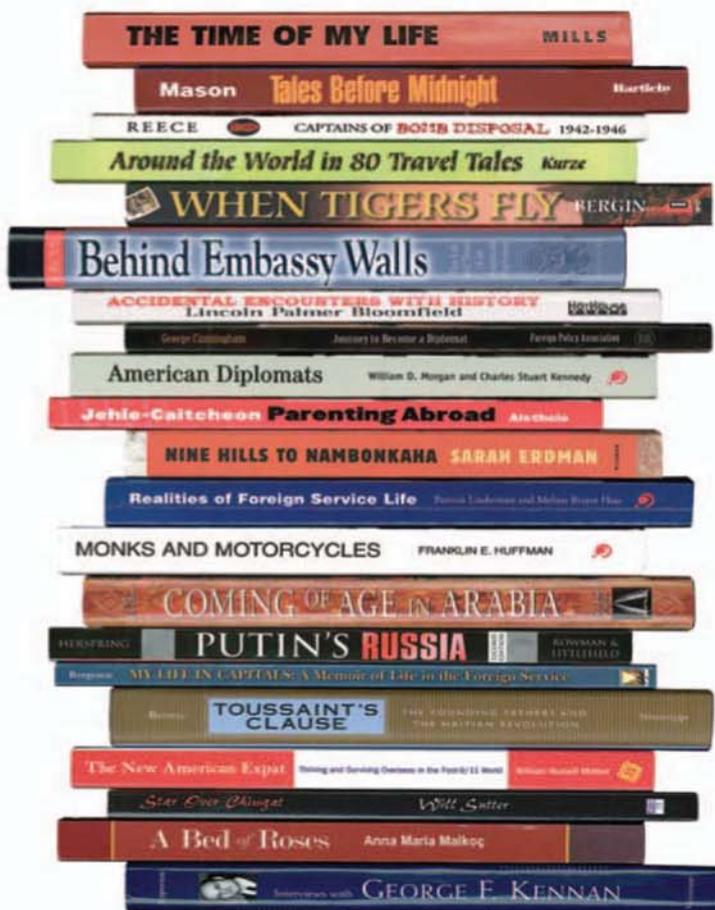
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LETTERS



certification courses. As a matter of fact, we were even told that we might have to clean bathrooms, if there were any located inside the restricted areas of the IPC (thankfully, that's not the case at my post).

Stefan's criticisms are not consistent with my experience as a new-hire IMS.

Chris Corlett
IMS
Doha

Gen X and IRM

It was with great interest that I read "State's Generation X Work Force" in the May *FSJ* and compared it to my own "new" experiences with IRM: two tours in two hardship posts. I was born in 1962, which makes me a "Boomer" with a "Gen X" lifestyle. When I joined the Foreign Service, I already had IT certifications, earned during corporate and military communications experience. I have benefited from promotion, while some of my "just as qualified" colleagues fear that promotion for them will be a long road to travel when looking at the statistics.

If the author's research holds true, then I say, "Yahoo!" The number of management positions opening up by 2010 will only put those of us that want to stay and make it into the Senior Foreign Service on a faster track to promotion than any of our predecessors.

But after seeing a number of the Gen Xers leave the department after one or two tours, and sometimes even sooner, I have to question management. I have worked with some (just some, not all) Boomers who had no desire ever to learn new technical skills, lacked any management skills whatsoever and had no usable skills other than longevity. Yet they continued to receive meritorious service increases when, in reality, if their EER had reflected their actual job perfor-

mance, they should have been low-ranked.

I have seen excellent candidates depart the Service, not primarily to accept offers for three times their current salary, but because the people who were supposed to be teaching them the job went out of their way to make life miserable, mainly because they were just RIP, "Retired in Place." What are we really offering Gen Xers, who aren't being paid even close to what the private sector makes?

In order to make changes, one has to stick around, give feedback and be able to articulate problems, and live with less than desirable situations until one gets high enough to change them. I intend to stick around.

Gwen M. Sell
IMS
Maputo

Roth IRAs and the TSP

AFSA seems to suggest that TSP contributions be maximized instead of funding a Roth IRA ("Make the Most of Your Thrift Savings Plan," *FS Know-How*, April). It's true that everyone should contribute the amount to a TSP that will gain the maximum employer match, but after that amount, the Roth IRA's benefit of tax-free withdrawals at retirement outweighs — for most people — the TSP's benefit of pretax contributions. The FSI Transition Center's "Personal Finances and Investments" course also strongly recommends the Roth, but don't just take their word or mine for it. Do the research yourself: Google "traditional Roth IRA comparison" to confirm whether the Roth IRA is a better deal for you than a traditional IRA.

The TSP is essentially the same kind of instrument as a traditional IRA: pretax contributions and fully-taxed withdrawals. The Roth IRA is the opposite: after-tax contributions and withdrawals are never taxed.

Unless your retirement income is drastically lower than current income (don't forget that you'll be collecting your pension, Social Security and other investment income), the Roth IRA is hard to beat.

The TSP article claims that Roth IRAs "frequently lack the TSP's automatic contribution mechanism, so they require much more discipline to make installment payments." If you can find an IRA custodian who doesn't allow automatic contributions, you've probably found "Spike's Bail Bonds and IRAs," down by the railroad tracks. Any reputable company that has a Web site and a toll-free number will offer convenient automatic contributions from your bank account.

The article also includes a statement about Roth IRAs that's not correct: "[B]ecause Roth IRAs permit withdrawals with no further taxes or penalties (unlike TSP contributions), it can be very tempting to use those invested dollars to pay for vacations, a new car, etc." The Roth IRA allows withdrawals before retirement without penalty only for the purchase of a first home (vacation and car purchases do not qualify). Non-qualified withdrawals from a Roth IRA are hit with a 10-percent penalty, right off the top, which is a big disincentive to making frivolous withdrawals from your Roth. If you're concerned that easy access to your retirement savings might make it too tempting to buy cars and vacations, it's harder to take a 10-percent hit on a non-qualified Roth IRA withdrawal than to take out a penalty-free TSP loan.

The Roth IRA is an excellent retirement savings vehicle. I recommend researching whether the Roth IRA is right for your personal situation before simply maxing out TSP contributions.

Rich Roelsing
FSO
FSI/Consulate Calgary

LETTERS



The Coombs Legacy

The *Journal's* obituary of Philip Coombs (May) prompts reflection. My book, *First Resort of Kings* (Potomac Books, 2005), devotes an entire chapter to his contribution to cultural diplomacy in his 700 frustrating days in State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (1961 to 1963).

Coombs was enticed to State by President John Kennedy. Friends like Chester Bowles, Dean Rusk, John Gardner and Ed Murrow, among others, believed that this human-resource economist, staffer for the monumental *Morrill Report* (Universities and World Affairs, 1959), could help focus the role of the university world in foreign policy, pull together the scattered efforts of a dozen U.S. agencies, and bring consensus to a few hundred distracted members of Congress. Along

with Sen. William Fulbright, D-Ark., he stood for a benign, engagemental, cooperative, mutually-advantageous and coordinated public-private approach to exchanges of intellect, scholarship and research.

Coombs' staff of 300 was discouraged by two decades of congressional whipsawing. Eight years of USIA ambivalence did not help: the message-driven agency that controlled the cultural affairs field staff saw little contradiction between education and propaganda.

His energy was impressive. He persuaded the president to establish a blue-chip advisory commission headed by Gardner, with its far-seeing manifesto *Beacon of Hope*. He brought outstanding scholars to Fulbright's supervisory Board of Foreign Scholarships. He pressed for

intellectual-ambassadors like Reischauer and Galbraith. He helped recruit academic cultural officers for embassies like Brazil, Egypt, France, India, Japan and the U.K. He shepherded the mission-defining Fulbright-Hays Act of 1963 through Congress, pulling fragmented legislation together. He pressed the overseas educational arms of a dozen federal agencies to work together. He convinced universities, foundations and NGOs that they had a friend in State. And he led a dozen interlinked study-groups involving 500 high-caliber Americans in redesigning cultural outreach.

Then it was over. One attack came from USIA, headed but not entirely led by his friend Murrow; its unabashed propagandists considered education a minor tool and saw



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LETTERS



Coombs as a predator. Elsewhere, Rep. John J. Rooney, D-N.Y., of the House Appropriations Committee, used Coombs for his annual game of death by a thousand cuts. True, Coombs was no incrementalist. With the economist's mathematical certainty and the short time-frames of any appointee, he could seem impatient — even Fulbright urged him to suffer the uninformed. Eyes on the horizon, Coombs did not see his support falling away. Washington was not entirely ready for new frontiers.

After State, Coombs found his niche. His calm post-mortem, *The Fourth Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Council on Foreign Relations, 1964), was, in its time, the best book ever written in any country on the diplomacy of education and culture. In Paris, he founded UNESCO's Institute for

International Educational Planning: until 1968, Coombs was unofficial "Dean of Education" to the world. Since 1963, IIEP has trained more than 5,000 planners, who today hold senior positions in educational management and teaching in 190 countries. *The World Crisis in Education* (Oxford University Press, 1968), validated 15 years later by an updated volume, is the world's leading textbook on educational costs.

Events today have shown that the submersion of culture and education in a propaganda framework, perpetuated in the phrase "public diplomacy," sells both sides short. Propaganda — or spin — is indispensable, especially in time of war. But wars come and go, whereas the need for intercultural communication never ends. For Coombs, education provided an

appropriate, enduring, unthreatening, productive and decent way of linking U.S. power with the world. The goal: to lead universities in a grand attack on ignorance, obscurantism and intolerance.

For Coombs, sharing education was a low-cost way of dealing with cultural clash, over time. And it maximized America's greatest wealth: education and its deep-dyed traditions of humanizing power.

Richard T. Arndt
FSO, retired
Denver, Colo. ■

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CYBERNOTES

Albright in the Limelight

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has been rivaling Condoleezza Rice for face time with the media lately. A round of late-April interviews centered on her new and timely book, *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God and World Affairs* (Harper-Collins), released on May 1 (www.amazon.com).

"I have looked at foreign policy and international relations issues all my life and I've never seen the world in such turmoil," Albright told *Time* magazine. "What I'm looking at is whether there are elements within all religions that allow us to work to solve problems rather than using religion as a divisive issue."

Albright told Reuters that President Bush's religious absolutism has made American foreign policy more rigid and more difficult for other countries to accept. "Some of his language is really quite over the top," she states. "When he says 'God is on our side,' it's very different from [former President Abraham] Lincoln saying 'We have to be on God's side.'"

But it's not all heavy-duty policy study for the former Secretary of State. She had some fun in a "guest star" cameo role on the WB series "Gilmore Girls" that aired last Oct. 25. "If you think she seems brilliant and sassy strutting around the Middle East, you should try talking to her in person," executive producer Amy Sherman-Palladino told the press. More recently, a May 11 appearance on Comedy Central's "Stephen Colbert Show"

showcased Albright's pointed and refreshing repartee.

The legendary formidable presence of America's first female Secretary of State was further boosted with the revelation in a *New York Times Magazine* interview that at age 68 she works out three times a week and can still leg-press up to 400 pounds. Who knew that Condi Rice was not the first female physical-fitness buff in Foggy Bottom?

— Susan Maitra

T-Bureaus Reorganization "Hijacked" by Political Appointees: An Inside View

The first detailed account of the controversial "stealth" reorganization of the State Department bureaus in the "T family" that handle arms control and international security issues is now in print in the June issue of *Arms Control Today*, the monthly magazine of the Arms Control Association (http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2006_06/ReorgRunAmok.asp).

In "Reorganization Run Amok: State Department's WMD Effort Weakened," arms expert Dean Rust, who saw the reorganization unfold as an acting deputy director in the Nonproliferation Bureau, gives a blow-by-blow account of the process. "What started as an ostensibly routine inspection of the arms control, nonproliferation, and verification and compliance functions at the State Department," Rust states, "has ended with a restructuring that has led to a net loss of the department's effective-

ness in these areas." Rust adds: "Frankly, one could argue that this reduction in State's role is precisely the outcome some were seeking."

Last November AFSA wrote to Secretary of State Rice expressing concern over the reorganization, which was already negatively affecting working conditions for Foreign Service members in the T bureaus ("What's Happening to the 'T' Family?," *AFSA News*, January 2006). AFSA's request to review, comment on and, where appropriate, negotiate the reorganization plans in writing before they were implemented was ignored.

Rust retired from the State Department in September 2005. He told Knight Ridder he was "very dismayed" by the decisions made by political appointees, but would have retired at that time anyway.

— Susan Maitra

Paul Wolfowitz at the World Bank: A Status Report

Paul Wolfowitz, former U.S. deputy defense secretary and lead architect of the U.S.-led Iraq invasion, took over as president of the World Bank Group on March 31, 2005. Picking up on his predecessor James Wolfensohn's anti-corruption campaign, Wolfowitz has made it his number-one issue. He has targeted graft among the recipients of World Bank loans, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, as well as within the Bank's management structure.

A spate of reviews, surveys and analyses of Wolfowitz's nearly 18-month tenure issued over the past



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50 Years Ago...



The voluntary relinquishment of American sovereignty over the Philippines was an almost unprecedented act of good will on the part of a stronger nation towards a weaker, dependent country. ... Today, when the problems of colonialism are receiving dramatic attention the world over, as highlighted last year by the Bandung Conference, the unique American record in the Philippines deserves to be emphasized and made known to a wider world audience.

— Edward W. Mill, on the tenth anniversary of Philippine independence on July 4, 1946, in “Letters to the Editor,” *FSJ*, July 1956.

weeks feature a passionate mixture of praise and criticism.

At first, the appointment was met with skepticism from Bank staff and incredulity from development campaigners. But as Emad Mekay of the Inter Press Service News Agency notes, Wolfowitz’s anti-fraud drive has proven, over the months, to be a “life raft for his image” (<http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=32926>). The World Bank president held up loans to India, Bangladesh, Kenya and Chad, and made it clear to the Republic of the Congo that it would not get the \$2.9 billion it desperately needed unless it established strong anti-corruption measures (<http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/art.shtml?x=531789>). Internally, Wolfowitz restructured the Bank’s Department of Institutional Integrity, the organization’s anti-corruption watchdog.

Still, many critics within the Bank remain unimpressed. A *Financial Times* analysis of his first eight months in office found “strife” and “unhappiness” among senior staff and directors over Wolfowitz’s management style and performance. A *U.S. News & World Report* investigation on the

Bank’s corruption and ethics program reported similar findings (http://www.whistleblower.org/content/press_detail.cfm?press_id=425&keyword). The sources of discontent most often cited were Wolfowitz’s appointment of personal Republican advisers and the resulting “massive exodus of top talent” from the Bank (<http://www.thewashingtonnote.com/archives/001196.php>).

There are also voices of dissatisfaction outside the Bank. At a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on March 28, Adam Lerrick, director of the Gailliot Center for Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University, said: “The Bank gives itself good marks and boasts that more than three-quarters of projects completed had ‘satisfactory outcomes.’ But when the auditors are captive, when the timing of judgment is premature, when the criteria are faulty and when the numbers are selectively manipulated — how credible are the conclusions?” (<http://www.senate.gov/~foreign/hearings/2006/hrg060328a.html>)

The final verdict is, clearly, still out. A BBC poll of 32 nations in January showed that the global public believes



It does sound like this is part of a strategy — in that they don't value their own lives, and they certainly don't value ours. ... Taking their own lives was not necessary, but it certainly is a good PR move.

— *U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy Colleen Graffy on the suicides by three inmates at Camp Delta in Guantanamo Bay, June 12, www.guardian.co.uk.*

the Bank still has a positive influence in the world (<http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brglobalmultiregionra/164.php?nid=&id=&pnt=164&lb=btgl>). But, some development activists argue, if Wolfowitz wants to maintain or increase this good will, he must show leadership in reforming the Bank's governance structures to give a voice to poor, recipient countries, take decisive action to get the Bank to stop dictating borrowers' economic policies, ensure that the Bank really has 'learned the lessons' of infrastructure and address the question of debt relief (<http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/art.shtml?x=538129>). Anti-corruption "noise" alone will not do, they say.

You can keep up to date on developments at the World Bank by visiting the many available online resources. In addition to the World Bank Web site (<http://www.worldbank.org>), check out Probe International's *Odious Debts* (<http://www.odiousdebts.org>). Also check out *IFIwatchnet* (<http://if WATCHNET.ORG>), which links NGOs monitoring the international financial institutions, and the

European Network on Debt and Development (<http://www.euroadad.org>).

— *Eirene Busa, Editorial Intern*

Lenovo Computers: China Card Trumps Reality

The State Department caved in to political pressure on May 18, announcing that none of the 16,000 computers it bought in March from Lenovo Group, Ltd., a Chinese-owned personal computer company, would be used on the department's classified networks. State had originally planned to use 900 for classified work.

The about-face came after Representative Frank R. Wolf, R-Va., chairman of the House subcommittee that oversees State's budget appropriations, wrote to Sec. Rice, warning that "the Chinese have a coordinated espionage program against our government" (<http://www.house.gov/wolf/news/2006/05-18Computers.html>).

Lenovo, which purchased the PC division of IBM Corporation in 2005, won a competitive bid in 2006 to sell the State Department \$13 million worth of PCs. Two years ago, the *Washington Post* called Lenovo "one of the darlings of the Chinese business world," and said it was destined to become a "global company with a recognized brand." Today, however, the company symbolizes American fears concerning national security and global competition.

The congressional campaign was spearheaded by Larry M. Wortzel and Michael R. Wessel, members of the bipartisan United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission. The two explained their security concerns thus: "The U.S. is a principal intelligence target for China. The government is pursuing aggressive efforts to obtain access to our networks" (http://www.uscc.gov/hearings/2006hearings/written_testimonies/06_05_18press_conf/06_05_18_wessel.php).

Fears over economic competition from China also played a role in the outcry over the purchase. In the fuss, however, little attention was given to the fact that Lenovo computers are assembled on U.S. soil, or that there are computer specialists at the Bureau of Diplomatic Security who regularly check State Department systems for monitoring devices and malicious software.

Though State buckled, not everyone was fooled. Dexter Anderson, a retired FSO from Connecticut and "Buy American" proponent who followed the issue, points up the ironies: "Given the yawning trade deficit with China, would the critics rather have had the department purchase 'American' computers such as Dells or HPs assembled in China, or 'Chinese' computers assembled in North Carolina?"

And further: "If the Chinese were going to slip bad things into computers they somehow knew were destined to perform classified U.S. government work, couldn't they just as easily slip them into computers assembled for American companies in China?" Anderson asks.

— *Eirene Busa, Editorial Intern, and Susan Maitra*

U.S. Restores Diplomatic Relations with Libya

The State Department announced on May 15 that the United States will restore full diplomatic relations with Libya (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/1006/66235.htm>).

In consideration of Libya's 2003 renunciation of terrorist activities and continuous cooperation with U.S. antiterrorist efforts thereafter, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice declared, the U.S. will upgrade the liaison office in Tripoli to an embassy, rescind Libya's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and remove it from the annual list of countries involved in terrorism.



The May 15 decision ends more than 25 years of hostility between the U.S. and Libya. Ties were formally cut in 1979, when an angry mob chanting pro-Iran slogans set fire to Embassy Tripoli. Relations deteriorated further over the next decade as Libya was implicated in the 1986 bombing of La Belle discothèque in Berlin, the French UTA Flight 772 disaster in 1989 and the 1988 downing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people died.

In 2003, Muammar Qadhafi announced that Libya would abandon its WMD program and allow international weapons inspectors into the country (<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/32007.pdf>). Since then, relations have warmed considerably. The process was helped by Libya's cooperation in tracking the illegal proliferation network run by A.Q. Khan, Pakistan's top nuclear scientist (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/libya/khan-libya.htm>).

What is expected from this new era in U.S.-Libyan relations? The Bush

administration looks forward to capitalizing on economic benefits. Libya's oil reserves total 39 billion barrels, the largest in Africa. As *Foreign Policy In Focus* analyst Ronald Bruce St. John states: "The United States has never been a major importer of Libyan oil and is not expected to be one in the future, [but] Libya's oil and gas reserves are increasingly important to America's European allies. Additional Libyan output will contribute to global supplies to the mutual benefit of both sides of the Atlantic" (<http://www.fpif.org/fpif/ftxt/3286>). Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs C. David Welch reaffirmed this focus on economic ties at a recent State Department briefing (<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rm/2006/66268.htm>).

The Bush administration also looks forward to a more open discussion with Tripoli on other issues of importance to the U.S., including human rights and political reform. Recently, the United States Liaison Office instituted the Libyan Fulbright Foreign Student Program to provide scholarships for Libyans to pursue post-grad-

uate-level study in the U.S. (<http://tripoli.usmission.gov/>).

Some also believe that Tripoli's restoration of relations with the U.S. may serve as a model for North Korea or Iran. Kurt Achin, a Seoul-based correspondent and Bureau Chief for Voice of America, believes the Libyan model can be applied to North Korea, especially with South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon already championing it (<http://www.voanews.com/english/2006-05-25-voa35.cfm>). U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton hinted in May, however, that it is "unlikely" that the same can be said for Iran (<http://www.nuclearno.com/text.asp?10856>).

Meanwhile, the Bush administration continues to face criticism from families of the victims of Pan Am Flight 103. These families are frustrated that the U.S. government has not urged the Libyan government to honor a settlement made with the families in 2003 giving them full compensation once Libya was taken off the list of state sponsors of terror (<http://www.victimsofpanamflight103.org>).

To follow unfolding developments, see the World News Network's *Libya Daily* (<http://www.libyadaily.com>). For a quick and easy timeline of U.S.-Libyan relations since 1979, visit *Aljazeera.net* (<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/9375DF75-28FB-4D18-96C591E55DB5B976.htm>).

For background, see the Council on Foreign Relations Web site (http://www.cfr.org/publication/10863/taming_of_a_pariah.html). See *Congressional Research Service Reports* for Libya's economic and political history (http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/data/2006/upl-meta-crs-8361/RL33142_2006Jan25.pdf). ■

— Eirene Busa, Editorial Intern

Site of the Month: www.craigslist.com

Getting ready for your next post? Whether it's your first or sixth tour, you may want to check out www.craigslist.com, the world's most popular online classifieds section. *Craigslist* currently provides services in 35 countries in addition to all 50 U.S. states, and can help users find anything from a new piano to a new pet or car.

Craigslist was created in 1995 by Craig Newmark, a Web-oriented software engineer in San Francisco. In just over a decade, it has become the seventh most popular English-language site — after Yahoo, AOL, Microsoft, Google, Ebay and Newscorp — with more than nine million classified ads and more than 400,000 new job listings each month. And the service, which is free, is still expanding at an astounding rate.

For new users, the Web site's homepage may seem overwhelming, with list after list of information to choose from. But the no-nonsense layout is surprisingly easy to navigate, even for the most Internet-challenged users.

— Eirene Busa, Editorial Intern



SPEAKING OUT

Run, Lemmings, Run

BY DAVID T. JONES

The Foreign Service is cavorting about in apparent eagerness to jump onto Secretary Rice's transformational diplomacy bandwagon. But before we join the procession like good little lemmings, we would be wise to notice that there is a cliff ahead. Several, in fact.

Take the Secretary's Global Repositioning Initiative. This is intended to realign our diplomatic staffing with our national interests by shifting Foreign Service positions away from comfortable European embassies to countries in the Middle East and South Asia on the front lines of the war on terror. Now, it is true that, at first glance, the disparity between the diplomatic staffing patterns for the U.S. government's relationship with 80 million Germans and with a billion Indians is striking. But look again.

Is the argument that we should staff our posts on the basis of the country's population? That would mean we should have over 40 times as many officers in China (population 1.3 billion) as in Canada (32 million). Or perhaps we should readjust the ratio of FSOs stationed in Saudi Arabia (population 26 million) and Bangladesh (144 million)?

Even if one accepts the rationale behind repositioning (whatever it is) at face value, it is rather puzzling that the first round of the exercise left France totally untouched while Germany, Belgium and Italy lost a combined 12 slots. No restructuring process is ever perfect, of course, particularly one executed as suddenly as this one was. But I still have to wonder whether the

The Foreign Service should look before it leaps onto the transformational diplomacy bandwagon.

main criterion for coming out a winner rather than a loser in the exercise is bureaucratic skill rather than substantive arguments.

There also seems to be a rather insulting assumption at work here that our colleagues serving in the developed world somehow are not pulling their weight, so their positions should be shifted to what appear to be more fallow (if perilous) fields. But is there any real evidence that U.S. objectives are better served by devoting resources to, say, Uzbekistan that used to be applied within the U.K.? Assessment and analyses, please.

It is also irrelevant whether there are 200 or 2,000 cities with at least one million inhabitants that lack a formal U.S. diplomatic presence. The point isn't population but whether the diplomatic equivalent of boots on the ground will provide commensurate value for expense and risk.

One-Person Deathtraps

Backers of transformational diplomacy also advocate expanding the number of one-person offices, currently known as "American Presence

Posts." In some ways, this concept is a natural outgrowth of the "honorary consul" mechanism, whereby a prominent local expatriate, host-country businessman, or sympathetic local national assumes some legal and representational responsibilities on behalf of the United States in a foreign city or province. (In fact, for most of our history such individuals provided the only U.S. diplomatic representation many cities, and some countries, ever saw.) In its modern incarnation, an American Presence Post allows us to cover more area with limited numbers, taking advantage of hi-tech connectivity.

But here is the dilemma. If we want to maximize the return on our investment in such posts, we should be opening them in the very places that we have traditionally ignored as marginal or inhospitable. So how do we effectively support such remote outposts? And what happens the first time that our man (or woman) in Carjackistan is seized, tortured and executed on global TV? And perhaps also the family as a bonus? At a minimum, that is likely to have a serious negative effect on recruitment across the board — and not just at American Presence Posts.

Those who suggest that FSOs in such environments need to act like Special Forces officers should be reminded that when headed into harm's way, the military sends fully equipped combat teams, not sitting ducks.

Although less likely to have a sanguinary outcome, the "Virtual Presence Post" has its own set of short-



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comings. These offices appear to be the equivalent of an Internet café-cum-chatroom, with a safely-distanced U.S. government representative on the other end of the fiber-optic connection. Leaving aside the obvious question of how effective such communications are in advancing policy objectives, just who secures this equipment from local thieves or from the random attacker who figures out that a liter of accelerant in a Molotov cocktail can cause a million-dollars-plus of expense to Washington?

If either of these proposals had come from former Secretary Powell, at least we could be confident that he had counted the costs. He has been in harm's way, has sent others in that direction, and has absorbed the consequences of them not coming back. Being "point man" in even the noblest cause can have bloody consequences; not always is the blood that of your enemy. For all of her intelligence and charisma, Secretary Rice has not walked this walk.

An Old Road

We have gone down this road before, of course. Those with longer memories will recall "GLOP" — Henry Kissinger's infamous Global Outlook and Programming shakeup of the mid-1970s. GLOP was supposed

to move all of those infected with "localitis" (others might prefer the term "expertise") into new regions and stimulate fresh thinking. But all the exercise managed to do was eliminate a good part of the department's institutional wisdom on the Middle East, as many "Arabists" walked away into more lucrative pursuits rather than spend a couple of tours elsewhere.

Obviously, we need to place our limited resources where they will have the greatest effect, but instantly interchangeable parts we are not. I recall the observation of an Army chief of staff who asked his audience rhetorically, "What is my longest lead-time item?" The answer was not the follow-on to the Abrams tank or the next helicopter gunship. The answer was a senior officer. "It takes me 20 years to grow a general officer." With that objective in mind, the military thinks, plans and prepares in generation-long terms, sorting through a vast intake of young officers to obtain its senior leaders.

To be sure, this is the Army way, not a State Department career track. You can "make" an ambassador in 20 seconds with a presidential phone call. But to produce a qualified U.S. diplomat at the FS-1 level, let alone a Senior Foreign Service officer, takes a long time, a great deal of training and many hard choices — by both the Foreign Service and the individual FSO.

If we want to cultivate Arabists, China hands, a Republic of Korea group, or Amazon area experts, we will have to make a generation-long investment in officers who are essentially tagged for such regions. More than that, we will have to protect and reward them for their commitment, even when it eventuates that we "guessed wrong" about how important the area will be in 2030. After all, there are those who say that "Brazil is the country of the future — and always will be."



The Chimera of Linguistic Facility

We have seen “Vital Language of the Era” fads come and go, as well. Today the top contenders include Arabic, Chinese, Farsi and Urdu. A generation ago, the central U.S. challenge (the Iraq of its day) was Vietnam, so winning hearts and minds ostensibly required our bodies on the ground to communicate in Vietnamese. Toward that end, Washington sent thousands of our best and brightest through crash courses in the language, as well as more extended study. Of course, the reasons we lost that war had little if anything to do with the ability to speak the language. Nor is their hard-won linguistic expertise exactly in high demand today.

Does anyone really think that we will convert Hamas or al-Qaida supporters to Western democracy by debating our differences in Arabic instead of English? And even if that were the magic key, just which variant of Arabic (or Chinese, to cite another prime candidate) should the new best-and-brightest generation be learning?

In truth, unless you come to the Foreign Service with the language already imbedded in your family or educational background, or possess the linguistic knack of a Gen. Vernon Walters, you will probably never speak a “hard” language with the same fluency with which your foreign interlocutor will speak English — because he or she almost certainly began mastering English in childhood. Your hard-language ability is likely to be equivalent to the knack of a bear for riding a bicycle: the observer marvels that you speak it at all, rather than that you speak it well. And, if we wish to recruit first- or second-generation Americans for special language positions, we must calculate the weight of the cultural baggage that they will bring with them into these assignments.

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To be sure, there will always be a handful of individuals who are the 21st-century equivalent of 19th-century linguist, adventurer and explorer Richard Burton. Among other exploits, he disguised himself as a Muslim and visited Mecca — where discovery meant death. But the downside of employing such figures is that they demand both autonomy and authority, and the results can be idiosyncratic.

In that regard, the precedent of Sir Charles Napier may be instructive. After seizing the Sind in 1843, he reportedly informed his superiors by transmitting only one word: “Peccavi” (I have sinned). Yet he still expected to be backed up by those superiors. While our cell-phone-connected world makes equivalent action unlikely, the consequences of initiative are not always predictable.

Arguing Over Transformation

Just as no one steps into the same stream twice, it is a new Foreign Service every day. And the next administration, of whatever party, will have its own foreign policy buzzword. But doing diplomacy differently doesn’t mean acting without appropriate reflection and analysis. Transformational diplomacy in its many manifestations deserves such a review rather than a galvanic twitch into action.

Why can’t we have a reasoned and reasonable discussion about the merits of the policy? To question policy is not disloyalty. In this regard, we can learn from our military colleagues. Those within and outside the armed forces who have cast a skeptical eye on the defense parameters and weapons systems costs associated with DOD’s cur-

rent quadrennial defense review are not attacked as insubordinate coup plotters. The arguments are intense, but cries of “treason” are not part of the discourse.

Foreign policy choices are always complex, and who is better positioned to critique them than members of the Foreign Service? Let us not turn into lemmings who obediently sprint over the cliff. Nor should we let fear that we will be dismissed as disloyal to the current administration deter us from responding to threats.

A soft answer turneth not away wrath; it only indicates weakness. Diplomat is not spelled “d-o-o-r-m-a-t.” ■

David T. Jones, a retired Senior Foreign Service officer, is a frequent contributor to the Journal.



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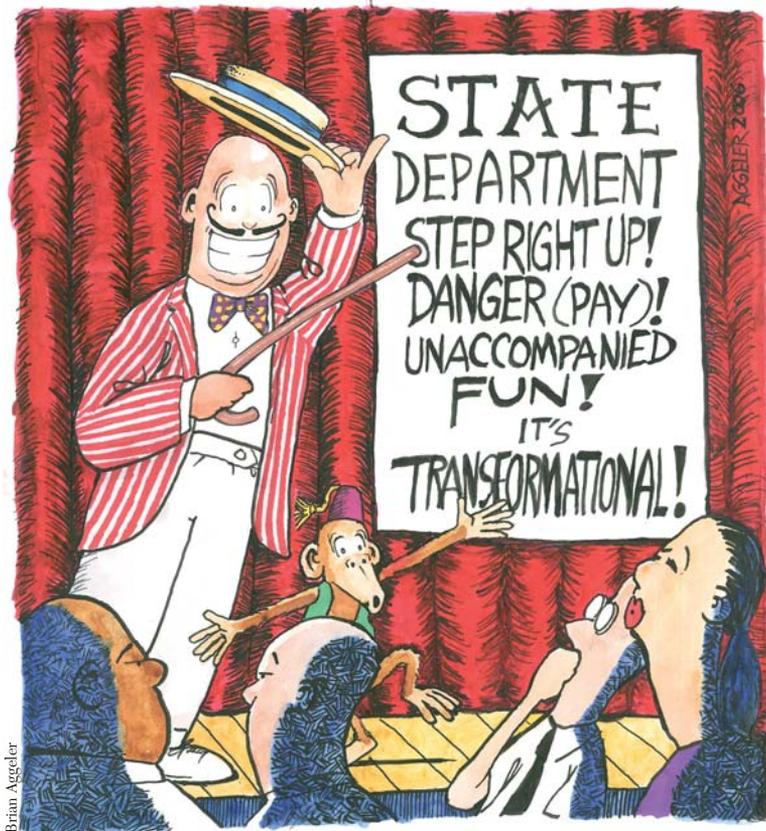
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OBTAINING THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY WILL BE THE KEY TEST OF SECRETARY OF STATE RICE'S COMMITMENT TO HER VISION.

BY SHAWN ZELLER

By all accounts, the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative revitalized the Foreign Service during Colin Powell's tenure as Secretary of State. But has it positioned State (and the other foreign affairs agencies) well enough to meet the challenges of "transformational diplomacy," the next big thing after the DRI?

There are certainly grounds for optimism. *Business Week* recently conducted a poll indicating that the State Department ranked third, behind only Disney and Google, as an ideal employer of undergraduates. The FBI and CIA

finished a close fourth and fifth, respectively, but no other government agency even broke the top 25. The study, conducted by Philadelphia-based Universum Communications, was based on a survey of 37,000 undergraduate members of the class of 2006. The students were asked to list their top five prospective employers from among 189 organizations that were frequently mentioned by students in the previous annual survey.

The Partnership for Public Service's most recent ranking of the best places to work in the federal government is similarly encouraging. This annual survey is viewed as a reliable gauge of employee attitudes because it is based on federal workers' responses to questions posed by the Office of Personnel Management in its biennial Federal Human Capital Survey on pay and benefits, family-friendly policies, diversity and leadership. The PPS, in cooperation with American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation, then crunches the numbers.

State finished second among Cabinet departments, close behind the Department of Energy, in the 2005 results, which mainly reflects the fruits of Powell's leadership. Overall, the department rose from 19th to 10th place. "It was quite a nice rise," says PPS Vice President John Palguta, who previously was director of the Office of Policy and Evaluation at the Merit Systems Protection Board.

"When Colin Powell became Secretary of State, he really paid attention to the people part of his job," recalls Palguta. "He listened to his troops. And one of the things he did was lobby for more money for proactive recruitment. He also looked at the deployment of his folks and where people were most needed. He listened to the employees where they said they were stretched thin, and set about trying to rectify that."

Now that DRI has ended, the big question is whether that momentum will continue in the new era of transformational diplomacy that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has proclaimed. Palguta thinks it will. Referencing the PPS survey, Under Secretary of State for Manage-

Shawn Zeller, a regular contributor to the Journal, is a senior staff writer for Congressional Quarterly.

***There is no doubt that
the Powell-era***

Diplomatic Readiness

Initiative brought State

back from the brink.

ment Henrietta Fore has assured employees that the department is committed to making itself the best place to work in the federal government, and has exhorted everyone at State to adopt that goal.

She may have a hard sell, however, judging from the responses of Foreign Service officers interviewed for this article. Many have serious concerns about Rice's leadership

style, which, in contrast to that of Powell, is less attentive to Foreign Service management. Even the prospect that the long fight for overseas comparability pay may finally be coming to a victorious end has not allayed widespread doubts about her willingness to go to bat for her department.

Meanwhile, huge concerns persist about the department's commitment to helping diplomats maintain their family lives, especially as Rice pushes for massive redeployments of officers to hardship and danger posts in the developing world as part of her Global Repositioning Initiative and the number of unaccompanied posts is expected to grow. (Such posts already account for more than 700 unaccompanied positions.) To be sure, the department has made progress on finding more jobs for spouses than it did in the past. But much more could be done on this critical issue, officers say.

Still, in comparison to the human resources-related turmoil now sweeping the Defense and Homeland Security departments, State's labor-management relations are civil and generally productive. Both DOD and DHS are mired in court fights over their plans to implement pay-for-performance systems, the result of legislation passed by Congress in 2003 and 2004 allowing them to scrap the decades-old General Schedule, the civil service's pay system, in favor of new regimes that grant pay raises based on formulas that will consider performance reviews, locality and market factors.

The Pay-for-Performance Tradeoff

When Rice went to Capitol Hill earlier this year to present the Bush administration's Fiscal Year 2007 budget request, she dropped what would have registered as a bombshell in almost any other Cabinet department. She asked Congress to authorize sweeping changes to the Foreign Service personnel system that would eliminate

C O V E R S T O R Y

annual step increases, equivalent to about 3 percent of base pay, while allowing the department to use the resulting savings to create a performance pay fund. (This change would not affect annual cost-of-living adjustments.) Officers could fare better under the new framework, but only if their performance is deemed outstanding. Moreover, under the new system, for every officer getting a bigger raise than average, another would get less, a zero-sum proposition that would be anathema in agencies less attuned to merit-based compensation.

As an incentive for the Foreign Service to accept this unprecedented change, State would phase in overseas comparability pay, the equivalent of Washington, D.C.-level locality pay for all its personnel serving abroad. Locality pay, which all federal employees receive on top of their base salary depending on where in the U.S. they

Huge concerns persist about the department's commitment to helping diplomats maintain their family lives.

Senior Executive Service, as well as employees of some federal agencies serving overseas, do receive it.) With Washington, D.C., locality pay already above the 17-percent mark, and rising by about a percentage point each year, this prohibition effectively imposes a double-digit pay cut on all Foreign Service employees serving abroad. This disparity damages both the morale and the diplomatic readiness of U.S. foreign affairs agencies.

The Office of Management and Budget, which has

work, is intended to close the gap between what public-sector and private-sector employees are paid for performing similar jobs. Unfortunately, the Federal Pay Comparability Act of 1990, 5 USC 5301 et seq., currently prohibits the payment of locality pay outside of the continental U.S. (However, due to a 2004 technical change in the law, all members of the Senior Foreign Service and

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long opposed AFSA's request to ensure that employees stationed abroad receive at least the same levels of compensation received by their counterparts in Washington, agreed to back pay comparability if the department shifted to pay for performance. In its budget request to Congress, the department requested additional funding in 2008 and 2009 to roll out the new system, with the goal being to begin implementation this year. During his confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in March, new Director General George Staples said that if the plan is approved by Congress, a transition phase to granting full overseas comparability pay would begin in April 2007. Under this plan the salaries of overseas personnel would be adjusted by one-half of the current difference between overseas and Washington, D.C., pay, or 9 percent.

The American Foreign Service Association's initial reaction was positive. "We basically support it because the Foreign Service is already a pay-for-performance system," says AFSA State Vice President Steve Kashkett. As he observes, "We already have rank in person, rather than position, and we already face fierce competition with our peers worldwide for promotion," in contrast to the Civil Service. However, disturbing indications that the bill may grant the Secretary of State "sole and exclusive rights" to design and implement the new system, thereby stripping AFSA of its current right to have a voice at the table, have caused the association to qualify its support.

For his part, Ambassador John O'Keefe — a career diplomat who served as acting director general of the Foreign Service for several months between the retirement of W. Robert Pearson and the confirmation of George Staples — cautions that the plan is still a work in progress. The department wants to model the system on that already in place for Senior Foreign Service officers, but has refined few of the details, he says.

"It's a reasonable management tool to say the high performers ought to get recognized for high performance," says O'Keefe. As for the lack of controversy about it at State, he notes that "We already do it," citing the longstanding promotion board reviews that every

***Rice is pushing for
massive redeployments
of officers to hardship
and danger posts in
the developing world
as part of her Global
Repositioning Initiative.***

Foreign Service employee faces on a regular basis, and the Foreign Service's up-or-out promotion system. "It's not office politics. This is truly objective. It's accepted as a fair and reasonable way of sorting out who gets promoted and who doesn't by the vast majority of our people."

Among the rank-and-file, some officers say they see examples of favoritism in the current performance board reviews. But their main recommendation — adopting 360-degree reviews, in which

both the superiors and subordinates of rated employees are asked to provide comments for the review panel — is something the department is eager to implement, says O'Keefe. Not all the details have been formulated, he's quick to add, "But if you are evaluating someone ... you need to know how well an individual gets along with colleagues because interagency and cross-sectional cooperation is critical to the success of any mission and you want to see how well they are treating subordinates." If that is the end result, most State employees will be pleased.

Recruitment and Retention

Even so, the Foreign Service does face many of the same problems that the Civil Service does, such as growing concern that government employment is becoming less competitive with the private sector at a time when it is more important than ever to recruit top talent. Is State doing what it takes to recruit the best possible personnel, and then retain them?

Some of the signs are good. The number of registrants for the Foreign Service exam has grown markedly since Powell launched a massive advertising push. At the same time, surveys of college graduates indicate a continued interest in public service. The Foreign Service has always had a special appeal, because it offers the opportunity to live and work literally all over the world.

But once the sense of adventure wears off, will new recruits stay committed, as their predecessors did, and pursue careers in the Foreign Service? Veteran officers worry they will not, unless State does a better job of rewarding talented young officers, providing them with challenging work, and employing their spouses and partners.

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Thanks to the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, State is out of the crisis situation it faced in the 1990s, when intake of new officers failed to keep up with attrition. More than 1,000 officers were hired between 2002 and 2004 under the DRI. The initiative is now over, but, says O'Keefe, "We continue to hire slightly above attrition." For 2007, the administration has requested more than 250 new positions in the areas of transformational diplomacy, security and consular affairs. "What it means is we are not going to fall back as we did before," says O'Keefe. It will also ideally open enough wiggle room to allow more officers to gain critical language training, program management and public diplomacy skills.

Even the prospect of achieving overseas comparability pay has not allayed widespread doubts about Rice's willingness to go to bat for her department.

By contrast, many say that the entire Civil Service is now in the midst of a "human capital crisis." In 2001, the Government Accountability Office (at that time known as the General Accounting Office), which oversees the executive branch for Congress, put the state of the federal work force on its list of high-risk areas, arguing that "serious management challenges across a wide range of federal agencies, covering programs that involve billions of federal expenditures, can be attributed to shortcomings in how agencies manage their human capital." The GAO went on to argue that agencies — during the downsizing of the 1990s — had allowed their skills at recruiting and training new workers to atrophy, and that with much of the federal work force

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aging, and on the verge of retirement eligibility, something had to be done fast.

The situation, in reality, has proven not quite as dire, thanks to the unusual loyalty of federal workers, who quit at rates only about a quarter of that of the private-sector work force. Many have readily worked for years past retirement eligibility, allowing agencies extra time to recruit and train new personnel.

Everyone says that the DRI brought State back from the brink. And the numbers bear it out. AFSA argues that the department needs to work harder to diversify the work force, recruiting more minority officers and women and hanging on to them. But that, too, has been a major priority for both Powell and Rice, who have ramped up recruiting at universities with large minority populations, and vastly increased the amount spent advertising the Foreign Service written exam. Under Powell, the department also decreased the amount of time it takes to bring a new officer on board from 27 months to 10, and reached out — through targeted advertising — to fill skills gaps in management and budget specialties.

Confirming the results of the PPS and *Business Week* surveys referenced at the beginning of this article, the State Department has proven a more desirable employer than most other agencies. According to separation-rate data provided by OPM, the department's annual rate at which Foreign Service officers have left the service has over the last five years been lower than that of the Civil Service governmentwide. Last year, for instance, the Foreign Service separation rate was 5.48 percent, compared with 6.76 percent in the federal government as a whole. Still, like the rest of the federal government, State and the other foreign affairs agencies have to be on their toes, filling skill gaps as veteran officers retire. Office of Personnel Management data indicate that over the next five years the percentage of Foreign Service employees eligible to retire will grow from 38 percent to 60 percent.

To be sure, senior officers are also about the same age as their Civil Service counterparts, at 54.3 years old on average. One potential cause for concern, however, is the

Most Foreign Service employees agree with the basic contours of Rice's strategy. But they worry that in a tight budget environment, some of the promises will go unmet.

apparent upward trend in the retirement numbers. Last year, 10.7 percent of senior officers left the Foreign Service, marking a five-year high. That's a lot of knowledge heading out the door.

Few in leadership, however, seem worried about State's ability to recruit new blood. And on its face, the numbers look good. The number of Foreign Service exam regis-

trants has continued to grow, and now averages 35,000 a year, up from 22,000 a few years ago. The department's advertising budget for the exam, just \$75,000 five years ago, is now well over \$1 million. Women make up a solid 45 percent of the hopefuls, and minorities 22 percent. The average age of incoming recruits is now 30, just a year older than when acting DG O'Keefe joined the Service. And that, in a way, is another feather in State's cap, as the federal government as a whole has traditionally had trouble hiring workers with substantial previous work experience.

State is happy with the recruits it is getting. After a review, the core characteristics that the department seeks — leadership skills and good judgment under pressure — appear to have stood the test of time. "We had a discussion about changing the profile in the Foreign Service," former DG Pearson told Federal News Radio last year, shortly before his retirement. "Should we recruit greater risk-takers," for example? In the end, the test remained the same: "We're getting such an excellent mix of people, I'm not sure we need to change the recruiting profile," he said.

State's numbers contrast sharply with those of the military, where recruitment in the Navy and Army have lagged since the war in Iraq began. For most of State's history, the comparison might not have been apt. But nowadays, with the number of danger posts spiraling upward, it is. Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the number of Foreign Service positions at unaccompanied posts has risen nearly fourfold to 700. Thankfully, a sense of adventure still drives young people to the Foreign Service, says Pearson. "For job seekers, we offer a career that can't be found anywhere else. That's our strongest appeal."

A Generational Shift

But under the surface, big questions remain, at least among the rank-and-file, about whether the recent recruits will pursue careers at State, or whether they will ultimately opt for greener pastures in the private sector.

A 2004 *Foreign Service Journal* report on officers hired under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative confirmed what many older officers have observed: the new generation is eager to be judged on its merits, rather than time in grade, but hesitates when it comes to committing to the Foreign Service for an entire career. (See “Great Expectations: New Hires and the Foreign Service,” June 2004 *FSJ*.) Many new entrants complain that it took years sometimes for State to put to use the skills for which they were hired.

In some cases, says one recently-retired, 24-year veteran of the Foreign Service, the new recruits have

State has taken some steps in the right direction to help spouses find rewarding work.

proven more reluctant to embrace State’s culture, and more willing to question their superiors. That’s not to say these young officers aren’t up to the task — most, she acknowledged, have proven their mettle just by surviving the highly competitive entrance process — but at the same time, given their

willingness to consider Foreign Service just a short-term job, they don’t have nearly as much at stake as their elders.

“Of course, you want these people, but the question is how do we keep them?” she asks. “How do we bring them into the culture? The attitude now is: ‘We really aren’t losing that many people’” to attrition. “But will that last? You have this big bulge at the bottom because of the DRI. Are those people feeling challenged? Are they happy? Is the department thinking about that?”

“I think there’s been a generational shift,” she says.

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“The people coming in no longer see this as a lifelong career. Often they see it as a way to see the world and to gain some experience.”

There is a consensus that State can take no bigger step toward ensuring the success of the next generation of officers — who, even more than their predecessors, are likely to marry highly-educated, career-oriented men and women unwilling to put aside their own goals — than by increasing employment opportunities for spouses. (Gay and lesbian officers note that the situation is even more dire for them, because their partners are not allowed to apply for many jobs set aside for spouses.)

One veteran officer now based in Washington, who has previously served in Africa, Asia and Latin America, would like to see the department introduce a program that allows spouses to fill Foreign Service jobs on a temporary basis and, after a period of a few years, transition fully into the Service without having to undergo the written exam. “Why is the department willing to bring in an untried college graduate, but not a spouse who’s proven over the years that they can do the job?” she asks.

That’s a question, like many others raised by Rice’s transformational diplomacy initiative, which remains to be resolved. Up to this point, officers have proven willing to make the necessary sacrifices, as Rice moves increasing numbers into hardship and danger posts. But with increasing numbers of two-parent working families in the Foreign Service, family matters remain the biggest sticking point.

The State Department has taken some steps in the right direction. In order to better help spouses find rewarding work, State last year contracted with Milwaukee-based job placement firm Manpower Inc. to launch an initiative that aims to provide spouses with access to overseas employment markets and cultural familiarization training. That built on other initiatives: In 2001, for example, the department launched the Strategic Networking Assistance Program, which seeks to link spouses up with jobs in local markets or positions with multinational companies, nongovernmental organi-

Officers want work that challenges them, but they also want a secure environment within which to carry out their duties and adequate compensation for taking on risky assignments.

zations, or other international agencies, as well as other assistance, in the form of career development seminars and information on training opportunities. And last year, the department teamed with Staff-Centrix to provide training for spouses on entrepreneurship and running service businesses from home using e-mail, phone or fax.

A *Foreign Service Journal* study last year (“Special Report — Family Member Employment: At Work in the Mission,” July-August 2005 *FSJ*) found that 75 percent of family members with jobs continue to work within embassy walls. Spouses preferred this work because it typically paid better than jobs in the local economy, but expressed concern that too few opportunities were available.

Overall, only 35 percent of spouses overseas hold jobs, according to State’s Family Liaison Office, while another 15 percent want a job but cannot find one. Spouses looking for high-level professional employment were particularly disappointed, as most of the available embassy jobs are in junior officer, clerical or blue-collar roles. Officers reported that opportunities vary widely by post, depending on the commitment of mission leaders.

“The Foreign Service is different from almost any other profession you can think of in that it’s composed of people who are highly educated, white-collar professionals, who have to live in places where their spouses cannot really pursue their careers,” says AFSA State VP Kashkett. “This is a unique challenge, and if you want the best and brightest, you have to accommodate their spouses and partners.”

The Transformational Diplomacy Effect

Kashkett says State management needs to be more diligent about ensuring that new recruits find the Foreign Service is everything it was billed to be. Officers want work that challenges them, to be sure; but they also want a secure environment within which to carry out their duties and adequate compensation for taking on risky assignments. That doesn’t mean easy jobs, Kashkett emphasizes. “The image of the pampered U.S. diplomat

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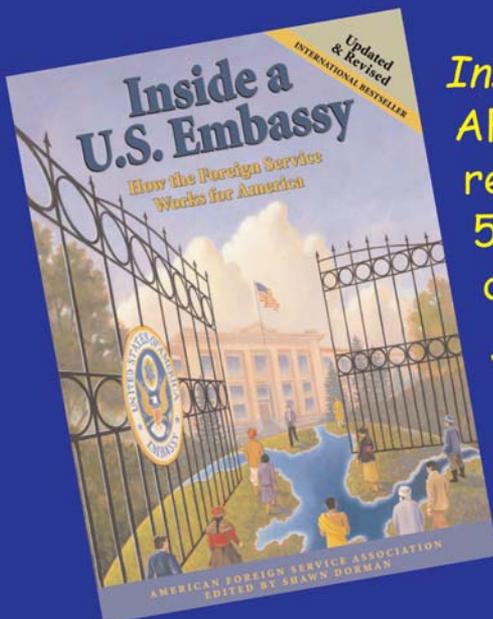
is one we strongly dispute. Today's Foreign Service is a tough way to make a life and our people deserve to be taken care of."

Rice, meanwhile, has laid out a vision of transformational diplomacy that projects placing Foreign Service officers in even more difficult environments on the front lines of the war on terrorism. She has proposed, for example, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, staffed with diplomats, to work outside the secured Green Zone in Baghdad in provinces throughout Iraq, as State has already done to some extent in Afghanistan. (Creation of the teams has been delayed because of slow recruiting and bickering with the military over security for the teams.) She's also upped the ante for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service, with officers now required to be expert in at least two regions and fluent in at least one foreign language. In addition, officers will have to serve in danger-pay and hardship posts (not just bid on them) in order to advance to the Senior Foreign Service.

In response, officers interviewed for this article say

they can't help but be a little offended by some of Rice's pronouncements — that, for example, they need to get out from behind their desks and onto the streets. That's exactly what most officers say they've already been doing for years, sometimes at great personal risk. And if they are to take on greater program management roles, as Rice has requested, officers say she must follow through on her commitment to improve the quality of program management training available, and provide employees with the time to make use of it.

The department has, to its credit, worked to refine its own processes. It has, for instance, taken a welcome step to improve efficiency in the assignment process by refining the EP-Plus program, in which officers have voluntarily entered biographical information about their work experience and skills. The program, which the National Aeronautics and Space Administration invented for its own engineering staff and State refined for use with Foreign Service officers, allowed the department to quickly find staff with experience in South Asia after the



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tsunami hit in 2004. More recently, it enabled State to contribute to the relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina. The department was able to quickly identify officers fluent in languages spoken by minority populations along the Gulf Coast.

In February 2006, Rice recognized the importance of training by filling the open slot at the helm of the Foreign Service Institute with Ruth A. Whiteside, a former FSO who had been the principal deputy assistant secretary of the Bureau of Human Resources. Rice has taken an interest in recasting the training curriculum for Foreign Service employees, shifting coursework at FSI toward public diplomacy and development. She's also moved to make training more accessible to officers at post through online coursework.

Also on the work-force efficiency front, Rice has tasked Under Secretary for Management Fore to redouble her efforts to "rightsize" overseas missions by, for example, shifting information technology, human resources and financial management staff out of individual embassies into regional centers. She also envisions regional public diplomacy centers that would be stationed in major embassies for the purpose of responding to negative propaganda, and has requested \$351 million to bolster those efforts.

As part of the Global Repositioning Initiative, the department is downsizing posts in Europe and the developed world, shifting positions to democratizing countries. Already, more than 100 officers have been repositioned, with more shifts to come. Unfortunately, many of them were moved into new positions in other countries well after being paneled for the job they had bid on; indeed, some of these individuals had already completed most of their language and professional training for that assignment. Such experiences only reinforce the accuracy of independent auditor reports that have sometimes questioned State's follow-through on such initiatives.

Hardship and Danger

Still, most Foreign Service employees agree with the basic contours of Rice's strategy. And for the most part,

If Foreign Service members are to take on greater program management roles, State must improve the quality of training and give employees the time to make use of it.

top management has said the right things about ensuring proper levels of security and providing incentives to encourage work in dangerous parts of the world, while at the same time considering the needs of officers with families. But officers worry that in a tight budget environment, some of the promises will go unmet.

With ever-larger numbers of officers shipping out to unaccompanied posts, family-separation issues continue to be a major concern. One method the department has used to limit family separations is to shorten terms at extreme-danger posts; but that, some worry, could have a negative impact on diplomacy. At Embassy Baghdad, for instance, the department has had to find a whole new set of recruits every year. Elsewhere, an inspector general report last September, for example, argued that turnover in Pakistan had led to "a lack of continuity in leadership, program management and contacts" that weakened public diplomacy efforts. At the same time, a May 2005 GAO report concluded that "State has not developed a comprehensive strategy that clearly identifies safety and security requirements and resources needed to protect U.S. officials."

Says Kashkett: "I don't think people have traditionally joined the Foreign Service expecting to spend a good chunk of their careers in dangerous hardship posts, separated from their families. The biggest challenge for State is to find ways to get people to bid on those posts and to make sure they are safe and are actually able to perform the jobs they are sent there to do."

Thus far, officers have proven willing to accept the challenge, but many wonder how long State can keep it up. It raised spirits, earlier this year, when State moved to boost hardship and danger allowances for service in Iraq and Afghanistan from 25 percent to 35 percent of base pay, the first time allowances had been lifted in decades. In the minds of most officers, the move was long overdue, given the many assignments bunched at the 25-percent level and the special risks associated with serving in countries still immersed in open conflict.

But even as the department followed through and

COVER STORY

raised the allowances, it covered the costs by cutting pay at more than a dozen other posts that had previously received a 5-percent differential, irking many. "They changed the allowances. That was great," says the Washington-based officer who has previously served in overseas assignments in Asia, Africa and Latin America. "But they took it out of other people's hides. You can't tell me they couldn't find that money somewhere else."

There was positive news on the funding front in testimony Rice delivered before Congress earlier this year outlining the administration's FY 2007 budget request. The request, if enacted, would boost State's budget by 13 percent to \$33 billion, the largest percentage increase requested for any Cabinet department, with \$9.3 billion for State Department operations. About \$23 million of that spending would go toward 100 new positions that would be targeted to transformational diplomacy, while another \$1.1 billion would be spent on bolstering the department's consular operations by hir-

ing 135 new consular officers and passport staff. Rice would also spend \$115 million on language training to boost fluency in languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Urdu and Farsi; \$1.5 billion on construction of new embassies and hardening of existing facilities; and \$276 million for professional training and information technology upgrades.

All of that, of course, sounds good. But anyone who's followed the congressional budget process in recent years knows well that the numbers thrown out at the beginning often bear little resemblance to those enacted at year's end. Much of Rice's legacy will hinge on her success in following through.

"We are the front lines of U.S. foreign policy," says Kashkett. "We are there to make sure that things don't deteriorate to the point where the military needs to get involved, yet we are a tiny percentage of the military in terms of funding. The bottom line is that we think that in a world like today's, the Foreign Service needs far greater resources." ■

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HONORING AN “AGGRESSIVE INTERVENTIONIST”: AMBASSADOR MORTON ABRAMOWITZ

LAST MONTH AFSA RECOGNIZED THE RETIRED AMBASSADOR FOR HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN DIPLOMACY AND A LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE.

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

On June 22, Ambassador Morton I. Abramowitz received the American Foreign Service Association’s award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, in recognition of a distinguished 31-year Foreign Service career and equally impressive achievements in public service after his retirement.

Born in Lakewood, N.J., on Jan. 20, 1933, the future ambassador was drawn to the Foreign Service from an early age. He studied Chinese affairs at Stanford, earning a B.A. in 1953 and an M.A. from Harvard in 1955. After a year in the Army, he worked for the International Cooperation

Administration from 1958 to 1960, when he joined the Foreign Service as an economic officer specializing in Chinese affairs. In keeping with that background, his first two assignments were as a consular-economic officer in Taipei (1960-1962) and a economic officer in Hong Kong (1963-1966). He returned to Washington in 1966, spending the next seven years there in various capacities, including serving as special assistant to Under Secretary Elliot Richardson.

The next phase of his diplomatic career, from 1973 to 1978, centered on relations with the Department of Defense: he was political adviser to the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Command from 1973 to 1974 and then deputy assistant secretary of Defense for international affairs, on detail from the Foreign Service, from 1974 to 1978. The familiarity with politico-military affairs he gained as a result would stand him in good stead in all three of his ambassadorships.

In 1978, Abramowitz was selected as chief of mission in Thailand, serving in Bangkok until 1981. He next became the U.S. representative to the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Negotiations in Vienna, with ambassadorial rank, a position he held from 1983 to 1984.

From 1985 to 1989, Amb. Abramowitz served as the first assistant secretary of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. His third and final ambassadorship was in Turkey, a position he held from 1989 to 1991. During that time he also attained the rank of career ambassador.

In 1991, Amb. Abramowitz retired from the Foreign



Amb. Abramowitz introduces Pres. George H.W. Bush, who visited Turkey in July 1991 after the Gulf War.

Service to become president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, soon after the attempted coup d'état against Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev. Even before that crisis, reflecting his self-description as an "aggressive interventionist," Abramowitz was looking for ways to integrate Russia into the international system. Toward that end, he launched the first Carnegie-Moscow Center, a bilateral think-tank that has brought together American and Russian scholars and continues to sponsor free-wheeling conferences, discussions, research and publications.

As president of the Carnegie Endowment, he also played the key role in launching the International Crisis Group, which he headed as acting president for six months after stepping down from Carnegie in 1997. Amb. Abramowitz has remained highly active in the ICG and has also been a senior fellow at The Century Foundation since 1998.

Another professional concentration, both at Carnegie and elsewhere, has been the Balkans. He was among the first U.S. diplomats to urge a robust response to the Bosnian war and the difficult situation in Kosovo. As Christopher Hill, currently assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs, has remarked, "Mort never saw a city in the Balkans he didn't want to become independent."

Amb. Abramowitz has long been a prolific author and editor. His book credits include: *Remaking China Policy: U.S.-China Relations and Government Decisionmaking* (Rand Corporation, 1971); *The Pacific Community: American Myth? Asian Reality?* (Carnegie Endowment, 1996), co-authored with Ambassador Stephen Bosworth; *China: Can We Have a Policy?* (Carnegie Endowment, 1997); *China-Japan-U.S. Relations: Managing the Trilateral Relationship* (Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998), with Funabashi Yoichi and Wang Jisi; *Managing Change on the Korean Peninsula: Report of an Independent Task Force* (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1998), *Meeting the North Korean Nuclear Challenge* (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2000) and *Testing North Korea: The Next Stage in U.S. and ROK Policy* (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2001), all co-authored with James Laney; *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (The Century Foundation, 2000); *China-Japan-U.S. Relations: Meeting New Challenges* (Japan Center for International Exchange, 2002), with Funabashi Yoichi and Wang Jisi; and *The United States and Turkey: Allies in Need* (The Century Foundation,

Steven Alan Honley, an FSO from 1985 to 1997, is the editor of the Journal.

2003). His latest book, also co-authored with Amb. Bosworth, is *Chasing the Sun: Rethinking East Asian Policy* (The Century Foundation, 2006). His op-eds and articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Foreign Policy* and *Foreign Affairs*, among many other periodicals.

Amb. Abramowitz has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Director General's Cup of the Foreign Service in 1995; the National Intelligence Medal in 1989; the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Service in 1981, 1985 and 1988; and the Joseph C. Wilson Award for International Service from the University of Rochester in 1980. He has served on the boards of many nonprofit organizations, including the International Rescue Committee, National Endowment for Democracy, Open Society Institute and International Crisis Group.

Through all these activities and associations, Amb.

Abramowitz continues to be vitally engaged in the critical issues facing U.S. diplomacy today.

Amb. Abramowitz and his wife, Sheppie, have two grown children.

Foreign Service Journal Editor Steven Alan Honley interviewed Amb. Abramowitz at The Century Foundation on May 22.

"Sen. Sam Nunn once told me, 'Anywhere you are, Mort, I know there's a war going on!'"

— Amb. Morton Abramowitz

FSJ: *First of all, Ambassador Abramowitz, congratulations on your award for lifetime contributions to*

American diplomacy. It places you in the same company as Thomas Pickering, Larry Eagleburger, George Shultz and Richard Lugar, among others. Who were some of the people you especially admired or were inspired by during your Foreign Service career?

MIA: I had some extraordinary political bosses during my career and learned a lot from them: Elliot Richardson, Jim Schlesinger, Don Rumsfeld, Harold Brown, George Shultz and Jim Baker. I also had some excellent career diplomat bosses like Art Hartman, Ed Fried and Bill Gleysteen. As for career officials I enjoyed working with, there are too many to list, but I'd start with the incomparable Phil Habib and then mention Mike Armacost, Bob and Phyllis Oakley, Nick Platt, John Negroponte, Marc Grossman, Stapleton Roy, Dick Clarke, Frank McNeil, Paul Cleveland ... the list could go on and on.

FSJ: *What drew you to the Foreign Service?*

MIA: I was always interested in international affairs, and began thinking about becoming an FSO during my senior year in high school. The Cold War had begun and was end-



Amb. Abramowitz at a refugee camp for Cambodians on the Thai border in 1980.

lessly fascinating. China was extraordinarily interesting at that time, and the debate about “who lost China?” was still fresh in my mind. There was also a cult of public service that motivated my generation.

FSJ: *Your first two overseas postings were in Taipei and Hong Kong. Did you originally plan to specialize in Chinese affairs?*

MIA: I did my graduate work in Chinese affairs and studied the language for three years at Stanford and Harvard. That was actually a mistake, by the way: I should have studied Chinese in Taiwan right away instead of stumbling along in the U.S. I was never a good language speaker and not much of a scholar. I also discovered I didn’t really enjoy trying to be a scholar.

FSJ: *Did you consciously move away from a China specialization after those first two tours?*

MIA: No. It just so happened that once I left Hong Kong in 1966, I never worked on China full-time again. I did, of course, later serve in East Asia and with CINCPAC, so China was certainly a part of my job. It wasn’t a conscious decision on my part. Foreign Service careers have a certain fortuitousness, and mine was no exception. I liked every job but one —

serving as ambassador to the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Negotiations. The conventional arms negotiations had turned into a cynical exercise and the interest of both sides was just to perpetuate the [talks].

Unlike most FSOs, I was never a political or economic counselor or DCM. I never worked in a regional bureau in the department. I went pretty much from consul to ambassador without doing a mid-level overseas job. So I had a rather bizarre career.

For instance, [speaking of] fortuitousness: When Larry Eagleburger, who was special assistant to Under Secretary [Nicholas] Katzenbach, went to New York in 1968 to work for Kissinger during the interregnum between the Johnson and Nixon administrations — a really awful time, by the way, in the department — I was then working for Arthur Hartmann. He persuaded Katzenbach to have me replace Eagleburger for a couple of months, and that totally changed my career. Under Secretary [Elliot] Richardson asked me to stay on in that position. In hiring me, he said, he had a simple incentive plan: “One mistake and you are out.”

FSJ: *What would you say have been your strengths as a diplomat?*

MIA: I don’t like to answer that sort of question, but I guess my short list would start with understanding — really trying to understand the views and positions of others. A second would be candor — I’ve never been reluctant to tell my bosses what I think. Another would be an action focus, to always concentrate on what do we do, not suck our thumbs. There is inevitably too much of that in the think-tank world.

FSJ: *On a related note, what qualities do you think are most important for a Secretary of State to have?*

MIA: Much depends on the times. Generally, they must have keen insights into how the world works — and not just in theory — and they must be good listeners. They should have a sense of the American national interest, and be able to communicate our positions articulately to foreign and domestic audiences. An ability to cut through BS is helpful. Finally, they must be able to make decisions, dominate the interagency process and work effectively with the president. Having a longer-term perspective is also helpful.

FSJ: *Which holder of that position in recent years would you say was most successful?*

MIA: I don’t think there’s any question that Henry Kissinger was pre-eminent in that job; he was a powerful policy-maker in a way that no one else in my lifetime has been. He remains a phenomenon at 80-plus. I’d also give high marks to George Shultz and James Baker, who was Secretary of State when I left the Foreign Service 15 years ago. I’m not really in as good a position to comment as well on the later ones, although I know and respect Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell.

FSJ: *What is your overall assessment of Condoleezza Rice’s first year in the position?*

MIA: It's still too soon to say and the country has this enormous unending problem of Iraq. You have to keep in mind that President Bush's first term was not impressive in foreign policy. It had one big achievement — there has not been a terrorist incident here for five years — but the country is in a massive hole, and has borne and continues to bear truly extraordinary costs. Rice wasn't Secretary of State when Iraq happened; but as national security adviser, she was part of the team that produced the problem. She has made a start on recovering from that period, but there are very difficult problems and the results are not in.

FSJ: *Going back to your career: Your first ambassadorship was in Bangkok from 1978 to 1981. What were some of the challenges you faced as chief of mission there, and how did you handle them?*

MIA: I was there at an extraordinary time, with the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia next door soon after I arrived and its massive impact on Thailand. It's a sad thing to say, but in times of war, things get extremely interesting.

Our primary task became to deal with a huge humanitarian crisis, to help the large numbers of Lao, Cambodian and Vietnamese trying to flee into Thailand in the wake of the invasion and the Vietnamese government's crackdown in South Vietnam. We led an international effort to feed and shelter over a million refugees and create a safe haven for them in Thailand or in camps along the border. As part of that effort, President Carter did an extraordinary thing: he paroled into the U.S. almost half a million Indochinese refugees over a three-year period.

As you might imagine, the Thais were not happy to suddenly have 300,000 to 400,000 Cambodian refugees on their border. One costly incident taught me quite a lesson. Early on in the refugee flood, I called the

**“In hiring me, Under
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Thai prime minister to obtain a pledge that some 30,000 refugees wouldn't be forced back into a dangerously mined area in Cambodia. He assured me that wouldn't happen but, sure enough, in a few days the Thai military forced them back. So I learned never to take anything for granted, no matter who it comes from. But we continued to praise the government and the Thai people for what was a deeply humanitarian response, and that made a difference in the pursuit of our objectives. My wife, Sheppie, probably spent as much time in border refugee camps as I did.

Second, we had to keep reassuring the Thais that the U.S. stood ready to safeguard their security if Vietnam were to invade, which was considered a real possibility in Thailand at the time. Both of these efforts were an incessant preoccupation for the next couple of years.

Third, it was crucial for ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to step up to the crisis. I remember a variety of conversations with Southeast Asian leaders, particularly Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yu, soon after the invasion during which I hammered home that point. That message, more importantly, was reinforced by Washington. And ASEAN did stand up and ultimately succeeded in ending the Vietnamese

occupation with the help of its friends.

I might also mention that the embassy was publicly attacked by many prominent Americans and others for supposedly undermining the new regime in Cambodia set up by Vietnam and hindering its relief effort by feeding people in western Cambodia from the Thai border. Our purpose was not to undermine the regime, although it was a rotten one, but to make sure people were fed, so we did not care who fed them or where the food came through as long as it served the purpose. If Phnom Penh could adequately deliver food to all of Cambodia amidst all the chaos, so much the better.

FSJ: *Do you see the current political turmoil in Thailand as worrisome or a sign of the country's democratic vitality?*

MIA: Both. Prime Minister Thaksin is not a particularly admirable fellow. He has feathered his own nest, ordered extrajudicial killings and weakened Thailand's political institutions. On the other hand, he has continued Thailand's economic growth and has sought to bring greater prosperity to Thai farmers. The way the opposition moved to oust an elected leader on the streets isn't healthy for democracy either. Sometimes democracies elect people we don't want, as we've seen in Palestine and elsewhere. That's one of the problems of democracy. We get leaders we don't like. Happens here, too.

FSJ: *You were also ambassador to Turkey from 1989 to 1991. What were some of the challenges you faced as chief of mission there, and how did you handle them?*

MIA: Turkey was a great post and a wonderful place. I only had two years there because I left the department in 1991 to become president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

My first year there was consumed by one issue, the Armenian genocide resolution that Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., introduced in April 1990. The Turkish government and people went berserk in opposition to it. I ended up coming back to Washington and personally calling on some 60 senators to persuade them not to approve the resolution, citing the damage it would do to our alliance with Ankara. I believed a war with Iraq was in the cards and we needed Turkish support; I also felt that the Senate should not pass resolutions of this type on historical events in a now-allied country nearly a hundred years ago. It was, I confess, a bad moral dilemma for me because of the massive killings of Armenians at that time. The resolution was defeated, not because of the administration, which for domestic political reasons lay low, but largely because of Sen. Byrd, D-W.Va. The resolution still comes up every year.

For the rest of my time in Ankara, Iraq was our preoccupation. The embassy focused on cementing Turkish support for the war against Saddam Hussein. President Bush's telephone diplomacy with President Ozul and Sec. Baker's four trips in six

"I've always been very proud of INR. Its people deserve a lot of credit for the work they do and the independent voice they maintain."

months to Turkey helped enormously.

In the aftermath of the war, I had to deal with another huge humanitarian crisis. The U.S. had called on the Kurds in Iraq to rise up against Saddam during the war, and they did — but we failed to support them. Half a million Kurds fled to the mountain borders of Turkey (and a million to Iran), and they needed to be taken care of. The Turkish government wouldn't let them into the country, but allowed the U.S. and other concerned countries to feed and shelter them along the border.

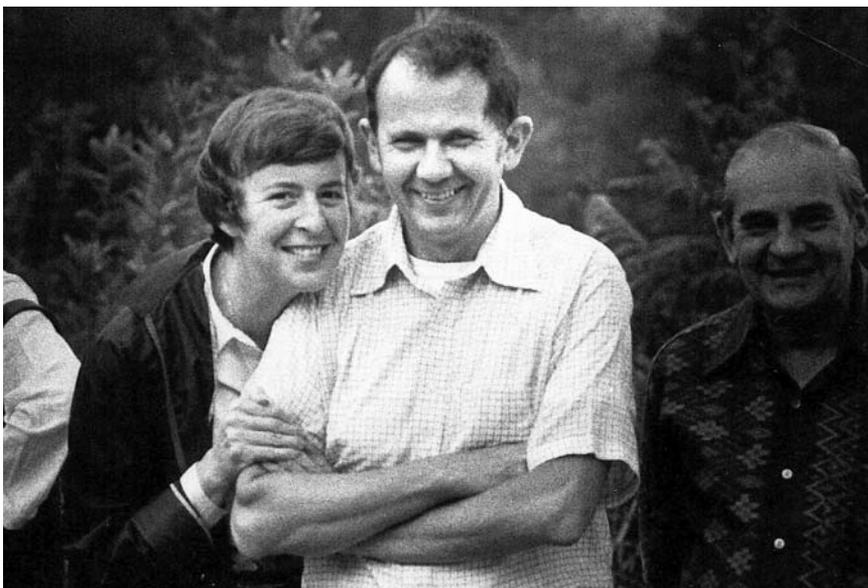
In the end, the logistical problem was so huge that it was necessary to get the involvement of the U.S. and other militaries. We urged Sec. Baker to make a brief stopover in a Kurdish refugee camp in northern Iraq. He was only there for 12 minutes, but it made all the difference. He got the U.S. military involved. The next effort was to get the Kurds home, and this was done by creating a safe haven for them in northern Iraq, protected by the strength and commitment of the U.S. and its allies. In two months, about 1.5 million people were returned to their homes. The justifiably legendary Fred Cuny, who was later murdered in Chechnya, played an important role in that effort. That area in northern Iraq was the beginning, it turned out, of a de facto Kurdish state in northern Iraq, another example of the law of unintended consequences.

I remember meeting Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., at the airport sometime during this period and having him tell me, "Anywhere you are, Mort, I know there's a war going on!"

FSJ: *Are you optimistic about Turkey's prospects for joining the European Union?*

MIA: Cautiously optimistic. The European publics are right now against it, and so the European Union governments' support has weakened. The E.U. also seems to have lost its way recently. But I believe Turkey will eventually be admitted. It has become a dynamic state and should continue to be one, if it maintains political stability and carries on its massive reform efforts.

FSJ: *You also served as the first assistant secretary of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research from 1985 to 1989. In the runup to the Iraq War, INR was one of the few voices in the intelligence community to express skepticism about claims that Saddam*



Amb. Abramowitz with his wife, Sheppie, and the French ambassador, awaiting the arrival of the King of Thailand in Bangkok in 1980.

Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and to anticipate what would happen after the war. It turned out to be right on both counts, of course, yet its counsel was ignored. Do you view that outcome as representing a politicization of the intelligence process?

MIA: First, let me say that I've always been very proud of INR. Its people deserve a lot of credit for the work they do and the independent voice they maintain. The marriage of good Foreign Service officers and long-serving Civil Service professionals with institutional memory has produced good analysis over the years.

I've felt for some time now that the ability to truly understand what's going on in other countries is central, both to intelligence analysis and to Foreign Service work across the board. That element of understanding is often missing, as we have seen in Iraq. Places like that, and Iran and Afghanistan, simply do not play to our strong suits. Another looming problem is that ever since 9/11, we've been understandably so focused on terrorist threats that we may be losing the analytical ability to look long term and think strategically.

In this connection, I've got a hobby horse: I believe breaking relations is one of the dumbest things we do. It is always a politically easy way. Of course, sometimes it is unavoidable. I have the view that keeping lines of communication more open and having people who might get a better understanding of what is going on are highly desirable. It would have been useful to keep an embassy in Baghdad after the Gulf War, for instance.

FSJ: You have been a highly vocal critic of the Iraq War and postwar policy. More than three years on, do you see any way our intervention in Iraq can help pave the way for democratization in the region?

MIA: Actually, I supported the move to oust Saddam Hussein. But I

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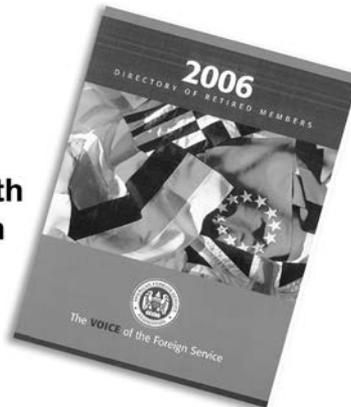
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now believe it was a profound mistake, looking at what has happened there since and the terrible costs we're paying in terms of lives lost, huge resources wasted, terrorism increased and major problems unattended to. I think history will judge the war as one of the biggest blunders in our lifetime. This administration seems to have no notion of real costs and focuses on would-be catastrophic consequences, which may occur but are thoroughly difficult to analyze or foresee.

Obviously, we all hope we will be able to leave Iraq in one piece and reasonably stable, and that the war and its results will have an impact in the long run on the democratization of the region. I am not smart enough to know, but I'm not optimistic, because I remain skeptical that we know what we are doing. There are always major problems of consistency and hypocrisy, of course, where promoting democracy is concerned. We are still supporting regimes like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, albeit for understandable reasons; but that sends mixed signals to the rest of the region.

FSJ: Last year, in a National Interest magazine article titled "In Defense of Striped Pants," you said: "Career professionals are being most loyal when they are being candid with their bosses about situations and when they press for a serious examination of policy. ... At this time, the country has a particular need for preserving candor in the departments and a variety of viewpoints from different agencies."

Yet use of the Dissent Channel has fallen sharply in recent years, as has the number of nominations for AFSA's four constructive dissent awards. Do you have any sense of what accounts for the decline in dissent? Any suggestions for how the Foreign Service can revive it?

MIA: I've been out of the Service for quite a while, and I have no real insight into that important question. But I would observe that this administration has certainly not encouraged dissenting voices. In fact, it has consistently blamed the bureaucracy for its own failures.

FSJ: When you resigned from the Foreign Service in 1991 after 31 years to become president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, was that transition difficult?

MIA: I was certainly sorry to leave Turkey a year early and to resign from the Service, so that was a difficult dilemma. What attracted me to the job was the fact that it had not been open for 20 years, and its scope. The Carnegie Endowment is not just a good think-tank but also an institution-builder. There are all kinds of ways one can make a difference.



Amb. Abramowitz today.

FSJ: What do you see as your main accomplishments during your six years at Carnegie?

MIA: I'm especially proud of the work the Carnegie Endowment has done in Russia. I took over at Carnegie a few days after the August 1991 attempted coup d'etat against Gorbachev. But even before that crisis, I was already looking for ways in which a private-sector institution could help better integrate Russia into the international system. That's why we set up the first Carnegie-Moscow Center, a bilateral

think-tank that has brought together American and Russian scholars and continues to sponsor free-wheeling conferences and discussions, individual research and Russian and English publications. It is a unique place.

We also conducted the first comprehensive post-Cold War study of U.S. foreign policy, which I think still holds up pretty well today. We focused much effort on the Balkans, trying to spark a more robust Western response to the Bosnian war and the difficult situation in Kosovo. I was an aggressive interventionist. Chris Hill always used to say, "Mort never saw a city in the Balkans he did not want to become independent." Oh, and we built a new headquarters on Massachusetts Ave. [in Washington, D.C.].

But probably the most useful long-term effort during my time at Carnegie was to help create the International Crisis Group. My memory of the ICG's birth is very precise. I was part

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of a small group set up in 1993 by George Soros to advise him how to spend \$50 million in relief for Bosnia. I still vividly remember flying into Sarajevo on Jan. 5 of that year, amid shelling on a terribly cold day, to meet the Bosnian president and as many others as we could on that brief occasion. The group also included Mark Malloch Brown, now U.N. deputy secretary general.

On the plane ride home we agreed that the Western response to Bosnia was abysmal and the humanitarian effort was also insufficient. We hypothesized whether a private organization could help stimulate a better Western response to preventing or containing conflict.

In 1995, the ICG was established, and it has grown into a \$14 million enterprise working in 30 countries. It tries to do three things: provide continuing, on-the-ground analysis of conflict or pre-conflict situations, offer prescriptions on how to deal with them and conduct advocacy to turn that prescription into public policy as best it can in those countries that have the resources to do something. Its reporting is sensational and, I suspect, in some cases far more useful than Foreign Service reporting. I am pleased to say [former Ambassador] Tom Pickering recently joined Chris Patten as co-chair of the organization.

FSJ: *In 1997, you left Carnegie and became acting president of the International Crisis Group. What did that involve?*

MIA: I was acting president of the organization for about six months. Our first president had suddenly died in Croatia, and my principal job was to find a new one. We have been lucky to have former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans as our current president. He is a force of nature.

FSJ: *What was next after you left the ICG in 1998?*

“Chris Hill always used to say, ‘Mort never saw a city in the Balkans he didn’t want to become independent.’”

MIA: At that point I decided I really didn’t want to run any organizations anymore or work full-time for anyone. [Still,] my wife and many others told me I made a serious mistake leaving Carnegie. Sometimes I agree. I also miss the money.

For the last nine years I have been associated with The Century Foundation, where I have written or edited three books and spent a lot of time in both speech and word pontificating.

FSJ: *Tell us about your latest book, co-written with retired Ambassador Stephen Bosworth — Chasing the Sun: Rethinking East Asian Policy, just published by The Century Foundation.*

MIA: In some ways, that was a more difficult project than we imagined, but it was fun. Basically, Steve and I wanted to do a book that would provide a fresh, broad analysis of East Asia, what the U.S. was doing in the area and what it might do better. It is a rather unique effort to try to do all that in one brief book.

FSJ: *Early on in the book, you observe: “Concern about how others see us is mirrored in increasing American self-criticism over the U.S. government’s failure to win support for its policies and calls for a more effective ‘public diplomacy.’ The problem, of course, often lies with the policies themselves.” Do you see any signs that Condoleezza Rice and Karen Hughes*

are addressing that point?

MIA: I don’t follow that closely; but yes, I have the impression they are aware of the difficulties.

FSJ: *In a later chapter, you note that after 9/11, top American officials frequently proclaimed that they’d learned the lesson that “weak and failing states can serve as breeding grounds for terrorism, as well as drugs and HIV/AIDS.” But you then go on to observe that in reality, the U.S. pays little or no attention to many weak and fragile states. “At most, Americans look at such states in a narrowly focused, short-term context.” What can be done about that tendency?*

MIA: I’m not sure we can do much about it, unfortunately. We always end up having priorities, and there are just too many failed states around the world for us to fix them all — whatever we might say. Remember, “failed states breed terrorism.” Just look at what has happened now in Somalia, and recall all the rhetoric we once expended on it. How quickly we all forget.

FSJ: *Whenever you talk to bright young people today, college graduates, do you recommend the Foreign Service to them as a career?*

MIA: I don’t have many opportunities presently to promote the Service, but I do so when I can. However, an FS career is not for everyone. There are serious problems of recruitment and maintenance, of being able to master the increasing number of subjects that are now involved in foreign relations, of tensions within the organization over fears of politicization. But the Foreign Service offers great opportunities and challenges to work on great public issues, which are simply not available on the outside.

FSJ: *Any final thoughts, Amb. Abramowitz?*

MIA: No. I have talked too much. ■

DAY OF THE JACKALOPE

A DELICATE DIPLOMATIC FAUX PAS IS NARROWLY
AVOIDED WITH THE DELIVERY OF A HEFTY JACKALOPE.

By BRIAN AGGELER

A halo of malarial mosquitoes buzzing around his head, Ambassador T. Farlack Vodel was lifting his racket to serve when the twin-engined aircraft roared low over the tennis court, causing the monkeys in the trees to start screeching. The ambassador stared at the empty sky where the plane had been, and adjusted his thick glasses. “Queer, a flight on Saturday morning.” Distrustful of excess verbiage, the ambassador did not use verbs.

Miles Farley, the deputy chief of mission, stared at the sky from the other side of the court.

“Yeah, the next flight is on Tuesday — the one that brings the *International Herald Tribune* and *Martha Stewart Living*.”

“Ah, yes,” the ambassador nodded. “Inspiration for those scented sorghum wreaths in our secure area.”

Information Officer Wally Spinks came sprinting from the embassy across the rutted street. “The plane! They called — it’s a congressman! And a jackalope!”

The ambassador adjusted his thick glasses. “Mythical creatures, Walter — at least according to conventional wisdom ...”

Editor’s Note: “Day of the Jackalope” by Brian Aggeler is the winner of this year’s Foreign Service Fiction contest. “Ram Balram’s Final Exam” by Rakesh Surampudi, which follows, took second place. The runners-up will appear in future issues of the Journal when space permits.

“Well, some of those guys do seem larger than life.” Miles had served at posts all over the world, and wielded a generous supply of tales from each. “I remember at my last post, we had a visit from a congressman who had to have a trapeze installed in his hotel suite and an officer designated as his badminton partner on call the entire visit. Had to have a whole-wheat bagel with goat cheese and an emu oil massage every morning, without exception. Milking the goat wasn’t a big deal, but finding an emu and then squeezing the oil out of it ...”

“No, Miles, the jackalope.”

“Of course that particular myth was inspired by sightings of rabbits with the papillomavirus — causes antler-like tumors to grow in various places on the rabbit’s head and body. Thought I had it once myself back in Moldova. Visited an unlicensed rabbit farm, and then found this strange horn growing in my ...”

“They’re landing right now — hurry!” Wally shouted. Miles and the ambassador ran over and jumped into the ambassador’s car. Followed by Wally in the embassy Landcruiser, they bounced off down the potholed road to the airport.

Nobody was sure when the last official U.S. visitor had come to Datipuru. There were stories that the desk officer had visited several years ago and left on the next flight out after a tainted Fanta quaffed in the airport terminal had resulted in all her hair falling out later that evening.

And Datipuru would have remained unvisited if Mandi

Wigenrath, wife of Representative Waylon Wigenrath, had not purchased a large and heavy statue of a recumbent jackalope during an overseas visit. She had insisted that the statue accompany them home in their official plane, meaning that the plane's range was correspondingly shorter — even with the congressman's staff assistant bumped off to make room for the jackalope. And that entailed an unscheduled refueling stop in Datipuru.

As the C-12 descended, a boy chased the sleeping dogs off the runway. The plane taxied to the small concrete terminal in a cloud of hot dust. Some still panting from their scramble, the whole country team lined up at the bottom of the stairs: Amb. Vodel, DCM Farley, Public Affairs Officer Lloyd Candy, Information Officer Spinks and Ardela Dingel, who did everything else.

The aircraft door opened and Rep. Wigenrath appeared, a stout giant with a solid helmet of improbably chestnut-colored hair and a jiggling wattle of chins and jowl. He squeezed his bulging frame through the door of the aircraft, eased himself down the stairs and squinted skeptically at the embassy officials. Ardela was in a faded jumper and Lloyd sported his off-duty men's capris and a T-shirt that read "I'd Rather Be Square Dancing." Amb. Vodel and Miles were still in their tennis togs, and Wally was in a sleeveless T-shirt with Spongebob Squarepants pajama bottoms. Amb. Vodel shook the congressman's hand and introduced the staff. "Embassy Datipuru at your service."

The congressman cleared his throat. "Sorry to land on you like this,

Brian Aggeler entered the Foreign Service in 1990, serving in Europe, South Asia and Africa. He is currently working in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

***The plane's range was
correspondingly shorter
— even with the
congressman's staff
assistant bumped off
to make room for
the jackalope.***

people. Fact is we got one helluva big jackalope in this plane — you know, those rabbits with antlers? Damn thing must be six feet long and 500 pounds."

"I didn't think they grew that big," Wally whispered.

"He's pure brass and he's glorious!" came a shout from the door of the plane. Mandi Wigenrath's vertiginous heels and confection of teased platinum hair combined to raise her height to very nearly five feet. "I collect jackalopes," she declared, wobbling down the stairs to the tarmac. "I have over 300, probably the greatest collection of jackalopes in the world. But this is the biggest." She snapped her gum and looked around the dusty, dry scene. The dogs had resumed their positions sleeping on the runway. The only other aircraft was a decaying wreck next to the terminal building, where more dogs slept. Fat flies buzzed lazily in the heat. "This is dismal," she declared. "Let's go to a Bennigan's."

"Sadly, food service industry here still in its infancy," the ambassador explained. "Not yet advanced to the stage of Bennigan's."

She shrugged. "Well, let's get the gas and go then."

"The problem is the fuel truck from the coast doesn't arrive until tomorrow morning, so I'm afraid you're here overnight," Miles explained.

"Our honored guests for the day," the ambassador said.

The congressman massaged his chins pensively. "Okay, then — got some time to kill," he said. "What kind of sightseeing is there to do?"

"The most famous attraction in the country is the mysterious dung mounds of Bingobara," Lloyd offered.

"What's so mysterious about them?"

"Well, it really is an incredible amount of dung, for one thing ..."

"What about shopping?" Mandi interjected. "No acceptable clothes, I guess," she sniffed, eyeing Ardela's dress, stitched of local fabric festooned with enlarged labels of the national beer.

"There's a guy who makes flutes out of hollowed-out tarantulas," Miles noted. "Surprisingly melodic, but you need to wear chapstick or some kind of protection when you're playing them — reason I have no feeling in my lower jaw ..."

"And there's that other guy in the shack down by the burning tire mound who makes purses out of bush rats," Lloyd said. "You know, with his little head and front feet, then the zipper opening across his stomach."

"You can get a better deal on the ones made out of the back end," Wally added. "That's everyone on my Christmas list this year!"

"Unique treasures," the ambassador agreed. "At the same time, real opportunity here for a big step in our bilateral relations."

"Absolutely! President Kotazo would be thrilled to receive you — biggest visitor in years," Miles suggested. "I mean in rank," he added, as the congressman scratched his fleshy flank.

"Sure, I guess I could go pay a courtesy call on the president," he shrugged.

"Waylon, do these official trips always have to be about you?" Mandi snapped. "There is absolutely nothing here for me to do, so don't you go off and see the president of some country that doesn't even have a Bennigan's."

The congressman hesitated. Mandi cocked her arm on her hip, lowered her cat-eye sunglasses and raised a tightly-tweezed brow at her husband. "I guess Mandi's right. Can't really see the need to see the president — not really any connection ..."

Miles' handlebar moustache drooped with despair. Ardelia glared at Mandi. "Maybe you'd like a Fanta from the terminal?"

Amb. Vodel led the couple to his car. "Ah, one of these fancy ambassadorial vehicles," the congressman slapped the steaming hood. "So you're out here living the high life in these luxury wheels the taxpayers get to pay for."

Mandi's hair stood straight out and her makeup had run down her face, giving her the appearance of a wet raccoon that had been electrocuted.

They got in the vehicle and slammed the doors. Rep. Wigenrath immediately began to pour sweat, his soggy shirt sticking to the molten vinyl. He tapped the driver on the shoulder, "Crank up the air conditioning there,

Sparky." The driver looked confused. "Apologies, missing a key part for the A/C," Amb. Vodel said. "Nothing in the budget for it, but fervent hope for next fiscal year."

The congressman stared in disbelief and tried to roll down the window. "Not possible, unfortunately, with the bullet-proof glass."

"How far to the hotel?" he gasped. "Only hotel in town temporarily out of service," the ambassador said. "Much-needed repairs and exorcism. Repairs on track, exorcism more problematic. No worries, though — plenty of room for you at my residence."

The car bounced down the deeply potholed streets, with the congressman's head slamming on the ceiling and getting redder and redder and Mandi's wildly gyrating breasts threatening to burst free from her tank top. The ambassador rolled with the familiar bumps like an experienced jockey. He pointed out the window. "On your

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left, the Presidential Palace,” he announced. “Conveniently located,” he added with a note of hope.

“I guess ...” the congressman started.

“Waylon, don’t even think it!” Mandi hissed.

The temperature continued to climb. When the car pulled to a stop in front of the residence, Wigenrath tugged frantically at the door. “A little jiggle always needed,” the ambassador said, opening the door. Rep. Wigenrath burst out of the car, red-faced and gasping, dripping sweat. Mandi’s hair stood straight out in all directions and her makeup had run down her face, giving her the appearance of a wet raccoon that had been electrocuted.

“Perhaps after freshening up ...” Amb. Vodel ventured.

“We are not leaving this house until we can fly out of this godforsaken country!” Mandi waved her finger up at the ambassador. “Now if you would just get us some emu oil.”

After the Wigenraths and their pilots were settled in at the ambassador’s residence, the country team huddled at the embassy, scouring old congressional directories and everything else they could find for information on their visitor. “At a crossroads here,” the ambassador announced. “Potential new era of bilateral hope and understanding on one side — diplomatic fiasco and descent into deep unspeakable on the other.”

Miles elaborated. “Pres. Kotazo has heard the congressman is here, and will take it as an enormous insult if he doesn’t come see him for a courtesy call — fairly grim news for us if he doesn’t do it.”

“Definition of grim?” asked Amb. Vodel.

“Well, the protocol office mentioned they could refuse overflight clearances for U.S. aircraft, ban imports of all U.S. goods, expel you and maybe even jam our rebroadcasting of Armed Forces television.”

***We are the mighty
Beetdiggers of dear old
Backlick State!***

“Baywatch!” Wally gasped.

“Didn’t we just reverse a military coup to restore Pres. Kotazo’s government to power?” Ardela asked.

“Old news, Dell,” the ambassador sighed. “A new week upon us now ...”

“If only there was some connection that would make the congressman want to see the president ...” Miles pulled on his drooping moustache.

“He’s on the House Subcommittee on Space and we are after all an official alternate landing site for the space shuttle,” Ardela said.

“Possibility,” the ambassador nodded.

“The new ‘Blue Hawaii Elvis’ stamp they’re issuing here is big news in the stamp community,” Wally chirped. “Is the congressman a philatelist?”

“There were allegations,” Miles whispered conspiratorially. “Nothing proven.”

“Backlick!” Lloyd shouted.

“Steady, Lloyd,” the ambassador cautioned. “No call for salty language.”

“No, no — Backlick State University!” Lloyd waved a biography of the congressman.

“Rep. Wigenrath went there and so did Pres. Kotazo — he was an exchange student! Wouldn’t that convince him they should meet?”

The ambassador smiled. “Well done, Lloyd. Still the matter of Mrs. Wigenrath, a bit of a skeptic on the utility of a meeting.”

“And damned if I know where to find an emu around here,” Miles muttered.

“I see that she has some dancing

background, cabaret things?” Lloyd said.

“I think most of her dancing was done on tables,” Ardela muttered. “Or wrapped around a pole ...”

“Anyway, perhaps we could convince her to come judge our square dance troupe? I know we’re not at competition level yet, but if it got her away so her husband was free for the meeting with the president ...”

“Worth a try, Lloyd,” the ambassador concluded. “Still some hope for ‘Baywatch,’ Walter ...”

That evening, Amb. Vodel and Miles paced outside Pres. Kotazo’s office. The ceremonial guards on either side of the door were dozing on their feet, the plumes on their helmets swaying with their deep breathing. “Two hours in there,” the ambassador whispered uneasily. “One-on-one meeting; margin for error uncomfortably high ...”

“Anything can happen with congressional types,” Miles agreed. “I was the notetaker once for a visiting senator’s meeting with a real hardline minister of sport and leisure. Lesson learned there was never call into credibility another man’s hairpiece, even if it’s not on his head. Things got pretty heated — I honestly don’t know whose bite marks these are ...”

Just as Miles turned and lifted the back of his safari suit, the heavy doors to the president’s office swung open. Pres. Kotazo and Rep. Wigenrath emerged arm in arm, chanting in unison:

*We are the mighty Beetdiggers
of dear old Backlick State!
You think our mascot’s kind
of lame,
But our teams really rate!
Beetdigger hearts always ring true,
With love for dear old BSU!*

The congressman and president backed up, then ran at each other and jumped, their bellies colliding in mid-air as they shouted: “Dig the beet!”

President Kotazo hugged the congressman, then turned to the ambassador. "This man is my dear brother Beetdigger!" He pumped the ambassador's hand. "We are so filled with gratitude to the United States for sending this distinguished envoy from BSU. My entire country will forever be filled with warmest adoration for the United States, its people and its enlightened policies!"

The congressman howled with delight. "Why didn't you tell me in the first place the president here is a fellow Beetdigger!"

At the airport the next morning, an honor guard from the Presidential Palace stood at attention on the tarmac as the embassy vehicles pulled up. A military band played a surprisingly peppy version of "Georgia on My Mind." And while Rep. Wigenrath was not actually from Georgia, he smiled graciously at the gesture.

*She mouthed Lloyd a
thank-you for the emu
oil, and tottered on her
stiletto heels up the stairs
into the aircraft.*

At the door to the plane, the congressman patted Amb. Vodel on the shoulder. "Thanks for everything. That Kotazo's a great guy — said he's looking forward to signing a bunch of new agreements with us." He turned to Lloyd. "And I don't know what kind of exchange program he was on, but you just let me know and I'm going to go back and get double

the funding for it!"

Overcome, Lloyd threw his skinny arms around Rep. Wigenrath in a weepy embrace. "You may not be my congressman," he sniffed, "But you touched me like my own member!"

Mandi Wigenrath, her hair teased to its full glory, planted a bright-red kiss on Lloyd's cheek. "This man has the body of a beaten-down bureaucrat but the heart of a dancer!" she announced. She mouthed Lloyd a thank-you for the emu oil, and tottered on her stiletto heels up the stairs into the aircraft. As the pilot started up the engines, the congressman leaned over and whispered to Amb. Vodel, "Hope Kotazo enjoys the token of our friendship I left for him."

Mandi shrieked from the plane, "Where's my jackalope?"

"Take it easy, Mandi!" the congressman growled, as he climbed into the plane. "There are always more jackalopes." ■

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SHIFT YOUR THINKING.

RAM BALRAM'S FINAL EXAM

AN INDIAN VILLAGE'S HISTORY AND HOPE ARE WRAPPED UP IN THE STRUGGLES OF
A DODDERING BUT DETERMINED OLD MAN.

BY RAKESH SURAMPUDI

On April 30, 2004, Ram Balram took the secondary-level exam for the last time. Now, this may seem unimportant to the average person, who might say, "What the hell, the secondary level exam? Thousands of newly adolescent students take that exam every year." And they would be right to be so disdainful, except for two things: one, every year the entire village of B__ waited for exam day with the anticipation of a carnival; and two, Ram Balram was 78 years old and had been trying to pass the secondary-level exam for the past 65 years.

Located in the heart of India's unassuming and oft-neglected south central region, B__ was remarkable for its citizens' utter sameness. Ram Balram's struggles functioned like the town's historical ledger. Everyone had a Ram Balram story, and part of the celebration was the retelling of these stories over cups of warm tea in the center of town on the night before the exam. (In fact, the storytelling was in danger of surpassing the actual event of the exam itself, and there was talk of creating a Ram Balram one-day storytelling festival. But the state gov-

ernment had so far not been responsive about funding.)

The most common and most popular tale concerned 1947, when the town was badly divided by religious strife. Ram Balram had agreed to wear a kufi while taking the test. Even then the superintendent of exams, waiting piously at the school entrance, commanded Ram Balram to lower his pants and show proof of religious affiliation — which he dutifully marked as Hindu — so that the record would be correct.

A close second was the story of 1977, during the Emergency, when the time of the test conflicted with Ram Balram's appointment for sterilization. He pored for so long over the questions that the government cutters grew snippy and bored, and left. It helped that Ram Balram had made a vow never to marry until he passed the exam. "We don't need to worry about this one," one cutter was heard to say.

Other stories challenged for top honors. There was 1968, when Ram Balram was sick with smallpox, and rumor had it that the town head had located a nearly identical twin to Ram Balram who had taken the exam in his place (he, too, failed), though this was never proven. Too late, someone had thought to check for the cauliflower-like brand of smallpox vaccination, but as a failing score was a failing score, the matter quickly died.

In 1994, a scandal broke out over the test itself. A particularly scholarly and fundamentalist set decried the exam, claiming it to be a copy of an ancient text that was itself a mimicry of an earlier work purportedly written by the

Rakesh Surampudi joined the Foreign Service in 2000, and has served in Mexico City, Santo Domingo and Islamabad, and with the Office of U.N. Political Affairs in the International Organizations Bureau. He is heading to Kolkata, India, for his next assignment.

first Hindu to have put ideas to paper. An original exam existed that should be used, this set insisted. The matter was sent before the magistrate of the district, who quickly and wisely passed the buck to another set of scholars. They, in turn, promptly asked for 20 years more time to research the matter thoroughly, hoping that Ram Balram would either pass the test in the interval or pass from this world into the next, rendering a final pronouncement on the matter moot.

Whatever the story, each and every villager understood that beneath it all, Ram Balram was an embodiment of their posterity. Generations of youngsters came and went, but over six decades Ram Balram had proven that in this world of patterns, cause and effect and complex algorithms, unpredictability alone was the rule. He was the only one in B__ who faced the future unblinkingly.

It was one subject or another in the test that caused Ram Balram's downfall year after year, but the wrinkle this year was the administration of the exam. For the first time, Ram Balram would be taking it by computer instead of with pencil and paper. The United States government had quietly provided funding for the computerization project, tying a small Texas software company to B__ by way of kilobytes, cash and the efforts of an excitable and somewhat determined USAID officer.

This was not as upsetting to the locals as one might have expected, though arguments had been going on from the moment word of the new format had reached the village. India had turned into the world leader in information technology and IT services. Internet houses were beginning to dot the larger towns that surrounded B__, dominated by pairs of young men crammed into drab cubicles in front of computer screens. Plans were afoot to create an electronically literate army of millions (and downloaders of pornography — an unfortunate side effect), said India's leaders, and demand for education in programming was being felt in a growing number of state capitals. *Let the Americans pour their money into India; hadn't they taken the best and brightest Indians for so many years?*

The USAID officer and an education ministry representative had held a meeting with Ram Balram to explain the new testing procedures. "There's nothing to worry about. It's modernization," the American said reassuringly. "Quite simple and quite efficient. The questions do not require more than pushing a button." Ram Balram made a mental

note to do some finger exercises, for his joints ached when making many small movements.

"And what's more," the American added, "P.D. Dixit, the state education minister, will attend your test here in B__. You will meet him when you are done. That's exciting!"

The education ministry representative nodded wisely in agreement and leaned back in his chair. "With the new system, we'll know your score within minutes."

On exam day, as in the past 50 years, Ram Balram was accompanied from his home by a woman named Devi Das, who, somehow in this small village, was completely unrelated to him. Notwithstanding this odd circumstance,

Devi Das had, in a display of bravado or stupidity (though quite remarkable in its matter-of-factness), taken a vow never to marry until Ram Balram passed his exam. Although every year a few naysayers argued that by swearing such a silly oath, she had unnecessarily piled mounds of pressure onto Ram Balram's much-pressurized shoulders, Devi Das generally garnered an incredible amount of sympathy in her own right. "She is a poor nutter, that woman," people said, "doomed to be a spinster and useful to no one." But, in truth, this was not quite accurate; for by matching Ram Balram vow for vow she had,

in essence, tied herself to him with a bond stronger than an actual marriage.

Devi Das was clearly in love with Ram Balram. To be honest, this love was unlike anything anyone in the village had ever seen: unarranged, topping the deepest of spiritual trances in its self-absorption, surpassing the most passionate of touches in its utter lack of physicality and outstripping the most heart-rending songs in its futility. It was pure 1950s cinema. Devi Das thus somehow managed to achieve her own film-star status, and every year a large proportion of the (male) crowd unabashedly seemed to show up better dressed than was befitting an event like the secondary-level exam in hopes of catching the starry gaze of a spinster who had eyes for only one person on the planet.

When asked, Devi Das claimed that she was only helping Ram Balram focus on the exam, and accompanying him to the school. Inwardly, she wished to spare him from the corrosive harm of constant failure. Were she able, Devi Das would receive the failures upon her body like blows from a policeman's stick. She knew that the harshest damage from failure was always on the inside, unseen and

*Let the Americans pour
their money into India;
hadn't they taken the
best and brightest
Indians for so
many years?*

brooding; and it was her task to mend the wound gently, as if rubbing a sponge on a soft stain of caked mud until it disintegrated. She knew also that her efforts could only be 90-percent effective, at most, for every stain, no matter how skillfully and carefully removed, leaves another stain behind it.

The keener minds among the village recognized that the shared burden of 65 failures had made them mirrors of each other. Devi Das and Ram Balram walked in perfect point-counterpoint, the cup of her palm propping up his left elbow as she leaned into him ever so slightly, not quite touching the loose folds of his white cotton kurta. This small assistance, the light touch of another human being that was little more than the tickle of a feather on his dry elbow joint, was the only help Ram Balram accepted from anyone on the half-kilometer walk to the school.

For a full 10 minutes the crowd stood looking at the pair with some measure of awe and remained speechless, except for one middle-aged Sikh fellow wearing a yellow turban. "The bastard, the poor bastard," he muttered repeatedly.

Suddenly a cheer rose from the middle of the large group: "Best of luck, Ram Balram! You'll do it this time!" Ram Balram raised a shaky hand toward the well-wishers, with the air of a detached politician.

Listening to the slightly nasal drone of his aide-de-camp briefing him on the new computer testing system, state education minister P.D. Dixit remembered that his own family tree, going back six generations, had its roots in Ram Balram's village. P.D. glanced briefly again at Ram Balram's dossier. He noticed the date of birth and did some rapid calculations. The sheer enormity of Ram Balram's inability to achieve was difficult for the minister to compre-

***Matching Ram Balram
vow for vow, she had
tied herself to him with
a bond stronger than
an actual marriage.***

hend. Sixty-five failures. Enough to crush the hardest of psyches.

Was the man really so unflappable? To think of all that time and energy wasted. He had read that Ram Balram had refused any sort of tutoring, though he knew it was certainly not because of any lack of available teachers. Maybe it was for the best, he speculated. If the fellow really was incapable of learning, to try and teach him only to watch him fail would be bad publicity for his educational plans for the district. He imagined his opponents campaigning: "Under P.D. Dixit, a state of 20 million people cannot teach a single old man to pass an exam." It was sadly ironic, thought P.D., that a man should ever reach a point where help was no longer an option.

Sighing and reconciled to the changes that were beyond his control — for the moment, he reassured himself — he motioned to his aide-de-camp and to the small attaché case he was carrying. He gathered the sheaf of papers that would be his speech, and began to mentally rehearse. A two-hour discourse on education to a captive audience. It would be a long day. Longer still if the old man didn't pass. People became angry too easily these days. He wondered if, in the sum of things, it would have been better to leave modern technology out of this kind of

matter, and out of the village, as the computerized testing would certainly be one of the first scapegoats in the event of Ram Balram's failure. No matter, he thought. He could always blame the Americans.

Ram Balram arrived at the entry to the school, where he glanced at the large dais that had been set up for P.D. Dixit's speech. He then noticed that the windows were closed inside the classroom where he would take the test.

"I'm sorry, Ram Balram," the superintendent apologized, "but we didn't want you to be disturbed by the noise from the minister's speech."

The exam room was empty except for a small desk centered in the front of the room, wires from the computer balanced on its surface trailing toward a large mess of plugs, cords and humming lights on the wall. The superintendent explained the process of the test in a speech that Ram Balram had nearly memorized by heart over the past 65 years. He would have three hours. If he needed some water or a bathroom break, he only needed to signal the test monitor standing by the door. Did he have any questions?

Ram Balram listened to the whirring of the computer's cooling fan and asked what he had been thinking of for some time now:

"If it is all right, please allow Miss Devi Das to remain."

Outside, the crowd seemed to be breathing sleepily as P.D. trudged to the end of his speech on the promise of high technology for education. The excitement of Ram Balram's entrance into the school had worn off, and updates were severely restricted by the superintendent, who shooed away the little boys trying to peek through the windows of the school, the glass too high for most of them to see through.

P.D. finished his speech in the time he had allotted himself and looked around, tremendously pleased. He noticed that for the first time in his tenure, no one was shouting at him or pleading for him to make an impossible change in government policy. His bodyguards stood in their normal state of cat-like alertness, with heavily lidded eyes; but he was, in fact, a spectator, unnoticed, in the truest sense of the word. Amazing, he thought as he smiled to himself. He made a mental note to write this humanizing event down in his memoirs, along with a secret wish to see Ram Balram fail. The man was good for business.

Meanwhile a group of reporters, no longer interested in his words, had gathered around a local man who was holding forth with seriousness. P.D. watched. "We love him. Everyone in this village. He is *our* Ram Balram. He has refused all help for 65 years.

P.D. shook his head slightly. The country would never change, he thought.

He says he will do it on his own, without any help. That is why we admire him," the local explained.

P.D. shook his head slightly. The country would never change, he thought. Let others raise the alarm about corrupting foreign influences, the drain on so much of India's future. He knew that India was unexplainable and unchanging on some basic level. What came would be converted. The keenest minds, men

like Forster and Naipaul, had seen and meditated on this truth. He also knew that, like Ram Balram, the cycle of repetition was the drug and also the addiction. The ending had already been written and the story, well, the story was only the echo of a song sung long ago.

Ram Balram would emerge, weary and a bit unsteady, and would be allowed perhaps 10 paces before someone would shout, "How was it, Ram Balram? Did you pass the exam?"

And Ram Balram would wave with the back of his hand and reply, "Only God can say, but I am confident" — which would please them all to no end, and fill them with hope for the future.

If only he could package that hope in something more manageable than a doddering and determined old man, P.D. thought somewhat wistfully.

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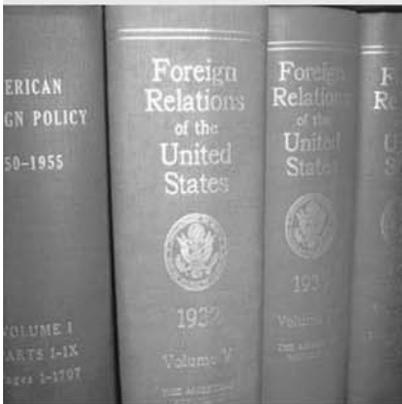


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P.D. was thinking of a mango lassi while being shuffled from the podium by his security detail when the bombs detonated, exactly 26 seconds apart, the first from near the base of the platform. The air, sucked inward for the briefest of milliseconds preceding the flash of noise and light that threw him to the ground, reminded P.D. of a moment from his own childhood, riding on the local Golconda Express between Chennai and Hyderabad.

He was a boy of 12, and had pushed and maneuvered his thin brown frame through the bodies of the older men standing in the open entryway of the overloaded rail carriage. Those closest to the edge maintained an easy grip on the vertical railing just outside the doorframe, others leaned and rocked comfortably further inside, sipping on the pungent smoke of their beedis. P.D. stared out at the passing landscape of dusty mounds and occasional rocks, feeling the balance of the train's motion and listening to the clack of the wheels upon the rails. He looked down at his toes, just crossing the edge of the doorway into the cooling evening air.

The men's voices, laughing and bantering, disappeared, and he was left for the briefest of moments with the sound of an eternal nothingness. Hypnotized by how quiet it had suddenly become, he turned to look forward, and at that moment the south-bound train screamed past. There had been no warning, and he had heard nothing. In reality, the train was never closer than one meter to his head, but it seemed to P.D. that mere centimeters separated his body from the speeding metal of death.

Now, as he lay face down upon the earth searching for breath and finding none, P.D. thought how similar the two moments were. Air gathered inward by an impending

*Such fragile things are
our thoughts, mused*

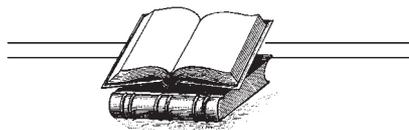
*Ram Balram as he
glanced at Devi Das, and
our dreams even more
so. Yet somehow they
manage to endure.*

explosion, taking all sound with it, giving the listener a moment of pure emptiness. The silent universe, he thought, before the big bang.

Inside the school, Ram Balram remained focused, accustomed to the droplets of sweat on his forehead, as the world outside careened out of control. The bombs had not shaken his will or his concentration. Neither had they affected Devi Das, who sat in a high-backed chair in a corner of the room. She was silent, with eyes closed in meditation, imagining a wedding where the scent of jasmine wove itself into the fabric of her wedding sari as the priest circled dancing flame around her head.

He felt the stiffness in his fingers and, for a moment, noticed a wave of tiredness surging along inside his body. Such fragile things are our thoughts, mused Ram Balram as he glanced at Devi Das, and our dreams even more so. Yet somehow they manage to endure.

The computer screen began to flicker. Ram Balram focused his gaze and stared at the last question on the exam. It was straightforward. There were only two possible responses. He answered yes. ■



BOOKS

A Rich Life

Mr. Ambassador: Warrior for Peace

Edward J. Perkins with Connie Cronley, University of Oklahoma Press, 2006, \$39.95, hardcover, 560 pages.

REVIEWED BY HERMAN J. COHEN

One of the most visible and inspirational icons of the Foreign Service during the 1980s, Ambassador Edward J. Perkins, has published his memoirs 10 years after his retirement from government. Had *Mr. Ambassador: Warrior for Peace* only recalled his 24-year diplomatic career, it would be well worth reading. But as a bonus, it gives us a total picture of his life. And what a fantastic life it has been! Kudos to the University of Oklahoma Press for giving Perkins the room to tell his entire story, from boyhood to his current position as professor of international relations at U.O.

The future ambassador was an underprivileged child raised on a cotton farm in rural Louisiana, in the midst of total segregation and racial discrimination. But with much love from his mother and grandmother to sustain him, and his own steely determination, he was able to overcome all obstacles. These early years constitute a motivational story that should be made available to high school students, especially those in underprivileged circumstances who need to know that hard work and determina-

Reagan gave Perkins instructions to “shake things up” as the first black ambassador to South Africa. And that is just what he did.



tion can pay dividends.

Separate periods of service in the Army and the Marine Corps gave Perkins opportunities to work in Korea and Japan. Persuaded that he was destined for a career in foreign affairs, he took advantage of every free minute to learn about the cultures surrounding him. After discharge, he remained in the Far East as a civilian with the Military Exchange Service; that organization assigned him to Taiwan, where he met and married his life partner, Lucy Cheng-mei Liu. Those of us who have worked with him know that she played a major role in his success as an anchor, muse and excellent representative of the United States in her own right.

From Taiwan, Perkins signed on with USAID as a reserve officer in Bangkok. This was his stepping stone to full Foreign Service status, which he achieved in 1972 at the age of 44. During early assignments in West Africa, Perkins witnessed revolutions, coups and instability in Ghana and Liberia. It was a period during which much of Africa was trying to find itself. Perkins learned quickly how difficult it

would be for the United States to bring solutions from the outside.

By far the most exciting section in the book centers on Perkins' experience as the first African-American to serve as U.S. ambassador to the apartheid-era Republic of South Africa, from 1986 to 1989. President Reagan gave Perkins instructions to “shake things up” down there. And that is just what he did, using his position to go everywhere and see everyone.

Through his very presence as a strong, articulate, unflappable black man, Perkins gave hope to South African people of color that there was a light at the end of the tunnel. As for the white power structure, he not only administered a dose of reality about the inevitable demise of the apartheid system, but offered reassurance that the transition could be peaceful and would benefit all South Africans. The controlled implosion of apartheid, leading to the advent of majority rule in 1994, came largely from within, but Perkins played a major role in the critical push from without during his three years there.

Perkins continued to move upward, serving as director general of the Foreign Service, then permanent U.S. representative to the United Nations, ambassador to Liberia and, finally, to Australia. In chapters devoted to these assignments, Perkins demonstrates his willingness to innovate, his ability to push the envelope and his courage in telling it like it is to all levels, above and below. I was particularly struck by Perkins' willingness



to share credit with the officers and support staff who advised him, educated him and aided his efforts to defend U.S. interests.

Still, this reviewer was a bit disappointed that Perkins did not take advantage of hindsight to comment on some policy issues that are still controversial, such as Washington's relations with Liberian dictator Samuel Doe and with Saddam Hussein following the Persian Gulf War. I also take issue with his assessment of Chester A. Crocker, assistant secretary of State for African affairs throughout the Reagan administration. Despite much opposition, he brokered the December 1988 New York agreements that brought about the independence of Namibia and the withdrawal of Cuban and South African troops from Angola. One of the great postwar U.S. diplomatic achievements, those agreements also contributed more than any other event, in my view, to the end of apartheid. Yet Perkins gives Crocker only tepid praise for them in a single short paragraph which, unfortunately, reflects mixed feelings toward the man himself.

That said, Ed Perkins has written a first-rate memoir that merits the attention of a wide public.

Ambassador Herman J. Cohen, a retired FSO, was assistant secretary of State for African affairs during the George H.W. Bush administration.

Be Careful What You Wish for

The Case for Goliath

Michael Mandelbaum, Perseus Books Group, 2005, \$26, hardback, 283 pages.

REVIEWED BY PARKER WYMAN

Mandelbaum doubts that the United States will continue to exercise its current dominant role in international relations.

Professor Michael Mandelbaum's novel thesis in *The Case for Goliath* is that ever since World War II, the United States has been performing some of those "services" that a world government would be providing if such a government existed. In the economic sphere, this role was undertaken at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, as the means to avoid a repetition of the worldwide economic disasters of the interwar period. In the sphere of national security, "What began as emergency measures to fortify its coalition partners in the Cold War became, over time, services that the United States provided to the world as a whole." In both cases the primary American motivation was to advance its own interests, but in both cases the rest of the world benefited more than its spokesmen have been willing to admit.

Mandelbaum devotes a lot of attention to the dissatisfaction and outrage that American activities of this type have caused in other countries, even when they met with a significant degree of tacit consent on the part of foreign leaders. He discusses a wide variety of factors contributing to those reactions. Some of them relate to the content of American policies, some to the many differences between American values and values elsewhere, and some to the advantages foreign gov-

ernments find in deflecting criticism that would otherwise be directed at themselves. A major factor has been the handicap of a nation so powerful that it is often seen as "the world's Goliath."

The author doubts whether the United States will continue to exercise such a dominant role in international relations, however. This is not so much because of foreign opposition, or even American dissatisfaction with the results achieved, but because it will prove impossible to finance such a role and also fund the staggering future Social Security and Medicare entitlements to which American voters will attach greater importance. Equally disquieting, he sees no other nation, alliance or international organization as likely to take over that role, and he predicts that the world will regret our withdrawal from it.

One aspect of this book I particularly appreciate is that Mandelbaum is not trying to whitewash or denigrate the record of any American administration. Rather, he is seeking to explain in basic terms how the United States has been behaving on the international scene, what the consequences of that behavior have been, and what changes are likely in the future. No one can be perfectly objective in pursuing such a task, but I think he has done remarkably well in this relatively short and consistently lucid book. I also enjoyed the apt and humorous quotations with which he illustrates some of his main points, and an astonishing final sentence that aptly sums up his predictions for the future.

I feel sure Foreign Service personnel will find *The Case for Goliath* thought-provoking and pertinent. It should be of particular interest to many, like myself, who have long thought that the ever-closer interdependence of the nations of the world



means that there cannot be anything like satisfactory solutions to many of their major problems without some kind, and some degree, of what Mandelbaum calls “global governance.”

Retired FSO Parker Wyman served in Berlin, Cairo, Duesseldorf, Milan, Tay Ninh (South Vietnam), Addis Ababa and Lagos, as well as in Washington, D.C. For 11 years following retirement he helped develop specialized computer programs for use by the Foreign Service and the State Department.

Tough Love

The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working
Robert Calderisi, St. Martin's Press, 2006, \$24.95, hardcover, 230 pages.

REVIEWED BY DAVID CASAVIS

Over the past half-century, many grand schemes have been launched to fix Africa's woes, often accompanied by huge sums of money. So why is much of the continent still in dire straits?

In *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working*, Robert Calderisi has a ready answer: “The simplest way to explain Africa's problems is that it has never known good government.”

A retired World Bank spokesman for Africa, Calderisi makes full use of the ammunition he gathered during his 22-year career there. He dismisses the Bank's Chad oil watchdog committee as more interested in receiving diplomatic passports and traveling first class, with all the perks, than in making sure that President Idriss Deby's government spends revenues from the

**Calderisi believes
 Western aid is actually
 slowing down
 democratization in
 Africa by propping
 up dictators.**

Chad-Cameroon pipeline properly. Because of this and other failures, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been nicknamed “the Masters of Disaster” in some parts of the continent.

The author concedes that there is plenty of blame to go around, to be sure. He lists several prominent NGOs as being better known for “pompous officials, padded budgets, stuffy reports and incessant self-congratulation than for any real progress in pooling national resources.” At the same time, he identifies African traits that he says work against development, chief among them “petty competition among enlarged egos.”

In his view, Western aid is actually slowing down democratization in Africa, as it props up dictators while doing nothing for the suffering masses. For support, he quotes no less an authority than former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere: “If our effort slackens, [donors] will — and should — lose interest in cooperating with us for our benefit.” Again and again he returns to the theme that aid works best when recipient governments are already on the right track. He even argues that countries like the Congo (formerly Zaire) that are too far gone to be reformed should be allowed to

fail and break up, reasoning that things could hardly get worse. He also quotes some average Africans who wish European colonialists would return.

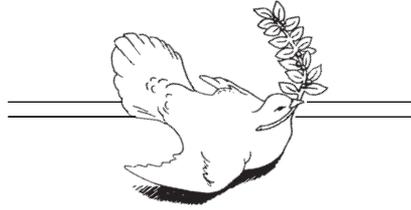
Conversely, Calderisi advocates increasing Western aid to the continent's few successes — Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, Uganda and Mali — and other countries that are serious about reducing poverty.

Calderisi's human touch is what draws the reader through often grim reading. He vividly illustrates the cumulative impact of day-to-day corruption, such as the need to hand over a month's farming income just to obtain a burial certificate, or the tradition of heads of state buying new presidential airplanes as soon as aid money arrives. And he explains why desperately poor farmers “tip” a schoolteacher to have a son or daughter seated in the front few rows: in a class of 150 to 200, that is the only way to ensure they get any attention.

Those new to Africa will find this book a breathless tour across a continent four times the size of the United States. Those formulating policy might want to concentrate on the country case studies laid out in the middle of the book. And Africa hands will find Chapter 12 of particular interest: it lays out 10 ways to change the continent.

Whether one agrees with Calderisi's basic thesis that less aid is best, there can be no doubt of his sincere commitment to improving the lives of Africans. He repeatedly hails the indomitable spirit of the continent's many, varied denizens who, he believes, have nothing to lose but their exploiters. ■

David Casavis has worked for the Commerce and Homeland Security departments. He has just completed a book on visa fraud.



IN MEMORY

Thomas W. Ainsworth, 84, a retired FSO of Chambersburg and Amberson Valley, Pa., died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family, on April 1.

Born in Beloit, Wisc., Mr. Ainsworth earned a B.A. in English from Yale University in 1942 and then began graduate school. His studies were interrupted by World War II. As a U.S. naval officer, he learned Japanese and served in the Pacific until the end of the war.

After the war, Mr. Ainsworth joined the Foreign Service. He studied Cantonese at the Army Language School, and served in embassies and consular offices throughout the Far East, including Fukuoka, Kobe, Tokyo, Taipei, Saigon and Hong Kong. His final overseas post was as consul general in Osaka-Kobe.

Mr. Ainsworth is survived by his wife, Wilma "Sue" Ainsworth; three sons, Bruce H. Ainsworth of Cheverly, Md., Thomas W. Ainsworth Jr. (and wife, Terry) of Woodbridge, Va., and Daniel E. Ainsworth (and wife, Becky) of Severn, Md.; two daughters, Jean Ainsworth Zablin (and husband, Gary) of Philadelphia, Pa., and Anne Ainsworth Kirkland (and husband, David) of Houston, Texas; and nine grandchildren: Candice and Charles Zablin; Jason, Daniel, and Andrew Ainsworth; Diana and Will Kirkland; and Samantha Ballard and Alexis Ainsworth. He is also survived by his sister, Elizabeth Ainsworth Steinberg, and her four sons.

Donations may be made to the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, 2700 Luther Drive, Chambersburg PA 17201, or to the Yale University Office

of Development, P.O. Box 2038, New Haven CT 06521-2038.



Edmund O. Barker, 86, a former member of the Foreign Service, died at his home in Montgomery, Ala., on Jan. 9 after a short illness.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska (Omaha) and the University of California (Los Angeles), Mr. Barker joined the War Department in 1940 as an editor and analyst. He was appointed vice consul at Noumea, New Caledonia, in 1943, and subsequently served as a diplomat in Addis Ababa and Bangkok during and after World War II.

After leaving the Foreign Service, he undertook graduate studies at UCLA in 1949, then married and relocated to Montgomery, Ala., where he began a distinguished, 25-year career as a civilian employee with Maxwell Air Force Base. His last and longest position was with the staff of the Air Force's Air War College professional journal, *AU Review*. He was one of the oldest members of the Maxwell Officers' Club, and enjoyed his connection with the base during his retirement years. He was an active sponsor of foreign students attending the Maxwell Air Force Base War College, and volunteered as an "English as a Second Language" teacher.

Mr. Barker's love of international travel was rivaled only by his interest in art, both of which provided great joy in his life. He also enjoyed the sport of fencing, serving as coach while at UCLA and assisting the

Huntington College fencing team in Montgomery in his later years.

Mr. Barker's wife, Joan Arnold Barker, and son, Thomas Barker, preceded him in death. He is survived by three children: Mary Barker of Long Island, N.Y.; Brent Barker (and his wife, Marcia) of Fairfax, Va., who is a diplomatic security agent in the Foreign Service; and Jeffrey Barker (and his wife, Ana) of Mobile, Ala.; and four grandchildren: Alexander, Francesca, Edmund and Martin Barker.



Robert Bruce Black, 85, an economist and former FSO with USAID, died on April 6 in Biddeford, Maine, of complications from a stroke.

Mr. Black was a native of Arlington, Mass. He was educated at Philips Exeter Academy, Harvard College, the Harvard Littauer School of Public Administration and the London School of Economics. He earned a Ph.D. in economics and political science from Harvard University. In 1942 he entered the U.S. Navy, serving in action on a destroyer during the entire campaign in the Pacific, rising in rank from ensign to lieutenant commander. He was present at the signing of the peace treaty in Japan.

After the war, Mr. Black began a distinguished government career on assignment to the President's Materials Policy Commission, which reviewed long-term needs for strategic natural resources. His foreign affairs career began during the Marshall Plan, when he served as an economist

IN MEMORY



in the office of Director of Mutual Security Averell Harriman. From 1953 to 1972, he worked in a variety of capacities for the U.S. foreign assistance agencies that became USAID, beginning with the Office of Program and Planning dealing with the Near East and Africa.

After attending the National War College, Mr. Black became chief of the USAID Military Assistance Division. He directed missions in Tunisia, Senegal and Costa Rica, and was subsequently appointed director of the Latin American Office for Population Programs and Civic Development. His last assignment was as head of the Social Development and Demography Program within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. He represented the OECD at the first U.N. World Population Conference in 1974.

Apart from his career, Mr. Black had many interests. He was an avid reader and an enthusiast for theater, modern dance and music. With John H. Esterline, he wrote *Inside Foreign Policy: The Department of State Political System and Its Subsystems* (Mayfield, 1975). He also wrote extensively on questions of planning and development. He was an ardent environmentalist and outdoorsman. He checked regularly for pollution in the streams around Washington, D.C., as a member of Save our Streams. He fly fished all over the world throughout his life, and was an expert canoeist and member of the Sycamore Island Club in Montgomery County.

He was a Washington, D.C.-area resident from the late 1940s until 2003, when he moved to Kennebunk, Maine.

Survivors include his wife, Jeanetta Wilson Black of Kennebunk, also retired from USAID; two daughters, Brenda Pollara Black of Hing-

ham, Mass., and Rebecca Black, a Foreign Service officer with USAID in New Delhi; a brother and a grandson. His first wife, Martha Mooney Black, died in 1963.



Clarence A. Boonstra, 92, a retired FSO and former ambassador, succumbed to pneumonia at his home in Gainesville, Fla., on March 20.

Born in Grand Rapids, Mich., Ambassador Boonstra graduated from Michigan State University, studied at the Universities of Chicago and Wisconsin, and earned a Ph.D. in agricultural economics at Louisiana State University. He was commissioned as a Foreign Service officer in 1946, after tours with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., and overseas.

Amb. Boonstra specialized in tropical development. On the staff of General Douglas MacArthur during World War II, his assignments included sugar purchases and food supply in Cuba and the Caribbean region, and agricultural reconstruction in the Philippines and Southeast Asia. Later, Amb. Boonstra was posted to Peru, to Argentina during the turbulent Peron years, and to Brazil. He served again in Cuba when the Batista regime was falling to Castro's forces.

After a year at the National War College in Washington, D.C., he served as director for South American affairs in the State Department and, subsequently, as political adviser to U.S. military forces under the Southern Command in Panama. In the 1960s and early 1970s, he was deputy chief of mission and chargé d'affaires in Mexico and Brazil, consul general in Rio de Janeiro and ambassador to Costa Rica.

After retiring from the State Department in 1974 with the rank of

career minister, Amb. Boonstra became a consultant to the Weyerhaeuser Corporation, the United Nations, and several public and private agencies. He also lectured extensively, provided foreign affairs expertise to commissions of the State of Florida and served for a number of years on the University of Florida's External Advisory Board. He was an active Rotarian and a Paul Harris Fellow, an avid fisherman and conservationist, a golfer and tennis player. He was a member of Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired and enjoyed events at the DACOR Bacon House during frequent trips to Washington, D.C.

Amb. Boonstra moved to Florida in 1975 after living in Washington, D.C., for over 30 years between postings abroad.

He leaves his wife of 40 years, the former Margaret Beshore; three daughters, Alexa Barnett of McLean, Va., Sandra Page of Miami, Fla., and Tara Boonstra of Gainesville; a son, Carl Boonstra of Miami; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; a sister, Lillian Piersma of Lansing, Ill.; and numerous cherished in-laws, nephews and nieces. His first wife, Mildred Ferreira, died in 1960.



John Edward Devine, 92, a retired FSO, died on Feb. 16 at the Carroll Manor Nursing Home in Washington, D.C., of complications from Alzheimer's disease.

Born in Chicago, Ill., he was molded into a distinguished government servant by his father, an assistant postmaster of Chicago. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 1935, and later received his master's degree from the same institution.

After a stint in the Army Air Force during World War II, Mr. Devine

IN MEMORY



joined the State Department in 1946. His first assignment was in Cairo. He was subsequently posted to Hamburg, Bonn, Vienna and Heidelberg. His last assignment was as a visiting professor and lecturer at the University of Oregon in Eugene.

Mr. Devine retired in 1970, and settled in Washington, D.C., where he worked as a representative of Business International of Zurich. With his long experience in European affairs, Mr. Devine continued bringing together people and cultures in the business world.

His wife of 62 years, Virginia C. Devine, died in 2004. Mr. Devine is survived by a son, John R. Devine of San Jose, Calif., and a daughter, Kate Williams of Washington, D.C.



Charlie Hagemann, 73, a retired FSO, died of a heart attack on April 3, in Cibolo, Texas.

Born in Mt. Morris, Ill., Mr. Hagemann was the son of Ella and Herman Hagemann, and brother of Iola Roos, Arnie, Jerry and Duane Hagemann. He married the love of his life, Pauline, in 1956.

Mr. Hagemann served meritoriously in the U.S. Navy Seabees for 26 years prior to joining the Foreign Service in 1980. He was also a 32nd degree Mason, Scottish Rite.

Mr. Hagemann served as the maintenance officer for posts in Kinshasa, Islamabad, Cairo, Mogadishu and Lagos. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1991. He and Pauline enjoyed their retirement years in Cibolo, working on building projects and helping neighbors in the community.

Mr. Hagemann is survived by his wife; a son and daughter-in-law, Kenneth and Michelle; a daughter and son-in-law, Linda and Joel Oksner;

and three grandchildren, Nicole, Steven and Andrea, all of Ventura County, Calif.; and a brother Duane, and his wife, Nancy, of Mt. Morris, Ill.



John C. Hawley, 87, a retired FSO, died peacefully on March 12 at Hampshire Care Nursing & Rehabilitation Home in Plainfield, Mass.

Born in Nagoya, Japan, as the youngest son of a Foreign Service officer and a missionary's daughter, Mr. Hawley was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Haverford College.

A brilliant linguist who spoke fluent French, Italian, Spanish and German, Mr. Hawley joined the State Department in 1942, and was posted to Agua Prieta, Ciudad Juarez and Port-au-Prince. He was commissioned as a Foreign Service officer in 1945. He was posted in Venice and Florence before joining USIA in 1956 as a foreign affairs officer. He subsequently served in Rome, Trieste, La Paz, Ottawa, Paris and Frankfurt.

Following retirement, Mr. and Mrs. Hawley moved to Vinalhaven, Maine. This was his first real home, and he lived there longer than any previous place. He loved the island and its people as if they were his family. He was an active member of the community, joining the school board and becoming a lay reader in the Episcopal Church. Later, when his wife's health deteriorated, Mr. Hawley moved to Plainfield, Mass., to live with his youngest daughter and son-in-law.

Mr. Hawley was predeceased by his wife, Kathryn, and eldest daughter, Beatrice. Survivors include two daughters, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to the Christian Children's Fund (www.christianchildrensfund.org).

Max Vance Krebs, 89, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on April 22 at St. Joseph of the Pines in Southern Pines, N.C.

Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, Ambassador Krebs graduated with honors from Princeton University in 1937. He enlisted in the Horse Cavalry Division of the National Guard in Ohio, graduated from the Transportation Corps Officer Candidate School in New Orleans, La., and was posted in California for the duration of World War II. He was mustered out of the service in 1946 with the rank of captain.

Amb. Krebs began his 29-year career in the Foreign Service in 1947. His first post was Montevideo. He next served in Bogota, and then went to the consulate in Antwerp as economic officer before being recalled to Washington in 1955 for an assignment in personnel. In 1957, Amb. Krebs was hand-picked by newly appointed Under Secretary of State Christian Herter as his special assistant.

Upon the death of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Herter became Secretary of State. Amb. Krebs declined an appointment to the War College to continue the challenging and exciting years with Secretary Herter, accompanying him on all his trips to Europe and a final one flying the length of Latin America with President Eisenhower.

With the change of administration in the White House, Amb. Krebs was sent to Manila as political counselor in 1961, and thereafter posted to Rio de Janeiro in 1964. He was sent to Guatemala City in 1967 as deputy chief of mission under Ambassador Gordon Mein, who sadly attained world fame in August 1968, when he was assassinated by communist guerrillas in a kidnapping attempt to free some captured guerillas. Amb. Krebs stayed in Guatemala as the *chargé d'affaires*

IN MEMORY



until the newly appointed ambassador arrived. He was then appointed political adviser to Gen. George Mather, Commander of the Southern Command, in Panama.

In 1971, Amb. Krebs was assigned to Buenos Aires as DCM. During his three-year tenure in Argentina, ending with the return of Peron, there was tremendous political turmoil for which he had to have constant police protection. In 1974, he was appointed ambassador to Guyana. He retired in 1976, and he and his wife settled in the Sandhills area of North Carolina.

Amb. Krebs continued his life of service in retirement, first training young Foreign Service officers at FSI. Later, as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, he spent three years visiting small liberal arts colleges to inform students

about the opportunity to live and work overseas. He served as an adjunct instructor to the Continuing Education Department at Sandhills Community College, where he designed and taught three different courses. And, for 17 years, he was moderator for the "Great Decisions" course designed annually by the Foreign Policy Association. In Foxfire, where Amb. Krebs lived until 1999, he served as chair of the Planning and Zoning Board, and also wrote a "History of Foxfire" that was printed in booklet form for newcomers.

Music was a constant interest in Amb. Krebs' life. In college, he played the violin in the Princeton Triangle Club. Throughout his Foreign Service career, he performed solos and accompanied voices at informal gatherings.

In the Sandhills, he joined the college orchestra and the Village Chapel. He led the Moore County Chapter of the North Carolina Symphony, expanding the number of concerts from three to six per year, including a popular Thanksgiving concert.

Amb. Krebs' Rotary membership and leadership promoted unique scholarships for young golf champions from foreign countries for summer instruction at the Pinehurst Golf Club. His interest in mental illness led to membership in the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill in the early 1980s. After work with local and state groups, Amb. Krebs was appointed to the Governor's Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities, where he served until 1997.

Amb. Krebs received the Depart-

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IN MEMORY



ment of State Superior Honor Award in August 1969 for his courage and leadership in Guatemala in the trying conditions following the ambassador's assassination. In 1998, his high school in Cincinnati presented Amb. Krebs the "Golden Eagle Lifetime Achievement Award." The award was uniquely appropriate, as it had been his high school French teacher who first inspired Amb. Krebs to become a diplomat. His most recent recognition was the 2002 award from the Foxfire Village Council for "Outstanding Leadership in the Village."

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Esther Winn Krebs; a daughter, Marlynn Clayton and her husband Garry Krinsky of Greenfield, Mass; a son, Timothy of Greenfield; a grandson, Sasha Clayton of Washington, D.C.; a sister, Ruth Anne Wright of San Juan Capistrano, Calif.; a sister-in-law, Elizabeth Baldwin of Cincinnati, Ohio; a niece, Elizabeth Simms, and two nephews, Christian and Britt Krebs, all of Ohio.

Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Western Carolina Chapter, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte NC 28215, to NAMI, Moore County, P.O. Box 4823, Pinehurst NC 28374, to St. Joseph of the Pines, Development Department, 100 Waters Drive, Southern Pines NC 28387, or to FirstHealth Foundation, 150 Applecross Road, Pinehurst NC 28374.



Dr. William Edward Reed, 91, a retired FSO with USAID, died on April 12 at Wesley Long Community Hospital in Greensboro, N.C.

Dr. Reed was born in Columbia, La., on July 15, 1914. He began his education at Rosenwald School, then attended the Brownville Baptist Church founded in 1869 by his great-grandfather and others in the com-

munity. He graduated from Union Central High School, built by his father, and went on to receive a B.S. degree (cum laude) in agriculture and science from Southern University, near Baton Rouge, in 1937. He pursued graduate studies during the summer of 1938 at Tuskegee Institute, and in 1941 he received a master's degree in soil science from Iowa State University. He earned a Ph.D. in soil chemistry in 1946 from Cornell University.

From 1936 to 1937, Dr. Reed worked as a technician with the Soil Conservation Service in Bossier and Caddo Parishes in Louisiana. From 1937 to 1940, he was a county agricultural agent with Louisiana State University's Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economic Extension Service in East Feliciana Parish, Clinton, La. From 1942 to 1947 he taught agronomy and chemistry intermittently at Southern University. During this period, he was a member of the State Committee on Resource Use Education at Southern University, and also a member of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Interracial Problems in the City of Baton Rouge.

Dr. Reed's first special assignment with the U.S. government was with the Department of State. From 1947 to 1949, he undertook a mission to the Republic of Liberia to study its soils and evaluate the prospects for agricultural development in that country as a forerunner of USAID development programs. He walked and traveled throughout Liberia conducting research for *Reconnaissance Soil Survey of Liberia*, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1951.

After his return from Liberia, in 1949, Dr. Reed became dean of the School of Agriculture at North Carolina's Agricultural & Technical College in Greensboro. From 1951 to

1961, he served as chairman of the State Rural Progress Campaign Committee, promoting rural development in 66 counties in North Carolina. At the height of the Cold War, in 1955, Dr. Reed was selected as one of 12 American agricultural scientists who toured the Soviet Union. During a subsequent leave of absence from A&T College from 1957 to 1959, he served as chief of party for an International Cooperation Administration contract team to Ghana.

In 1961, Dr. Reed joined the Foreign Service. He served several tours of duty in Ibadan as USAID's assistant director for the western region of Nigeria. In 1963, he was a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for the benefit of the less developed areas of the world in Geneva. He was posted to Ethiopia from 1968 to 1972 as USAID's deputy mission director. From 1972 to 1976, Dr. Reed served as USAID officer-in-residence at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (formerly A&T College), the last two years as special assistant to the chancellor for international programs.

Dr. Reed remained at NCATSU for the rest of his career. From 1976 to 1978, he was associate dean for research and special programs in the School of Agriculture; and from 1978 to 1988 he was director of international programs for the university. After retiring in 1988, he enjoyed spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren, and gardening.

Dr. Reed was a member of numerous organizations and professional societies, including: Omega Psi Phi, Sigma Pi Phi, Phi Kappa Phi (National Scholastic Honor Society), Sigma Xi (National Scientific Honor Society)

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and Beta Kappa Chi (National Scientific Society).

Dr. Reed was predeceased by his wife, Mattye Marie Scott Reed, whom he married in 1942. He leaves behind three daughters, Edwarda Johnson, Carol Reed and Bernetae Reed, of Greensboro; four grandchildren, Lucien Johnson of Falls Church, Va., Kimberly Johnson of Irving, Texas, Yewande Johnson of Washington, D.C., and William Johnson of Oakton, Va.; numerous nieces and nephews and many other relatives and friends.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Heifer Project International, 1015 Louisiana Street, Little Rock AR 72202, or The Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart IN 46515.

Edward E. Rice, 97, a retired FSO, died on April 13 in Tiburon, Calif.

Born in Saginaw, Mich., Mr. Rice attended the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (including post-graduate work) and the National University of Mexico.

Mr. Rice passed the Foreign Service exam in 1932, but due to the Great Depression no new appointments were made until 1935. In those days the Foreign Service was still dominated by men from the eastern part of the U.S., many with a Eurocentric orientation. With his Midwestern background, Mr. Rice was ready for something else: when offered the opportunity to become a

Chinese-language officer, he eagerly accepted. China would be a constant theme in his career and into retirement: he was probably the last among the American "China hands" who began their careers before World War II.

Mr. Rice was a language attaché in Peiping (as it was then known) from 1935 to 1937. Posts in Canton, Foochow, Chungking, with details to Lanchow and Sian, followed. After World War II, he served in the office of Chinese and then Philippine affairs, and had a posting to Manila. He attended the National War College in 1951-1952, followed by an assignment as consul general in Stuttgart. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Mr. Rice was deputy director of personnel, a

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member of the Policy Planning Council and deputy assistant secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs. From 1964 to 1968, he served as consul general in Hong Kong, with the rank of minister. In 1968-1969, he was a diplomat-in-residence at the University of California at Berkeley.

Edward Rice and Mary June Kellogg were married in 1942. After their years in the Foreign Service, much of it dealing with Asia, they built a home in Tiburon, Calif., with a lovely view of San Francisco and its bay. Mrs. Rice had and still has many art interests. Mr. Rice was for a time a research associate at the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of California. He is the author of two books: *Mao's Way* (University of California Press, 1972), an account of Mao Tse-tung's life and leadership of the Chinese Communist Party that won the Commonwealth Club's gold medal for nonfiction in 1973, and *Wars of the Third Kind: Conflict in Underdeveloped Countries* (University of California Press, 1986).

Mr. Rice was slowed by a stroke in his final years. He is survived by his wife, Mary Kellogg Rice, and niece, Catherine Siewert.



Edward Louis Robinson, 84, a retired Foreign Service Reserve officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died of cancer on Feb. 8 at the Wilson Health Care Center of Asbury Methodist Village, in Gaithersburg, Md.

Born in Ames, Iowa, Mr. Robinson was also an avid son of northern Minnesota. He served in the U.S. Navy in the Pacific during World War II, and was honorably discharged as a lieutenant (j.g.). He earned a B.A. from the University of Iowa in 1944, an M.S. from the University of Colorado in 1948 and an M.A. in jour-

nalism from the University of Minnesota in 1952. He wrote advertising and educational television copy from 1948 to 1972. For a short time, in 1967-1968, he was a consultant to the U.S. government's Teacher Corps program.

Mr. Robinson joined the Foreign Service in 1954, and was posted to Rangoon, and then Moulmein. He was transferred to Stuttgart in 1957, and detailed to the Foreign Service Institute's language school in Frankfurt in 1958. In 1959, he was named director of the Amerika Haus in Marburg. From 1960 to 1962, he was an information officer in Saigon. From 1962 to 1964, he worked at the Voice of America in Washington, D.C. He was posted to Bombay in 1964, and returned to USIA headquarters in 1966. He held a number of positions at USIA, notably head of its Thai language service, from 1972 until he retired in 1985.

Friends and family remember him as an avid reader, author, storyteller, gardener, walker and loyal friend. He is the author of *Sloth and Heathen Folly* (Macmillan, 1972), a novel set in Burma (now Myanmar) about serving as an FSO in Gamalia, a "backwater corner of Asia."

Mr. Robinson and his family lived for many years in Bethesda, Md., before moving to Darnestown, Md., in 1992.

Survivors include his beloved wife of 40 years, Mary Blair Robinson, and three sons: Edward Jr. of New York City, Michael of Darnestown, and Neil of San Diego, Calif. He was preceded in death by a fourth and much-loved son, Ben, in 1996. There are also two sons from a previous marriage to the former Joanne Peterson: Rand, a USAID officer now serving in Tel Aviv; and Shawn, of Frederick, Md. There are two granddaughters, Sophia and Kate, who live with their

mother, Katya Robinson, of Silver Spring, Md.



Mary Ryan, 65, a retired FSO and former career ambassador, died on April 25 of myelofibrosis at her home in Washington, D.C.

Ambassador Ryan was born in New York, and received a bachelor's degree in 1963 and a master's degree in 1965, both from St. John's University. She remained a New Yorker in spirit her entire life, friends told the *Washington Post*, with a New York Public Library book bag constantly filled with books and a passionate attachment to the New York Yankees.

Amb. Ryan joined the Foreign Service in 1966. Her first posting was to Naples. She served in Tegucigalpa and Monterrey before returning to Washington, D.C., to take up a position as roving administrative officer for Africa and post management officer in the Bureau of African Affairs. In 1980 she was posted as administrative counselor to Abidjan, and then Khartoum. In 1988 she was appointed ambassador to Swaziland, and in 1990 became director of the Kuwait Task Force after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

In 1991, Amb. Ryan was one of 14 consular officers fired by Assistant Secretary of State Elizabeth M. Tomposi, a political appointee. Amb. Ryan then became the first director of operations for the U.N. Special Commission on the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, based in New York. When Tomposi was herself fired by Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger (for authorizing the search of passport records belonging to then-presidential candidate Bill Clinton), Amb. Ryan returned to Washington as deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of European and

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Canadian Affairs. In 1993, she became assistant secretary of State for consular affairs.

Amb. Ryan was named career ambassador in 1999, the second woman to hold that rank in the history of the State Department. She served as head of the Bureau of Consular Affairs until 2002, when she resigned as a result of the post-9/11 dispute over whether visa standards had grown lax during her watch. At the time, she was the longest-serving diplomat in the State Department, with 36 years of service.

Amb. Ryan received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award in 1992 and in 1998, and the State Department's Arnold L. Raphel Award for mentoring in 1996. "Amb. Ryan exemplified the best in public service," her successor as assistant secretary for consular affairs, Maura Harty, said in an official statement. "She was a colleague, a mentor and a friend to all of us. We will miss her humanity, her intellect and her kindness."

In retirement, Amb. Ryan tutored students in Washington, D.C.-area schools and volunteered as a Eucharistic minister for patients at George Washington University Hospital. She served as an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist at St. Stephen Martyr Roman Catholic Church, attended the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament and graduated from a two-year program in parish administration at Trinity University in Washington, D.C.

Survivors include a sister, Kathleen Montgomery of Flushing, N.Y.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Stephen Martyr Church, 2436 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20037.



Erwin Clayton Seeley, 85, a retired FSO with USAID, died on

April 11 in Fort Myers, Fla.

Mr. Seeley was born in Detroit, Mich. He attended Columbia University, where he received his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. He joined the Foreign Service in 1969, and was posted with USAID as an educational adviser in Bogota. Besides Bogota and Washington, D.C., his postings included Rio de Janeiro. He retired in 1986, receiving recognition from the Reagan administration for his service.

In 1994, Mr. Seeley moved to Lehigh Acres, Fla., from Virginia. He was a member of the Fort Myers, Estero, Caloosahatchee Chorus and the Lehigh Senior Citizens Center. He enjoyed volunteering for Hope Hospice. He was a member of the Christ United Methodist Church of Lehigh Acres, and sang in its choir. Throughout his life, his passion for music was matched only by his dedication to serving humanity.

Mr. Seeley was predeceased by his wife, Margaret Ruth, in 1997.

He is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law, Sandra and John Guerrero, Jr., of Fort Myers Beach, Fla., and Susan and Bob Derse of Seattle, Wash.; a son, Clayton Seeley of Brazil; a son and daughter-in-law, Donald and Li Seeley of Virginia; a brother, Robert D. Seeley of Virginia; a sister, Bethany Klug of Oviedo, Fla.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to any charity.



Gloria Diana (Lehan) Smith, 83, wife of retired FSO Glenn Lee Smith, died on Christmas Day 2005 of complications of Parkinson's disease after a brief stay in a nursing home in Santa Rosa, Calif.

Born in Minneapolis, Minn., Mrs.

Smith was a graduate of Los Angeles City College and the Radio/Television Arts Academy of Los Angeles. She joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1943, where she met her husband, also a U.S. Marine. They were married in 1944.

Mrs. Smith accompanied her husband to posts in India, Turkey (twice), Ethiopia, Cyprus and, when her husband attended the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

She was an avid tennis player into her seventies. She appeared in many amateur and professional theater and television productions, both in the U.S. and abroad. She was also active in charitable organizations, working with Planned Parenthood in India, aiding lepers in Ethiopia and teaching English in Turkey. She taught in inner-city schools in Washington, D.C., when her husband was special assistant to Edward R. Murrow, then director of the U.S. Information Agency.

In addition to her husband of 61 years, Gloria Smith is survived by two daughters, Kerry Bargsten of Windsor, Calif., and Shelley Sweeney of Raleigh, N.C.; two sons, Bruce Smith of Venice, Calif., and Stephen Smith of Las Vegas, Nev.; five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



William H. (Bill) Spengler, 82, a retired FSO, died on Nov. 8 in Colorado Springs, Colo., after a 10-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

Born in 1923 in Neenah, Wisc., Mr. Spengler was active as an Eagle Scout and traveled to the International Boy Scout Jamboree in the Netherlands in 1939. He attended Andover Academy and the University of Wisconsin, earning an M.A. in political science. During World War II he served as a code breaker in the U.S. Army.

In 1950, he joined the Foreign Service. His postings included Thai-

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and, Norway, Afghanistan and Pakistan. He retired as consul general in Lahore in 1976.

Mr. Spengler was an avid researcher and collector of stamps, antique phonograph machines, cylinders and disks, sheet music, maps, books, ancient coins and Soviet cosmonaut souvenir pins (znachkii). While stationed in Kabul during the 1960s, he grew interested in ancient coins from the region, and subsequently became one of the foremost authorities on the people and coins that passed through that area over the centuries. This interest in numismatics and history influenced the rest of his life. Mr. Spengler published numerous articles, contributed to and edited catalogs on world coins and co-authored two books on the Turkomans.

He was a member of the Society for Preservation & Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America for 59 years, and organized a quartet in almost every place he lived.

After retiring, he settled in Colorado Springs, where he was active in Sister Cities, the American Numismatic Association, the American Numismatic Society and the World Affairs Council, and also formed the local Committee for International Visitors. He held memberships in many international societies.

Mr. Spengler leaves his wife of 55 years, Phid; three children, Sarah, Bill and John; and four grandchildren, May, Alex, Grant and Bennett; a sister, Susan; and a brother, David.

Memorial contributions may be made to South Asia Earthquake relief at www.worldvision.com, or to any hospice.



Margaret V. Taylor, 81, a retired FSO with USIA, died on May 9 at her home in Washington, D.C., of natural causes.

Ms. Taylor was born in San Diego, Calif., and graduated from San Diego State University, later earning an M.A. from Stanford University in 1966. After three years in Boston with *The Christian Science Monitor*, she joined the Foreign Service in 1951.

In 1952, Ms. Taylor's long service abroad as a cultural affairs specialist began with an assignment to Salonika. Subsequently, she served in cultural and educational affairs positions in Tel Aviv, Medan, Tokyo, Helsinki and Washington, D.C. She specialized in cultural exchange programs, including those for Fulbright scholars, foreign and American students, and civic leaders of the countries where she was posted. She retired in 1980, following a tour in Rangoon.

In retirement, Ms. Taylor lived first in Tiburon, Calif., moving to Washington D.C. in 1996. She maintained a lifelong commitment to the arts, environmental causes and politics, and remained an inveterate international traveler.

Ms. Taylor is survived by a niece and nephew, and by the children and grandchildren of her two cousins. Memorial contributions may be sent to the Sierra Club or to the Save the Redwoods League.



Arthur T. Tienken, 83, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on May 7 at his home in Arlington, Va., after a long battle with stomach cancer.

Ambassador Tienken was born in Yonkers, N.Y. His studies at Princeton University were interrupted by World War II, in which he served as a first lieutenant in the 3094th Quartermaster Company of the Western Pacific in the Philippines. He returned in 1946 to marry Jean Ridgway of Springfield, Mass., and finish his

undergraduate degree at Princeton, staying to complete his master's degree in international relations at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

Amb. Tienken began his diplomatic career in 1950 as a Kreis resident officer in post-World War II Germany. He spent the majority of his career in Africa at embassies and consulates in Mozambique, the Belgian Congo (now Congo), Zambia, Tunisia and Ethiopia. He was appointed ambassador to Gabon and São Tome & Príncipe in 1978. He also spent four years in Brussels, as well as several tours in Washington, D.C. He attended the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., and was a diplomat-in-residence at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis.

Following retirement in 1987, Amb. Tienken continued his service as a State Department inspector, surveying embassies in China, Algeria, Egypt, India, Jamaica, Honduras, Brazil and many others. Until March 2006, he assisted in declassifying documents as part of the Freedom of Information Act. He was active in the Tunisian-American Society, the Senior Living Foundation and Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR). He was also a member of the Riverbend Country Club.

An avid golfer, Tienken continued to enjoy the game to the day before his death, and prided himself on the many courses he had played worldwide. When he wasn't golfing, he was fishing, preferably saltwater surf-casting or boat fishing. He was also a stamp collector, and trained his family and friends to save cancelled stamps and send them to him in batches for review. He was fascinated by American history and military history in general. He loved to sing, smoke his pipe and drink a perfect Manhattan.

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A daughter, Ann Tienken, died in 1971.

Amb. Tienken is survived by his wife of nearly 60 years, Jean R. Tienken of Arlington, Va.; three daughters, Judy Nelson of University Place, Wash., Nancy Milburn of Falls Church, Va., and Carol Tienken of Boston, Mass.; four grandchildren, Angela, Aaron, Matthew and Katharine; two great-grandchildren, Treyphosa Jean and Anthony, Jr.; and a nephew, Robert Woods Tienken.

Memorial donations may be sent to Capital Hospice (www.capitalhospice.org).



Lee Hall Valeriani, 80, one of the pioneering female network correspondents and a member of the Foreign Service with the Voice of America, died of cancer on March 23 at her home in Washington, D.C.

Known professionally as Lee Hall, she was born in Oklahoma and spent her infancy in Japan, where her father, an engineer, was working on a project. She received her bachelor's degree in journalism in 1947 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. There she met Wilson Hall. When he transferred to Yale University, they married in New Haven, Conn. She began working for a local radio station and participated in programming children's shows in the early days of TV.

Lee Hall was hired by NBC in the early 1950s as a foreign correspondent. Prior to that, when her husband was recalled to military service and stationed in Japan, she did broadcasts for Armed Forces Radio on the Korean War. By 1953, they were both working for NBC and based in Cairo, covering the Middle East. She reported on the 1952 military takeover of the Egyptian government and the abdication of King Farouk. She

also filed audio reports on the 1956 Suez Canal crisis. In Jordan, Lee Hall broke the news of King Hussein's surviving an assassination attempt. When Lee and Wilson Hall returned to New York in 1957, she served as United Nations correspondent.

In 1959 the Halls were assigned to cover South America. They established a bureau in Rio de Janeiro and covered the continent, keeping a close eye on Cuba, where Fidel Castro had overthrown the Batista regime in January. Later in 1960, she left South America temporarily to join in NBC's coverage of the national presidential nominating conventions. She was the lone woman on a panel of NBC correspondents that included Chet Huntley, David Brinkley and others, who responded to letters from listeners. She then returned to South America. But by the end of 1961 Lee and Wilson Hall were back in New York, assigned to NBC-TV and divorced.

At this time, Ms. Hall moved to Washington to begin what would be a 28-year career at VOA. There she had reporting assignments in addition to supervising worldwide English programs. She covered the Republican and Democratic conventions in 1964 and 1968. In 1966, she was a member of the press corps accompanying President Johnson on his trip to Asia and the Pacific.

In 1965, Ms. Hall married Richard Valeriani, who was NBC's diplomatic correspondent, and they traveled abroad frequently. She was promoted to deputy chief of the VOA's Worldwide English Division and also was VOA's White House correspondent. She was unfailingly helpful to her staff, especially newcomers, and they admired her as a boss and as a person.

Her marriage to Valeriani ended in divorce in 1979, and she moved to Los Angeles as chief of VOA's West

Coast Bureau. In Los Angeles she took over a large staff of correspondents and technicians, and arranged news coverage of events from Hollywood to outer space throughout the western states.

On her retirement in October 1990, Ms. Hall moved back to Washington, D.C., and temporarily worked part-time for two British newspapers. She served a term as president of the D.C. Public Library's Palisades Branch, and in 1992 became active in the Institute for Learning in Retirement. There she not only took courses, but also served as a member of the board of directors and on a number of committees.

Throughout her life, friends recall, Lee Hall was known as an elegant and modest woman who rarely discussed her remarkable career. Julius Goodman, former president of NBC, remembers Ms. Hall as "a good reporter, personable and energetic." As he told the *Washington Post*, "She was tenacious and was interested in everything; just one of those women with a kind of atmosphere about her, so you knew when you entered a room that you wanted to talk to her."

Ms. Hall has no immediate survivors.



Leonard F. Willems, 68, a retired FSO, died in Hamilton, Ontario, on April 30, following a long illness.

A graduate of Brown University, Mr. Willems grew up in a military family. His father, John Willems, was a general officer who served in the peacetime army of the 1930s and in World War II. One of Mr. Willems' proud possessions was a large black-and-white photo of his father's battalion drawn up in formation with soldiers and equipment. A self-proclaimed "military brat," Mr. Willems

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clearly had a happy childhood and cherished his family's Wyoming roots.

Mr. Willems joined the Foreign Service in 1963. His postings included Kingston, the Cayman Islands, Montreal, Hong Kong, Lagos, Edinburgh, Moscow and Monrovia, as well as assignments in Soviet affairs in the department. He was acclaimed for initiating the practice of "accelerated third-country processing," which enabled Soviet Jews and other minorities to reduce their time spent in holding camps in Italy before proceeding on to the USA. He assiduously followed reciprocity issues, which he enforced rigorously. As the supervisory consular officer in Hong Kong, he prided himself on issuing more nonimmigrant visas than the rest of his large staff combined — setting the tone that "our doors" needed to be more open to China.

In Lagos, Mr. Willems served as labor attaché and also ran the political section for long periods between the assignment of new occupants to that office. As in his work on Soviet affairs, he demonstrated the versatility and managerial acumen that moved him to the top of the consular ranks. He retired as consul general in Ottawa in 1991, subsequently crossing Wellington Street to advise a number of prominent members of Parliament on immigration issues.

Friends recall Mr. Willems for his insight, integrity and candor. He was also known for his ready wit and skill in telling a revealing story.

Mr. Willems is survived by his wife, Alice, manager of the Canada Marine Discovery Centre/HMCS Haida in Hamilton, Ontario; their daughter, Rebecca, a student at Acadia University in Nova Scotia; and two sons by his first marriage, John of New York City, and Jim of Seattle, Wash.

Stephen Winship, 85, a retired FSO, died on March 11 in Charlottesville, Va., after a brief illness.

Born in Charles River, Mass., Mr. Winship attended Phillips Academy and was a 1941 graduate of Harvard College. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942 and, after aviation training, became a flight instructor and also flew sea planes in the Caribbean. After World War II, he worked briefly as a commercial airline pilot before joining the Foreign Service in 1947.

Mr. Winship served in Kingston, Buenos Aires, Perth, Stockholm, Washington, D.C., and as consul in Peshawar. He spent the later years of his career doing political-military work in Saigon and Bangkok, and with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Office of Military Assistance in Washington, D.C. His last assignment before retiring in 1977 was as a member of a Foreign Service inspection team in France.

His favorite assignments were as the American consul in Perth in the mid-1950s and in Peshawar in the late 1960s, where being in charge of small diplomatic outposts left him relatively free from bureaucratic burdens. He took these opportunities to travel extensively through the vast consular districts, using his vibrant style of personal diplomacy to win friends and increase understanding for the people of the United States.

Upon retirement, Mr. Winship and his wife, Ronnie (Norinne), fulfilled a long-deferred dream by relocating aboard a 45-foot ketch, *Marith II*. The boat was named after the schooner they had lived on with their young family in Florida and on the Potomac River during the shortage of postwar housing in the 1940s. They cruised the Caribbean, the East Coast of the U.S., and made a voyage to the Galapagos Islands before settling in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., in 1987.

There Mr. Winship was an active

volunteer for the Sailboat Bend Civic Association and Recordings for the Blind. The couple moved to the Westminster-Canterbury retirement community in Charlottesville, Va., in 1995.

In addition to his love of sailing, Mr. Winship had a lifelong association with the mountains of New Hampshire. He spent many summers in North Sandwich in his early and later life hiking, cutting firewood, gardening and relaxing in the wood-fired sauna he built by a mountain brook.

Until his health failed in his final years, Mr. Winship was a dynamo — "indestructible," in the words of an old family friend. He never shirked a new construction or renovation project, and enjoyed reading and reciting poetry or prose aloud and making woodcuts and wooden toys for his grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Norrine Hayford Winship; four children, Peter Winship of Dallas, Texas, and London, Rebecca Morehouse of Corte Madera, Calif., Michael Winship of Austin, Texas, and Nathaniel Winship of Leominster, Mass.; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



Irena O. Yost, 91, widow of the late Ambassador Charles W. Yost, passed away in her sleep in Bethesda, Md., on March 25.

Mrs. Yost was born in 1915 in Lodz, Poland, and grew up in Radom, where her father was director of the government-owned arms factory. Having already acquired proficiency in four languages, she was attending the *École des Sciences Politiques* when she met her future husband, then a young diplomat in Warsaw. They married in 1934, then moved to the United States.

With little knowledge of English or the ways of the State Department,

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Mrs. Yost joined a group of foreign FSO wives, including Annalise Kennan (the wife of George Kennan) and Elise Henderson (the wife of Loy Henderson), who met regularly to help each other navigate their new country. During the war years, with her husband at the State Department, Mrs. Yost assisted with fundraising for the Red Cross and worked on Polish war relief.

In 1946, when Amb. Yost was sent as chargé d'affaires to Bangkok, Mrs. Yost began her life as a career Foreign Service wife, packing and unpacking as well as entertaining, cajoling, assisting and persuading on four different continents. Besides postings in Europe, Mrs. Yost had to contend with household rats and no running water in Laos

as well as having her home turned into an international relief center after an earthquake in Morocco. In 1961, when Amb. Yost was called to serve at the U.N. with Adlai Stevenson, and later, when President Nixon called him out of retirement to serve as the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Mrs. Yost found herself on a new world stage where her talents made her a popular figure with several generations of diplomats and their wives.

When Amb. Yost retired from his U.N. posting in 1971, the couple settled in Washington, D.C. After her husband's death in 1981, Mrs. Yost continued her involvement with UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, while also involving herself in various Polish

assistance groups. She was a member of the U.S. United Nations Association, the Women's Democratic Club, the World Federation of U.N. Associations and the Polish-American Association.

She also continued to travel extensively. In 2003 a fall forced her to a nursing home in Bethesda, where she remained until her death.

Mrs. Yost is survived by her three children, Nicholas of San Francisco, Calif., Casimir of Bethesda, Md., and Felicity of New York, N.Y.; a sister; three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the AFSA Scholarship Fund, 2101 E Street NW, Washington DC 20037. ■

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AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • July-August 2006

AFSA Award Winners Honored

The American Foreign Service Association is proud to announce the AFSA Award winners for 2006. They were honored at a June 22 ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State. AFSA places great emphasis on these awards, which recognize intellectual courage and outstanding achievement in the Foreign Service.

Ambassador Morton Abramowitz was selected for the 2006 AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy. James Schlesinger presented the award to Amb. Abramowitz at the ceremony. See the profile and interview on p. 30 of this issue and look for coverage of the awards ceremony in the September *AFSA News*. Articles about the award winners follow in this issue of *AFSA News*.

AFSA greatly appreciates the efforts of all those who sent in nominations or served on a selection panel this year. We also extend warm thanks to the director general for co-sponsoring the annual awards ceremony.

CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AWARDS

For over 30 years, AFSA has been honoring members of the Foreign Service who have the intellectual courage to question the status quo and take a stand, no matter the sensitivity of the issue or the consequences of their actions. The following Foreign Service employees received this year's AFSA awards for intellectual courage, initiative and integrity in the context of constructive dissent, for speaking out and challenging the system from within.

The Christian A. Herter Award, for a senior-level Foreign Service officer: **Ambassador Michael E. Guest**, current dean of the Foreign Service Institute's Leadership and Management School.

The William R. Rivkin Award, for a mid-level Foreign Service officer: **Richard S. Sacks**, political counselor at Embassy Panama.

The W. Averell Harriman Award, for an entry-level Foreign Service officer: **Christopher C. Allison**, vice consul at Consulate Chennai.

The Tex Harris Award, for a Foreign Service specialist: **Kevin B. Morgan**, budget and resources officer at Embassy Minsk.

EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARDS

These awards recognize exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions to professionalism, morale and effectiveness.

The Delavan Award, for extraordinary contributions by an office management specialist: **Malgorzata "Gosia" Lamot** at Embassy Kuwait; Runner-up: Linda Ingalls at Embassy Pretoria.

The M. Juanita Guess Award, for outstanding service as a community liaison officer: **Martine McKinnie** at Embassy Yaounde; Runner-up: Shelley Wooley at Embassy Brasilia.

AFSA SPECIAL AWARDS OF APPRECIATION

AFSA presented a special award of appreciation to retiring **Senator Paul Sarbanes**, D-Md., in acknowledgement of his strong support for the Foreign Service during his 30 years of service in the U.S. Senate.

A special award of appreciation was also presented to **Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen** in recognition of his many years of dedicated service as chairman of the AFSA Awards & Plaque Committee.



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FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY 2006

Four Names Added to Memorial Plaque

On May 5, four more colleagues who died in the line of duty while serving their country overseas were honored during the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony, held on Foreign Affairs Day. They are: Barbara C. Heald, Keith E. Taylor, Stephen E. Sullivan and David E. Foy. The new names have been added to the plaque and were unveiled by Secretary Condoleezza Rice and AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes. There are now 222 names inscribed on the Memorial Plaque, which were established by AFSA in 1933.

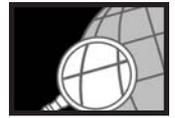
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MIKKELA THOMPSON

Secretary Rice offers condolences to the families of the honorees at the AFSA Plaque Ceremony.

AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER



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The Great American Patronage System

There is an old story that has been circulating throughout the ranks of the Foreign Service for years. In this tale, a politically well-connected U.S. Navy captain who is in command of an aircraft carrier battle group visits the U.S. embassy in a foreign country where the carrier is making a port call. At a reception that the ambassador hosts in his honor, the Navy captain exclaims: “This is a really sweet setup you’ve got here. I think when I retire next year, I’ll pull some strings in Washington and get me appointed to one of these ambassador gigs.” To which the ambassador, a veteran FSO, replies: “You do that ... and when I retire next year, maybe I’ll pull some strings in Washington and get me appointed to command a Navy aircraft carrier battle group.”

This story, meant to illustrate the absurdity of considering virtually anyone with political “connections” to be capable of assuming the responsibilities of serving as a United States ambassador, cuts close to the bone for many of us who devote our lives to the professional Foreign Service. After all, we spend our careers laboriously acquiring a nuanced understanding of the challenges facing our country abroad, developing our expertise on foreign nations, languages and cultures, learning how to negotiate and manage bilateral and multilateral relationships with other governments, cultivating our diplomatic skills and being groomed to perform the job of United States ambassador — only to face the reality that more than a third of the U.S. ambassadorships around the world, including in some of the most important countries for U.S. interests, are handed out as perks to the president’s political cronies and campaign contributors, often with no regard whatsoever for foreign-affairs qualifications.

Most of us in the Foreign Service have had mixed experiences working for political-appointee ambassadors. Some of these appointees prove to be quick learners and manage to do well as ambassadors, but a great many others do not. Some treat the job as little more than a status symbol and a social opportunity, hardly participating in the real work of managing the bilateral relationship. Some spend three years as ambassador without ever bothering to learn the language of the country to which they are assigned to represent the United States. Some spend most of their time away from post.

This should surprise no one. Someone who has never served in an embassy, never delivered a diplomatic demarche, never drafted a reporting cable and never worked in the foreign-policy arena is going to need an awful lot of on-the-job training. Having been

successful in another profession — business entrepreneur, stock broker, tax lawyer, oil magnate, bank president, whatever — does not automatically qualify one to serve as a United States ambassador, any more than a career as a Foreign Service officer qualifies someone to command a naval battle group. Even suggesting otherwise is an insult to our proud profession. We in the Foreign Service do specialized work that is painstakingly learned over the course of a diplomatic career.



What few people realize is that this patronage system is unique to the United States government. Sadly, we remain the only country in the world that routinely treats its ambassadorships as rewards for the president’s friends and financial backers. It is no secret that many ambassadorships can now be purchased by the highest bidder among campaign contributors.

Sadly, we remain the only country in the world that routinely treats its ambassadorships as rewards for the president’s friends and financial backers.

Virtually every other country in the world takes its ambassadorships seriously. The U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Japan, India, China, Saudi Arabia, Brazil and Mexico all reserve their most important diplomatic postings — including their envoys to Washington — for their

most experienced professional diplomats. These countries’ ambassadors to the United States all have glittering resumé’s of achievement in managing foreign-policy issues. Yet our ambassadors to every one of those countries are political appointees with no diplomatic background.

What does this practice say about our foreign policy? What signal does it send to foreign governments? What does it reveal about the face America is presenting to an increasingly difficult and dangerous world?

Because the ambassadorial patronage system has been a longstanding feature of American politics — and has been practiced equally by Democratic and Republican presidents — few have been willing to challenge it. Perhaps in the post-9/11 world of transformational diplomacy, in which our country is fighting a war in the Middle East and struggling to contend with widespread negative images of the United States, it is time to reconsider who represents our country abroad as ambassadors. Perhaps it is time for one bold administration to stand up and put an end to the patronage system. □

V.P. VOICE: USAID ■ BY BILL CARTER

“Adios,” Sports Fans



After serving as the AFSA/USAID vice president for three satisfying years, I am retiring. This is my swan-song column. I have been trying to come up with something appropriately sage and profound to say as I exit, like: “Beware of the military-industrial complex,” or “Remember to use sunscreen, floss and recycle,” but I would be borrowing those from others. Instead, indulge me in a few reflections.

I come away from this experience with a much deeper appreciation for AFSA, and what it does, than I had when first elected. Bureaucratic systems are not always benign. They need checks and balances; they need vigilant watchdogs against the arrogance of power; they need employee advocacy organizations to minimize abuses. At other times, employees need third-party interventions to resolve individual issues or to correct systemic flaws flowing from specific cases. AFSA serves these functions for all five foreign affairs agencies — and serves them well.

It took my entire tenure to get the unjust dismissal of two USAID officers reversed. If common sense had prevailed at the outset, there would have been tremendous savings in time and money, and avoidance of the loss of some trust and good will. But, common sense was on an extended vacation, and it took the Foreign Service Grievance Board and, finally, federal court action before it returned.

At last, these two Foreign Service officers are back and fully reinstated. AFSA-sponsored litigation in court and before the Foreign Service Grievance Board helped bring about this just ending. These cases against two untenured officers had a broad impact. They led to successful negotiations for revising tenure procedures so that what happened to these two employees will not happen to anyone else.

AFSA played an important role in reversing a “reblocking” decision that would have reconfigured the office space within the Ronald Reagan Building at great expense. Given the subsequent agency changes and reorganization, this would have proven to be very wasteful. AFSA was instrumental in convincing management to staff critical-priority countries on a volunteer basis, as opposed to the use of directed assignments, which was the initial intent. So far, this voluntary system has worked well.

The Student Loan Repayment Program for USAID employees was implemented before budgetary shortfalls put it temporarily on hold. I know my successor will be working hard to get it restarted.

No, it was not all sweetness and light. AFSA was not successful in gaining eligibility to join USAA for new USAID, FAS and FCS officers. We fought a valiant fight but lost, for now. I predict that somewhere down the road, this, too, will be reversed in our members’ favor. And, AFSA continues to believe that converting Personal Services Contractors and others to Foreign Service positions and creating the quick-fix Foreign Service Limited personnel category were serious errors that will haunt the agency’s human resources function for many years to come.

I cannot go without thanking my sidekicks at the AFSA/USAID office, Doug Broome and Asgeir Sigfusson, for their patience, support and wise counsel.

I will miss this job at AFSA, and I will miss being an active member of the Foreign Service. I wish you all the best in life. □

Award for Lifetime Contributions Morton Abramowitz

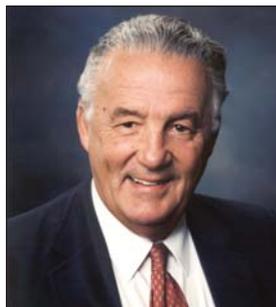
During the June 22 AFSA Award ceremony, James Schlesinger presented the 2006 AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy to Ambassador Morton Abramowitz. Previous recipients of this prestigious award include U. Alexis Johnson, Frank Carlucci, George H.W. Bush, Lawrence Eagleburger, Cyrus Vance, David Newsom, Lee Hamilton, Tom Pickering, George Shultz, Richard Parker and Richard Lugar.

The lifetime contributions award honors Amb. Abramowitz for his dedicated public service of more than 46 years. (See profile and interview, p. 30.) His 31-year career in the U.S. Foreign Service included ambassadorships to Turkey, Thailand and the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Negotiations in Vienna. He also served as assistant secretary of State for Intelligence and Research and deputy assistant secretary of Defense, among many other assignments.

Upon retirement from the Foreign Service as a career ambassador in 1991, Amb. Abramowitz continued his distinguished service to the American people as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for six years. He has also been acting president of the International Crisis Group and a senior fellow at The Century Foundation. He has published numerous books, articles and essays on a wide range of foreign policy issues.

Amb. Abramowitz continues to be actively engaged in the critical issues facing U.S. diplomacy today and to work toward the achievement of peace and better relations between America and the rest of the world. AFSA is proud to honor Amb. Abramowitz for his important and significant contributions to U.S. foreign policy.

Special Award of Appreciation
for Support of AFSA and the
American Foreign Service
*Senator Paul S. Sarbanes,
D-Md.*



In appreciation for all that he has done in support of the American Foreign Service and the American Foreign Service Association while serving in the U.S. Senate for 30 years, AFSA presented a special award to Senator Paul S. Sarbanes, D-Md., at the AFSA Awards Ceremony on June 22. Sen. Sarbanes is retiring this

year, at the end of the 109th session of Congress, having served five terms in the Senate. He currently serves as ranking member of the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, and is a senior member of the Foreign Relations Committee, the Budget Committee and the Joint Economic Committee.

For three decades, Sen. Sarbanes has been a champion for the Foreign Service, someone who understands the important role of diplomacy. As a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Sarbanes and his staff have always provided AFSA with valuable advice and support. Because of his sound advice and careful consideration of legislation affecting the U.S. foreign affairs community, the Foreign Service is better able to protect and advance the vital interests of the United States in the international arena.

“For AFSA as well as all those in the Foreign Service community,” says AFSA Legislative Director Ken Nakamura, “he is known as a strong supporter and defender of our interests. His help comes in many forms: from quietly advising us to actively fighting for our interests, whether in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or on the floor of the Senate. Without his help, many of the things that have improved the lives and working conditions of those in the Foreign Service, their families and our retirees would not have been achieved.”

Sen. Sarbanes has consistently supported and fought for the resources needed for diplomacy and foreign assistance. He strongly favored appointment of ambassadors from the career Foreign Service. And he has always taken up less-noticed issues that strengthen the foreign affairs agencies and improve the Foreign Service. He has played a crucial role in defending the Foreign Service over many years, and served as a valuable partner in AFSA’s Capitol Hill efforts. AFSA is honored to recognize Sen. Sarbanes for his long record of support for the Foreign Service.

Special Award of Appreciation
Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen

In deep gratitude for his two decades of distinguished service as chairman of the AFSA Awards and Plaque Committee, as well as his lifetime of dedication to the American Foreign Service Association and public service, AFSA honored Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen with a Special Award of Appreciation at the June 22 ceremony.

In 1987, Amb. Laingen was elected as a retiree member of the ASFA Governing Board and appointed chairman of the Awards Committee (which later became the Awards and Plaque Committee). During his tenure, he succeeded in greatly improving the standing of the AFSA awards, and consistently provided wise guidance in the important task of honoring members of the Foreign Service who have lost their lives overseas in the line of duty.



AFSA is deeply grateful for Amb. Laingen’s commitment and dedication to our organization for so many years. In his modest and understated way, he made a tremendous contribution to the awards program, helping the association continue to honor dissent through the only such program for U.S. government employees. He devoted countless hours to AFSA and the committee, always maintaining a high level of integrity.

A Minnesotan, Amb. Laingen served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and in the Foreign Service from 1949 to 1987. He was ambassador to Malta from 1977 to 1979. While serving as chargé d’affaires in Iran in 1979, he was taken hostage. Following his release in 1981, Amb. Laingen served as vice president of the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., and executive director of the National Commission on Public Service (the Volcker Commission).

Amb. Laingen recently retired from his position as president of the American Academy of Diplomacy, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to fostering the highest standards in the conduct of diplomacy. While president of the academy, he served on the boards of A Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, the Mercersburg Academy of Pennsylvania, No Greater Love and the National Defense University Foundation, among others.

He holds the Award for Valor from the U.S. Department of State, the Distinguished Public Service medal from the Department of Defense, the Distinguished Alumnus Award from St. Olaf College, the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement, a Presidential Meritorious Award and the Foreign Service Cup.

Amb. Laingen is a graduate of St. Olaf College in Minnesota, the National War College and has a master’s degree in international relations from the University of Minnesota. He is the author of *Yellow Ribbon: The Secret Journal of Bruce Laingen* (1992), and has written several articles and commentaries for the *Foreign Service Journal*.

AFSA'S 2006 DISSENT AWARD WINNERS

The constructive dissent awards recognize individuals who have demonstrated the courage to challenge the system from within.

Christian A. Herter Award

FOR A SENIOR-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Michael E. Guest

Secretary Rice's Transformational Diplomacy initiative states that the U.S. "must send out into the world a diplomatic ... corps that reflects [its] great diversity." However, the department's own regulations impede that goal through provisions that discriminate against unmarried partners of Foreign Service personnel. Ambassador Michael Guest has been selected for the Herter Award for his efforts to push the State Department to adopt family-friendly policies for all families, and to ensure that Members of Household are treated fairly and equitably by the foreign affairs agencies.



At the Foreign Service Institute, where he is serving as dean of the Leadership and Management School, Amb. Guest has quietly but persistently advocated that partners be given the same training and other opportunities afforded to spouses. "Training is not a benefit, but a core requirement for the security of those who live abroad on behalf of the United States, and for the effectiveness of our mission," Guest believes. "The department's discriminatory disregard for unmarried partners, whether gay or straight, is an issue of work force fairness and equity."

As ambassador to Romania, where he served with distinction from 2001 to 2004 with his life partner by his side, Guest found that the inequities for unmarried partners were creating a negative morale issue for the community as a whole. A number of employees at post, both gay and straight, had unmarried partners. They had been refused training that would have benefited their security, and were denied access to embassy facilities and services.

Amb. Guest has been patient but insistent in urging the department to revise internal regulations so that partners of State

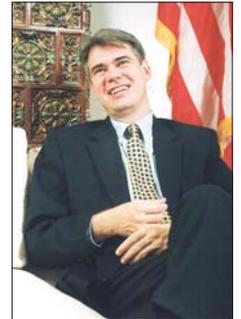
Department employees are accorded protections, training and benefits now provided only to spouses. Current regulations are particularly unfair to gay and lesbian employees, who cannot marry but whose partners nonetheless are denied basic training and benefits accorded to heterosexual spouses. These inequities also affect heterosexual employees in committed relationships who are not married but are part of U.S. mission communities abroad.

Recognizing that the "best and brightest" of the Foreign Service are sometimes also homosexual, Amb. Guest has sought to promote a diverse Foreign Service whose members are distinguished by talent, and where discrimination is not tolerated. He has encouraged the department to recognize that gay and lesbian FSOs serve on the front lines in often dangerous and difficult conditions. He has highlighted to management the fact that their partners, unlike the spouses of heterosexual FSOs, cannot receive security training, will not be evacuated in an emergency or assisted by embassy medical personnel during an epidemic

and do not receive the protection of a diplomatic visa. Amb. Guest does not seek special "gay rights;" rather, he seeks fairness and equity for all employees.

Dissatisfied with the status quo, Amb. Guest continues to press department managers to remedy these inequities so that the talented work force of the Foreign Service can serve as the team it should be and can channel its full energies in directions that will benefit the United States.

In addition to FSI and Bucharest, during his 24 years in the Foreign Service, Amb. Guest served in Prague as deputy chief of mission, in Paris as deputy political counselor and in Embassy Moscow's political section. In Washington, he has served as principal deputy assistant secretary and acting assistant secretary for the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, as deputy executive secretary of the State Department and White House assistant press secretary during the Reagan administration. He has received the State Department's Superior Honor Award five times. While serving as ambassador to Romania, he received the prestigious Charles E. Cobb Award for Initiative and Success in Trade Development. Amb. Guest is a Phi Beta Kappa and holds an M.A. from the University of Virginia and a B.A. from Furman University.



Top: Amb. Guest is sworn in as ambassador to Romania, 2001. Bottom: Romanian children in traditional regional garb meet Amb. Guest.

William R. Rivkin Award FOR A MID-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Richard S. Sacks

While serving as political counselor in Panama City, Richard Sacks sent a Dissent Channel message to the State Department that called attention to the negative effect that poor treatment of Panamanian Muslims at U.S. ports of entry was having on the U.S. image in Panama. For his intellectual courage and constructive dissent, he was selected for the 2006 Rivkin Award. He challenged and ultimately influenced the Department of Homeland Security's passenger-screening procedures as well as the embassy's approach to engagement with Panama's Muslim community.

Since the 9/11 attacks, foreign Muslims traveling to the U.S. have come under greater scrutiny. Members of Panama's Muslim community have faced numerous difficulties, including having their visas revoked, being incarcerated or being voluntarily deported as a result of information in various U.S. government databases. Sacks identified the problems faced by the Panamanian Muslims at U.S. ports of entry as a major factor influencing their negative attitude toward the U.S.

Sacks researched both individual claims of harassment and admission procedures. The Dissent Channel message he sent called attention to this problem and urged changes in the procedures.

Despite vocal opposition from some members of the country team — who argued that the mission's primary concern should be U.S. homeland security, not the alienation of Panama's Muslims — Sacks continued to push for recognition of this problem. He formulated several strategies to deal with it, such as expanding outreach to Panama's Muslim community (including first-time invitations to functions hosted by the ambassador), and fostering a greater willingness to address the larger immigration

issues that have been raised. None of this would have been possible without his courageous actions in challenging the status quo and persisting in efforts to find other solutions.

Sacks says he was "a bit stunned, but very happy" on winning the Rivkin award. "It is a great honor. But more importantly, the award helps AFSA focus attention on issues and problems that the department might otherwise prefer to ignore," Sacks stated. "My dissent criticized widespread mistreatment of Panamanian

Sacks with Public Affairs Director of Colón Islamic Cultural Center Luis Ibrahim at the Arab community school.



Embassy Panama City country team with Sheik Halim at the Colón mosque. Sacks is sixth from right.



From left: Sacks at Panama Ports with his mother Dorothy Sacks, FSN Ceci Carrasco and sons Jared and Gershom.

Muslims at U.S. ports of entry in the context of the threat from jihadist terrorism, and questioned how those practices make Americans more secure or enhance the image of the United States abroad, or make winning the struggle against Islamic totalitarianism more likely. Also, by holding constructive dissent in the highest regard, AFSA maintains an important standard. If I may quote one of my colleagues, is not the right to dissent at the very core of the freedom we espouse for all?"

Prior to joining the Foreign Service in 1989, Sacks worked as a journalist for the Associated Press and as World Bank publications editor. He co-authored *Paraguay: The Personalist Legacy* (Westview Press, 1991), with Riordan Roett. Sacks has served in Seoul, Hanoi, Casablanca, Mexico City (twice) and Washington, D.C. He heads back to the U.S. this summer for a Washington assignment.

W. Averell Harriman Award

FOR AN ENTRY-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Christopher C. Allison

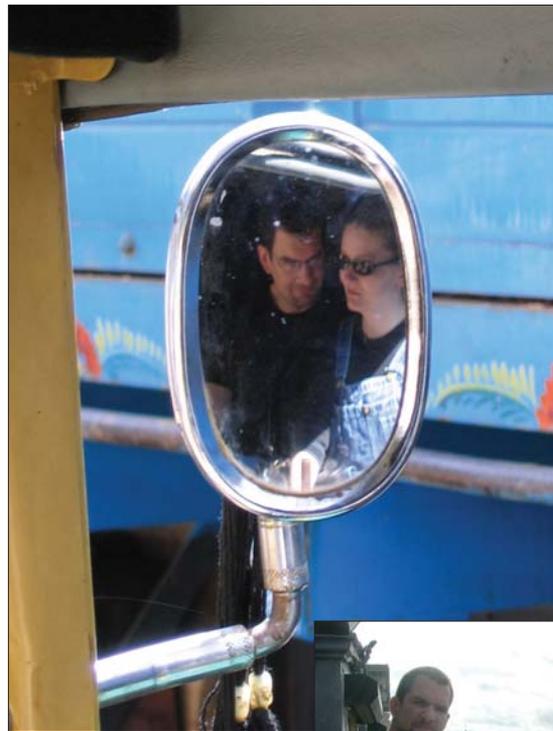
Dissent does not always mean saying no or sending a Dissent Channel message. What first-tour officer Christopher C. Allison did was challenge the status quo and ask difficult questions, as well as suggest solutions for a problem he saw in the processing of temporary-worker visas in South India. His efforts led to positive changes in H-1B visa processing. For constructively challenging the status quo, Christopher C. Allison was selected for the 2006 W. Averell Harriman Award.

While working in the fraud prevention unit in a traditionally high-fraud environment, Allison discovered that many questionable H-1B temporary-worker visa petitions seen by Consulate Chennai were being approved by Department of Homeland Security officers even though some petitioners appeared not to have the required job waiting for them in the U.S. The practice was not clearly definable as fraud, and the Foreign Affairs Manual states that consular officers are not allowed to re-adjudicate a DHS petition approval. Consular officers may, however, return problematic cases for review if new information unavailable to the DHS approving officer at the time of the approval arises later. Allison went to work trying to fix the system.

He worked with the consular fraud unit at the Kentucky Consular Center, the H-1B visa desk officer in the Bureau of Consular Affairs and contacts he had made within DHS to determine what, if anything, he could do regarding such cases. Through that cooperation, he was able to target his interviewing and bring out new information. The interagency discussions led to efforts by DHS



Chennai consular officers (from left) Franc Shelton, Hilary Dauer and Chris Allison promoting grass-roots diplomacy at the Sri Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala, Andhra Pradesh, India.



Allison and his wife, Beth Rollins, riding in an autorickshaw in Mysore, India.



Allison contemplating the Lisbon skyline while on R&R in 2005.

colleagues to improve their temporary worker visa processing.

It would have been easy for Allison to say that the law prohibited re-adjudication of DHS decisions and to conclude that it was too hard to fight the system. Consulate Chennai's workload is notoriously heavy, and taking the time to pursue this course meant lots of extra work with the possibility of no change at all in procedures. "Chris's willingness to ask questions and not just accept the status quo, while at the same time working within the system," notes the colleague who nominated him, "is an example of how one person can make a big difference."

Allison is finishing up his first tour in Chennai. He tells *AFSA News* that the work he did "would not have been possible without the active encouragement of my supervisors and the support and assistance of my colleagues at post, particularly the other H-1B adjudicators and the outstanding fraud prevention unit staff."

His next post is Tokyo, for another consular tour.

Tex Harris Award FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

Kevin Morgan

As the budget and human resources officer at Embassy Minsk, Kevin Morgan earned a reputation as a strong protector of, and advocate for, the local Belarusian staff in the embassy. When a delicate situation arose involving the credibility of allegations made by an embassy Foreign Service National, Morgan argued strenuously that no action should be taken until a thorough investigation could be made by someone from outside the embassy. While some in post management argued that the local employee should be summarily dismissed for making the allegations, Morgan insisted that this course of action would send the wrong message to the embassy work force: that reporting misdeeds could result in punitive action.

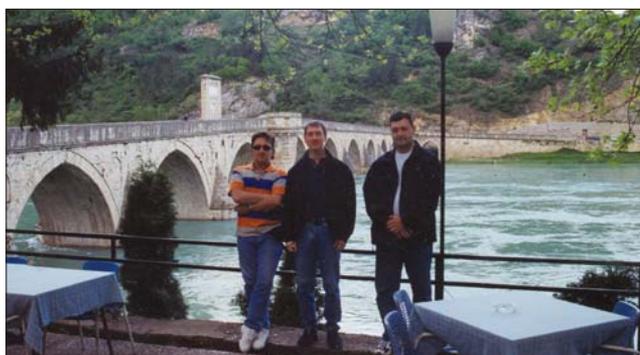
The 2006 Tex Harris Award has been given to Kevin Morgan for taking a brave and difficult stand to protect the rights of a local employee. In advocating due process for the employee, who was described as a valuable and model member of the embassy staff, Morgan took career risks to do what he believed to be the right thing. He demonstrated courage and integrity in an effort to protect and defend the rights of a local employee.

Belarus is an extremely difficult environment in which to operate; relations between the host government and the U.S. are tense. This hostile atmosphere contributed to an initial post reaction to prevent this sensitive matter from being exposed to a wider audience, including the Belarusian authorities, and to limit the extent of the internal investigation.

“Kevin’s willingness to fight to protect one of the



Morgan at a local bread factory in Minsk.



Morgan (center) with FSNs at the Drina River in Visegrad, Republika Serbska, while working with USAID.



Morgan with daughter Valentina at the World War II Khatyn Memorial outside Minsk.

embassy’s most valuable and trustworthy local employees showed his true character,” the nomination states, “as a person who will stand his ground in the face of overwhelming odds when it is the right thing to do.” Morgan was successful in his efforts, and post management reversed the earlier position.

Kevin Morgan was born in Ft. Monroe, Va., while his father was stationed there in the Army. He grew up in Fairfax, but his maternal grandmother was born in Belarus. Morgan has a degree in accounting from George Mason University. He is a CPA, and prior to joining the Foreign Service worked in the finance office of the National Science Foundation for seven years. Then he spent six years in the Regional Inspector General’s

Office of USAID, serving in Budapest. In this position, he worked in Yerevan, Sarajevo, Warsaw, Moscow and Kiev.

Morgan joined the State Department as a financial specialist in 2002, and went to Harare for his first tour. Embassy Minsk is his second post with the Foreign Service. He and his wife, Tatiana, have a 3-year-old daughter.

AFSA'S 2006 OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD WINNERS

These awards honor exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions.

Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

Malgorzata "Gosia" Lamot

Beyond her regular duties as the office management specialist for the deputy chief of mission, Malgorzata "Gosia" Lamot has made significant contributions to the entire embassy community in Kuwait. She generously shares her knowledge, skills and lifelong commitment to learning and exercise through spirited and relevant activities she organizes for embassy staff and family members. For enhancing the quality of life and learning at Embassy Kuwait, Lamot has been selected as the 2006 winner of the Delavan Award.



Nearly 10 percent of Embassy Kuwait's 500 personnel participate in the popular program she runs during her lunch break every day. "The Healthy Living Lunch Break" promotes both physical and mental fitness as well as financial and social well-being. Four times a week, she leads a group-oriented athletic activity, such as walking, running or water exercises, enjoyed by a loyal following of locally-engaged staff, Foreign Service officers and family members.

Wednesday's lunch breaks are dedicated to promoting professional development. Lamot targets each lecture to specific groups of employees or Eligible Family Members. Most of these workshops aim to better familiarize employees with the Department of State and the embassy. For example, her talk on employment

opportunities for spouses weighed the benefits and disadvantages of outside employment versus embassy employment as an Eligible Family Member.

The sessions on "Intranet versus Internet"



Lamot (right) with the junior diplomats at the ambassador's residence in Kuwait.

and "FSI Distance Learning" were so popular that she had to repeat them several times to accommodate the extraordinary demand from FSN and direct-hire personnel.

During the 2006 winter school break, when options were scarce for organized activities for students, Lamot arranged a three-day Junior Diplomat Program for embassy youth between the ages of 12 and 15. In addition to field trips, the group met at the embassy and learned about the functions of the many elements of the U.S. mission to Kuwait and visited the ambassador's residence.

Lamot's creative programs have contributed enormously to post morale. Her programs have prepared participants to make better career decisions, improve their performance, gain new skills and compete more effectively for promotions and awards. She also has boosted participants' self-confidence, and encouraged them to share their knowledge and demonstrate their new skills to others.

Kuwait is her second posting as an OMS, the first being Riyadh. Before joining the Foreign Service, Lamot was an EFM and worked as an overseas educational adviser during postings with her husband to Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. She was born and educated in Poland and is a graduate of the Academy of Economics in Krakow. She and her consular officer husband, Charles Glatz, have three children.

M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

Martine S. McKinnie

This year's M. Juanita Guess Award goes to Martine McKinnie for her superb performance as community liaison officer at Embassy Yaounde, which resulted in a dramatic improvement in morale among mission employees, their families and the American community.

"Martine's devotion to duty is without parallel," explains the deputy chief of mission. "She seems to be everywhere at all times, organizing or assisting in an astounding number of morale-boosting programs, both official and private. Her outreach to the expatriate and Cameroonian communities has brought great credit to this mission."

She sees her highest priority as welcoming newcomers and assisting them in getting settled and getting their bearings in Yaounde, a historically-difficult-to-staff 25-

percent differential post. "As an experienced Foreign Service family member," she says, "I know first-hand how stressful moving to a new environment can be on anyone. ... It makes a world of difference to have someone assist in the crucial first days after arrival and during an entire tour."

McKinnie begins welcoming new employees and family members long before they arrive at post. "Many new employees have told me they have never felt so welcome upon arrival in a new community," comments the deputy chief of mission. "I felt the same when I arrived."

Fluent in French and English, McKinnie has made a tremendous contribution to the post language program. The French-immersion trips she has organized have been particularly popular for helping staff and family members learn about and appreciate the culture of Cameroon.

A weekly newsletter that McKinnie puts together serves as a great resource, including information for diverse interests. She is inclusive, and ensures that all members have holiday plans. "Martine made me feel welcome at a time when I was new to living at an American embassy," says a Marine security guard. "She was so helpful, and that set the tone for the impression I got about the entire civilian community here in Yaounde."

A strong advocate for family member employment, McKinnie works to seek and support job opportunities inside and outside the mission. Ambassador Niels Marquardt describes McKinnie as "an indispensable actor both in building internal morale and in projecting an appropriately inclusive public image for this mission."

Martine McKinnie grew up in Niger. She went to Paris for three years of secretarial training, and returned to Niamey, where she gained valuable private-sector experience working for several companies before going to work for the U.S. embassy as an office management specialist. She has accompanied her Foreign Service spouse, Robert McKinnie, for 19 years to Georgetown (Guyana), Kinshasa, Bogotá, Berlin, Dar es Salaam and Washington. The couple has three sons. The family will return to Washington this summer for a new assignment.



McKinnie, with the Embassy Yaounde Marine Detachment, delivering food and supplies to an AIDS/HIV orphanage.

Foreign Affairs Day • Continued from page 65



MIKKELA THOMPSON

Newest additions to the AFSA Memorial Plaque are unveiled.

The Honorees

David E. Foy, a facilities manager at Consulate Karachi, was killed by a car bomb on March 2, 2006, as he was about to enter the consulate on his way to work. After a 21-year career in the Navy, Foy had joined the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations in 2003, and was on his second tour of duty.

Stephen E. Sullivan, Diplomatic Security Special Agent, was killed in a car bombing in Mosul, Iraq, on Sept. 19, 2005. He was serving as acting regional security officer for the Regional Embassy Office in Mosul, and was part of a chief-of-mission motorcade that was attacked.

Barbara C. Heald, a civilian employee of the Army's Project and Contracting Office, was killed on Jan. 29, 2005, while working at her desk, by a rocket that hit the U.S. embassy complex in Baghdad. She had volunteered for service in Iraq after retiring from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and was on her third tour there when she was killed.

Lieutenant Commander Keith E. Taylor, a Navy reservist, was killed in the Jan. 29, 2005, rocket attack on the embassy complex in Baghdad. He was the chief contracting officer for transportation and communications for the Army's Project and Contracting Office.

Amb. Holmes welcomed the family members of the honorees and other guests, numbering over 200. "To their families and friends gathered here," said Holmes, "I express my deepest gratitude for the contributions that your loved ones have made for our nation. But I also want to acknowledge the sacrifices that *you* have made, and the pain and loss that you have endured. Please be assured that we will never forget what they have done."

Following the presentation of the colors by a United States Armed Forces Color Guard, Sec. Rice spoke about each of the four honorees and read a message from President George Bush.



MIKKELA THOMPSON

AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes and Secretary Rice at the Plaque Ceremony.



MIKKELA THOMPSON

Retiree Coordinator Norma Reyes greets Foreign Affairs Day attendees at the AFSA table.

The message included the following: "Across our nation and around the world, members of the Foreign Service, Civil Service and Foreign Service Nationals work to improve lives, advance prosperity and protect our homeland. As they support our country, these individuals make great sacrifices and, of course, some have paid the ultimate price. ... We honor the Foreign Service members who lost their lives this

past year ... I appreciate the members of the American Foreign Service Association for their support of the men and women who face danger to protect our citizens."

In his remarks, Holmes said that the individuals being honored "voluntarily embarked on very difficult missions to serve their country in extremely dangerous places — Iraq and Pakistan. They did not consider themselves heroes. ... The men and women in the Foreign Service face great risks and serious hardships every day in virtually every post in which they serve. The same is true for our colleagues from other U.S. government agencies serving overseas. However, despite the danger, they contin-

ue to go forth with dedication and determination, united in their desire to serve their nation and to meet the demands of service in a turbulent and uncertain world."

Guests at the ceremony included Acting Director General of the Foreign Service John O'Keefe, USAID Administrator Randall Tobias, Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Richard Griffin, FAS Administrator Michael Yost, Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.), and representatives for Rep. G.K. Butterfield (R-S.C.), and for Sen. John Warner, (R-Va.), among many others.

After the official ceremony, Sec. Rice greeted the family members and offered personal condolences. The plaque ceremony was followed by Foreign Affairs Day seminars sponsored by the State Department. After the conclusion of the day's programs, AFSA hosted a reception and announced the annual AFSA Merit Scholarship winners. □

DAY ON THE HILL 2006

Taking the Voice of the Foreign Service to Capitol Hill

BY AUSTIN TRACY, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE AFSA PRESIDENT

On May 4, the day before Foreign Affairs Day, 35 retired and active-duty members of the U.S. Foreign Service, joined by AFSA Governing Board members and staffers, visited 29 congressional offices during AFSA's sixth annual Day on the Hill program. The intrepid volunteers, representing nine states (Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia and Washington) and the District of Columbia, helped convey the message that the Foreign Service, though it serves abroad, has a constituency at home that must not be neglected.

AFSA's overall theme for Day on the Hill focused on how each of our legislative proposals complements Secretary Rice's transformational diplomacy initiative. By taking this approach, AFSA demonstrated the role it plays vis-à-vis the State Department and the men and women serving in our diplomatic missions.

During meetings on the Hill, AFSA participants highlighted issues of importance to the Foreign Service, such as the need for enactment of overseas comparability pay, which would create pay equity for Foreign Service members serving overseas. Currently, Foreign Service members at FS-1 and below receive a 17-percent pay cut when they leave Washington, a clear disincentive for overseas service. Participants also highlighted the need to improve the mechanisms for rehiring Foreign Service annuitants (under the WAE program), which would give the Secretary more flexibility to rebalance and transform the nation's diplomatic posture around the globe.

Participants called on Congress to fully fund the president's international affairs



From top, clockwise: AFSA Legislative Affairs Director Ken Nakamura welcomes participants to Capitol Hill. Departure from AFSA headquarters. AFSA Retiree VP David Reuther with Senator Maria Cantwell, D-Wash.

PHOTOS BY MIKKELA THOMPSON

budget request. As AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes stated in a National Public Radio interview, "We cannot be a superpower on a shoestring. ... The administration needs to work with the Congress [to give the necessary] resources ... to transform the Secretary's vision of transformational diplomacy into a meaningful reality."

AFSA also highlighted several issues of top concern to retiree members. While recognizing that the current Congress has kept a low profile on retiree issues (perhaps to avoid upsetting an important block of voters), AFSA has vigorously supported several bills which provide relief to the checkbooks of retired federal employees. AFSA Retiree Coordinator Bonnie Brown and Legislative Affairs Director Ken Nakamura keep a sharp eye on proposals that could negatively affect retirees, such as the administration's call to

introduce Health Savings Accounts into the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan.

After a brunch briefing on the issues at AFSA headquarters, participants were taken by bus to the Hill and gathered in a House International Relations Committee hearing room. Guest speakers, Eleanor Nagy, director of policy for the HIRC Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, and Scott Thayer, staffer for Senator John Sununu, R-N.H., spoke of the atmospherics on the Hill. Thayer and Nagy, FSOs working on Capitol Hill as Pearson Fellows, were able to offer unique insights.

Following the plenary session, the participants dispersed into smaller groups to visit the offices of their elected officials. Over 20 Virginian participants packed into the offices of Senators George Allen, R-Va., and John Warner, R-

Va., to show their support for the Foreign Service. AFSA Retiree Vice President David E. Reuther enjoyed meeting a hometown senator, Maria Cantwell, D-Wash. And AFSA member Vern Penner, undeterred by the fact that AFSA staffers had been unable to secure a meeting with one of his elected officials, showed up at the office of Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, R-Md., and struck up a conversation with the congressman.

AFSA's legislative strategy encompasses a number of efforts, with Day on the Hill being the most high-profile and grass-roots oriented. The program's success depends on a strong and enthusiastic turnout by members and non-members alike. Using the momentum created by Day on the Hill, AFSA continues advocating on behalf of the men and women of the Foreign Service all year. □

STAMPS OF APPROVAL

Career Diplomats Honored with First Postage Stamps

BY EIRENE BUSA, EDITORIAL INTERN

For the first time, U.S. postage stamps bear the faces of career diplomats. Six commemorative stamps, “Distinguished American Diplomats,” were dedicated at a special U.S. Postal Service ceremony on May 30 at the Washington, D.C., Convention Center as part of the World Philatelic Exhibition.

The stamps honor Hiram “Harry” Bingham IV, Charles E. Bohlen, Philip C. Habib, Robert D. Murphy, Clifton R. Wharton, Sr. and Frances E. Willis. These diplomats made significant contributions to international relations as negotiators, administrators, trailblazers, shapers of policy, peacemakers and humanitarians. AFSA is proud to see them bring national attention to the accomplishments of the Foreign Service.

The stamps were the culmination of almost a decade of collaboration among AFSA, the USPS, the State Department and other organizations. In attendance at the ceremony were AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes, AFSA Communications Director Tom Switzer, USPS Board of Governors member John S. Gardner and State Department Civil Service officer John Hotchner, an avid stamp collector who serves on the USPS committee that advises the postmaster general on new stamps and played a key role in seeking the issuance of the diplomat stamp series.

James C. Miller, chairman of the USPS Board of Governors, officially dedicated the stamps. “All of these diplomats served in different parts of the world, yet they shared a common passion for service — a passion that sometimes put them in harm’s way. ... It is because these accomplished diplomats took so much pride in their service to our nation that they have inspired generations of diplomats — each one dream-

ing of how he or she can, like them, make a difference. These six diplomats represent what it means to be an American.”

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered remarks via videotape. “It is the

Distinguished American Diplomats



The “Distinguished American Diplomats” stamp series

memory of these great diplomats that serves as a source of strength and inspiration for all who use diplomacy today to build a future of peace and hope,” she said. “By honoring the memory of the past, we are better able to face the future.”

The highlight of the special ceremony was when the diplomats’ family members reflected on their loved ones. Those who



AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes (right) with State Department Civil Service officer John Hotchner at the stamp ceremony.

spoke were Robert Kim Bingham, son of Hiram Bingham; Avis Bohlen, daughter of Charles E. Bohlen; Susan Michaels, daughter of Philip C. Habib; Mildred Pond, daughter of Robert D. Murphy; Dr. Clifton R. Wharton Jr., son of Clifton R. Wharton Sr.; and Sherene Gravatte, great niece of Frances E. Willis. They all spoke highly of the Foreign Service in highlighting the achievements of the honorees.

Representative Robert Simmons, R-Conn., attended the ceremony especially to pay tribute to Harry Bingham. Simmons, himself an avid stamp collector, took part in the dedication ceremony, proudly pulling the stamps out of his jacket while making his remarks. He distinguished Bingham from the other five honorees, noting that “Bingham was not a success. He was not the first of anything. He was not an architect of some great foreign policy. In fact, he left the Foreign Service under a bit of a cloud. ... [Yet Bingham] saw and

recognized the face of evil. He knew it was wrong, and worked in the only way he knew.”

While serving as a consular officer in Marseilles from 1939 to 1941, Bingham defied orders, issuing over 2,500 life-saving visas to Jews and anti-Nazi activists. He was not recognized for his work during his lifetime, but received a posthumous dissent award from AFSA in 2002, which then-Secretary of State Colin Powell presented to his family.

AFSA greatly appreciates Robert Kim Bingham’s positive remarks about the organization. Bingham said that his father was “always proud to receive mailings from AFSA.” Bingham noted his appreciation for the AFSA award for his father, which represented the first time Bingham’s courageous actions were recognized at the State Department.

The “Distinguished American Diplomats” ceremony drew positive media coverage for the Foreign Service and for AFSA. Stories ran on CBS News and CNN, and in *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Times*. □

2006 AFSA Merit Award Winners

AFSA is proud to announce the 22 Foreign Service high school seniors who were selected as the 2006 Merit Award winners. These one-time-only awards, totaling \$26,500, were bestowed during Foreign Affairs Day May 5 at an AFSA ceremony and reception. AFSA congratulates the students for their academic and artistic achievements. Winners received \$1,500 awards and Honorable Mention winners received \$500 awards. Judges were drawn from the Foreign Service community.

This year, 42 students competed for the 15 Academic Merit Awards. They were judged on grade point average, Scholastic Assessment Test scores, essays, letters of recommendation, extracurricular activities and any special circumstances. From the Academic Merit Award applicants, a best-essay winner (**Julia Wohlers**) and a community service winner (**Alexandra Noyes**) were selected. The best essay winner and community service award winner received \$250. Julia's essay can be found on AFSA's Web site at www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm.

Nine students submitted art merit applications under one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, drama or creative writing. Art

applicants were judged on their art submission, letters of recommendation and essays. **Benjamin McAllister** was selected as the Art Merit Award winner for his euphonium performance musical arts submission. **Stephanie Kranstover** was selected as the Art Merit Award honorable mention winner for her visual arts acrylic paintings and charcoal drawings.

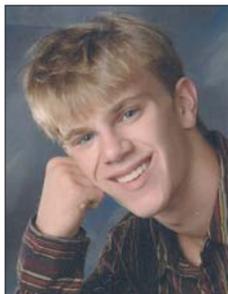
Six academic merit named scholarships have been established to date, and these awards are bestowed on the highest-scoring students. The recipients of these scholarships were: **Katherine Rock** for the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholarship; **Laura Downes** for the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholarship; **Theresa Smyth** for the John C. Leary Memorial Scholarship; **Melinda Kilner** and **Christian Ternus** for the Joanna and Robert Martin Scholarships; and **Matthew Dantas-McCutcheon** for the Donald Spigler and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholarship.

For more information on the AFSA Merit Awards, the AFSA Scholarship Program, or how to establish a named scholarship, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504, or dec@afsa.org, or visit www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm.

Academic Merit Winners



David Bertsch: son of Charles (FAS) and Donna Bertsch; graduate of McLean High School, McLean, Va.; attending Elon University, majoring in engineering.



Richard Brown: son of Dolores (State) and Graham Brown (deceased); graduate of James Madison High School, Vienna, Va.; attending Columbia University, majoring in pre-med/political science.



Joel Christensen: son of Brenda and W. Brent (State) Christensen; graduate of the International School of Beijing, China; attending Brigham Young University, majoring in computer science.



Eion Dando: son of Lori (State) and Stephen Dando; graduate of Copenhagen International School, Denmark; attending Macalester College, majoring in engineering.



Matthew Dantas-McCutcheon: son of Elizabeth de Lima Dantas and Robert McCutcheon (State); graduate of DeMatha High School in Hyattsville, Md.; attending the University of Maryland, majoring in aerospace engineering; recipient of the AFSA Donald S. Spigler and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Academic Merit Scholarship.



Joseph Muhm: son of Catherine Nemmert and Daniel Muhm (State); graduate of Taipei American School, Taiwan; attending the University of Washington in Seattle, majoring in aerospace engineering.



Alexandra Noyes: daughter of Julieta (State) and Nicholas (State) Noyes; graduate of James Madison High School, Vienna, Va.; attending the University of Virginia. Alexandra is the AFSA winner of the Community Service Award.



Erin O'Grady: daughter of Deborah Guido-O'Grady (State) and Daniel O'Grady (State); graduate of Anglo-American School, Moscow; attending the College of William and Mary, majoring in pre-med.



Katherine Rock: daughter of Anthony (State, retired) Rock and Shery Bamdollar Rock; graduate of McLean High School, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in biology/pre-med; recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Merit Scholarship.



Stephanie Ruse: daughter of Edward (FCS-retired) and Kathleen Ruse, graduate of Ravenscroft School, Raleigh, N.C.; attending Washington University College of Arts and Sciences in St. Louis.



MIKKELA THOMPSON

Scholarship Winners Honored

The 2006 AFSA Merit Award winners who attended the May 5 reception in their honor are shown here with AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes.

Back row, from left: David Bertsch, Richard Brown, Alexandra Noyes, Katherine Rock and J. Anthony Holmes; front row, from left: Laura Downes, Stephanie Kranstover, Matthew Dantas-McCutcheon and Janelle Barth.

PMA Presents \$3,800 Award to AFSA

On May 4, at the annual meeting in honor of the 38th anniversary of the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service, PMA presented a check for \$3,800 to AFSA for the AFSA Scholarship Fund. This check will be used as a scholarship under the need-based AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship Program and will be bestowed on a junior or senior majoring in foreign affairs in the 2006-2007 academic year.



Shown here at PMA's luncheon are, from left, AFSA Scholarship Director Lori Dec, PMA Scholarship Coordinator Nick Frankhouser and PMA President Betty Duckert.



Laura Downes: daughter of Robert (State) and Sara Downes; graduate of Wakefield High School, Arlington, Va.; attending University of Pittsburgh, majoring in theater arts; recipient of the AFSA Priscilla and John Becker Family Academic Merit Scholarship.



Melinda Kilner: daughter of Jan and Scott (State) Kilner; graduate of St. Stephen's School, Rome, Italy; attending Stanford University, majoring in English; recipient of the AFSA Joanna and Robert Martin Academic Merit Scholarship.



Eva Kolker: daughter of Ambassador Jimmy Kolker (State) and Britt-Marie Forslund; graduate of United World College, Montezuma, N.M.; attending Brown University, majoring in economics.

Academic Merit Honorable Mention Winners

Janelle Barth: daughter of Deborah and Phil (State) Barth; graduate of W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, Va.; attending Duke University, majoring in mechanical engineering.

Katherine Schroeder: daughter of Anne Callaghan (State) and Robert Schroeder; graduate of Colegio Nueva Granada, Bogota; attending the University of Virginia.

Julia Wohlers: daughter of Mary Jo and Paul (State) Wohlers; graduate of NOVA International School, Skopje, Macedonia; attending Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Ga. Julia is the winner of the AFSA Best Essay Award (essay posted at www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm).

Art Merit Honorable Mention Winner

Stephanie Kranstover: daughter of Anne Lewandowski and Peter Kranstover (USAID, retired); graduate of W. T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, Va.; attending Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va., majoring in art and art history. Stephanie won for her charcoal drawings and acrylic painting submissions.



Theresa Smyth: daughter of Janice (State) and Richard (State) Smyth; graduate of South Lakes High School, Reston, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in biology; recipient of the AFSA John C. Leary Memorial Academic Merit Scholarship.



Christian Temus: son of Mary (State) and Scott (State) Temus; graduate of Munich International School, Stamsberg, Germany; attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, majoring in computer science and astrophysics; recipient of the AFSA Joanna and Robert Martin Academic Merit Scholarship.



Art Merit Winner Benjamin McAllister: son of Paul McAllister and Susan Domowitz (State); graduate of the American School in London, England; attending Towson University in Towson, Md. Benjamin won for his euphonium performance musical arts submission.

New Incentives for Iraq PRT Volunteers

AFSA has agreed to four new incentives for those who volunteer to serve on Iraq Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), at Regional Embassy Offices (REOs) and as State Officers Embedded with U.S. Military (SETs). Prior to signing off on the new incentives, AFSA sought feedback from members worldwide and held numerous discussions with department management.

The four new incentives announced by the State Department on May 31 are, in brief:

1) For those serving at Iraq PRTs/REOs/SETs only, and transferring in 2007, a firm commitment to one of the member's top five choices for an onward assignment (at-grade, in-cone or in-specialty, with no language waiver requirement, excluding deputy chief of mission and principal officer positions).

2) Amended language for the 2006 procedural precepts, instructions to the 2006 selection boards, which draws particular attention to performance in PRTs and other regional operations in Iraq.

3) For those serving at Iraq PRTs/REOs/SETs beginning in 2006, plus a limited number of other positions still to be defined, an extension of time-in-class and time-in-service for certain Foreign Service members.

4) For those serving in one-year tours Iraq PRTs/REOs/SETs only, beginning in 2006, the option to elect to have family members remain at losing post during time of Iraq service. (Note: See May 31 State 088092 for the full incentives announcement.)

AFSA understands the importance that Secretary Rice and the administration place on transforming Iraq and the high priority of the State Department to fill all the jobs that have been created there, both at the embassy in Baghdad and outside the capital. AFSA remains convinced, as do the vast majority of AFSA members around the world, that continuing to staff these posi-

tions with volunteers is vastly preferable — for both the department and individual members of the Foreign Service — to resorting to directed assignments. Senior department management officials have assured AFSA that virtually all positions have been filled for the coming year, that there is presently no plan to begin directing Foreign Service members to assignments in Iraq, and that the purpose of the package of new incentives is to continue to encourage volunteers to serve in Iraq.

For AFSA and for the
overwhelming majority of the
Foreign Service, the essential
link between outstanding
performance and promotion is
the bedrock of our meritocracy
and must not be severed.



REBECCA FONG

The first two incentives listed above were the subject of AFSA's electronic survey conducted in June after they were initially proposed to association officials. Nearly 2,500 active-duty members responded. On the onward-assignment incentive, AFSA members indicated their willingness to support this proposal as a one-time benefit for those who volunteer and as a measure to help avoid directed assignments to a war zone,

by a margin of 59 to 41 percent. AFSA and management agreed to take stock of the situation again next year to determine whether the program achieved the desired results.

On the promotion incentive, AFSA members opposed any explicit or automatic promotion benefit merely as a reward for volunteering for Iraq PRT service, by a wide margin (69 to 31 percent). AFSA members worldwide made it clear that they recognize the difficulty of Iraq service but nonetheless seek to preserve the fairness and integrity of a promotion system based on how well an employee performs, not on where an employee is assigned.

At the same time, the nearly 2,000 individual comments that members wrote revealed a more nuanced and flexible attitude on the subject of giving due consideration to service in particularly difficult and dangerous places. The survey comments indicated that a majority are prepared to accept language in the procedural precepts for promotion that recognizes the unique difficulties of service in war zones, particularly in the PRTs/REOs/SETs in Iraq.

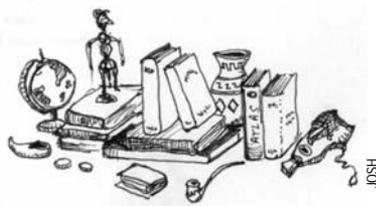
AFSA therefore negotiated and ultimately concurred with the language contained in the DG's cable, which builds on and slightly modifies the comparable references in the 2004 precepts. The key point is that the selection boards will continue to base their decisions on "credible and exemplary" performance. For AFSA and for the overwhelming majority of the Foreign Service, the essential link between outstanding performance and promotion is the bedrock of our meritocracy and must not be severed.

Iraq presents extraordinary challenges for the Foreign Service, and AFSA hopes the new incentives will help us rise to those challenges — without tampering with the basic principles of fairness in the open assignments and promotion systems. □



Donate to BOOKFAIR

The Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide need donations for the 2006 BOOKFAIR, especially for the art corner. Art, collectables and handicrafts, as well as books, CDs, DVDs and videos are welcome. Proceeds benefit scholarship programs and other Foreign Service projects. The 2006 BOOKFAIR will be held Oct. 13 to 22 in the State Department Harry S. Truman Building. Please call (202) 223-5796 or e-mail BOOKROOM@aafsw.org for donation information. From overseas, items may be pouched to the AAFSW Bookroom, B816 in the Harry S. Truman Building.



Request for Information: Neil Ruge

Linda Williams would like to hear from anyone who worked at Embassy London in 1955 or 1956 and knew Vice Consul Neil Ruge. She can be reached by e-mail: lwil2@hotmail.com, or mail: 62 Seymour St., Middlebury VT 05753.

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REFLECTIONS

A Deep Bow to the Foreign Service

BY ASHLEY WILLS

In 1972, I set off from the small-town South to join the Foreign Service. I stopped along the way at the University of Georgia to meet with Dean Rusk, Secretary of State in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, who had just joined the law faculty there. I had not called ahead to seek an appointment; I suppose I thought I could just walk in unannounced to chat with one of the most eminent figures of the mid-20th century.

I arrived at the law school late in the afternoon and was directed to Rusk's office. His door was open and I could see him at his desk, his back to the door. Unaccountably, I lost my nerve and walked by his office twice without mustering the gumption to knock. On my third pass, he belted: "Don't be timid, boy; come on in!"

To my delight, Rusk was extraordinarily gracious. We talked for more than two hours: about the Foreign Service, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam. It was a thrilling moment for me, a 22-year-old, to talk about great events with a participant in them.

As I got up to leave, I asked the Secretary if he had any parting counsel for me as I embarked on a career

in the Foreign Service. He thought for several moments and then said, solemnly: "Watch what you eat, and keep your zipper up!"

It was not what I expected to hear. It was earthy, politically incorrect even then, and funny as hell. I laughed, we shook hands and I left his office. As I drove through the night to Washington, I thought if such a person could thrive in the Foreign Service, perhaps it would be a good professional home for me, too.

Thirty-four years later, I can report that the Foreign Service was a wonderful career for me. Never having set foot outside the United States when I joined the Service, I thought I would explore the world for two or three years, and then come home to take up a sensible profession my rural relatives would understand.

It didn't happen that way; the Foreign Service seduced me. It appealed to my sense of romance and adventure. I delighted in encounters with otherness, in finding myself in some truly exotic spot in this over-discovered world. The Foreign Service brought out my patriotism. I felt pride in representing a well-intentioned society, no matter who was president. I liked debating ideas and policies with foreigners. I thrived on having change built into my profession. I enjoyed being part of a team of embassy colleagues engaged in a noble enterprise. And I loved the laughter: the Foreign Service deals with serious issues but, let's face it, diplomacy is a

very amusing occupation. If you can't find the funniness in the pretensions of diplomatic custom or the surprises that attend living in a foreign culture, then — in the idiom of Georgia — you was raised wrong.

Perhaps I've gone gooey about the FS in my recently-retired state of mind. Certainly time has rounded the edges of my memory, allowing me to luxuriate in nostalgia and to forget most of the irritations of the diplomatic calling. Or perhaps I really was a natural-born ramblin' man.

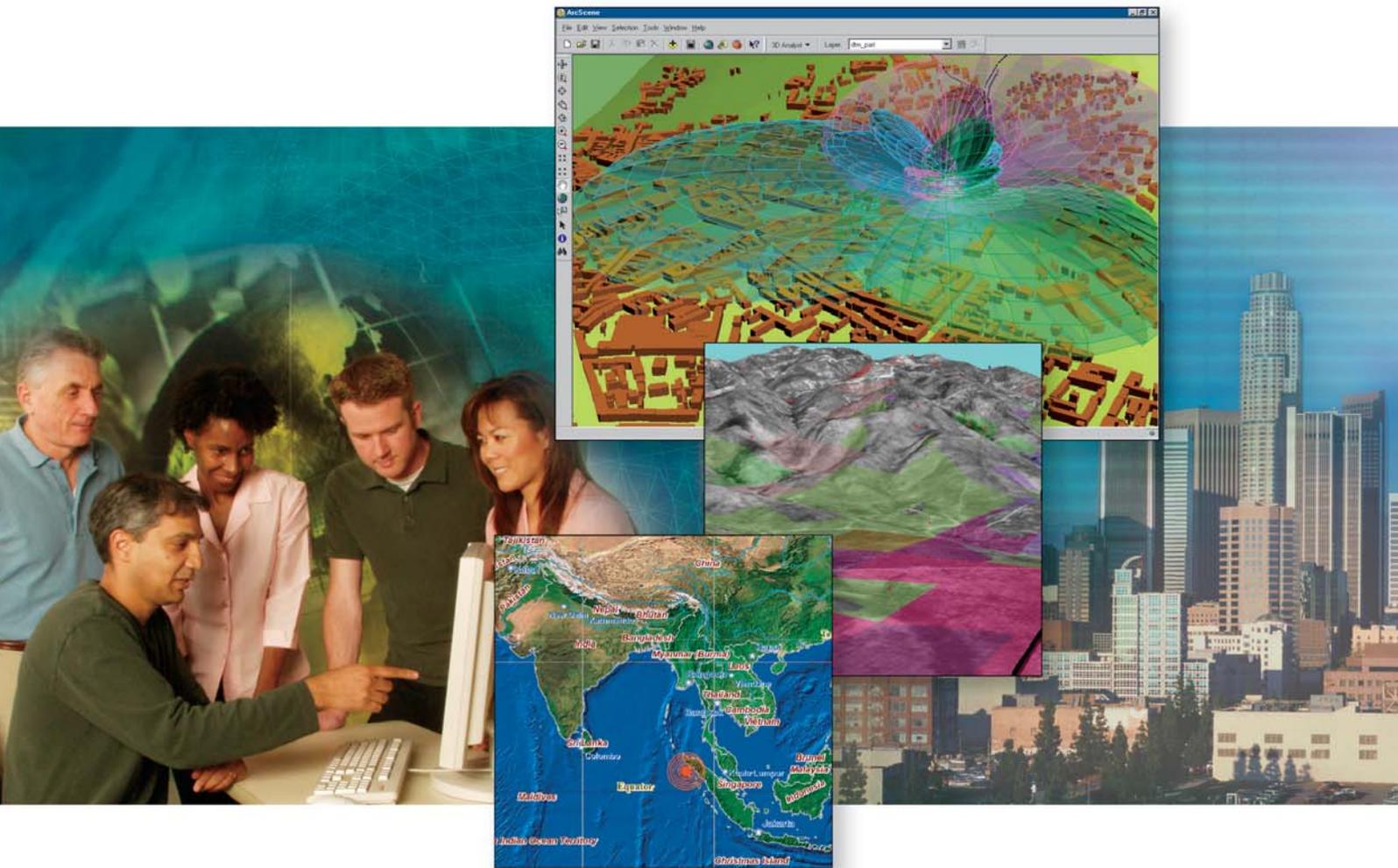
If Secretary Rusk were advising a prospective diplomat today, he surely would add a third admonition: Duck! Danger and anti-Americanism have been part of our professional lives for years, but today's American diplomats encounter threats and hatred as never before. I have visited our embassies in Afghanistan and Iraq and was struck by the claustrophobia of our compounds and the courage of our colleagues. Menace hangs around both Kabul and Baghdad like mist in a Sherlock Holmes story.

But insecurity is now chronic everywhere. Jefferson could return from his wanderings to Monticello, but in the modern world, where is it safe to hide? Not even the fastnesses of America's coasts offer us a retreat anymore.

So I salute today's Foreign Service employees. It's no longer enough to have a sense of curiosity about the world, or patriotism, or love of teamwork. In today's Foreign Service, one needs to be brave, big-time. ■

Ashley Wills served as ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, in addition to postings in Romania, South Africa, Barbados, Yugoslavia, Belgium, India and Washington, D.C. Stamp courtesy of the USPS.

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