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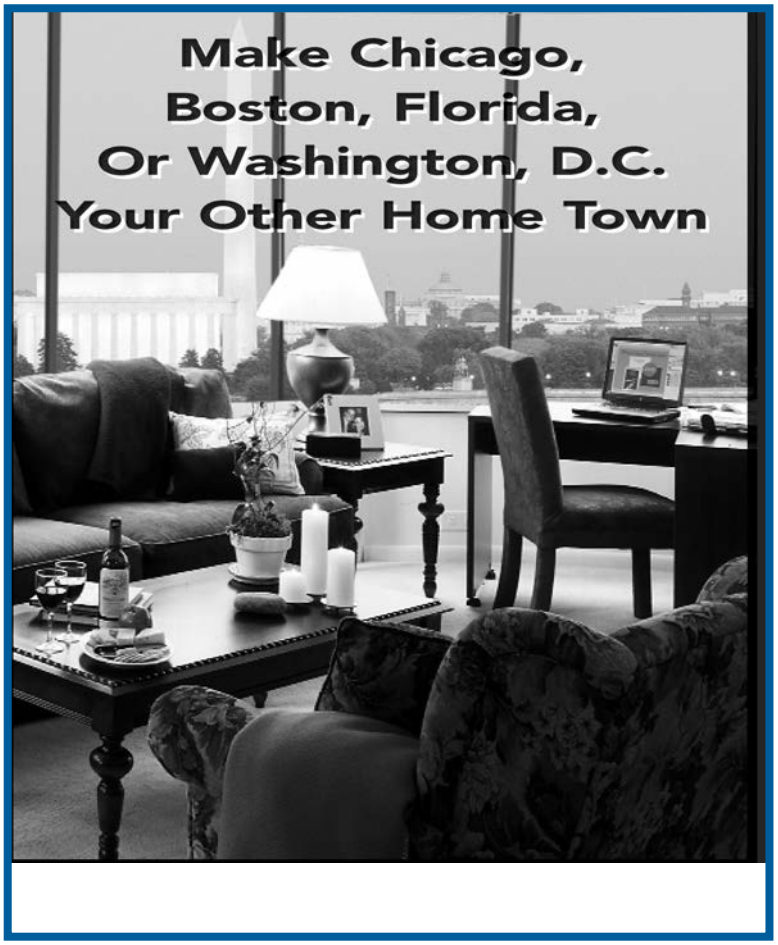

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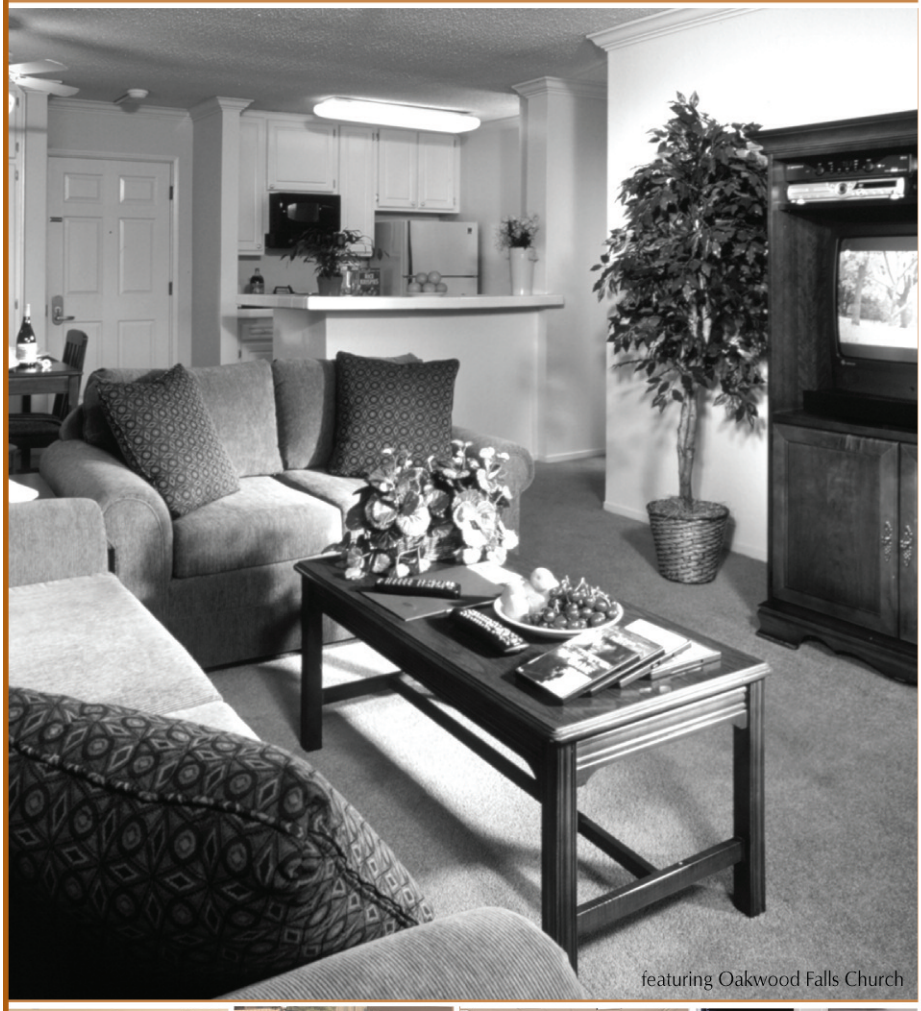

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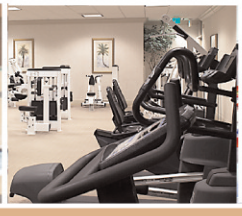

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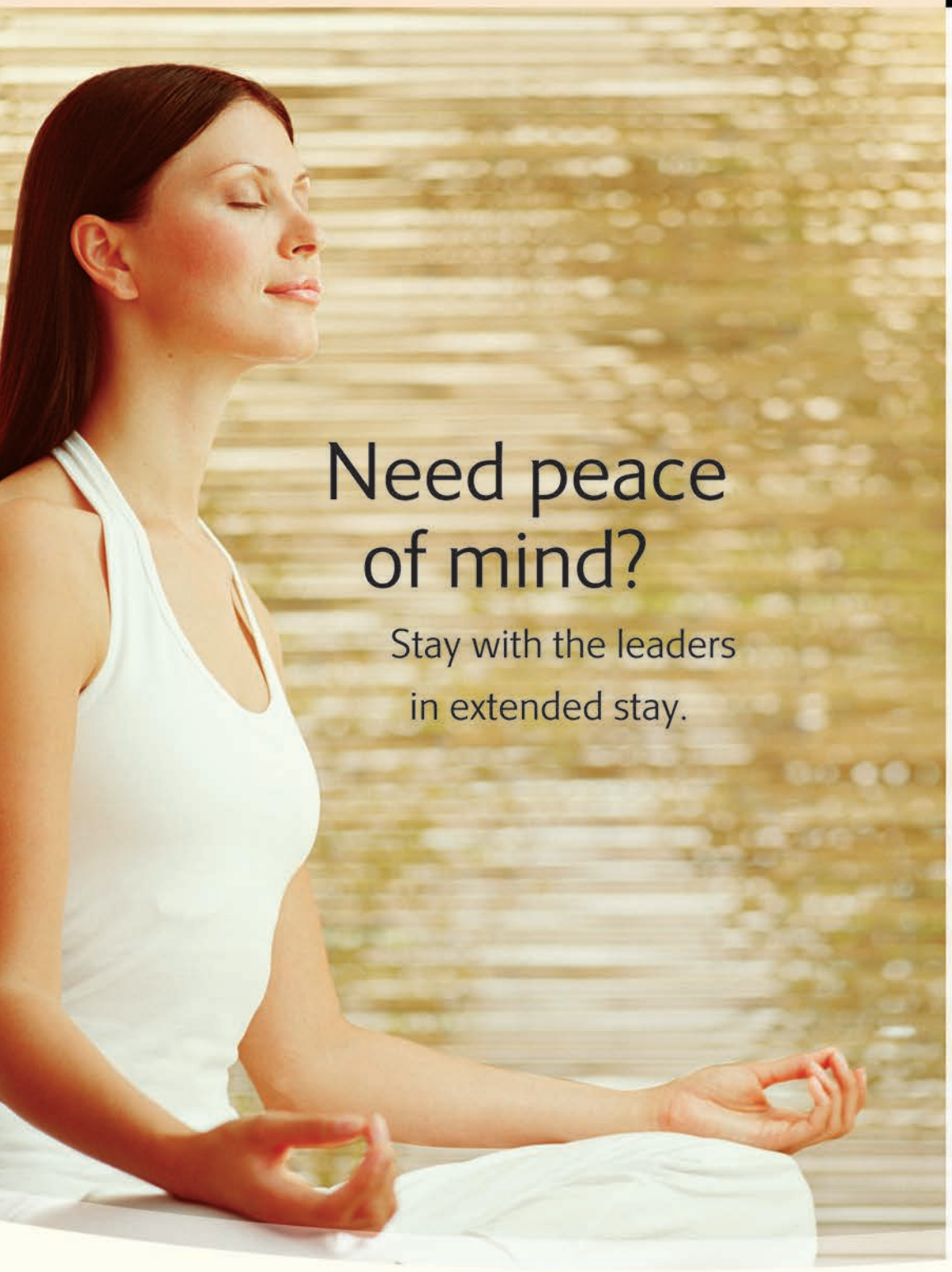

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President's Views

2004: Year of the Dissident

By John Limbert

Last October I attended an event hosted by "Visas for Life," a group dedicated to recognizing and honoring those diplomats who saved hundreds of thousands of lives during World War II by issuing visas and papers to the hunted and the threatened across Europe. Two things struck me about these colleagues' stories. First, compassion and courage knew no national boundaries. Those who acted bravely included Americans, Swiss, Turks, Swedes, Mexicans and Iranians. Some even represented "enemy" countries such as Japan and Germany.

Second, many suffered for doing the right thing. Sweden's Raoul Wallenberg disappeared into the gulag, and, by all accounts, died there. Iran's Abd al-Hosein Sardari faced an official inquiry and reprimand for having protected Europeans Jews with Iranian passports. Our own Hiram Bingham, honored in June 2002 with a special posthumous AFSA award for constructive dissent, found himself shunted into backwaters and eventually hounded out of the Foreign Service for his courageous actions in Marseilles. Other winners of the AFSA dissent awards also faced great difficulties and were sometimes forced to leave the Foreign Service.

Yet it would be a sad day for our profession if we did not have such individuals. We need our gadflies, our shin-kickers, to remind us that all human wisdom does not necessarily reside in the FAM or in guidance from Washington. It does not even reside in Section 214 (b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The realities of our violent and unpredictable world rarely conform to bureaucratic guidelines hammered out between competing bureaus and departments. Think of Vietnam in 1975; Iran in 1979; Rwanda in 1994; and Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003. None of these places was orderly, and none of them conformed to any rulebook so far written.

> *We need our gadflies, our shin-kickers, to remind us that all human wisdom does not necessarily reside in Washington.*

Since 1968 AFSA has recognized colleagues who show the integrity, initiative and intellectual courage to take a stand for what is right. We are proud to present awards to those Foreign Service personnel who say "no" or ask "why?" and "why not?". AFSA is proud to present awards to those who, like Craig Johnstone, Ed Peck, Sam Hart, David Long, Doug Ramsey, Tom Boyatt, and others, have challenged conventional wisdom and taken a risky or unpopular stand.

For the sake of our Service and our profession, we need to value our dissenters. I urge all of you to recognize colleagues who have had the courage to speak out by nominating them for one of our AFSA awards for constructive dissent.

We offer awards in four categories:

- The Tex Harris Award for a Foreign Service specialist
- The Averell Harriman Award for a junior officer (FS 06-04)
- The William Rivkin Award for a mid-career officer (FS 03-01)
- The Christian A. Herter Award for a senior officer (FE/OC-FE/CA)

Recognizing dissenters is never easy. Doing so may mean swallowing our pride and admitting we were wrong — or could be wrong — about an issue. It may mean identifying ourselves with an unpopular and contrary view on policy or operations. It may mean identifying ourselves with an abrasive, difficult personality. None of the above will come easily in a Foreign Service that values collegiality and consensus.

But the very difficulty of the process makes it all the more important. I urge all of you to go to www.afsa.org/awards and take an hour to write a nomination for a colleague who has shown the courage to stand up for what is right. Our Service and our profession will be better for your efforts. ■

John Limbert is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

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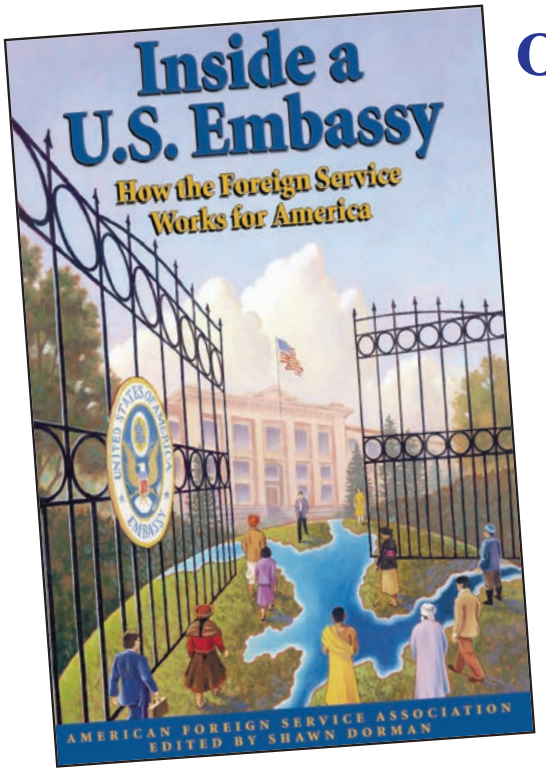

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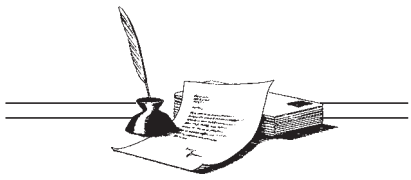


LETTERS

Looking Back for the Way Ahead

I wish to support the observations of Ronald Spiers in his November Speaking Out, "The Middle East Road Map: Going Nowhere Fast," and his sound proposals on the way ahead. I'm sure most of our colleagues who have served in the area would agree.

I made virtually the same proposals in a talk to the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco in February 1971. They were considered to be "politically unthinkable" in both Israel and Washington at the time!

David G. Nes
FSO, retired
Owings Mills, Md.

More on the Young Turks

The *Journal* sometimes swims slowly overseas, as happened with my copy of the very interesting June issue. Though late, I still think I should fill out the excellent accounts of the AFSA labor union formation by Tex Harris, Tom Boyatt and Hank Cohen. I was the AFSA Governing Board member first assigned to sound out Tex on joining us, the one who first asked Tom to help organize support among State officers for AFSA to become a labor union, and — a decade later — co-author with Hank of a *Journal* article attacking the (military-inspired) up-or-out policy, which prematurely deprives the Foreign Service of many of its most experienced diplomats. Even former Secretary of State George Shultz now agrees that such forced early retirement is a waste. (See the September *Journal*.)

Sometime around 1970, there was a crucial meeting of the "Young Turk" AFSA board under President Charlie Bray's leadership. Lannon Walker, the original "Young Turk" who in many ways was the prime mover on this issue, came from overseas to attend, though he was no longer on the board. Interestingly, he expressed doubts at that meeting about whether the Foreign Service was ready for AFSA to become a labor union. One or two others on our board agreed, and it appeared for a while that the negative might carry the day, until several of us weighed in on the positive side. I am proud to have been one of the majority who supported the move. Following this major decision, we waged a publicity campaign in favor of the change. AFSA as combination professional association and labor union has never looked back.

In reading the October Letters, I remember the helpful role that the late Bill Macomber played as head of State Department management on smoothing the integration of AFSA as labor union and helping to minimize growing pains.

I sympathize with John Harter's lament about the confusion in earlier State management that probably contributed to the Young Turk revolution overshooting its mark. The major reform that led to institution of "up-or-out" personnel policy overlooked the reality that in diplomacy, age is more often a plus than a minus, as exemplified by Ambassadors Harriman, Kennan, Bunker, Habib and so many others. My concern today is about the need to manage and control the activities of so many different U.S. agencies overseas, to improve the views of foreign governments and publics about the nature of American policy, and to report back to the Washington establishment with the authority that comes from palpably greater experience.

It profits us to remember that the excess zeal of the real-life Young Turks helped destroy the faltering Ottoman Empire that they were trying to save. Perhaps it is not too late to save the remnants of American diplomacy. Returning to some of the classical principles of effective diplomacy comes more easily with experience. Maybe some of today's FS generation will try to reverse that misguided reform, which speeds promotion in the lower ranks only to cut careers short when they are most productive. State's personnel policy should be re-examined with that in mind. Then State may once again support its leader with the weight and depth that wins respect in the interagency process.

George B. Lambrakis, Ph.D.
FSO, retired
Professor of International Relations and Diplomacy
London, England

The Arnie Amendment

Where will Arnold Schwarzenegger take the U.S? A *Washington Post* editorial and Senator Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, show the way: Repeal the constitutional ban on a foreign-born president. Shouldn't we also drop the citizenship requirement? Let's go all the way with the globalization of presidential politics.

Why not? Americans wear garments made in foreign sweatshops and cheer imported baseball stars who never saw a neighborhood sandlot. Why shouldn't we also seek the best candidates the world has to offer and draw from farm teams overseas? Why be satisfied with an uninspiring, politics-as-usual bunch like the Democratic Nine? To celebrate our modern political values and add excitement to campaigns both parties should consider drafting some of the following …

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi: Italy's richest man and a former cruise ship crooner with a shady past. Can't speak English? Niente problema. Most opera divas can memorize lyrics in Italian, German or French and still be unable to handle the language. Not so different from our current crew with sound bites imbedded in their brains.

British PM Tony Blair: He's religious with a tendency toward untruthfulness and a wife with a questionable real estate deal. But do we want a "lap dog" who readily follows orders? Karl Rove would love that — except that Blair might be too intelligent to stay on a message of simple slogans.

David Beckham: British soccer superstar now playing for Madrid, married to the pop singer Posh Spice, rich and living in a castle. Certain to bring in the soccer mom, plutocrat and Hispanic votes.

The Pope: Sorry, Americans aren't ready for a man wearing a dress. At least, not yet. For the same reason Iran's Prime Minister Khatami is out. Still, both men sport funny headgear that might appeal to voters who go for cowboy hats.

Israeli PM Ariel Sharon: Tough and adept at making war on smaller, weaker and demonized people — exactly the American style of warfare since World War II.

Finally, Cuban President Fidel Castro: A man who has stood down every American president since Eisenhower. Expert on running a country with a declining economy and restricted civil liberties, Castro's only liability might be his beard. But then there's the nostalgia vote. Think of Rutherford B. Hayes and spittoons returned to the White House.

So, editorial writers and senators, push on fast with the Arnie Amendment. Make politics as playful as making movies.

Henry Precht
FSO, retired
Bridgton, Maine ■

AN INVITATION FOR SUMMER FICTION

Once again the *FSJ* is seeking works of fiction of up to 3,000 words for its annual summer fiction issue. Story lines or characters involving the Foreign Service are preferred, but not required. The top stories, selected by the *Journal*'s Editorial Board, will be published in the July/August issue; some of them will also be simultaneously posted on the *Journal*'s Web site. The writer of each story will receive an honorarium of $250, payable upon publication.

All stories must be previously unpublished. Submissions should be unsigned and accompanied by a cover sheet with author's name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address.

Deadline is April 1. No fooling.

Please also note the following:

- Authors are limited to two entries.
- Entries will only be accepted by e-mail (preferably in the form of Word or Word Perfect attachments and with the text copied into the body of the message).

Please send submissions (or questions) to Mikkela Thompson, *Journal* Business Manager, at Thompsonm@afsa.org.

CYBERNOTES

Census Test to Count Americans in Three Countries

The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting test censuses beginning in February in three nations — Kuwait, France and Mexico — as the first step toward determining the feasibility of counting all Americans overseas in the 2010 census (**www.census.gov/PressRelease/www.2003/cb03cn03.html**).

Between three and six million Americans are currently estimated to be living abroad, a feature of the increasing integration of the world economy. But to date, only federal civilian employees, military personnel and their respective dependents have been included in the decennial census. The results of this test will help determine whether to include the rest of the overseas Americans — retirees, students and business people — in the 2010 census, and how to do it.

The three nations chosen for the sample are geographically diverse, but all have large populations of Americans. The Census Bureau, working through American business and civic groups and English-language media in the three countries, is informing people about how they can participate. An Internet site has been set up with information about the test, including "frequently asked questions" and confidentiality information (**www.census.gov/overseas04**). In February, U.S. citizens will be able to respond to the census test online at this site. They may also request that a questionnaire be mailed to their overseas address, or pick it up at embassies and consulates or from partner organizations serving American overseas.

Meanwhile, Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., introduced a bill in September calling for a series of overseas census tests, and mandating that all Americans residing abroad must be included in the 2010 Census. The "Census of Americans Abroad Act" (S.1682) states that because of the threat of terrorism in the world today, especially against Americans, it is vital to keep a tally on where Americans are and what their status is around the world (**http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c108:S.1682**). The legislation has been sent to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. (So far, no similar bill has been introduced in the House.)

I really could use you … on those diplomatic conferences that I have to go to, sitting there all day long. … Man, you could have livened up things at the end of a long day, when we were all dying to reach an agreement on something! I can just see you now, jumping up, throwing off the cape. Get up! Get up! Get off of that thing! … Godfather, I hereby appoint you Secretary of Soul and Foreign Minister of Funk.

— Colin L. Powell, speaking to Kennedy Center Honors winner James Brown, Dec. 6, *www.state.gov*.

How Much Rank Does State Pull?

NASA and the National Science Foundation are the top two federal agencies to work for, according to the first-ever "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government" rankings released Nov. 12 by the Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation (**www.bestplacestowork.org**). Twenty-eight cabinet departments and independent agencies and nearly 200 subagencies were ranked.

State's ranking in the different categories is instructive. On overall employee satisfaction, State ranked 19th out of 28. Its best showing was in the category of support for diversity (12th), with a middling standing in strategic management and work/life balance (both 16th), and in effective leadership and pay & benefits (both 15th). The rest was downhill: performance-based rewards and advancement (20th), teamwork (21st), employee skills/mission match (22nd) and training and development (25th). As far as the category of family friendly culture and benefits is concerned, State hit rock bottom (27th).

"Best Places to Work" was created by the Partnership for Public Service and the ISPPI to promote excellence and improve performance within federal agencies by creating a baseline for measuring employee commitment and engagement.

The Washington, D.C.-based Partnership for Public Service (**www.ourpublicservice.org**), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to revitalizing public service, was

CYBERNOTES

founded in 2001. It aims both to inspire talented professionals to join government service and to transform the way government operates.

The "Best Places to Work" Web site contains the complete rankings and comprehensive information on the methodology behind them, as well as detailed analysis of the findings, frequently asked questions about the rankings and "fast facts."

On the Other Side of the Fence…

The grass is always greener, according to the old saying. But Foreign Service folks, worried and dispirited by the almost constant barrage of attacks on American diplomacy and diplomats from Capitol Hill to Istanbul during the past year and more, can take heart. News from France and Canada indicates that things could be worse.

On Dec. 1 thousands of French diplomats and Foreign Ministry staff members resorted to a strike for the first time ever, protesting proposed 2004 budget cuts that would trim the Foreign Ministry's operating budget by nearly 2 percent, do away with 116 jobs, and cut diplomatic housing allowances by $24 million.

"After years and years of economizing that have hit this ministry," a strike leader said, "they're asking us to go further — that is, to no longer have the means to do our job." The French Foreign Ministry supports about 5,000 people in 154 embassies, 98 consulates and nearly 500 cultural offices and schools around the world.

In Washington, Secretary of State Colin Powell pulled U.S. diplomacy out of the dumps into which it was cast during the 1990s, when the State Department's budget was halved, Foreign Service ranks dwindled and for two years the FS entrance exam wasn't even given. On his watch, the budget has been restored and the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative rapidly rebuilt FS ranks. But that doesn't mean the plug won't be pulled again on the ship of State in the future.

To our north, the Canadian Foreign Service appears to be facing a truly existential crisis, its raison d'etre called into question as much by government actions as by the stunning portrayal of Canada's decline on the international stage in Andrew Cohen's *While Canada Slept,* a book making the rounds among policy circles. "Do we want or need a professional career diplomatic service?" is the way Masud Husain, president of Canada's Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers, put the fundamental question facing Canadian diplomats and the nation in a recent issue of PAFSO's quarterly, *bout de papier* (Vol. 20, No. l, p. 4).

There has been a sharp decline in Canada's ability to project a diplomatic presence both abroad and in Ottawa, Husain explains. It is evident in the extent to which other government departments conduct their own foreign affairs without central coordination, in the large number of vacan-

Site of the Month: The National Security Archive

The National Security Archive, located at the George Washington University's Gelman Library in Washington, D.C., is the world's largest nongovernmental library of declassified national security documents. A great many of these documents are available, with annotation and well-written commentary, at the Archive's Web site (**www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/**). It is a gold mine of fascinating and topical material.

Founded in 1985 by a group of journalists and scholars who had obtained documentation from the U.S. government under the Freedom of Information Act and sought a centralized repository for these materials, the Archive also functions as a public interest law firm defending and expanding public access to government information through the FOIA, and an indexer and publisher of the documents in book, microfiche and electronic formats.

The Web site contains "Headlines" — which at this writing featured new documents on "Nixon's Trip to China," "The Dawn of Mexico's Dirty War," and "Kissinger to Argentines on the Dirty War: 'The quicker you succeed, the better'" — as well as critical documents on 10 different topics such as Europe, Humanitarian Interventions and Government Secrecy. The site also contains special Archive projects.

There are also links to a directory of the Archive's books, with ordering information, and to the Digital National Security Archive, which, however, is a subscriber-only facility.

50 Years Ago...

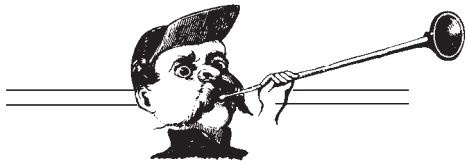
The task of keeping the American people adequately informed on international developments is a joint responsibility of the diplomat and the newsman. It is a responsibility which must be carried out in a spirit of cooperation and mutual trust.

— Henry B. Cox, from "Diplomacy and the Press," *FSJ*, January 1954.

cies in the Foreign Service that force the remaining officers to work large amounts of overtime, and in the poor salaries FS officers receive compared to the responsibility of the work, among other things. In a recent public service survey, FS officers had one of the highest planned departure rates in the public service, and a whopping 42 percent of FS officers at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade felt they were not treated with respect (compared to 14 percent of the public service overall).

At the DFAIT there has been a large increase in "non-rotational" officers filling FS positions on a single assignment basis over the last few years, as well as continued conversion of FS positions to non-rotational positions and increased use of locally engaged staff employees. "These changes have created a quasi-parallel Foreign Service without the same rules on entry requirements, bilingualism, probation, training, appraisals and promotion imposed on the FS," Husain points out.

"The government is going to have to decide if it wants a professional career Foreign Service or whether it is happy to go with another model of a public service that has people going on single assignments to foreign postings," says Husain. "If the latter, it will have to address issues of getting people to go to the hardship posts rather than New York, London, Paris and Geneva. It will have to consider how it will develop Asia specialists, Middle East experts and Africa hands. Or how it will explain its inability to have expertise in these areas when crises hit." ■



SPEAKING OUT

Time to Speak Up for the Voice of America

BY MYRNA WHITWORTH

"Remember you represent the American people and its free press." With these words, VOA Newsroom Chief Bernard Kamenske bade farewell to his staff in the fall of 1981. Bernie lived and breathed the First Amendment, and believed passionately that VOA had an obligation to its international audience to provide balanced journalism. A self-professed Jeffersonian, he also knew the American experience was worthy of sharing with the rest of the world.

Bernie, my friend and mentor, passed away in September, but he leaves behind a lasting legacy best exemplified in the document he helped to become law — the VOA Charter. The Charter, drafted in 1960 and signed into law in 1976, is both the foundation of VOA's credibility and a statement of its public diplomacy role. "VOA will serve the long-range interests of the United States," the document states, "by communicating directly with the people of the world." It requires VOA to provide accurate, objective and comprehensive news; a broad and balanced picture of American institutions, thought and values; and a thorough explanation of U.S. policies on a broad range of issues. It provides a road map for U.S. international broadcasting that is as relevant in today's war on terrorism as it was in the Cold War.

However, at the very time that it should be at its strongest, America's Voice is being silenced in some parts of the world and marginalized in others. One might expect pressure from outside to politicize VOA content. To be sure there has been some of that; notably, for instance, the State Department's disagreement with VOA management in the emotionally charged days following 9/11 over the airing of a report based on an interview with Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar. But equally troubling, if not more so, is the tilt toward commercialization of publicly funded international broadcasting.

At the very time that it should be at its strongest, America's Voice is being silenced in some parts of the world and marginalized in others.

The Commercial Impulse: Radio Sawa

Following restructuring in the 1990s, a nine-member, bipartisan Broadcasting Board of Governors oversees VOA and its sister grantee broadcasters. (The Secretary of State serves as an ex-officio member.) This part-time group of private citizens, most of whom are active in the media business, has broad authority over a multimedia, international broadcast operation that cost the American taxpayer some $540 million in 2003. The BBG sets priorities, determines languages, allocates resources and commissions program content. Under the current structure, the directors of VOA and the grantee entities do not make policy or programming decisions; instead they are expected to implement the wishes of the board.

Drawing upon their domestic commercial experience, board members seek to oversee with a corporate, micro-managerial style. Unfortunately, there is no one among them who advocates for the Voice of America. In fact, frustrated by what they see as a cumbersome federal bureaucracy, board members have chosen to break away their pet projects from the Voice of America, thus bypassing the mandate of the VOA Charter. (Of all the entities that the BBG supervises, VOA is the only one that has a legal mandate, based on Public Law 94-350, to uphold the provisions of the VOA Charter.)

A case in point is the much-touted Radio Sawa that replaced VOA's Arabic Service in March 2002 with a 24-hour Western/Arabic music network. Gone were the VOA brand, the VOA central news product, and the comprehensive reporting and analysis that had been the hallmark of VOA Arabic programming for 55 years. In their place were Britney Spears, Amer Diab, Justin Timberlake and Nawal Zoghby. VOA Arabic Service employees were required to compete for positions in the new Radio Sawa. In fact, the majority of the Sawa staff is not from VOA. They were hired under a relatively new personnel provision called

the Personal Services Contract.

Radio Sawa is the creation of BBG Governor Norman Pattiz, founder and chairman of Westwood One, the nation's largest radio syndicator. Using the business acumen and salesmanship that turned a small business into a multimillion-dollar media empire, Pattiz led a campaign on Capitol Hill and in the corridors of the State Department to sell his vision of a network designed to attract Arab youth with music and then inform them about the United States with short news, interviews and opinion pieces.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Pattiz found a receptive audience willing to appropriate $35 million to put Sawa on the air. And more funding is promised for an around-the-clock Arabic-language TV service, the Middle East Television Network, to compete with the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera and the 44 other Arabic-language satellite channels that blanket the Middle East.

A New Model of Success?

In its literature and public statements, the BBG regards Radio Sawa as an unqualified success, pointing to the results of an ACNielsen survey that showed it is the leading international broadcaster in five Middle Eastern countries, with a 31-percent listenership. But what is the audience hearing? It is true that at the height of the Iraq War, Sawa's four streams increased news coverage, but it continued to air at least 14 hours of Arabic and Western pop music as U.S. bombs fell on Iraq. Radio Sawa now offers at least one 30-minute news program on its Iraqi stream. However, the bulk of news is delivered in hourly five-minute and 90-second increments. This is hardly sufficient for comprehensive news coverage or for in-depth discussion that will foster greater understanding of the United States. The board says it will continue to layer more substance onto Radio Sawa, but in Jordan, where Sawa's easily replicated format is already receiving competition from a local military station, news programming is being reduced not increased.

As FM markets continue to open in the Arab world, we can expect more stations to copy the successful Sawa model but jettison the American news content. There is precedent for this. Backed by a million-dollar research study, VOA Europe was launched in 1985 in an effort to attract a new generation unaware of the U.S. role in reconstructing the new Europe. Its "music and more" format had some success, especially as media markets began to open in Central Europe after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. But it didn't take long for young, would-be media moguls in Europe to pick up on the format and, given the easy availability of CDs on the commercial market, to replace VOA Europe with their own brand.

The quality of Sawa's transmission also has something to do with its listening rate. Despite repeated appeals from VOA managers for improved transmission facilities, VOA's Arabic Service — Radio Sawa's predecessor — was relegated to barely audible short-wave and medium-wave signals to the target area. In the days of the Cold War and in the budget-tight 1990s that followed, no money was ever appropriated for better radio coverage to the Middle East.

Yet with a one-time capital expense of $16 million, the BBG built and improved AM transmissions, established FM transmitters in nine Arabic-speaking countries, including four in Iraq, and leased audio channels on popular regional satellites. We will never know what kind of audience VOA Arabic would have garnered during the Iraq War if it had had similar transmissions at its disposal.

Instead, audiences seeking substantive VOA information had only one source — an eight-minute newscast on the VOA Arabic Web site that drew not from Sawa news output, but from double-sourced and carefully edited VOA central news material.

And the producers had much to choose from. The VOA newsroom output during the 22 days from March 19 through April 9, 2003, comprised a total of 1,563 news items and 847 reports and backgrounders; about two-thirds of the output reflected U.S. policies and statements. Understaffed and underfunded, the VOA newsroom rose to the occasion in the finest Bernie Kamenske tradition. The overall content of this material was judged "accurate, objective and comprehensive" by an inside review panel and by four outside experts.

A Public Diplomacy Mandate

In recent months, a series of reports have been released documenting the failure of American public diplomacy since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. To name a few, they include reports from the Council on Foreign Relations, the Heritage Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trust, and the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World. All have concluded that anti-Americanism is widespread, particularly in the Muslim world.

While each takes a different approach to addressing the problem, none has given adequate recognition to what a properly funded, staffed and supported Voice of America could contribute to improving international understanding of the United States, its values, its institutions and its policies. VOA tells the American story within a regional and cultural context and in the 50-plus languages its audiences speak. The BBC World Service is not going to tell that story.

No other entity under the purview of the Broadcasting Board of Governors has the well-defined public diplomacy mandate that is

outlined in the VOA Charter. Radio and Television Marti have no such mission, nor do Radio Free Asia and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. These are surrogate broadcasters, created to promote democracy through the broadcast of accurate local and regional news and information. Their mission statements do not call for an explanation of American values or policies. On the contrary, the "Radios" take pride in the fact that they are not required to carry U.S. policy statements.

If Radio Sawa is any example, the BBG strategy of trying to increase audience and market share by "marrying the mission to the market" will bring on line more tax-supported, easily replicated, commercial-style music stations with a minimum of information or American identification.

Cost Efficiencies

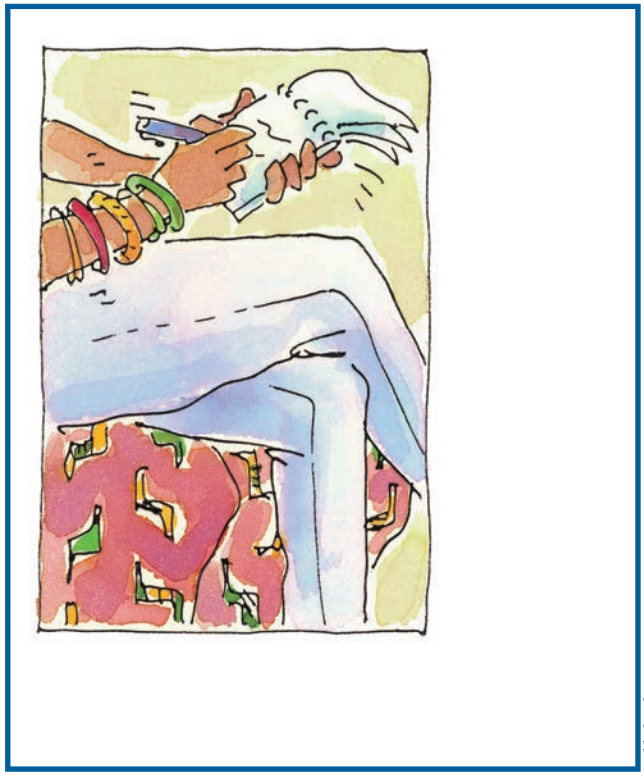
The American taxpayer spent about $150 million dollars in 2003 for the Voice of America to deliver credible, truthful information about the United States and the world to an estimated global audience of 100 million people. That's less than the cost of an F/A-22 jet fighter. As a public diplomacy tool, VOA is cheap.

To put it in even clearer focus, VOA's Kirundi/Kinyarwanda Service broadcasts a daily program of news coupled with conflict resolution, democracy-building, humanitarian and youth reporting to the strategically important Great Lakes region of Central Africa. The cost of the program, which reaches an estimated 50 percent of the population, is about the same as one State Department FSO with a family posted to an overseas mission.

The globally recognized VOA brand is worth protecting and preserving. Strengthen it; improve it; streamline its personnel and administrative procedures. But don't dismember, marginalize or commercialize it. For over 60 years, the Voice of America has, in Bernie Kamenske's words, "represented the American people and its free press" to the world. This venerable institution remains the best and most cost-effective vehicle for projecting American values and policies to tens of millions of people around the globe. And hopefully, once knowing us better, they will distrust us less. ■

Myrna Whitworth is a former program director of the Voice of America. She also served twice as acting VOA director, including during the summer and fall of 2001. She is now a free-lance journalist and writer.

THE ABCs OF U.S. OVERSEAS BROADCASTING



Mikkela Thompson

THE BBG AND THE BBC ARE DIFFERENT ANIMALS, BUT FACE MUCH THE SAME CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Over the past 16 months, the *Foreign Service Journal* has periodically spotlighted each of the foreign affairs agencies (besides State) with Foreign Service contingents: the U.S. Agency for International Development (September 2002), the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service (January 2003), and the Foreign Agricultural Service (May 2003). This month, we wrap up the series by focusing on the smallest (and newest — just a decade old) of the bunch, the International Broadcasting Bureau.

Now, a quick show of hands: how many of you knew there was another foreign affairs agency with Foreign Service posi-

tions — much less what the IBB does, or how it relates to the rest of the acronym-laden alphabet soup of international broadcasting? I thought so.

Well, here's the story.

America was the last major power to enter the world of international broadcasting, setting up the Voice of America in 1942 — well after Radio Moscow, the official service of the Soviet Union (1929), Vatican Radio (1931), the British Broadcasting Corporation (1932), and Nazi Germany's Rundfunk Ausland (1933). Yet despite that relatively late start, today VOA broadcasts around the world (except for Western Europe and the United States) in 55 languages to an estimated audience of 91 million people each week. Its programming travels via short-wave and medium-wave radio, on television via satellite (14 hours a week), and on the Internet.

Now we jump ahead half a century to the International Broadcasting Act of 1994. That legislation brought VOA and all the other radio, television and Internet resources of U.S. nonmilitary international broadcasting under the aegis of the nine-member Broadcasting Board of Governors. It also established the International Broadcasting Bureau as the administrative arm of the BBG (not to be confused with the BBC!). The IBB not only manages the day-to-day operations of the three governmental broadcasters (the Voice of America, Radio Marti and TV Marti), but also provides technical support to all the other official U.S. broadcasting entities the BBG manages: Radio Sawa, Radio Farda, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and WORLDNET Television (which is now being folded into VOA).

We hope our coverage will provide a solid framework for understanding the bureaucratic structure of U.S. international broadcasting, some of the issues it faces, and how most of its components operate. But that is a far cry from being able to assess its effectiveness. Are the fruits of America's governmental broadcasting effort worth the approximately half-billion dollars the BBG spends annually?

How Effective Is the Effort?

Consider the following statistic, cited on the BBG's home page (www.bbg.gov) and quoted in several of the articles on the following pages: "Every week, more than 100 million listeners, viewers and Internet users around the world turn on, tune in and log on to U.S. international broadcasting programs."

That's a nice, round figure. But like most statistics, it raises as many questions as it answers. First of all, given that a large portion of our "target audience" resides in countries where tuning in to U.S. broadcasters can be dangerous, it is impossible to know for sure how accurate that estimate is. But assuming that many more people would listen if their governments did not jam our signals — for instance, Fidel Castro's regime does such an effective job of jamming Radio and TV Marti that as few as 1-2 percent of Cubans can receive those broadcasts — let's triple the figure to 300 million worldwide "customers" per week.

Impressive as that hypothetical number is, it represents barely 5 percent of the six billion or so people in the world. On the other hand, if they are "opinion leaders" (in Foreign Service parlance) who disproportionately influence their compatriots to understand and (ideally) appreciate America and Americans, then that would be a real success story — particularly if they are located in volatile regions such as the Middle East that are difficult to reach otherwise.

Complicating the issue further, one must also bear in mind the increasingly stiff competition VOA and its sister services face on the international airwaves from dozens of other governmental broadcasters, such as the BBC World Service, Radio France International, China Radio International, and the Voice of Russia (Radio Moscow's successor). Even more formidable is the challenge from the commercial media that have mushroomed around the world in the past decade or so — from the Dubai-based Al-Arabiya and Qatar-based Al-Jazeera satellite TV channels to the private FM stations in Africa.

Suddenly, Everything Changed …

During the four decades of the Cold War, the scope and mission of international broadcasting was simple and straightforward. The Soviet bloc and the Free World battled to sway each other's domestic populations and the populations of developing countries, and nobody much questioned the budgetary outlays involved. Getting an audience was not very complicated either: there weren't many broadcasts to be picked up on the shortwave dial, so just putting a strong signal out there meant you'd be likely to get listeners. Jamming, of course, was a problem, but

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with sufficient funding it could be worked around.

The fall of communism and the end of the Cold War transformed the world's political geometry. Many international broadcasters cut back on their hours and foreign languages, and were generally forced to scramble for government funding. The Voice of Russia, for instance, discontinued six languages and laid off 30 percent of its staff in 1995. In the U.S., foreign policy premises and goals were thrown into turmoil, and many questioned the continued need for public diplomacy of any sort. Suddenly, international broadcasting was fighting for its life, at the mercy of lawmakers for whom budget restraint had become an overriding preoccupation.

Perhaps more significant, this crisis coincided with an explosion of communications technology that fueled a commercial media boom around the world and fierce competition for audiences everywhere. Satellite technology, in particular, gave broadcasting a global reach. The growth of the Internet and developments in digital technologies linking television and computers point to the continuing nature of this revolution. Few governmental broadcasters have the budgets to proceed with all of the program delivery options simultaneously, so choices have to be made and priorities set.

And, because listeners worldwide now have more choice in private and governmental media offerings to tune into than ever before, programming content has become a critical issue. How do you win and hold a growing audience share, and at the same time get a particular editorial message across?

Content In Contention

Two of the BBG's new market-based projects — Radio Sawa, aimed at Arab listeners, and Radio Farda, aimed at Iranians — exemplify a trend toward downplaying news and information in favor of popular music and other "softer" programming. Early indications are that this approach is successfully inducing younger listeners to tune in. A late-November survey conducted by D3 Systems Inc., of Vienna, Va., in Baghdad, Mosul and Basra, Iraq's three largest cities, found that Radio Sawa's average listenership was 48.9 percent of the population, compared to 39.2 percent for Radio Monte Carlo and 30.4 percent for the BBC. But is Britney Spears truly the best cultural diplomat we have in our arsenal? And it may not take long for local commercial media to copy the format, leaving out the "content" altogether, as former VOA Assistant Director Myrna Whitworth notes in her Speaking Out column (p. 13).

Further, the introduction of a commercial approach has given a new twist to the old tension between the public broadcaster's role as an instrument of U.S. policy and as an exemplar of free and independent journalism. This fundamental tension is still alive and well. Al Kamen's column ("In the Loop") in the Nov. 19 *Washington Post* reprints an internal VOA e-mail, for instance, expressing high-level displeasure with a report on President Bush's visit to England that focused on the millions being spent for security during the trip, the numbers of police to be deployed and protest activities, rather than the substance of the visit. Here are the final two paragraphs from that missive:

"Do you think the listener in North Korea or India or Nigeria understands or cares that $9 million will be spent on security, or that 5,000 police will be deployed?

"If you were the Khmer or Dari or Swahili language service chief, would you even bother translating these stories? I know that slightly more substantive stories about the visit were sent out yesterday, but that was yesterday. The users of today's stories have been given no clue why this visit is occurring or what these national leaders are planning to talk about. Did the White House not have a pre-trip briefing on the trip? Where is that information?"

Such complaints are not new. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, the State Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors put intense pressure on VOA not to air a news report that included excerpts from an interview with Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar. Nonetheless, News Director Andre de Nesnera authorized the release of the report as one part of VOA's overall coverage. For his courageous efforts to defend VOA's charter and preserve the integrity of its news broadcasts, AFSA honored de Nesnera in June 2002 with the Tex Harris Award for constructive dissent by a Foreign Service specialist.

The Challenge of Public Broadcasting

The BBG's five-year strategic plan issued in December 2002 attempts to address the new challenges. The plan, "Marrying the Mission to the Market," was prompted by declining audience share in key markets such as Russia, and historically static performance in critical strategic regions such as the Middle East. In the early 1990s, for instance, the BBG had a 21-percent market share in Russia; in recent years that has declined to about 4 percent of the adult audience. For decades, the VOA's Arabic ser-

vice listenership in the Middle East has been static at less than 2 percent of potential listeners. Hence the desire to prioritize the use of limited resources to reach larger audiences in key markets in support of U.S. national interests. Support for the war on terrorism is one of the BBG's principal missions.

According to a U.S. General Accounting Office report issued in July 2003 for the House Committee on International Relations, the BBG has done a commendable job of advancing solutions to the challenges of technological innovation and better coordination of its seven separate broadcast entities. But the board needs to set measurable objectives, and has yet to address the problem of overlapping language services, the GAO report notes pointedly ("U.S. International Broadcasting: New Strategic Approach Focuses on Reaching Large Audiences but Lacks Measurable Program Objectives," GAO-03-772).

America was the last major power to enter the world of international broadcasting.

As of April 2003, the GAO states, the BBG had a 55-percent overlap between VOA and the surrogates broadcasting in the same language: 23 of RFE/RL's 31 language services overlapped with VOA's language services, as did eight of RFA's nine services and Radio/TV Marti's Spanish services. Though the BBG refuses officially to accept the premise that there are "duplicate" services, it is currently conducting an in-depth assessment of the utility and practicality of integrating current overlap language services. The findings will be reported as part of its Fiscal Year 2005 budget submission.

"Overlap" is only one aspect of the skirmishing over the language services. The BBG conducts an annual review intended to address the need to delete or add language coverage to streamline operations. More than $9 million has been reallocated through the elimination or reduction of language services since the first review in 2000: VOA Portuguese to Brazil was eliminated, and VOA Arabic and RFE/RL's Persian service were eliminated (replaced by Radio Sawa and Radio Farda respectively), and the scope of operations of another 25 services has been reduced so far.

But Congress has begun to challenge the efficiency moves. The BBG's 2004 budget request, reduced at OMB's direction by $8.8 million to reflect the proposed elimination of nine language services assessed as low priority/low impact in the BBG's 2001/2002 language service review, ran into roadblocks when senators objected to ending service in some countries where a free and fair press is not yet assured. As the GAO report notes, the total number of language services has actually increased, from 91 to 97, between the BBG's 2000 review and today.

Despite the many difficulties, as the BBG's "Vision 2010" strategic plan asserts — and several recent commissions deploring the state of public diplomacy have noted — the need for U.S. international broadcasting has never been greater. The challenge for the Foreign Service personnel and other professionals working at the IBB, VOA and regionally directed services will be to organize and direct the official broadcasting behemoth to accomplish this mission, despite circumscribed budgets, increased competition from other governmental and commercial broadcasters, and omnipresent political sensitivities about program content. ■

NEW DIRECTIONS IN U.S. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS IS BUILDING ON THE PROUD LEGACY OF U.S. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING, NOT RESTING ON ITS LAURELS.

BY BRIAN CONNIFF

The world is in the midst of a communications revolution, with new technologies and delivery systems constantly changing the way people receive facts and information. Yet billions of people continue to be denied access to basic, accurate news about their countries and the world.

To fill that gap, the Broadcasting Board of Governors supervises a diverse array of U.S. government-funded, non-military international broadcasters. These include the Voice of America; Radio/TV Marti; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; and Radio Free Asia.

An independent federal agency since Oct. 1, 1999, the BBG has about 3,200 employees; its budget was $544 million in FY 2003. (See table on p. 24 for a detailed breakdown.) Previously, the BBG was part of the U.S. Information Agency, which was abolished when the State Department assumed public diplomacy functions in 1999. The BBG is headed by a nine-member Board of Governors, eight of whom are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The Secretary of State is the ninth member, serving ex-officio; Sec. Powell has designated his under secretary for public diplomacy as his representative on the board.

By law, no more than four of the appointed governors may belong to the same political party, a limitation intended to reinforce the firewall that insulates broadcasters from political pressures. The Senate confirms a chairman, appointed by the president; Kenneth Tomlinson currently holds that position. All eight governors, many of whom have extensive private-sector media experience, serve three-year terms, on a part-time basis, including regular monthly meetings.

VOA, based in Washington, D.C., with bureaus around the world, is the largest and oldest of these broadcasters. Founded in 1942, it is charged with presenting news about the world and the United States, and representing all segments of American society in its reports to the rest of the world. (Under the 1948 Smith-Mundt Law, VOA is prohibited from broadcasting to the United States.)

Radio Marti and TV Marti, now based in Miami, have been broadcasting Spanish-language programming to Cuba since the mid-1980s. Like VOA, they are under the aegis of the BBG.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio Free Asia are known as "surrogate" services, focusing on providing news to countries where the free flow of information is blocked and residents have little or no access to uncensored news. RFE/RL, headquartered in Prague, Czech

Republic with an office in Washington, was founded in 1950 as a Cold War tool to defeat communism. The Washington-based RFA was started in 1996. Both services are private, nonprofit corporations, wholly funded by Congress, but they are also supervised by the BBG.

In addition, the BBG oversees the International Broadcasting Bureau, which manages the day-to-day operations of VOA and the Marti services — a function previously performed by the now-defunct U.S. Information Agency before its consolidation with the State Department. The IBB handles transmission, marketing and program placement for all broadcasting services, including RFE/RL and RFA.

The IBB's global transmission network includes shortwave stations in Botswana; Delano, Calif.; Germany; Greece; Greenville, N.C.; Kuwait; Morocco; Philippines; Sao Tome and Principe; Sri Lanka; Thailand; and the Northern Mariana Islands. High-powered AM transmitters, with a long reach, are used to reach places the BBG can't penetrate with FM signals, such as Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia. (IBB has over 1,400 FM affiliates around the world.). IBB's engineers also distribute radio and TV programs via satellite.

Reporting the News

The BBG's mission is deceptively simple: "promote and sustain democracy by broadcasting accurate and objective news and information about the United States and the world to audiences overseas." And that commitment has remained constant through more than 60 years of international broadcasting

BBG's broadcasters are journalists first. Every day, they reaffirm William Harlan Hale's maiden VOA broadcast on Feb. 25, 1942. "The news may be good for us. The news may be bad. But we shall tell you the truth," Hale said.

As Kenneth Y. Tomlinson, the BBG's current chairman and a former editor-in-chief of *Reader's Digest*, points out, U.S. international broadcasting is part of the public diplomacy apparatus, but operates according to a separate set of rules.

"International broadcasting … is called upon to reflect the highest standards of independent journalism as the best means of convincing international audiences that trust is on the side of democratic values," he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in early 2003.

Yet when overseas listeners, particularly in the Middle East, are already skeptical or cynical about U.S. policies, it can be a daunting challenge to build an audience. Fortunately, the BBG has identified several tools with which to address this problem.

Research is a building block in creating a flexible, multi-media broadcasting service that reaches the target audience. Each year, BBG hires an independent research firm to conduct research on the effectiveness of broadcasting in all languages as part of a program review process. In addition, the BBG itself annually reviews all language services to determine priority audiences, in accordance with U.S. foreign policy objectives. The process, conducted in consultation with State Department officials, helps the BBG allocate its resources more efficiently. In some cases, language services have been consolidated — RFE/RL's Persian service was combined with parts of VOA to create Radio Farda for Iran. In other cases, the language services complement each other as in Afghanistan.

Keeping up with **technological advances** is also crucial. Shortwave radio was once the only way to listen to U.S. international broadcasting. Today, more than 100 million listeners can receive news, information and entertainment by shortwave, FM, medium-wave, television, Internet and digital audio satellite in English and 64 other languages.

The BBG is also moving to accelerate multimedia development, adopt updated techniques, control distribution and develop multiple products for key areas.

Finally, the BBG is moving to **tailor content to the audience**.

"The one-size-fits-all approach no longer works as a model for U.S. international broadcasting," says Governor Norman J. Pattiz, a radio pioneer who is also chairman of Westwood One, America's largest radio network. "We have to use modern communications techniques to target our audiences."

Adds Tomlinson: "We need to keep in mind that no media market is monolithic. We have to make choices about which parts of the market we most want to reach."

For example, Congress has recognized "the particular importance of broadcasting in countries and regions undergoing democratic transition." So the BBG's five-year strategic plan, 2002-2007, spells out the following priority areas as the Middle East; Central, South and West Asia; China and the Far East; Southeast Asia and the Pacific

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area; Eurasia, particularly Russia, Ukraine and Belarus; the Caucasus; the Balkans; Sub-Saharan Africa; Cuba; and the Andean region.

In many of the priority areas, the BBG continues to face challenges in reaching audiences because governments jam, block and censor broadcasts and the Internet. China is a major offender, jamming VOA and RFA broadcasts in Mandarin and Tibetan as well as RFA broadcasts in Cantonese and Uygur. BBG files monthly complaints with the International Telecommunications Union over the jamming — and spends millions transmitting on extra frequencies to get through.

China also blocks the Internet sites of RFA and VOA, requiring both services to experiment with proxy servers and mirror sites. But BBG Governor Edward Kaufman, a former chief of staff to Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., believes the Chinese are pursuing a losing strategy in censoring international broadcasting. "While pursuing more interaction in the global marketplace, the Chinese government is trying harder than ever to isolate its people, cut off the free flow of information and deny them access to accurate and credible news."

Other countries that routinely jam and/or block U.S. broadcasts include Cuba, Iran, Vietnam and North Korea.

Recent and Upcoming Initiatives

The BBG's recent and upcoming initiatives include: a soon-to-be launched, Arabic-language Middle East Television Network; the popular Arabic-language Radio Sawa and Persian-language Radio Farda; new television programs for Iran and Indonesia; a country-wide, 24/7 radio network for Afghanistan; special e-mail packages for China, and new delivery options for Cuba, designed to elude jamming. The BBG recently announced a test to put TV and Radio Marti on Hispasat's satellite, allowing Cubans and others with a dish and digital receiver to view the programs.

One of the BBG's most ambitious projects has been Radio Sawa, a 24/7 Arabic-language station that is broadcast throughout the Middle East on a combination of AM, FM, shortwave, Internet and digital audio satellite. Sawa, aimed at listeners under 28 who comprise about 60 percent of the Middle East's population, primarily broadcasts Arabic and Western popular music, but also mixes in news and current information.

Not surprisingly, it took less than a year for Radio Sawa to become the leading international broadcaster in the region, according to an ACNielsen study. Nielsen's research, conducted in July and August 2003, showed that Radio Sawa has an average listenership of 31.6 percent among the general population 15 years and older in five Middle Eastern countries. Listener rates were: Egypt 10.6 percent; Jordan, 30.4 percent; Kuwait, 39.5 percent; Qatar, 40.8 percent and UAE, 36.6 percent. (Typically, international broadcasters get between 4-5 percent listening rates.)

Because the BBG manages Sawa's transmission, including FM and AM stations, the U.S. government is able to deliver crucial information at key times. During the Iraq War, Sawa broadcast as much as five hours of news a day. And when U.S. forces bombed Baghdad in April 2003, residents heard live coverage from Sawa's correspondents on the ground.

Joining Sawa in the near future will be the Middle East Television Network — an Arabic-language, full-service network that will compete with Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabyia and other direct-to-home satellite channels in the region. This product will be the first Arabic-language Western network in the Middle East, a region where 90 percent of the people own television sets, and satellite viewing is growing rapidly.

"Impressions of the U.S. in the region come from government-controlled stations," says Pattiz, chairman of the BBG's Middle East Committee. "We're changing that with Radio Sawa — now we want to do the same with METN." He adds that the United States needs to get involved in the "media war," where "the weapons include disinformation, incitement to violence, hate radio, government censorship and journalistic self-censorship."

Based outside Washington in suburban Virginia, with bureaus across the Middle East, the new network will feature news, information and public affairs programs, along with family and children's entertainment. More than 100 Arabic-speaking broadcasters will comprise the core staff. Startup is expected in early 2004.

In December 2002, VOA and RFE/RL launched Radio Farda — a 24/7 program stream targeting young Iranians with popular Persian and Western music, as well as news and special features. With studios in Prague and Washington, this program offers a fresh alternative to listeners in Iran, a country where 70 percent of the population is under 30 years. Farda is available on AM, shortwave, Internet and digital audio satellite.

Listeners' response to Farda has been strongly positive, judging from e-mail traffic, Internet use and reports from inside Iran. "You cannot imagine what a big impact you

had during recent events with your timely news," an Iranian e-mailed the station during the pro-democracy protests in the summer of 2003.

In addition to Farda, the VOA radio network continues to offer objective news and information through its AM, Internet and shortwave broadcasts, which Iranians have enjoyed for over 30 years. Radio Farda and VOA's Persian-language Web sites attract nearly a million visitors every month.

Television is popular in Iran — 90 percent of Iranians say they get their news that way — so VOA has developed a range of TV products beamed to Iran by satellite.

"News and Views," a daily 30-minute show, offers comprehensive news and expert commentary about events inside and outside Iran. "Roundtable with You" is a weekly 90-minute, call-in program that allows viewers and listeners to speak directly with prominent figures regarding politics, social issues, and entertainment. And "Next Chapter" provides the younger Iranian generation a weekly sample of fresh cultural fare — including the latest in sports, technology, fashion, Hollywood films, and car reviews. It also profiles the daily lives of young Iranian-Americans.

Afghanistan is another important broadcasting area. VOA had strong listenership for its Dari- and Pashto-language broadcasts during the Taliban era, when as many as 80 percent of the country's men tuned in. (Women were not permitted to own radios.) So in January 2002, just a few months after the Taliban fell, RFE/RL launched Radio Free Afghanistan. Together, the services form a single, 24/7 stream of news and information.

Shortwave was the only medium in the past, but the BBG has installed high-powered, 400-kilowatt AM transmitters in Kabul to give the programs nationwide reach. The BBG also gave an AM transmitter to the Afghan government. Meantime, engineers are installing FM transmitters in cities around the country.

Training is a key component of the Afghan initiative. With money from the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, BBG has trained more than two dozen journalists, coaching them on how to cover events involving politics, health and education in a

FY 2003 Budget and Staffing for U.S. International Broadcasting

IBB *(Engineering and technical services, management, direction, program support)*
Budget: $219.583 million
Positions: 1,048 (including FSNs)

Voice of America
Budget: $155.643 million
Positions: 1,364
Bureaus: 22 (5 domestic and 17 international)

RFE/RL
Budget: $78.486 million
Positions: 602

RFA
Budget: $27.084 million
Positions: 262

Radio/TV Marti
Budget: $25.362 million
Positions: 163

fair, balanced and unbiased fashion. This is helping build a cadre of independent journalists with the skills needed to impart information to their fellow citizens.

Cuba, where Fidel Castro stifles dissent and imprisons independent journalists, remains a priority for the BBG. As engineers try new radio frequencies to overcome jamming, Radio Marti has redesigned its programs to attract listeners. At TV Marti, broadcasters have added new programs, and, as part of a transmission test, shows are being put on a popular, high-powered regional satellite.

Other potential initiatives are in the works — increasing Urdu broadcasting to Pakistan with a lively, upbeat, youth-oriented service designed to run 24/7; refocusing on Africa, which holds about 40 percent of VOA's audience; and ensuring comprehensive coverage of countries in Central Asia.

Nearly 40 years ago, John Chancellor, the respected broadcaster and onetime VOA director, wrote in the *Foreign Service Journal* that there was a "spirit … that exists inside the Voice. … They understand that microseconds after they speak, what they say is communicating to people in bedrooms, living rooms, tents, cars, caravans as they enter the world of the listeners."

Chancellor's description of the "magic of the Voice" persists. But it has grown — and the same magic now pervades the expanding, vitally important world of international broadcasting. ■

THE VOICE OF AMERICA ENTERS A NEW ERA

THE U.S. FLAGSHIP BROADCASTER'S UNIQUE DUAL MISSION — AS A TOOL OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND A SOURCE OF OBJECTIVE NEWS REPORTING — IS MORE RELEVANT TODAY THAN EVER.

BY DAVID S. JACKSON

Never before have so many countries around the world had governments dependent on the will of the people. And consequently, at no point in the history of the United States has it been more important for us to speak not only to the leaders of those countries, but also directly to their citizens. The former task, of course, belongs principally to the Department of State; the latter to U.S. international broadcasting and, especially, to its flagship service, the Voice of America.

The practice of diplomacy, of speaking government to government, is well understood by most people. But the role of international broadcasting in support of U.S. policy interests is much less so. So let me describe to you what we at VOA are doing to promote the national interests of the United States.

The Voice of America first went on the air Feb. 24, 1942 — just 79 days after the United States entered World War II. In its first broadcast, in German, from New York City, announcer William Harlan Hale began with the words: "The news may be good for us. The news may be bad. But we shall tell you the truth." This date and these words taken together reflect the core of VOA's activities throughout its more than 60 years of continuous service to the nation and to the peoples of the world.

When people say "I heard it on VOA" they can be confident that it's true.

A Little History

On the one hand, VOA was created by Congress and functions as a federally funded agency to respond to the foreign policy challenges faced by our country. During World War II, VOA focused its energies against the Axis powers in Europe and the Pacific. During the Cold War, the organization devoted its greatest attention to the peoples of the Soviet bloc and to places where what John F. Kennedy called "the long twilight struggle" was played out in Asia, Africa and Latin America. After our victory in the Cold War, VOA regeared its efforts to reach a different audience yet again, a process accelerated in the wake of the terrorist attacks on our country on Sept. 11, 2001.

On the other hand, the journalists at VOA have always seen their role as telling the truth to the world. Like the American founders, they believe that truth works for us, that

"a decent respect for the opinions of mankind" requires that we give nothing less.

These two views of our mission — a tool of public diplomacy and a beacon of accurate, objective news — were interwoven in the charter of the Voice of America which was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Gerald R. Ford on July 12, 1976. That document governs everything VOA does to this day, and is prominently displayed throughout our building (see box, below).

VOA's Central Newsroom prepares more than 150 news reports every day in English; these are then shared with all of VOA's language services and programs.

You'll notice that the charter speaks about communicating via radio. A quarter-century ago, that was more or less the only option, and, indeed, it was the rise of short-wave radio broadcasting that made it possible for us to enter into this kind of public diplomatic activity. Now we have a variety of other outlets, including television and the Internet, which greatly add to the impact of what we do.

The charter also requires that VOA "win the attention and respect of listeners." Getting the attention of people in the increasingly crowded media marketplace of today is not easy, even in developing countries. But when we get it, through creative programming and modern marketing techniques, we win the allegiance of generations of listeners by treating them with respect, and by providing accurate and balanced information. When people say "I heard it on VOA" they can be confident that it's true. Given the nature of some media outlets around the world, that's no small thing, and it's a key reason why VOA has been so effective for so long.

Finally, the charter specifies that VOA must "represent America" and "present the policies of the United States clearly and effectively." Alone of all U.S. international broadcasters, VOA is responsible for telling the world about the richness and diversity of American life, and for outlining what American policy is on the key issues of the day. In both cases, VOA broadcasts help to overcome the kind of distorted or deliberately dishonest presentations of who Americans are, and what we believe in, that are, unfortunately, all too prevalent in today's world. In this sense, VOA is a critical partner of the State Department in the promotion of American foreign policy.

The VOA Charter

The long-range interests of the United States are served by communicating directly with the peoples of the world by radio. To be effective, the Voice of America must win the attention and respect of listeners. These principles will therefore govern Voice of America (VOA) broadcasts.

1. VOA will serve as a consistently reliable and authoritative source of news. VOA news will be accurate, objective, and comprehensive.

2. VOA will represent America, not any single segment of American society, and will therefore present a balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought and institutions.

3. VOA will present the policies of the United States clearly and effectively, and will also present responsible discussions and opinion on these policies.

VOA Today

For much of its history, VOA was part of the U.S. Information Agency, and many Foreign Service officers played distinguished roles in helping to build the organization and its reputation. But since 1999, VOA has been subordinate to the presidentially-appointed Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees all

David S. Jackson is director of the Voice of America. A veteran journalist and foreign correspondent, Jackson spent 23 years at Time *Magazine. He has also worked as a consultant to the U.S. Defense Department, where he created the DefendAmerica.gov Web site.*

civilian U.S. international broadcasting, including our sister stations Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Sawa, Radio Farda, and the new Middle East Television Network. In those cases where VOA and one of its sister stations can be heard in the same region, VOA's unique mission — to present and explain U.S. policy, and to explain Americans and what we believe in — ensures that our messages are both different yet complementary.

Many of our language services view the Internet as their future: our Web-based products for China are especially effective.

The Voice of America today is a remarkable and remarkably complex organization. In English and 55 other languages, VOA broadcasts more than 1,000 hours of radio and television each week to most regions of the world except Western Europe and the United States. Every one of its language services maintains a Web site at VOANews.com, in order to reach the growing number of people around the world who go online to get news and information. Combined, VOA's various broadcasting efforts reach more than 90 million people, according to media surveys.

At the heart of our operation is news coverage. VOA's Central Newsroom prepares more than 150 news reports every day in English; these are then shared with all of VOA's language services and programs. In addition to the newsroom's staff of writers and editors in Washington, VOA has 10 domestic and 21 overseas full-time correspondents, plus a worldwide stringer network.

In addition to our standard English core, VOA offers Special English, a program which uses slow-paced delivery and simplified vocabulary to help listeners learn American English, and an English to Africa service, which features programming from the Central Newsroom. Every one of VOA's 55 language services has its own staff of journalists who produce stories about particular regions and about American developments that have particular relevance to those regions. Many of those stories are then shared across VOA to ensure that all broadcasts are accurate, balanced, and broadly informed.

To support the more than 1,100 journalists, managers, and support personnel who work full-time for America's Voice, VOA's Washington headquarters has more than 40 radio studios and three television studios, as well as a digital master control and two centers to record reports from correspondents around the world. Our colleagues at the International Broadcasting Bureau help us maintain some 22 transmitting stations around the world.

Moving Beyond Radio

When VOA began in 1942, the only channel for U.S. international broadcasting was short-wave radio. Since then, we have moved into all of the media that the world uses. First, we put our programs on FM and (medium-wave) AM radio via cable and more than 1,300 affiliate stations. As anyone who has listened to short-wave and FM knows, it's far easier to hear the latter than the former. And in most places in the world, VOA is welcomed as an affiliate partner. But where it isn't, or where we're uncertain about the future, we've maintained a short-wave presence, a strategy that enables us to be heard now while also serving as an insurance policy for the future.

Second, VOA has moved aggressively into the world of television. Even in less developed countries, the device many people now turn to for their news is a television set, not a radio. So VOA is there for them, too. We currently produce regular television programs in 10 languages, special programs in many others, and rebroadcast a variety of acquired U.S.-produced programs as well. We broadcast via satellite, through affiliates, and even online. As for the future, we believe it's only a matter of time before direct-to-home satellite television will be one of our most effective delivery mechanisms.

Finally, VOA is an active participant in the rapidly expanding world of the Internet. VOANews.com features streamed audio and video of VOA programs, story texts, and Web-based materials in support of our radio and television programs. Many of our language services view the Internet as their future: our Web-based products for China are especially effective in reaching audiences, and in one case, Arabic, VOA has shifted

entirely to an Internet operation since the launch of Radio Sawa and U.S. Middle East Television Network. At present, more than two million people a day see the VOA materials translated into Arabic, both directly and as they are posted on major portals throughout the Middle East.

These new technologies help our audiences to do more than just watch or listen to our programs; they allow them to participate. VOA's radio programs have always featured call-in shows which give our listeners the chance to react to what we say, and educate us about how they see us and the United States. Now they can do that and more with our content on television and the Internet. Some of VOA TV's most popular programs are those in which viewers can call in and challenge officials and experts appearing on the shows. The Internet allows them to contact us at virtually no cost.

At present, more than 2 million people a day see the VOA materials translated into Arabic, both directly and as they are posted on major portals throughout the Middle East.

What's On VOA? And Why?

In its hundreds of hours of programming every week, VOA carries a virtual encyclopedia of information for our listeners, television viewers and Internet surfers. We present a portrait of the world as it is every day, with news so accurate and carefully sourced that many journalists around the world rely on it to do their own work. It is a portrait of America as diverse as we are, with editorials — which are approved by the State

Department — and discussions of American policy that help promote and explain our policies and our values.

During one recent month, we broadcast three of President Bush's major speeches, covered all the speeches of Secretary of State Colin Powell, and interviewed more than a dozen members of Congress as well as a variety of senior administration officials.

From the State Department alone, VOA featured interviews with Lorne Craner, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Walter Kansteiner, (former) Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; Amb. Ellen Sauerbrey, U.S. Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women; Zalmay Khalilzad, Ambassador to Afghanistan; Amb. Thomas Watson, State Department Special Coordinator for Cyprus; Amb. David Satterfield, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs; and John Miller, director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Over the course of a year, we've interviewed officials from most, if not all 16, of the State Department's bureaus.

In addition, during the same month we aired interviews with the presidents of Ecuador, Romania and Ghana; the prime ministers of Albania and Kosovo; senior ministers in the governments of Chile, Lithuania, Hungary and Eritrea; and the Slovak, Bulgarian and Colombian ambassadors here in Washington. Like the interviews we do with American officials, these conversations promote the kind of dialogue that President Bush and Secretary Powell have indicated is essential to winning the war against terrorism.

By itself this isn't enough, of course. But VOA's overall contribution to promoting American national interests is not trivial, especially in the world after 9/11. That world, which President Bush has accurately described as a new war of ideas, is one in which we must appeal directly to individuals and groups, not just to governments, if we are to succeed. In that kind of struggle, VOA can and will continue to play a key role. ■

A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

THIS VOA CORRESPONDENT'S LIFE HAS BEEN FULL OF EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES AND A DIFFERENT KIND OF NOTORIETY.

BY ALEX BELIDA

OK. Unlike Brokaw, Jennings or Rather, I am a virtual unknown here in the United States. But I do have more listeners in my audience than all three of them combined. And I have had my name recognized at an airline ticket office in Ethiopia and at passport control in Uganda. I'm told African babies have been named after me.

Like the network anchors, I, too, get fan mail. But I bet no network anchor has ever had an incident like this:

I was sitting in the VOA News Bureau in an office building in central Nairobi one day in the mid-1990s when the phone rang. On the line was a man who told me his name was Alex Belida. I was naturally flabbergasted — so flabbergasted that I agreed to an appointment so the caller could drop by in person.

The next day my mystery guest arrived and I again, this time for the record, asked him to state his name.

"My name is Alex Belida," he said.

But after some prodding, he acknowledged that was not his real name.

"My real name is Mesafint Beyene. My nickname is Alex Belida. I got it recently from friends."

Even I had to admit it was an unusual choice for a nickname, so I asked him to elaborate. The answer was one that was certain to thrill the hearts of all VOA executives.

"I got that name because I listen to the radio day and night."

And not just any radio. He listened to VOA and he especially liked to hear my voice.

"It's a wonderful voice. ... The sound is great. ... That's why many friends, when I tell them about Alex Belida ... they gave me that name."

The author in Rwanda.

Mesafint Beyene was an Ethiopian refugee who lived in Kenya. Before he left the VOA office, I got him to record a standard VOA news sign-off and added it to the bottom of a report I wrote about him. Listeners that day got to hear Mesafint saying at the end of one of my voice

reports, "I am not the original Alex but I can say I am the copy Alex Belida, VOA News, Nairobi."

Where A VOA Correspondent Should Be

Of course, life for a VOA correspondent overseas is not always that amusing. I have been shot, shelled, harassed and threatened while covering stories in Africa from 1993 to 2000 (after more sedate, if not more prestigious, assignments in Europe and at the White House).

I have had my name recognized at an airline ticket office in Ethiopia and at passport control in Uganda. I'm told African babies have been named after me.

But a continent like Africa, where there are actually listeners and a never-ending supply of human dramas, is, in my view, the best kind of place for a VOA correspondent to be working. It gives you a chance, as VOA historian Alan Heil has written, to be "a voice for the voiceless." And you have the most extraordinary experiences in the process.

In early 2000 there were thousands of flood victims in Mozambique. While covering the disaster, I one day flew out with the crew of a South African military rescue helicopter, a BK-117. It was not a particularly large helicopter. Its stated capacity was eight people. On the last mission of the day, there were five on board to start — the pilot, a co-pilot, two crewmen and me.

We flew out to a field of mud and water where a group of Mozambicans were huddled on the steps of a building in which they had taken shelter. After a slog through the field, first a woman with a baby and suitcase climbed on board, followed by an elderly man with a water-logged bag of clothes. Then more bodies piled in. Soon it was so crowded that it was impossible to distinguish whose arms and legs were attached to which bodies. I was crammed deep in the back of the passenger compartment, my body forced into a U-shape by the curve of the fuselage, my eyes barely able to look up and survey the contorted scene in front of me.

The BK-117 groaned as it strained to take off. Slowly, painfully, it gained altitude and struggled back to an airstrip near the town of Chibuto. When it landed, it was anything but graceful. The helicopter slammed into the ground and slid a hundred meters on its skids before stopping. In all, there were 26 people on board — on an aircraft with a normal capacity of eight. I was astonished, but even more so when I later learned the record during the flood relief effort was 32 aboard a similar chopper.

Street Prospecting

Equally amazing, though for a different reason, was an incident that occurred in Burundi in 1994. I was driving through a residential area of the capital, Bujumbura, when I spied about half a dozen men in tattered shirts standing knee-deep in the waters of a drainage ditch with shovels, plastic basins and metal pails.

I stopped and discovered they were panning for gold. How absurd, I thought. But what made the effort worthwhile was that the waste water they were working in originated behind the walls of a villa housing what was said to be a secret gold and gemstone processing operation run by a local businessman.

The businessman, the gold diggers told me, bought raw gold-bearing ore that was smuggled across Lake Tanganyika from what was then called Zaire. After he crudely refined it, the gold was sold to buyers outside Africa. In the finishing process, though, tiny amounts of gold dust got washed away — and the street prospectors of Bujumbura recovered it. They told me they found about two grams of gold per person a day — not a lot, but enough to provide them with an excellent source of income in a country where most people got by on subsistence-level farming.

But for every entertaining story I have written over the years, there have been far more disturbing ones. The Rwandan genocide, clan warfare in Somalia and the civil war in Sudan are among the turmoils I covered

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Alex Belida is a senior correspondent with Voice of America, currently assigned to the Pentagon, who has spent more than 30 years in international broadcasting. He is the IBB representative to AFSA's Governing Board.

The Price of Independence

Think about all the facets of Foreign Service life that are, at least in theory, intended to make life a little less stressful, a bit more comfortable and secure. Now take them all away. No diplomatic or official passport. No embassy housing or furnishings. No cars or drivers. No customs assistance for household goods. No medical care. No APO. No two-way radios or security escorts. No PX or commissary or cafeteria. No duty-free cars or booze. Think of anything else and take that away, too.

What kind of Foreign Service life would that be? Especially in hardship locations? Probably pretty difficult, and perhaps totally unattractive.

But that is precisely the way Foreign Service specialists who are correspondents with the Voice of America are required to live overseas — totally separated from U.S. missions. It is the price they pay to protect their journalistic independence and integrity from possible interference by ambassadors, PAOs and others in the "official" American diplomatic community abroad.

There are, at present, fewer than 10 such tenured, fully-sworn and full-fledged VOA specialists (plus about a dozen others who are domestic employees on foreign excursion tours or limited appointment "contract" correspondents). Attrition and a lack of replenishment have depleted the ranks. No one has been hired into the Foreign Service at VOA as a prospective career foreign correspondent for more than a decade.

But none of them feels particularly disgruntled or disadvantaged. Most VOA correspondents consider themselves journalists first, not Foreign Service officers. VOA veteran Mike Drudge, now posted in London as a roving "fireman," says he didn't even know what the Foreign Service was when he was hired. After all, he notes, he didn't join VOA to be a Foreign Service officer but to report the news to a worldwide audience.

He says the independence of VOA is essential to the credibility of its news. "I don't want (our) listeners thinking VOA journalists are flunkies for the State Department," Mr. Drudge says, adding, "We don't do diplomacy, we report the news, and the VOA Charter and our independence should help us defend that tradition."

— Alex Belida

that are well-known. Some of the lesser-known human tragedies that I covered occurred in Angola, when it, too, was torn by civil war.

Sewer Boys

One day, returning from the airport after a visit to one of Angola's besieged provincial cities, I was riding to my hotel with some aid workers when I thought I saw a child crawling into a drain hole by the side of the road. One of the aid workers said she had heard of such "sewer boys," and told me they often were seen emerging at dawn.

So I returned the next day as the sun was rising and watched as a head popped up from the grimy drain along the curb, followed quickly by two arms. A young boy wearing a filthy T-shirt and tattered shorts hoisted himself out and stood on the sidewalk, stretching and yawning. Thirteen-year-old Osvaldo Mingo was followed by several other sleepy-looking boys.

But for every entertaining story I have written over the years, there have been far more disturbing ones — the Rwandan genocide, clan warfare in Somalia and the civil war in Sudan.

Surrounded by flies, covered in sores and coughing, they were probably the most pathetic street children anywhere in Africa. They emerged by day to scrounge through garbage cans for food and scooped water from puddles to drink. People in nearby apartment buildings told me the boys sometimes stole but neighbors also occasionally gave them food. Aid workers said some had run away from their homes in the capital. Others, they said, fled the embattled countryside and their parents were probably dead.

Lesser-Known Tragedies

I found some other casualties of war among the mentally disturbed imprisoned at Papa Kitoko's clinic and church on the outskirts of Luanda. I went on a Sunday, and from the street I could see the patient-parishioners swaying and clapping to the music of a church service. What I could not see until I went inside was that some of them were in chains.

Kitoko's facility was the only one dealing with Angola's mentally disturbed at that time in 1997. The government had given him a battered ambulance with which he cruised the streets, picking up anyone acting strangely. Many of his patients were, in fact, former soldiers who were said to be violent. At the clinic, Papa administered his own concoctions of herbs and roots, and chained the patients to things like bed frames or scrap auto parts and other heavy objects like truck transmissions or wheel hubs, which they dragged behind them as they meandered around the courtyard of the compound.

Regrettably, I could only tell his story… but that is how VOA correspondents make a difference.

It was not a pretty sight. Parts of the compound were unroofed, exposed to the blistering sun. Human waste lay about the yard. But perhaps most distressing was the chained man leaning against a wall, who muttered repeatedly in a soft voice that he had been snatched off the streets and deprived of his liberty against his will. Regrettably, I could only tell his story.

But that is how VOA correspondents make a difference. ■

VOA'S SPECIAL ENGLISH PROGRAM IS REALLY SPECIAL

INTERESTING AND SUBSTANTIVE, SPECIAL ENGLISH PROGRAMS QUICKLY BECAME SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR ON VOA — AND THEY STILL ARE.

BY SHELLEY GOLLUST

Several American visitors to Chinese cities have recounted similar versions of the following experience. Walking down a street on a warm summer evening, they heard coming from every window a newscast, spoken very slowly in simple English. They could walk the entire length of the street without missing any of the broadcast. What they heard was Special English, one of the most popular products of the Voice of America.

VOA broadcast the first Special English program on Oct. 19, 1959. It was an experiment to communicate by radio with people whose native language was not English. Experts said the goal was admirable, but the method would not work. Countless listeners have proved them wrong.

Special English programs quickly became some of the most popular on VOA, and they still are. Over the years, the role of Special English has expanded. It helps people learn American English while they learn about life and popular culture in the United States and stay informed about world news and developments in science. It provides listeners, including native English speakers, with information they cannot find elsewhere.

In many countries English teachers require their students to listen to Special English broadcasts.

A Unique Program

Three elements make Special English unique: We use a core vocabulary of 1,500 words that are published in a workbook and posted on our Web site. We write short sentences in the active voice that contain only one idea, avoiding unnecessary phrases, idioms and slang. Finally, Special English broadcasters read at a slower pace than standard English. This helps people learning English hear each word clearly, and enables people who are fluent English speakers to understand complex subjects. Yet while the format is simple, the content is not. We describe complex topical subjects in a way that is easy to understand.

Eleven full-time staff members and four part-time contract workers write and edit all the news and feature programs in a specialized format. We broadcast around the world six times a day, seven days a week. Each half-hour broadcast begins with 10 minutes of the latest news, followed by 20 minutes of feature programming. A different four- or five-minute feature is broadcast each day. During the week there are reports about important issues in developing countries, agriculture,

health and medicine, education and economics. The education reports include a 28-part series, updated every two years, on how foreign students can study at colleges and universities in the U.S. The weekend short features are timely background reports about news events and a lighthearted program about American idioms and phrases called "Words and Their Stories."

These short programs are followed by a different 15-minute feature each day. These are "This is America," "Science in the News," "Explorations," "The Making of a Nation," and "American Mosaic," which includes popular music and an answer to a listener's question each week. The weekend shows are "People in America," about famous Americans from history, business, science and the arts; and "American Stories," adaptations of short stories. In a typical week these programs might be about the life and music of Johnny Cash, Asian-American writers, nanotechnology, the latest exploration of Mars, writing the U.S. Constitution, the American health care system, hip-hop music or an adaptation of an award-winning novel for young adults.

The format of up-to-the-minute, objective news followed by informative features is very popular with listeners.

This format of up-to-the-minute, objective news followed by informative features is very popular with listeners. However, last year, for the first time, Special English changed its news format during the war in Iraq. We temporarily suspended our short features and expanded the daily news shows from 10 to 15 minutes. This new format enabled us to broadcast in-depth backgrounders to explain important issues relating to the war.

A Popular Teaching Tool

Though not designed as a teaching program, Special English has become a very popular tool for teaching English. In many countries, English teachers require their students to listen to Special English broadcasts. Teachers around the world use Special English as a teaching tool — from private teachers in Cuba, to elementary school teachers in Thailand, to university professors in Vietnam, China, Japan, Iran and several other countries. Many Peace Corps workers also use our materials for teaching English. Universities, governments and private companies adapt Special English materials for use in their own English-teaching projects. China National Radio has been broadcasting Special English features for several years.

Listeners also are able to learn English on their own. Prince Norodom Ranaridh of Cambodia visited the Voice of America in 1991, and told then-director Chase Untermeyer that he was able to speak English because of VOA. The prince had listened to Special English since arriving in exile in Thailand eight years earlier. A few years ago, another VOA director, Sandy Ungar, reported after a visit to Vietnam that practically every Vietnamese person he met knew and listened to Special English. Many people have written to tell us that learning English improved their lives by helping them get a better education and a better job.

People around the world practice their listening and speaking skills by recording our programs and playing them repeatedly. In the past, we have received letters from individuals who make a special effort to listen even when our programs are not broadcast in prime time. A group of college students in Iran said they take turns getting up in the middle of the night to record our programs in order to listen and translate them as homework. An older listener in Kuwait wrote to us that before going to sleep he drinks four large cups of warm water mixed with fruit juice so he can wake up at 3:30 a.m. for the Special English broadcast.

People with Internet access have it much easier. They can listen to our programs any time they want. For the past several years, listeners have been able to stream or download programs from the Special English Web site while reading the text. And they can receive scripts of features every week by e-mail. This e-mail subscription service is especially popular with listeners in China whose access to our Web site is blocked by their government. The Special English Web site,

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Shelley Gollust is chief of the Special English Branch of the Voice of America. She has worked for VOA for more than 20 years. In 1986, she served as community liaison officer at the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem.

www.voaspecialenglish.com, and our e-mail subscription service are among the most popular at VOA.

For the past two years, Special English Television has been broadcast by satellite around the world. Each day, a Special English announcer reads one of the short reports on development, agriculture, health, education or economics while the text scrolls below. This has proved to be such a good teaching tool that China Educational Television has been broadcasting these videotapes, with definitions of key words in Mandarin, for almost a year.

Typically we receive about 500 e-mails and 100 letters every month from all corners of the globe.

Devoted Listeners

Over the years, Special English has forged a strong link with millions of people around the world. Listeners in several countries including Nigeria and Pakistan have formed Special English clubs. While we do not know exactly how many people listen to Special English, we receive much feedback. During one week in June we had a contest, asking listeners to send us an e-mail telling about themselves and their favorite Special English program. During that week, we received almost 500 e-mails from 49 countries. The highest numbers of e-mails came from China, Nigeria, Vietnam, Japan, India and Iran.

While these listeners ranged in age from 9 to 75, the largest number were college students, graduate students or teachers in their 20s and 30s. Although we broadcast many programs about popular music and culture for young people, we were surprised to learn what the respondents listed as their favorite program: our 234-part weekly series about the history of the United States, called "The Making of a Nation." Several of these listeners said learning about American democracy gave them hope for their own countries.

Typically we receive about 500 e-mails and 100 letters every month from all corners of the globe. We hear from listeners in Ethiopia and Ghana, Yemen and Iraq, Sweden and Italy, Kosovo and Cuba. We get letters from young people in universities and refugee camps. A listener in Eritrea says he translates almost all of our programs into the local language and sends them to the local radio station, which broadcasts them. He says he does this so that fellow citizens who do not understand English can get the latest information.

But even Americans living overseas listen to Special English. Recently I had the pleasure of meeting Francie Bremer, wife of Amb. L. Paul ("Jerry") Bremer, the chief civilian administrator in Iraq. When I told her where I work, I thought I would have to explain all about Special English. But she knew all about it. She and her husband listened to Special English during their early years in the Foreign Service. "We were posted to Malawi from 1968 to 1970," Ms. Bremer said. "Jerry was the junior officer there. Everybody would listen to Special English. … This was a fascinating time and we learned all the news about America — from the riots to the moon walk." ■

GOING ONLINE AT VOANEWS.COM

VOA'S NEWEST MEDIA ELEMENT AIMS TO REACH OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS WITH ACCESS TO COMPUTERS WHO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES.

BY MOLLIE M. KING

VOANews.com, which serves up news and information for about two million visitors a month, is VOA's newest media element. Launched in November 2000, the Web site now averages more than 60,000 visits a day, with six million pages viewed every month. When the Iraq War started, traffic to VOANews.com almost doubled as users around the world rushed to get the latest news and U.S. perspective on world events. Usage has remained high — so visitors must like what they see.

VOA has Web pages for more than 50 language services, all of which stream their daily audio programs on the Web. Nearly 40 services also produce regular unique text and news content on the Web. VOANews.com uses the VOA Charter as its guiding mission statement.

Because VOA's target audience is entirely outside the United States, VOANews.com has had to take accessibility and other factors into consideration more than commercial American news organizations like CNN or MSNBC. Most of its users don't have access to broadband connections, and are paying per minute for both telephone time and dial-up Internet service. Therefore, VOANews.com offers its Web material as a "full bandwidth" option with pictures, graphics and audio and video links, as well as a "low bandwidth" option in text only.

Future options might also include wireless applications or other formats for handheld devices, as these become the preferred Web-surfing method in countries where mobile phones outnumber landlines.

Why the Web?

VOA has a 61-year history as a broadcaster, with its traditional audience sometimes seen as the shepherd in the tent or the migrant in the refugee camp, who has no other access to accurate news and information. But VOA wanted a way to reach a different audience, one that includes government and NGO officials, university students and urban professionals who are comfortable with technology and have access to computers at school and work. These are the current and future leaders, activists and decision-makers of the world; they are Web users but not necessarily radio listeners, and include many whose parents listened to the Voice of America but who may not listen to it themselves.

These are the people who can make a difference in their own countries, based on the information they get from the Voice of America. They increasingly get their news online. Busy people with tight schedules that may not match the times that VOA broadcasts locally, they may travel frequently, or no longer live in the "footprint" of the VOA broadcast. They need to get their news and information at their own convenience, and at a pace they

can process, which is best done by reading on the Web. If they are getting the news in English but speak it as a second language, they can also expand their skills as they listen to the reports while they read.

Web Benefits

One of the advantages VOA offers compared to other news sources on the Internet is that its archives are available free of charge. Most newspapers begin charging within a week or two of publication, making it impossible to do any extensive research on a topic or region without racking up a significant bill. Even in the area of multimedia, many commercial broadcasters charge to see video or hear audio. A Jupiter research survey of online adults in March 2002 found that 70 percent could not understand why anyone would pay for online content. A subsequent Jupiter survey in September 2002 found that more people in Western Europe were willing to pay for online content such as news, audio and video, but that's still the exception rather than the rule. VOANews.com offers its entire archive without expense to the user.

VOA uses a content management system that allows broadcasters to copy and paste text material directly into templates. People with no training in HTML or other specialized Web production skills are able to publish material easily, and maintain the same "look and feel" for their Web pages as the rest of VOANews.com.

In addition to providing audio or video of broadcast programs, and text of many of the stories, more than 25 language services produce a daily or weekly e-mail subscription service of their news and feature content. For English, Special English and Chinese, this has been especially useful in circumventing the Web site blocking practiced by the Chinese government to prevent its citizens from having free access to information. VOA has also used proxy servers and mirror sites to help the Chinese people find the information they seek.

Help for the Foreign Service

In addition to helping the overall public diplomacy effort by presenting accurate and objective news and information about the world, and about American perspectives and U.S. government policy, the VOA Web site can help Foreign Service personnel in some very real and concrete ways. First, VOANews.com provides a quick glance at world news headlines, providing a fast way to soak up the top stories quickly. The great benefit of the Internet is that it's always "on" — you don't need to wait for a broadcast. So you can usually get a global view of the news very quickly, at any time of day.

Second, Voice of America covers the parts of the world where you are, or where you may be going. VOANews.com can help you keep up with current events in your target country or region. When you get a new assignment, this Web site can give you a quick read on the region, or even a broad overview of events over the past few years. And, unlike CNN, VOA doesn't just cover the Ivory Coast when it's "hot." It has a correspondent based in Abidjan who provides regular coverage of events in Ivory Coast and the rest of West Africa.

Finally, VOA's most valuable resource is its language services — more than 50 of them — all with something to share on the Internet. If you're learning Mandarin, Arabic, Urdu, Turkish, Persian, Dari, Amharic, Kirundi, or any of the other VOA languages, VOANews.com provides an excellent way for you to listen to broadcasts in that language every day and hone your listening skills and understanding. There's even a good chance the service provides news in text on the Web site or through an e-mail newsletter, so you can work on reading skills, too. ■

Mollie King is the deputy Internet coordinator for VOA, and Internet news chief in the English News Division. An integral part of the team that launched VOANews.com, she has 19 years with the Voice of America, previously serving as an assignments editor, copy editor, and news writer.

RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY: TODAY AND TOMORROW

AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM, THIS VENERABLE COLD WARRIOR SHIFTED ITS FOCUS TO THE TROUBLED AREAS OF EURASIA AND SOUTHWEST ASIA.

BY THOMAS A. DINE

The caller from Azerbaijan had a problem. "I own an apartment in Makrorayan, a section of Kabul," he told the moderator of a recent installment of "Listeners' Corner," a regular program on Radio Free Afghanistan. He had lived there for 20 years before fleeing to Azerbaijan to escape the repression of the Taliban. "Now my daughter and brother-in-law are living in the apartment, but some time ago a man who introduced himself as Commander Basir's relative came and threatened my daughter, ordering her to leave the apartment."

Within hours, Afghan authorities arrived at the man's apartment, evicted the interloper and returned it to the rightful owners. It turned out that Afghan President Hamid Karzai had been listening to the popular Radio Free Afghanistan program, and promptly dispatched aides to look into the matter.

That kind of impact has been the hallmark of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasts for more than 50 years.

Cold War Origins

RFE/RL was founded in the early days of the Cold War to broadcast uncensored, accurate information behind the Iron Curtain (Radio Free Europe to Central and Eastern Europe, Radio Liberty to the Soviet Union). That mission almost ceased after the collapse of communism. In 1991, a special presidential commission concluded that RFE/RL should continue to serve as a source of encouragement and factual, analytical support to newly free nations of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union as they struggled to build free-market democracies. But in 1993, amid a general reduction in U.S. funding for defense and foreign affairs activities, Congress slashed RFE/RL's budget from a peak of $227 million a year to a maximum of $75 million, and set the end of 1999 for the elimination of taxpayer support for broadcasts.

On July 4, 1994 — U.S. Independence Day and the 44th anniversary of RFE broadcasting — President Bill Clinton formally accepted an offer from Czech President Vaclav Havel and the Czech Government to relocate all of RFE/RL from Munich, Germany, to Prague. The move symbolized America's commitment to democratic development in Central Europe, and coincided with the creation of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the reorganization of U.S. international broadcasting under the U.S.

International Broadcasting Act of 1994. It enabled RFE/RL to streamline and redesign its operations with new efficiency.

The first broadcasts from RFE/RL's new home in the former Czechoslovak Federal Parliament building took place on March 10, 1995. In 1999, Congress adopted legislation supporting the continuation of RFE/RL broadcasts until democracy and independent media have been firmly established and consolidated in a country.

RFE/RL broadcasts emphasize local and regional developments — so-called "surrogate" radio — in places where local media remain under authoritarian control or where economic chaos, censorship and other threats to democracy remain. In some places these programs are complemented by Voice of America broadcasts, which in addition to news and analysis present a U.S. perspective on issues and provide information about American life.

RFE/RL broadcasts more than 1,100 hours of programming a week in 34 languages from its Prague operations center to listeners in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central and Southwestern Asia. RFE/RL's location in the broadcast region facilitates the production of relevant, locally oriented programming in a cost-efficient manner. Its organization includes the headquarters, 30 bureaus in its broadcast region, and more than 1,500 freelancers worldwide reporting local, regional and international news.

Iraq, Iran and Beyond

Well before the 9/11 attacks, RFE/RL was emphasizing new information products for countries and regions that are now on the front line of the U.S.-led war against terrorism. In 1994, RFE/RL began broadcasts to the countries of the former Yugoslavia. In 1998, Congress mandated that RFE/RL begin a Persian language service beamed to Iran and establish Radio Free Iraq to broadcast in Arabic. Since then, this trend has accelerated. Now 19 of RFE/RL's language broadcasts — more than half the total — are to places where the majority populations are Muslim.

It is important to now focus fully on the troubled areas of Eurasia and Southwest Asia.

This shift was underscored with the Nov. 28 announcement that RFE/RL would cease broadcasts in seven languages to countries in Central and Southeastern Europe — countries preparing to join NATO and the E.U. — by the end of 2003. Given budgetary constraints, it is important to now focus fully on the troubled areas of Eurasia and Southwest Asia where RFE/RL has rapidly expanded operations in the past six years.

Before the Iraq conflict, RFE/RL had correspondents in northern Iraq reporting in Arabic; these reports were used as well by other RFE/RL language services. Once the war began, it naturally dominated RFE/RL's news and analytical coverage in 2003. Its correspondents were embedded with U.S. forces in Iraq, and reported from the Kurdish-held North plus elsewhere in the region. Drawing on Radio Free Iraq resources, RFE/RL began to provide daily reports in Kurdish to the Voice of America for inclusion in its programming. After major hostilities ended, RFI quickly established an office in Baghdad and a network of more than a dozen correspondents throughout the country representing all of Iraq's ethnic and regional groups. RFI is now on the air 17 hours daily, including on FM stations in Baghdad and Basra.

Radio Farda, an around-the-clock service to Iran produced jointly by RFE/RL and VOA, went on the air in 2002 and now offers news and information coverage an average of eight hours daily, plus music and features designed to attract young listeners (70 percent of Iran's population is under age 30). First-year highlights included live, in-depth coverage of the war in Iraq, including exclusive coverage from inside Iraq; and extensive, live coverage from within Iran of student-led anti-regime protests during June 2003. In response to the early success of the station — and paying Radio Farda the highest of Cold War compliments — the Iranian government began jamming the broadcasts and blocking the station's active, popular Internet site.

Since January 2002 Radio Free Afghanistan has broadcast 12 hours daily in Pashto and Dari in a joint 24-hour program stream with VOA. It does live programming from its Kabul bureau, and has expanded its stable of correspondents to more than 30 to provide detailed,

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Thomas A. Dine is the president of RFE/RL. Prior to his appointment in 1997, he served as assistant administrator for Europe and the New Independent States at USAID. Earlier, he headed the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

current domestic news and information.

In 2001, RFE/RL increased its daily broadcasting to Central Asia and the Caucasus (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan) by 50 percent to more than 160 hours weekly. The weekly audience in Kyrgyzstan is now up to 11 percent of adults. Listenership has also increased in the Muslim North Caucasus region of Russia, where programs in Avar, Chechen and Circassian were launched in 2002 at the request of Congress.

Putting together in-depth reporting under battlefield conditions is hazardous. Radio Free Iraq reporter Sami Shoresh narrowly escaped death twice in Iraq, once when traveling in a Kurdish convoy mistakenly attacked by a U.S. Navy warplane, and again when his car was hit by 22 bullets in an attack by pro-Saddam militia forces. In 2000, RFE/RL Russian Service correspondent Andrei Babitsky vanished while on assignment in war-torn Chechnya. Babitsky, who was abducted and held by Russian authorities, was released only after nearly six weeks of uncertainty and intense international pressure on the Kremlin. Last year, Radio Free Afghanistan correspondent Ahmad Behzad was assaulted, detained, and expelled from Herat after he put tough questions to warlord Ismail Khan at a news conference about the human rights situation in Herat Province. Also, in June 2003, two Radio Farda correspondents fled Iran to avoid detention by the authorities. Threats to RFE/RL's Prague broadcast headquarters have been ongoing since 1998.

RFE/RL's recent successes extend well beyond its high-priority broadcasts to Muslim populations. In May 2003, RFE/RL's Belarus Service broke an exclusive story that was picked up by media outlets worldwide about secret Iraqi government documents found by an embedded RFE/RL correspondent in Baghdad that implicated the Belarusian government in illegal arms trade with the Iraqi regime. "Blitz," a morning television news program launched by RFE/RL's Bulgarian Service in 2003, quickly became the top show in its time slot with a 43-percent market share. In Serbia, RFE/RL's South Slavic and Albanian Languages Service was the first electronic media outlet to report the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djinjdic.

Such vivid, timely reports are an RFE/RL trademark. In October 1999, RFE/RL's Armenian Service aired electrifying coverage from inside the country's parliament as it was attacked by masked gunmen who killed the country's prime minister, parliament speaker and six other officials. Shots could be heard as an RFE/RL correspondent, huddled under a desk in parliament hall, reported from her cell phone.

New Initiatives

A major change since the end of the Cold War is the availability of RFE/RL programs on local, rather than shortwave, frequencies. As of September 2003, RFE/RL coverage was available on 632 local AM and FM frequencies broadcast by 272 affiliated radio organizations — an increase of more than one-third in a year.

The Internet has also become an important means of delivery of RFE/RL products. The average number of visitors to RFE/RL's 23 Internet Web sites doubled in 2003 from the previous year, to over 1.8 million monthly. In addition, each month RFE/RL electronically distributes nearly 838,000 copies of news and analysis reporting in English about the countries to which it broadcasts.

In April 2003, RFE/RL launched an external training program in Afghanistan. The program, undertaken at the request of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and unique to U.S. international broadcasting, utilizes the expertise of RFE/RL trainers in Kabul, thus fulfilling one important aspect of its mission to foster the development of independent media. Courses stress the importance of newsgathering, forming contacts, developing news judgment, and keeping to tight deadlines and schedules in an environment as close as possible to that of a live, working-news setting. A clear measure of the success of the program is the fact that three of the 24 trainees who attended courses from April through July recently secured jobs in Kabul's first commercial music station, Arman FM. Other trainees have become trainers themselves in media NGOs or have increased their responsibilities in their current workplaces. Perhaps most impressive, a female student from the third course is now heading up the first women's community radio station in northern Afghanistan.

In the past decade, RFE/RL has made many changes to remain relevant to U.S. foreign policy needs. But its vital mission hasn't changed from that celebrated by President Dwight Eisenhower in a tribute to RFE/RL: "The simplest and clearest charter in the world is what you have, which is to tell the truth." ■

RADIO FREE ASIA: A "RARE WINDOW"

RFA HAS TARGETTED THE SWATH FROM HANOI TO HOHHOT AND FROM LHASA TO LUANG PRABHANG TO DEMONSTRATE BY EXAMPLE WHAT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION MEANS.

BY RICHARD RICHTER

Every year, the nonprofit U.S. organization Freedom House publishes a map of press freedom around the world. The map and accompanying narrative rank countries as "free," "partly free," or "not free" — denoted by the colors green, yellow, and purple, respectively. Year after year, the countries of East Asia, comprising the entirety of Radio Free Asia's target audience, stand out as a broad, bold, violet sweep. From Hanoi to Hohhot, Lhasa to Luang Prabhang, the media are decidedly unfree.

Enter Radio Free Asia, a "surrogate" national broadcaster, delivering news and information relevant to listeners' daily lives in a way the local press would if its journalists could report freely. RFA broadcasts in Mandarin, Cantonese, Wu (Shanghainese), Uyghur, three dialects of Tibetan, Burmese, Vietnamese, Korean, Lao and Khmer. Each language service is staffed entirely by native speakers, and the programming of each service is unique.

Setting an Example

Incorporated by an act of Congress as a private nonprofit company in 1996 and funded by an annual grant from the Broadcasting Board of Governors, RFA employs 256 staff and broadcasts roughly 250 hours every week. All broadcasts originate from RFA's Washington, D.C., headquarters, with reports from bureaus in Hong Kong, Taipei, Phnom Penh, Dharamsala, Bangkok, Seoul, and Ankara. Broadcasts also include reporting from numerous stringers elsewhere around the world. RFA follows strict journalistic standards of objectivity, integrity and balance. Maintaining credibility among listeners is RFA's top priority.

Exiled Chinese dissident Wang Dan and Hong Kong pro-democracy leader Martin Lee take calls from China on June 4, 2003, during one of Radio Free Asia's toll-free, Mandarin-language hotline programs. Wang and Lee's visit coincided with the 14th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown and an outcry in Hong Kong over government plans to pass a draconian anti-subversion bill.

Broadcasters and editors try to demonstrate by example what freedom of expression really means to a population of listeners who have never experienced it in their own lives. In practical terms, this means airing balanced, objective stories and a wide variety of voices and views. For example, when a U.S. reconnaissance plane and a Chinese fighter jet collided over international waters in early 2001, RFA received calls from listeners who believed the United States was at fault as well as calls from those who regarded the Chinese pilot's moves as provocative. RFA broadcast them all. Chinese listeners quickly recognized this balance in reporting on a highly controversial incident, and many thanked RFA for giving airtime to both sides.

Reporting on these tightly closed countries poses some unique challenges, not least of which is the propensity of Asia's authoritarian regimes to jam or block reception of RFA signals. RFA listeners frequently complain about jamming, which most governments accomplish by broadcasting at the same time and on the same frequency as RFA. Some also try to jam RFA's Web site, www.rfa.org. Just as often, however, listeners phone, write or e-mail RFA to say that they're able to listen to its programming despite jamming, and that it fills a critical void in their lives.

Gathering information about these countries can also pose some difficulties, as obvious news sources are often unwilling or literally unable to speak on the record about newsworthy events. In most instances, however, relentless reporting does turn up all sides of a story — though the process may take longer than it might elsewhere as reporters must confirm and reconfirm information from sources who cannot be named on-air.

Call-in Programs in China

RFA also broadcasts seven telephone call-in programs: four in Mandarin and one each in Tibetan, Uyghur, and Cantonese. These programs provide a unique window on events in territory under the control of the Chinese government.

"Labor Hotline" and "Labor Express," Mandarin-language programs hosted by former Chinese labor leader Han Dongfang, regularly break news related to worker unrest in China. Han, a 1989 dissident who now lives and works in Hong Kong, retains a loyal following throughout China, and he frequently fields calls from Chinese workers whose stories would otherwise remain untold.

In 2002, for example, Han obtained an exclusive interview with the indicted leader of massive worker protests that rocked China's northeastern industrial city of Liaoyang. In the interview, Wang Zhaoming was unrepentant, saying, "We did what we did only to survive."

Wang was among four workers in Liaoyang arrested for organizing demonstrations there in March, briefly paralyzing the city. The protesters claimed that their employer, a bankrupt metals-processing factory, had robbed them of severance pay to which they were entitled when the factory failed. The protests, which drew tens of thousands of people, touched a nerve among Chinese authorities, who fear a major backlash by workers angered by efforts to transform loss-making state-owned enterprises.

In 2003 RFA launched a toll-free hotline in the Uyghur language, spoken by the mainly Muslim population of Xinjiang, after a devastating earthquake tore through the remote northwestern Chinese region in February. The Chinese government largely rebuffed foreign journalists who wished to travel to the stricken area, but RFA's Uyghur service was able through its hotline to speak directly with earthquake survivors, who painted a grim picture of disaster-driven hardship in what was already one of China's poorest regions.

A Rare Window

Precise audience research in RFA's target countries is impossible to obtain. Yet even in countries that still hand down jail terms or worse to anyone caught listening to foreign broadcasts, listeners report that they rely on RFA programs and often use ingenious means to circumvent official jamming.

"After listening to RFA, I have seen light and … hope," one Chinese caller reported. "Please, soldiers, don't jam RFA's programs, for your own good and for the sake of Chinese people," said another.

"All the comrades who listen to Radio Free Asia," a Chinese caller said in May 2003, "can actually hear a radio station that speaks the truth. They should feel

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Richard Richter, a veteran journalist, became the first president of Radio Free Asia in 1996, soon after it was chartered. He previously held senior executive positions at ABC News, CBS News and the PBS affiliate WETA in Washington, D.C.

happy and fortunate. This is a rare opportunity ... I think that all the audience should cherish this rare window that allows us to breathe in the air of freedom."

Even North Koreans, subjected since 1950 to intensive propaganda and draconian media controls, retain an astounding capacity — against all odds — to think for themselves, and appreciate honest, factual reporting when they hear it. A survey of 200 North Korean defectors conducted by the Intermedia Survey Institute in June 2003 found that 47 percent had personally modified a one-channel radio to listen to foreign broadcasts, although nearly all knew this could land them in re-education camps. Forty-two percent reported listening to South Korean radio every week, while 17.5 percent reported listening to RFA's Korean-language broadcasts (at four hours daily).

"Tell Him the Truth"

Over the past year, all RFA language services devoted exhaustive coverage to the deadly SARS virus and its regional impact. They also covered in-depth North Korea's declared nuclear program, China's leadership transition, Burmese unrest, and Cambodia's July elections. The international commercial media now often cite RFA as an authoritative source for news on Asia's closed countries, which attests to RFA's growing access and credibility.

Current plans call for stepped-up investigative reporting and an expansion of RFA's Web site to include more text, more audio, and live streaming of call-in programs.

These initiatives will likely fuel a growing audience in East Asia — which, despite assertions to the contrary by authoritarian leaders, has prized the virtues of truth-telling and speaking truth to power for centuries. Asked by a student how he should address a prince, no less venerable a sage than Confucius landed on the side of unvarnished honesty. "Tell him the truth," Confucius replied, "even if it offends him." ■

IBB EMBRACES THE DIGITAL AGE

U.S. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING IS EXPANDING THE ESSENTIAL MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL WORLD.

BY ALAN L. HEIL JR.

Forty years ago, then-VOA director Henry Loomis was quoted as saying that running the Voice of America was somewhat akin to manning the bridge of an aircraft carrier: just operating the ship was a huge and complex task, and it was impossible to maneuver or change course very quickly.

Of course, there was no pressing need to alter the vessel's direction back then, for the life of a U.S. international broadcasting executive was relatively simple in the 1960s. The skipper on the bridge could coordinate his programming and technical operations and his budgetary and personnel functions, and set long-range goals for a one-medium delivery system. And the consistency of policy and resources helped VOA to blossom as the nation's largest government-funded global broadcaster, expanding its primarily shortwave radio operations from Europe and Asia into the rest of the world.

That halcyon state of affairs continued more or less intact until the early 1990s. U.S. international broadcasters such as VOA and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty helped provide the intellectual stimulus for the reformers who toppled the Soviet empire and, in the Voice's case, fueled the expansion of democratic governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

But with the end of the Cold War and the apparent victory of capitalism and democracy around the world, critics began to question the need for America to maintain a strong official presence overseas, either diplomatically or on the airwaves. Those doubts led to a wave of massive funding cuts, increased congressional micromanagement and, eventually, the dissolution of USIA and the creation of a new bureaucratic structure for U.S. official overseas broadcasting operations.

Then came the 9/11 attacks. Terrible as they were, they did serve to demonstrate that overseas broadcasting is essential to our nation's long-range security. After all, high-quality, thought-provoking programming can inspire a new generation of reformers all over the globe: the Mandelas, Sakharovs and Walesas of the Arab and Islamic worlds and beyond. And there is a real hunger for accurate, objective, in-depth news and information among overseas listeners, viewers, and Internet users.

Nations began broadcasting across borders to other nations 75 years ago. Over the years, they have employed three principal styles of international radio:

1) Propaganda or policy-laden radio. This style was

prevalent during World War II and the first two decades of the Cold War. Radio Moscow and Radio Tirana were typical examples. But despite rather awesome transmission systems, neither of these networks ever attracted significant audiences because they lacked an essential ingredient, credibility.

2) Youth-oriented or entertainment radio. From 1985 to 1996, VOA Europe exemplified this approach before being abolished as part of a number of budget reductions. Since 2001, the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors has created new, predominantly pop-music formats to attract younger audiences in Arabic and Persian. These programs are heavy on entertainment, light on news.

3) Fact-based, news and information radio. The primary examples over the years have been the BBC and VOA, which have amassed the largest global audiences and between them, currently reach a quarter of a billion listeners a week. They reflect and offer incisive, objective, on the scene reportage and analysis of events in their own countries as well as the world and regions to which they broadcast.

History suggests that the third category of broadcasting — that is, "full service" programming — is likely to continue to be the most successful model for the 21st century.

This fact-based broadcasting, especially if it includes call-ins with experts in many fields, fosters dialogue with the new generation of reformers described earlier. It also inevitably expands the essential marketplace of ideas in an increasingly curious and increasingly digital world of ferment and change. The new non-government Arab TV networks illustrate how differing viewpoints can begin to make a difference. As veteran Dutch international broadcaster Jonathan Marks once put it: "We must share information, not shout it."

The challenges to U.S. publicly-funded international broadcasting and the IBB have become vastly more complex, technically as well as substantively. VOA and its growing array of sister networks are playing catchup, competing in a zillion-channel world to reach shortwave and medium-wave (AM) listeners via satellite. At the same time, they must move far beyond traditional shortwave delivery systems, entering already crowded and increasingly competitive television markets, and finding ways to fully exploit the potential of the Internet. And they must do all this on a planet where about half the people have yet to make their first telephone call.

Furthermore, IBB navigators, working with the VOA director, are confronting the enormous geopolitical changes of the post-Cold War era. In particular, as noted, broadcasting to the Arab and Islamic worlds has become a high priority.

An "Architectural Monstrosity"

IBB Director Seth Cropsey and his staff are responding to all these challenges from the helm of an unwieldy organizational structure that is devilishly difficult to manage. International broadcasting veteran Mark Hopkins once called it "an architectural monstrosity." Writing in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, he commented that, "White House and congressional tinkerers have attached a wing here, a porch there, a shaky cupola on top, and some dormers jutting from the roof."

Today, the International Broadcasting Bureau supports VOA and Radio Marti, including their television networks. It provides engineering services for all U.S. government-funded overseas broadcast entities (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia and Radios Sawa and Farda, as well as VOA and the Martis). Its Office of Performance Review evaluates programming content at the Voice and the Martis.

In addition to providing engineering support to all the networks, IBB reports to a U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors that is increasingly inclined to micromanage day-to-day operations and technical enhancements in the networks it oversees. The BBG, in fact, conceived of and pressed for the new networks, Radios Sawa (Arabic) and Farda (Persian), and the Middle East Television network (Arabic). Both METN and an Urdu language station to Pakistan, Radio Aap Ki Dunyaa (Your World Radio), are scheduled to launch in 2004.

The contrast between the organizational structures of the Loomis and the Cropsey eras is stark.

Yet the IBB has defied claims by some that federal bureaucracies are plodding and unresponsive to change. In just eight days last summer, IBB engineers, working closely with VOA's Persian Service, expanded VOA Persian-language TV programs from two to seven days a week at the height of student demonstrations in Iran. Those programs, including call-in segments, are

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Alan L. Heil Jr, a retired deputy director of VOA, is author of Voice of America: A History *(Columbia University Press, 2003).*

now a permanent feature of the media scene there. They have attracted substantial new, reform-minded audiences.

The agency is also utilizing the digital age to capitalize on the potential for instantaneous communication among expert studio guests in Washington and listeners, viewers and Internet gurus in every corner of the globe. Call-ins are regularly scheduled on 13 VOA foreign-language services today, in addition to English. Some are radio-TV simulcasts videostreamed live on the Internet.

Meanwhile, over the past year, the Office of Engineering and Technical Operations negotiated more than 20 around-the-clock leases of FM stations in the Middle East and Africa, helping to increase youth audiences for Radio Sawa and VOA services to Africa; set up FM stations in four cities in Iraq: Baghdad, Basra, Irbil and Suleymania; and constructed or leased powerful AM transmitters in Afghanistan, Cyprus and Djibouti.

In some countries, notably the People's Republic of China and Iran, the thought police continue to try to prevent Western broadcasts from reaching their citizens. Beijing has heavily jammed VOA shortwave broadcasts in Mandarin ever since the Tiananmen crackdown of 1989, and in Tibetan since that service was established in 1991. For the past several years, Chinese authorities have also blocked access to the Web sites of VOA, Radio Free Asia and other Western broadcasters.

IBB Engineering has been active in exploring technologies such as the use of proxy sites and expanded e-mail services to counter such interference by centrally controlled PRC service providers. As a result, VOA Chinese Branch e-mails to China have expanded from hundreds of thousands to millions of messages a day over the past year. (Using the same technology, Persian Service and Radio Farda daily e-mails to Iran now number in the thousands.) U.S. overseas broadcast network Web sites also have been blocked from time to time by Burma, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Laos, North Korea, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, prompting IBB to work on a global strategy to combat such interference.

VOA News Central

Looking ahead, Cropsey has won the Broadcasting Board of Governors' approval for what he calls "Global Broadcasting Vision, 2010." The blueprint is designed to flesh out and set tangible goals for implementing the BBG's overall strategic plan. Its main points:

- The need for U.S. international broadcasting has never been greater, and sufficient funding is essential to meet the challenges of a multimedia age.
- U.S. must achieve market dominance as an international broadcaster in parts of the world that are strategically important to American interests.
- Managers of U.S. international broadcasting must address the perennial problem of time lags between when an international crisis erupts and when funding permits its managers to acquire and deploy equipment such as high-power, medium-wave transmitters for the necessary surge broadcasting.
- IBB must make the most effective use of its physical plant, both in the United States and overseas. This means providing the most cost effective services to VOA, VOA/TV and Worldnet, RFE/RL, Radio Free Asia, Radio/TV Marti, Radio Sawa, Radio Farda, and soon the Middle East Television Network.

Cropsey singles out two challenges as particularly important: tracking expansion of the Net, and using cell phones as vehicles for transmitting information. Even in many poorer countries, he notes, there's a tendency to "leapfrog" from rudimentary communications systems directly to wireless. As he puts it: "IT technology is changing before our eyes every month."

This vision is already starting to become a reality. Very soon, IBB and VOA will complete a high-visibility project that has been five years in the making. Just as the 2004 presidential primaries start up, "VOA News Central" will be inaugurated, open to the viewing public from a new visitors' center. The multimedia newsroom will be located at the IBB-VOA headquarters building, just three blocks from the U.S. Capitol. Encompassing radio, television and Internet operations, the facility will include a new specialized section designed to serve an innovative "24-hours-a-day" VOA multimedia broadcast service to Africa.

The center will stand as a symbol of IBB's and VOA's ability — if left intact with their current cooperation sustained — to continue practicing in the 21st century what Henry Loomis had in mind when he promulgated the Voice of America's Charter in 1959: a steady pursuit of knowledge, and a determination to share accurate, objective and comprehensive news and analysis with a curious and candid world. ■

Letter from Baghdad

An FSO recounts a memorable recent week in Baghdad.

By Beth A. Payne

This morning (Oct. 31) in the wonderful city of Baghdad, I woke up at 6:00 and made some coffee. Sitting out in front of the Convention Center and listening to the birds, I watched the tail end of the sunrise and felt almost normal.

This week was a little more exciting than even I would like. Sunday morning (Oct. 26), I had just woken up to the Muslim call to prayer and was lying in bed thinking about getting up and starting another day. I'd had a really nice Friday off and Saturday was very productive, so the week had started out well. Suddenly there were huge explosions and my room was filled with smoke — the Hotel al-Rashid was under attack again, and this was a big one.

I rolled out of bed, grabbed my sandals and phone (we'll leave the analysis of why I grabbed sandals and a phone until later — a friend grabbed her contacts and makeup case!) — and was instantly out of my room. The hallway was filled with smoke and I had almost reached the stairs when I heard an American woman screaming for help — she'd lost her arm. I ran back and immediately put pressure on her wound (thanks to State Department training on emergency medical assistance when I was in Kuwait). I yelled for assistance and after ordering several guys with tourniquets away (she could have lost her arm if we'd tied a tourniquet), I found several men to help carry her down the three flights of stairs.

I remember calling for a medic once we got to the lobby of the hotel, which was already filled with people. Unfortunately, no medic had been stationed at the hotel, but a former South African special forces officer came to help (he's doing private security here, the most popular job in town) and helped somewhat while I continued to keep pressure on the arm. After what seemed like forever (but probably was 15-20 minutes), the army ambulance arrived. Because there weren't many medics, I stayed with the woman in the ambulance continuing to keep pressure on her arm, using my other hand to call the State Department and tell them of the attack. We arrived at the hospital and she was immediately taken into surgery for two or three hours. The doctors saved her arm and she is doing very well.

I called mom and dad and told them I was all right. I then started counting the casualties as they were brought into the hospital.

So, there I was at the 28th Combat Surgical Hospital in my green PJs (my favorite PJs!) and sandals, clutching my cell phone! I was covered in blood and still somewhat in shock, but I called mom and dad and told them I was all right. I then started counting the casualties as they were brought into the hospital. Someone gave me a hospital gown, so I could take off my top — but the gown kept opening and here I was, clutching the front of my gown, still wearing my PJ bottoms, carrying a phone covered in blood. I must have looked like a madwoman!

Beth Payne is the U.S. consul in Baghdad. An FSO since 1993, she has served in Kuwait, Tel Aviv and Kigali. On Nov. 24, she received a Superior Honor Award and an Award for Heroism for her service in Iraq.

I must admit that I rather like having men with guns around!

At one point some officer ordered me away (I had no ID and couldn't prove who I was), but luckily I knew the head of the hospital. He told the guys that I was the U.S. consul and asked them to let me hang around and give assistance to the injured Americans. I actually ended up helping everyone who came in only slightly injured with simple things like making a phone call home, finding clothes for people to change into, and getting a ride to the CPA headquarters (better known as the four-headed palace) for temporary lodging. Someone eventually gave me a T-shirt and shorts and I was able to clean up a bit.

When the lady came out of surgery, I helped her call her family and sat with her for a while until she went to sleep. At some point I managed to shower and then went back to the hotel to pick up a few things for her (and clothes for myself). In particular, she really wanted her glasses since she could not see without them, so I was glad I found them. I was very thankful for my own Lasik surgery; that's one less thing to worry about in a crisis — I can see!

That night I slept in a friend's trailer (she was in the U.S. on leave) and tried to figure out what to do. The homeless from the hotel were scattered throughout the Green Zone (protected area), with the less fortunate (meaning no friends with empty trailers) sleeping on cots in

the basement of the palace. I decided that the best and safest place for me would be the spare room in my office. I got permission the next day to move into the Convention Center, and became the only woman living among hundreds of Florida National Guardsmen in a very nice fortress-type building!

Unfortunately, I was still at breakfast on Monday (Nov. 1) when bombs started exploding all over the city. I ran to the office of Global Risk Security (a private security company with some of the best people I've ever met, who take care of me and never forget me in a crisis) and listened to a first-hand report from my friend Chris, who had quickly arrived at the scene of the Red Cross car (actually ambulance) bombing. There were a total of eight explosions on Monday morning — luckily, miraculously, no private Americans were injured or killed. In fact, no private Americans were injured or killed in the Hotel al-Rashid bombing. However, one military officer was killed and four civilians were injured.

I went back to the al-Rashid on Monday afternoon to retrieve the rest of my things from the hotel room. The only thing I lost in the bombing was my World Space radio, which was on the window ledge connected to a small satellite antenna. As I looked out the window, naively thinking my radio might be on the ground below it, I saw a round hole in the concrete overhang over my bulletproof window (the al-Rashid was built by Saddam to withstand quite a beating). It turns out that one of the 20 rockets that slammed into the hotel hit my window overhang but did not detonate; it blew open the window (which was good because it otherwise would have broken) and shattered the glass in the other windows. Everything else in the room was perfect except for a

AN INVITATION FOR SUMMER FICTION

Once again the *FSJ* is seeking works of fiction of up to 3,000 words for its annual summer fiction issue. Story lines or characters involving the Foreign Service are preferred, but not required. The top stories, selected by the *Journal*'s Editorial Board, will be published in the July/August issue; some of them will also be simultaneously posted on the *Journal*'s Web site. The writer of each story will receive an honorarium of $250, payable upon publication.

All stories must be previously unpublished. Submissions should be unsigned and accompanied by a cover sheet with author's name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address.

Deadline is April 1. No fooling.

Please also note the following:

- Authors are limited to two entries.
- Entries will only be accepted by e-mail (preferably in the form of Word or Word Perfect attachments and with the text copied into the body of the message).

Please send submissions (or questions) to Mikkela Thompson, *Journal* Business Manager, at Thompsonm@afsa.org.

I became the only woman living among hundreds of Florida National Guardsmen in a very nice fortress-type building.

layer of gray dust — amazing! I've never felt so lucky!

So I'm now resettled into the Convention Center (the envy of others who are still in the basement of the palace) and am ready for anything! It's going to be a rough few weeks — there's been at least one bombing each day so far, and people in town are pretty scared. I've told my staff not to come in on Saturday and Sunday and am going to take it easy for the next few days just in case something big happens. Luckily, I have the Global guys who call me several times a day, and tell me if I need to come stay with them (which I did several times). I must admit that I rather like having men with guns around!

So, I was very ready to board the plane on Nov. 19 for a brief R&R and take a nice break from the excitement! I have a new appreciation, though, for what it's like for you all on this side of the world as I am now worrying about everyone I love and care for back in Baghdad. I realize that I can't just leave Baghdad behind, even for a few weeks of R&R!

P.S. Check out my updated Web site: http://www.geocities.com/bethapayne/usconsulbaghdad/BaghdadBlues.htm — I put in a photo of my new room. I promise to take more photos! ■

Latin America: Back on the Radar Screen?

The 9/11 attacks derailed the Bush administration's plans for a "Century of the Americas." But now that vision may be getting back on track.

By George Gedda

At the outset of his administration, President George W. Bush signaled his intention to make Latin America a key focus of his foreign policy. During an April 2001 hemispheric summit, he outlined to fellow heads of government his dream of making this "The Century of the Americas," declaring: "We have a great vision before us: a fully democratic hemisphere, bound together by good will and free trade. That is a tall order. It is also the chance of a lifetime."

Secretary of State Colin Powell offered similar rhetoric during a Sept. 9, 2003, swearing-in ceremony for the new assistant secretary of State for Western Hemisphere affairs, Roger Noriega.

Powell told a room full of Latin American envoys that, "There is no region on earth that is more important to the American people than the Western Hemisphere. This is our home. This is our neighborhood, and we are bound to our neighbors by the deepest ties — ties of family, ties of business, ties of culture."

Yet, from a political perspective, Powell left a different impression just six days later about the importance of hemispheric ties during an address — one of his longest as Secretary of State — delivered at the George Washington University. The speech, a comprehensive foreign policy analysis covering 8,000 words, contained just two fleeting references to Latin America: the newly enacted free trade agreement with Chile and the goal of a hemisphere-wide free trade accord by early 2005.

Missing was any mention of other hemispheric issues, such as the potentially explosive political upheaval in Venezuela, the general economic malaise throughout Latin America, and what appears to be a worsening crisis of governance in much of the region. Even the perennial issue of narcotics came up just once — and not in reference to Colombia, the world's largest exporter of cocaine, but to North Korea and its penchant for state-run trafficking in heroin and other illicit drugs.

The attention Powell actually devotes to the hemisphere is probably somewhere between the contrasting extremes of the two speeches. This past June, he took part in a meeting of Organization of American States foreign ministers in Chile (an annual event that some of his predecessors routinely skipped), and he also made a stop in Argentina. During two hectic days in November, he traveled to Panama, Nicaragua and Honduras. Meanwhile, a parade of Latin American presidents have visited Bush in the Oval Office. He and Powell will attend a hemispheric summit in Mexico this month. The main issues are expected to be economic growth and democratic development.

Latin America's democratic development generally has not been accompanied by gains in the social sphere.

Jorge Castaneda, who stepped down as Mexican foreign minister in early 2003, believes there is not much substance to U.S.-Latin American ties, aside from the ambitious trade agenda. "In the post-Sept. 11 world, Latin America finds itself consigned to the periphery: it is not a global power center, but nor are its difficulties so immense as to warrant imme-

George Gedda is the State Department correspondent for the Associated Press.

diate U.S. concern. In many ways, the region, at least in terms of U.S. attention, has become once again an Atlantis, a lost continent."

Democracy Emerges

That description may be excessive but it is true that threats to the United States from nations to the south are minimal, particularly when compared to the "other hemisphere" to which Powell devotes the great bulk of his time. Terrorism in the hemisphere is generally limited to acts by illegal armed groups in Colombia and, most importantly, there are no known unconventional weapons anywhere in the region. (Argentina and Brazil flirted with acquiring nuclear weapons a generation ago but eventually dropped the idea.) Nearly all Latin American and Caribbean nations earn good grades for keeping the peace and shunning arms races.

They also are doing better at avoiding the scourge of dictatorship. Thirty-four nations of the region are now bound together by the Inter-American Democratic Charter, a region-wide commitment to promote and defend democracy in the hemisphere. In fact, the 9/11 suicide bombers struck on the very morning Powell was in Peru for a ceremony to ratify that document. The bombings forced him to cut short his visit.

Between 1979 and 1990, all Latin American military leaders stepped aside, allowing elected civilians to take power, though the armed forces have retained a significant — and detrimental — political role in some countries, notably Guatemala.

Except for unconstitutional changes of government in Haiti (1991) and Suriname (1980), democratic processes have been respected throughout the region since a 1976 military coup in Argentina. As Powell repeatedly notes, 34 of the hemisphere's 35 nations hold competitive elections on a regular basis. (Cuba is the exception, of course.) Considering Latin America's grim history of military dictatorships, this is no small achievement.

Compared with its grim past, this is a rare period of hope for Central America.

Falling Short on Development

The big disappointment for Washington, not to mention the region itself, is that Latin America's democratic development generally has not been accompanied by gains in the social sphere. Precise figures are hard to come by but there are said to be 160 million Latin Americans and citizens of Caribbean nations who live in extreme poverty — nearly a third of the region's half-billion residents. In fact, the area is actually less prosperous than it was a decade ago, according to Stephen Johnson, who examined the region's socio-economic conditions in an October study for the Heritage Foundation.

This has produced a political fallout, as Powell noted in his Sept. 9 speech, when he alluded to the "lingering dissatisfaction" with what the democratic evolution in Latin America has wrought.

"Men and women have sacrificed and they want to see results in their pocketbooks, in their pay packets, in their polling places, but above all, in their homes by their ability to put food on the table, to bring a roof over the head of their families, to see their children grow up to have a better future than they do, to see more opportunity in their lives," Powell said.

"But too often they still suffer from weak governments and ineffective institutions. In too many places, rule of law and property rights are honored mainly in the breach. Children are not being educated for jobs in a globalizing world or being educated for citizenship in a democracy. ... In too many countries in our hemisphere, health care systems are failing. Corruption still saps the marrow of democracy. Economic stagnation and even deep recession retard development."

Latin America's inability to develop strong institutions to deal with its problems is becoming increasingly worrisome. The depth of the dilemma was eloquently underscored by Mario Vargas Llosa, the Peruvian novelist who is widely admired as one of the hemisphere's most astute thinkers.

In Latin America, he said in a speech in Spain, "there is a total lack of confidence, on the part of the immense majority of the people, in institutions, and that is one of the reasons why our institutions fail.

"Institutions cannot flourish in a country if the people don't believe in them, if people ... see in them not a guarantee of security or of justice, but precisely the opposite."

He then outlined his own experience as a former resident of England to provide a concrete example. In England, he said, "something curious happened to me. I didn't feel nervous when I passed a police officer. In Peru, I had always felt, when in the presence of a policeman, a certain nervousness, as if that policeman in some sense represented a potential danger to me. ... In Peru, as in most of Latin America, people have good reason to feel alarmed when they come across someone in uniform, because there is a good chance that the uniform will be used, not to defend their safety, but to shake them down."

Frustrated by dysfunctional institutions, Latin American voters sometimes look to presidential candidates

who promise change. Brazilians, for example, veered to the left in 2002 when they elected Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, head of the Workers Party, as president. "Lula," as he is universally known, has turned out to be more pragmatist than doctrinaire leftist, and is widely admired in much of the hemisphere. President Bush greeted him warmly when he visited the White House in June.

Venezuelans broke with 40 years of centrist politics in 1998 by electing populist Hugo Chavez as president, reflecting widespread disgust with the country's traditional parties. But Chavez appears to have made a bad situation worse. He has presided over a dramatic decline in the country's economic fortunes. He befriended Fidel Castro and Middle East radicals, leading many to worry that he plans to shut down Venezuela's democratic processes in favor of a more authoritarian approach. A referendum on his rule may be held in early 2004. Meanwhile, U.S. officials are becoming increasingly concerned about what they see as a joint effort by Chavez and Castro to nurture anti-American sentiment in a number of Latin American countries with money, political tutoring and training.

In Bolivia, a pro-American president, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, was deposed in a political uprising in October. U.S. officials are convinced that Chavez financed the Bolivian opposition and say that may have contributed to Sanchez de Lozada's downfall. At present, the most popular political figure in Bolivia appears to be Evo Morales, known for his hostility to capitalism and his support for Bolivian farmers who grow coca, the raw material for cocaine. Bolivia not long ago qualified as a U.S. favorite in the Andes, with its pro-growth policies and its determination to destroy the narcotrafficking industry. Now its course is highly uncertain.

Another cause for anxiety in Washington is Chavez's willingness to allow leftist rebels in Colombia to make use of territory in western Venezuela as a springboard for attacks inside Colombia. Colombian President Alvaro Uribe has emerged as perhaps Washington's favorite president in the hemisphere. He wants his country out of the drug export business and has accelerated efforts to eradicate coca. He also has been stepping up the war with the leftist FARC and ELN rebels while attempting to negotiate the demobilization of the AUC, a rightist paramilitary group.

Redefining Security Threats

In October, Mexican President Vicente Fox convened a meeting of hemispheric foreign ministers to redefine hemispheric security. He pointed out that inter-American concepts on this issue have not been revised since the Rio Treaty, a mutual defense pact, was signed in the Cold War year of 1947. Citing his belief that the real threats to hemispheric security are poverty, disease and environmental degradation, Fox had already withdrawn Mexico from the treaty in 2002.

His stand may also reflect Mexican weariness with constant American pressures to combat narcotraffickers and to ensure that the border area is not a gateway for terrorists wishing to enter the United States.

Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez gave voice to this frustration in a September speech in which, without mentioning the United States by name, he said, "No state can impose on another its own security agenda nor the order of its priorities."

The Bush administration argues that the Rio Treaty is still applicable, pointing out that other dangers have emerged to replace international communism, such as terrorism and drug trafficking — threats that it believes are best dealt with collectively.

Signaling Washington's view that Fox's initiative trivializes grave dangers, Powell showed his disregard for the Mexico City conference by not bothering to show up. In the end, the conference approved a statement that embraced the views of both Mexico and the United States. It acknowledged the legitimacy of Washington's concerns about transnational threats but also accepted Mexico's position that poverty and other social issues deserve attention as well under the hemispheric security umbrella.

Mexico's decision to go to the mat with the United States on the security issue reflects the complexity of cross-border relations. On the whole, 2003 was not a good year for U.S.-Mexican relations. Much to Fox's chagrin, it marked yet another year in which there was little measurable progress in Mexico's hopes for a fairer shake for the four to five million Mexicans who live and work illegally in the United States.

Mexico wants legal status for these people, but in the post-9/11 environment, there has been little enthusiasm in Congress for rewarding Mexicans who entered the United States illegally. There is more interest in expanding a program that allows Mexicans to enter the country as guest workers for a set period. Rather than taking the lead itself, the administration seems content to let Congress carry the ball on immigration reform. It's hard to overestimate the importance of Mexican immigrants to the Mexican economy: $14.2 billion in remittances during 2003, according to a new study. And as Bush himself has noted, they help the U.S. economy as well.

Mexico is not alone among hemispheric countries in its eagerness to score political points at American expense. Latin American and Caribbean nations banded together at the Organization of American States meeting in Chile last June to defeat the U.S. candidate nominated to serve on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, an arm of the OAS.

There was no open debate on the merits of the U.S. candidate, Rafael Martinez, brother of HUD Secretary Mel Martinez. But several delegates privately expressed doubts about his qualifications. He is a Cuban-born lawyer who is best known for his expertise in medical malpractice and health law. Martinez's defeat means that the commission for the first time will not have a U.S. representative.

The vote also may have reflected hemispheric dissatisfaction with America's unbending hostility toward Cuba. Many countries oppose Washington's long-standing campaign to punish the island through a policy of economic denial. So does a majority of the U.S. Congress. Both houses approved amendments in 2003 to ease restrictions on travel to Cuba. A presidential veto threat doomed the effort. With its eye on the Florida vote in the November elections, the administration is working on a plan to hasten a transition to democratic rule in Cuba. A spring announcement is planned.

Central American Warmth

Against a backdrop of generally unwelcome developments in the hemisphere in 2003, Powell's early November trip to Central America was a pleasant surprise. Nicaraguan President Enrique Bolanos and Honduran President Ricardo Maduro both lavished praise on the United States and endorsed the U.S. notions of the requirements for good governance and economic growth: open markets, free trade, transparency in government, the rule of law and rooting out corruption. Powell was also well received in Panama, where he attended ceremonies marking the country's 100 years of independence.

No region in the hemisphere has been more supportive of the U.S. effort in Iraq than Central America. Honduras and El Salvador each dispatched 360 troops to assist the U.S.-

On the whole, 2003 was not a good year for U.S.-Mexican relations.

led coalition in Iraq, while Nicaragua sent 120. (The only other Latin American country with troops in Iraq is the Dominican Republic, with 300.) Combined, these forces are assisting a Spanish-led brigade in south-central Iraq. No South American country has offered troops.

Trade expansion is the prime issue on the U.S.-Central America agenda. The United States is negotiating a free trade agreement with Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica (Panama and Belize are not included). If and when the agreement is signed and ratified, it should offer the promise of a better economic future for the region.

Compared with its grim past, this is a rare period of hope for Central America. Powell has firsthand recollections of the 1980s, a period when, as a high-ranking military officer, he personally helped persuade El Salvador's military brass to surrender power, exhorted members of Congress to support the Nicaraguan Contras in their fight against the leftist Sandinistas and planned for the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama that deposed Manuel Antonio Noriega. The peace that prevails on the isthmus nowadays is a welcome change.

Heading home on Nov. 4 after his Central America visit, Powell outlined to reporters the promise and the problems of the region: "There's been so much progress on the road to democracy and economic reform, but the problems are still very basic and severe: poverty, economic development, social development, political development, education of young people, health care — all the standard issues that all developing countries have to deal with."

A big test for U.S.-Latin American relations will come this year. Every nation in the Western Hemisphere except Cuba will be working against a January 2005 deadline for approval of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Bush wants to build on what he sees as the huge success of the North American Free Trade Agreement. He says trade among the United States, Canada and Mexico has more than doubled since NAFTA took effect in 1994.

He predicts a similar trade explosion if free trade were to extend from Alaska to Argentina, a community of 800 million. Critics, of course, argue that free trade has led to the export of U.S. jobs and the hollowing out of America's manufacturing capability. Some also question whether Mexico and Canada have actually benefited from NAFTA.

An FTAA agreement is likely, but one that is far less ambitious than what was originally contemplated because differences on some issues could not be overcome, including complaints, mostly from Brazil, about U.S. farm subsidies, and U.S. insistence on measures to protect intellectual property rights. Hemispheric trade officials decided that these issues are more appropriately handled by the World Trade Organization rather than a regional trade group. But rather than await WTO action, the Bush administration is working out bilateral free trade agreements with a number of eager Latin American countries outside the FTAA.

Whatever the outcome, the trade issue is giving Latin America more prominence than usual on the admin-

Making Institutions Out of Projects

Ad hoc aid projects often work very well. But even the best ones usually don't pave the way for long-term solutions to development problems.

By James Olsen

The U.S. Agency for International Development and other aid agencies have carried out literally thousands of international development projects in the Third World over the years, in addition to their ongoing assistance programs. Such projects are generally ad hoc efforts lasting from six to 24 months carried out by expatriate specialists, who use limited funding to achieve specific short-term objectives

Often these projects work very well, as far as they go. But even the best of them tend to share one serious flaw: they don't pave the way for institutions that can prevent the problems the project addressed from recurring or apply the approach to address other needs. And certain problems, such as helping children without access to schools or assisting expectant mothers who lack prenatal health services, are best addressed institutionally. This can be done through creating a new organization on the ground or a new capacity for an existing agency to provide goods and services to unserved citizens. However it is done, such "institution-building" is central to a country's social and economic growth.

To make this outcome more common, we have to think differently about how we design, implement and evaluate assistance projects. Let me illustrate this by giving some "lessons learned" from a five-year USAID-sponsored education project I worked on as chief of party in the Dominican Republic during the 1980s. From speaking to professionals working on social projects, it is clear these issues still pose difficulties.

Project Design

It is crucial to begin with an accurate definition of the problem the assistance is meant to remedy, rather than relying on the answers provided by models, experts, studies, and local government officials and bureaucrats. The best way to accomplish this is to talk to the people who live there and will be affected by what's done. If it's an educational project, start with the teachers and parents. If it's an agricultural project, start with the campesinos who farm. If it's a water project, start with the people who need the water.

Instead, we tend to impose an extant "model" — a particular technology or methodology — that has worked elsewhere. (In education, it may be team-teaching, programmed instruction, radio education, or audiovisual instruction, to name a few.) The trouble with this approach is that even models that have succeeded in similar places may not suit the physical, cultural or social reality in which they are to be applied in the recipient country.

It is also important to realize that the host-country ministry helping to implement the project may know as little about the realities of life in an impoverished rural area as the foreigners do. I discovered that our Ministry of Education counterparts in Santo Domingo had never even visited the southwest region of the country where the pro-

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ject I was responsible for was to be based. At that time, there was no highway, the heat was intense, most of the area was desert, and the population was highly impoverished. Why would anyone in his right mind want to go there?

The few government officials who did work in the region regarded it as a form of exile, and because of the difference in social status between them and the locals, they were not fully aware of just how bad conditions were. Nor were they keen to find out.

Nevertheless, the officials had plenty of statistics and baseline studies at their fingertips. For instance, they assured us that a census had just been taken and that there were 5,000 children in the area without access to schools. When we actually went to the communities to talk to our future clients, however, we had to leave the jeep behind and walk several miles up the mountains where coffee was grown and down into coastal areas where the sugar cane was cut in order to reach the remote villages. The census takers had not done this and six months into the project we discovered there were actually 250,000 children in the area without access to schools! This misinformation was extraordinarily costly; for example, we would have been better off from a cost and outreach perspective to use available satellite technology rather than repeater radio signal towers. (But we stuck with the towers, by the way.)

Even when background data are reliable, site visits should still be made by the people who are going to do the actual work, not by "project designers" who draft a project paper and then leave. Making matters worse, all too often the project designed by one so-called "expert" is carried out by another "expert." The designer never understands why his or her plan wasn't actually carried out and the person implementing the project thinks that the original design was clearly insane. (Both are correct, of course.)

Money should be budgeted so that the future project workers can travel to the area and experience the actual conditions they will be working in for long enough to check the accuracy of the available reports. In that way, we can avoid doing projects that will cease to exist when the money runs out and the foreigners leave — as happens all too often when the strategic decisions about a program are made over dinner in an air-conditioned hotel back in the capital.

Ultimately, however, it's the people carrying out the project who make it work — or fail. International aid agencies usually don't recruit monomaniacs with missionary zeal, but that's what it takes to turn a short-term project into a self-sustaining institution. An entrepreneurial type is ideal for this because he or she has the motivation to create something out of nothing. But the agencies prefer cooler types with a Ph.D. (the more specialized, the better).

Institution-building is central to a country's social and economic growth.

Most host countries like the Ph.D.s, too, because they show the international agency is sending its "best" people. But speaking as a Ph.D.-holder myself, I have to admit we aren't always the best choice. We are used to competent support staff, telephones and computers that work, a social setting much like a corporation or university, and cultural amenities like movies and restaurants and museums. We are often overspecialized and not too concerned about what are properly called business and political matters. We also like abstractions and are sometimes unaccustomed to addressing practical problems like project workers stealing gasoline, or selling powdered milk meant for malnourished children on the black market, or figuring out how to reach a given community when it's flooded four months out of the year. Sure, you need to know what you are doing but that doesn't necessarily mean you need a Ph.D. to do it. Personally, I think some of my best preparation for overseas work took place on the streets of the low-income neighborhood in the Bronx where I grew up.

The Host Government

There are lots of reasons why the governments of Third World countries want international projects. Sometimes they want them for the cash or the physical inputs (i.e., equipment). Or they may want to curry favor for a development loan they are seeking. In some countries, it may be for the prestige. In our case, in the Dominican Republic, it was because the population in the targeted region were now voting in significant numbers and the government wanted to show those voters that it was concerned and was actually helping their children.

Finally, it may be, as it was with our project, that one

person in the ministry is personally committed to the initiative. Having a backer like that is good news if it is necessary to push the bureaucracy along, but if that person leaves, you may have no constituency for what is to be done — especially if the project involves change.

In fact, change — even for the better — is often perceived as a threat to the status quo and therefore to the position of the special interests already operating there. In our case, for example, we argued that a nonformal education project didn't replace conventional schools but simply supplemented them. That rationale was effective for a while, but then four things happened to undermine our position. The powerful governmental official who had grown up in the region and had successfully fought for the project was replaced for political reasons. Next, the project was placed directly under the control of the new minister of education, who was also the head of the teachers' union. She had always seen the project as a threat to union power because our teachers were unpaid paraprofessionals we had recruited from the local community and trained. Then an economic crisis meant that the 150 Dominican Education Ministry project staff were not paid for six months.

The coup de grace, however, was our very success. As measured by tests, our children were learning more and faster than the students in the conventional schools with trained, licensed teachers. Here we were, teaching in thatched structures paid for and built by the community, staffed by unpaid volunteers, and transmitting lessons via the radio at about 20 percent of the cost of a formal school setting. Due to the transparency of our research, people were bound to ask what our success said about the efficiency and cost of Dominican schools.

The best way to target assistance is to talk to the people who will be affected by what's done.

So the question arose, who was supplementing whom? The Ministry of Education, no matter how much we extolled their efforts and emphasized the importance of formal schools, perceived us as undermining their programs because they were never really committed to nonformal education anyway. They wanted more traditional schools and more teachers even though hundreds of thousands of youngsters would go unserved. (Under even the most favorable economic projections for the country there was not enough money for conventional school programs to meet the current or future demand.)

The situation soon resembled "Roshamon," with everyone involved seeing the project differently. For the international cosponsor of the project, the project was an educational experiment to see if numeracy and literacy skills could be taught via radio. The Ministry of Education saw it as a temporary, stopgap program to help unserved people. We, the three expat project staff, were trying to build an institution to serve the many hundreds of thousands of Dominican kids without access to schools. And for the subcontractor for whom we worked as direct hires, the project was simply a wonderful chance to make money.

In the resulting collision of interests, the clients came last. Ultimately, you can't build an institution unless everyone shares a common vision — and when they don't, the vested interests opposing change almost always win, unless the international agency has the courage of its convictions and a heavy hammer to use on the client. And because most aid agencies lack the political will even to engage in the conflict — as many agency officials say, "we want to make friends, not enemies" — the people who would have been served lose.

Staff Training and Finance

A project that is an innovative experiment does not normally require heavy staffing because the focus of the effort is on identifying research results along specific dimensions. But if you are building an institution, creating a human infrastructure for the future, you need to train people intensively in all phases of the work so they can keep going after the foreign staff have left, the money has been spent, and the project is over. Everyone on the staff, down to the porter and cleaning lady, needs to understand what the project is about, why it is important, and how it will serve the people of the country. Furthermore, they need to learn how to participate in decision-making — a new experience for many, particularly in traditionally authoritarian, hierarchical societies. Understanding and faith are the cornerstones of institution-building.

This also means that you have to change the time period of the project and allow more time for the same amount of work to be produced. (Five years, I think, is a lot better than three.) I am always amused that no matter how much Washington bureaucrats extol the virtues of foreign staff participation, we will read-

The host-country ministry helping to implement the project may know as little about the local situation as the foreigners do.

ily sacrifice participation for performance — because that is how we ourselves are judged. "Did you bring it in on time and within budget?"

Once institutionalization becomes a stated goal, all staffing, budgeting, administration and scheduling functions have to be regarded somewhat differently. This will affect many of the host government's decisions regarding its own counterpart contribution.

As to financing, in a bilateral arrangement neither government may have the long-term resources to sustain the project. At best, we or they may be able to pay part of the bill. So we need to think about the type of future organization we want. Perhaps it shouldn't rely wholly on public sector revenues. Maybe it will be able to raise money in the corporate sector or from the clients themselves or from private foundations, or even all three sources. To provide the necessary flexibility, a parastatal format might be called for. Or maybe a nonprofit organizational format might work. Once the project is up and running, these decisions need to be made early on so there is enough time to gear up for the fundraising that will inevitably

have to take place.

Cost considerations are also paramount. The institutional budget should factor out expat salaries and initial capital expenses but should factor in recurrent costs. I remember once reviewing a development bank's capital expense budget for building schools. No one had factored into the loan document the recurrent costs of maintaining and repairing the structures, which run about 10 percent of the capital costs per year. I pointed out that under the prevailing economic conditions, there was no way these countries could afford to pay back the loans and keep the proposed new schools in repair. Silence greeted my comment and we moved on to other matters. Clearly, the development bank school construction loans were going to be made even if the countries couldn't afford the upkeep. Economic decisions are often made by politicians who have other agendas.

Defining Success

Evaluation is the great stepchild of all assistance projects. Why spend money finding out how successful you were ... or how you miserably failed? Yet if routine assessment measures were integrated into our project designs, we would have a much better idea as we go along of what is working and what is not. That would allow us to make the necessary adjustments, or extend the project's scope.

Alternatively, after 50 years of conducting so many pilot projects, we already have a sufficient research base to launch large-scale programs that have the potential to change people's lives in a number of sectors instead of small-scale pilot projects. One of the most brilliant series of evaluations ever done in the field of development, I believe, came from the Center for Development Information & Evaluation. This compilation brings together 18 studies, ranging over every type of conceivable project. That an agency could critique itself so incisively and so thoroughly is a remarkable achievement — and that knowledge, experience and institutional intelligence are there to be used.

Part of the problem is that one-time projects can be swept under the rug while big, expensive programs can damage careers.

Part of the problem is that one-time projects can be swept under the rug while big, expensive programs receive publicity that can put professional careers on the line, and perhaps even damage the bilateral relationship if they don't succeed. And there are certainly many ways for them to fail: the subcontractor who uses the staff and money of one funded project to write the proposal for another one; the development bank official whose career depends on how quickly he can push the money out; the program officer who would rather smooth over problems than directly address them; the overly hierarchical, top-down structure of development organizations, which often pre-empts the very staff participation urged for the developing country; the artificial dichotomy between people who think (designers) and people who do (technicians in the field); the emphasis on risk-averse, academic types to run projects rather than entrepreneurial ones; the embassy staff person who is more concerned about his own career than about how effective U.S. assistance programs are; the Third World official seeking to plunder the project's resources. The list goes on and on, suggesting we need not new techniques or even new ideas so much as a new ethos to inform and give meaning to what we do.

On the other hand, we have smart, committed people working in our government who have the skills and the background to accomplish some remarkable things. So these initiatives can succeed, creating broad constituencies for the project's benefits. And if we focus our attention on comprehensive strategies to deliver those benefits, rather than one-shot "quick fixes," we could weed out those countries that really don't want change anyway and focus on those desperate and smart enough to make a genuine commitment. We could have a real partner rather than someone just along for the ride.

Only a thorough evaluation will make that possible, however. Usually, the U.S. embassy in the country is best suited to conduct such an assessment and do the necessary follow-up work. In the Dominican Republic, our in-country USAID program officer was our greatest support the whole way through. He visited the project, saw the benefits and identified the problems, and personally resolved some of the pressing political issues that could have destroyed us. To institutionalize a program, you need this type of professional support.

Even with his strong backing, it took us close to a year to convince his colleagues in the embassy that our project could succeed and obtain their backing. But it was worth all the hard work. When embassy representatives and Dominican Republic government officials came and visited the communities where we

To build an institution, you need to train people intensively in all phases of the work.

were working with the 5,000 children in the program and saw them learning along with their parents and older siblings, it was a moving experience. Children suffering from malnutrition, many dressed in rags, were learning their letters and numbers, much to the delight of their parents. They were the most powerful argument we could have made for the success of the project.

Nor is that the only way projects make a difference. My wife Anne, who was deputy chief of party and largely in charge of the outreach component, had to leave the country after almost three years because she contracted tropical sprue. (When she finally got medical attention in the States, she was so anemic and malnourished that she was given almost two dozen blood transfusions.) The day she was leaving, a campesino walked seven miles to our office carrying a sack of grapefruits. He said he heard she was leaving the project and hoped she wouldn't because his children were learning so much. Could she please stay? He said that if she ate two grapefruits every day, it would cure her health problems. He would bring them to her every week. Then he left.

International development is about many issues. But ultimately, isn't it about people like that man and his family? ■

AN INVITATION FOR SUMMER FICTION

Once again the *FSJ* is seeking works of fiction of up to 3,000 words for its annual summer fiction issue. Story lines or characters involving the Foreign Service are preferred, but not required. The top stories, selected by the *Journal*'s Editorial Board, will be published in the July/August issue; some of them will also be simultaneously posted on the *Journal*'s Web site. The writer of each story will receive an honorarium of $250, payable upon publication.

All stories must be previously unpublished. Submissions should be unsigned and accompanied by a cover sheet with author's name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address.

Deadline is April 1. No fooling.

Please also note the following:

- Authors are limited to two entries.
- Entries will only be accepted by e-mail (preferably in the form of Word or Word Perfect attachments and with the text copied into the body of the message).

Please send submissions (or questions) to Mikkela Thompson, *Journal* Business Manager, at Thompsonm@afsa.org.

Kabul Training Trip

A diplomatic courier's first mission offers provocative geographic and political sights.

By James B. Angell

At dawn, as our plane entered Northern Pakistan from China, the glaciated Karakoram massif rose abruptly from the sand waves of the Takla Makan desert and we were offered a stunning sunrise view of K-2, at 28,250 feet the world's second highest peak. The spindrift blasted from its crest by jet stream winds was a dramatic sight indeed.

A desk officer in the Bangkok Regional Diplomatic Courier Division, I was escorting newly-minted diplomatic courier Bob Hull on his very first mission: securing classified material for Embassies Islamabad and Kabul, as well as Consulate Peshawar. The continued Indian overflight ban on Pakistan International Airlines meant that PIA's Bangkok to Islamabad service took a northern route over China at night. This routing ensured that our morning arrival in one of the more challenging parts of the globe would be impressive. Our paired training mission was off to an inspiring start.

Our first stop was Embassy Islamabad. From there, we took care of the monthly courier service to Consulate Peshawar, and then headed on to Kabul.

James B. Angell is a diplomatic courier officer in Bangkok, Thailand. He joined the Foreign Service in 1993 and has served in Washington and Frankfurt in addition to a previous tour in Bangkok. His short story, "The Bone Collector," appeared in the July-August 2001 summer fiction issue of the Journal.

On the Grand Trunk Road

For an overland diplomatic courier trip, the Grand Trunk Road, the 1,600-mile thoroughfare from Calcutta to Kabul that has bound the Indian subcontinent together for more than five centuries, is a fine introduction to the challenges of the job. The stretch from Islamabad to Peshawar takes three hours each way and transects an intriguing landscape of dusty minaret-spired villages with bustling markets full of burka-draped women, men attired in shawal qamiz wearing Chitral hats or turbans of varying colors, and the most beautiful multicolored trucks in the world; not to mention camels, horses and donkeys hauling everything imaginable.

About halfway to Peshawar the mighty, glacier-blue Indus that drains the Tibetan Plateau and the dust-brown Kabul River originating near the city of the same name merge in a steep, rocky gorge under the mammoth walls of Attock Fort. The fort was first built by the Mughals in the 1600s and is still used by the Pakistan Army to house political prisoners, including former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's husband. This was also where Alexander the Great's Greeks crossed in 330 B.C. on their march to victory over the warrior-king Porus and his 200 battle elephants at the Jhelum River near the present-day border with India.

As we neared Peshawar, the adobe refugee camps that once housed tens of thousands of Afghans were strangely quiet. On my diplomatic courier missions five years ago, the railroad tracks that separate the camps from the trunk road had been seething with humanity. Now, according to the Pakistan media, substantial numbers have returned

home to Afghanistan, encouraged by the prospect of a more sane future secured by the International Security Assistance Force and President Hamid Karzai.

Stability in this part of Pakistan is not guaranteed, however, as most of the Taliban who fled the U.S. attacks are now living either in Peshawar, the rugged Northwest Frontier Province, or in the Pashtun tribal areas along the border, where there has never been government control. As we passed the massive Bala Hisar Fort in Peshawar's old town, built by the Mughal emperor Babur, Bob and I conjectured that the Pakistan Army hunkered down inside was also a target due to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's alliance with the West. Security was extremely tight at Consulate Peshawar, the once noisy street outside only a memory due to barriers blocking access except for authorized vehicles. Needless to say, consulate personnel were delighted to receive the classified material we delivered.

As we neared Peshawar, the adobe refugee camps that once housed tens of thousands of Afghans were strangely quiet.

After a jarring return to Islamabad with Peshawar's outbound material, we were off to Kabul the next morning aboard the 45-minute United Nations flight that services the Afghan capital four times a week. For the first part of the trip we retraced the previous day's route to Peshawar: Bob and I gazed down upon the confluence of the turquoise and adobe-brown rivers at Attock, followed by the gun-barrel-straight Grand Trunk Road into Peshawar. Seconds later, we were over the autonomous Pashtun tribal lands, marveling at the family fortresses with gun turrets and crenellated walls strewn over the barren land on either side of the Khyber Pass road. Next the naked Suleiman range rising to the Khyber Pass came into view, its folds still embracing the severe switchbacks of the British "Great Game" railroad on its climb to the summit and forlorn border town at Landi Kotal.

Over the Pass

Just over the pass is Afghanistan, with the glaciated Spinghar (White) Mountains to the south forming its border with Pakistan. Along the eastern end of this spectacular range glistening in the winter sun was a dark gash penetrating its icy peaks. Known as Tora Bora, this gorge is where Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida forces withstood massive U.S. bombing and slipped away across the border into the lawless regions of Pakistan. In another section of the range, U.S. forces battled the Pashtun warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami soldiers, killing 18, in January 2003. This rugged border gives sanctuary to those who would like to overthrow the Karzai government and therefore is a constant focal point in the war against terrorism.

To the north of the Khyber and the Spinghar, the massive, snow-covered Hindu Kush dwarf the landscape, as the range climbs toward the Panjshir Valley of the late Northern Alliance commander, Ahmed Shah Massoud (the Lion of Panjshir), and the 25,000-feet-high Pamirs of Tajikistan. The Spinghar range runs east-west, so we paralleled its craggy ridgeline as we descended into the parched Kabul valley, at about 6,000 feet above sea level, and the remnants of the 500-year-old Mughal capital (before it was moved to Delhi).

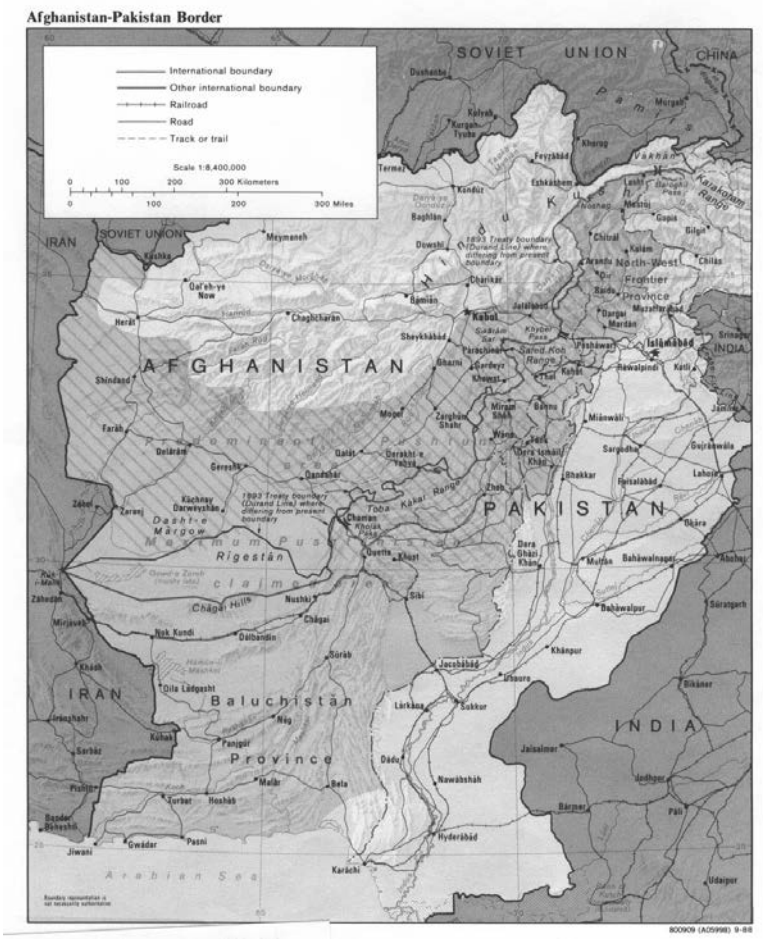
The first shock upon landing in Kabul is the number of destroyed Soviet-era planes littering the airfield, from MiGs to the Antonovs and Ilyushins of Ariana, the national airline. When Bob and I deplaned, we were met by our embassy escort and a detail of two diplomatic security officers. The tight security is due to the assassinations that have occurred at the airport, as well as the continuing citywide attacks against International Security Assistance Forces troops. After our classified material was secured in a government vehicle, we were off to the nearby embassy compound. Security at the mission was tight; the Marine Expeditionary Force put all vehicles and passengers through rigorous inspections.

When we were given clearance to offload our material at the chancery building, it became clear the entire facility was an armed encampment. Sandbagged gun emplacements crown each corner of the embassy's roof, while its main door was a sandbagged fortress as well, guarded by two Marines. As the information management officer began giving Bob a signature for each classified pouch, I wandered over to the nearby flagpole to read a memorial plaque at its base. I took an extra deep breath of thin mountain air when I realized the plaque itself was a piece of gray marble plucked from the rubble of the World Trade Center. While helping drag the classified pieces into the chancery's dilapidated foyer guarded by a Marine post of cracked and bullet-holed protec-

tive glass, my eye caught a collection of color in the drab interior, halfway up the stairs to the second floor. It was an "art in the embassies" montage of photographs capturing the spirit of the Afghan people in their untamed land, a rare sign of hope amidst the harsh interior and exterior of the mission.

After meeting with the regional security officer and securing our pouches in the classified vault, we headed off to find our assigned quarters — two spaces in a container (the ambassador has a whole one to himself). The embassy grounds are filled with rows of freight containers, both for permanent employees and those on temporary assignment. Ours was a 12-person container with six bunk beds, recently vacated by the Karzai Protective Detail. It was close to an old bomb shelter, where shower and toilet facilities could be found deep underground. The Marines are housed in triple-wides, while all employees eat together at a canteen made from several containers fastened together. Bathrooms are found in a few remote containers, so in the middle of the night, it's typically a long, cold walk to find relief.

Along the eastern end of this spectacular range glistening in the winter sun was a dark gash penetrating its icy peaks — Tora Bora.



Guided through Ruins

After we tossed our suitcases on our respective bunks, Bob and I marched off to the motor pool in search of a driver. The RSO had authorized a tour of Kabul as long as we used a light armored vehicle. Fortunately for us, it was a fairly quiet day in Kabul, so motor pool was more than happy to assign a driver to guide us through the ruins. Our first stop was the heavily shelled mausoleum of King Nadir Shah, the resting-place of the royal family. His son, former King Zahir Shah, age 87, was flown in from Italy where he'd lived in exile for nearly 30 years, to convoke the Loya Jirga of June 2002.

The view from this barren hill crowned by the mosque-like mausoleum was of total devastation, especially to the east. The densely packed adobe structures in the late afternoon shadows at the base of the hill were completely wrecked, yet people wandered through the remnants, seemingly at home in the rubble. Our driver explained that the mausoleum hill had become a firing platform for Abdul Rashid Dostum and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's troops from 1992 to 1996, when the Mujahideen, who defeated the Soviets and their puppet, President Muhammad Najibullah, turned on each other and fought for control of the city and country (the conflict killed 50,000 in Kabul alone). Dostum and Hekmatyar combined to oppose then-President Rabbani and Defense Minister Shah Ahmed Massoud.

To the south the azure Idgah Mosque rises untouched (along with several other structures) from what's left of the city center. Downtown Kabul is backed by craggy hills, whose bases are thick with shanty-

towns perched amidst rocky outcrops, that separate the eastern and western parts of the city. One of the hills is crowned by another Mughal fort, Bala Hisar, with crenellated "city walls" snaking north along a ridgeline to protect the populace in times past. Directly underneath the Nadir Shah Mausoleum is the infamous Kabul Stadium, where the Taliban executed those who fell afoul of their strict interpretations of Islam.

We set off down the mausoleum hill, past the stadium and through the Dresden-like remains of structures that once made up the Char Chattya Bazaar. There were few signs of reconstruction, but that didn't stop a throng of humanity from conducting business along the cratered dirt road and setting up shop in the adobe ruins. A plethora of bright yellow cabs, horse-drawn wagons, blue-burka-clad women, men in flowing shawal qamiz and vendors selling fruit and vegetables lined the route as we crawled carefully through the seething marketplace. Occasionally, after eyeing our license plates, black-turbaned men shot hateful glances at the bulletproof glass of our vehicle.

The first shock upon landing in Kabul is the number of destroyed Soviet-era planes littering the airfield.

We turned left on Jada Maywind road, decently paved and lined with vendors and a mass of pedestrians. Downtown Kabul is relatively untouched, encircled as it is by almost total destruction. Our driver took us to the west of town, over the paltry Kabul river whose banks are crowded with more markets, out beyond the craggy hills and noon gun left over from more civilized times. Soon after the river we passed the zoo, home of the infamously neglected and impoverished animals, as well as the grave of Marjan, the one-eyed lion.

The Road of Death

Then came the arrow-straight Darulaman Palace Boulevard, which used to be the most beautiful road in the city, according to our dri-

ver, lined as it was with various diplomatic and government missions full of flowering plants and trees. As we drove in awed silence there was not a shade of green anywhere: only mounds of rubble and shattered compounds. We passed the completely gutted Soviet embassy, whose size at one time must have matched the State Department's Truman Building. The KBG compound next to it was extensive as well, but little remained except for a few skeletal structures barely standing. Further on we passed more adobe ruins with white trucks parked outside. The driver told us this was the new UNICEF mission headquarters, a glimmer of hope amidst total devastation.

At the end of the two-mile long road of death, the Darulaman Palace (home of King Zahir Shah before his exile to Italy) rises majestically atop a knoll, its gorgeous architectural detail still visible between pockmarked shell holes. Circling its base is a barren domain of crumbling walkways. Our driver described this belt as once containing the most beautiful gardens in all Afghanistan, with the citizens of Kabul thronging here on weekends to picnic amidst the luscious palace foliage. Today there is nothing but rubble and desiccated earth. The famous Kabul Museum is just across the street, directly beneath the palace, its priceless Buddhist collection destroyed by the Taliban just like the towering Buddha figures carved in the cliffs at Bamiyan.

Behind the Darulaman Palace rises the hulk of another great structure, the Ministry of Defense, another heavily shelled exterior whose windows show nothing but sky. From the hill of the Darulaman Palace looking back through the wasteland we had driven through, it was as if a nuclear explosion had leveled the western part of the city. The craggy, lifeless hills separating the devastated part of the city from downtown to the east, only added to the bleak vista. The massive, snow-covered Hindu Kush, rising majestically to the northeast, still seem to wall the tragedy of Kabul off from the world.

There were few signs of reconstruction, but that didn't stop a throng of humanity from conducting business along the cratered dirt road and setting up shop in the adobe ruins.

To counter the depressing nature of our surroundings, our motor pool driver, who was himself incarcerated by the Taliban for several months, took us though more rubble to the Loya Jirga tent, where the tribal chiefs met and voted to form the Karzai presidency. The transparent bigtop, a tent-like structure made of some sort of plastic, in which King Zahir Shah convened the meeting is a hopeful sign that a healthy democratic government can be established. But with Hekmatyar's troops staging hit-and-run operations on U.S. special forces in the Spinghar region and elsewhere, and a resurgent Taliban challenging ISAF troops ahead of the coming elections, success is far from certain.

Stark Contrasts

Taking another route back into town, we stopped atop a pass over the craggy hills at the Inter-Continental Hotel for its tremendous views over downtown Kabul and the airport. The quiet civility of the hotel was in direct contrast to the reality of what surrounded it. Just below the hotel, in fact, is a deserted swimming pool resort, called Bag-e-Bala. According to our driver it once housed Al-Qaida troops and was visited often by Osama bin Laden. We drove in and toured the decrepit ruins once encircled by a vineyard. Most of the grapes are gone now, the roots and branches used for firewood by al-Qaida.

Driving back into Kabul's center, things do appear normal, mainly because there is so little overt destruction. We went to ramshackle "Chicken Street" to check out the carpets and jewelry, but found the selections limited and overpriced. ISAF forces patrol the streets of downtown, so we did feel safe on the sidewalks. The most intriguing sight in all of Kabul, however, is the overwhelming number of Massoud posters. They're affixed everywhere! The Northern Alliance leader, assassinated two days before 9/11 by either Taliban or al-Qaida operatives masquerading as journalists, seems to rule Kabul through the ubiquitous photograph of him peering out from under his floppy (pakol) woolen cap. In contrast, there is not a sign of President Karzai anywhere.

Despite the relative safety of downtown, it was comforting to return to the security of the embassy compound at dusk. The random hateful stares on the streets, coupled with the devastation we'd witnessed, made a night in a clean, modern container seem downright elegant.

The following morning dawned icy and cloudless. Our quick transfer to the airport graveyard with post's classified outbound proved uneventful. We were escorted

planeside by the same security detail, and were greeted warmly by the U.N. airline personnel managing the flight. After takeoff the views of the Hindu Kush, Jalalabad, the Spinghar range, the Khyber Pass, Peshawar and the Grand Trunk Road were crystal clear on the quick flight back to Islamabad. We secured the diplomatic pouches in the vault at Embassy Islamabad and made preparations for our return to Bangkok the next morning. After Kabul, the capital of Pakistan seemed like Paris.

Our flight to Bangkok, with a thousand kilos of the region's classified outbound material, initially followed the Karakoram Highway due north past the 26,660-foot, ice-gnarled Nanga Parbat, and the black granite pyramid of K-2 with its massive Baltoro Glacier before crossing into Xianjiang at the Khunjerab Pass.

The massive, snow-covered Hindu Kush, rising majestically to the northeast, still seem to wall the tragedy of Kabul off from the world.

For an introductory diplomatic courier assignment, Bob couldn't have been given a more provocative and, therefore, instructive mission. ■

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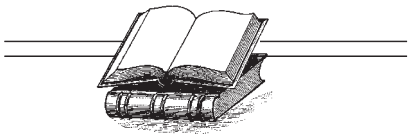

BOOKS

Dangerous Drivel

Dangerous Diplomacy: How the State Department Threatens America's Security
Joel Mowbray, Regnery Publishing Inc., 2003, $27.95, hardcover, 307 pages.

REVIEWED BY EDWARD L. PECK

Let's not be diplomatic about this book. As you might expect from a jacket blurb praising its author as a "pit-bull journalist" (a slur on both groups, I would contend), it is a nasty piece of work, grossly inaccurate and gratuitously polemical throughout.

Take just one amazing howler, on page 100: "... all communication from the embassy must go through the filter of the desk officer, [so] what folks in Washington know about the goings-on in a foreign country ... largely hinges on what the desk officer chooses to pass on." To support that lunacy, he quotes an unidentified "administration official with extensive desk officer experience ...".

Self-immolation of this magnitude destroys Mowbray's repeated claims to insider status, but critics of the Foreign Service (his target audience) may instead be impressed by his 603 footnotes (I *had* to count them) and 15-page index. Of course, 99 footnotes are meaningfully attributed to "interview" or "an informed source;" a further 103 are "ibid." As for the index, it includes three citations for "Texas" and two for "Virginia." If you are looking for real research, this is the guy.

Mowbray endlessly alleges dishonesty, unethical behavior, and crimes of omission and commission by State's Civil and Foreign Service employees, and suggests that such conduct is not merely condoned, it is encouraged. He devotes a great deal of space to detailing the heartbreaking agonies of Americans whose children are taken overseas by the other parent, blaming the failure to get host countries — e.g., Saudi Arabia — to act against their citizens to satisfy ours entirely on the cold indifference of named consular officers. He then puts into their mouths brutally callous, offensive and highly questionable hearsay comments allegedly obtained from angry, understandably distraught Americans.

Dangerous Diplomacy *belongs in a checkout-counter tabloid: "Saddam's WMD Seen at Graceland!"*

The book's overarching focus on America's (mis)dealings with Arab countries is reflected in chapter titles like "Courting Saddam," "Crushing Freedom, Tolerating Tyrants," and "Wrong Hands: The Arming of the Middle East." Yet the role of State and the Foreign Service in implementing the cited policies was neither proprietary nor exclusive, as is well known and understood by anyone with the tiniest sliver of knowledge, understanding or experience. Mowbray fails to qualify, even at that level, and appears proud of it.

Nor is he even a decent writer, though we should perhaps welcome that particular fault if it deters readers from getting very far into this poorly organized and disjointed diatribe. The book rambles, goes back over the same distortions, repeatedly touts the author's skills and accomplishments, and shrilly hypes his basic points. Lacking any semblance of rationality, it belongs in a checkout-counter tabloid: "Saddam's WMD Seen at Graceland!"

Regrettably, this book will likely reinforce the limited but dangerous delusion that State has absolute — and absolutely covert — control over foreign affairs, and that the Foreign Service is full of rogue members. That belief conveniently permits critics to unplug their brains, content to identify diplomats as the source of everything that goes wrong.

The truth is far messier than that. Yes, State participates actively in the domestic battles over foreign policy formulation, but it does not make the decisions. In overseas implementation of those decisions, State has a larger role, but it certainly does not (and cannot) operate either independently or clandestinely, as Mowbray endlessly alleges.

But he is right about one thing: organizations are never perfect, nor are their personnel. So the Foreign Service and State Department would

benefit from intelligent analysis and thoughtful, constructive criticism — but not the hostile, baseless drivel Mowbray serves up here.

An FSO from 1956 to 1989, Edward Peck served in Gothenburg, Tangier, Tunis, Oran, and Cairo, and was chief of mission in Baghdad and Nouakchott. In Washington, he worked in State, DOD and the White House, and had extensive experience in interagency intelligence coordination. A Rivkin Award winner, he is a longtime member of AFSA's Awards Committee and a lecturer at FSI for A-100 and other courses on "Advocacy and Dissent."

America's Best-Kept Secret

Voice of America: A History
Alan L. Heil, Jr., Columbia University Press, 2003, $37.50, hardcover, 538 pages

REVIEWED BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Given that this issue of the *Foreign Service Journal* has focused on U.S. overseas broadcasting, it seemed only fitting to conclude our coverage by reviewing Alan L. Heil Jr.'s *Voice of America: A History*, the first comprehensive history of the VOA since the mid-1980s.

Heil worked for VOA from 1962 until he retired in 1998, holding various positions including foreign correspondent, chief of news and current affairs and deputy director of programs. The resulting familiarity with both the nitty-gritty and the larger issues surrounding "the Voice," as VOA is commonly known, does much to make the story come alive, as do the anecdotes and transcripts of radio broadcasts he intersperses throughout the narrative.

Heil's sympathies are clearly with those who fiercely defend VOA's independence.

He opens his account with a look at how VOA witnessed and covered the dramatic developments in China during the spring of 1989, before stepping back to the agency's founding in the grim months after Pearl Harbor. That pattern of alternating "thematic" and "chronological" chapters continues throughout the book, and proves quite effective in conveying the sweep of the agency's history.

Yet despite the wide variety of stories VOA has reported (or sometimes been the focus of) over the past 60 years, certain policy debates have been waged virtually nonstop. Most fundamentally, is VOA primarily a vehicle for expressing U.S. government views, or for reporting the news without worrying about how it may make America look to the rest of the world? Heil's sympathies are clearly with those who fiercely defend VOA's independence and adherence to journalistic canons, even when bending to political pressures might be more prudent. But he is careful to give the other side of the issue its due, as well, and to acknowledge that there are times when the line dividing the two roles moves and becomes blurry.

Heil repeatedly rebuts the stereotype some of VOA's critics — and even some proponents — have articulated, that the agency is just a Cold War relic. He notes that the agency very nearly was abolished a decade ago because of that misperception, and sheds some light on the desperate campaign to keep it not only functioning but thriving in the new millennium.

But substantive as the narrative is, it also contains plenty of human interest, including some charming and even hilarious stories about VOA personalities and listeners. A chapter on the Voice's musical offerings pays homage to longtime jazz host Willis Conover but goes on to cite many other hosts who have helped show the rest of the world America's multifaceted cultural tapestry.

The book does have some shortcomings. The author's modesty about his own role in VOA's history is commendable, but the few personal anecdotes he shares leave the reader wanting more. And although he repeatedly alludes to interagency struggles with State and other entities over broadcasting content, he never really explains the process of how VOA's editorials are put together, for example. (In fact, neither that topic, the Foreign Service, or the State Department rates a citation in the index.) Conversely, there is also some padding; for example, one chapter near the end, "Yearning to Breathe Free: Tales of Great VOA Escapes," is clearly heartfelt but could have been shortened or even omitted.

Nevertheless, this is a valuable account that deserves a wide readership, both within the Foreign Service and among the general public. ■

Steven Alan Honley is the editor of the Journal.

In Memory

Harry Ackerman, 79, retired USAID official, died of lung cancer on Sept. 25 in Tucson, Ariz.

A native of Arizona, Mr. Ackerman received a law degree from the University of Arizona in 1952 and was a member of the state bar. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1943 to 1946.

Mr. Ackerman joined USAID in 1962. He served as a congressional adviser for USAID/State on Latin American affairs from 1962 to 1967 in Washington, D.C. From 1967 to 1971 he was posted in Panama as deputy director of the USAID mission. From 1974 to 1977 he directed the USAID mission in Quito. From 1977 to 1980 he served in Guatemala City as director of ROCAP, the Regional Office of Central American Programs. He retired in 1980.

Mr. Ackerman is survived by his wife Vivian, three children and five grandchildren.

Findley Burns Jr., 86, retired FSO and former ambassador, died Oct. 14 at his home in Southern Pines, N.C.

Mr. Burns was born in Baltimore, Md. He was a graduate of Princeton University and of the National War College.

He entered the Foreign Service in 1941. His postings included Madrid, Brussels, Warsaw, London, Vienna, Berlin and Washington. In the latter part of his career he served as ambassador to Jordan (1966-68) and to Ecuador (1970-73). He retired from the Foreign Service following that assignment, and from 1974 to 1980 worked at the United Nations in New York, where he was director of the Office of Technical Cooperation.

Amb. Burns is survived by his wife Martha and two sisters.

William Stuart Caldwell, 82, former FSO, died Nov. 1 of cancer in Northridge, Calif. Born in Farmer, S.D., and raised in several small towns in South Dakota and Minnesota, Mr. Caldwell graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1943. He enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War II, and served in medical and training positions at various domestic military installations.

Mr. Caldwell joined the Foreign Service in 1945. He served as third secretary in Embassy Rome, and as director of the U.S. Information Service at the U.S. Consulate in Palermo. One of his key accomplishments during this period was providing U.S. support to the Christian Democratic Party, which defeated the Communist Party in the Italian elections of 1948. This election was a crucial turning point, preventing the further spread of communism into Western Europe.

In 1950 Mr. Caldwell left the Foreign Service and began a long academic career, studying and teaching political science and journalism, with an emphasis on international affairs. He taught at a number of institutions including the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; the University of California, Los Angeles; and the University of Southern California. While at USC in the 1960s, he was the editor of the academic journal *Communist Affairs*.

Mr. Caldwell's political and academic pursuits took him all over the world, particularly to Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. He also participated in the League of Sister Cities and the United Nations Association.

He is survived by five children, Bonnie Jane Stroock of Rancho Mirage, Calif.; Angela Marie Reiner and Ralph William Caldwell of Reseda, Calif.; Stephen Leslie Caldwell of Bethesda, Md.; and William S. Caldwell Jr. of Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif.

Mary Pearl Dougherty, 88, retired member of the Foreign Service, died Nov. 13 at The Methodist Home in Washington, D.C., after a long illness. Ms. Dougherty was the mentor for several generations of young black Foreign Service officers, including Ambassador Edward Perkins, the first African-American ambassador to South Africa, who later became ambassador to Australia and the United Nations.

Born in Alabama, Mary Dougherty

was raised and educated in Cleveland, Ohio. She accompanied her husband to Washington, D.C., where she studied psychology at American University and in her spare time acquired superior secretarial skills. Mary went on to work for the War Department for nearly a decade, before returning to the private sector to wait out the yearlong clearance process required to join the Department of State. In those days, State was considered the most segregated federal agency of all.

Ms. Dougherty's first posting, in 1953, was to Liberia, where she was assigned to the consular section but became secretary to the U.S. ambassador. There followed a series of postings around the world. Bill Davis, a retired Senior Foreign Service officer, observed: "For decades, she worked outside of her official duties as a volunteer and mentor for young black officers in the Foreign Service. She served in Liberia, South Vietnam, the Central African Republic, Zaire, France, Germany and Romania. She drove her Volkswagen all over Europe, crossed international borders and startled border guards who wondered why on earth this black American woman was traveling in that area. In Vietnam, Mary gave receptions at her home and included the Vietnamese as social guests at a time when it was unusual for Americans to be so forthcoming with the local citizenry."

In 1974, Ms. Dougherty retired from the Foreign Service. But in the life of a woman who was always committed to things beyond herself, retirement had no place. She voluntarily escorted State-sponsored international visitors throughout the United States. Later, she came out of government retirement to work for Dr. Lorraine Williams, vice president for academic affairs at Howard University.

Ms. Dougherty was a dedicated member, volunteer or official of many organizations including: The National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, African-American Women's Association, Thursday Luncheon Group (at the U.S. Department of State), Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, AFRICARE and TransAfrica. She was a devoted member of the Shiloh Baptist Church for more than 55 years. In 1977, as a consultant for the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Ms. Dougherty coordinated and led a delegation of NANBPW members to Senegal, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Malawi.

At 85, Mary Dougherty retired from active social service but was determined to remain involved and supportive of causes which improved the quality of life for those in need until, as she stated, "I can't go any more. When that time comes, and I can no longer move, I'll at least hold someone's hand."

Ms. Dougherty leaves a host of senior, mid-level and junior Foreign Service officers, ambassadors, educational consultants, university professors, ministers, medical professionals, and longtime friends who will honor her memory forever.

James T. McMahon, 73, retired USAID official, died suddenly on Aug. 24, at a fitness center in Vero Beach, Fla.

Mr. McMahon was born in Massachusetts. He received a B.A. from Boston College, an M.A. from The George Washington University and an M.S. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was a Sloan Fellow.

Mr. McMahon joined USAID in 1959 and served tours of duty in Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand. He also had brief assignments in many other parts of the world with that agency. Under the oversight of the World Bank, he accepted tours of duty in research centers in Syria, Indonesia and the Philippines. He traveled to Oman to help start up a research station in Muscat, which was independently funded by various donors.

Mr. McMahon had recently been selected to serve with USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, and was looking forward to more assignments abroad at the time of his death.

Survivors include his wife Audrey, five children and several grandchildren. A veteran of the Korean War, Mr. McMahon was buried with military honors in Bourne National Cemetery in Massachusetts.

Robert Irving Owen, 82, retired FSO, died Oct. 5 at the Navesink House in Red Bank, N.J.

Born in New Jersey and raised on a farm owned by his father, Irving Lovejoy Owen, a former agriculture professor at Rutgers, Bob Owen graduated from Rutgers University with an engineering degree in 1941, and went on to graduate work at MIT. The Navy mobilized him out of MIT and he subsequently served in the South Pacific as an engineering officer. Just prior to his first assignment in the Navy, Mr. Owen married his college sweetheart, Mary Hance, in a military-style ceremony, complete with drawn swords, at Rutgers Chapel in August 1942. At the end of the war, he decided to change

direction, and joined the Foreign Service in July 1946.

Mr. Owen's first posting was to the Dominican Republic, where he served as the administrative officer for the embassy, then in Ciudad Trujillo. Following training at Middlebury College, Princeton and Columbia Universities, he became a specialist in Soviet and Eastern European affairs. During the 25 years he was with the State Department, Mr. Owen served overseas in Finland, Germany, Moscow-USSR (twice), and Yugoslavia. While in Moscow the second time, he was the officer-in-charge for internal political affairs. During his last overseas posting he was the consul general in Zagreb, from 1966 to 1970. He finished his career in Washington, D.C., working in the Bureau of European Affairs. He was country director for Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia and Albania until he retired in 1971.

Bob and Mary Owen raised four children, each born in a different country: Jim, the eldest, was born in the Domican Republic; Mary Ellen in Germany; John in Bethesda, Md.; and Jeff, the youngest, in the Soviet Union.

After retiring, the Owens moved to West Long Branch, where they occupied on old farm that had belonged to Mary's uncle, former West Long Branch mayor Dr. Owen Woolley. They became deeply involved in the community, investing countless hours in their church, Old First United Methodist Church, and in service to environmental organizations and causes. Mr. Owen was most proud of his work on behalf of the Manasquan Watershed Planning group, and the Monmouth County Friends of Clearwater. He also became deeply involved with the Alumni Association of Rutgers University, and devoted himself to supporting the social and charitable activities of the class of 1941, most recently as the president of the class. He was grateful for his many friends in the Foreign Service, in the environmental movement and at Rutgers and kept in touch with them.

Continued on page 76

Need to Sound the Alarm About Something?

Why not write a "Speaking Out" column for the *Foreign Service Journal*?

"Speaking Out" is your forum to advocate policy, regulatory or statutory changes to the Foreign Service. These can be based on personal experience with an injustice or convey your hard-won insights into a foreign affairs-related issue.

Writers are encouraged to take strong stands, but all factual claims must be supported and documented. Submissions should be approximately 1,500 words in length and should be sent via e-mail to journal@afsa.org.

Please note that all submissions to the *Journal* must be approved by the Editorial Board and are subject to editing for style, length and format.

William Macomber, 82, former ambassador and under secretary of State for administration during the critical years of AFSA's campaign to become a union, died at his home in Nantucket, Mass., on Nov. 19 of complications from Parkinson's disease.

"Bill was a dear friend to many, a great diplomat and a great contributor to the Foreign Service," AFSA Secretary F.A. "Tex" Harris said. "We will miss him, but will cherish his memory and many accomplishments."

Ambassador Macomber was known in the Foreign Service community as a reformer. He was a founding member of the American Academy of Diplomacy. As deputy under secretary of State for administration from 1969 to 1973, Macomber led an effort to not only reform the department, but to change the way American diplomacy was conducted.

His recommendations were set forth in an action blueprint titled, "Diplomacy for the 70s." The proposals introduced the cone system and open bidding for jobs, emancipated wives from ratings and unpaid work, mandated gender equality, and provided for due process allowing officers to see their "secret" performance appraisals, among other reforms.

"It was a true revolution," wrote Harris in "The Macomber Era, 1969-73" (*FSJ*, June 2003, p. 20). "In all these battles, AFSA was Macomber's strategic ally, but sometimes his tactical enemy." Macomber himself wrote a book about his experiences managing change at State. *The Angels' Game: A Handbook of Modern Diplomacy,* originally published in 1975, was revised and reprinted in 1997.

Amb. Macomber was part of a small group of top officials, Patricia Sullivan wrote in an obituary in the *Washington Post*, who refused President Richard Nixon's demand to punish Foreign Service officers who participated in demonstrations against the Vietnam War. In a 1984 newspaper column he denounced the exchange of campaign contributions for ambassadorships.

William Macomber was born in Rochester, N.Y., and graduated from Yale University. He received a master's degree in government from Yale in 1947, a law degree from Harvard University in 1949 and a master's degree in social science from the University of Chicago in 1951. From 1943 to 1946, Macomber was a Marine lieutenant assigned to the Office of Strategic Services. He twice parachuted into France to work with the French underground, and later worked in Burma. He taught government for two years at Boston University while in graduate school, and worked for the CIA from 1951 to 1953 in Washington before beginning his career with the State Department.

Amb. Macomber twice headed the congressional affairs bureau, from 1957 to 1961 and again from 1967 to 1969. In 1961 he was named ambassador to Jordan by President Kennedy, a position he held until 1964, when he was made assistant administrator for Near East and South Asia at USAID. In 1973 he was appointed ambassador to Turkey.

Following retirement in 1977, Amb. Macomber became president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, serving until 1987.

He then settled in Nantucket, Mass., where he taught history and coached football at the local high school. "He had all kinds of honors and awards, but two things were more important to him than anything: teaching at the high school and coaching the JV football team," his brother John told the *Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror.* "He was amazingly dedicated to kids. He believed very strongly in education, and he loved our kids," Nantucket Public Schools Superintendent Alan Myers said. "He was just one of those people so dedicated to his country, who truly served his country. When he retired, he did the same thing here. We were very, very fortunate to have him with us."

Mr. Macomber also served on the Nantucket School Committee and started the Friends of the Atheneum.

Survivors include his wife of 39 years, Phyllis of Nantucket; his brother John and sister-in-law Caroline Macomber of Washington, D.C., and their children; and his sister-in-law Jacquie Macomber. His brother Bob predeceased him.

The family requests that tributes be made in his name to the "AFSA Scholarship Fund." Amb. Macomber had originally established a scholarship in his name in 1997, with a donation of all proceeds from his book, *The Angels' Game*, to AFSA's Scholarship Fund. Family and friends hope to reach the goal of $12,000 in contributions to make it a permanent scholarship.

Mr. Owen loved his family very much, and will be remembered for his supportiveness at different stages in their lives, his lessons in practical, frugal living, his love of games, his love of reading and intellectual debate, his humor, and for his many stories about family history.

Surviving are his wife of 61 years, Mary Hance Owen, his sons and their wives; Jim and Jan of Bangor, Maine; John and Lisa of St. Petersburg, Fla.; Jeff and Chris of Marshall, N.C.; and daughter Mary Ellen McNaughton of Grand Rapids, Mich.; seven grandchildren; his cousins and lifelong friends, Ann and Tom Hedges of Moorestown, N.J., and Carol Badgley of Eleuthra, Bermuda. Last year, the Owens moved to the Navesink House in Red Bank, where they found a welcoming community for folks their age. Mrs. Owen is grateful for the support she has been given, and will continue to reside there, close to her family's roots, among new friends, and enjoying the river view from her apartment.

A memorial service will take place at a later date. Those wishing to remember Mr. Owen may make contributions in lieu of flowers to the American Foreign Service Protective Association or to DACOR, or to an environmental organization of their choice.

Robert J. Ryan Sr., 89, retired FSO and former ambassador, died on Sept. 17 at his home in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Ambassador Ryan was born in Hatfield, Mass. He attended the University of Massachusetts and obtained an LL.B. from the Columbus University School of Law in Washington, D.C. He also attended the National War College in Washington in 1958-59.

Early in his working life Mr. Ryan was a sports reporter for two Massachusetts newspapers and administrative assistant in a fruit and produce company in Hartford, Conn. In 1937, he accepted a clerk-secretary position with the Passport Office and then advanced to increasingly responsible positions in the State Department, including assistant chief of the divisions of departmental and Foreign Service personnel, chief of personnel operations and executive director of the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs.

In 1955, he was appointed as a Senior Foreign Service officer. His assignments included counselor for administration in Paris and, concurrently, executive officer of the U.S. Mission to NATO, ambassador to Niger and deputy assistant secretary of State for administration. He joined the United Nations Secretariat in New York in 1969, serving first as director of administrative management services and later as assistant secretary general for general services, a position which encompassed a broad range of administrative responsibilities including the logistics of U.N. peacekeeping operations.

After retiring from the U.N. in 1977, Amb. Ryan resided in Volusia County, Fla. He remained active in foreign affairs until his death, particularly working to build grassroots support for U.S. foreign affairs programs and for the United Nations. His many activities in the Daytona Beach area included a strong role in the local chapter of the United Nations Association; service as a consultant on international affairs to local high schools, colleges and universities; membership on the boards of Bethune-Cookman College and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; and frequent speeches to community organizations. He also wrote columns for the *Daytona Beach News-Journal*, appeared frequently on radio and television programs, both locally and elsewhere in the United States, and served on the board of DACOR. These activities earned him awards from AFSA, DACOR and the United Nations Association.

On March 7, 2003, AFSA presented Amb. Ryan with its National Alumni Service Award in recognition of his tireless efforts to build a solid domestic constituency for the U.S. Foreign Service and for American diplomacy, his role as a longtime board member of the Foreign Service Retirees Association of Florida and his invaluable advice and assistance to AFSA's public outreach efforts.

Survivors include his wife, Mary; two sons, both retired Foreign Service officers, Robert Jr. of Daytona Beach and Thomas of Redding, Calif.; four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Robert R. Schott, 82, retired FSO, died of an aneurysm on Oct. 19 while vacationing in Sweden.

A native of Oregon, Mr. Schott graduated from the University of Oregon in 1943. He served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1944, and joined the U.S. diplomatic service in 1945. His first posting was to Basra, Iraq. He later served in Tehran and Solnika. After Persian language training, he was assigned as consul in Meshed and political officer in Tehran. In 1960, he was named officer in charge of Greek affairs, a post he held until he was transferred to Nicosia, Cyprus, as political counselor in 1964. Several turbulent events,

mainly Archbishop Makarios' maneuvering and the movement to union with Greece, took place there during this time, culminating in the partition of Cyprus and the Turkish invasion of the northern areas of the island. Mr. Schott received the Department of State's Superior Honor award for his work during this period. In 1967, he was assigned as political-military officer in Embassy Tehran. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1970.

After retirement, Mr. Schott was associated with Iranians Bank in Tehran (an affiliate of Citibank) and worked as a consultant to the bank and other companies until the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79. He continued consulting, working principally out of Athens until 1999, when he retired from active business. He divided his time between Santa Fe, N.M., Athens and Washington, D.C., until his death. Mr. Schott was a member of Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired.

Mr. Schott was married to the former Diana Bennett, whom he met while serving in Basra. Besides his wife of 55 years, who resides in Santa Fe, Mr. Schott is survived by two daughters, Barbara Mostofi of Honolulu, and Alexandra P. Schott of San Francisco; two sons, Robert B. Schott of New York and Conrad W. Schott of Santa Fe; and four grandchildren.

Paul Robinson Sweet, 96, retired FSO and specialist in German history whose work ranged from research and teaching to intelligence and diplomacy, died in Philadelphia on Nov. 5.

During World War II, as a member of a roving three-man unit of the Office of Strategic Services on Europe's western front, Mr. Sweet co-authored reports that got prominent notice in the press and led to changes in occupation policy. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, in recognition of his OSS work.

In the 1950s, as the senior U.S. editor of documents captured at the war's end from the German foreign office, Mr. Sweet found himself in an awkward confrontation with British authorities over whether to publish material concerning the Duke of Windsor's relations with Nazi Germany. Mr. Sweet joined the Foreign Service in 1959 and was U.S. consul General to Stuttgart in the late 1960s.

Mr. Sweet grew up in Indiana, the son of a prominent historian of religion in America. His interest in Germany was first awakened in 1929, when he received a scholarship from Depauw University in Indiana to spend a year studying in Germany. It was a time when German nationalism was sharply on the rise, and while Mr. Sweet sent letters home expressing alarm, he also was strongly drawn to Germany's language, culture and history.

Upon returning to the United States, he went to the University of Wisconsin to do graduate work in German history. There he met his wife-to-be, Katharyn Grumman, the daughter of an art curator and professor of German at the University of Nebraska. They married soon after Sweet completed his dissertation on Friedrich Gentz, a top aide to Clemens Metternich, the architect of the conservative post-Napoleonic European order.

Wisconsin published the dissertation as a book, to strong reviews from the French historian Georges Lefebre and Hannah Arendt, the social theorist. Until 1943 Mr. Sweet taught modern European history at Bates College in Maine. When war broke out, he was recruited by the OSS, assigned to its London office, and then sent to accompany the invading Allied forces to interrogate prisoners of war and report on matters like enemy morale.

In January 1945, the nationally syndicated columnist Dorothy Thompson picked up on a report by his OSS unit that in the occupied city of Aachen, German nationalism had evaporated and people felt unfit to govern themselves. Thompson praised the report, done by Saul K. Padover, Lewis F. Gitler and Sweet, not only for its findings but for the interviewing techniques the three men used. Rather than asking "a stereotyped question" that can only bring "a stereotyped answer," they conducted interviews as informal conversations.

In March 1945, their report complaining that Nazis were being restored to positions of authority in Aachen evidently led to a change in policy. Drew Pearson, in his "Merry-Go-Round" column in the *Washington Post*, said that it had prompted Roosevelt himself to order a tougher line. According to an article by the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. that appeared in the *New York Times* after the war, the findings came to the attention of top military brass in Paris, where Schlesinger was serving at the time. Schlesinger said the Sweet-Padover-Gittler report reverberated through every level, so that future military government officials tried to "avoid the Aachen pattern of collaboration with Nazi fellow-travelers."

Mr. Sweet reported extensively on Austrian affairs in the months immediately after victory in Europe.

His letters home and his investigations of Austrian industry have been reproduced in historical accounts of the period.

Mr. Sweet joined the historical division of the State Department after the war, following stints teaching at Colby College in Maine and the University of Chicago. He worked from 1948 to 1959 on the German foreign office documents, first in England, then in Washington, D.C., as American editor-in-chief in the tripartite U.S.-British-French project. An account he later wrote about the Windsor episode, after appearing in *The Historian*, was translated into German and published in that country's leading journal of modern history.

From 1959 to 1963, Mr. Sweet served in Bonn, and then from 1963 to 1967 in Stuttgart. Following retirement, he taught the history of international relations at Michigan State University in East Lansing. His two-volume biography of the Prussian statesman, political theorist and linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt, was published by Ohio State University Press in 1978 and 1980. Mr. Sweet continued to publish articles on German intellectuals of the 19th century until he was well into his nineties.

Mr. Sweet is survived by his wife Katharyn, a daughter Sarah Rosen of Philadelphia, a son William Sweet of Brooklyn, N.Y., four grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Donations in his memory may be made to Depauw University in Greencastle, Ind.

William Henry Witt, 83, a retired FSO who specialized in political affairs and global issues, died of complications from Parkinson's disease on Oct. 24 at the Collington Lifecare Community in Mitchellville, Md. Mr. Witt, who also had a home in Nantucket, Mass., retired in 1977 after 30 years in government service.

Mr. Witt was born and raised in Seattle, Wash., where his father, W.H. Witt Sr., was a prominent engineer and builder. He graduated salutatorian from Broadway High School and received a scholarship to attend Harvard University, where he graduated magna cum laude in 1941. He entered the Army Air Corps and trained as a pilot, serving until 1945. In 1943, then-Lt. Witt met his wife of nearly 60 years, then-Lt. Mary Fox, who was serving as an officer in the Women's Army Corps.

From 1945 to 1947, Mr. Witt attended Harvard Law School, and received his law degree from George Washington University Law School.

He entered the Foreign Service in 1947, and his career included postings in Denmark, Finland and Iceland. In 1957 he was assigned as a division chief in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and from 1961 to 1962 he attended the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

From 1962 to 1967, Mr. Witt served as political counselor to the U.S. embassy in the Republic of South Africa. He served in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs from 1967 to 1970, and was assigned to the faculty of the National Defense University from 1970 to 1977, where he taught courses on a range of global issues.

Mr. Witt served as a warden in the Episcopal Church and participated in many charitable activities, including Meals on Wheels. For many years, he kept a sailboat, "Madre," in Nantucket, Mass.

Survivors include his wife, Mary F. Witt of Mitchellville and Nantucket; his four daughters, Susan Alexander of Bethesda, Md; Priscilla Witt of Reston, Va.; Dr. Charlotte Witt of Portland, Maine; Virginia Witt of San Francisco, Calif.; and six grandchildren. ■

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REFLECTIONS

An Epiphany in Juarez

BY ROBERT PROCTOR

Some say the city of Juarez has always had an air of impermanence. But I suggest this is an illusion. I think I know. I've walked the Juarez streets a number of times in the last four decades and would be hard pressed to say that anything of substance has really changed. And, I am basically glad for that.

Early last January, I spent a most pleasant hour or so in and around the late-17th-century Guadalupe Mission church, just a block from the end of Avenida Juarez, the heart of a major market and eating area. I could not recall ever seeing this building with the same appreciative eye that granted me closeness to it at that moment.

In the past its classic but subdued, unpretentious nature escaped me. Its towers seemed pitifully spindly and lacking in substance when compared to images of the great ecclesiastical structures of Mexico City and Guadalajara.

Bob Proctor retired from USIA in 1987, having served in South and Southeast Asia, Africa and the Middle East. He and his India-born wife live in La Luz, N.M. In recent years, he has taken to writing, and his poems, short stories and essays have been published in various literary journals and Web sites. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair "Stamp Corner."

She was very far away, in a place of wonder.

Now it actually reached out to me warmly and said, "Come, enjoy the peace I give to you, and to all the people near you there, on the plaza before me." It was nearly sunset, and there was soon enough shadow to cast the edifice into a silhouette, a non-threatening backdrop for the swirl of life around me. There was no high drama as such, but a plethora of everyday things going on; mothers strolling with kids, people rushing to catch busses, hurrying to shops and restaurants before they closed for the day.

It seemed almost uncanny but appropriate that just about this time a number of energetic evangelicals showed up, and the leader, a youthful, stunningly beautiful sandy-haired woman, started singing a popular hymn in full voice. With a touching reverence, a skinny, shabbily dressed man of indeterminate age moved to her side and proceeded to hit two sticks together in an attempt to give background rhythm to her singing.

Meanwhile, a half-dozen or so male co-religionists, smartly uniformed in white trousers and jackets with yellow piping, brought her a portable mike. And just behind her, on the ledge of the park's gazebo, the young men placed a huge cooler filled with what could well be something like lemonade or Kool-Aid.

One fellow swept right by me towards the gazebo carrying bulbous plastic bags stuffed with pastries. Every once in a while I could catch a word or two. "Esperanza — gloria — diablo — terrible — señor — angeles ..." But I wasn't listening so much as watching.

The young woman was transported. Oh, she was very much there in body, yes, swaying in full accord with the music and her message of salvation. But the look in her eyes said she was very far away, in a place of wonder where just about everyone around her — me included — wouldn't mind being, too. I was transfixed.

On previous visits, I might have laughed at this spectacle of a young woman preaching to mesmerized "ignorant innocents." But now, I myself was one of those mesmerized ignorant innocents. And while it disturbed me slightly, it mainly pleased me. I could think of little else while slowly walking back to Avenida Juarez.

Nothing has changed here — except, with some certainty, me. ■

AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • January 2004

IRAQ SERVICE RECOGNITION DAY

Praise and Advocacy for Employees Serving in Iraq

On Nov. 24, Foreign Service and Civil Service employees who have served in Iraq on assignments of at least 30 days were honored. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented two individual Awards for Heroism to Bill A. Miller and Beth A. Payne. A Group Superior Honor Award was presented to the other 136 employees who have served in Iraq.

The ceremony was held before an audience of several hundred in the Benjamin Franklin Room of the State Department.

AFSA wants all Foreign Service employees to know that it is concerned about con-

Secretary of State Colin Powell presents an Award for Heroism to FSO Beth Payne.

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Inside This Issue:

LAST CALL FOR AFSA AWARD NOMINATIONS

Honor the Dissenters

AFSA President John Limbert strongly encourages all members of the Foreign Service to consider nominating a colleague for an AFSA Constructive Dissent Award this year. The AFSA awards recognize not just superior job performance, but the courage and integrity to take a risky or unpopular stand or to challenge conventional wisdom on any issue related to the work of the Foreign Service.

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VISAS FOR LIFE

AFSA Recognized for Honoring Harry Bingham

BY MELISSA SCHWEINBERG, PUBLIC AFFAIRS INTERN

The originator of the Visas for Life Project, Eric Saul, presented AFSA President John Limbert and Executive Director Susan Reardon with commemorative medals at the Oct. 29 opening of the exhibit, "Visas for Life: The Righteous and Honorable Diplomats,"on Capitol Hill. AFSA was recognized for posthumously honoring U.S. diplomat Hiram "Harry" Bingham IV with a special award in 2002 for his "constructive dissent" in going against official U.S. policy by issuing over 2,500 life-saving visas and personally assisting Jews and others in danger in 1940 and 1941 while serving as a Foreign Service officer in Marseilles.

The Visas for Life exhibit displays photographs and previously untold accounts of numerous diplomats who risked everything to rescue Jews and others during World War II. The traveling exhibit was on display in late October in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C. The exhibit was sponsored by Senator Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., Congressman Tom Lantos, D-Calif., and Mrs. Annette Lantos, and the American Jewish

Continued on page 8

AFSA NEWS BRIEFS

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Do you enjoy the *Foreign Service Journal* but are not an AFSA member? Joining is easy and your membership helps AFSA support all Foreign Service employees. To become a member of AFSA, go to www.afsa.org/mbr/index.cfm.

To subscribe to AFSANET — a free service designed to provide updates on items of interest to the foreign affairs community — go to www.afsa.org/forms/maillist.cfm.

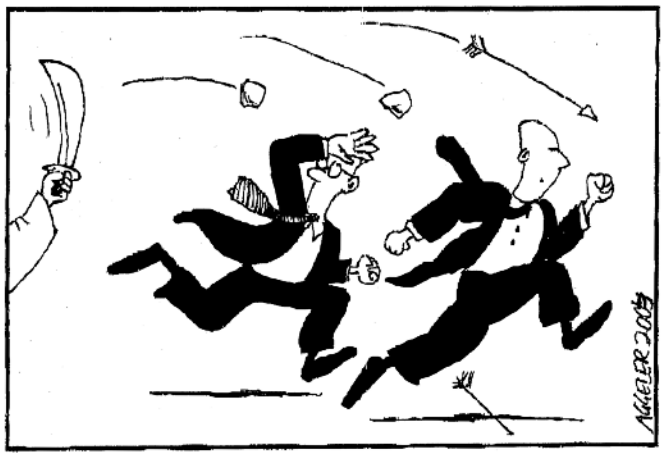
Florida Retirees Publish Book

AFSA congratulates the Foreign Service Retirees Association of Florida on the publication of their book, *Serving America Abroad: Real-Life Adventures of American Diplomatic Families Overseas*, a compilation of 122 stories by Foreign Service retirees. The book was edited by FSRAF Chair Irwin Rubenstein, who served in Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Colombia, Nicaragua, Israel and Mexico during his 36 years in the Foreign Service.

The book is published by Xlibris, and is available through amazon.com, Barnes & Noble.com and Borders.com. The price is $22.99.

Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER, FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER



"MAKE SURE THE REPORTING CABLE NOTES THAT WE DID NOT REACH AGREEMENT ON ALL POINTS IN OUR DEMARCHE."

CONTRIBUTE TO THE FSN EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

AFSA urges members to contribute to the Foreign Service National Emergency Relief Fund. Recent relief efforts have depleted the fund, and it is now in urgent need of replenishment. Contributions serve as direct assistance for FSNs around the world. Contributions to the fund can be made by check, credit card, or through payroll deduction.

Check contributions may be sent to the State Department's gift fund coordinator, Donna Bordley, RM/CFO Room 1115, Main State. Make checks payable to the "U.S. Department of State" with the notation "FSN Emergency Relief Fund." Donors should include a return address where an acknowledgment for charitable tax deduction purposes may be sent.

Credit card contributions are also accepted (Visa or Mastercard). To make a credit card contribution, send an e-mail via the Intranet to "FSN Emergency Relief Fund" (State Department Global Address List). The subject of your e-mail should be: "Contribution to FSN Emergency Relief Fund." In the text of your message include your name, mailing address, Visa/Mastercard account number and expiration date. Also include the following statement: I authorize the State Department to charge the reference credit card account in the amount of $_____ as a contribution to the FSN Emergency Relief Fund.

All donations are appreciated and needed.

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SUCCESS ON CAPITAL GAINS

Years of Advocacy for FS Tax Relief Pay Off

BY LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR KEN NAKAMURA AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS INTERN JOANNA MCNAMARA

On Nov. 11, 2003, Veterans' Day, President Bush signed H.R. 3365, the "Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003," into law. It was passed in the House 420-0 and in the Senate by unanimous consent. One aspect of this law, now Public Law 108-121, that affects the Foreign Service is the change in the tax treatment of capital gains on the sale of a principal residence.

Prior to 1997, the U.S. tax code allowed home-owners to roll over the capital gains from the sale of a principal residence and take a one-time tax exemption on the rolled-over gains. A 1997 change in the tax code stated that if a homeowner resided in his or her house for two of the previous five years from the date of sale, that person could exclude up to $250,000 ($500,000 for a married couple) in gains from the sale of their principal residence. This is where the members of the Foreign Service and the uniformed services ran into problems. Back-to-back tours can keep employees overseas six years or more. Upon return to the U.S., when Foreign Service members wanted to sell their homes, because they had been out of the residence more than two of the previous five years, they had to either occupy the property for two more years or pay the full capital gains tax.

The "Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003" changes the provision for members of the Foreign Service and the uniformed services, extending the look-back period from five to up to fifteen years, based upon the number of years the person was at least 50 miles from the principal residence posted on orders from the U.S. government. *(For more details, go to the AFSA Web site.)*

The new law is retroactive to May 7, 1997. A homeowner who sold a principal residence since then and incurred the capital gains tax because he or she did not fill the residency requirement has one year to file for reimbursement. This one-year period to file ends Nov. 11, 2004.

AFSA efforts to change the law have been ongoing for over four years. There are many to thank for helping bring the effort to a successful conclusion. AFSA worked closely with the Military Officers Association of America and the American Bar Association. We went to the Hill together to talk to staff on this issue, spent countless hours in strategy sessions, and exchanged information as things were developing. Their work was key to the success and we always appreciated and enjoyed working with them.

This legislation passed as a result of a bipartisan effort. While there was difficulty in coming to a final agreement on the details, the support from Congress was not questioned. Thanks to our friends in the legislature, the provisions covering the Foreign Service were added to various tax bills in an effort to get a vehicle that would carry our tax provisions to become law. AFSA thanks Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, and his staff, and Finance Committee Ranking Member Max Baucus, D-Mont., and his staff for their continued support in developing these bills. In the Senate, a special thanks must also be given to Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and his staff. Sen. McCain, though not on the Finance Committee, was constant in his support of our efforts, and his interventions over the years helped bring this legislation to fruition.

In the House of Representatives, we must thank Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Thomas, R-Calif., and his staff, and Ranking Member Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., and his staff. Their work was essential in finally developing a bill that everyone could accept. We also want to thank Rep. Amo Houghton, R-N.Y. It was his bill in the House that gave us a legislative vehicle to start the efforts to change the law. It was to Rep. Houghton and his staff that we could always turn for advice and information on developments in the House.

Last but not least, AFSA thanks Secretary of State Colin Powell and his colleagues at the State Department, both Foreign Service and Civil Service. At key moments, the department weighed in to help secure the agreement of the Office of Management and Budget to our proposal, and the Secretary and other officials contacted important legislators to express the department's full support for the passage of this and earlier bills. □

AFSA reminds members that the critical advocacy work done by the legislative affairs staff is funded primarily through the Legislative Action Fund. Please send contributions to: AFSA Legislative Action Fund, P.O. Box 98026, Washington, DC 20077-7093, or go to the AFSA Web site: www.afsa.org/laform.html. Make checks payable to "Legislative Action Fund."

V.P. VOICE: **STATE** ■ BY LOUISE CRANE

"SHADDUPA YA FACE"

I had an epiphany recently. It revealed a truth so basic I was abashed I hadn't learned it earlier. This truth dawned on me during a courtesy call AFSA's new president John Limbert paid on Assistant Secretary for Administration William Eaton. (The A Bureau is the one that brings you allowances and pouch service and the other basic "foodstuffs" of overseas service.) During the course of the conversation, in which we asked about the status of the State Post Office, overseas schools, etc., John Limbert mentioned some of AFSA's goals. One goal is what he terms "pride of profession" and he said AFSA would not let the Pat Robertsons, Newt Gingriches and Joel Mowbrays of this world get away with taking cheap shots at the Foreign Service. Mr. Eaton asked, "Does this include the Foreign Service taking cheap shots at management employees? We're Foreign Service, too."

How can we talk about "pride of profession" when we ourselves don't speak proudly of everyone in the Foreign Service?

The conversation took an interesting turn. Mr. Eaton noted that there is a leadership problem within the Foreign Service when one of our "recreational activities" is to complain about our colleagues. You know what I mean. The disparaging comments about the authoritarian political cone, "consular fodder" and "Euro weenies," the tired old characterization of management officers as people who tell you how to build a watch when you ask them the time. Then there are the Foreign Service specialists, who do not believe they have been given a proper measure of respect. In the interests of full disclosure, I confess I have been guilty of all of the above. But I have seen the light.

Why are we disparaging our colleagues, members of the same Service? They are just as loyal, they work just as hard, they serve in just as many hardship posts and experience just as much danger as anyone else. They make the same sacrifices and they are just as eager to be recognized and promoted.

How can we talk about "pride of profession" when we ourselves don't speak proudly of everyone in the Foreign Service, when we aren't loyal to all of our Foreign Service colleagues, when we don't present a united front to the world? These snide remarks most certainly creep into the public image of the Foreign Service. This past July, members of Congress were making speeches about how the Foreign Service disparages consular work. Now, just where do you think they got this? From us!

The Foreign Service is unique in that it manages itself. The people responsible for administering the system, for disciplining us, for assigning us and promoting us, are we. We should be supporting us and sticking up for us, not putting ourselves down.

So here's my advice: Stop it! Right now. Make this your New Year's Resolution! Speak about your colleagues — both within the department and outside — only with respect. Acknowledge everyone's contribution. Disparage no one. Be loyal to our Foreign Service. If we aren't, how can we possibly be surprised when others aren't?

As your mother would nag, "Watch your language and don't tolerate disparaging remarks about others."

May light dawn on you. Welcome, Aurora. □

Iraq Service • Continued from page 1

ditions of service in Iraq. AFSA is in frequent contact with the Human Resources Bureau. The first issue AFSA raised in a recent meeting with HR was security. AFSA was pleased to hear that Diplomatic Security is creating a week-long security course that includes emergency first aid training. (See Beth Payne's account of how critical this knowledge can be on page 49 of this issue of the *Journal*.) As of late November, DS had 12 agents on the ground in Baghdad working to improve the security of employees.

AFSA has stressed with HR the hardship for employees of being "seconded" to the Department of Defense overseas, which leaves them without reliable access to home agency resources including e-mail.

AFSA has stressed with HR the hardship for employees of being "seconded" to the Department of Defense overseas, which leaves them without reliable access to home agency resources including e-mail. AFSA is working on such issues as ensuring adequate security equipment and training for employees going on assignment to Iraq; ensuring the ability to participate in the various current open seasons for benefits; and pushing for assistance with access to bidding materials for employees in Iraq. The department has assured AFSA it shares these concerns, and recently assigned an experienced HR specialist to Iraq. This specialist will be able to assist State employees with personnel issues that the DoD structure in Iraq does not handle. This new staffing move should help ensure that department employees don't find themselves shortchanged. □

Watch Your Annuities

When I retired, I received a "Foreign Service Annuity Supplement Computation," which noted that, "The annuity supplement takes the place of the Social Security portion of FSPS, which is not payable until age 62. The annuity supplement is payable only until the month prior to the month in which the retiree reaches age 62," regardless of whether I actually receive Social Security benefits or not. The document included the calculated supplement and was signed by the chief of the Retirement Division under the words, "I certify the above as true and correct as shown by the records of the Department of State." When I reached 62, I received an "Annuity Adjustment Notice" reducing my monthly annuity by the amount of the supplement. Did you?

You will have seen the Q&A on pension overpayments in the November 2003 *AFSA News*. We addressed this issue because 10 retirees have contacted AFSA after being notified by the department that their pensions had been overpaid, some for many years and into the tens of thousands of dollars. In most cases, the reason was that the department failed to stop the annuity supplement, and the retiree failed to realize that it was still being paid (it is not shown separately on the monthly annuity breakdown you receive). We don't know how many retirees have been notified but have not contacted AFSA; the department declined to tell us how many cases of overpayment had been found. (There were also some cases of underpayment.)

When I reached 62, I received an "Annuity Adjustment Notice" reducing my monthly annuity by the amount of the supplement. Did you?

AFSA General Counsel Sharon Papp, two other AFSA staffers and I met recently with Cecilia Cooper, the chief of the Retirement Division (HR/RET), and representatives from the Legal Advisor's office and the Resources Management Bureau (RM), to discuss this issue. They said they were confident they had now found all the erroneous annuities, and that all those affected had been notified. The problem, they said, arose from the fact that the supplement is not automatically stopped; someone has to manually change the annuity. Until recently, the retirement office did not even have the capability to do a computer printout of those nearing age 62. The move of the department's Finance Center to Charleston, S.C., further complicated matters.

The department officers also acknowledged that the letter notifying retirees of an annuity error was "not very consumer-friendly" (a true understatement!) and did not even identify the reason for the over (or under) payment. The letter is being changed, computer systems have been upgraded, and Ms. Cooper has instituted a system to check and double-check calculations to prevent future errors.

The November Q&A explained how retirees can contest the notification of overpayment and/or request a waiver — in effect, forgiveness — of part or all of the overpaid amount on grounds of financial hardship. The department representatives told us that they "wouldn't want to discourage anybody from requesting a waiver." What they do discourage is stonewalling — failing to exercise any of the annuitant's options, which are to repay, appeal the repayment decision, request a full or partial waiver of repayment or file a grievance. A retiree who does nothing will eventually have to repay with interest, and the payments can be deducted from the annuity. Annuitants who request a waiver must, of course, fully document their financial situation, and AFSA can provide some guidance on that.

We pressed our interlocutors on the standards used to determine whether a waiver is justified and whether in some cases a compromise could be reached on the repayment amount. They declined to go beyond saying that retirees with a total income of $12,000 a year would obviously be waived, and that those with $2 million in assets obviously would not. Those in between, they insisted, had to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. The Office of Personnel Management has published guidelines for Civil Service that serve as a "baseline," but they said the department wants to do better than the baseline. The department is trying to redact information protected by the Privacy Act so that they (and AFSA) can explain the facts of some of the cases where waivers have been granted without violating privacy rights. That would provide some guidance to other retirees.

As we noted in November, if you are uncertain whether your annuity is correct, you may ask HR/RET to recalculate it by submitting Form DS-5000. And, of course, retirees who are members of AFSA may always come to us for help. □

V.P. VOICE: **USAID** ■ BY BILL CARTER

A Tired Patchwork

Dating back to the early 1990s, at least eight (and perhaps more) internal and external reports from the General Accounting Office, the Inspector General and others have tried with monotonous consistency to hammer home USAID's need to undertake strategic workforce planning. Simply put, USAID was being begged from many sides to put emphasis on human resource development — on its people. Instead, top agency management in each successive administration has consistently opted for a strategy of "patch the tire."

After losing a generation of Foreign Service officers because of a hiatus in hiring, USAID recruitment restarted in the late 1990s with the New Entry Professional program. This was a patch, because it meant hiring Foreign Service officers only at mid-level, neglecting the entry level and thus not measurably changing the demographics of an organization that is patently skewed toward a Methuselah profile.

This latest patch envisions bringing in non-career officers at mid-level. We believe this will further delay needed strategic workforce planning ...

After many years of conducting little or no training, management used the leadership-development training patch, while at the same time eliminating more practical on-the-job training and mentoring slots in field missions. When field leadership gaps were perceived, USAID management turned to the outside-the-service patch.

Then, of course, there was the management de-layering patch, which, rather than putting more emphasis on human resources, buried the office and its director deeper down in USAID's bureaucratic weeds. And sometimes the agency has chosen the no-patch approach, and permitted a slow leak to go unchecked, as in the case of HR staffing, where a whole office has been left chronically understaffed and thus unable to meet recruitment goals.

Well, you ask, if the agency has not been "investing in people," where has it been investing its time and money? A partial litany would include re-engineering, reorganization, a new management system (called the NMS), reblocking and competitive outsourcing. It has even decapitalized human resources with a Reduction in Force. Employees have been "BTEC'ed" and "Quick Hit" and, most recently, another right-sizing patch has been applied that the agency is calling a "template." This is a wholly (I might say unholy) ineffective patch, because it fails to cover all the bureaus.

Now there is a new patch that agency management has in mind — the non-career hiring patch, bringing in non-career officers at mid-level. In AFSA's view, this is just another misguided half-measure to try to undo a decade of strategic planning inaction on human resources issues. We believe this will further delay needed strategic workforce planning, and will sow palpable discontent and foster corrosive morale problems among employees, especially NEPs, who see their career development and promotions jeopardized.

If you have read this far, you know what the punch line is: Yes, it is time to spend the money and buy a new tire — and I sure hope this cockeyed patchwork of a tire doesn't hit a pothole before then. □

Dissent Awards • Continued from page 1

Foreign Service employees put their lives (and often their families' lives) at risk every day to serve their country. Help AFSA show those who have questioned the loyalty, dedication and abilities of the men and women of the Foreign Service that the FS exemplifies the best in public service, and that colleagues who demonstrate the courage of their convictions and the commitment to work for positive change within the system should be honored.

Presenting AFSA's Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award to George Shultz last June, Secretary Colin Powell congratulated all of the award winners and said, "I thank you for what you have done for the department and for the culture of the department … by speaking out, having the courage of your convictions. …. It is my job to integrate it and decide how best to use that information, but I encourage all of my people to stand up for what they believe, speak out, let us know what they think."

Information on submitting a nomination was detailed in the December 2003 *AFSA News*, and is also on the AFSA Web site at www.afsa.org/awards. The nomination form is also posted on the AFSA site.

Please send in your nomination now. The deadline for submissions is February 26.

Help honor those who rock the boat! □

New Retiree Directory Published by AFSA

Retiree members should keep an eye out for the new edition of the Retiree Directory, published in December 2003. All AFSA retiree members receive a copy of this valuable directory. This edition includes a new feature, a resource section in the center of the book catering to the needs of Foreign Service retirees. Just one more reason to keep your membership active even after retirement! □

Q&A

Retiree Issues

BY BONNIE BROWN,
RETIREE ACTIVITIES
COORDINATOR

Q: How does a Foreign Service annuitant become reemployed by the Department of State in a WAE position?

A: Each regional and functional bureau in the department has its own separate WAE (While Actually Employed) program, which is managed according to the bureau's particular personnel needs. To apply for re-employment, an applicant must submit a resumé or a standard employment application form to a specific bureau. (Using a resumé rather than the employment form gives an annuitant greater flexibility in showing how his or her skills would be of use to a particular bureau.) When the bureau — usually through the executive office — decides to hire an applicant, the annuitant is added to the bureau's reemployment rolls. After the annuitant's security clearance is reactivated, he or she can begin work as soon as a suitable position becomes available.

Q: What's the best approach for an annuitant seeking a WAE appointment?

A: Most annuitants are re-employed because they have vital skills and knowledge that are needed by a bureau, they are well known to bureau personnel and/or their timing is good. I would advise an annuitant to make preliminary contacts about re-employment with the bureau in which he or she is interested before retirement and to renew these contacts periodically after applying for an appointment and while on a re-employment roll. An annuitant can also assure immediate availability by applying for re-employment shortly before or after retirement and thereby keeping his or her security clearance current.

Q: Can a WAE employee work for different bureaus?

A: Yes. Although an annuitant may get an appointment only with one dedicated bureau, he or she can work for other bureaus. While some transfer accommodations may have to be made in order to move from one bureau to another, the annuitant's security clearance will remain in effect.

Q: Do WAE employees have job security?

A: No. As part-time, temporary or intermittent employees, WAE employees serve at the pleasure of the bureau and do not receive evaluation reports or future job guarantees.

Q: Is there a cap on earnings for WAE employees?

A: Yes. The sum of an annuitant's salary and annuity during a calendar year cannot exceed the annuitant's salary at the time of retirement (without adjustment for inflation) or the full-time salary of the position in which he or she was reemployed, whichever is higher. In practice, this means that an annuitant can work only for three to six months per year and receive a full annuity as well as full compensation for work performed. Contractors, in contrast, are not affected by this cap. AFSA supports current Senate efforts to expand the authority of the Secretary of State to waive annuity limitations on re-employed Foreign Service annuitants. □

FOCUS ON ELDERHOSTEL

AFSA Program Educating the Public

BY WARD THOMPSON,
AFSA ELDERHOSTEL COORDINATOR

Are you one of the many AFSA retirees (or future retirees) who enjoy telling people about the Foreign Service? That's an important activity, as the public needs to have a better understanding of diplomacy. But for many of us, finding interested audiences is often difficult. AFSA has hit on one solution — we bring the audience to you! In its eight-year collaboration with the Elderhostel organization, AFSA has arranged 84 courses at 11 different sites throughout the U.S. to which Americans travel for a week of lectures by Foreign Service retirees.

The latest course, held in Portsmouth, N.H., in October 2003, was an outstanding example of this approach. The first to take place in New England, home of many distinguished retirees who volunteered as faculty members, the program took AFSA's outreach cooperation with State into a new area. Portsmouth houses both the National Visa Center, which does much of the immigrant visa processing formerly done by embassies, and the Passport Office, which handles all passport renewal applications. So we called the course "Yearning to Breathe Free." It attracted 41 participants who came from 14 states to learn about diplomacy, with a special focus on visas, refugees and citizens services.

Lectures were presented by members of the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England. Ambassadors Charles Dunbar, Hermann Eilts, Roland Kuchel, Donald Petterson, Ronald Spiers and Michael Wygant treated participants to diplomatic case studies and insights on regional issues involving the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Central Asia. An overview of the Foreign Service was provided by Ward Thompson and a discussion of consular functions and refugees by Matthew Ward. Visa Center Director Sara Tufo, Passport Office Acting Director Leo Hession and Susan Mefel of S.I. International hosted course participants on tours and briefings at these State Department facilities. In a special evening session, participants heard about the family side of Foreign Service life from Elria Ewing, Julie Petterson and Catherine and Lee Wygant.

This course followed others successfully inaugurated earlier in 2003 by colleagues in California and Washington state. There are plans to reprise them, to continue ongo-

Continud on page 9

FS VOICE: **FAMILY MEMBER MATTERS** ■ BY KELLY BEMBRY MIDURA

Self-Employment: A Portable Career Solution

Editor's Note: Due to the success of this AFSA News *feature, AFSA will now pay a $100 honorarium (up from $60) for any column published as part of this series. Submit your 500-word column on any topic of interest to Foreign Service family members to dorman@afsa.org. SD*

As "trailing spouses" we carry our homes on our backs like snails — why not carry our careers as well?

I have been self-employed since we joined the Foreign Service. From selling handmade toys at craft bazaars, I have moved on to free-lance writing, editing and Web-site design. Self-employment has always been possible, but is now an easier and more lucrative option, thanks to the educational, telecommuting and networking opportunities offered by the Internet.

Nearly every Foreign Service spouse enters the diplomatic community with the brains, education and talent he or she needs to open a home business: It's just a question of finding the right business. The answer may have nothing to do with the spouse's university degree or previous professional life. For example, I have a B.A. in international relations, but learned to design Web sites through online resources.

Over five overseas tours, I have known self-employed caterers, translators and woodworkers, and teachers of foreign languages, yoga and quilting. Many of these free-lancers successfully turned the disadvantage of being unemployed in their profession into an opportunity to explore an interest or a talent that might not have been sufficiently profitable to support a family in the U.S. (Embassy-provided housing can reduce, if not eliminate, the need for a second income, at least during some overseas tours.)

While few self-employed spouses make large salaries, few conventionally-employed Foreign Service spouses do either. Self-employment has certain advantages over embassy employment, including the following:

• Self-employed spouses, unlike those in Eligible Family Member positions, can claim the overseas earned income tax exemption. Even considering the "self-employment tax," they will keep more of every dollar earned outside the embassy than would be possible in EFM positions (for more information, visit www.irs.gov).

• They can enjoy career continuity. They may have to acquire new clients at each new post, but they will not have to start from scratch. If the business is Internet-based, they may not even have to do that. With the aid of a laptop computer, the business can continue to prosper and provide an income even during home leaves and transfer periods.

• Particularly if children are involved, self-employed spouses can arrange their business hours to suit the family's schedule, remaining employed yet available while the FS employee works long hours or travels frequently, as so many do. This can be especially useful during difficult periods such as the months following arrival at a new post.

• They will have interesting answers to the "What do you do?" question at dinner parties, enjoying a separate professional identity from their FS spouses. At my current post, for example, most people know me as a local Web-site designer or the mother of my children, not as "the cultural attaché's wife."

Finally, free-lancers overseas can enjoy the same advantages as their counterparts in the States. There's something to be said for being able to work in your sweatpants and bunny slippers on cold days, or to drop everything and take a walk on beautiful ones. When my kids are in school, I can be available to help with homework, or just to hear about their day. When they are sick, they can curl up with a book on the daybed in my office. Meanwhile, I'm earning enough to fund their college savings plans. A "portable career" has been a good employment solution for this Foreign Service spouse. □

Kelly Bembry Midura is a Web-site designer and writer who has accompanied her husband, Chris, a public diplomacy officer, to La Paz, Guatemala City, Lusaka, San Salvador, Washington and Prague.

Visas • Continued from page 1

Committee, in cooperation with the Visas for Life Project. The exhibit was put together by Eric Saul, who has gathered information on 147 diplomats from 27 different countries who aided in the massive effort that in total saved more than 250,000 Jews from certain death during the Holocaust. Nine of the diplomats honored were American.

At the June 2002 AFSA award ceremony, thanks to the hard work and research of former AFSA President John Naland, Secretary of State Colin Powell presented a special posthumous constructive dissent award to Bingham's family on behalf of AFSA. AFSA has also been actively involved in supporting efforts to gain approval from the U.S. Postal Service for an official postal stamp honoring Bingham. Bingham's story was featured in the June 2002 issue of the *Foreign Service Journal.*

AFSA Executive Director Susan Reardon and AFSA President John Limbert with their commemorative medals.

Rep. Lantos, who survived the Holocaust because of the efforts of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, opened the exhibit program by extending heartfelt words of gratitude to the families of all the righteous diplomats. Family members present offered emotional

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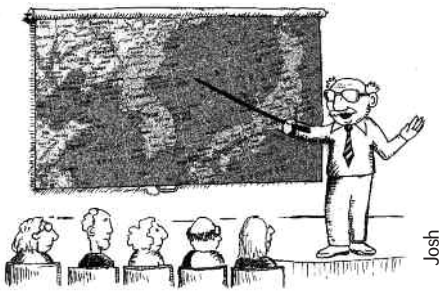
and inspiring stories of their loved ones. Bingham's daughter Abigail Bingham Endicott, an operatic soprano, performed a song that she wrote to honor her father and other righteous diplomats.

John Limbert and Susan Reardon made brief remarks upon receiving their commemorative medals — the Carl Lutz and Raoul Wallenberg Medals. Limbert offered words of gratitude on behalf of over 12,000 active and retired AFSA members, saying the award serves to remind us to be proud of the profession of diplomacy. Susan Reardon remarked that it is an honor to work for an organization that recognizes dissent. Just as Rep. Lantos has personal and professional reasons to promote the recognition of righteous diplomats, so does Susan Reardon. She is one of the estimated half-million descendants of the survivors and refugees saved by the honored diplomats.

In closing the ceremony, Eric Saul asked that attendees share the stories with their children and educate others by the examples of the diplomats honored in the Visas for Life exhibit. □

Elderhostel • Continued from page 7



Josh

ing programs by colleagues in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia and the D.C. area, and to keep sending retirees to conduct programs in Chautauqua, N.Y., as well as to launch a new course in Houston. If you live elsewhere and would like AFSA to bring an audience to you, please contact Ward Thompson at thompsonw@afsa.org for more information. □

FOCUS ON SCHOLARSHIPS

Foreign Service Colleagues Honor Their Own

The AFSA Scholarship Fund recently established two scholarships honoring Ambassador Prudence Bushnell and FAS FSO Martin G. Patterson. What is unique about the awards is how they came to be.

The 111th A-100 training class created the Bushnell scholarship through a donation to AFSA. The aim was to thank Amb. Bushnell for being their mentor and for her service to the United States. She joined the Foreign Service in 1981 and has served as ambassador to the Republics of Guatemala (1999 to 2002) and Kenya (1996 to 1999). Currently, she is dean of the Leadership and Management School at FSI. Holly Holzer, at Embassy Kathmandu, is acting as the class coordinator for the scholarship. The one-time-only award will be bestowed in August 2004 as a need-based Financial Aid Scholarship to a child of a Foreign Service employee to help defray undergraduate college costs.

Martin Patterson, an FSO with the Foreign Agriculture Service, passed away suddenly from heart failure on July 3 while visiting his parents in Louisiana. His wife, Constanza, and three young daughters survive him. Over the course of three months, his colleagues, friends and family donated over $16,000 to establish a perpetual scholarship in Marty's name.

AFSA would like to commend Mike Conlon and Eric Wenberg of FAS, and other close friends of Marty's, for the lead they took in this effort. They made personal presentations, worked to establish a Web page, and even coordinated a bake sale to raise awareness of the Martin G. Patterson Scholarship. This award will be bestowed in perpetuity because only the interest from the donated principal is awarded as a scholarship. Like the Bushnell scholarship, this will be awarded under AFSA's Financial Aid Scholarship Program and will specifically be bestowed on a child of a FAS or APHIS employee. When the Patterson children are old enough, they can apply to receive this award.

In both instances, biographical information on the scholarship will be shared with the recipients so the students can understand the Foreign Service connection. For more information on how to contribute to these scholarships or for general AFSA Scholarship Fund information, contact Lori Dec at 1 (800) 704-2372, ext. 504, or e-mail dec@afsa.org.

Applications for AFSA's merit and financial aid scholarships for the 2004/2005 school year are due Feb. 6, 2004. □

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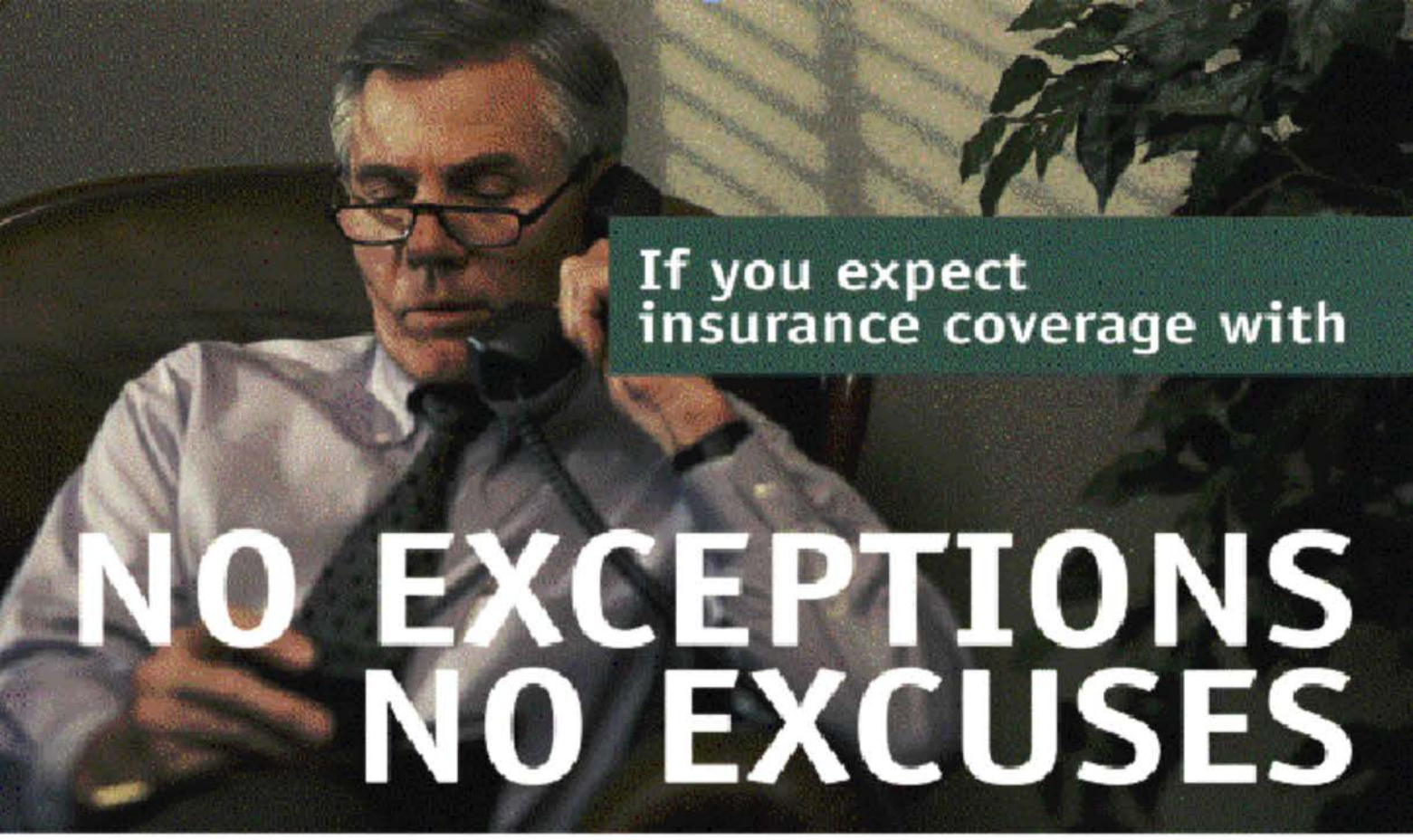

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