

# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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JULY-AUGUST 2014



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# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

July-August 2014  
Volume 91, No. 7-8

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# THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

## Editor

Shawn Dorman: [dorman@afsa.org](mailto:dorman@afsa.org)

## Managing Editor

Susan Brady Maitra: [maitra@afsa.org](mailto:maitra@afsa.org)

## Associate Editor

Debra Blome: [blome@afsa.org](mailto:blome@afsa.org)

## Ad & Circulation Manager

Ed Miltenberger: [miltenberger@afsa.org](mailto:miltenberger@afsa.org)

## Art Director

Caryn Suko Smith

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Aishwarya Rajee

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## Contributing Editor

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Washington DC 20037-2990



## CONTACTS



### AFSA Headquarters:

(202) 338-4045; Fax (202) 338-6820

### State Department AFSA Office:

(202) 647-8160; Fax (202) 647-0265

### USAID AFSA Office:

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### FCS AFSA Office:

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#### Assistant Controller

Cory Nishi: [cnishi@afsa.org](mailto:cnishi@afsa.org)

### LABOR MANAGEMENT

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Sharon Papp: [PappS@state.gov](mailto:PappS@state.gov)

#### Deputy General Counsel

Zlatana Badrich: [BadrichZ@state.gov](mailto:BadrichZ@state.gov)

#### Labor Management Specialist

James Yorke: [YorkeJ@state.gov](mailto:YorkeJ@state.gov)

#### Senior Staff Attorney

Neera Parikh: [ParikhNA@state.gov](mailto:ParikhNA@state.gov)

#### Staff Attorney

Raeka Safai: [SafaiR@state.gov](mailto:SafaiR@state.gov)

#### Staff Attorney

Andrew Large: [LargeA@state.gov](mailto:LargeA@state.gov)

#### Labor Management Counselor

John Long: [LongJD@state.gov](mailto:LongJD@state.gov)

#### Executive Assistant

Lindsey Botts: [BottsLK@state.gov](mailto:BottsLK@state.gov)

#### USAID Senior Labor Management Adviser

Douglas Broome: [dbroome@usaid.gov](mailto:dbroome@usaid.gov)

#### USAID Staff Assistant

Chioma Dike: [cdike@afsa.org](mailto:cdike@afsa.org)

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#### Administrative Assistant and Office Manager

Ana Lopez: [lopez@afsa.org](mailto:lopez@afsa.org)

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Lori Dec: [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org)

#### Scholarship Assistant

Jonathan Crawford: [crawford@afsa.org](mailto:crawford@afsa.org)

[www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org)

# The New QDDR Offers Hope

BY ROBERT J. SILVERMAN

**E**arly summertime lulls us with expectations of a more relaxed, contemplative period ahead.

But summer is also a time for preparations of all kinds. In the spirit of preparing for policy reforms, let's talk about the 2014 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review.

Are you still conscious and focused? I, too, used to feel a certain ennui about the State Department's strategic planning exercises. Too often they lacked operational relevance for those of us in the field or in line offices in Washington.

The 2010 QDDR created some new senior positions in Washington and moved existing offices under new boxes on the organizational chart, thus adding to the top-heavy nature of the State bureaucracy.

The 2010 QDDR process elevated the priority of "engaging beyond the state," expanding our relations with civil society and local publics.

This was a good idea, but again was not translated into much of practical value to the career staff.

The new QDDR process, launched this spring, offers hope. First, the new team in charge has many years of experience in the federal government and NGO community, so it knows how to link grand strategic objectives to programs and budgets. Second, the time constraint it faces in implementing a QDDR in the last two years of an administration will help it focus on concrete measures in discrete areas of our work.



**"Vision without execution is hallucination."**

—Thomas Edison

So AFSA decided to fully engage. Please read the seven papers drafted by working groups of AFSA members and given to the QDDR team at State (and posted at [www.afsa.org/qddr](http://www.afsa.org/qddr)). The papers include a few controversial recommendations.

If you feel strongly about any of the issues addressed, my advice is to form a working group of like-minded AFSA members and write a new paper. AFSA's Governing Board will review it and decide whether to pass it to State and publicize it.

The main intent of the AFSA papers is to elicit interest in the new QDDR as a vehicle for reform, and to help focus the QDDR team on concrete reforms of concern to our members.

Several common themes emerge in the papers. One is a desire to push down the policy process at State to the action offices in the regional and functional bureaus, which entails paring back the number of seventh-floor envoys and other positions.

Another is to empower our folks in the field by improving and expanding FSI training needed to equip them and by protecting their ability to make security decisions.

Here are some teasers from the papers:

• **Technology:** It is time to

fundamentally rethink our relationship to IT platforms and personnel and focus on IT personnel as enablers and multipliers rather than just as the 'computer, pouch, or radio' people of the Foreign Service.

• **Public Diplomacy:** The practice of staffing R family leadership positions with political appointees, with their shorter time horizons and focus on domestic effects, has not fostered long-term strategic planning and has delayed innovation. Program priorities for overseas posts should derive from each mission's plans, not from generic Washington mandates. Ambassadors and country teams are best positioned to integrate public diplomacy priorities into their overall mission objectives.

• **Economic Prosperity and Development:** Economic and development policy should be used to advance other foreign policy goals; economic policy must be an integral part of policy decision-making in all bureaus. State economic and USAID officers should have career tracks that allow them to progress to senior leadership positions in Washington and ambassadorial positions abroad, which will season the policy process with influence from those with senior field experience.

Be well, stay safe and keep in touch,  
Bob

[Silverman@afsa.org](mailto:Silverman@afsa.org) ■

*Robert J. Silverman is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*

UNCLASSIFIED  
Reporting Matters



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Subject: IS ANYONE READING? IS ANYONE THERE?

**1. BEGIN SUMMARY:** AT ITS BEST, EMBASSY REPORTING IS READ IN THE RIGHT PLACES AT THE RIGHT TIME BY THE RIGHT PEOPLE, WHO USE IT TO CONSTRUCT AND CONTEXTUALIZE FOREIGN POLICY. AT ITS BEST, REPORTING CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. A BIPOLAR WORLD HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A MORE COMPLEX ONE, SATURATED WITH VAST AMOUNTS OF INFORMATION FLOWING AT LIGHTNING SPEED. DOES EMBASSY REPORTING STILL MATTER IN SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT? DOES ANYONE HAVE TIME TO READ BEYOND THE SUMMARY PARAGRAPH, OR EVEN TO READ THE FULL SUMMARY? THIS MONTH WE TRY TO FIND OUT. ARE YOU STILL READING? IS ANYONE THERE? **END SUMMARY**

**2. LOOKING BACK TO LOOK AHEAD.** ON TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT TO CONGEN LENINGRAD'S OVERBURDENED CONSULAR SECTION IN 1989, I WAS TASKED WITH DETERMINING WHETHER A PERSON ON "THE LIST" OF REFUSENIKS DENIED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE WAS, IN FACT, STILL ALIVE. THE LIST MATTERED. SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ PRESENTED IT TO HIS COUNTERPART AT HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS AS PART OF AN ACTIVE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN. UNDER GORBACHEV, ALMOST EVERYONE ON THE LIST WOULD EVENTUALLY BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE.

3. I SET OUT BY TRAIN, NOTEBOOK IN HAND, TO THE TINY TOWN OF URDOMA, REACHABLE THROUGH THE BUSTLING REGIONAL CENTER OF SYKTYVKAR. AS FAR AS ANYONE COULD REMEMBER, NO AMERICAN HAD TRAVELED TO THESE PLACES, AS THEY WERE IN AN OFFICIALLY

"CLOSED" PART OF THE USSR. BUT IT WAS THE GORBACHEV ERA, AND "CLOSED" DIDN'T NECESSARILY MEAN CLOSED ANYMORE. AT THE END OF A LONG DIRT ROAD, I FOUND THE HOUSE OF THE MAN I WAS SEEKING. HE HAD PASSED AWAY THE YEAR BEFORE, BUT I FOUND HIS SON. I VISITED THE GRAVEYARD, SURVEYED THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND LEARNED ABOUT LIFE IN THE KOMI REPUBLIC.

4. I STILL RECALL THE STRANGE EXHILARATION THAT CAME WITH WRITING REPORTING CABLES LONGHAND BACK AT THE CONSULATE, RIPPING PAGES OUT OF YELLOW LEGAL PADS TO BE HAND-CARRIED TO FINLAND FOR TYPING AND TRANSMISSION THROUGH EMBASSY HELSINKI. THE CONSULATE DIDN'T HAVE SECURE COMMUNICATIONS AT THAT TIME. WE WROTE ABOUT POLITICS, ECONOMICS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LIFE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN.

5. END USERS AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER U.S. AGENCIES SEEMED TO HAVE AN INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR REPORTING FROM THE SOVIET UNION. ON-THE-GROUND IMMERSION, LEARNING AND CONTACT WORK LED TO REPORTING THAT WAS USEFUL, WAS READ IN WASHINGTON, AND IN SOME CASES, COULD EVEN INFLUENCE POLICY.

**6. REPORTING TODAY.** AIMING TO SHINE A LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT, FSO DAN LAWTON (PROTECT) LOOKS AT "THE ART" OF EMBASSY REPORTING. THOUGH HE IDENTIFIES MANY CHALLENGES—TRYING TO REACH HARRIED WASHINGTON

AUDIENCES WITH SHORT ATTENTION SPANS AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD, AND COPING WITH THE FALLOUT FROM THE UNPRECEDENTED ASSAULT ON THE INTEGRITY OF CLASSIFIED COMMUNICATIONS—LAWTON BELIEVES THAT "REPORTING FROM THE FIELD IS STILL THE INDISPENSABLE INGREDIENT OF ANY MEANINGFUL FOREIGN POLICY DISCUSSION."

7. NEXT, FORMER CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY DIRECTOR FOR EUROPEAN ANALYSIS JOHN GANNON (PROTECT) HIGHLIGHTS THE WAYS THAT EMBASSY REPORTING IS UTILIZED, OFFERING EXAMPLES FROM HIS OWN EXPERIENCE. A COMPILATION OF SHORT PIECES OFFERS PERSPECTIVES ON REPORTING FROM SEVEN FSOS IN THE FIELD. A REVIEW OF RAY SMITH'S BOOK, THE CRAFT OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS FOR DIPLOMATS, HIGHLIGHTS A VALUABLE PRACTITIONERS GUIDE THAT FEATURES, AS A CASE STUDY, EMBASSY MOSCOW'S PREDICTIONS OF THE FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION.

8. IF YOU ARE STILL READING, LET ME ALSO REPORT THAT THE CHIEF-OF-MISSION QUALIFICATIONS DISCUSSION CONTINUES. IN HIS SPEAKING OUT, AMB. DENNIS JETT MAKES THE CASE FOR MEASURING COM PERFORMANCE SYSTEMATICALLY. IN THIS MONTH'S RELAUNCH OF THE "AFSA ISSUE BRIEF," AMB. CHARLIE RAY LAYS OUT THE EVOLUTION OF THE AFSA COM GUIDELINES. IN HIS PRESIDENT'S VIEWS COLUMN, ROBERT J. SILVERMAN EXPRESSES CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ABOUT THE NEW QDDR EXERCISE. AND WE OFFER TWO VIEWS OF THE WESTGATE TRAGEDY IN KENYA, ONE FROM A KENYAN JOURNALISM STUDENT, THE OTHER FROM AN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.

**9. BEGIN COMMENT:** REPORTING IS ALIVE AND WELL. NO MATTER WHERE TECHNOLOGY TAKES US, THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REAL, LIVE, ON-THE-GROUND REPORTING OFFICERS. SO PUT DOWN THE BLACKBERRY AND PLEASE READ ON. **END COMMENT**

10. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

Drafted By: FSJED: SDORMAN ■



## Promoting Professional Discourse

I have been following with great enthusiasm what I see as a new direction for AFSA, and hope you will keep it up. I was initially skeptical of the Chief-of-Mission Guidelines project, thinking it would just serve to create a rift between the career and political sides of the house. But in the end it seems to have laid down a marker that was both important and helpful, an initiative that to my mind is much more useful than the kind of sniveling AFSA was engaged in over the previous several years.

I have also enjoyed Robert J. Silverman's recent President's Views columns, starting with the defense of nationbuilding and the references to George Kennan's work. In regard to the question of why the Foreign Service doesn't seem to produce any Kennans these days, I conducted a project for the Council on Emerging National Security Affairs several years ago titled "The Search for Mr. X." The June 2008 edition of your Cybnotes department (now Talking Points) reported on that project.

I wonder if AFSA might serve as a venue for searching for that post-containment national security doctrine that has eluded us for more than two decades now. Perhaps AFSA could run a "Calling Mr./Ms. X" contest in which contestants get two pages to write a "Short Telegram," and AFSA publishes them online with a bit of fanfare.

There are a lot of new ideas out there that are cowed by the system, and a lot

of creativity that is crushed over time. Just compare the bright eyes of entry-level officers with the tired cynicism of so many mid-level and senior-level officers.

In any case, I am much more enthused by an AFSA that raises the level of intellectual and professional discourse than one that just goes after that third tranche of overseas comparability pay. Keep it up!

*Keith W. Mines*

*FSO*

*Embassy Tel Aviv*

## Get Rid of "Up or Out"

I was pleased and flattered that Thomas Longo, writing in your March issue, found comfort in my December

2013 Speaking Out column, "A Plea for Greater Teamwork in the Foreign Service." Though I was not previously aware of Mr. Longo's sad experience, I am familiar with similar outcomes created by the up-or-out rules embedded in the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

Despite that history, some FSOs may share the viewpoint of Tyler Sparks, whose Speaking Out column in the April *FSJ* calls for reviving the Powell Fellows Program. Such efforts to hand-pick young officers for privileged, fast-track assignments to the top may work in the military. But, like up or out, I don't think such favoritism is appropriate for the much smaller Foreign Service. When we copy from the military, it is wise to be carefully selective.

So, FSOs unite! If up or out is to be repealed or overhauled, it will require a campaign like what we "Young Turks" on the 1970 AFSA Governing Board orchestrated to turn AFSA into our labor



union—with spectacularly good results ever since.

FSOs, start tweeting on your social networks and writing to *The Foreign Service Journal* to make that happen. You have nothing but your rivalries to lose!

*George B. Lambrakis*  
*FSO, retired*  
*London, U.K.*

## Thank You, AFSA!

My son's university of choice, and of heart, added my housing (in Europe!) to my salary in computing his financial award package. In fact, all the schools did.

I will say as a proud mom that my son received a wonderful merit scholarship, but we still had a long way to go to meet the costs for this small private university.

I asked for an appeal, explaining that the cost of our housing is not added to my salary; nor do I see it or feel it! My appeal was denied.

This school truly wanted my son as much as my son wanted to go and was not being difficult. They were just following the rules set by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA, which is used by the U.S. Department of Education to determine the "expected family contribution" to paying for college.

I called AFSA and was put in touch with James Yorke. Without hesitation, Mr. Yorke became a champion for my son. He wrote a letter to the vice president of financial aid at the university, and AFSA State VP Matthew Asada signed it. The letter clarified how the practice of adding Foreign Service housing to income is off target.

This appeal was approved, and the revised award package was outstanding.





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## Technology and the QDDR

AFSA's Quadrennial Diplomacy & Development Review statement on technology is the most progressive and forward-leaning assessment of the Bureau of Information Resource Management and its people that I can ever recall hearing from the association—an organization traditionally more focused on the FS generalist corps.

While we can only speculate about any actual reforms that might come out of the QDDR exercise, the broad scope of AFSA's statement on technology was intriguing: "It is time to fundamentally rethink our platforms and people and focus on IT personnel as enablers and multipliers, and not just as the 'computer, pouch or radio' people."

This could be quite promising. To all you "computer, pouch and radio people" out there on the front lines, good luck. Keep enabling and keep multiplying the power of diplomacy.

*Timothy C. Lawson*  
*Senior FSO, retired*  
*Hua Hin, Thailand*

## Foreign Service History

Your May issue was first-rate, especially the excellent article by Larry Cohen and James Lamont on the Rogers Act, "In the Beginning: The Rogers Act of 1924." Regarding other May content, I have two comments.

First, the article by Robert Hunter, "Getting State and the Foreign Service Back in the Game," is a bit unrealistic. Foreign policy is going to be made by the president, who will receive advice from a lot of people, including the Secretary of State as the principal, but not the only, adviser. The top priority of the State Department and the Foreign Service is to implement the policy.

Second, I was surprised that you did not include the whole timeline of important events in the history of AFSA and the Foreign Service, which includes the policy changes in the early 1970s initiated by Under Secretary for Management William Macomber concerning the role of wives of Foreign Service employees, and the 1976 establishment of grievance procedures.

I think your readers would enjoy, as you suggest, reading the more comprehensive chronology at [www.afsa.org/timeline](http://www.afsa.org/timeline). I hope that you will add recently established policies regarding LGBT issues to that timeline.

*Ted Eliot*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Sonoma, Calif. ■*

**Share your thoughts about this month's issue.**  
**Send your letters to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org).**

## Honoring Public Diplomacy's Best

**E**ffective public diplomacy requires strategic thinking, creativity, commitment and sound judgment in the use of resources.

Each year the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association recognizes the achievements of those PD practitioners, whether overseas or in Washington, D.C., who best exemplify these qualities. PDAA's 17th annual awards dinner, held on May 4 in Washington, D.C., spotlighted the achievements of this year's six winners.

The first three recipients worked together to create and implement an exceptional multidimensional exchange program: "Pakistani Voices: A Conversation with The Migration Series."

International Information Programs Bureau officer **Attia Nasar**, Islamabad Public Affairs officer **Ajani Husbands** and **Rachel Goldberg** from the Phillips Collection collaborated to set up speaker programs and hands-on workshops involving more than 375 artists, students, educators and museum professionals across Pakistan.

This multiyear project uses the arts to generate positive discussions on U.S.-Pakistani relations, and establish a conduit for communication on challenging social issues.

In Equatorial Guinea political opponents are routinely arrested and held without charge, media outlets are severely restricted, and websites deemed critical of the government are blocked. Undaunted, first-tour PAO **Ashley White** found creative ways to put together high-impact public diplomacy programs on human rights and democracy.

She organized a series of roundtables with students, government officials, legal experts and civil society representatives, featuring U.S. Ambassador Mark Asquino

and high-level civil rights and election experts. On her own time, Ms. White also started an "English Speaking Roundtable" that meets twice weekly with students to strengthen their language skills and understanding of U.S. society and values.

Despite a highly restricted social and political environment, female activists in Saudi Arabia are mobilizing to run in the country's first municipal elections open to female candidates and voters. Cultural Affairs Specialist **Naimeh Hadidi** responded to this opportunity by building a nationwide network to foster partnerships between the mission and these courageous women's work to battle gender apartheid.

"She has almost singlehandedly led U.S. government outreach in hard-to-reach, remote and ultra-conservative areas—places embassy staff would ordinarily never be able to access," Deputy Cultural Attaché Marlo Cross-Durant said in nominating Hadidi.

Thanks in no small part to her efforts, 41 percent of Mission Saudi Arabia's



Courtesy of Naimeh Hadidi

**Naimeh Hadidi (on right) visits in the Aljouf region with a member of the King Abdulaziz Society for Women, whose goal is to strengthen the position of women in Saudi society.**



Courtesy of Attia Nasar

**Emerging Artists Workshop organized by the Phillips Collection and the U.S. Department of State at the Alhambra Arts Center in Lahore, Pakistan.**

nominees to the Fiscal Year 2014 International Visitors Leadership Program were female.

And later this year a group of nine Saudi activists who are mobilizing women to run in next year's municipal council elections will visit the United States to meet with American women who are running for office, managing election campaigns, raising money and managing media.

In Swaziland, more than 92,000 visually impaired citizens now have access to new information technology, thanks to **Morrison Mkhonta**, director of Embassy Mbabane's Information Resource Center. Concerned that few organizations exist in Swaziland to advocate for their fundamental rights, Mr. Mkhonta helped obtain

resources to purchase technology for translating print materials into Braille or audio.

He also set up a training center to assist people trying out these new tools, thereby playing a key role in opening up a world that had never before been accessible to people in Swaziland with disabilities.

The Public Diplo-



Courtesy of Morrison Mkhonta

**Morrison Mkhonta conducts a session for trainers for visually impaired computer users.**

**SITE OF THE MONTH: [www.one.org](http://www.one.org)**

On May 16, 2004, in a ceremony at the Liberty Bell, ONE was born. The nongovernmental organization has brought together American, European and African activists, students and faith leaders, musicians, sports stars and politicians from left, right and center. Now four million strong, ONE members continue to believe that one person, coming together with many others, can change the world.

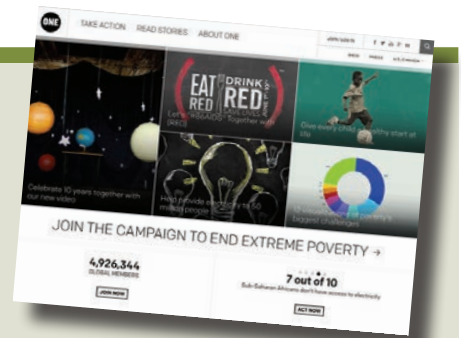
To celebrate its tenth anniversary, the ONE campaign has created 10 Years Together, an interactive timeline that combines images, video and text documenting the organization's first decade of activism. The production, available on ONE's homepage, moves from Nelson Mandela's landmark 2005 "Make Poverty History" speech in London's Trafalgar Square to the 2014 music video, "Cocoon Chocolate," which features 19 of Africa's top recording artists urging their leaders to invest in agriculture.

The timeline features an exclusive animated film by award-winning artists Oliver Jeffers and Mac Premo, highlighting the fact that the number of people who live in extreme poverty worldwide has been cut in half over the past two decades. If current trends continue, the world

could see the end of extreme poverty by 2030. (Last year, singer and activist Bono outlined the road to that objective in a TED talk, highlights of which are on the "10 Years Together" site.)

Michael Elliott, president and chief executive officer of ONE, says: "In our first decade, ONE has brought together millions of activists around the world committed to the belief that where you live shouldn't determine whether you live. We are proud that our advocacy has played a part in the collective progress that has been made over the years—from cutting malaria deaths in half in 13 countries in Africa to increasing the number of people globally on lifesaving HIV/AIDS medications from 300,000 in 2002 to nearly 10 million today. Working with partners from all over the world, we have proved that together we are so much stronger than the sum of our parts."

—Steven Alan Honley, Contributing Editor



macy Alumni Association is a volunteer, nonprofit membership organization that is open to all current and former State Department and U.S. Information Agency employees, as well as broadcasting and other public diplomacy professionals from the public, academic and private sectors.

PDAA's mission is to foster understanding, recognition of and support for public diplomacy through educational and social activities.

For more information about the awards ceremony and PDAA's activities, please visit [www.publicdiplomacy.org](http://www.publicdiplomacy.org). You'll also find a complete list of PDAA Alumni Association award winners since 1993 there.

—Steven Alan Honley,  
Contributing Editor

## Public Health Workers Will No Longer Be Used for CIA Operations

After 18 months and in the midst of a global polio health emergency, the White House has responded to a letter from the deans of 13 schools of public health urging the U.S. government to stop using public health workers for covert operations or intelligence gathering.

The January 2013 letter stemmed from the revelation that in its hunt for Osama bin Laden, the CIA had recruited a Pakistani physician to conduct a fake hepatitis B vaccination campaign in Abbottabad using local public health workers without their knowledge. The mission, which was apparently not successful, was designed to collect DNA samples from family members living in the compound where bin

Laden was suspected to be living.

When word of the covert effort spread in Pakistan in 2012, legitimate public health workers providing polio vaccines were run out of town. At least nine were killed in December 2012, and more since then. Save the Children was compelled by the government of Pakistan to withdraw all foreign national staff in September 2012.

Mistrust of public health workers was not new in the region; the Taliban in Pakistan had opposed vaccine campaigns before. But the revelation that health workers were in fact compromised sparked a backlash against immunization workers.

Public health workers throughout the region were threatened, as were the legitimate vaccination programs they

## 50 Years Ago

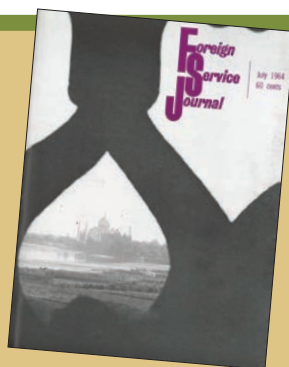
**"A** Foreign Service officer should keep his nose clean and his mouth shut."

I have ignored this excellent advice, with mixed results, for 18 years and will now do so again. I propose the reinstatement of the security classification "Official Use Only" (but with a simpler name) and the abolition of the security classifications "Limited Official Use" and "Confidential." I also propose that declassification decisions be centralized. ...

If you are like me, at least half of the juicy items of gossip you have vouchsafed to Washington have come from your local employees. This is particularly true in the more developed countries where the locals tend to have more on the ball. To classify these vignettes as "Unclassified" exposes you to the risk of publication, but to mark them "Limited Official Use" means that the energetic but non-American types who wrote them may neither read them, file them nor refer to them.

By all means let us reinstate a classification which means, in effect, "fairly common knowledge but not for publication." To appease the typists and the rubber stamp markers, I would suggest that this classification be titled "USG," which would mean that the information would be available to any U.S. government employee, whatever his nationality. Such a classification would do much to reassure our first-class locals that they are indeed a part of the U.S. government.

Obviously, we cannot entrust to foreigners really sensitive information, even if another foreigner is the source. But why



must we have four gradations of sensitivity (leaving out super-grades)? Surely it is enough to say that a document is "Confidential." ...

I think we have all been somewhat shattered by the new responsibility of determining when a document must be declassified. (I personally have forgotten to put the "group indicator" on a number of recent cables and airmgrams.) I fully support the theory. Practi-

cally all of our output is of transitory secrecy, and a good deal of it is overclassified to begin with. We need a system to downgrade our mistaken prophecies as soon as they are proved invalid.

But in my humble opinion this could well be done by a team of experts at some central point, perhaps by those shadowy characters who receive files retired from Washington agencies and overseas posts. Why not set up a degaussing crew at Foggy Bottom with summary powers? The man-hours thus saved would be considerable and the declassification criteria would be more intelligently and consistently applied.

In making these suggestions I have, of course, glossed over a number of problems which would have to be resolved if the classification system is to be simplified. If someone could take a stab at it, however, it would be a great boon to us hard-working reporters.

—From "Classification USG" (*Department of Dissent*)  
by John Q. Blodgett, FSJ, July 1964.

were implementing. According to various reports, suspicion of public health workers led thousands of people in Pakistan to refuse to be vaccinated against polio.

A 2013 *Scientific American* article ("The Spies Who Sabotaged Global Health") noted: "The violation of trust threatens to set back global public health efforts by decades."

The letter from the deans, addressed to President Barack Obama, and shared with other U.S. officials and the media, stated:

"While political and security agendas may by necessity induce collateral damage, we as an open society set boundaries on these damages, and we believe this sham vaccination campaign exceeded those boundaries.

"As an example of the gravity of the situation, today we are on the verge of completely eradicating polio. With your leadership, the U.S. is the largest bilateral donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and has provided strong direction

and technical assistance, as well.

"Polio, which particularly threatens young children in the most disadvantaged communities, has been isolated to just three countries: Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. Now, because of these assassinations of vaccination workers, the U.N. has been forced to suspend polio eradication efforts in Pakistan. ...

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## Contemporary Quote

“ I think Americans have learned that it’s harder to end wars than it is to begin them. Yet this is how wars end in the 21st century: not through signing ceremonies, but through decisive blows against our adversaries, transitions to elected governments and security forces who take the lead and, ultimately, full responsibility. We remain committed to a sovereign, secure, stable and unified Afghanistan. And toward that end, we will continue to support Afghan-led efforts to promote peace in their country through reconciliation.

We have to recognize that Afghanistan will not be a perfect place, and it is not America’s responsibility to make it one. The future of Afghanistan must be decided by Afghans. But what the United States can do—what we will do—is secure our interests and help give the Afghans a chance, an opportunity to seek a long-overdue and hard-earned peace. ”

—President Barack Obama, speaking at the White House on May 27 following his return from Afghanistan.

covert activities threatens the present participants and future potential of much of what we undertake internationally to improve health and provide humanitarian assistance. As public health academic leaders, we hereby urge you to assure the public that this type of practice will not be repeated.”

In the spring of 2014, the World Health Organization and others reported polio outbreaks in at least 10 countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the majority in Pakistan. Pakistan’s Ministry of Health, in accordance with WHO guidance, began requiring all travelers leaving Pakistan to show proof of polio vaccination on June 1.

On May 16, the White House responded to the public health school deans and shared the response with the media. The memo, from Lisa O. Monaco, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, says:

“The United States strongly supports the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and efforts to end the spread of the polio virus forever. In response to your January 2013 letter to the president expressing concern about the safety of vaccination

workers, I wanted to inform you that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency directed in August 2013 that the agency make no operational use of vaccination programs, which includes vaccination workers.

“Similarly, the agency will not seek to obtain or exploit DNA or other genetic material acquired through such programs. This CIA policy applies worldwide and to U.S. and non-U.S. persons alike.”

CIA Director John Brennan made the decision, according to CIA spokesman Todd Ebitz, because he “took seriously the concerns raised by the public health community. By publicizing this policy, our objective it so dispel one canard that militant groups have used as justification for cowardly attacks against vaccination providers.”

—Shawn Dorman, Editor

## Changing the Voice of America

A bill to overhaul the Voice of America has prompted an intense debate between supporters, who say the changes would better equip the broadcast news

service to counter Russian disinformation, and opponents, who say the legislation would turn VOA into an American propaganda tool and discredit it.

The legislation, which recently passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee with bipartisan support, would revise VOA's mission statement to declare explicitly that the outlet has a role in supporting American public diplomacy and the policies of the U.S. government.

Founded in 1942 as a part of the Office of War Information, the Voice of America was originally tasked with countering Japanese and Nazi propaganda. In the 1950s, the broadcaster moved to the State Department and then the U.S. Information Agency, where it focused on countering communist propaganda and, later, on broadcasting news to people living under repressive regimes. Since 1999, the VOA has been overseen by the Broadcasting Board of Governors, an autonomous federal agency.

In 1976 President Gerald Ford signed legislation tasking VOA to serve as an "accurate, objective and comprehensive" source of news, as opposed to a propaganda outlet. But Representative Ed Royce, R-Calif., who chairs the House Foreign Affairs Committee, alleges that "While countries like Russia have been working 24/7 on their information campaigns, the VOA has abandoned its mission to effectively promote the policies of the U.S., even though its charter is clear in this regard."

*The New York Times* reports that the bill has spawned a backlash from journalists, many of whom work at the news service once run by Edward R. Murrow. "The only thing VOA has left is its reputation, built over decades, as a credible news organization," says one veteran journalist at the service who asked not to be named. "Changing our focus from straight news

to policy promotion will undercut any efforts to keep or build our audience."

Still, on rare occasions, that commitment to independence has led to controversial coverage. For instance, the Heritage Foundation issued a policy brief in May charging that "The Persian News Network of the Voice of America has been documented to show anti-American bias,"

Although the potential changes to VOA's mission have gotten most of the headlines, the restructuring of U.S. international broadcasting may prove to be even more significant. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that the bill would create a U.S. International Communications Agency, with a full-time chief executive officer, to administer all U.S. government news services.

USICA would replace the current Broadcasting Board of Governors, a nine-member board of part-time overseers that has proved "practically defunct in terms of its capacity to tell a message around the world," as then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton put it in 2013. The proposal reflects longstanding frustration from members of both parties with the BBG, which has been accused of mismanagement and drift.

The legislation would also consolidate Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks into a single organization called the Freedom News Network, so they can share content and avoid duplicating their efforts.

Walter Isaacson, a former BBG chairman who once headed CNN, sees the legislation as a way to give VOA a dual mission to clearly present American policy, as well as objective news. "Russia has returned to its old Pravda-like disinformation tactics, China and the Arab nations are creating sophisticated new broadcasts, and Twitter and social networks are

changing the game," Mr. Isaacson said. "We need to respect Edward R. Murrow's legacy while realizing that even he would be changing with the new technologies and threats."

But D. Jeffrey Hirschberg, a former member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, called the legislation problematic because, he said, it would fundamentally change the way the service operates. "The VOA has a pure journalistic mission, and it always has," Mr. Hirschberg said. "It doesn't do messaging or propaganda. Any legislation that alters the journalistic mission would be unfortunate."

During a recent staff meeting, VOA journalists angrily expressed their concerns to managers, hinting at a mass exodus if the legislation passes. Dan Robinson, who worked at the service for more than two decades before retiring this year, says it could even endanger the lives of journalists and broadcasters who work abroad. "Do foreign governments now start seeing journalists from VOA as agents of U.S. policy, rather than as journalists?" he said. "That's a real concern."

But Helle C. Dale, a senior fellow for public diplomacy at the Heritage Foundation, insists that fear is absurd. "It's not like people don't already know," she said. "It's completely funded by the U.S. government, and it's called the Voice of America. How does this legislation change this reality?"

The full House is expected to take up the bill this summer; meanwhile, the Senate is working on similar legislation.

—Steven Alan Honley,  
Contributing Editor

## Tracking the Well-Being of Youth

On April 3, the Center for Strategic and International Studies held a panel discussion in conjunction with the unveiling of

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its brand-new Global Youth Wellbeing Index. Created in partnership with the International Youth Foundation and Hilton Worldwide as part of a commitment made at the 2012 Clinton Global Initiative, the index is part of CSIS's Youth, Prosperity and Security Initiative.

William Reese, president and CEO of the International Youth Foundation, described one goal of the initiative as reframing the debate about the developing world's "youth bulge": nearly 3.5 billion people under the age of 25. Reese believes that too many people view this group as a security threat when they should see it as an "untapped resource."

Kathleen Hicks, director of the International Security Program at CSIS, believes the index will help illuminate the demographic challenges and allow private investors "to see where countries have the potential to improve and to grow."

She also encouraged young people to "buy into the index." Chris Nassetta, president and CEO of Hilton Worldwide, echoed that sentiment, warning that the initiative "will not succeed without full engagement by youth."

The index tracks 40 indicators across six interconnected domains: citizen participation, economic opportunity, education, health, information/communication technology, and safety and security. The index currently covers 30 different countries, which collectively account for about 70 percent of the world's total youth population.

CSIS is working hard to promote their new index through social media as well, starting a #YouthWellbeingIndex trend on Twitter, and launching a new website ([www.youthindex.org](http://www.youthindex.org)) with an interactive map and a link to the full report of the index. ■

—Bret Matera, Editorial Intern



# How to Get Better Ambassadors

BY DENNIS JETT

When an ambassador's confirmation hearing makes "The Daily Show," it is not because it went well. The nominees for ambassadorships to Norway, Hungary and Argentina, all major Obama campaign contributors, provided so many cringe-worthy moments when they appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year that Jon Stewart had more material than Fox News provides in a month.

There was also a flurry of stories in the media about the qualifications (or lack thereof) of these nominees, which raised the hope that higher standards might be possible in the future. Presidents appoint people as ambassadors for many reasons, however, and campaign contributions is one of them. Still, money does not have to speak louder than foreign policy credentials.

There are some limits on the amount an individual can give to a presidential campaign, but thanks to recent Supreme Court decisions, these are largely meaningless. And supporters of a candidate for president can bundle the checks of friends without limit for a campaign that

now costs over a billion dollars.

In an electoral system so thoroughly driven by money, asking a president to cut back on the number of ambassadorial titles he can bestow on those who played a critical role in getting him elected is like suggesting the United States unilaterally eliminate its nuclear weapons.

One might look to Congress for reform, but members of Congress owe their jobs, in no small part, to their own ability to raise money. In addition, the Senate traditionally gives the president wide latitude in selecting the people he wants as his envoys. Congressional opposition to ambassadorial nominations therefore tends to be ephemeral, partisan and only rarely related to a lack of qualifications.

## Reform Has Never Been Easy

In the late 19th century, professionalization began to make a serious dent in patronage only after a frustrated job seeker, who thought he should be chief of mission in Vienna, assassinated President James Garfield in 1881.

It took the criminality of the Nixon administration and the support of President Jimmy Carter to bring about the Foreign Service Act of 1980. So, in the absence of another major scandal, there is little hope for change coming from the legislative branch.

Yet the need for campaign cash and the existence of a dysfunctional Congress do not mean that nothing can be done to ensure better qualified ambassadorial nominees. AFSA could help bring about modest reform, but its recent efforts are not enough.

Take for instance, AFSA's issuance of the "Guidelines for Successful Performance as a Chief of Mission." A group of retired ambassadors put the guidelines together. Most of the members of the group had been career Foreign Service officers, but the group also included several former political appointee ambassadors who were unlikely challengers of the status quo. While the AFSA Governing Board approved the guidelines, the vote was not unanimous.

But even if meaningful guidelines could be drawn up, they alone would do little to improve the quality of ambassadors. Expecting those who do not meet the criteria to forgo applying for the job is the equivalent of thinking that describing virtue will rid the world of sinners.

Another AFSA initiative that is not likely to bring about substantial change is its Freedom of Information Act request for the "certificates of demon-



*Dennis Jett is a professor of international affairs at Pennsylvania State University. A retired FSO, he served as ambassador to Peru and Mozambique, on the National Security Council and on assignments in Argentina, Israel, Malawi and Liberia. He is the author of three books: Why Peacekeeping Fails, Why American Foreign Policy Fails and a forthcoming book on American ambassadors (all published by Palgrave Macmillan). He is an occasional contributor to the Journal, whose "So You Wanna Be an Ambassador?" was published in November 2012.*

## If aspiring ambassadors realized that their performance will be measured and that their failures could become very public, they might think twice about buying the job if their only qualification is the size of their checkbook.

strated competence” that the Foreign Service Act requires the department send to the Senate for each nominee.

The White House has now agreed to make those certificates public, thanks to AFSA’s effort. But while that is a small step toward greater transparency, the certificates of competence will not be the smoking gun that proves a nominee’s incompetence.

These certificates are, in reality, one-page summaries of the kind of basic

biographic information that any Google search would produce. The lack of foreign policy credentials of the Norway, Hungary and Argentina nominees was obvious, but drew little attention.

It took the videotape of their hearings to create the controversy. Recognizing that, the State Department has put out a solicitation to hire a contractor to prepare nominees for congressional testimony. So the hearings may be less of an obstacle for the incompetent in the future.

### Predicting Success and Failure

A bad hearing may not be a good predictor of who will fail as an ambassador, however. Many will argue that is not the case and insist that knowledge of the language, history and culture of a country is essential. But that knowledge, with the exception of fluency in the language, can be acquired fairly quickly. Moreover, the lack of such knowledge does not irrefutably portend failure.

# CALLING ALL FS AUTHORS!

The November 2014 *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors.

FS authors whose books have been published in 2013 or 2014, and have not been previously featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author, to:

Susan B. Maitra  
Managing Editor  
*Foreign Service Journal*  
2101 E St NW  
Washington DC 20037

Email: [maitra@afsa.org](mailto:maitra@afsa.org)  
Deadline for submissions is Sept. 5.



## If there is any indicator of future ambassadorial success, it is probably more a function of personality and the ability to effectively manage people.

Career officers with extensive experience can fail as well as political appointees. To test the question of whether there is a measurable difference between the performance of political appointee ambassadors and career ones, I had four graduate students read the 139 inspection reports that the Office of the Inspector General had at that point posted on the IG's website. They included 98 embassies with career COMs and 41 political appointees.

The students were asked to assign two grades to each ambassador: one for internal mission management and the other for external relations. While the average grades for the career officers were slightly higher for both categories, the difference was not statistically significant.

The career ambassadors were more tightly grouped around the average-to-good rating, while the political appointees had a flatter and wider distribution. This tends to confirm what many believe based on anecdotal evidence—that political appointees are more likely to be either superb or bad ambassadors, with fewer falling in the middle of the range where career officers tend to cluster.

Bad ambassadors, whether career or political, could be avoided if there were a way to determine in advance what the qualifications for success are. That is not easy, and other professions have tried with little success. The American Bar Association does a thorough review of the background and experience of judicial nominees and declares each of

them to be highly qualified, qualified or unqualified.

The clearest measure of the performance of a judge is how often a higher court overrules his or her decisions. A recent study found little difference in the reversal rates of judges, regardless of the ABA categories in which they had been placed. An a priori ranking that some deem a true indicator of success may not work for ambassadors any more than it does with judges.

In addition, every chief of mission has a career officer for a deputy. The deficiencies of a COM can be compensated for if the ambassador is smart enough and trusting enough to make good use of the DCM.

If there is any indicator of future ambassadorial success, it is probably more a function of personality and the ability to effectively manage people—and that is as true for career COMs as it is for the political ones. However, managerial skill and personality traits are not readily conveyed by basic biographic information.

### Performance Measures

But there is an opportunity to make modest improvement in the way chiefs of mission are selected. Ambassadors do not have a readily available measure of performance as judges do, but a visit by a team from the Inspector General's office results in a detailed evaluation of how well an embassy is being run. Those reports, now on the IG's website with minimal redaction, are available for

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anyone to assess an ambassador as my students did.

The problem is that even though the law says each post should be inspected every five years, inspections occur only about every eight years due to a lack of resources. This means most ambassadors will come and go without a thorough review of their performance.

They do, of course, get annual evaluations like every other officer; but those are written in Washington and are not the best measure of how well the mission is managed. And they are never made public.

As part of the OIG inspection, every employee at an embassy is required to fill out a personal questionnaire in which they are asked to rate the work environment and management of the post.

Instead of this happening only when an embassy comes up for an inspection, an abbreviated PQ could be sent in electronically by everyone at every post every year.

With these 360-degree evaluations, the IG could quickly identify the embassies with the most serious problems and send a team to do a rapid review. A similar system could also be used within the State Department to rate the effectiveness of every bureau and the assistant secretary who runs it. And those results could be added to the IG's website.

### **Power and Responsibility**

This system would apply to all ambassadors. That could be challenging for AFSA, because it is both the professional association and the labor union of the

Foreign Service. In this case, for instance, it can either work to improve the quality of ambassadors and the professionalism of the Foreign Service, or diminish both by defending all of its members, including the incompetent.

Thus far, thanks to the posting of the inspection reports on the IG's website, four ambassadors have resigned. They were all political appointees.

A system of abbreviated annual PQs would have to apply to all embassies, even though career ambassadors face bigger challenges than their political counterparts. Morale problems are typically worse at embassies with hardship and danger pay—posts where political appointees rarely tread.

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**With these 360-degree evaluations, the IG could quickly identify the embassies with the most serious problems.**

Development Review declared that the State Department would “empower and hold accountable COMs as chief executive officers of interagency missions.” Power comes with responsibility, however. If the State Department and AFSA support the QDDR goals, they should enhance the ability of the IG and work to ensure that grievance procedures do not allow accountability to be litigated to death.

Will that ensure no unqualified person will seek an ambassadorship? No, but some of those who aspire to become an ambassador through bundling campaign cash give little consideration to the risk of being held accountable in a very public way. Like some of my students, they seem to think diplomatic life consists of ignoring parking tickets and attending endless cocktail parties.

If aspiring ambassadors realized that their performance will be measured and that their failures could become very public, they might think twice about buying the job if their only qualification is the size of their checkbook and those of their friends.

If that happened, American diplomacy would be strengthened and there would be less material for “The Daily Show.” But it is a standard to which career officers will also have to be willing to hold themselves. ■

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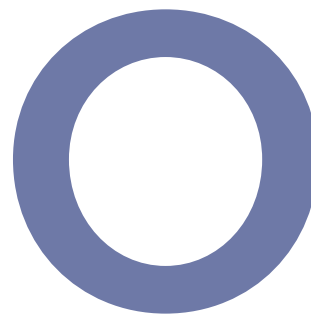


**Moving?**

# THE ART OF POLITICAL REPORTING

**Despite the challenges, reporting from the field—in whatever form it takes—is still the indispensable ingredient of any meaningful foreign policy discussion.**

BY DAN LAWTON



ur official diplomatic correspondence has changed considerably since the days of the quill pen, and even since the not as distant period of typed dispatches. But as much as the forms may change, the need for insightful analysis from abroad has not.

Foreign policy should be informed and guided by the insights discerned by our diplomats posted overseas, who inject local perspectives into policy debates and decision-making—not made in a vacuum.

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*Dan Lawton, deputy director of the Office of Southern European Affairs in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, served as political counselor in Athens from 2010 to 2013. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1990, he has also served in Caracas, Copenhagen, Lima, Karachi and Mexico City. The views expressed in this article are his personal opinions and are not intended to represent U.S. government policy.*



Yet the challenges to reporting officers in the field today are particularly acute. Technological change strains the nexus between form and substance, and overseas posts must compete for the attention of Washington audiences focused on their email inboxes. On top of that, the unauthorized online publication of purported cables has greatly undermined our interlocutors' trust. And a work culture that emphasizes leadership and managerial skills can inadvertently marginalize written communication skills

### Are Cables an Anachronism?

Remember airmgrams? They were typed informative reports from overseas missions sent by diplomatic pouch back to Washington as a means of alleviating overtaxed telegraphic systems. Over time, they earned a reputation for containing more information than intended audiences had time to read.

As telegrams—or “cables,” as they are commonly called—came to dominate State Department reporting and analysis, airmgrams were phased out as a form of official communication in 1991, almost 50 years after they had been introduced.

In the tiny fjord village of Igaliku in southern Greenland, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell (far right), Greenland Home Rule Deputy Premier Josef Motzfeldt (center) and Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller sign an agreement in August 2004, paving the way for upgrading the early warning radar system at Thule, the U.S. air base in northern Greenland. Assisting Sec. Powell is Foreign Service political officer Dan Lawton (second from right).

For the first time, Greenland was a party to the century-old defense agreement between Denmark and the United States that governs U.S. defense activity on the island. The three parties signed two additional documents, one providing for economic and technical cooperation between the United States and Greenland, and another to protect the environment.

Are reporting and analytical cables going the way of the airmgram?

In 1946, then-Chargé d'Affaires to Moscow George Kennan wrote perhaps the most famous of diplomatic cables, the “Long Telegram.” This 8,000-word message sought to explain the sources of Soviet (mis)behavior while recommending a pragmatic policy of containment.

In his *Memoirs, 1925-1950* (Little, Brown and Company,

## Are reporting and analytical cables going the way of the airgram?

1967), Kennan modestly suggested that his message had such an enormous influence because of the receptivity of his audience. Six months earlier, he argued, it would have been received with “raised eyebrows and lips pursed in disapproval.” Six months later, “It would probably have sounded redundant, a sort of preaching to the convinced.”

Kennan’s Washington readers in all likelihood received batches of cables, delivered to their real (not virtual) inboxes, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Handling cables mandated some engagement with these texts, even if only to glance at the summary paragraphs, or at least the subject lines, before marking them for shredding. Readers would annotate noteworthy missives by highlighting sentences, scribbling notes in the margins, or sharing them with colleagues.

It is hard to imagine an 8,000-word telegram on any subject being read today, let alone having a similar impact. Kennan himself acknowledged that he divided the telegram into five sections so it would not appear “so outrageously long.” And therein lies an intrinsic tension. Most Washington readers would counsel, “the shorter the better,” while most drafters in the field bristle at “oversimplifying” for the sake of brevity.

Today, Washington readers enjoy the advantages of paperless systems, but they also generally devote far more attention to their email inboxes than their cable queues.

News Washington can use is often quickly conveyed to target audiences via email in easily digestible form. In contrast, a reporting cable on the same subject is more cumbersome to access, or it may be drowned out by the sheer volume of telegrams that pour in from embassies and consulates daily. It may even seem duplicative, merely “memorializing” previously communicated information.

### From Action to Reaction

Foreign Service officers at home and abroad must confront what Marshall McLuhan, in *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Bantam Books, 1967), had already branded a “global village” of “allatonicness.” McLuhan argued that the speed of communication, which keeps increasing, forces us to “shift our stress of attention from action to reaction.”

The breadth, depth and pace of news and commentary

today are so colossal that there is precious little time for deliberation and reflection. Diplomacy was once likened to three-dimensional chess, but today the more apt simile would be speed chess.

In such an environment, cables that have real impact are likely to have been shared as an email attachment with someone’s strident exhortation: “Read this!” They also most likely mimic email messaging by frontloading conclusions, using ticks or bullets, or employing a breezy sentence structure. A snappy subject line always helps, and embedded images may attract attention.

Even so, how many overtaxed desk officers, working hard to meet the everyday operational needs of their office, would prefer to plead the Fifth Amendment than honestly answer the frustrated query of a political or economic counselor: “Didn’t you read our cable?”

### A Massive Breach of Confidentiality

It’s not just the short attention span of harried Washington audiences with which drafting officers must cope, however. They are also working in the wake of an unprecedented assault on the integrity of classified communications systems. Diplomats rely on confidentiality just as much as doctors, lawyers and the clergy. That’s why the State Department waits at least 30 years before publishing diplomatic correspondence in its *Foreign Relations of the United States* series.

Previous experiments in speedier public access fared badly. William Seward, President Abraham Lincoln’s Secretary of State, opted to print recent letters between his office and American ministers abroad for public inspection. Seward biographer Walter Stahr quotes the American minister (ambassador) to London as complaining that the “rather liberal publication of my more confidential dispatches may stand in the way of my future usefulness at this post” (*Seward*, Simon & Schuster, 2012).

Nor is the United States the only country to have its diplomatic correspondence leaked with deleterious consequences. The British Foreign Office once had a storied tradition of ambassadors sending valedictory dispatches as they prepared to leave their posts. That custom reportedly ended in 2006, in large part due to the difficulty of keeping the wit, candor and condescension of departing chiefs of mission confidential.

The illegal transfer of an enormous trove of alleged diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks in 2010 posed new challenges for



drafting officers. First and foremost, the unauthorized publication of such correspondence seriously damaged U.S. national security. Apart from premature revelations, the leaks exposed foreign sources of information to retribution, giving other potential interlocutors pause about the risks of engaging in dialogue with U.S. diplomats. It suddenly became harder to win or retain the trust of foreign contacts, and elliptical references to sources became more common (e.g., “a veteran party insider told us...”).

The Foreign Service did win some new respect as the commentariat extolled the quality of its writing and reporting. Some columnists even opined that the best missives had a literary quality to them. As Fareed Zakaria wrote in *Time*, “When foreigners encounter U.S. diplomats and listen to their bland recitation of policy, they would do well to keep in mind that behind the facade lie some very clever minds.”

This should not have come as a surprise, of course. U.S. diplomats have enviable access, speak foreign languages fluently, and are steeped in local knowledge. They can also produce clear and purposeful prose.

### **The Power of the Pen**

Reporting from the field, in whatever form it takes, is still the indispensable ingredient of any meaningful foreign policy discussion. Our diplomats’ deep understanding of foreign countries and cultures, and ability to discern political and economic trends that matter to the United States, constitute our comparative advantage in the U.S. foreign policymaking community.

Even so, knowledge does not necessarily equal power. Foreign Service officers are called on to be versatile, and communication is only one of the six competencies evaluated for tenure and promotion. Written communication, in turn, is only one of five subcomponents of that particular precept.

Washington readers are besieged by what Joseph Nye calls a “paradox of plenty,” such that “attention rather than information becomes the scarce resource.” It has probably long been true that the time one has to write or read cable traffic is inversely proportional to one’s decision-making authority. Nye suggests that in such an environment, “Editors and cue-givers become more in demand.”

## **The means of communication may change, but the need for bankable reporting and analysis does not.**

I recall a Foreign Service Institute instructor asserting that, anthropologically speaking, the Foreign Service is an oral culture. In that vein, the staff assistant regularly briefing a senior State principal has a distinct advantage over the drafting officer who performed the actual on-the-ground analysis.

### **Upholding the Value of the Reporting Function**

During the 1992 presidential campaign, independent candidate Ross Perot suggested that ambassadors were relics, akin to “sailing ships,” and that Washington could accomplish its foreign policy goals by simply communicating with foreign capitals by phone and fax. Friends of the Foreign Service rightly responded that there is no substitute for having diplomats on the spot who build relationships and advocate in person with foreign governments and publics.

Somewhat lost in the debate was the fact that Perot’s comment ignored a vital function of U.S. diplomats abroad: conveying to U.S. policymakers analysis of significant local events. A data systems entrepreneur from Texas can be forgiven for getting that wrong, but we would do well to remind ourselves of that important job from time to time. All Foreign Service work is vital, but the reporting function is truly fundamental to the success of U.S. foreign policy.

It’s safe to say that the airgram is not coming back, not at a time when the Associated Press is asking its reporters to limit most of their stories to 300-500 words. The cable is still with us, but is becoming ever leaner. Email updates, BlackBerry-friendly digests and weekly roundups with cable links are all in the ascendancy.

While the means of communication may change, the need for bankable reporting and analysis does not. This is true despite the fact that most writing we produce and see is decidedly temporal.

Still, the best Foreign Service reporting stands the test of time. Look again at Kennan’s Long Telegram: “At the bottom of the Kremlin’s neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity.” And then fast forward to recent press comments (no cable revelations here) by President Obama: “Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors—not out of strength, but out of weakness.” ■

# DIPLOMATIC REPORTING: ADAPTING TO THE INFORMATION AGE

**While technology enhances brainpower, it is no substitute for the seasoned diplomat's powers of observation and assessment, argues this veteran consumer of diplomatic reporting.**

BY JOHN C. GANNON

**A**s an analyst or manager of government analysts for more than 25 years, I acquired a deep appreciation for diplomatic reporting. That does not mean I romanticize it, however. U.S. policy formulation, which depends on reliable diplomatic reporting, is a hardscrabble business, not an ivory-tower pursuit.

Not all of the reporting I saw was useful or well-sourced, any more than was the output of other agencies over the same period. Reporting was not a high priority for some embassies,

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*During a government career spanning a quarter-century, John C. Gannon served as the Central Intelligence Agency's director of European analysis, deputy director for intelligence and assistant director for analysis and production. He also chaired the National Intelligence Council, worked in the White House transitional planning office for the Department of Homeland Security and was the staff director of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security. He is now an adjunct professor at Georgetown University and the executive director of the congressionally directed FBI 9/11 Review Commission.*

and others simply lacked the talent to excel at it. The ideological bent of powerful policymakers and ambassadors at times suppressed or distorted analysis on important issues. Occasionally, high-quality reports were sadly late in arriving.

That said, I came to respect diplomatic reporting and analysis from the field. It added to my knowledge of the local stage and its key actors, broadened my perspective on potential outcomes, deepened my understanding of complex issues and tested my own, sometimes-rigid assumptions—all building critical context for the judgments I made.

Accomplished diplomats, who artfully captured ground truth while skillfully pegging the story to U.S. interests, always informed, sometimes entertained and often had real impact. They helped to reduce the confusion and uncertainty faced by senior decision-makers and government analysts in Washington.

## **The Record Is Clear**

Timely and insightful reporting from U.S. diplomats has given meaning to major geopolitical transformations in Latin America, Europe and Asia, as well as to persistent or escalating violence and conflict in the Balkans, the Middle East and South Asia. More recently, Foreign Service officers have ably

tracked and assessed a host of transnational threats ranging from terrorism, weapons proliferation, cyberoperations and narco-trafficking to natural disasters, organized crime, trafficking in women and children, infectious diseases, global financial crises and climate change. And in today's interconnected world, the list only grows.

Since the 1980s, diplomats have seen both their workplace and the world they cover turned upside down by the continuing revolution in information technology. Yet the work of veteran diplomats and the emergence of a new generation of tech-savvy Foreign Service officers have made clear that diplomatic reporting is still, fundamentally, a people business.

Technology can increase efficiency, but it still takes brainpower to produce succinct reports that creatively combine breadth, depth and clear policy relevance. A quick survey of some of my own career experiences will reinforce this point.

**Dominican Republic, 1978.** On election day, May 16, Antonio Guzman's Dominican Revolutionary Party, which had been sidelined by President Lyndon Johnson's Marines in 1965, was perceived to be leading conservative U.S. ally Joaquin Balaguer. The pro-Balaguer army began to seize ballot boxes. Ambassador Robert Yost's country team reported the story blow by blow through the night into the early morning hours.

This gave me time to get the details into crack-of-dawn intelligence briefings for the senior national security team, and enabled Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to persuade Balaguer's government to restore the vote count that made Guzman the next president. The run-up to this election also exposed me to the tensions that can arise between Washington's political biases and reality in the field. Excellent reporting reassured U.S. policymakers that fears of Cuban intervention were not warranted (and, I concluded, may not have been such a big deal back in 1965 when both embassy reporting and policy perspectives set a different tone).

**Jamaica, 1980.** The charismatic and Castro-friendly incumbent, Prime Minister Michael Manley, faced a serious electoral challenge against the background of a declining economy. As someone who had both studied and taught in Jamaica, I concluded that Manley's opponent, Edward Seaga, would win

because of the centrality of bread-and-butter issues in union-based parties.

Embassy reporting, though less confident of the outcome, gave me lots of material to make my case in what became a heated debate in Washington during the election campaign. I was fortunate to have worked closely with the team of Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Viron "Pete" Vaky, which provided me with an early example of the potentiating effect of a collaborative intelligence-policy relationship. I had also been mentored as an analyst by Vaky's distinguished predecessor, John Crimmins.

In one contentious briefing on the Hill at which some members strongly disputed my analysis, Representative Shirley Chisholm, D-N.Y., the daughter of West Indian immigrants and the wife of a Jamaican husband, silenced the room with her eloquent assessment of why Seaga was likely to win. He did, with nearly 59 percent of the vote.

**Spain, early 1980s:** This is another case where, in my judgment, a solid record of informative and insightful embassy reporting helped sometimes skittish Washington policymakers get on the right side of history. Spain was still in an unsteady transition to post-Franco democracy. Right-wing military elements staged an abortive coup in 1981. The Socialists came to power in October 1982 on an anti-NATO platform and with Basque terrorist assassinations of military, security and political leaders on the rise.

Other factors were involved, but I believe that excellent diplomatic reporting encouraged broad U.S. government support for Spain's fledgling socialist government, for its accession to NATO and the European Union, and for its long fight against a major domestic terrorist threat. Credit goes far and wide, but I recall Political Counselor Bob Service's pithy and punchy cables as a standard setter.

**Emergence of the European Union, mid-1980s.** The transformation of the European Economic Community of the mid-1980s into the European Union is a story of consistently outstanding reporting from economic, political and security officers. As instability on the continent increased during the 1990s, security issues took on greater importance in what became a more interdisciplinary approach to analysis of Euro-

## Since the 1980s, diplomats have seen both their workplace and the world they cover turned upside down by the continuing revolution in information technology.

pean integration. Ambassador Jim Dobbins' rich reports from Brussels were always a must-read.

**Eastern Europe Transforms, 1989.** This was the most eventful year of my career, as the East European communist regimes began to topple starting with Poland, followed by Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and, finally, Romania in December. In what seemed like a breathless sweep, the Warsaw Pact was history!

A steady flow of useful diplomatic reporting, exceptional interagency collaboration and effective leadership from the White House—along with the refusal of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to resort to violence—minimized the risks during this rapid transformation of postwar Europe. Countless diplomatic reports contributed to this triumph for U.S. policy. I would single out Ambassador Mark Palmer in Hungary as emblematic of the best.

**1990-1995: Yugoslavia Breaks Up and the Bosnians Go to War.** After the collapse of communist regimes and the implosion of the Soviet Union, there was little appetite in the final years of the Bush 41 administration or in the first years of the Clinton presidency to intervene in the Balkans' toxic ethnic brawl. I saw firsthand how a steady stream of informative and insightful diplomatic reports educated policymakers on the complex issues, political minefields and increasing risks to broader regional stability of persistent volatility and ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

I particularly recall Ambassador Warren Zimmerman's thoughtful contributions to the U.S. policy debate on Yugoslavia and his willingness to engage intelligence analysts directly. On Bosnia, Dick Holbrooke assembled a team of workhorses, including Bob Frasure, Chris Hill, Jim Pardew, Nelson Drew and Joe Kruzel, who were especially skilled at reporting rapidly changing developments to Washington decision-makers. They were among the many talented diplomats and policymakers who helped bring about an end to the Bosnian conflict.

**China Rises, early 1990s.** Government analysts, like diplomats, do not always come out of the gate with the right answer. But they play great catch-up ball! In the early 1990s, I remember mixed views on the impact of Deng Xiaoping's measured opening of China to the outside world. How would this vast country of a billion people maintain its territorial

## During the rapid transformation of postwar Europe in 1989, countless diplomatic reports contributed to this triumph for U.S. policy.

integrity, internal stability, centralized authoritarian rule and robust economic growth against the stresses that would come with integration into the global economy? How would its military modernization programs affect stability in Asia?

Focused, balanced and forward-looking diplomatic reporting, in my view, has helped Washington to understand both the challenges and the opportunities in China's rapid rise. The Sino-American relationship has a complex future with varying shades of partnership, competition and rivalry—but hopefully not violent conflict.

**A Year of Crises, 1998.** The U.S. agenda was upended as India conducted a nuclear test in May, and Pakistan followed quickly; al-Qaida attacked our embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in August; a global financial crisis that started in Thailand swept through East Asia, provoking serious economic and political turmoil in Indonesia, and eventually walloping President Boris Yeltsin's Russia; North Korea tried unsuccessfully to launch a satellite; and Saddam Hussein booted United Nations arms inspectors out of Iraq.

Foreign Service reporting reduced the uncertainty associated with all these overlapping events, and enabled policymakers to scale appropriate responses. It helped them to get a hold on Yeltsin's erratic behavior during an unstable period in the region. It educated U.S. government agencies to the growing threat from al-Qaida terrorists. It shed light on the domestic and regional political implications of the global financial crisis, even though it was a mighty struggle for all of us to get ahead of this fast-moving curve.

### Three Revolutions

All of these episodes occurred against the background of historic geopolitical and technological change that dramatically affected reporting from the field. Three distinct yet intersecting revolutions took root in the early 1980s as closed societies began to open up, as both the volume and velocity of information flows increased exponentially with the advent of the Internet, and as the distinction blurred between foreign and domestic threats in a borderless world and in cyberspace.

The first revolution was **geopolitical**. It swept away the Soviet Union, propelled the rise of China and forced both

## INR makes up for small numbers in its impressive analytic expertise and in its intimate connection to State's indispensable diplomatic reporting.

intelligence analysts and diplomats to confront a new, diffuse global threat environment in which non-state actors—including terrorists, WMD proliferators and cybercriminals—operated against U.S. interests across national borders, including our own.

The second revolution involves **technology**—primarily information technology, but also the rapidly advancing biological sciences, nanotechnology, material sciences, neuroscience and robotics. We have moved in one generation from an environment of information scarcity to information glut, and into a world where the United States no longer dominates technology R&D and is subject, more than ever, to technological surprise. In the late 1970s, it took at least a week for me to receive newspapers from Latin America and the Caribbean. Today, Washington analysts receive newspapers and media reports often before the people in the country of interest.

Governments have less and less capacity to control information flows, including social media. In recent years, the Arab Spring in the Middle East and widespread protests in Brazil and Turkey are cases in point. Meanwhile, international organized crime groups, terrorists, narcotraffickers and proliferators are taking advantage of such technology, bypassing governments or seeking to undermine them to protect their illegal activities.

The third revolution relates to **homeland security**, which may not seem appropriate for the diplomat's agenda but is. Multiple federal agencies, state and local governments, and "first responders" have a legitimate need for information about threats that originate abroad, including human trafficking, refugee flows, migration patterns and infectious diseases. Looking ahead, diplomatic reporting will be expected to advance our understanding of a growing number of such complex issues in an increasingly interconnected world.

### Responding to Change

From 1998 to 2001, as the first assistant director of central intelligence for analysis and production, I chaired the National Intelligence Production Board.

The NIPB, a working group spanning 11 agencies, including the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research,

worked to bring analytic production into the 21st century. This meant responding to both the post-Cold War geopolitical transformation and IT-driven technology revolution that were producing such churn in our workplace.

In 2000, the group produced *The Strategic Invest-*

*ment Plan for Intelligence Community Analysis* (ADCI/AP 2000-01), which recommended intelligence agencies invest in recruitment and training, interagency collaboration, use of external expertise and aggressive exploitation of open-source information. These resources will help counter "a dispersed, complex and 'asymmetric' threat assessment in which information technology makes everything move faster."

INR, then headed by Tom Fingar, was ably represented on the NIPB panel by Chris Kojm, the future chair of the National Intelligence Council. INR has always been one of the smallest organizations in the intelligence community, but it punches well above its weight. It makes up for small numbers in its impressive analytic expertise and in its intimate connection to State's indispensable diplomatic reporting.

Yet I saw diplomatic reporting as undervalued within the State Department—and even more so on the Hill. State lacked strong legislative advocates, even at a time of growing global threats to national security. The failure to adequately fund the department was a blow to all the agencies that relied on diplomatic reporting, including mine.

Critics have asserted that while U.S. diplomatic reporting has a rich and noble tradition in our country, it has suffered from the advent of the Internet and easy access to valuable open-source information. Policymakers, the argument went, could now mine the Web for the country-specific information they needed and make direct contact with official counterparts and other valuable foreign sources—all in real time. Embassy political and economic officers, who generally rejected this line, could now be directed to reduce their substantive reporting activities and take on more of the embassy's operational duties such as managing congressional delegations.

This critique, which exaggerated both the vulnerability of diplomatic reporting and the potential of the Internet, had surface appeal for a time. Experienced FSOs and government



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## In fact, bountiful Web access to open-source information has the potential to make good diplomatic reporting even better.

analysts in Washington were quick to recognize, however, that while the Internet would narrow the diplomat's reporting domain, it could not compete with the Foreign Service's ability to provide policy-relevant insight and invaluable context with regard to local people, events and trends. In fact, bountiful online access to open-source information has the potential to make good diplomatic reporting even better.

### Technology Needs Brainpower

We cannot minimize the challenges ahead. U.S. diplomats must deal with a world in which everything moves faster, including advances in technology. The State Department will need to invest more in technology to preserve the global edge for diplomacy. IT-driven globalization has already fostered the unprecedented development of interconnected, global networks that move political, cultural, economic, financial, military and environmental information around a shrinking world with unprecedented speed and efficiency. This historic phenomenon of our age will not go away.

My core message, however, is that, while technology enhances brainpower, it is no substitute for it. Today a new, tech-savvy generation of Foreign Service officers is entirely comfortable with analytic tools and software applications like time series, clustering, link analysis and visualization. These young diplomats use social media as easily as they brush their teeth. But in the end, it is their talent and passion for crisp, incisive reporting that sustains the State Department's gold standard for reporting from the field. Technology enables as never before, but cognitive power still makes the critical difference.

The advance of technology will only accelerate in the decades ahead. But it can never match the seasoned diplomat's powers of observation and artful precision in assessing complex issues, local developments and trends. ■

# STATE DEPARTMENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REPORTING TODAY

## A SELECTION OF VIEWS FROM PRACTITIONERS

*The Journal invited AFSA members to share their perspectives on this important topic. We asked five questions to spur discussion: What is the state of State Department political and economic reporting today? Can you provide recent (unclassified) examples of how reporting affected policy or led to a change in operations? What is the impact of the vast and instantaneous flow of information in today's digital age on political and economic reporting (and are embassy reporting methods changing as a result)? What impediments to reporting—technological, physical access or process—have you encountered, and what would be your proposed remedy? Do today's promotion boards give too much or too little weight to reporting and analysis versus other skills (e.g., management of people and resources)?*

*Here is a selection of the responses we received. We thank all those who responded.*

*—Shawn Dorman, Editor*

### *Hitting the Ball*

By Christopher W. Bishop  
Consulate General Osaka-Kobe

A senior officer of the old school—and four-time ambassador—once told me that diplomacy was like playing tennis. “The cable is just the follow-through on the stroke,” he explained. “What really matters is that you hit the damn ball. You have to go talk to people and influence them.”

I've often thought about this analogy as I reflect on my work as a political officer. The very term “reporting officer”—a favorite State Department catch-all—implies that a political or economic officer's primary job is to report on conditions in the host country to inform and influence the making of U.S. foreign policy. But isn't influencing host-country policy just as important to U.S. interests, if not more so?

Reporting has long been an easy way to judge the “productivity” (if not the success) of a post's political or economic section. A friend at the American Institute in Taiwan once admitted he kept a tally of how many cables Embassy Beijing had sent the previous day, so that Taipei could match it the next day. (The fact that Beijing had twice as many “reporting officers” as Taipei didn't matter—nor, apparently, did the question of whether either posts' cables actually influenced policy in Washington.)

As a junior officer in Shanghai, I was routinely tasked with writing quarterly cables on the local macroeconomic situation. Even if anyone read them (something I doubted), I knew someone

in Washington could have written them just as easily as I did from China. Almost all the data was on the Internet, and much of it was in English.

The fetishization of reporting at many posts has led to an odd phenomenon. Even as overseas posts are reporting more than ever—not just by cable, but by email, both official and personal—Washington’s attention span is getting shorter. Many desk officers could spend all day doing nothing but reading (or just skimming) all the cables and emails and press summaries and Ops Center briefs and daily activity reports that pop into their inboxes. “Inbox management” has become as critical a skill in Washington as drafting a briefing memo, much less running an office.

The department is drowning in information. But how much reporting actually gets read? How much ever reaches bureau front offices—not to mention the seventh floor? And if it doesn’t get read, how can it influence policy?

We need to get back to basics. State should review the role of political officers in the Foreign Service, to help us refocus our work and set expectations. (We might start by looking at the recent emphasis on “economic statecraft,” and how it has revitalized the work of economic officers.) Senior officers should mentor and train newer officers not just in cable drafting, but in how to identify and engage contacts, and how to elicit and synthesize information.

We should focus less on producing quantity reporting about our host countries, and focus more on clear, concise reporting that helps Washington understand those countries. We need to help the department better manage all the information it receives—not just add another cable or email to someone’s inbox.

Good reporting is vital to diplomacy. It provides a record for others to learn from our successes, and our failures. It can inform, advise and even influence the making of policy at the highest levels. But diplomacy is more than some kind of glorified journalism. We still have to go talk to people and influence them. We have to hit the damn ball.

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*Since joining the Foreign Service in 2002, Christopher W. Bishop, a political officer, has served in Shanghai, Khartoum, Yokohama and Washington, D.C. In August, he will begin Chinese-language and area studies instruction in Taipei at the American Institute in Taiwan.*

## ***Bring in the Noise: Using Digital Technology to Promote Peace and Security***

**By Daniel Fennell**

**Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations,  
Washington, D.C.**

Running at full speed on projects at our overseas posts, it’s not easy to break focus and find time to send reports back to Washington. But like the proverbial tree falling in the forest, an activity in the field needs to make some noise if you want anyone in Washington to know it struck the ground.

Working in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations has impressed on me how field reporting can promote the use of new tools to fight conflict and instability. For example, our team in Honduras helped mount a conference with young

technology-savvy participants, international funders and local government officials to identify tech-based solutions for addressing destabilizing violence in the country with the highest murder rate in the world.

This event, called a “Tech-Camp,” was jointly organized by CSO, the Office of eDiplomacy and Embassy Tegucigalpa. It

was a new experience for our bureau, but looked like an innovative way to address drivers of conflict.

Field reporting painted an engaging picture of 13 groups proposing ideas involving digital platforms. Some, like coordinated social media strategies, were free. Others, such as a new computer-based crime-tracking system and a plan to allow anonymous incident reporting, won basic funding from an international nongovernmental organization. All of the proposals sprang from local groups using local expertise to find solutions to citizen security problems—meeting a central goal for the U.S. mission.

Field reports on the TechCamp, including cables, email and even video clips, caught the attention of our bureau leadership and our Burma engagement team, which believed that a TechCamp would work there, too. That team adopted the basic elements of the Honduras event, and the Burma version, mounted in partnership with Embassy Rangoon and the Spirit of America foundation, was another success.

We are now seeking opportunities to set up similar events

**One of the hidden benefits of serving in Washington is seeing how field reports that get into the right hands can improve policy and operations.**

—Daniel Fennell





Daniel Friedman/U.S. Embassy Tegucigalpa

Young, tech-savvy participants at a January TechCamp in Honduras discuss digital platforms to address crime and instability.

in other countries facing ongoing conflict. Thanks in part to embassy reporting, the Honduras initiative is having even greater impact.

As a Foreign Service officer moving between field and domestic assignments over the years, I've been at both ends of the reporting pipeline. I'm struck that one of the hidden benefits of serving in Washington is being on the receiving end, and seeing how and when field reports from our embassies and diplomatic posts that get into the right hands can improve policy and operations. With the right audience, making that noise can shape events and our work around the world.

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*Since entering the Foreign Service in 1999 as a public diplomacy officer, Daniel Fennell has served in Iraq, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico and Canada. In Iraq, he served as the spokesman and public diplomacy chief for a Provincial Reconstruction Team embedded with the U.S. First Infantry Division in an active combat zone. He is currently completing an assignment in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations as the deputy director of an operations team, and will begin an assignment as the public affairs officer in Accra this summer.*

## **The Value-Added of Networking**

**By Christopher Markley Nyce  
Consulate General Basrah**

Being a reporting officer is interesting, rewarding and important work. I love the pursuit of knowledge and particularly enjoy searching out expert contacts on the subject I am responsible for

covering, and learning from them.

In the best of times we are afforded the luxury of writing think-pieces, which rely on multiple sources and offer depth and perspective. Spot reports and shorter writing pieces are by far the more common type of reporting, but even in those we strive to include the perspectives from people on the ground with whom we have talked.

Why is all this important? I believe that, unlike journalists, reporting officers must be perpetually building our network of contacts. That way, when a crisis arises we are in the best possible position to draw on our relationships to positively affect the outcome. This impact is often focused on our best interests as Americans, but just as often promotes the best interests of the people of the country in which we are serving.

It is in times of crisis that our network matters most. But that network is only as good as our reporting efforts have helped to make it. There may be only a few times in our careers when it all comes together, but when it does, it makes a huge difference. That happened to me in Malawi in April 2012, when the sudden death of President Bingu Wa Mutharika led to a two-day period of uncertainty during which an unconstitutional transition of power—a coup—almost occurred.

Through Ambassador Jeanine Jackson's immediate engagement, we were able to encourage the constitutional transition of power to Vice President Joyce Banda. Our network of reporting contacts made this engagement flow naturally. In May 2014, President Banda competed in an election against Bingu Wa Mutharika's brother, Peter Mutharika, and lost. Although vote



Courtesy Embassy Bogota

U.S. President Barack Obama and Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos shake hands after a bilateral meeting at the margins of the Summit of the Americas in April 2012 in Cartagena, where they announced the Free Trade Agreement's date of entry into force.

counting was a protracted process, Banda acknowledged her defeat, and the rule of law has prevailed.

Here is another example, from our consulate general in Basrah, where I recently completed a year of service as energy officer. One of our highest priorities is keeping Washington abreast of developments in southern Iraq's energy sector, where exports of more than 2.5 million barrels of oil per day account for 90 percent of the country's total oil production and the vast majority of its national budget.

Having built a wide-ranging network of active contacts in the energy sector, I was able to influence stakeholders both in and out of government. Our most recent analysis of southern Iraq's oil sector summarized an entire year's worth of field visits and data collection into a succinct argument for Iraq's need to hire an outside project management firm to meet its ambitious oil expansion plans. That reporting directly contributed to our leadership's ability to craft a set of policy recommendations to help stabilize Iraq's economy and simultaneously ensure a less volatile world market for oil.

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*Since joining the Foreign Service in 2005, Christopher Markley Nyce has served as an economic officer in London, Managua and Lilongwe.*

**Unlike journalists,  
reporting officers must  
be perpetually building  
our network of contacts.**

—Christopher Markley Nyce

## *The Three Amigos: South Korea, Colombia and Panama Trade Agreements*

By Ivan Rios  
Embassy Windhoek

To get the United States out of a deep recession, the Obama administration used many tools when it took office in 2009. It

was a time of high unemployment and despair, of bailouts and stimulus packages. It was a time for the National Export Initiative and international trade to be added to the policy toolbox. And it was a time when trade agreements were awaiting congressional ratification, involving the three amigos: South Korea, Colombia and Panama. Economic and political

reporting, without a doubt, advanced the cause of ratifying those pacts, which now benefit businesses large and small and people in many countries beyond the four signatories.

In July 2010, I arrived in Bogota as the new trade officer. I had the good fortune to be at the right place at the right time. We wanted to do all we could do to persuade Congress to ratify the trade agreement between Colombia and the United States. But what could we do?



Courtesy Embassy Bogota

Embassy Bogota Deputy Chief of Mission Perry Holloway, center, during a ceremony celebrating the arrival of the first U.S. motorcycle, a Harley Davidson, imported into Colombia under the Free Trade Agreement signed in 2012.

Among other things, we reported on the billion-dollar market share U.S. agriculture was losing to countries that had free trade agreements in place with Colombia. We monitored trade negotiations between Colombia and major competitors including South Korea, the European Union and China. We also documented trade agreements as they entered into force. And we painted a picture of Bogota's aggressive trade agenda and the economic losses to U.S. exporters if the trade agreement was not ratified.

Similar reports went in from South Korea and Panama, but each of the three amigos had its own peculiarities. For Colombia, the special twist was labor and the labor action plan, and what a twist it was! We had some superb labor officers—that rare breed that pingpongs between political and economic sections, depending on the roundness of the ball and the size of the racket that hits it. Their impartial reporting was critical to the cause, covering reactions from the labor sector and events leading to the labor action plan.

Once the plan was in place, they reported on progress toward meeting the plan's targets and continued to report on labor sector positions. These virtuosos had to convey accurate information to change the old preconceptions about the labor sector in Colombia and present an updated reality of the country to justify ratification of the trade agreement.

There are far more details and stories about the three amigos, and perhaps one day they will be written down. If you ever find yourself, as a reporting officer, wondering whether the cable you just drafted and put through the transformation of the clearance process would affect policy, just remember the three amigos: the South Korea, Colombia and Panama trade agreements.

Political and economic reporting *does* make a difference.

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*Ivan Rios is an economic and commercial affairs officer now serving in Windhoek. He joined the Foreign Service in 2005 and has served in Mexico City, Recife and Bogota. Prior to that, he held two limited non-career appointments, in Mexico City and São Paulo.*

## **Political Reporting: Then and Now— and Looking Ahead**

**By Kathryn Hoffman and Samuel C. Downing**  
Consulate General São Paulo

The world has changed in the three decades since Mongolian Airlines stewardesses in black fishnet stockings crossed my desk in Washington via a cable from the field. That cable described a bipolar world, stark and clear, where the gulf between what “we”

saw and what “they” saw was so great that the contrast yielded the deliciously absurd. In that world, State Department cables translated faraway events, large and small, obscure and evident, into understanding. Narration, local color, interpretation, analysis—the tools of the magazine writer, of William Shawn’s *New Yorker*—produced both excellence and excess. Now that world is gone, and those tools have fallen into disuse.

—Kathryn Hoffman

For better or worse, the Cold War world offered my colleague Kathryn and other American diplomats a natural narrative framework. They wrote to connect local events to the global narrative, and to show how they diverged, offering insights the D.C. desk jockeys could not. There is no clear picture window on the multipolar world we face as new diplomats.

If today’s cables sometimes lack context and interpretation, perhaps that is because today’s world is more complex, America’s role is harder to define—and crafting big-picture analysis feels like hubris. But if by oversimplifying we risk misinterpreting; by confronting complexity without analysis, we beget misunderstanding.

My history teacher, Ernest May, said when American officials bring to a “bewildered, confused, globalizing world a bewildering, confusing mélange of policy ideas—trade, the environment, growth,” we “strike a hundred notes, but make no melody.” He called for a concise, compelling new foreign policy narrative—a “Capital ‘P’ Policy” to win the world to a more meaningful idea of American leadership in a “world of diverse cultures on common human ground.”

Perhaps this call also hints at how State Department reporting sometimes comes up short, and how we can fix it. Reading a recent cable on a tiny country’s coming election, I found an unimpeachable primer on the rules of the race, but no hint of how the election might matter beyond those borders. In today’s interconnected world, surely it would. As Foreign Service officers, our job is to explain why.

—Samuel C. Downing

We could do with more, and more innovative, training in writing. We could do with less make-work and a streamlined process for mandatory annual reports. But we could also do with a little less modesty. We are America’s frontline foreign affairs professionals. Why not challenge ourselves to contribute to this new narrative?

When we neglect the difficult discipline of regular writing—telling ourselves that cables don’t matter, that an email will

do and that we should instead focus, relentlessly, on outreach and conference calls—we treat diplomacy like the kind of war that is won through action at any cost. We forget that writing is a tool for thinking, and that we will be better at our jobs if we better understand the challenges we are facing.

The core of diplomacy is the belief that an exchange of ideas can change the world. As American diplomats, our job is not merely to note our own doings, or even new facts, but to draft cables that interpret and help steer events. It is to help shape the world, through the power of our ideas.

—Kathryn Hoffman and Samuel C. Downing

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*Kathryn Hoffman is a political officer now serving as the deputy of the economic/political section of Consulate General São Paulo in Brazil. She has previously served in Port au Prince, Khartoum, Kabul, PRT Nuristan, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, as well as in Washington, D.C. She joined the U.S. government in 1987 and the Foreign Service in 2003.*

*Samuel C. Downing joined the Foreign Service in 2012 as a political officer. He is serving his first tour at Consulate General São Paulo.*

## The #Twitterfication of Political and Economic Reporting

By Travis Coberly

Consulate General Hyderabad

“Give me your analysis on the impact of the terrorist attack on the national elections in 140 characters or fewer.”

No, it hasn’t happened yet—but we are getting there. Instantaneous digital communication has created a paradox wherein our ability (and desire) to instantly transmit information has actually diminished our ability to process, understand and use that information. In the universe of political and economic reporting, this paradox has manifested itself in the call for “shorter” and “even shorter” cables.

Admittedly, I have only been with the department for five years and I don’t know how things were back in the day, when everybody had to trudge uphill through the snow both ways just to pound out a cable on the single Wang machine in the office. But even in my short tenure, I have noticed that the trend in reporting has been toward shorter and shorter cables. Nobody has time to read the vast amount of material being produced.

Just imagine if George Kennan sent his celebrated “Long Telegram” today. Instead of launching Kennan on a path of foreign policy fame, that cable would die an ignominious death by a thousand clicks of the delete button.

We’ve all been there—on both sides. As consumers, much

**As writers, we spend inordinate amounts of time crafting the perfect summary paragraph because we know that is all that is likely to be read, if it is read at all.**

—Travis Coberly

as we would like to read the latest cable on mud exports from Southern Elbonia, there are only so many hours in the day. As writers, we spend inordinate amounts of time crafting the perfect summary paragraph because we know that is all that is likely to be read, if it is read at all. Where is the logical endpoint?

Even more disconcerting: with the ease of digital communications and access to open sources and social media, will reporting officers be tweeted out of a job? If the beast can be happily fed on 140 characters at a time, why are we spending millions of dollars to station officers overseas when their reporting won't be read?

Is there a magic formula for producing useful, quality material without being a burden on an already overloaded audience? Can we, as reporting officers, successfully communicate our product without resorting to top-10 lists with pictures of cats?

As a concept, information overload has been around for a long time. Unfortunately for those of us in the Foreign Service, our capability of dealing with information is lagging far behind our ability to produce it. And things will only get worse.

We need to find technological and organizational solutions to the issue other than creating a classified Twitter system. We need to train entry-level officers to focus on quality over quantity, and senior-level officers to have the self-discipline to delegate and, yes, put down that BlackBerry once in a while. All of us need to change the ways we process and use information—beyond asking for shorter cables.

I would go on, but it appears I have already reached my word limit. ■

*Travis Coberly, an economic-cone officer, joined the Foreign Service in 2009. He has previously served in Merida and Hyderabad.*



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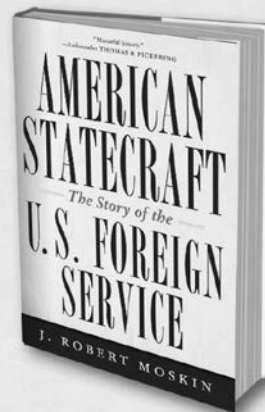
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# It Deserved an Oscar

**For those of us in the Foreign Service, “State Department File 649” is our cinematic showcase, William Lundigan our star, and Virginia Bruce our Best Actress.**

BY DONALD M. BISHOP

**A**h, the movies! They entertain. They make us cry, or cheer. They lead us down the paths of love, or fear. In front of the big screen our blood runs cold, or rushes in anticipation. Films introduce us to the regions of America and the countries of the world. They take us to places—prisons, courtrooms, airline cockpits, mines, ranches, submarines—we are unlikely ever to visit in real life.

Films also portray and introduce professions, giving visibility, dignity and, perhaps, adventure to many walks of life. What fisherman does not see something of himself in Spencer Tracy (in “Captains Courageous”) or George Clooney (in “The Perfect Storm”)? Robin Williams in “Dead Poets Society” and Richard Dreyfuss in “Mr. Holland’s Opus” surely make every teacher walk a little taller. What American can see a locomotive without think-

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*Donald M. Bishop, a retired Foreign Service public diplomacy officer, was a public affairs officer in Bangladesh, Nigeria and China, and twice served as a foreign policy adviser at the Pentagon. His last assignment was in Kabul.*

ing of Denzel Washington (“Unstoppable”) or Barbara Stanwyck (“Union Pacific”)? Tell lawyer jokes if you will, but who does not admire Gregory Peck in “To Kill a Mockingbird” and Jimmy Stewart in “Anatomy of a Murder”?

Once upon a time, Hollywood helped Americans get to know our diplomatic corps through magnetic, attractive and well-tailored actors like William Lundigan and Virginia Bruce. I refer, of course, to the stars of that classic film directed by Sam Newfield, “State Department File 649.” I’m still hoping that Denzel, Kevin, Keanu or Leonardo, paired with Sandra, Angelina, Renee or Lucy, will star in a similar diplomatic blockbuster.

Yes, “Argo” gave us a slice of embassy life and quiet courage, but the hero worked for the CIA. For those of us in the Foreign Service, “State Department File 649” is our cinematic showcase, William Lundigan our star, and Virginia Bruce our Best Actress.

This 1949 indie classic long lay in undeserved obscurity, until Alpha Video recently made it—original, unedited, unenhanced, unrestored—available in its rich, original CineColor on DVD and online. Netflix can send you the film, or you can find it on YouTube (or [publicdomainflicks.com](http://publicdomainflicks.com)). For those of you in Washington, there’s a copy at the Ralph Bunche Library.

Wherever you view it, “State Department 649” deserves pride of place at the next Foggy Bottom Film Festival. Let’s look, then, at

the motion picture, its casting and what makes it such an enduring portrait of the United States Foreign Service.

### Dramatis Personae

Playing our Foreign Service hero, Ken Seeley, was the handsome William Lundigan (1914-1975). While studying at Syracuse University Law School, he worked part-time as a radio announcer. A Universal Studios executive heard his voice, and signed him in 1937. His many pre-war screen credits included "Dodge City" (1939), "The Fighting 69th" (1940) and "The Sea Hawk" (1940). In "Santa Fe Trail," also released in 1940, he joined Ronald Reagan in the cast.

During the war, Lundigan enlisted and took his place behind, rather than in front of, the camera. He was a Marine Corps combat cameraman in the battles of Peleliu and Okinawa. Returning to Hollywood, he starred in "Pinky" (1949), "Love Nest" (1951), "The House on Telegraph Hill" (1951), "I'd Climb the Highest Mountain" (1951), "Inferno" (1953) and many other movies.

Like his friend Ronald Reagan, Lundigan leaned conservative in his politics. In the 1964 presidential campaign, he, Walter Brennan, Chill Wills and Efrem Zimbalist Jr. were a celebrity Hollywood foursome supporting the Republican candidate, Barry Goldwater, in his run against President Lyndon Johnson.

Playing opposite Lundigan in our Foreign Service blockbuster was Virginia Bruce (1910-1982). As the more famous star, she received top billing. She had already played the title role in the 1934 version of "Jane Eyre," and in 1936 she introduced the Cole Porter song, "I've Got You Under My Skin" in "Born to Dance," melting Jimmy Stewart's heart. Her long list of other film masterpieces includes "The Mighty Barnum" (1934), "The Great Ziegfeld" (1936) and "Pardon My Sarong" (1942), in which she starred with screen greats Abbott and Costello. Her performances in "Adventure in Washington" (1941), "Action in Arabia" (1944) and "Brazil" (1944) no doubt informed and shaped her work in "State Department File 649."

Other Hollywood deities appeared in the cast, as well. Jonathan Hale surely deserved a statuette for his best-ever portrayal of "the Director General." Philip Ahn and Richard Loo were unjustly neglected at the Oscars as Best Oriental Heavies. And it's inexplic-



able that the 1949 award for Actor with the Best Makeup did not go to the professional wrestler Henry "Bomber" Kulky, appearing as one of the Mongolian "bandits."

### Story Line

The film opens with a stirring narrative introduction, referring to the Foreign Service as "unsung and unhonored heroes;" "the Silent Service that works under the most difficult and dangerous conditions, which require tact, diplomacy and courage;" and "men and women who have given their health and their lives in obscurity;" often "tortured, maimed, stricken by disease, disaster and death." I thought that Navy submariners were "The Silent Service," but who am I to dispute such plain words of truth, so well deserved? From the platen of a scriptwriter, pure inspiration!

The film's nonpareil plot then follows Seeley (Lundigan) as he

## The entire staff of Consulate Mingu consists of a consul, a vice consul, a secretary and a Foreign Service National.

appears before the examination board, enters the Foreign Service, learns Chinese at the Foreign Service Institute and is assigned to a faraway consulate in postwar north China, “Mingu,” somewhere near Mongolia. In Washington, he meets Marge Waldon (Bruce), and they meet again when she visits Mingu as a rover.

There’s trouble up north—but from “bandits,” not communists. A local strongman, Marshal Yun Usu (Richard Loo) hopes for recognition by the government in Nanking, but our brave American diplomats know him to be a smuggler and a power-mad scoundrel. When he and his uniformed thugs take over the consulate and kill the loyal Chinese radio operator, Johnny Han (Victor Sen Yun, in one of his most memorable roles), Ken must use his Marine veteran’s knowledge of explosives and his Foreign Service courage to foil the warlord’s plan.

The film closes with Ken’s name being chiseled on the AFSA memorial wall at the State Department.

### Immortal Lines

Alas, none of the lines in Milton Raison’s boffo script have become as common as “Make my day” or “I’m shocked, shocked to find that gambling is going on here.” But members of the Foreign Service can well appreciate these quotes:

Consul Reither: “I think I’d better inform Washington.”

Ken: “I’m just a vice consul, a dime a dozen.”

Marge: “This happens to be a post where the clerical work is quite superior.”

Colonel Aram: “The marshal is very angry. He has broken your radio.”

Pay no attention to the crabby review on the Fandango website: “The characterizations are of the cardboard variety and the dialogue is straight out of Fu Manchu.”

### Not a Foreign Policy Primer

I suppose it was asking a lot of “State Department File 649” to portray Foreign Service heroism and the subtleties of postwar foreign policy. One commentator, Catherine Yronwode, sums up the challenge UCLA professor Yu-Shan Han, the film’s technical adviser, faced:

“How many modern viewers will understand the backdrop of what the script refers to as “the present crisis”—the fact that, in 1949, this meant the communist takeover of China, with Mao Tse-tung wresting control from the pro-American Generalis-

simo Chiang Kai-Shek? Communism might have made a credible opposing force to the heroic American men and women of the State Department, but the filmmakers apparently wanted to play it safe. Not knowing which way the cats were gonna jump in old Peiping, they inserted a stereotypical ‘Mongolian warlord’ figure as the opponent to America’s interests, a ‘Yellow Peril’ threat that was dated at the time and hasn’t aged well since.”

Promoting exports is one Foreign Service role that could not fit in the film, but there is a subtle message on behalf of American products. When the warlord comes, he arrives in a sleek, long trailer, obviously made in the USA. Its arrival—with cavalry escort, no less—never fails to evoke laughter among 21st-century viewers. No doubt that reaction expresses joy at the successful promotion of American vehicles in north China markets.

### The Enduring Spirit of the Foreign Service

Foreign Service viewers of the film may also erupt in laughter at the bulky tape players in the language course at FSI; gasp at the short list of names on the AFSA Memorial Plaque; and wonder what it was like to serve in one of the consulates in China where the entire staff consisted of a consul, a vice consul, a secretary and a Foreign Service National. All will surely notice the absence of female officers, along with the histrionic portrayal of an exhausted and stressed Foreign Service secretary (played by Barbara Woodell). As Consul Reither says, “I suspect she cries more than is good for her.” And needless to say, the Chinese roles are stereotyped.

Still, as the film comes to its conclusion, our brave vice consul confronts the warlord and expresses the spirit of the Foreign Service and America: “I am on the winning side, Marshal. I represent an ideology that recognizes the dignity of the individual, that holds all men to be free and equal under God. You represent murder, rape and slavery in the name of the law. You’re a mad dog that must and will be destroyed.”

Admittedly, these flag-waving lines now seem corny and anything but “diplomatic.” The whole tone is dated, oh so 1940s. Yet ... don’t murder, rape and slavery still stalk the world? Don’t “dignity of the individual” and “free and equal under God” still express the best American sentiments, no matter how imperfectly we advance them? Don’t we still believe in—and represent—these old values?

So here’s to you, Virginia! Here’s to you, Bill! And here’s to “State Department File 649!” Surely, Mr. Spielberg, this classic deserves a remake. ■



# WESTGATE: THE OTHER NAIROBI AND THE FUTURE OF KENYA

**In the shock and tragedy of the terrorist attack, the outpouring of charity from Kenyans toward all those affected demonstrated the power of the “Kenyan Spirit.”**

BY JOASH OMONDI

**T**he upscale Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, burst into international headlines on Sept. 21, 2013, when unidentified gunmen launched a three-day siege of the shopping center that left at least 67 dead and more than 175 wounded. All attackers were reportedly killed in the mass shooting, later claimed by the Somalia-based Islamist group Al-Shabaab.

While people around the world decried the seemingly inexorable spread of terrorism, Kenyans were forced to come to terms with its reality in a new way. During the two years leading up to “Westgate,” they preferred not to acknowledge the threat of fundamentalist forces in the region.

When Kenyan troops had invaded neighboring Somalia in October 2011, the public exhibited varied reactions. The process of troop deployment met with little resistance from any of the arms of government. A spate of kidnappings of aid workers on the

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*Joash Omondi is a journalism student at the United States International University in Nairobi.*

Kenyan border seemed to add fuel to the fire—though, in truth, the kidnappings may have been carried out by any of the cartels operating from inside Somalia, not necessarily al-Shabaab.

It was also often argued that the Kenyan troops were unseasoned and inexperienced, and that the military was eager to demonstrate otherwise. The approval and financial backing of Western allies had added momentum to the operation, which was named “Operation Linda Nchi,” Swahili for “protect the nation.” The official justification was that by invading Somalia we were protecting ourselves.

Some believed we had a responsibility to help stabilize our lawless neighbor. Others saw the invasion as a knee-jerk reaction to the kidnapping of a few tourists and foreign aid workers, an event that didn’t deserve a full-scale military assault. Though most Kenyans recognized that we were now “in it,” and there was no turning back, they were slow to grasp the implications.

Despite the deadly attacks by al-Shabaab in Kampala the previous year, which killed 74 and injured many others when a bomb went off in the middle of a crowd, few Kenyans anticipated such an eventuality on their soil. The last attack was the deadly 1998 al-Qaida bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, the worst terrorist attack in our country’s history.

It wasn't that we didn't know we were in the crosshairs; we just preferred not to speak about it.

### The Consequences of War Unfold

The war gradually made itself felt in Nairobi. The first wave of terrorist reprisals by al-Shabaab was a series of poorly executed grenade attacks that only killed one or two, but stirred palpable fear. After all, violent attacks once reserved for distant, tiny towns along the Somali border were now happening in the crown jewel of East Africa, the most modern and progressive city on this side of the continent.

Still, they were confined to impoverished and marginalized sections of the city—far from the rich and middle-class havens of the “other Nairobi” located west of Moi Avenue, the road cutting across the central business district that has become symbolic of the city’s social divide. East of Moi Avenue is characterized by congestion, dirtier streets and less safe neighborhoods; west of it are tall, modern buildings housing nongovernmental organizations and corporations from all over the world, glamorous night life, manicured lawns and, of course, shopping malls.

As the attacks increased over the next year, security measures increased. The guards (“askaris”) who once stood outside the doors of supermarkets and office buildings armed with little more than nightsticks and flashlights, added hand-held metal detectors to their arsenal. These were meant to deter the potential grenade attacker through early detection of the device, should it be hidden in a pocket or a handbag. Each person was to be screened before entering a building.

Because the number of people to be screened was very high and the procedure was cumbersome, it came to be seen as something of a formality meant only to give the impression that the organization was up to date on security. One could easily tell that the poorly paid security guards had no idea of what, exactly, they were looking for and were powerless to stop an attack in any case. (Kenyan security guards do not carry guns.)

Meanwhile, the attacks were becoming more sophisticated. In one, at a busy section of Moi Avenue, an improvised explosive device went off inside a building that housed a number of stalls where shopkeepers sold clothes and mobile phone handsets. Just

one person was killed, but the fact that it had occurred in the heart of the business district—closer to the “other Nairobi” than ever before—set off alarm bells.

As reflected in the Kenyan press, only good news came from Somalia: the terrorists had been decimated and were now on the run, reduced from a rebel faction to a mere insurgency, greatly weakened by the overwhelming force of our troops under the banner of the African Union. The reality of how close jihad had come to our doorstep never fully evaporated from the back of our minds. Yet life went on as if none of the attacks had ever happened. It wasn't that we didn't know we were in the crosshairs; we just preferred not to speak about it.

### The Bubble Bursts

On the afternoon of Sept. 21, 2013, however, that became impossible. When gunmen entered Westgate Mall brandishing heavy weapons and ammunition strapped across their chests, witnesses are reported to have thought it was an ordinary bank robbery. This idea was shattered when the terrorists began indiscriminately shooting in every direction, killing dozens and leaving dozens more injured in their path.

Suddenly, the words “Westgate” and “Nairobi” began trending on Twitter worldwide. Tweets could also be read from desperate survivors trapped inside the mall. Police and ambulance sirens could be heard across the city as emergency services rushed to the scene. The rest of the country watched the events unfold on their TV screens.

We had been warned of this day, but it all seemed unreal. We were used to a bomb or a grenade going off and seeing footage of the destruction afterwards. This time live television confronted us with the sounds of sporadic gunfire and victims, journalists, police and emergency medical technicians alike all shouting and ducking for cover.

Nairobi’s cosmopolitan nature became evident in news footage showing people of every race and ethnicity running out of the mall. This may be one of the reasons the event drew so much attention from international news agencies: the fact that along with Kenyans, people from their own countries may have been trapped in the mall.

Another reason could have been the scene itself. Westgate Mall, in the leafy, upscale suburb of Westlands (west of Moi Avenue, of course), is a popular spot for middle-class and rich Kenyans and also for the expatriate community of journalists, tourists and employees of the United Nations and numerous other international NGOs operating in Nairobi. In many ways, Westgate epitomizes the “other” Nairobi—an oasis of fine dining, coffee houses



Jeff Angote/Nation Media/Callo Images/Getty Images

On Sept. 21, 2013, unidentified gunmen entered Westgate Mall in Nairobi. Firing randomly and taking hostages, the terrorists laid siege to the upscale shopping center for three days, leaving at least 67 dead and more than 175 wounded. Above, officers of the Kenyan Defense Forces during a rescue operation on that day.

and world-class shopping, it offered all the excesses of being fortunate enough to be an affluent Nairobiian. Few imagined that this would be ground zero for jihad in Kenya.

As more news reached the international media, discussion of the devastating event took on an interesting twist. Besides calls for unity and love among Kenyans during this trying time, tweeters from the rest of the world also began expressing their surprise that there were any shopping malls in Kenya. Yet one would think that a city with four million residents, one of the largest stock exchanges in Africa and the headquarters of more than 100 major international companies and organizations, would have at least one shopping mall.

Indeed, the curiosity of this apparently “Western” environment seems to have contributed to the massive international news coverage. It struck home for some with familiar overtones of shootings in Aurora and Sandy Hook: senseless violence and young lives snatched away by gunfire. Westgate, however, was not a result of weak gun laws or introverted perpetrators who had slipped through the cracks of society. Our country was under attack.

### The Power of the Kenyan “Spirit”

After four days of a horribly botched operation by the Kenyan army to neutralize the attackers came to an end, the effects on our collective psyche were tremendous. Suddenly no one felt safe anymore. Rich, poor, black, white: when jihad came knocking, everyone was a target.

There was an enormous outpouring of love and support from Kenyans to all those who had been affected by the attack. People gave blood, food and clothing, anything that would take our minds off the news and counteract our feelings of powerlessness. Something called “the Kenyan Spirit” was seen in the acts of charity and giving. International journalists said that in all their years spent around the world, they had never been served tea and food by well-wishers at the scene of any event they were covering.

Everyone acknowledged that this was not a normal occurrence. Kenya is a country where the top 10 percent of the population earns 44 percent of the country’s income. The poverty rate is between 37 and 42 percent, and 40 percent of the working-age population is unemployed. Nowhere in the country are these inequalities more extreme than in the capital, where people from all over the country come in search of a better life. Two-thirds of Nairobians live in “informal settlements,” the shantytowns littered with miles and miles of tin shacks. These informal settlements occupy less than 5 percent of the total landmass.

When you hear about Nairobi being one of the top property markets in the world, you probably won’t be told that a majority of these developments cater exclusively to high-income earners, leaving the poor with no chance of ever owning a home. Impressive high-rise apartments overlook slums with some of the lowest living standards in the world. Executives and professionals walk past beggars and street families on their way to work.

For us, this is simply how it’s always been. Poverty is like a

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Suddenly no one felt safe anymore. Rich, poor, black, white: when jihad came knocking, everyone was a target.

physical feature: a mountain or a stream or a statue that you see every day, and don't look at twice because it is a fixture that never changes. Even in an Africa that is finally rising, with a middle class that is expanding, nothing is trickling down to those who have made the unfortunate mistake of being born poor.

This, it would seem, is a tragedy much vaster and deeper than Westgate. Yet it isn't treated with the urgency of a national disaster. Without downplaying the loss of life, I would suggest that the place where Kenyans responded with charity and togetherness is where we ought to go to bridge the gap between east and west of Moi Avenue.

Unfortunately, that doesn't look to be happening any time soon. Recent times have seen more attacks occur in churches and, even more often, against public service vehicles. With increasing public pressure and tourist numbers dwindling due to perennial travel advisories, the government's remedy has been a police campaign based on racial profiling of Somalis, both Kenyan and refugee. A worrying trend has also been the assassination of radical Muslim clerics in the coastal city of Mombasa, which many claim to be the work of either the police or Kenyan intelligence agencies.

A massive investment in the security apparatus has been promised as Kenyans desperately grasp at any sense of normalcy amid all the uncertainty. On the surface, though, nothing seems to have changed since the Westgate attack, and one is left with the sense that there is nothing to stop the next one. Meanwhile, the country continues to endure all the old problems that plagued it before the terror. The only difference is that words like "improvised explosive device" have been added to our vocabulary.

Terrorism is not the biggest threat facing Kenya. Perhaps the bigger problem is the complacency of a system that is now failing to combat it. Mobilizing the "Kenyan Spirit" to address terror won't necessarily head off another Westgate. It may, however, be the wellspring that sets us on the path to positive change. ■

**90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE**

**AFSA Hosts Gala Dinner Celebration**

On May 22, AFSA hosted a dinner celebrating 90 years of the U.S. Foreign Service and AFSA in the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room at the Department of State.

With NBC News Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent Andrea Mitchell serving as the master of ceremonies, the evening's speakers included Secretary of State John Kerry, former Senator Richard Lugar, Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) and former Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Among the 215 attendees were many current and retired members of the Foreign Service; Deputy Secretaries of State William Burns and Heather Higginbottom, and other senior officials of the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, Foreign Commercial Service and Foreign Agricultural Service.

The families of Anne Smedinghoff and Antoinette Tomasek, two AFSA members who recently died while on duty overseas, were in attendance.

The youngest (Stephanie Parenti) and oldest members of the Foreign Service (Joan Clark, Bruce Laingen and Al Lukens, each more senior than the Foreign Service



Former Senator Richard Lugar addresses guests at the gala dinner celebrating the 90th anniversary of the U.S. Foreign Service. In the audience, from left, Ambassador John Negroponte, Mary Beth Smedinghoff, former Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of State John F. Kerry.



Gala attendees included Paula Jakub (left), chief executive officer of the American Foreign Service Protective Association, and Joan Clark, a retired FSO. A former ambassador and winner of AFSA's 2007 Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award, Ms. Clark is one of the oldest members of the Foreign Service.

itself) were also present.

Owing to ticket sales, the dinner event broke even in terms of budget cost to AFSA.

As guests mingled prior to being seated for dinner, Virginia State Assembly Delegate Alfonso Lopez (49th

District) paid tribute to AFSA and the Foreign Service. He presented a framed copy of House Joint Resolution 406 passed by the State Assembly to AFSA officials, which commends AFSA and honors the Foreign Service on its 90th anniversary.

Opening the dinner program, AFSA President Robert J. Silverman welcomed the guests. "Ninety years makes us a young profession that has much to be proud of, and can build on its successes as we continue to expand and redefine ourselves," stated Silverman. He dedicated the evening to celebrating the Foreign Service's past—and, more importantly, to committing to ensure a professional, diverse and effective diplomatic service for America's future.

Secretary Kerry spoke of an evolving Foreign Service that

*Continued on page 54*

**CALENDAR**

July 9  
12-2 p.m.  
**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**

July 24  
2-3:30 p.m.  
**AFSA Book Notes: Seriously Not All Right**  
Ron Capps

August 4  
2-3:30 p.m.  
**AFSA Book Notes: More Than Just Diplomacy**  
George Gedda

August 6  
12-2 p.m.  
**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**

August 21  
2-3:30 p.m.  
**Writing in the Foreign Service: A Conversation with FSO and Author Matthew Palmer**

August 27  
3-4:30 p.m.  
**Adair Lecture at American University: Ambassador Thomas Miller**

September 1  
Labor Day:  
**AFSA Offices Closed**

September 3  
12-2 p.m.  
**AFSA Governing Board Meeting**





## Bidding and 360s

The 2015 summer assignments cycle has begun, so I want to highlight efforts to improve the assignments process—in particular, the 360-degree evaluation component.

Each year AFSA negotiates with the State Department the procedures governing the assignments season. AFSA's goal is to ensure a level playing field and maximize the efficiency and transparency of the process for the department, the individual employee and bidders as a whole.

All employees should have a fair shot at positions for which they are qualified. That is why the process of removing positions from the overall pool (i.e., linked assignments) is so troubling.

In addition to meeting the department's goal of "trying to get the right person, with the right skills, in the right position," it is important to consider the employee's own professional development and personal concerns in the assignments process.

Ideally, such a process would maximize overall employee utility, and do so in the most efficient manner possible. However, the decentralized decision-making system; the absence of a sophisticated matching program; and the lack of full information about employee preferences, performance and potential, all contribute to overall system inefficiencies.

Although regional bureaus will likely continue to control assignments, there is some interesting work being done on the development of a matching algorithm. Particularly at the entry level, where assignments are directed, such an approach could save time and prevent sub-optimal matches.

Several years ago, medical schools successfully introduced such an algorithm into the resident-residency matching process. A Foreign Service bidding algorithm could yield similarly productive results.

Even if such an algorithm were to exist, however, posts and bureaus would still suffer from incomplete information about an employee's performance and potential. Enter the 360-degree evaluation and several bureaus' attempts to address this information deficiency.

**CBAT—Another CA Innovation.** Last year, the Bureau of Consular Affairs piloted its Consular Bidding Assessment Tool for officers bidding on senior supervisory positions. This year it has refined the tool (CBAT 2.0) and expanded participation to all employees bidding on consular positions overseas (State 65852).

The Bureau of Human Resources built its own deputy chief of mission/principal officer assessment tool (called DAT), modeled on the first-generation CBAT, and is piloting it this year with

MC-level DCM/PO positions (State 65200).

Finally, the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs continue to refine their joint 360 bidder reference portal, relaunching it this year as the 360 Community Lobbying Center. The center further simplifies the process for candidates and their references for assignments in regional and functional bureaus that have opted to use the single system.

While AFSA would like to see a more holistic review of the assignments process to address employee and management concerns, we are encouraged by briefings on CBAT 2.0. CA decided to scrap the traditional 360 in favor of this improved tool. The beauty of CBAT is that both management and the employee receive the summarized feedback from the anonymous contributors.

In addition, the tool informs management's selection process and the employee's own professional development.

AFSA sees value in this professional development tool and has worked with CA to address concerns regarding access, data retention and use. In our view, access to the raw data and final product must be strictly limited, disposed of within the year (not retained) and only used in the assignments process. The CBAT report should not become part of the official

performance file; nor should it be used for other assessment purposes.

**DCM/PO Assessment Tool.** The Bureau of Human Resources' DCM/PO assessment tool is a good start. However, it lacks the CA tool's professional development value because the employee does not receive a copy of the results. AFSA hopes that DAT 2.0 will also include an employee feedback mechanism and, if found successful, will replace rather than supplement the existing 360 reference process.

**360 CLC.** NEA and SCA's effort to optimize the existing 360-degree evaluation process with a centralized reference portal is an improvement over the status quo. If you are going to request 360s, why not make them easier for all to collect? Moreover, it is exciting to see the intrabureau cooperation on this organic effort.

However, it is worth asking whether the 360 evaluation process is worth doing at all. Might there be an altogether better way of improving information about an employee's performance and potential, and providing the employee with constructive feedback?

In this regard, CBAT 2.0 looks promising. We will have to see how the expanded rollout goes. I'm thinking of bidding on a consular position just to test it out. ■

*Next month: Promoting Diversity in the Foreign Service*



Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA USAID VP.  
Contact: swayne@usaid.gov or (202) 712-1631

## Foreign Service Benefits Across Agencies: How Do State and USAID Compare?

The 2013-2015 AFSA Governing Board is committed to seeking parity in benefits for members of the Foreign Service across all five foreign affairs agencies.

As part of this effort, we are creating a benefits comparison document that includes information on benefits and policies from the different agencies to illustrate the disparities. It will be

next steps will be to monetize what it would cost to begin closing these gaps, and push for having USAID budget submissions reflect these needs.

Thanks to all of you who responded to my request to share your experiences with inequality in Foreign Service benefits and policies between USAID and the State Department. Utilizing real examples has always

**As part of this effort, we are creating a benefits comparison document that includes information on benefits and policies from the different agencies to illustrate the disparities.**

a “living” document, including testimonials from FS members, and will be posted on the AFSA website for use as a tool to advocate for equality and to track progress in achieving the goal.

The comparison of State and USAID, as shown in the accompanying chart, is a first step. For space reasons, the chart does not include the personal commentary and testimonials that are important for making our case. Those “live” in the online document at [afsa.org/benefitschart](http://afsa.org/benefitschart).

The entire package—chart and testimonials—has been shared with USAID’s Office of Human Resources. The

been the most effective way of telling the USAID story; I believe that documenting these inequalities and their effects on individual employees is the best way to advocate for change.

As this is meant to be a living document, please continue to send any comments to [swayne@usaid.gov](mailto:swayne@usaid.gov). The more accurate and complete this chart, the more effective it will be. It is already advancing the cause by generating conversation and gaining management attention and support.

Future articles will take a deeper dive into specific issues and track progress in the quest for equality. ■

Benefits Comparison Chart 2014

	USAID	State
FSI Day Care Services	NO	YES
FSI Spousal Language Training/Area Studies	Partial (if funds available)	Yes (if space available)
Oakwood Suites Program/Washington Housing During Training	NO	YES
Per Diem for Training Between Assignments in Washington (gradually reduced)	100% first 30 days plus gradual decrease	100% first 60 days plus gradual decrease
Per Diem for Eligible New Hires (outside 50 mile distance from Washington, D.C.)	NO	YES
Salary	Lower Entry Salary	Higher Entry Salary
Language Incentive Program	Partial	YES
Foreign Language, Leadership and Professional Training Classes (employees and EFM's)	Partial	YES
Difficult-to-Staff Incentive Differential (DSID)	NO	YES
Diplomatic Plates for Vehicles	Partial	YES
Ease of Post Transfer	Post-to-Post Inconsistencies	Centralized
Washington Positions in Regard to Promotion	Can be detrimental	Importance is recognized and rewarded
EFM Employment	PSC Process	State is able to use their equivalent of operating funds to hire EFM's
USAA	NO	YES

## AFSA Welcomes New Staff Members



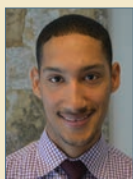
**Janice Weiner** has joined AFSA's advocacy department as our new Professional Issues and Policy Adviser. She comes to AFSA after a 26-year career at the State Department. As a Foreign Service officer, Janice bookmarked her overseas career in Germany: she began in East

Berlin when the Berlin Wall fell, and her final overseas assignment was as consul general in Düsseldorf. In between, she served two tours in Ankara and had postings in Warsaw, Brussels, Toronto and Mexico City, as well as stints on the German desk and in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs. She won AFSA's Rivkin Award for constructive dissent in 1995 for her work as human rights officer in Ankara. Originally from Iowa, Janice is a graduate of Princeton University and Stanford Law School. She has two daughters and a varying number of dogs.



**Debra Blome** is our new Associate Editor, one of whose tasks will be editing AFSA News. Debbie is an experienced magazine journalist, writer and editor who also brings the Eligible Family Member perspective to the *Journal*. She has lived in Riyadh, Amman, Tunis, Kuwait and

Cairo. Debbie worked for a number of years as an editor for the Open Source Center, and more recently as senior project editor at the American University in Cairo Press. She has also served in a variety of embassy positions, including as an assistant Community Liaison Office coordinator. A University of Michigan graduate, Debbie also holds an MSJ from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.



**Lindsey K. Botts** is the new Executive Assistant and Office Manager at AFSA's State Department Labor Management office.

Lindsey is a Washington, D.C., native and received his undergraduate degree in advertising and marketing communications at the Fashion Institute of Technology. While at FIT he interned at several fashion magazines, including *Esquire*, *Elle* and *Vogue*. Lindsey then pursued a master's program in journalism at Central Saint Martin's University of the Arts in London. During his three years there, he traveled extensively throughout Europe. ■

## AFSA National High School Essay Contest Winner

Nitisha Baronia  
Dougherty Valley High School  
San Ramon, California

**Runner-Up**  
Angelia Miranda  
Homeschooled  
Kent, Washington

Coverage of Nitisha's trip to Washington, D.C., and her meeting with Secretary Kerry will appear in a future issue of AFSA News.

## Two New Members Join AFSA's Governing Board

At its June 4 meeting, the AFSA Governing Board appointed two candidates to fill existing vacancies. AFSA is very pleased to welcome Ronnie Catipon and Ronita Macklin to the board. Both are State Department representatives.

**Ronnie Catipon** is a Diplomatic Security Agent with 17 years of Foreign Service experience. He has just finished an assignment as the Senior Regional Security Officer at Embassy The Hague. Previous assignments include Manila, Tbilisi, Kyiv and two tours in Kabul. He also served on Secretary Madeleine Albright's security detail. Ronnie is married to a former FSO, and also brings years of experience as an EFM prior to joining the Foreign Service.

**Ronita Macklin** is an Office Management Specialist who joined the Foreign Service in 2006. She has served in Conakry and Kabul as well as the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels. She is currently a Post Management Officer in the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau Executive Office. Ronita also served as the AFSA post representative in Conakry, and worked in the House of Representatives and on political campaigns before entering the Foreign Service.

Ronnie and Ronita replace outgoing State Representatives Michael D. Thomas and E. Alex Copher. AFSA thanks Michael and Alex for their stalwart service on the Governing Board. ■



## AFSA Launches Speaker Partnership with USC

On April 23, AFSA launched a new Speaker Partnership with the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Robert English, director of SIR, opened the event, warmly thanking AFSA for developing this important partnership. He expressed USC's



Above, Ambassador Lynn Pascoe speaking at the USC School of International Relations. Discussions continued after the talk among (left to right) Prof. Jonathan Aronson, Robert English, Amb. Pascoe and students.

desire to expand the new relationship over the long term.

Keynoting the event was Ambassador Lynn Pascoe, who recently served as United Nations undersecretary general for political affairs, overseeing all conflict planning, and before that spent several decades focused on U.S. security policy toward Asia.

His talk, "American Diplomacy and Conflict in Asia—Lessons and Opportunities,"

was attended by some 150 faculty and students from various USC departments. They asked numerous thoughtful questions about the Foreign Service.

Amb. Pascoe emphasized that the United States, working through and with the United Nations, must continue to build strong shared values with Asian allies, and assist local nongovernmental organizations with effective

*Continued on page 65*

## 2014 AFSA Award Winners

### Charles Stuart Kennedy Jr.

Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy

### Constructive Dissent Awards

#### Ambassador Jonathan Addleton

Christian A. Herter Award for a Senior Foreign Service Officer

#### David Holmes

William R. Rivkin Award for a Mid-Level FSO

#### William O'Bryan

W. Averell Harriman Award for an Entry-Level FSO

#### Nick Pietrowicz

F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award for a Foreign Service Specialist

### Exemplary Performance Awards

#### Carol K. Backman

Nelson B. Delavan Award for a Foreign Service Office Management Specialist

#### Mary Kay Cunningham

M. Juanita Guess Award for a Community Liaison Officer

#### Kari Osborne

Avis Bohlen Award for a Foreign Service Family Member

**Full coverage of AFSA's June 18 awards ceremony, profiles of the winners and related articles will appear in the September issue of The Foreign Service Journal.**



## ISSUE BRIEF

# Evolution of the Chief-of-Mission Guidelines

BY CHARLES A. RAY

In August 2013, a month after AFSA's new Governing Board took office, AFSA President Robert J. Silverman asked me to chair a working group that would formulate a set of guidelines for successful performance by chiefs of mission.

Having served twice as an ambassador during my three-decade Foreign Service career, I know just how vital it is to ensure that each chief of mission is well-qualified to serve as the president's representative to a foreign government or multilateral institution. As

the face and voice of the United States, he or she sets the tone for operations within the mission.

Indeed, it is not going too far to say that a chief of mission's performance can often spell the difference between success and failure of U.S. policy in the country of assignment, and can affect bilateral and regional relations long after the incumbent has left post.

With that in mind, our goal was to produce a resource to inform the process of selecting the leaders of our diplomatic missions around the world. Earlier this year, after vigorous debate, the AFSA Governing Board formally adopted the document our working group produced.

Given the sensitivity of the subject, and the magnitude of the task, it is understandable that not every AFSA member agrees with all our recommendations. (Indeed, the same could be said of our committee, and of the AFSA Governing Board.) The purpose of this Issue Brief is to explain the process we followed, in hopes of dispelling any confusion or misconceptions.

### The Role of Leadership

To facilitate the development of guidelines that would be widely accepted by everyone involved in the selection process, our working group consisted of retired ambassadors from the career Foreign Service, as well as non-career appointees from

both major political parties. We also reached out to people outside the working group, many of whose suggestions influenced the final document. (You'll find the full text on AFSA's website; or see the article about the COM Guidelines in the April issue of *The Foreign Service Journal*.)

We all agreed that keeping the number of criteria to three or four made for a document that would be relatively easy to understand and apply in assessing COM nominees. The challenge was to agree on that list of criteria, and decide whether to prioritize any of them.

In addition, the guidelines needed to be relatively simple, and crafted so they could be used to assess any nominee, regardless of background.

My research for preparing the initial draft used the Foreign Service Act of 1980 as its foundation. However, it turned out that a trait I view as essential to success is not listed there; nor has it ever been formally considered in the ambassadorial selection process. That is leadership ability. To be sure, that skill is mentioned in some operational documents, but nowhere could I find any indication that it has been part of the formal review process for potential nominees.

In addition to managing bilateral relations, the COM must lead the country team, ensure the security of mission staff, and manage the mission's budget and other resources. While it is true that there are professionals within each diplomatic mission to deal with these issues, the ultimate responsibility for proper management rests with the person at the top. That, then, became the central thesis of my draft.

### Achieving Consensus

Bringing 10 former chiefs of mission together was the easy part of the job. Getting that many strong-willed, experienced

**Our goal was to produce a resource to inform the process of selecting the leaders of our diplomatic missions around the world.**

*Charles A. Ray retired from the Foreign Service in 2012 after a 30-year career that included ambassadorships to Cambodia and Zimbabwe. Ambassador Ray also served as deputy assistant secretary of Defense for prisoners of war/missing personnel affairs, deputy chief of mission in Freetown and consul general in Ho Chi Minh City, among many other assignments. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Ambassador Ray spent 20 years in the U.S. Army. He is the outgoing chair of AFSA's Professionalism and Ethics Committee, and does freelance writing and speaking.*

individuals to reach consensus on what constitutes a good set of performance guidelines was a far more difficult task.

Most of the working group's activity was conducted via email for the first few months. Drafts, redrafts and comments flew back and forth each day as the 10 of us wrestled with our sometimes strongly diverging views, based on our unique experiences as ambassadors.

Since many of the arguments were more about process than substance, the outstanding drafting skills of Janice Weiner, a recently retired FSO and AFSA staff member who served as the working group secretary, enabled us to reconcile our differences.

During a face-to-face meeting at AFSA headquarters in December 2013, we formally adopted the guidelines. The basis of the document we forwarded to the AFSA Governing Board for approval drew mainly on the following sources: the Foreign Service Act of 1980; State Department Office of the Inspector General criteria on qualities of COMs; and our individual experiences.

The four guidelines for successful performance as a COM that we identified were:

- Leadership and interpersonal skills
- Understanding of high-level policy and key U.S. interests and values in the host country
- Management skills
- Understanding of the host country and international affairs, and ability to promote U.S. interests.

These four guidelines are easily understood, and can be used to assess career and non-career nominees alike, without regard to the background of the individual.

I continue to believe that of these four criteria, leadership is the most critical. But after intense discussion, we came to the consensus that all are equally important. After all, a successful COM has to be knowledgeable about policy issues and have the leadership skills that enable him or her to apply that knowledge effectively.

### Recognizing Reality

Our project was controversial from the beginning. In particular, some critics object to the involvement of non-career individuals in the process.

I understand this view, given AFSA's historically strong position on non-career ambassadors, but still see it as misguided in this context. While I personally believe that the vast majority of ambassadorial positions should go to qualified, proven pro-

fessional FSOs, from the beginning of the republic presidents have nominated people from the private sector for ambassadorial positions.

An even stronger justification for at least some non-career appointments is found in Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of the United States, which says in part: "He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for..."

The members of our working group never viewed recognition of this reality as contradicting AFSA's stand in favor of selecting career FSOs as ambassadors. Moreover, we believe COM positions are far too important to ignore the need for all appointees, regardless of background, to be fully qualified to successfully carry out the nation's business.

After giving serious consideration to those who advocated that the COM Guidelines demand that only career diplomats be selected for service as chief of mission, our working group decided that we should not let the perfect become the enemy of the good. We also remain convinced that for the document to have any chance of acceptance by all stakeholders in the COM nomination process, it had to be relatively simple and universally applicable, and deal with the world as it is.

### Spreading the Word

Once the AFSA Governing Board approved the document, we shared it with senior managers in the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other foreign affairs agencies. We then presented it to key members and staffers in Congress, as well as the White House personnel office. We also shared it with other foreign affairs organizations, such as the American Academy of Diplomacy, the Association of Black American Ambassadors and the Council of American Ambassadors. The general reaction to the guidelines from all these recipients was agreement in principle, and in some cases strong support.

When we shared the guidelines with the media, there followed a veritable blizzard of press coverage. This was mostly positive, though some expressed skepticism about how effective the guidelines would be in ensuring successful

**We believe COM positions are far too important to ignore the need for all appointees, regardless of background, to be fully qualified.**

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## AFSA NEWS

### The guidelines are a first step in enhancing the professionalism of the practice of American diplomacy.

performance. Our intent at the outset of the project was to launch it publicly at a time when there were few if any pending nominations, in the hope that it wouldn't be seen as politically motivated or aimed at any individuals.

As luck would have it, however, several ambassadorial nominations drew intense negative media attention in January, and our project got caught up in that flurry of coverage. The plus side, I suppose, is that it ensured our guidelines received more public attention than they might have in a less volatile environment.

### Why Not the Best?

The Guidelines for Successful Performance as a Chief of Mission were never designed as a cure for every flaw in the ambassadorial nomination process. Nor were they intended to replace existing laws and regulations. They were meant to supplement existing rules, and to be easy to understand and apply to the process of assessing whether those selected to be the president's representatives abroad are truly up to the job.

As such, the guidelines are a first step in enhancing the professionalism of the practice of American diplomacy. We live in a complex world that is in many ways even more dangerous than the age of nuclear standoff that characterized the Cold War. If the United States is to thrive in the 21st century, it is imperative that we effectively use every available instrument of national power, including diplomacy. Toward that end, chiefs of mission, as the leaders of our overseas diplomatic missions, are key to their effective functioning.

AFSA is under no illusions that the document will solve all of the problems associated with the COM selection process. Its adoption would, however, bring a greater degree of transparency and consistency to the process, ensuring that all nominees are judged according to a common set of standards.

No document, no matter how well-intended, can guarantee success. But, the criteria set out in these guidelines are good determinants of effective performance. They are based upon the collective experiences of the 10 members of the working group, all of whom have served successfully as ambassadors—several at more than one post, and in some of our most challenging overseas environments.

Still, any set of guidelines can only be effective if those involved in the ambassadorial selection process commit to using them as a uniform set of standards against which to assess nominees. It remains our hope that will turn out to be the case. ■

## Expert on Professions Kicks Off New AFSA Forum

On May 29, AFSA welcomed Don Snider, a senior fellow in the Center for the Army Profession and Ethics at West Point and an adjunct research professor at the U.S. Army War College, for a presentation on the concept of what constitutes a profession and how that might inform the professional Foreign Service and the Department of State.

Snider's presentation marked the launch of a new lecture series at AFSA, the Expert Speakers Forum. The new forum has been established in the spirit of the 90th anniversary of the Rogers Act.

To promote the Foreign Service as a profession, AFSA will bring experts on professionalism, ethics and leadership to speak. The events will all be shared online through the AFSA website for those who cannot make it to AFSA headquarters.

Through a slide presentation and subsequent question-and-answer session, Mr. Snider gave an excellent overview of the considerable research and implementation efforts undertaken to further the U.S. Army as a profession.

Much of this work was performed at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the seat of the Army's Center for the Army Profession and Ethics, known as CAPE.



Don Snider speaking at AFSA on May 29. Below, a slide from his presentation lists the differences between a profession and a bureaucracy.

### What Makes a Profession?

Snider pointed out that there are certain essentials to every profession. These include a moral foundation, self-discipline within the profession, the ability to utilize abstract knowledge in an expert manner and a career-long education system. He mentioned how he thought some of the Army's work might inform other U.S. government organizations, including the Foreign Service and the Department of State.

Snider addressed the differences between a profession and a bureaucracy, and why we should care about those differences. He explained that professions offer unique benefits that

<i>Profession vs. Bureaucracy</i>	
▪ Expert knowledge	vs. Non-expert knowledge
▪ Accepts life-long learning	vs. "You develop me"
▪ New situations	vs. Routine situations
▪ "Practice" by humans	vs. Work done by (all)
▪ Unlimited personal liability	vs. Little personal liability
▪ Invests in humans first	vs. SOPs; soft/hard ware
▪ Measure - effectiveness	vs. Efficiency
▪ Trust relationship w/client	vs. Public market
▪ Granted some autonomy	vs. Closely supervised
▪ Develops worldview	vs. None inherent
▪ Maintain ethos, self-policed	vs. Externally imposed
▪ Intrinsic motivations	vs. Extrinsic motivations
▪ A life-long "calling"	vs. A job

bureaucratic organizations do not. "Professions provide a vital service to the society which it cannot provide for itself, but must have to flourish," Snider said. "They are therefore granted relative autonomy in the application of their art and expertise."

A dynamic Q-and-A ses-

sion followed his presentation. To view Mr. Snider's remarks and the discussion online, please visit [www.afsa.org/video](http://www.afsa.org/video). The slides used during the event are available upon request; please email [events@afsa.org](mailto:events@afsa.org) for a copy.

—Cecilia Daizovi,  
Communications Intern



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PHOTOS 2-10 BY JOAQUIN SOSA/AFSA

*Gala continued from page 45*

has come a long way—from, for example, not having a single female chief of mission to more than 40 today. He recalled that his father, FSO Richard Kerry, had worked in the 1950s for Clifton Wharton—who, at the time, was the only African-American FSO. The Secretary declared that the diversity of the United States is what makes our nation strong, and it is increasingly reflected in the Foreign Service.

Sec. Kerry also emphasized that the Foreign Service is not only important in maintaining diplomatic relations with other countries,

but in promoting American ideals admired around the world. “We are working—all of us together—to try to create order where there is none, to bring stability out of chaos, to fix what is broken and to make this complicated world just a little bit less complicated and a lot more free. And that’s really worth the effort. Thank you all for being part of it,” said Kerry.

Sen. Lugar, a former member and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the winner of AFSA’s 2005 Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award, conveyed his respect

for AFSA and deep regard for the Foreign Service.

Offering a lively account of his personal experience working with members of the Foreign Service in Ukraine in 2004, Sen. Lugar praised the “exemplary” performance of Ambassador John Herbst during the historic elections held at that time.

Rep. Van Hollen, whose father spent 25 years in the Foreign Service, shared his admiration for American diplomats. “Growing up in the Foreign Service family gives you great appreciation for the energy, the talent, the creativity and the dedication

that all of our Foreign Service members and their families bring to the job,” he said, and underscored the importance of ensuring adequate resources for diplomacy.

“It’s smarter to focus on peace than fighting wars around the world,” Van Hollen stated. His support for American diplomats’ ability to get out of embassy compounds and engage foreign publics in a safe manner drew applause.

Van Hollen also expressed gratitude for the work of Sec. Kerry and former Sec. Powell. But he noted that their diplomatic accomplishments would not have been



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possible had it not been for the devoted FS members who work tirelessly to put American foreign policy into practice.

Colin Powell concluded the program by addressing the importance of integrating America with the rest of the world, specifically through immigration. "Immigration reform has got to be one of our highest priorities because it's keeping this country alive," said Powell, who believes cultural and racial diversity is the most unique aspect of the United States. The United States is still an inspiration to the entire

world, he said, attributing that image to the work that the men and women of the Foreign Service have done over the past 90 years.

Sec. Powell also stated that it is easy for government officials to forget that they work to serve everyday Americans, but that no one is more aware of the true purpose of their tasks than the members of the U.S. Foreign Service. "You all have done that in such a magnificent way," he told the FS members in the audience. ■

—*Editorial Intern Aishwarya Raje and Managing Editor Susan B. Maitra*

1) From left, AFSA Deputy Director for Member Benefits and Events Kristy Pomes, AFSA President Robert J. Silverman, Representative Chris Van Holler (D-Md.), Secretary of State John F. Kerry, former Senator Richard Lugar, NBC News Chief Foreign Correspondent Andrea Mitchell, AFSA Governing Board Member Lillian Wahl-Tuco, AFSA State VP Matthew Asada and AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston.  
 (2) Ambassador Ryan Crocker and his wife, Christine, with Ambassador Bruce Laingen.  
 (3) FSJ Editorial Board Chairman Jim DeHart and Lisa DeHart.  
 (4) Jean and F. Allen "Tex" Harris, with Senator Lugar.  
 (5) Former Secretary of State Colin Powell.  
 (6) Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman;

Peggy Cifrino, principal assistant to former Secretary of State Colin Powell; and Ambassador Ronald Neumann.

(7) AFSA Governing Board Member Clayton Bond and former Director General Ruth A. Davis.

(8) Lillian Wahl-Tuco and FSO Stephanie Parenti, the youngest member of the Foreign Service.

(9) Virginia State Assembly Delegate Alfonso Lopez (49th District), fourth from left, presents House Joint Resolution 406 to AFSA officials.

From left, Foreign Agricultural Service VP David Mergen, Foreign Commercial Service VP Steve Morrison, Advocacy Director Javier Cuebas, Alfonso Lopez, Ian Houston, Robert Silverman, Matthew Asada and USAID VP Sharon Wayne.

(10) At left, Ambassador William Harrop and his wife, Ann, with Ted Wilkinson and his wife, Zenia.

## Ambassador Thomas J. Miller to Deliver Adair Lecture

Ambassador Thomas J. Miller will deliver the 8th annual Adair Memorial Lecture on U.S. Diplomacy on Wednesday, Aug. 27, at 3 p.m. at American University's Kaye Memorial Chapel. His topic will be "The Link Between Diplomacy and Development."

The public is welcome to attend this special event, which traditionally kicks off the fall semester at A.U.'s School of International Service.

Amb. Miller is president and CEO of International Executive Service Corps, a nonprofit that focuses on fostering prosperity and stability through private enterprise in more than 130 countries around the world.

During a distinguished 29-year career at the State Department, the three-time ambassador served overseas in Thailand, Greece (three times) and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and held important assignments in Washington, D.C.

In 2001, President George W. Bush named Miller U.S. ambassador to Greece, where he focused on counterterrorism, serving through 2004. Earlier, President William Clinton had appointed him ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina (1999-2001) and Special Cyprus Coordinator at the rank of ambassador (1997-1999).

The Adair Lecture series is the result of a partnership between AFSA and A.U.'s School of International Service. The Marshall P. Adair Family has generously created a perpetual endowment to sustain the series, named in honor of their parents, Caroline and Ambassador Charles Adair.

## AFSA Bestows the 2014 Kennan Strategic Writing Award

At a June 6 ceremony on the campus of the National War College at Fort McNair, AFSA President Robert Silverman and Commandant Brigadier General Tom Cosentino announced this year's winner of the George F. Kennan Strategic Writing Award.

AFSA has long sponsored this award, which recognizes the best paper written by a State Department employee at the War College.

This year's winner is Foreign Service Officer Mark Libby, who was nominated for this honor for his essay, "Hedging, Cooperation and Prestige: British and French Nuclear Deterrence (How We Can Stop Worrying & Learn to Love These Bombs)," written as part of a course focused on European and transatlantic security issues.

Libby, who lived and studied in France, has always been intrigued by French



FSO Mark Libby, center, receiving the 2014 George F. Kennan Strategic Writing Award. At left is AFSA President Robert J. Silverman; Commandant Brigadier General Tom Cosentino is at right.

### Libby, who lived and studied in France, has always been intrigued by French nuclear policy.

nuclear policy. This class at the National War College, he said, gave him the perfect opportunity to finally explore that interest in depth. "More recently, having worked with European security issues, I

found my interest in France and French nuclear policy rekindled," he said.

A political officer, Libby's overseas assignments have included tours in Warsaw, Nassau, Nicosia and, most recently,

Baghdad, where he served as political counselor. He has also had temporary duty assignments in Minsk, Riga and Basrah.

His Washington, D.C., assignments have included tours as a watchstander in the State Department Operations Center, line officer on the Secretariat Staff under Secretary of State Colin Powell, deputy director in the Office of Central European Affairs, deputy director and

crisis management coordinator in the Operations Center, and director of the Secretariat Staff under Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In July, he will begin his next assignment as director of orientation at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute.

Mr. Libby has a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and a Certificat d'Etudes Politiques from the Institut des Etudes Politiques ("Sciences-Po") in Paris. He is fluent in Polish and French, and has a working knowledge of Russian, Turkish and German.

The winner of the Kennan Award receives a certificate and a prize of \$250, which is intended for the purchase of scholarly books. To learn more about the award, please go to [www.afsa.org/kennan](http://www.afsa.org/kennan). ■

—Evan Bulman, Awards and Outreach Intern

### AFSA Holds First Post Rep Webinar

On April 29, AFSA hosted its first webinar with AFSA post representatives from around the world. President Robert J. Silverman joined State Vice President Matthew Asada to provide an overview of labor-management relations, post representative responsibilities, and current AFSA labor management and congressional priorities. A lively discussion followed.



ELIZABETH LEE



## AFSA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## Presenting the 2014 AFSA Merit Award Winners

On May 2, the American Foreign Service Association Scholarship Fund held its annual merit awards ceremony to announce the recipients of the 2014 AFSA Merit Awards.

This year, \$48,500 was bestowed on 27 Foreign Service high school seniors for their outstanding achievements in academics and art. Each winner received \$2,500, and honorable mentions received \$750 to \$1,000. (See pp. 58-59 for a listing of the winners.)

Academic merit judges evaluated 78 students in the following areas: grade point average; standardized test scores; high-level courses taken; a Foreign Service-themed essay; student activities and community service; and special circumstances, if any. The judges selected 13 winners, 10 honorable mentions, one Best Essay (see p. 60) and one Community Service winner.

The 16 art merit award applicants submitted work in one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, performing arts or creative writing. The applicants were evaluated on the quality and creativity of their work, dedication to their artistic pursuit and an essay.

This year's art merit winner, Rebecca Sarfati, was chosen for her poem, "Regression," and short story,



The local winners of the 2014 merit awards at the May 2 ceremony at AFSA. Back row: Benjamin "Phoenix" Morrison, Frank Keat, Timothy Kostelancik. Front row: Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn, chair of the AFSA Scholarship Committee; Grace Bachman; Olivia Sullivan; Maya Yu; and AFSA President Robert J. Silverman.

"Red." Alison Dominguez and Copeland Smith both won honorable mention for their visual arts submissions.

The AFSA Scholarship Program would also like to recognize its merit award named donors. To date, nine merit scholarships have been established by individuals or organizations.

These awards, bestowed on the highest-scoring students, are: the John and Priscilla Becker Family Award, the Turner C. Cameron Jr. Memorial Award, the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program Award (two awards), the Embassy Risk Management Award, the John C. and Nancy S. Leary Memorial Award, the

Joanna and Robert Martin Award (two awards), and the Donald S. Spigler Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Award.

In addition to the merit awards program, 68 students received need-based, financial aid scholarships for undergraduate education. AFSA bestowed more than \$184,000 during the 2013-2014 school year, with awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

This amount will increase to \$3,000 to \$5,000 for the 2014-15 school year. The recipients of the 2013-2014 financial aid scholarships can be found on the Scholarship website at: [www.afsa.org/scholar](http://www.afsa.org/scholar). The 2014-2015 finan-

cial aid scholarship recipients will be announced in August.

As of this fall, the total aid awarded by the AFSA Scholarship Program to members' children will increase to \$245,000 annually. This is in large part due to the continued and generous support of AFSA members and individuals throughout the Foreign Service community.

For more information on the merit awards, applying for this benefit of AFSA membership or contributing to the AFSA Scholarship Fund, visit [www.afsa.org/scholar](http://www.afsa.org/scholar) or contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504 or [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org).

—Jonathan Crawford,  
Scholarship Assistant

## AFSA Merit Award Winners

**1. Grace Bachman** – daughter of Brian Bachman (State) and Jan Fisher-Bachman; graduating from Chantilly High School, Chantilly, Va.; attending Endicott College, majoring in business. Recognized as the Embassy Risk Management Scholar.

**2. Sarah Carlson** – daughter of Mark Carlson (State) and Melinda Carlson; graduating from Grace International School in Chiang Mai, Thailand; attending the Wheaton College, majoring in education. Recognized as the John C. and Nancy S. Leary Memorial Scholar.

**3. Greer Christensen-Gibbons** – daughter of Karen Christensen (State) and Thomas Gibbons (State); graduating from the John F. Kennedy School in Berlin, Germany; attending Brown University, majoring in history.

**4. Amelia Goldrup** – daughter of Stephen Goldrup (State) and Nicole Price; graduating from the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India; attending Princeton University, majoring in mathematics.

**5. Carsten Haas** – son of Peter Haas (State) and Amy Haas; graduating from the American School of Bombay in Mumbai, India; attending Macalester College with an undeclared major.

**6. Timothy Kostelancik** – son of David Kostelancik (State) and Patricia Kostelancik (State); graduating from Langley High School in McLean, Va.; attending Middlebury College, majoring in Russian and international & global studies. Recognized as the Donald S. Spigler Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholar.

**7. Natalie Mango** – daughter of David Mango (State) and Jennifer Mango; graduating from the American International School in Vienna, Austria; attending Leiden University College in the Netherlands with an undeclared major. Recognized as the Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.

**8. Connor McKinney** – son of Christopher McKinney (State) and Tracy McKinney; graduating from George Washington High School in Charleston, W. Va.; attending the University of California at Berkeley, majoring in political science. Recognized as the Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.

**9. Benjamin “Phoenix” Morrison** – son of Stephen Morrison (FCS) and Carol Fishback; graduating from St. Anselm’s Abbey School in Washington, D.C.; attending Vassar College, majoring in physics. Recognized as the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholar.

**10. Morgan Pratt** – son of Adrian Pratt (State) and Margaret Pratt; graduating from the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India; attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, N.C., majoring in mathematics. Recognized as the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program Scholar.

**11. Rebecca Sarfati** – daughter of Linda Daetwyler (State) and Mark Sarfati; graduating from the Seoul Foreign School in Seoul, South Korea; attending Brown University, majoring in law. Recognized as the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program Scholar and the Art Merit Winner for her creative writing submission, which included a poem, “Regression,” and short story, “Red.”



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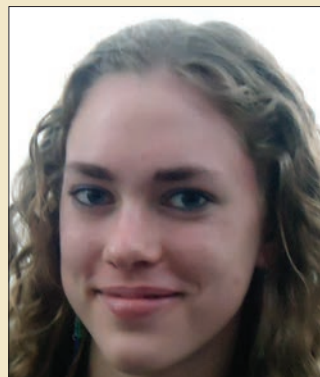
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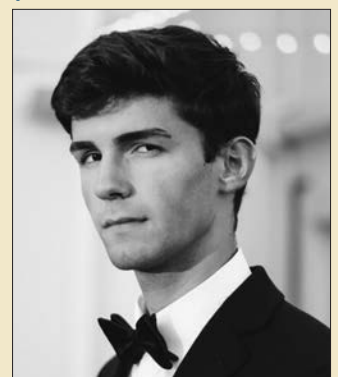
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**Frank Keat** – son of Stephen Keat (State) and Josie Keat; graduating from West Potomac High School in Alexandria, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in business.

**Gracia Luoma-Overstreet** – daughter of Charles Luoma-Overstreet (State) and Kristine Luoma-Overstreet; graduating from the American School of Warsaw in Warsaw, Poland; attending the College of William & Mary, majoring in biology.

**Daniel Lyng** – son of Theodore Lyng (State) and Muliani Lyng; graduating from Jakarta International School in Jakarta, Indonesia; attending The George Washington University, majoring in political science.

**Ashley Miller** – daughter of Daniel Miller (USAID) and Ai Chin Wee; graduating from the International School of Manila in Taguig, Philippines; attending Tufts University, majoring in literature.

**Jordan Rohrllich** – son of Paul Rohrllich (State) and Susan Sandler; graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, N.H.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in economics.

**Olivia Sullivan** – daughter of Ellen Kresen Sullivan (State) and William Sullivan (State); graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, Va.; attending St. Olaf College, majoring in biology.

**Edgar Thornton IV** – son of Edgar Thornton (USAID) and Deborah Thornton; graduating from Iowa City High School in Iowa City, Iowa; attending Harvard University, majoring in engineering.

**Maya Yu** – daughter of Alan Yu (State) and Sharon Yanagi; graduating from Georgetown Day School in Washington, D.C.; attending the University of California-Los Angeles, majoring in chemistry.

## Art Merit Award Winner

**Rebecca Sarfati** – see description under the “Academic Merit Award Winners” listing.

## Art Merit Award Honorable Mention Winners

**Alison Dominguez** – daughter of Stacy Pearce (State) and Daniel Dominguez; graduating from the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India; attending the University of the Arts London, majoring in visual art.

**Copeland Smith** – daughter of Zeric Smith (USAID) and Heidi Hemming; graduating from Northwood High School in Silver Spring, Md.; attending Columbia College Chicago; majoring in visual art.

## Best Essay Award Winner

**Natalie Lewis-Vass** – daughter of Valerie Vass (State) and Matthew Conger; graduating from the International School of Kenya in Nairobi, Kenya; attending the University of Massachusetts-Amherst with an undeclared major.

## Community Service Award Winner

**Katherine Mauldin** – daughter of Jimmy Mauldin (State) and Jennifer Mauldin; graduating from the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India; attending the University of Alabama, majoring in education.

**12. Kathleen Saunders** – daughter of Robert Saunders (State) and Wendy Saunders; graduating from Ankara Elementary/High School in Ankara, Turkey; attending the University of New Mexico with an undeclared major.

**13. Jackson Steger** – son of Stephen Steger (State) and Stacey Steger; graduating from Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Lima, Peru; attending Duke University, majoring in biology. Recognized as the Turner C. Cameron Jr. Scholar.

## Academic Merit Award Honorable Mention Winners

**Easwari Amirthanayagam** – daughter of Aruna Amirthanayagam (State) and Vathani Amirthanayagam (USAID); graduating from the American Cooperative School in La Paz, Bolivia; attending Brown University, majoring in psychology.

**Salvatore Capriglione** – son of Pasquale Capriglione (State) and Tonya Capriglione; graduating from Point Pleasant Beach High School in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J., attending The George Washington University, majoring in political science.

## 2014 AFSA MERIT AWARDS— BEST ESSAY WINNER

### Westgate

BY NATALIE LEWIS-VASS

I have always lived in a safe place. In Vermont, I enjoyed a nearly Rockwellian childhood. We never locked our house, knew our neighbors, had routines, close family and shared a common culture with the community. Life was simple and I never worried about my safety. A world of violence, robberies and terrorist attacks happened on TV, in books and articles. Then I moved to Nairobi. My most memorable Foreign Service experience was the loss of that innocence.

My mom had recently joined the Foreign Service and I had to change schools in my senior year and relocate to Africa. My senior plans, which had included concerts, friends, extracurricular activities and a carefully selected class schedule, were abandoned. Instead, I was moving to a place nicknamed “Nairobbery” and sent to a class called “Security Overseas,” where I was taught what to do if I was kidnapped, held at gun-point or evacuated. While the class was interesting, I thought it was fairly useless information.

I arrived in Nairobi and found my life was quickly similar to Vermont. I made friends, ran track, and had good classes. Nairobi didn’t seem that different from

other places, but on September 23rd, that all changed.

Al-Shabaab attacked the Westgate Mall, a place where I went to see movies and sipped coffee with my friends. A girl from my school was killed and one of my track teammates sustained a gunshot wound. The siege dragged on for days and we feared there would be more attacks. The community was devastated by the horrific losses and the fear was paralyzing.

This event changed me almost instantly. Immediately, I began to draw on my

“Security Overseas” [Seminar] I had dismissed just two months earlier. When I walk into a restaurant, I assess the best escape routes and try to sit with a view to the door. I time my outings so I’m not in crowded places during peak times. I observe my surroundings closely, to pick up on anomalies quickly and assess if they are dangerous. I am a far cry from the teen I would have been, had we stayed in Vermont.

The Westgate Mall terrorist attack was terrible, but it is also my most memorable Foreign Service experience in positive ways. After resenting my mother for moving me in my senior year, I witnessed first-hand how important her work is, as she and her colleagues spent hours in hospitals and morgues to

make things easier for Americans in devastating situations. I became inspired by the Kenyans’ response to the attack, as they descended on hospitals to give blood for the injured, just a few miles from the ongoing siege. People had the choice to hunker down in fear or to rally and meet the challenge. Witnessing the response to Westgate has shaped who I am. ■



*Natalie Lewis-Vass is the daughter of Valerie Vass (State) and Matthew Conger. She graduated from the International School of Kenya in Nairobi, and is attending the University of Massachusetts-Amherst with an undeclared major in the fall.*



From left, Merit Award winner Olivia Sullivan, Representative Christopher Van Hollen (D-Md.), AFSA Scholarship Director Lori Dec, AFSA President Robert Silverman and AFSA Scholarship Committee Chair Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn in conversation following the merit award ceremony.

## AFSA Files MSI Implementation Dispute

AFSA was disappointed to learn in May that the State Department had decided not to confer the monetary portion of Meritorious Service Increases on the 554 colleagues who were recommended by last summer's selection boards.

We urged the department's senior leadership to honor our colleagues' performance with a monetary component in accordance with the negotiated procedural precepts. Since the department has opted not to do so, AFSA has filed an implementation dispute on behalf of the MSI recipients and the Service.

For the last 34 years—since the Foreign Service Act of 1980—peer-constituted selection boards have recognized outstanding performance and potential with recommendations for promotions and MSI conferrals.

Over time this practice, including a monetary component, has become one of the terms and conditions of employment negotiated between State and AFSA in the form of the promotion procedural precepts.

The State Department and AFSA have agreed to recognize colleagues who were recommended by the selection board for promotion, but for whom there were no available promotion opportunities, with an MSI instead.

At the time of the 2013 sequester, AFSA agreed

to department-proposed language in the promotion procedural precepts requiring the department to pay the MSIs "if authorized." AFSA understands that phrase to denote relevant provisions of law or any budgetary requirement imposed by the Office of Management and Budget/Office of Personnel Management; the department disagrees.

State and AFSA had agreed to the procedural precepts following the Feb. 27, 2013, OMB guidance that limited monetary awards across the federal government.

In November 2013, OMB/OPM issued new guidance that authorized the department to fund last summer's MSIs, in addition to other awards.

The department acknowledges that it has this authority, but has chosen not to apply it. State is the only foreign affairs agency that has not yet paid out its MSIs from 2013.

The Foreign Service personnel system is up-or-out, with competitive promotions recommended by peer boards. The MSIs are part and parcel of this personnel system, and play a key role in those specialties in which promotion opportunities and career advancement are already limited.

The majority of last summer's MSI recipients are specialists, with the largest group being Diplomatic Security

agents, followed by Information Resource Management specialists.

The impact of an MSI, whether it is a financial step increase or cash payment, reaches beyond one's active-duty career into retirement and the calculation of pension payments.

While AFSA's preference is to work together with management to address the challenges facing the Service, at times it must respectfully disagree and dissent. This is

one of those times. AFSA has filed an implementation dispute on behalf of these 554 members, the merits of which will ultimately be decided by the Foreign Service Grievance Board, if not resolved at the agency level.

Meanwhile, AFSA will continue to work with the department in other areas to make it a better, safer and more rewarding place to serve for all employees.

Please email [AFSA@state.gov](mailto:AFSA@state.gov) with any questions or comments. ■

—Matthew Asada,  
AFSA State VP

### AFSA Welcomes TSA Pre-Check Expansion

AFSA welcomes the State Department's recent announcement about the expansion of Transportation Security Administration Pre-Check to employees with Top Secret clearances. Within three days of implementation, more than 3,800 department personnel had opted into the program.

For the past several years, AFSA has advocated for measures to make travel—domestic and overseas—easier for its members, including it in the Governing Board's 2013-2015 strategic plan. AFSA continues to work with its partners and the other foreign affairs agencies to expand employee participation in trusted traveler programs, such as the Customs and Border Protection's "Global Entry" program.

On Global Entry, we are advocating for what is known in industry speak as "risk-based screening," which would enable automatic enrollment for those employees with security clearances, and have written to the CBP to that effect (see <http://bit.ly/1ku7Jlo>).

At the same time, we are seeking a revision to General Services Administration guidance on employee reimbursement for CBP Global Entry fees (see <http://bit.ly/1jB9ng2>).

We have approached Department of State management on both of these items (see <http://bit.ly/1Y9XWC>). For more on AFSA's travel facilitation efforts, please see the March State VP column. —M.A.



## AFSA ON THE HILL

# Who Said It's All About Congress?

BY JAVIER CUEBAS, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY

People sometimes make the assumption that congressional leaders and their staff will disregard state legislatures and city councils when strategizing about public policy. The truth is quite the opposite. Because members of Congress are elected officials, many of them pay very close attention to local elected officials and community activists when making decisions.

As former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill used to say, "All politics is local." What does that mean for Foreign Service employees and their families?

Many of the issues that affect FS employees and their families are directly related to local laws and their interpretation. When it comes to local taxes, residency, driver's licenses or plate registration, for example, our members often find themselves in a predicament.

How many of you know or have heard of colleagues who received a bill for taxes they did not owe from a jurisdiction where they are not domiciled? And what about choosing a domicile? I'm sure you've all got some stories to tell on that subject.

The most common complaint is about equity: Why is it that FS employees do not

enjoy the same guarantees and rights as their brothers and sisters in uniform? How can this be fixed?

More often than not, these challenges are based on a lack of information about the reality of the Foreign Service profession by federal, state and local officials. Aware of that reality and committed to effecting positive change through a proactive approach to public policy, the AFSA Advocacy Department is working with several AFSA members to help them advocate for themselves, and in some cases we can help them get regulations changed.

Two quick examples come from Wisconsin and Virginia. In Wisconsin we are working with one of our members to promote changes to the state law that deals with driver's licenses, to ensure that FS employees on orders receive the same treatment as military personnel. And in Virginia, the General Assembly recently passed House Joint Resolution 406 commending AFSA on its 90th anniversary.

Both of these initiatives are aimed at educating elected officials about your reality, the Foreign Service career and life. No matter how worthy the cause, people are unlikely to support it if they do not know you or your

circumstances.

So the first step to address the challenges that affect FS employees is to tell your stories to elected officials at every level, to remind them that your job has a positive impact on their communities and that you and your family are part of those same communities.

These state and local initiatives are part of AFSA's efforts to tell your story while promoting partnerships with locally elected and appointed officials. At the end of the day, it is not always about Congress.

Feel free to share your story and any challenges you or your family may be facing. Send an email to [advocacy@afsa.org](mailto:advocacy@afsa.org). We are here to help. Remember that you are our greatest asset, and elected officials know it!

—Javier S. Cuebas,  
Director of Advocacy



CAMERON TRIMBLE

## Foreign Service Park Cleanup

The Congressional Black Associates, the American Foreign Service Association and a local Washington, D.C., flag football group, Routelife, teamed up on Saturday, May 31, to clean up the Foreign Service Park opposite AFSA headquarters in downtown Washington. The group of volunteers spent the morning picking up trash and restoring the park before congregating at AFSA for networking and refreshments.

—David Murimi, AFSA Senior Legislative Assistant and Andrew Keyes, Legislative Correspondent, Office of Representative Louie Gohmert (R-Tex.)

## AFSA Hosts USAID Mission Directors' Happy Hour

On May 15, AFSA hosted the first-ever "Mission Directors' Happy Hour" during USAID's Mission Directors Conference at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Va.

AFSA President Robert J. Silverman, AFSA USAID Vice President Sharon Wayne and AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston hosted the attendees and shared AFSA's work, projected plans and accomplishments.

In addition, the AFSA officials received informal feedback from mission directors on issues they face in the field and management concerns among Foreign Service officers. These include retirement age, case fairness and balance, medical issues, State/USAID benefit parity, spousal employment and benefits, language training, USAID interest in linked assignments, pet advocacy, international school safety and Senate promotion and tenure holds.

AFSA thanks all who attended and participated in the discussion. AFSA also thanks the office of USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah for continual support in aiding our efforts to speak for the Foreign Service and improve American diplomacy both at home and abroad.

—Chiomia Dike, AFSA USAID Staff



PHOTOS: CHIOMIA DIKE



Above, USAID mission directors at a "happy hour" hosted by AFSA on May 15. AFSA President Robert J. Silverman, left inset, and AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston and USAID VP Sharon Wayne, right, addressed the group.



TIM DILLI

### Inside a U.S. Embassy: Yet Another Print Run

By early spring, AFSA had sold and distributed just about all of the first 25,000 copies of the 2011 third edition of our popular introduction to the Foreign Service, *Inside a U.S. Embassy: Diplomacy at Work*. We ordered a third printing, a run of 5,000 books, in May.

All three printings of the third edition have been done by United Book Press, a family owned and operated printing business in Baltimore, Md. The company is committed to environmental sustainability and is a member of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Staff at UBP are a pleasure to work with—reliable, efficient and quick to get the job done. They even took photos for us.

This printing takes the overall print run of all three editions of *Inside a U.S. Embassy* to more than 110,000 copies.

Find out more about the book and how you might use it for Foreign Service outreach at [www.afsa.org/inside](http://www.afsa.org/inside) or write to [embassybook@afsa.org](mailto:embassybook@afsa.org).

—Shawn Dorman, Editor

## Why You Need a Household Inventory

**Q:** *After my packout from post, someone from the General Services Office came, as required, to do the inventory of government property, and to assess the state of the furniture and carpets, etc. The GSO's office then sent me an enormous bill, claiming that I had damaged the chairs and soiled the carpets. How should I proceed?*

**A:** This problem arises more often than it should, and is really something that needs attention throughout your occupancy of the house or apartment. You need to be aware of what you have and its condition.

So, as soon as you move into your assigned quarters, take an accurate inventory of all the furniture and fittings, including their condition. This is very important, as it gives both you and the GSO a baseline from which to work. If there are any stains, wear or damage on any furniture, carpets or fittings, be precise about where the damage is located and its nature. Take pictures if you like, and make sure that they are reliably dated.

Next, throughout your occupancy, it probably goes without saying that you should take care that the furniture and fittings are treated well. If any damage occurs, make a note of the extent of it and when and how it occurred. This will ensure that you are not taken by surprise when the checkout

inspection turns up any damage, and will enable you to identify damage that was not caused by you or your family.

During the checkout inspection, make sure that you and the GSO's representative do the walk-through together. Compare your observations with those you made on arrival. Make sure you get a copy of the rough report, but keep your own list as you go around the house.

If you disagree with the bill when you get it, ask to go through it with the GSO's office. There are a number of factors that are worth bearing in mind:

- Fair wear and tear is not your responsibility. Things wear out over time unless you never walk anywhere on the carpets or sit on any of the chairs.
- If you have damaged something that needs to be replaced, depreciation should be taken into account. You should not get charged the cost of a new item to replace a 10-year-old armchair.
- Look at any proposed re-upholstery costs very carefully; and, if necessary, compare the proposed costs with other upholsterers. Again, you should not be charged for fair wear and tear.
- On the other hand, be realistic. Damage and soiling by pets and children do not count as fair wear and tear and are your responsibility to clean up or repair, or to

pay to have rectified after leaving. Large scratches and cigarette or other burns on furniture are not fair wear and tear either, and are also your responsibility.

If you need help in nego-

tiations with the GSO, speak with your AFSA post rep, who may contact the AFSA Labor Management Office. ■

—James Yorke, Labor Management Specialist

### Veteran AP Reporter on State— “More Than Just Diplomacy”

Longtime Associated Press State Department reporter George Gedda reaches back into his many years at Foggy Bottom and tells stories from his long career.

His new book, *The State Department—More Than Just Diplomacy: The Personalities, Turf Battles, Danger Zones for Diplomats, Exotic Datelines, Miscast Appointees, the Laughs—and, Sadly, the Occasional Homicide*, is the latest selection in AFSA's ongoing Book Notes series.

This event will take place at AFSA headquarters, 2101 E St NW, at 2 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 4. RSVP to [events@afsa.org](mailto:events@afsa.org). Books will be available for sale; the price is \$12 and checks are preferred.

### FSYF Annual Welcome Back Picnic

The Foreign Service Youth Foundation's annual welcome back picnic will take place on Sunday, Sept. 14, at 4 p.m.

The location, as in previous years, is Nottoway Park in Vienna, Va. (9610 Courthouse Rd.). This is always among FSYF's most popular events each year, and is intended to welcome back families returning from overseas and those families who are new to the Foreign Service. There is no cost associated with attending the picnic, and FSYF membership is not a prerequisite. FSYF does ask attendees to bring a side dish or dessert to share. Additional information is available at [www.fsyf.org](http://www.fsyf.org).





## Federal Benefits Event Draws a Full House



ASCEIR SIGFUSSON

On May 19, AFSA welcomed Paula Jakub of the American Foreign Service Protective Association for an encore of her popular seminar, “The Coordination of Medicare and FEHB,” explaining the intricacies of federal benefits. Our members responded strongly, as we had a packed house —more than 110 people attended. A complete recording of the event is available at [www.afsa.org/video](http://www.afsa.org/video); for a copy of Ms. Jakub’s PowerPoint presentation, please contact Matt Sumrak at [sumrak@afsa.org](mailto:sumrak@afsa.org).

*USC continued from page 49*  
institution-building. He thinks that China cannot force the United States out of the Asian region.

If the United States can resolve some of its current political divisions, upgrade its diplomatic services and enjoy stronger leadership going forward, Pascoe concluded, it will continue to exert a vibrant, positive influence on Asian stability and security for decades to come.

Amb. Pascoe also presented a talk to a special class of some 70 advanced students and faculty on “The Nexus Between U.S. Diplomacy and the U.N.” He stressed that despite its daunting global political and

financial obstacles, the United Nations has been doing better in conflict management in recent years, mainly due to improved management, much of which has been fostered by American diplomats.

In addition, he said, the organization is relying more on capable NGOs, which sometimes operate more efficiently than the U.N. bureaucracy. Pascoe also briefly spoke about Foreign Service careers, exhorting students to take the entrance exam as soon as convenient.

In his closing remarks, English again praised AFSA for developing this valuable partnership. ■

—Tom Switzer, Speakers Bureau Director



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## FS Reporting: Craft, Context and Practice

### The Craft of Political Analysis for Diplomats

Raymond F. Smith, Potomac Books, 2011, \$23.62/paperback, \$16.50/Kindle Edition, 174 pages.

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN W. BUCK

Three years after its publication, retired FSO Ray Smith's *The Craft of Political Analysis for Diplomats* holds up very well. He starts with a clear definition of political analysis as “the attempt to convey an understanding of how authority and power relations operate and evolve within and between governments and between government and society.”

### This book focuses on the practical and is particularly relevant for Foreign Service officers.

This is not an academic tome, however. It focuses on the practical and is particularly relevant for Foreign Service officers. In a foreign affairs universe filled with organizations pursuing worthy goals, he reminds the reader that “the diplomat works with a specific primary objective in mind: to protect and promote his country’s interests...not those of all mankind.” Accordingly, in the end all diplomatic reporting needs to answer the question, “What does this mean for my country?”

Smith does a good job of delving into the different purposes of diplomatic political analysis “to inform, explain or influence the universe of Washington audiences” for Foreign Service reporting. He quotes one colleague as observing, “Embassy reporting must add value to what policymakers learn from news reports; it cannot hope to substitute for or compete with news organs in report-

ing ‘fast facts.’ The primary value of a field report, then, is to tell policymakers what they need to know and to sort out what’s important from all the other things Washington is hearing.”

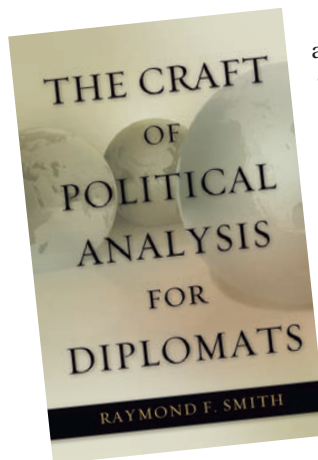
So how to do this? This is where Smith really shines. In chapters titled “The Analyst’s Personal Tool Kit,” “The Analytical Tools,” “Criteria for Political Reporting: The State Department View” and two case studies from his own reporting from Embassy Moscow on the collapse of the

Soviet Union, he probes deeply into what is needed and what works.

While he occasionally allots more space to theory than I needed, Smith makes very useful points about the importance of clear, concise writing to attract policymakers’ attention and, in particular, the importance of sources and a real understanding of the culture—political, religious and social—of the host country.

Smith’s research into the criteria cited by State awards committees leads him to rank the following attributes in descending order of importance: usefulness; analytic and interpretive content; sources and contacts; style; and cultural and linguistic skills. He then excerpts some declassified cables that won the Director General’s Reporting Award, and explains why they won.

His thoughtful penultimate chapter, “The Compass and the Weather Vane,”



addresses the fraught question: “What does the professional diplomat do when he thinks his government’s policies are wrong or counterproductive?” He answers by citing examples of how Embassy Moscow’s reporting helped reshape U.S. policy over time.

Pursuing the chapter title’s metaphor, Smith wisely concludes: “The best diplomatic professionals, like good sailors, know they need both the weather vane and the compass. The weather vane tells you the course that you can steer. You cannot sail directly into the wind [i.e., challenge established policy]. You must choose a course that allows you to keep your boat under control while heading as closely as possible towards your destination. Keeping your internal compass working while the wind is not under your control and shifting erratically around you is one of the conscientious diplomat’s fundamental personal challenges.”

The book’s final chapter, which discusses the impact of technological change and the risk of irrelevance, reminds us that the Foreign Service milieu so many of us operated in years ago—reading and assessing clues hidden in newspapers in the fashion of Kremlinologists—is gone. Sometimes CNN and other media outlets report what is happening overseas before the post knows it has even happened. Moreover, Washington can Skype, tweet or email in an instant.

Yet this does not eliminate what Edward R. Murrow called “the last three feet” between a reporter or diplomat and his contact. Equally important, it does not eliminate the understanding that can only come from seasoned reporters who really knows the country they are in—and

the Washington to which they report.

Making a comparison to Renaissance craftsmen who spent decades building cathedral doors which might well be completed long after their deaths, Smith concludes that the “craftsman in our field must pursue his work, understanding that he does not control the outcome, contributing what he can, as best he can, to a worthy endeavor.” Sage advice, indeed.

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*Stephen W. Buck, a retired Senior Foreign Service officer, served at eight posts in the Arab world during his 39-year diplomatic career and was nominated for the Director General's Reporting Award for his economic and, later, political reporting. He has served on the Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board since 2003.*

## Worthy of Its Subject?

### **The State Department: More Than Just Diplomacy**

George Gedda, AuthorHouse, 2014,  
\$16.95, paperback, 166 pages.

REVIEWED BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Longtime readers of *The Foreign Service Journal* will instantly recognize George Gedda's name, both for his nearly four decades as the State Department correspondent for the Associated Press and his frequent articles in the *Journal*. Reviewing his previous book—*Cuba: The Audacious Revolution* (CreateSpace, 2011)—in the March 2012 *FSJ*, John Maisto hailed it as “a great introduction to Cuba for non-experts. Yet it is also filled with stories and insights for specialists to ponder.”

It appears that Gedda tried to follow that same middle-of-the-road formula with his new book, *The State Department: More Than Just Diplomacy*. And if anyone can engage a “lay” audience that is at

## In trying to cover so ambitious a list of topics in a short space, Gedda fails to do justice to most of them.

least theoretically interested in a book about the State Department, while offering some deeper insights for those who already know the subject, it is George Gedda.

The good news is that the author clearly appreciates the importance of diplomacy and respects its practitioners, and he makes some useful points. But I'd be willing to bet that members of the Foreign Service community, and just about anyone else with at least a passing interest in foreign affairs, already know the vast majority of the information he imparts here.

Perhaps the book's full subtitle is the first sign of trouble ahead: *More Than Just Diplomacy: The Personalities, Turf Battles, Danger Zones for Diplomats, Exotic Datelines, Miscast Appointees, the Laughs—and, Sadly, the Occasional Homicide*. In trying to cover so ambitious a list of topics in a short space, Gedda fails to do justice to most of them.

After a foreword that inexplicably locates State in southwest D.C. rather than northwest, Gedda's first chapter assesses the Secretaries of State he covered and traveled with for the Associated Press. Yet his list omits Edmund Muskie (1980-1981) and Larry Eagleburger (1992-1993). (He does allude to both men later in the book, but fails to note that Eagleburger is the only career FSO ever to ascend to the top of the department.)

That is followed by sections devoted

to “Humor,” “Violence at Uncommon Venues,” “The State Department: Tales from the Home Office, Iran and Beyond,” “Central America—Turning Red?,” “Personalities,” “Destinations” and “Anecdotes.” Alas, most of the content is painfully dated, thin on substance and contains random material with no apparent connection to State or diplomacy.

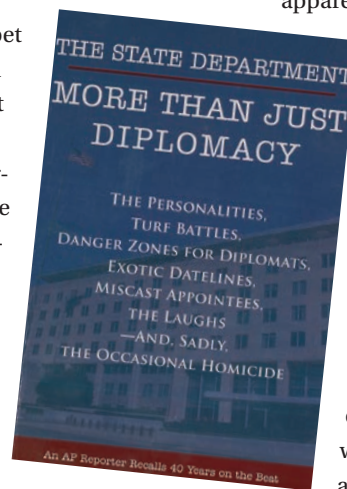
Nor does it help matters that I see no evidence that anyone proofread or edited the book. Virtually every page has sentences with missing or repeated words, text that is riddled with punctuation and capitalization errors, and passages whose meaning is opaque at best.

Gedda does share one amusing quip I'd never heard before: “Diplomats have to be fast on their feet, as illustrated by this (possibly apocryphal) diplomat's response to his wife upon realizing he had forgotten her birthday: ‘Honey, how can I remember your birthday when you never seem to grow older?’”

I truly wish I could recommend *The State Department: More Than Just Diplomacy*. Instead, I encourage you to check out Gedda's previous book, *Cuba: The Audacious Revolution*, which is everything this one is not. ■

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*Steven Alan Honley is the contributing editor of The Foreign Service Journal.*



■ **David C. Brooks**, 56, a Foreign Service officer with the State Department, died on April 2 at Virginia Hospital in Arlington, Va.

Mr. Brooks was born in Middletown, Conn., on March 28, 1958. He graduated from Valley Regional High School in 1976, and received a B.A. and an M.A. from Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.

Mr. Brooks was a Fulbright Scholar in Nicaragua, and earned his doctorate in Latin American history from the University of Connecticut in 1998. In 2013, he was awarded a master's degree from the Army War College.

Prior to joining the Foreign Service in 1993, he taught history and coached wrestling at the Kingswood Oxford School in West Hartford, Conn.

Mr. Brooks began his Foreign Service career in public diplomacy with the U.S. Information Agency and then became a political officer at the State Department. During his 21-year career, he served as a cultural affairs officer in Warsaw, a trade officer in Caracas, and as a political officer in São Paulo, Lima and Managua.

He served as deputy chief of mission in Luanda prior to returning to Washington, D.C., last summer as chief of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs policy unit.

Mr. Brooks was an expert in Latin American politics. Colleagues remember that he was known for being able to disarm the most anti-American audiences with engaging talks on American culture—especially comic books, which allowed him to explain U.S. policy in a context anyone could understand.

No audience was beyond the reach of Mr. Brooks' enthusiasm, his passion for American culture and the desire to connect with people, they recall. Mr. Brooks received many honors during his diplomatic career, including the Secretary's

Award for Outreach, presented to him by Secretary of State Colin Powell in 2004.

Mr. Brooks was also a member of Toastmasters, where he competed regularly and won several awards.

He is survived by his wife of 24 years, Nancy Rios-Brooks, also an FSO and a member of the AFSA Governing Board; their three children, Fernando, Jack and Elisabeth; and a brother, Douglas Brooks (and his wife, Catherine) of Vergennes, Vt.

■ **Lisa Chiles**, a retired USAID Foreign Service officer who held the rank of career minister, died on May 19 in Santa Barbara, Calif.

A native of North Carolina, Ms. Chiles received a bachelor's degree from Salem College in North Carolina, a J.D. from Emory University and a master's degree in international and comparative law and trade from Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Belgium.

Prior to joining USAID, Ms. Chiles was a trial attorney in the International Antitrust Section of the U.S. Department of Justice.

During her nearly 30-year career at USAID, Ms. Chiles served as legal adviser in the Office of the General Counsel in Washington, D.C., and as the regional legal adviser in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. She also served as deputy mission director in Bangladesh and as mission director in Pakistan, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

Having previously worked with Ambassador Ryan Crocker in Pakistan, she happily agreed to his request that she serve as acting mission director in Iraq.

Ms. Chiles was the deputy assistant administrator for USAID's Asia and Near East Bureau before serving as the agency's counselor from May 2008 through July 2009. She was a recipient of the Meritorious Presidential Service Award.

After retirement, Ms. Chiles settled in Santa Barbara, where she resumed painting—one of her passions—and worked with various committees at All Saints by the Sea Church. She also contributed her management experience to the Music Academy of the West.

Colleagues and family members recall how enriching Ms. Chiles found her work at USAID, including her interaction with colleagues and other stakeholders, and how she used the lessons learned to teach her children the virtues of compassion and kindness.

Ms. Chiles is survived by her husband, Austin Pullé; her children, Roshani and Ananda Julian; her son-in-law, Tom Inwood; and her granddaughter, Evangeline Inwood.

■ **Dorothy Green**, 94, wife of the late USAID FSO Chuck Green, died peacefully on April 7 at her home in Malibu, Calif., surrounded by her family.

Born on Aug. 14, 1919, in Canada, Mrs. Green grew up in Iowa and moved to California after meeting and marrying Chuck Green. Unable to attend college during the Depression, she attended Santa Monica College while raising their two children and earned her bachelor's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles.

On joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Green served first with the U.S. Information Agency and later with the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Greens were posted overseas in Colombia (twice), the Dominican Republic, Peru, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Mrs. Green was always the first to say yes to a new assignment. As family members recall, she never complained, even when they were assigned to Vietnam during the war. One of a small number of wives allowed to be in Saigon at that time, Mrs. Green worked there for the Internal

Revenue Service, whose agents were chasing war profiteers.

Later she joined the Drug Enforcement Administration, during a time when large amounts of heroin were being shipped illegally through Vietnam to the United States. During their second assignment, in Colombia, she continued to work for the DEA when that country became a center for cocaine and marijuana.

A true adventurer, she made friends all over the world. She took packs of teenagers every weekend to the beach in the Dominican Republic; managed to evade scooters, cabs, and buses while mastering driving on the left side of the streets in Jakarta; and spoke fluent Spanish and Indonesian.

The Greens were among the first Americans to travel to China when it opened to tourism. On her own, Mrs. Green toured the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries in the 1970s, long before the fall of the Soviet Union when travel was exceptionally limited. Another of her amazing solo adventures was an open-boat voyage up the Mahakam River in Borneo, where she visited the Dyak tribes.

Mrs. Green was a natural athlete. Growing up, she danced tap and ballet, rode horses, did gymnastics, and enjoyed roller and ice skating. She loved tennis and swimming, and swam for an hour a day into her mid-80s. She preferred reading, traveling, being with friends and going to the beach to cooking and cleaning.

Her flexibility and tolerance extended to allowing exotic pets, including snakes and monkeys, to join the household. She loved people and invited any and all into her home—including many “adopted” extra kids of all ages along the way.

Mrs. Green’s husband of 67 years, Chuck, died in 2011. She is survived by her son, Terry (and daughter-in-law JoAnn) of Santa Monica, Calif.; her daughter,

Marilyn (and son-in-law Larry Jones) of Moorpark, Calif.; four grandchildren; and many nieces, nephews, in-laws and friends around the world.

■ **Michael J. Lippe**, 70, a retired Foreign Service officer with USAID, died on April 28 in Washington, D.C., after a long illness.

The son of an American diplomat, Mr. Lippe was born in Columbus, Ohio, but grew up and attended schools in Cuba, Singapore, Belgium and England. He graduated from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and the University of Michigan. After receiving a J.D. from Harvard University, he went to Botswana for three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

After joining USAID in 1976, Mr. Lippe had tours in Ivory Coast, Kenya and Tunisia, where he was a specialist in urban development and housing, as well as Washington, D.C. He retired from USAID in 1996, but continued to work as a contractor traveling on short-term assignments to many places outside his primary career specialization in Africa, including Jakarta, Beijing and Prague.

After several years in Washington, D.C., Mr. Lippe relocated to Shepherdstown, W. Va. He also provided pro bono legal services to political refugees in the Washington, D.C., area.

Mr. Lippe was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2007. With his doctor, Dung Le, he wrote a book about his experience, *Pancreatic Cancer: A Patient and His Doctor Balance Hope and Truth* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011). Following the diagnosis, he unexpectedly enjoyed six years of mostly pain-free and relatively active living, during which he continued to travel for pleasure. He was also an avid Washington Nationals fan, and continued to be involved in the well-being of his children and grandchildren.

At the time of his death, Mr. Lippe was planning to move to New Zealand, where his youngest son, Luengo, had settled. His second-oldest son was helping him get ready for the move. Friends and family members remember Mr. Lippe’s liveliness, his humor and his continuing interest in the world.

He is survived by his first wife, Lesego Lippe, and his second wife, Elizabeth Bellamy; four sons: Motaki of North Carolina; Motho and Thapelo, both of Botswana; and Luengo of New Zealand; seven grandchildren; and a sister, Laurie, and a brother, Stuart.

■ **Haynes Richardson Mahoney Jr.**, 94, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on April 5 in the Mayflower Nursing Home in West Yarmouth, Mass.

Born on Feb. 13, 1920, Mr. Mahoney grew up in Jacksonville, Fla., swimming with the manatees in the St. Johns River and shipping out one summer on a banana boat to Cuba. In later life, he was an avid sailor out of Bass Hole on Cape Cod.

Mr. Mahoney worked his way through the University of Florida and then attended The George Washington University, where he covered international affairs as a part-time journalist for the *Washington Herald*. During World War II he served in France and Germany, then joined the military government and directed the denazification of the Bavarian press.

In 1949, Mr. Mahoney joined the State Department as a press officer posted to Germany. He was assigned to Thailand with the U.S. Information Agency in 1953, returning to Washington, D.C., in 1956 to work on Asian affairs. In 1959, he was sent to Japan as deputy public affairs officer. There he dealt with the anti-American riots that derailed a planned visit by President Dwight Eisenhower and pioneered

American appreciation for sushi.

In 1962, after the Berlin Wall went up, Mr. Mahoney was posted to West Berlin as deputy director of Radio in the American Sector, which beamed into communist East Germany.

Topping off his Foreign Service career, he served as public affairs counselor in Kuala Lumpur, where he handled the media during a kidnapping by the Japanese Red Army.

Mr. Mahoney retired in 1976 and settled in Cape Cod, where he plunged into scholarship on the old Cape whaling families, interviewing their descendants, publishing a booklet on the Cape Cod packets and riding his bicycle to Historical Society meetings.

In his final years, his daughter, Ann Pinkham, lived with him and accompanied him on his naturalist adventures along the Cape's coastal marshes and the Atlantic beaches.

Mr. Mahoney was predeceased by his wife, Catherine M. Mahoney. He is survived by his daughter, Ann; his son, Haynes Mahoney III, also a Foreign Service officer, and daughter-in-law Sossi; five grandchildren: Douglas and Kim Pinkham; and Karina, Dominique and Colette Mahoney; a great-grandson, Alaric; and a sister, Eleanor Mahoney of Jacksonville, Fla.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Yarmouth Port Library, 297 Route 6A, Yarmouth Port MA 02675 ([www.yarmouthportlibrary.org](http://www.yarmouthportlibrary.org)).

■ **John Alden Mason Jr.**, 91, a retired FSO with the U.S. Information Agency, died on April 14 in Kittery, Maine.

Mr. Mason was born in Illinois. His younger years were full of fascinating work and adventure. At age 16, he hitchhiked across the country by himself with \$30 in his pocket. At 17, he spent a

month in Panama helping his father on an archaeological dig sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania. And at 18, he joined the U.S. Navy and taught naval aviation to pilots during World War II.

He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1948, and spent several years in the newspaper business in the Philadelphia area before joining the U.S. Information Agency in 1960.

Mr. Mason's overseas postings included tours in Brazil: as a publications officer in Rio de Janeiro, as information officer in São Paulo, and as branch public affairs officer in Salvador. He then served as cultural affairs officer in La Paz before returning to Washington. His final assignment was as branch public affairs officer in Guayaquil.

After retirement, Mr. Mason and his wife, Wendy, settled in Kittery, where they lived happily for more than 30 years. An avid reader, thinker, writer and storyteller, he had a marvelous sense of humor and a great interest in politics, art, literature and the environment.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Wendy; daughters Wendy, Leslie and Robin; and son John Alden Mason III.

■ **Tibor Nagy Sr.**, 93, a retired FSO with USAID, died on April 25 in Washington, D.C.

Born in Budapest, Hungary, on Aug. 14, 1920, Mr. Nagy served as a career engineering officer in the Hungarian Army and participated actively in the country's brief quest for freedom in 1956. Because of his anti-Soviet activities, combined with an earlier term of political imprisonment, he knew he would face execution after the uprising was crushed.

Instead, he escaped with his young son, Tibor Jr., into Austria, eventually arriving in the United States as political

refugees in 1957. Penniless, Mr. Nagy worked menial jobs until he learned English and received his U.S. engineering license.

After gaining recognition in private practice, Mr. Nagy was hired by USAID in 1969 as a civil engineer. He worked in South Vietnam on infrastructure development and repaired war damage in the Mekong Delta region. In 1976, he was assigned to Haiti to help design and repair roads and bridges in that severely underdeveloped nation that experiences frequent hurricanes.

After Italy suffered devastating earthquakes in 1980, Mr. Nagy was transferred to Naples to help implement a massive U.S. relief program to repair the damaged infrastructure. He also managed projects in other Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries out of Naples.

Mr. Nagy retired from the Foreign Service in 1987, but returned to work for USAID under contract in El Salvador after that country's civil war.

In 1993 he retired again, but was again called back in 1995—this time to help revive Bosnia's infrastructure after the Balkan civil war. He stayed in Sarajevo until 2000, when he retired for the last time and returned to Washington after being diagnosed with a rare form of blood cancer.

Because of his expertise in working in war zones and areas of devastation, Mr. Nagy earned the nickname "disaster master" among USAID's engineering corps.

One of his proudest moments came in 1998, when he was invited back to Hungary by the post-communist government to a ceremony in his honor. There the Hungarian government nullified Mr. Nagy's 1956 treason conviction and death sentence, promoted him retroactively to full colonel and awarded him one of Hungary's highest honors—"Hero of the Revolution."

The same son who had fled Hungary with him as a little boy and who later became a two-time ambassador, Ambassador Tibor P. Nagy Jr., accompanied him on his return to Budapest, along with his daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

During his career, Mr. Nagy received various superior and meritorious honor awards, as well as citations from Haiti and Italy. In addition to Hungarian and English, he was also fluent in Russian, French, Italian and Spanish.

Mr. Nagy is survived by his son, Tibor Jr., and daughter-in-law, Jane, of Lubbock, Texas; two grandsons, Stephen and Peter; a granddaughter, Tisza Rutherford; and great-granddaughters Aliyah, Kalyx, Serey and Abbey.

■ **Sidney Sober, 94**, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on April 21 at his home in Front Royal, Va.

Mr. Sober was born in New York City. He graduated magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from City College (with a junior year's study in Paris on a special scholarship) and entered U.S. government service in 1940 in Washington, D.C., and then in Bermuda. He served as a deck officer on a U.S. Navy destroyer in the Pacific in the latter months of World War II.

During his State Department years, Mr. Sober was assigned to a year's study at both Northwestern University and the U.S. Army War College, and received a master's degree in international affairs from The George Washington University.

Mr. Sober joined the Foreign Service in 1947. He served in Madagascar, Czechoslovakia, Iceland, Turkey and India (where he was acting consul general in Bombay during the 1962 Sino-Indian War).

In earlier assignments in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Mr. Sober was economic desk officer for South Asia, director of regional affairs and staff

director of the Interdepartmental Regional Group for the area.

His last overseas post was as minister-counselor and deputy chief of mission in Islamabad from 1969 to 1973.

During the last two years of this assignment, when Pakistan was beginning to recover from defeat in a war with India that had ended with Pakistan's loss of its eastern wing, which became Bangladesh, he was chargé d'affaires.

In 1973, Pakistan President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto credited him for helping to bring competing political elements together to achieve unanimous approval by the National Assembly for the new draft constitution, the country's first democratically endorsed charter, which is still in effect (though frequently amended). On the eve-

ning of the vote in the National Assembly, Pres. Bhutto asked Mr. Sober to call on him so the president could thank him.

Also in 1973, shortly after Palestinian extremists assassinated the American ambassador and his deputy in Khartoum, the Pakistani government stationed a round-the-clock security detail at Mr. Sober's residence for a period of several weeks after reports of a terrorist plot targeting Embassy Islamabad.

From 1974 to 1978, Mr. Sober served as senior deputy assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs. During this period of intensive peacemaking efforts and turmoil in the oil industry in the Middle East, he frequently acted as the bureau's assistant secretary.

After retiring from the Foreign Service

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in 1979, Mr. Sober taught for nine years as a visiting and distinguished adjunct professor at American University's School of International Service. He also chaired South Asian area studies department at the Foreign Service Institute for 16 years.

From 1981 to 2008 he worked part-time for the State Department, reviewing official documents on the Near East, South Asia and the U.S. intelligence and foreign policy communities prior to their publication in the department's series, *Foreign Relations of the United States*.

Mr. Sober participated in local affairs at his residential community in Bethesda, Md., serving as president of the Sumner Village Community Association. After moving to a retirement community in Prince George's County, he was president of the Collington Residents Association.

Mr. Sober was a member of the American Foreign Service Association, Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired, the Asia Society and the Middle East Institute.

He enjoyed reading and listening to classical music. As a teenager, he was an avid tennis player and then a member of his college track team. Later, he took up golf and became a devoted duffer.

Survivors include Elizabeth Holmes Sober, his wife of 68 years, and a son, Stephen, of Woodstock, Va. A daughter died in 1979.

■ **Sidney Weintraub**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on April 10 at his vacation home in Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1922, Mr. Weintraub received his bachelor's degree from the City College of New York and his master's degree in economics from Yale University. In 1966, he obtained a Ph.D. in economics from American University.

After combat service as a tactical inter-

rogator in Europe during World War II and a stint as a journalist, Mr. Weintraub joined the Foreign Service. His first posting was as vice consul in Tananarive (now Antananarivo) from 1949 to 1951.

After serving as a consular and political officer in Mexico City (1951-1954), he returned to Washington, D.C., where he worked on Japanese and Korean political and economic affairs (1954-1957). He was then posted to Tokyo as political adviser (1958-1959), and then transferred to Bangkok as economic officer (1959-1961).

From 1961 to 1965, Mr. Weintraub worked on commercial policy and trade negotiations in the Economic Bureau, becoming chief of commercial policy.

He was posted overseas again in 1966, serving simultaneously as economic counselor and director of the USAID program in Santiago until 1969. He returned to Washington as deputy assistant secretary for international finance and development, a position he held until 1974.

In 1975, Mr. Weintraub became assistant administrator for interagency coordination at USAID. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1976 to become the Dean Rusk Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs of the University of Texas-Austin, a position he held until 2011.

Mr. Weintraub was the founding director of the LBJ School's program in U.S.-Mexican policy studies and played a significant role in research leading to the North American Free Trade Agreement. He directed a number of policy research projects related to international affairs, including studies of the use of public services by undocumented workers in Texas, the operations of the U.S.-Canada automotive pact, the impact of tourism on Mexico's economy, and the impact on Texas of free trade with Mexico.

In 2006, the Mexican government awarded him the Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest decoration the country confers on foreigners.

Mr. Weintraub also held the Simon Chair in Political Economy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies from 1994 to 2011. He wrote more than 100 articles, books, monographs, chapters and commissioned papers, and was also the author of two mystery novels.

Mr. Weintraub was predeceased in 2001 by his wife of 55 years, Gladys Weintraub. He is survived by his wife of 10 years, Elizabeth Midgley; three children, Jeff Weintraub, Marcia Weintraub Plunkett and Deborah Weintraub Chilewich; five grandchildren; and a great-grandson. ■

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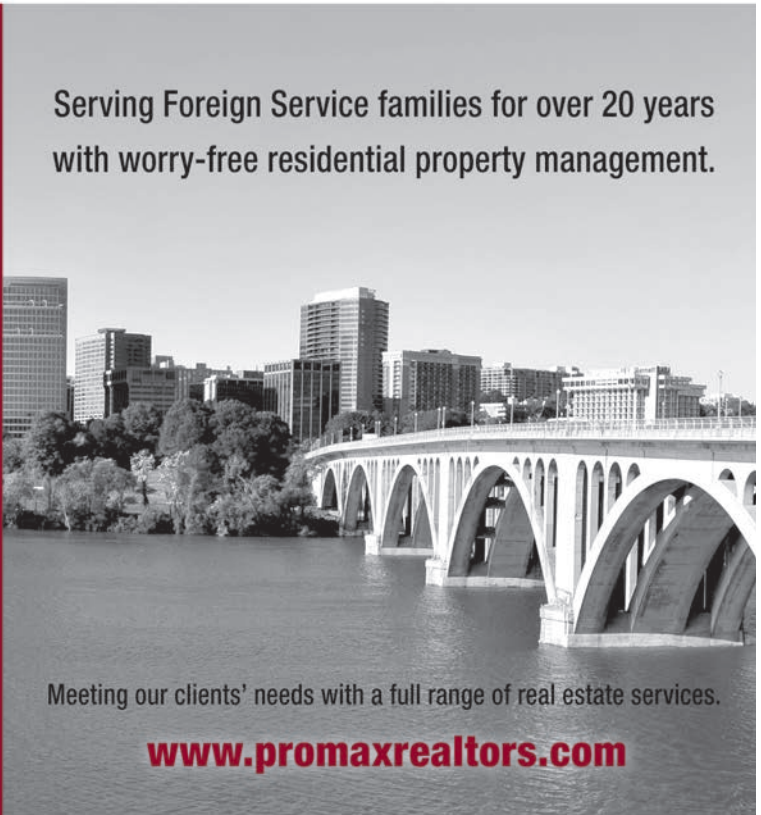
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# Spy vs. Spy, Romanian Style

BY LUCIANO MANGIAFICO

Well before 1977, when I was assigned to Bucharest to head the embassy's consular section, I was already well aware that Securitate, the state security service, kept close tabs on all foreigners, both at work and home. They also used a medical clinic across the street from the embassy to observe our visitors and intercept communications.

When I arrived, our ambassador was Harry G. Barnes Jr., a Foreign Service

In Romania, consular services often involved human rights issues. For instance, in 1979 German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt signed an agreement with Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu that granted about \$368 million in trade credits in exchange for the yearly emigration of some 10,000 to 13,000 ethnic Germans. Deviously, however, the Romanians refused to issue them exit visas to West Germany, but instead indicated the United States as their destination.

for U.S. refugee status travel to other countries, we came up (in cooperation with Canadian diplomats) with a crazy solution that worked for months, until Romanian security finally caught on. We had rubber stamps made in Vienna that read:

American Embassy Bucharest  
This is not a visa  
It is not valid for entry  
to the United States  
(Date)

After we stamped their passports, we advised the bearers to take the afternoon train to Belgrade so that they would arrive at the border crossing point into Yugoslavia in the middle of the night. Frontier guards who were not fluent in English and sleep-deprived tended to miss seeing the word “not” since it was in much smaller type, or did not understand the significance of that disclaimer.

Either way, they usually assumed the bearer was bound for the United States (or Canada, which employed the same trick for its visas). Instead, the refugees then made their way to the refugee camp at Traiskirchen, near Vienna.

I also played postman for Constantin Rauta, a Romanian intelligence officer who had defected to the United States while on an advance trip for the 1974 visit of Pres. Ceausescu to Washington, D.C. Rauta had left behind his young wife and child, so I regularly delivered mail from him to them, and collected letters she wanted sent to him. She was finally allowed to leave Romania late in 1979, nearly six years after her husband had defected.

The guidance of my superiors and colleagues, the trust and camaraderie we developed, and the experience I gained during my two years in Bucharest all proved invaluable to me, both from a personal and a professional standpoint. ■

We came up with a crazy solution that worked for months, until Securitate finally caught on.

legend who was famous for having had a shoe bugged by Romanian intelligence while he was deputy chief of mission in Bucharest years before. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security subsequently exhibited the shoe during Washington security briefings to illustrate the lengths to which hostile powers would go to obtain intelligence.

As Barnes later recounted, “Dick Davis (his ambassador at the time) wrote back to State: ‘Don’t you think you ought to reimburse Harry for the price of new shoes?’ The department’s response was, ‘We will replace the one shoe.’ He finally persuaded them to pay for a pair.”

At first, we issued them tourist visas, assured that German officials would get them off the plane in Frankfurt. Alas, a couple of them ended up in New York and the Immigration and Naturalization Service raised Cain about it, so the department told us to stop doing that.

Fortunately, State left us a loophole by saying nothing about issuing other kinds of visas. So we switched to transit visas, as if the bearers were traveling to Frankfurt via New York. In cooperation with West German officials, who closely monitored the whereabouts of the “transit passengers,” that stratagem worked.

To help Romanians who were ineligible

---

*Luciano Mangiafico, an FSO from 1970 to 1991, is the author of two books, Contemporary American Immigrants (Praeger, 1988) and Italy's Most Wanted (Potomac Books, 2007). He has contributed articles to The Foreign Service Journal and the literary journal Open Letters Monthly, among other periodicals.*



**T**his trail traverses the high-altitude rain forest on Barva Volcano, in the mountains overlooking San Jose, Costa Rica. The top of the mountain is nearly always shrouded in clouds. The trail has been hiked by Boy Scouts of America Troop 43 from San Jose, which includes many scouts and volunteer dads from the embassy. The troop has camped on the mountain twice. ■

---

*Joe De Maria, a mid-level consular officer, is completing a three-year assignment in San Jose. There he volunteers with BSA Troop 43, where his son is a scout. Having previously served in Europe and East Asia, as well as in Washington, D.C., his next assignment will be in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs. He took this photo with a Canon EOS 1100D, Rebel T3 with a EF-S 18-55mm lens.*

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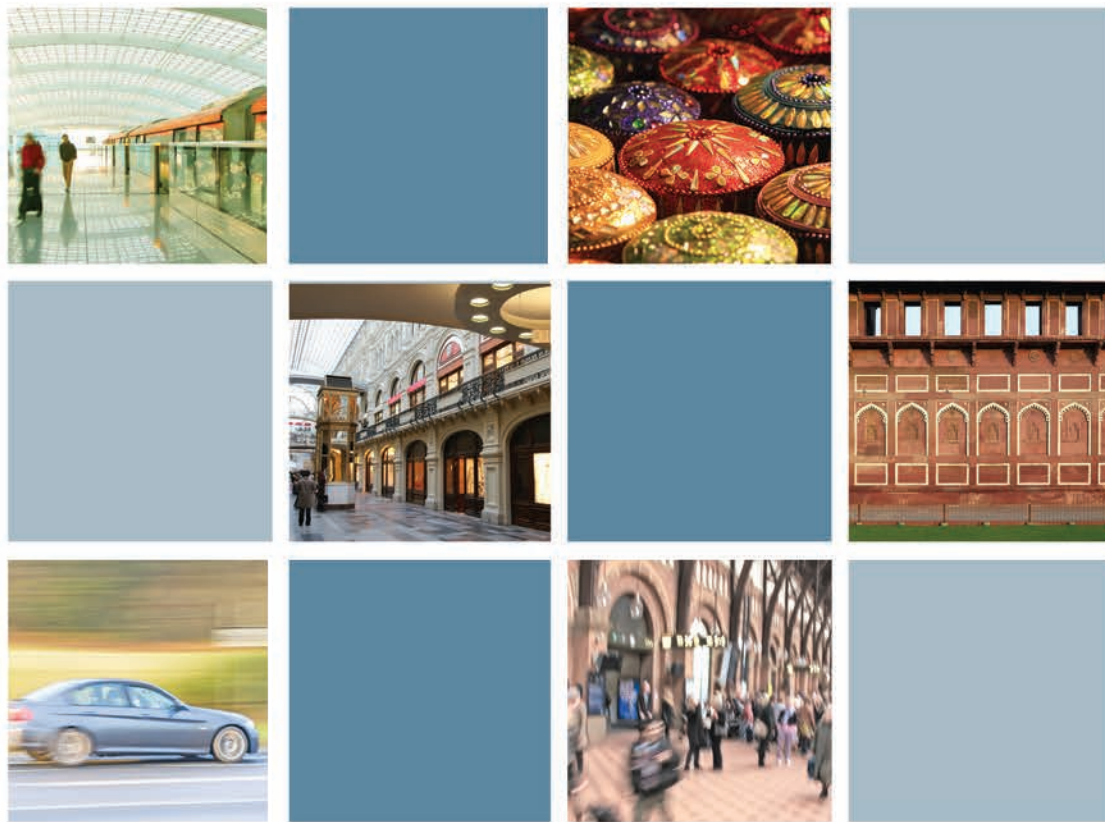
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