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# PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

## *Voice of the Foreign Service*

BY JOHN K. NALAND

This is my final column after four years on the AFSA Governing Board, first as State vice president and then as president. When I first arrived, I did not fully appreciate just how great a force for good AFSA is. But now I do. Day in and day out, AFSA's professional staff members, elected officials, and post representatives fight for the interests of our members, both active-duty and retired. They negotiate improvements in our conditions of service, lobby for legislation to improve our quality of life, respond to those who unfairly criticize our profession, and speak up for employees who have been let down by the system. In so doing, they help to make the Foreign Service a better supported, more respected, and more satisfying place in which to spend a career. That makes our agencies more effective and thus improves our nation's diplomatic readiness.



It has been a great honor for me to work in this organization that so vigilantly defends and promotes the interests of the Foreign Service. One of the best things about this job has been the opportunity to work alongside AFSA's fantastic professional staff members. It is they who do the bulk of the work for our members. They do so guided by eight core values:

*John K. Naland is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*

*AFSA's professional staff members, elected officials, and post representatives fight for the interests of our members, both active-duty and retired.*

**Responsiveness:** AFSA listens to our members and actively promotes their interests. When you contact AFSA with a question or a problem, you will get a response.

**Effectiveness:** AFSA acts with a sense of urgency, gets results, and makes a difference. While AFSA cannot win every battle that it undertakes, it wins quite a few.

**Integrity:** AFSA demonstrates openness, honesty, and fairness. We strive to close the gap that sometimes exists in the Foreign Service between what is said and what is done.

**Efficiency:** AFSA carefully expends resources where they can have maximum impact. Our dues are relatively low by federal union standards, so efficiency is essential.

**Community:** AFSA's staff and officers foster teamwork and enjoy their time together. Happy employees are motivated employees. AFSA's staff

members are both.

**Courage:** AFSA exhibits responsible risk-taking in order to achieve results. The only people who don't make mistakes are those who don't undertake difficult tasks.

**Empowerment:** AFSA staff and officers trust each other to give their best efforts guided by the association's core values. Given our lean staffing, there is little time for micromanaging.

**Patriotism:** AFSA is faithful to the grand and enduring ideals of our nation. Those ideals include the checks and balances on governmental action afforded by collective bargaining.

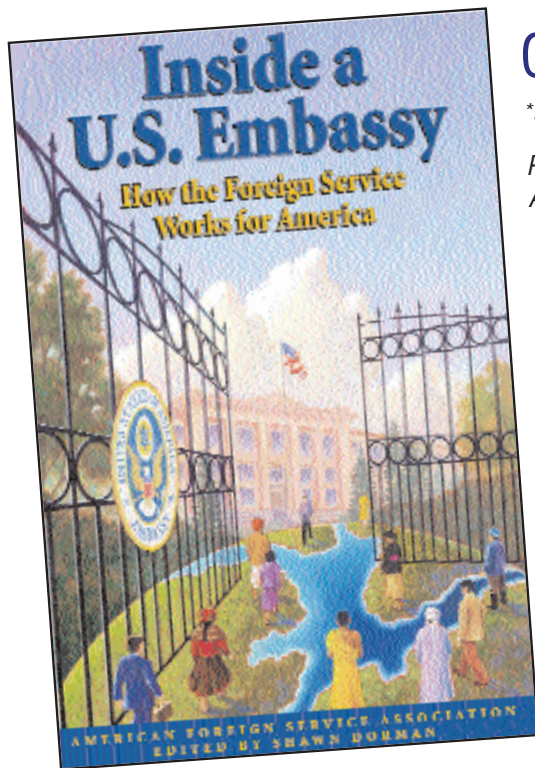
AFSA has been the voice of the Foreign Service since 1924 when the Service itself was created. As happens every two years, the time has now come for a new Governing Board to assume the responsibility for fighting the good fight for the benefit of our members. My distinguished successor, Ambassador John W. Limbert, heads up a very strong team that includes numerous longtime AFSA activists as well as newcomers bringing fresh perspectives.

I urge members worldwide to give our new AFSA Governing Board the same support that you gave to the outgoing board. Send them your suggestions, your kudos, and your constructive criticism. In so doing, we will be continuing the proud tradition of mutual support dating back nearly eight decades. And the Foreign Service will be the better for it.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. ■

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# LETTERS

## War and Peace(keeping)

What a pity that just as U.S. and coalition forces are confronting the dangerous and untidy process of restoring order in Iraq, the U.S. Army's Peacekeeping Institute (PKI), established a decade ago to study post-conflict peace operations, is about to be shut down. The Pentagon, ostensibly as part of the Army's transformation process, decided in 2002 to close this uniquely valuable operation at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. I say "ostensibly" because this move appears to have as much to do with the antipathy of the Pentagon's top civilian leadership toward the idea of "peacekeeping" — a concept associated with "nation-building" and the Clinton administration — as it does with cost-cutting and organizational streamlining. The PKI's functions are reportedly to be transferred to the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., this coming October.

From 1997 to 2000 I was international supervisor of the Bosnian city of Breko, a Balkan flashpoint. Along with other civilians involved in implementing the Dayton Peace Accord, my staff and I relied for security on the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia in which the U.S. Army continues to play a vital role. Without the visible presence of these armed peacekeepers, we civilians could not have continued to implement our multi-pronged mandate to bring

order and democratic, multiethnic government to a society fractured by war.

In Iraq, too, the long, painstaking process of restoring order will require coalition military forces to provide a safe environment for civilian peacekeepers — and not just for weeks or months. The need exists, therefore, for our military to understand and support the flip side of war fighting: peacekeeping. And that need looks ready to expand over time. The Bush administration, however, seems reluctant to acknowledge this inevitable consequence of America's emergence as the world's "hyperpower."

Inscribed on the Army War College's entrance gate are the words of Elihu Root, Secretary of War in the McKinley administration (1897-1901) and, later, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient: "To keep the peace is as much the Army's role as fighting wars." These words are even more apt today. At no time in our history has an understanding of post-conflict peace operations been more important to our national security.

Since 1993, the Army's PKI has become a focal point for the study of peace operations within the military because no other service branch has established such a learning center. The institute has also drawn national security policy-makers, diplomats, academics, think tank and nongovernmental organization representatives together with their military counterparts for wide-ranging discussions on

peacekeeping operations in "post-conflict environments." Moreover, the PKI has published studies, proceedings, and book-length documents that enrich the public's understanding of the critically important role peace operations now play in U.S. foreign policy. Many colleges and universities rely on PKI publications for undergraduate and graduate courses in this growing field of study.

Faced with a power vacuum in Iraq, the Pentagon is sparring with the State Department on how best to create an interim indigenous authority to pull Iraq back from a complete breakdown of public order. What better place to turn for precedent and insight than the PKI, whose charge is the study of "postwar complex contingencies" — a phrase that precisely fits the current situation in Iraq.

The Army's Peacekeeping Institute would have been the ideal venue for military and civilian administrators of postwar Iraq to have assembled and forged an integrated recovery plan. Instead, an alarming and embarrassing spectacle of near-anarchy is unfolding in Iraq as seemingly haphazard calls for more troops, new administrators, more police, and health workers go out to help curb the rising lawlessness. The PKI was made to order for the kind of advance planning, the Pentagon's putative hallmark, required for postwar Iraq. Apparently, it was not used.

If the PKI is moved to a distant place and its functions disassembled, a

## LETTERS



valuable learning resource will have been lost. The half-million dollars “saved” by shutting the institute down will have no meaning in a Pentagon flush with funds. The wiser choice would be for the Army to reverse its untimely decision, keep the PKI right where it is, strengthen its staff, and rekindle its contributory role in meeting the challenges we face in Iraq, Afghanistan, and who knows where else in coming years. This is no time to downgrade the study of peace operations.

*Robert W. “Bill” Farrand*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Supervisor of Brcko*  
*(1997-2000)*  
*McLean, Virginia*

### More on FAS

I commend the *Journal* for the May coverage of the fiftieth anniversary of the Foreign Agricultural Service. I was particularly interested in the article by Allan Mustard titled “An Unauthorized History of FAS.” My father, Horace Bolster, was an FAS pioneer. While the author is probably right that the greatly expanded number of agricultural attachés sent abroad after World War II mainly went to Europe and Latin America, my father was posted to Tehran in 1946 as the first U.S. agricultural attaché to Iran, and I’m sure there were other agricultural attachés assigned to the Middle East.

Mustard’s comments about strained relations between State and Agriculture in those early days ring true. Dad was given a small office in the economic section and had to wait in line for secretarial services, but eventually he appealed to USDA’s Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations and was given the funds to hire a skilled Iranian assistant and his own secretary.

In the Iranian government, agricultural information such as crop statistics barely existed, and the data were not kept in a systematic fashion. So my father developed his own sources, such as provincial officials and professors at agricultural colleges. He also traveled a great deal, consulting with officials around the country and visiting fields, which he assessed using skills he had learned as a farmer, an agronomist with an M.S. degree, and an extension agent in Montana. After he’d spent a couple of years there, Iranian officials sometimes came to him for such data when they needed to submit them to the U.N.

After returning to Washington, he worked at USDA and was eventually chief of the Middle Eastern and Eastern European Division of FAS. When the “Point Four” program came along, he was put in charge of selecting agricultural technicians to go to the Middle East, and in a two-year period recruited 71 experts for duty in that area. In 1954 he was executive secretary of an agricultural trade mission, and later he was European area officer for FAS. He served as manager of an American pavilion at a Fine Food Fair in Munich in 1958 and pushed exports of American seeds as USDA’s seed marketing specialist before retiring in 1963.

The furor over using Foreign Service generalists versus sending out specialists is no longer as strong as it was 50 years ago, and FSOs have become accustomed to working with a variety of representatives of Washington agencies at overseas posts. Agricultural attachés such as my father proved that specialists could be recruited to serve ably as diplomats as well.

*Archie M. Bolster*  
*Arlington, Va.*

### Bobbitt vs. Carter

After reading the *FSJ* review of Philip Bobbitt’s *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History* in the State Department Library today, I came across Jimmy Carter’s *The Nobel Peace Prize Lecture* (Simon & Schuster, 2002) in the New Books section. Juxtaposition of the two different concepts told me a lot about the relative values of strategic-socio-economic-political theory and down-to-earth love for one’s fellow inhabitants of Planet Earth.

The *FSJ* review praises Bobbitt’s sweeping thesis: that “the essential ideas that govern statecraft must change. The change will be as profound as any that the State has thus far undergone. ... Bobbitt’s intellectual ambition is truly breathtaking.” In one section Bobbitt discusses three possible scenarios for reorganizing international relations to cope with “various military attacks ... and assorted technological, economic and environmental developments during the next half-century.” (Breathtaking indeed!) The review tells us that Bobbitt freely admits that none of the scenarios will eliminate war, and all have advantages and disadvantages. (... and humble!) I think I will have to pass on this book because my modest grasp of military-political-economic theory will impede my ability to understand and appreciate it.

Now to Jimmy Carter’s Nobel address: “Great American power and responsibility are not unprecedented and have been used with restraint and great benefit in the past. We have not assumed that super strength guarantees super wisdom, and we have consistently reached out to the international community to ensure that our own power and influence are tempered

## LETTERS



by the best common judgment.” (Delivered in Oslo, Dec. 10, 2002.) “Constrained and inspired by historic constitutional principles, our nation has endeavored for more than two hundred years to follow the now almost universal ideals of human rights, freedom, and justice for all.”

Carter notes that he was asked to discuss the greatest challenge that the world faces at the beginning of the new millennium. He decided that the most serious and universal problem is the growing chasm between the richest and the poorest people on earth. Citizens of the 10 wealthiest countries are now 75 times richer than those who live in the 10 poorest ones, and the disparity is increasing every year, not only between nations but also within them. He believes that the results of this divergence are the root causes of most of the world’s unresolved problems, including starvation, illiteracy, environmental degradation, violent conflict, and unnecessary illnesses that range from Guinea worm to HIV/AIDS.

Carter’s solution? “War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn to live together in peace by killing each other’s children. The bond of our common humanity is stronger than the divisiveness of our fears and prejudices ... We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace. We can make these changes — and we must.” Seems pretty clear to me — and about as sweeping and breathtaking as anyone could ask for.

*Francis Xavier  
Cunningham  
FSO, retired  
Arlington, Va.*

### Conversion Frustration

The *AFSA News* column by Kelly Midura, “Now Why Would I Want to Go There?” (October 2002) hit home with me. I joined the department 15 years ago as an Information Management Technical Specialist. After many unsuccessful years trying to convert from IMTS to IM Specialist to avoid having to spend some 80 percent of my time traveling, I took an excursion tour as a GSO. I chose a hard-to-fill post — Beijing — thinking it would be a good career move and expedite my conversion.

But it took me almost four more years to convert, and I only succeeded after filing a grievance and obtaining support from the post admin officer, the ambassador and even Under

Secretary for Management Grant Green. During those four years, I was unofficially ineligible for promotion. Why would IRM panels promote me when I was not competing with my peers serving in IRM jobs? They wouldn’t. They even low-ranked me while I was trying to enhance my career filling a hard-to-fill position based on the “needs of the Service.”

Unfortunately, this leads me to believe all specialists should steer clear of out-of-cone, hard-to-fill hardship posts and take an “every man for himself” attitude, even though this contravenes the spirit of teamwork in the Foreign Service.

*John Smith  
IM Specialist, currently  
serving as a GSO  
Embassy Beijing ■*

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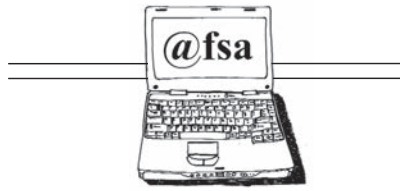
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# CYBERNOTES

## Nation Building: A Reality Check

Despite claims to eschew nation building, the Bush administration is now “up to its ears,” as an American diplomat in Afghanistan put it, in just that. And the price of failure, especially in Iraq, is high.

History tells us that winning the peace is every bit as difficult, if not more, than winning the war. The occupation of postwar Germany and Japan took place in highly favorable circumstances: there was strong domestic and international support for America’s role in nation building; the soldiers were trained and well-prepared for the transition to occupation; and the polity of each nation was relatively homogenous and well-organized. At the time, it was thought that several months would be required at most, yet each occupation lasted seven years, U.S. Institute for Peace Senior Fellow Ray Salvatore Jennings observes in a report issued in May. “The Road Ahead: Lessons in Nation Building from Japan, Germany and Afghanistan for Postwar Iraq” is available online ([www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)).

Jennings compares the German and Japanese occupations with the ongoing U.S. experience in Afghanistan. He explores the implications of the recent emphasis on updated war-fighting strategies and technologies and the simultaneous downplaying of peacemaking. “In this dissonance between an overdeveloped ability to wage and win war and an anemic facility for winning peace,” says Jennings, “is the potential for a reversal of war gains, a subverting of the country’s long-term security goals, and a deflat-

**R**uling three-and-a-half million Palestinians cannot go on indefinitely. You may not like the word, but what’s happening is occupation. Holding 3.5 million Palestinians is a bad thing for Israel, for the Palestinians and for the Israeli economy. We have to end this subject without risking our security.

— Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, May 27, 2003, [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

ing of ambitions to reform the norms of international order and recast the U.S. role in the world.”

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has also taken a long, sober look at nation building ([www.ceip.org](http://www.ceip.org)). The result is a pol-

icy brief, “Lessons from the Past: The American Record on Nation Building,” by Minxin Pei and Sara Kasper, that helps give context to the Iraq undertaking. America’s overall success rate in democratic nation building is about 26 percent, or 4 out of 15 cases, a finding that is presented usefully in the form of a table.

The report zeros in on the factors experience shows to be important for success: “the target nation’s internal characteristics, a convergence of the geopolitical interests of the outside power and the target nation, and a commitment to economic development in the target nation.”

## Pulling Rank

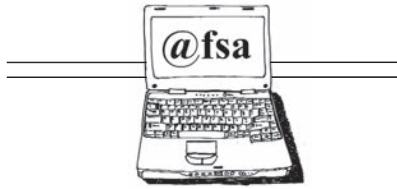
What country has the least freedom? Which harbors the biggest bribe-payers? How do nations rank for governance or environmental sustainability? The answers can be found at a growing variety of Web sites

## Site of the Month: Great Books Online [www.bartleby.com](http://www.bartleby.com)

Now, when you take off on vacation or set out for a new, distant posting, there’s no need to fret about lugging your favorite books and reference works along. All you need is your laptop. There, just a click or two away, *Bartleby.com*, named the “Best Literary Source of 2002” by *Yahoo!Internet Life*, offers the full, printable, searchable texts of hundreds of classics, as well as poetry collections and reference works online.

Among its interesting and useful content, the site includes the complete *Gray’s Anatomy*, the *Oxford Shakespeare*, the *King James Bible*, and the complete 70-volume *Harvard Classics and Fiction Shelf*. Reference works include world factbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and a variety of historical documents including the inaugural addresses of past presidents and William Jennings Bryan’s *The World’s Famous Orations*. Great for looking up quotes or references, *Bartleby.com* can be an invaluable resource for speech writing.

— Aster Grahn, *Editorial Intern*



# CYBERNOTES

devoted to country ratings and rankings.

“Good governance,” a somewhat amorphous buzzword, is the first of the Millennium Challenge Account criteria. The World Bank has developed a comparison tool that ranks countries by governance indicators, including corruption control, rule of law, political freedom, and others. While the ranking system is based on an extensive survey and fairly complicated statistics, the results are displayed simply and usefully on the World Bank Web site (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/kkz/gov2001map.asp>).

Foreign aid programs like the MCA are only part of the equation by which the Center for Global Development evaluates the development commitment of the most developed countries ([www.cgdev.org](http://www.cgdev.org)). In collaboration with *Foreign Policy* magazine, CGD produces an annual Commitment to Development Index ranking 21 industrialized countries on the extent to which their aid, trade, investment, migration, peacekeeping, and environment policies actually foster development. It turns out the world's biggest donors, the U.S. and Japan, are at the bottom of the heap in this regard.

Political and social freedom are measured in the “Country Ratings” published annually by Freedom House, a think tank in Washington, D.C. ([www.freedomhouse.org/ratings/index.htm](http://www.freedomhouse.org/ratings/index.htm)). Ratings are provided from 1972 for most countries, making it a useful tool for determining relative stability and trends for a country or government.

This year the U.S. pushed Finland

## 50 Years Ago...

We shall not react emotionally and irresponsibly to the many slings and arrows for which our Service provides the target these days. As trained observers of the political scene in many countries, we have learned a few lessons that should help us in these difficult times, particularly the advantages of forbearance and patience in the long-pull. This does not mean that our editorial comments will be restricted to the heat of the Washington summer or the relative merits of specialization versus varied assignments.

— Editorial, “Your Journal,” *FSJ*, August 1953.



aside for the title of most economically competitive, according to the *World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Report* ([www.weforum.org/site/homepublic.nsf/Content/Global+Competitiveness+Programme](http://www.weforum.org/site/homepublic.nsf/Content/Global+Competitiveness+Programme)). On the Web site each country's competitiveness scores can be viewed by individual factors like infrastructure, labor, or government, as well as by overall result. The rankings can be viewed as a list of all countries or by region. A related site, also sponsored by the World Economic Forum, has similar rankings for information technology readiness (links to the IT rankings can be found at the URL above).

Environmental sustainability is another buzzword that has recently come into its own. The Center for International Earth Science Information Network at Columbia University ranks countries by the current status of their environment and their capacity to manage future environmental challenges ([www.ciesin.columbia.edu/indicators/ESI/rank.html](http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/indicators/ESI/rank.html)).

A year ago, in the July-August 2002 *Cybernotes*, we reported on another instructive ranking service, the *Transparency International Bribe Payers Index* ([www.transparency.org/index.html](http://www.transparency.org/index.html)). The current index shows Australians paying the fewest bribes. American companies are still among the top 10, though behind, among others, Italians, Russians, and Malaysians.

— Aster Grahm

## Vacationing in Perilous Times

The U.S. war in Iraq set off a firestorm of anti-Americanism around the world. U.S. embassies have ratcheted up security precautions in response, but what about the ordinary American tourist? Is he or she welcome or safe anywhere? What precautions can American tourists take?

Conde Nast's *Traveler* asked its reporters in 17 places around the globe these questions, and their informative answers are featured in the June issue, most of which is posted at

## CYBERNOTES



**www.entraveler.com.** Though the correspondents in cities from Berlin to Jakarta, including London, Cairo, Istanbul, Buenos Aires, and Hong Kong, reported some generalized anti-U.S. sentiment (consisting, they said, mostly of nasty slogans directed at President Bush during demonstrations), not a single correspondent was personally harassed — even in Paris. The most striking effect of the war, it seems, is actually a positive one: a significant drop in hotel rates.

A “Safety Check” is featured in *The Perrin Report* in the May issue of *Traveler*, also posted at the Web site. Consulting the State Department travel advisories ([http://travel.state.gov/travel\\_warnings.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html)) is an essential first step, but *entraveler.com* recommends cross-checking with the British ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)), Canadian ([www.voyage.gc.ca](http://www.voyage.gc.ca)) and Australian

([www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au)) advisories for additional views. Reading an English-language newspaper from your destination is also suggested; you can find them in the Google Directory for Newspapers.

The report recommends hiring an English-speaking guide, and advises against going for a group tour: safety in numbers doesn't necessarily apply to a busload of Westerners. The report also contains tips for how to get the best medical care anywhere in the world, and how to negotiate the minefield of travel insurance effectively.

Communication is another dimension of safety. As the June *Traveler* reports, the GSM (global system for mobile communications) networks that now include 197 countries are growing fast. Detailed maps are posted at the GSM Association Web

site at [gsmworld.com](http://gsmworld.com) and can also be found at [www.gsmcoverage.co.uk](http://www.gsmcoverage.co.uk), a popular site with an update-notification facility.

To stay connected, all you need is a tri-band phone and a SIM (subscriber identification module) “smart” card to go with it. Cell phones operate on one of three different frequency bands, depending on what part of the world you are in: the tri-band phone, made by all the major manufacturers, can operate on all three bands. The SIM card, which stores your account information, identifies you to the regional network you are in. Wireless carriers in the U.S. that use GSM have roaming agreements with foreign networks. Or, you can purchase a prepaid SIM card from between \$17 and \$80 to access the local network in the country you're visiting. ■



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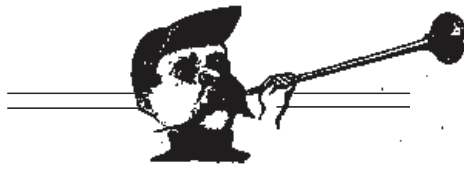
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# SPEAKING OUT

## *Strengthen Diplomacy for the War on Terror*

BY SEN. RICHARD G. LUGAR

Looking back to the time just after the Soviet Union broke up, most observers now realize that it was naive to think that the U.S. government could open diplomatic missions in 15 newly-created countries without a budget increase. But it was surely folly to try to manage that expansion, plus all the turmoil in the rest of the world in that decade, while cutting State Department budgets. Despite protests from some of us, that's exactly what Congress and the administration advocated in the mid-1990s, when spending on international affairs in real terms was cut year after year.

Tragically, it took the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania to reverse this short-sighted trend, but the damage was done. Hiring had stopped, generalists and specialists headed for the exits, and a personnel gap opened that will persist for years. As the Bush administration came into office in 2001, "the dilapidated state of America's foreign policy apparatus [was] a national security crisis," according to a Council on Foreign Relations study at the time.

To his credit, Secretary of State Colin Powell was moving to repair that apparatus even before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. But now that we are on a war footing against terrorism, it is more urgent than ever to beef up our diplomatic capabilities just as we are beefing up our military and our homeland defense forces. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which I chair, has dedicated a significant

*It's time to stop nickel-and-diming our diplomatic corps, because this spending is cost-effective in the war on terror.*



portion of its efforts during 2003 to this goal.

In April, during consideration of the FY 2004 budget resolution, I worked with other senators to restore a \$1.15 billion cut by the Senate Budget Committee in the president's request for the 150 Account, which funds the State Department and international affairs programs. I offered an amendment on the Senate floor to fully fund President Bush's international affairs budget.

In this era of deficits, plenty of other budget accounts were cut, and their supporters were likewise trying to restore funding. My amendment was among the few that succeeded. The Senate put back the \$1.15 billion, and the full Congress approved that budget, a show of confidence in Secretary Powell and a sign that Congress is paying more attention to foreign policy.

We can no longer afford to conduct diplomacy on a shoestring. To

win the war on terrorism, we must assign our diplomatic assets the same strategic importance we give our military assets. I use the phrase "win the war on terrorism" deliberately. Few doubted that our troops could defeat the Iraqi army, and they did so convincingly. That was an important battlefield conquest, but it is only a middle chapter in the story. We are already faced there with important questions about whether we can limit anti-American reactions in Iraq and in the region. Can we enlist help from our friends and allies in reconstructing Iraq? Can we work with the United Nations and with NATO to quickly bring security and stability there, and then success in political reorganization? Can we deal with the other sources of tension in the Middle East?

We can only claim a complete victory in Iraq if we can achieve those goals, and that success can't be achieved solely with military forces and smart weapons, no matter how superbly trained and designed. Victory requires a robust and engaged foreign policy, one that is creative and capable of leveraging America's economic and political strength.

Similarly, winning the larger war on global terrorism will require more than military force. We will need to continue rallying all countries against al-Qaida, gaining cooperation from local law enforcement agencies on every continent to hunt down and arrest terrorist cells wherever they are. We must help Islamic countries



lift themselves out of the poverty that breeds the foot soldiers of extremism. We must work with friends to find ways to rehabilitate the failed states that harbor terrorists. Most fundamentally, we need to change the political and economic environment so that al-Qaida's message no longer strikes a favorable chord in the Muslim world. All this will require a sustained diplomatic commitment over many years.

### Five Campaigns

To achieve victory in the war on terrorism, we must dedicate ourselves to five foreign policy campaigns. The first campaign is boosting investments in our diplomats and in their security, increasing our foreign assistance and strengthening our diplomatic capabilities. It's time to stop nickel-and-diming our diplomatic corps, because this spending is cost-effective in the war on terror. If we can prevent the bombing of an embassy, secure more allied assistance for expensive peacekeeping operations, or keep more terrorists from reaching our shores, the extra funding will have paid for itself many times over.

The second campaign is to expand and perfect our non-proliferation activities. I believe that we can build on the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which is dedicated to safeguarding and eliminating nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the former Soviet Union. The program, which is essential for keeping these weapons out of terrorist hands, currently is limited to Russia and the former Soviet states. We must apply its successful methods to additional countries, eliminate the red tape that hampers emergency non-proliferation missions, and encourage fulfillment of the \$10 billion in pledges toward weapons dismantlement programs that we have

received from our G-8 partners.

Third, we need to expand trade by eliminating political and economic restrictions and pushing ahead with trade agreements. Free trade is necessary to create the international transparency and economic growth that will dampen terrorist recruitment and political resentment.

Fourth, we must repair our frayed alliances and establish new ones. We simply cannot win the terrorism war alone, any more than we can win the drug war, or the war against AIDS and other deadly diseases.

The final campaign involves addressing underdevelopment along a broad front, with special attention to building democracy, assuring security and diversity of energy supplies, and protecting the environment. These are all necessary to help reverse anti-American attitudes and stop the creation of new terrorist cells.

### Ensuring Adequate Funding

The responsibility for waging these campaigns falls heavily on the State Department. Yet diplomatic funding receives only about seven cents for every defense dollar in the U.S. budget. Annual foreign policy funding remains, in real terms, 32 percent below its peak in 1985.

In May, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously passed a State Department authorization bill and reported it to the entire Senate. The committee increased funding for the State Department above the amount requested by the Bush administration. This increase included two important additions that directly affect diplomats on the job:

- \$312 million for embassy construction, which will enable the department to break ground on an additional three embassy compounds next year. Despite the stepped-up

spending on security during the past four years, the GAO says that more than 200 posts still don't meet all the basic security criteria, and at current rates it will take more than 20 years to finish the planned replacement program. We should cut that time in half. Our diplomats are truly on the front lines of the war on terrorism and we must give them the necessary protection.

- \$8 million to increase the caps on hardship and danger pay for State Department employees. This will enable the department to boost the danger pay differential at 10 posts from 25 percent to 35 percent, and to raise the hardship differential at 21 posts from 25 percent to 30-35 percent. Staffing shortfalls are occurring at many of our most important missions — some 60 percent of State's overseas workforce is in hardship posts, where the vacancy rate averages 12.6 percent, versus "only" 8.4 percent at non-hardship posts. Report after report has shown that despite the dedication of our envoys overseas, staffing problems are compromising diplomatic readiness and our ability to meet foreign policy objectives.

Moreover, to bolster the non-military side of the war on terrorism, we added \$30 million to the president's request for outreach to the Islamic world, including public diplomacy efforts such as Arab-language TV and Fulbright exchanges. In all, we added approximately \$400 million, or about 4 percent, to the administration's original budget request.

That's still not enough, in my view, and we have to help it survive the legislative meat-grinder. But it's a start, one I want to build on. The Foreign Relations Committee will continue with hearings to review a host of State Department programs that have suffered from congressional neglect in





recent years. Some are left over from another era and may need to be scrapped or radically redesigned. Still others may need to be expanded or refocused as State assumes additional responsibilities. New approaches to eliminating and controlling weapons of mass destruction must be high on the list. A comprehensive and creative strategy for public diplomacy in the Islamic world, and efforts to strengthen international civil police capacity, are two other areas that require more emphasis.

On other fronts, the Foreign Relations Committee in May passed a foreign assistance authorization bill for the first time in many years. This will further strengthen our diplomatic capabilities, by raising the profile of foreign assistance programs and

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***Victory in Iraq requires  
a robust foreign policy,  
one that is capable  
of leveraging  
America's strength.***

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giving Congress a greater stake in their success. During the first months of 2003, we also achieved a number of bipartisan successes as the Senate, based on work done by the committee, ratified the Moscow Treaty, the NATO membership

accession treaty and three tax treaties, and approved President Bush's landmark Global AIDS Initiative.

This is an important time in our history, perhaps as pivotal as the beginning of the Cold War. The same CFR report I cited earlier noted that, "American foreign policy prevailed in the Cold War in large part because of the Department of State." In the new war on terrorism, too, we can only prevail by skillful use of our diplomatic clout, public diplomacy, and foreign assistance, directed by a reinvigorated and replenished State Department. ■

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*Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., is the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.*

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# INDIGO AND PEPPER SOUP

“I just love pepper soup!” Ellen did relish the innocuous-looking soup with its light cargo of meat bits and onions and other veggies bobbing about in a broth for which “tangy” was a hazardous understatement. Nigerians and other guests at embassy parties laughed hysterically at her ice-breaking mime of the new-comer meeting her first spoonful. She’d saucer her eyes and wave off the imaginary flames: *Whoo-ee! It’s explosive! It’s corrosive! It’s napalm wall-to-wall! And forget about the water! Nothing helps!*

Remembering her last performance, Ellen smiled, but she decided not to inflict the routine on the reporter who was interviewing her. This very self-assured young woman might be in a prickly post-colonial phase. She might take humor for ridicule. Keep it simple, Ellen told herself. Whatever the reporter asks, make sure all roads lead to the boutique. Give Patti lots of credit. Not every Lagos widow who takes in sewing develops into a top tailor and goes on to become a designer and entrepreneur.

“It isn’t too hot for you?” asked the reporter, whose stretch jeans clung no more than the black and amber tie-dye wrapped around her torso. Rings of copper threaded with flame-red coral ran through the reporter’s ears.

Exactly the kind of client we want for the boutique, thought Ellen. Patti would love to dress her. “You can really take a whole bowl of it?” the reporter was saying. Ellen nodded. “I love the tingle. It’s just like Nigeria. Such a vibrant place. So alive it almost hurts.” “That’s terrific! Quotes make the story, you know.” Ellen watched the reporter scribbling on a little pad with coils at the top. A wristful of bracelets jangled when she crossed a T or looped an L. Her scrawl was so extroverted she had to keep flipping pages, and with every flip the bracelets jangled some more.

Ellen wanted to relax. She liked the reporter, liked her looks and her noisy bangles, liked her spontaneity, liked the way she paused to get quotes right. But Jim’s shadow kept her on guard. Although the ambassador had raised no objections to the interview, her husband had taken issue, strongly.

Even that morning at breakfast Jim had still been hammering away, rehashing all the reasons for avoiding reporters like the plague.

“Better safe than sorry,” he’d concluded. “I speak from experience, as you well know.” Ellen nodded. She couldn’t count the times Jim had gone red in the face and thrown down a section of the paper in disgust. “They’ve fouled it up again,” he’d mutter through his teeth. “Why do I bother?” “Because you’re the economic



Janet Cleland

AN ENTERPRISING  
FS WIFE CHALLENGES  
THE PRESUMPTION  
OF HARDSHIP IN LAGOS  
AND HER HUSBAND’S  
CYNICISM.

BY PATRICIA L. SHARPE

## F O C U S

counselor,” she would say. “Explaining’s your job.”

“It’s not my job to look like a fool,” he would retort.

Again and again Ellen had soothed him with the obvious. The Nigerian press was notorious for getting things wrong. Any reader who mattered would chuckle and dismiss the offending garble. Et cetera.

Jim refused to be comforted. He could not or would not roll with the punches. After a year in Nigeria, his blood pressure was planing at dangerous levels.

He had become insufferable to live with, too. Patience had never been Jim’s strong point. Now he was so stressed from work he couldn’t relax anywhere. He was also complaining of neglect. Calling home to clarify plans for an evening engagement, he’d find she wasn’t there. The maid would take his message. He didn’t like it.

Ellen admitted her days were monopolized by the million things still to be done if she and Patti were going to open their high-fashion venture on schedule. The legal complications of setting up a partnership between a diplomat’s wife and a Nigerian national had almost doomed the enterprise. Finding a good but affordable location had been harder than they expected. They racked their brains for a name that would entice chic young women as well as monied matriarchs. Now they were on the brink of realizing their vision. Ellen loved Patti’s new take on traditional textiles. Patti was fascinated by Ellen’s uninhibited trade bead jewelry.

The jewelry-making idea had popped into Ellen’s head as a way to fill long, empty days. With servants to cook, wash, clean and shop for her, she’d been functionless once she had livened up their government-provided, government-furnished house with Nigerian artifacts.

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*Patricia Sharpe was an FSO with USIA from 1978 until the agency’s consolidation with State in 1999. She served as public affairs officer, branch public affairs officer, information officer or cultural affairs officer in Medan, Colombo, Dar Es Salaam, Lagos, Freetown, Santo Domingo, Karachi and Calcutta. She retired from the State Department in 2001. Before joining USIA she was (among other things) an assistant professor of English at Pennsylvania State University, from which she holds a Ph.D. in American literature. She was a Fulbright Professor of American Literature at Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan, and an American Institute of Indian Studies Hindi grantee at Delhi University in New Delhi, India.*

She was busy now, and happy. She had no intention of staying home all day.

Ellen felt her eyes tracking the motion of the reporter’s ballpoint. Men are raised to be self-centered, she thought. Jim was falling into a Marianas Trench of self-pity. Otherwise he’d give her credit for thriving at a post most Foreign Service families shunned or, if they had to, endured. Hating Nigeria, despising Nigerians, these reluctant recruits maintained calendars on which they crossed off the days that brought them closer to pack-out time.

Ellen was flourishing in Lagos. She didn’t doubt the megacity had its share of violent crime, but her gamble on the decency of ordinary people had paid off, a point she made at embassy functions. For Jim’s sake, she was diplomatic, of course, and she couldn’t really fault the women whose cautious nature turned fearful under a barrage of negative reports. The boutique, she hoped, would be a window on a world into which they might eventually tiptoe.

This interview with a reporter from the leading Lagos daily promised city-wide, free publicity for the boutique’s opening, and Ellen had set the scene carefully. Motioned to a chair covered in crazy-quilt akwete cloth, the reporter faced a wall on which Ellen had stretched a length of Calibari plaid to evoke its resemblance to op-art. Ellen poured coffee from a brown glazed pot she had bought from a potter in Oshogbo. Most important, she wore one of Patti’s creations, a body-loving sheath with a slit sneaking up between two of the tightly woven aso-oke strips normally intended for a Yoruba woman’s imposing traditional wrapper. A torrent of old glass beads, her own creation, swirled about her neck and cascaded into cleavage.

Deferring the moment of truth, Ellen had asked the maid to answer the door and conduct the reporter to the living room. Shaking hands, Ellen had felt a nudge of panic. What if she froze like a hopeless dummy? She and Patti had brainstormed the fashion points she needed to inject, and Ellen had gone to sleep full of confidence, but breakfast with Jim had drained it all away.

They had eaten on the terrace, by the pool, as usual. Red plantain and common banana trees swept the silvery sky of early morning. Hibiscus, lantana and bougainvillea sprawled over walls so high she often forgot there were neighbors within hearing distance. Copycat splotches of

## F O C U S

red and violet patterned the tablecloth and napkins Ellen had fashioned from some batik she'd bargained away from her favorite market lady.

"You should have declined," Jim had said. "You can still postpone. Why must you insist?"

The angry clink of cup on saucer startled a crow hovering about with the clear intention of sharing their breakfast.

"You know why. The boutique. But it's good for you, too."

"The minister's going to make concessions on oil because you jolly the social reporter?"

"Can't hurt, if the economic counselor's wife shows she really likes Nigeria."

Jim spooned imported jam onto his toast.

"Trust me," continued Ellen. "I've listened to you. I know the angles. Why market economies are more productive. Why free trade is good for all of us. Why the IMF demands conditionalities."

"Not bad."

"I can do even better. I can defend American fast food and music videos and—"

"Damned crow!"

The crow had zoomed in like a hotshot pilot on a strafing mission. Retreating to a branch of a mango tree overhanging the pool, it dropped crumbs among the leaves that had fallen into the water overnight.

"That'll teach you to peck at me!" laughed Ellen, reminding herself to have the gardener trim the tree. "Don't worry. This is a style story, a human interest story."

"Correction. It's a back-door story. A way to attack the mission through you. Why else would they profile a diplomat's wife?"

"Because she leads an unusual life. Women, at least, want to know how she deals with making a life in the face of constant uprooting and different customs." Ellen's spine left its place of ease against the chair back. "I have a story, too, you know. Or maybe I'm not interesting?"

"Of course you are. I married you. And you've had a good life, haven't you? Servants. Breakfast by the pool. Safaris in Kenya. Skiing in Switzerland. Shopping in Hong Kong. What more could you want?"

"What does a bird in a gilded cage want?"

"Oh, Christ! Not the flaming feminist act."

"Is that really what you think?"

"What I think doesn't seem to matter."

Jim pulled his napkin through its ring. He came around

the table and gave her the usual peck on the cheek.

"I'm off. Please, for my sake, be careful."

Now the dreaded interview was under way. As the reporter's head bent toward her notebook, Ellen could see her scalp glistening between the tight cornrows. The day was warming up. Soon the servants would close the windows and turn on the air conditioning. The reporter stabbed in a period to end the pepper soup quote. She flipped to a new page. The bracelets danced on her wrist.

"Now tell me — what do you think of Nigerian women?"

Ellen gave herself a moment to consider how to negotiate the line between "flaming feminism" and inanity.

"Yes?" said the reporter, smiling impishly, tapping her pen on the pad.

"Impressive," said Ellen. "Look at you. I read your series on the garbage-dumping scam. The feature on exploited orphans was great, too."

"Thanks, but I can't write about me."

"Say that I'm bursting with admiration for the women who are getting into law and medicine and education — and journalism, too. I really admire the women traders I know. And I think the women in the countryside are positively heroic. Use that word. Heroic. African women have always done the farming, with so little respect."

"My grandmother worked like a donkey. She vowed her daughters would be literate. Her eldest, my mother, told me to aim for the stars. So here I am."

"Your grandmother must be proud," said Ellen.

"Not yet. She says I should be an editor."

"Do it!" said Ellen. "Here's my favorite story about the caliber of Nigerian women. It happened in Ibadan during the colonial period. The British decided to impose a new tax. When the market women marched in protest, the authorities backed down."

"That's true," nodded the reporter.

"But," pursued Ellen, "if market women were so powerful then, why don't women play a really strong role in modern society? How did it slip away?"

"It didn't fade in the traditional sector," said the reporter. "But the Brits pushed the Western model. Men got the education and opportunities. Now *they* make the blockbuster deals with other men, like your husband—"

"We're getting into tricky territory," Ellen warned.

“Don’t worry. This isn’t an exposé.”

“Thank you,” said Ellen. “But don’t be afraid to give the story some pizzazz, some excitement.”

The reporter rested her pen. “I clawed myself out of the soft reporting ghetto. I’ll never return to writing fluff and flattery. I didn’t ask for this assignment. But the usual reporter was sick, so I agreed, reluctantly, to sub for her. I guess I misjudged you.”

“Happens all the time to us housewives,” Ellen teased. “Dull by definition.”

“How did you find out about the market women? Most foreigners aren’t aware of the Ibadan incident.”

“A very esoteric process called reading,” said Ellen. “I love history. And literature, too. Wole Soyinka is so impressive, and *Things Fall Apart*, I think, is universal. Oh, yes — don’t forget Ken Saro Wiwo. His style’s unique and he cares so much.”

The reporter’s wrists were jangling.

“I get around as much as I can, too,” said Ellen. “The collection of portrait bronzes in Ibadan was a real eye-opener. A thousand years old and full of personality! Visiting the dye pits in Kano, I shot a whole roll of film recording every step of the indigo-making process. Patti’s having some prints blown up to wall-size for the boutique. What do you think?”

“Perfect!” murmured the reporter, filling a few more pages, then looking up. “About the boutique now, tell me more. Make me a customer.”

At last, thought Ellen, it’s time for the spiel: how fitting sessions with Patti, her fabulous dressmaker, had turned into a partnership; how their boutique would open with a splash in a couple of weeks; how they already had export nibbles that Ellen would be handling.

“The idea was incubating even before I met Patti,” said Ellen. “Every time I passed through the airport, I saw women returning from the U.K. with humongous suitcases crammed with clothes. I was amazed. Nigerian fabrics are so special. Take indigo. I’m haunted by indigo. It’s the blue of the ocean when you’re hovering off a reef and gazing into depths you’ll never get down to. And the adire patterns remind me of the night sky — the deep dark infinity of it, and, sparkling through the darkness, stars to give you heart.”

“Novelty has something to do with it. You like our stuff. We like yours.”

“That’s exactly what Patti and I are dealing with.”

Ellen described how she and Patti had clicked from the moment she’d appeared in Patti’s workroom cum par-

lor with a bundle of the lacier aso-oke strips for Patti to tailor into a cocktail gown. Patti had never undertaken such an assignment, but she was delighted to dress a foreigner in the traditional textiles young Lagosians were snubbing. The two of them had worked together to devise a sleek and elegant design totally at odds with the fussy, girth-exaggerating outfits Nigerian women of Ellen’s age tended to favor for dress-up occasions.

Suddenly, during the final fitting of that fateful cocktail dress, Patti was spitting pins into her palm. She made Ellen spin around several times.

“What’s wrong?” Ellen had been puzzled.

“Not a blessed thing,” Patti had told her. “I’ve just found the solution. Don’t fight the modern world. Use it!”

“I don’t understand.” Ellen was peeling the tight dress off her sweaty body.

“Traditional textiles. Radical style.” Patti’s face was full of wonder and delight. “It came like a revelation. I almost swallowed a pin!”

The reporter’s bracelets were jangling. The pages were flipping. Finally the pen jabbed in a period. The reporter looked up for more.

Ellen held out a card. “Patti hit on the name as well as the concept that very day, although it took us months to circle back to it. Look.”

The reporter took the card and read: “*Revelations*: Ready-to-wear for smart women. Rooted in tradition. Ripe for the future.”

“I wish you luck,” said the reporter. “Plenty of people have tried and failed.”

“You and my husband! He’s full of cautionary tales. He thinks I should be content with my exotic life. But don’t print that, please!”

“Men!” snorted the reporter. “Last year I was so happy. I was going to marry my boyfriend. Then he dropped the bombshell. His wife would not be permitted to work at night. I explained that reporters often work at night. They travel, too. Alone. He didn’t like that either. Result: I’m still single. But I love my work.”

“I have kids,” said Ellen. “But they’re grown-up. I needed something real to do.”

“What if your enterprise does fail?” asked the reporter.

“Patti returns to her VIP tailoring business. I move on to other things. I’ll have sacrificed some of what I inherited from my father, but the experience won’t be wasted. Here in Lagos, I’ve discovered strength, even courage. I’ll always be grateful.”

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The reporter put down her pen. "Thank you so much for liking my crazy, mixed-up country."

"Just doing what comes naturally," smiled Ellen. "Have another cup of coffee. Tell me more about your life. Tell me about your mother and grandmother."

"Photos first," said the reporter.

Ellen arranged herself on the sofa beneath the Calibari. She felt perfectly calm.

The interview was to run in the Sunday edition. For the rest of the week Jim labored under a cloud of foreboding that seemed ludicrous to Ellen, who insisted that the reporter could be trusted. Jim retorted that Ellen's personal charm had not been lavished on the editor.

Sometimes the Sunday paper arrived before dawn; sometimes it was delayed. As luck would have it, there was no paper on the doorstep when Ellen went to retrieve it. There was still no paper when the maid called them to breakfast. Jim was on edge. He was driving Ellen crazy. The usual racket of the crows was get-

ting on her nerves, too.

Finally the maid approached with the paper, which she laid on the table. She had hardly turned her back when both Ellen and Jim lunged for the Style section.

Ellen restrained herself.

As Jim's eyes devoured words, Ellen studied the page upside down. She loved the headline: "New Boutique to Be a Revelation." And the color photo capping four columns was all she could have hoped for. The Calibari made a dramatic backdrop; Patti's dress was definitely chic; she herself looked better than not bad.

But Jim's reading was taking so long Ellen could hardly stand it. She poured coffee, checked her fingernails, noted that the mango tree had been clipped back, tapped a bare foot soundlessly on flagstone.

Eventually Jim looked up, perplexed.

"There's nothing here," he said.

"Nothing?"

"Nothing bad. Nothing about the mission."

"Well," said Ellen, as mildly as she could, "that's all that matters, isn't it?" ■

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# DEATH OF A PUBLIC SERVANT

**T**he awkward position of the body lying on the floor. A knife protruding from his back. Curiously little blood. I froze in the doorway, a strangled cry stuck in my throat.

"Liza, did you find that asshole Fleet yet?" The annoyed

voice calling loudly from the other end of the hallway was apparently past caring whether the members of the General Council would hear.

"Over this way," I said. Then realizing he hadn't heard me, I cleared my throat and repeated more loudly, "Jay, come here now! Something awful has happened!"

Worse than awful. The World Trade Organization's first meeting of the season was opening in 10 minutes with a keynote speech from the U.S. under secretary for economic affairs — and the head of his advance team was lying dead at my feet.

Six hours later, I remained ensconced in a small side office at World Trade Organization headquarters in Geneva with the other two members of the U.S. delegation. The police had come and gone, the under secretary and his entourage had been whisked back to the hotel, and most of the other delegations had left for the night.

Without the bureaucratic hum that normally filled the WTO's

halls, the building seemed oddly silent to me. I slouched back in a leather armchair with my eyes closed, badly wanting to sleep. Jay, on the other hand, was turning ghoulish.

"The body was still warm, so the police think Fleet was murdered just a few minutes before you found him. You and the killer must have been this close." Jay held his hand up, thumb and forefinger pinched together.

"Don't be such an ass; I've already told you I didn't see anyone," I snapped. "I walked up and down the hallway opening up doors looking for Fleet. The corridor was empty. No one even went by me. Everyone was already in the main hall waiting for the meeting to start."

"If no one else was there, you must be the police's main suspect."

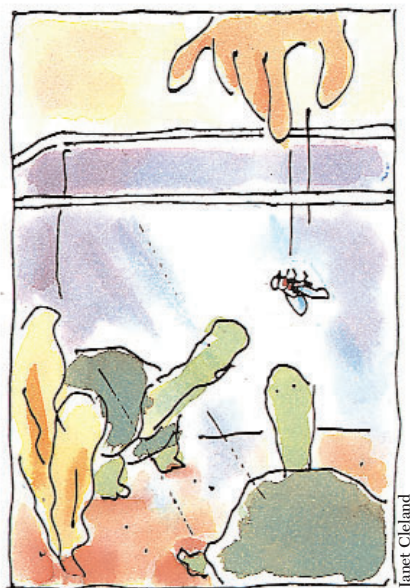
I opened my mouth to protest, but Jay was already talking again. "You'd be the perfect murderer. You're methodical, calm under pressure, and you hold a grudge."

I didn't like Jay's description, but he wasn't far off the mark.

"But I didn't have a motive," I said, draining the last of the coffee out of my mug. It was cold.

There was a brief pause. "I did," said Ellen.

Both Jay and I looked over at our soft-spoken office assistant in surprise.



ERIC FLEET WAS A  
VERY ANNOYING MAN.  
BUT WHO DISLIKED  
HIM ENOUGH TO  
KILL HIM?

BY NANCY NELSON

*When the General Council Chairman started screaming at Fleet,  
the rest of the advance team just snickered.*

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“Eric Fleet was a jerk, I don’t care who hears me say it. He refused to get his own coffee even if he was sitting right by the coffee maker and I had to cross the room to pour it. And he claimed he didn’t know how to make the photocopy machine work. Fleet enjoyed making other people do menial labor for him.”

I digested this in silence. That wasn’t a motive to kill someone, not really.

“He was irritating,” agreed Jay amiably, reaching behind an impressively thick tome in the bookcase for the bottle of Scotch we kept there. He poured a shot of the amber liquid into a glass and continued, “It’s amazing he managed to piss off so many people in just the five days he’s been here. Yesterday the WTO director-general became furious when he found Fleet changing the podium arrangement to give the under secretary a more flattering camera angle.”

That wasn’t a reason to murder someone, either.

“And wasn’t your committee chairman upset about something Fleet was doing?” he asked me. I held up my empty mug and Jay poured in some whiskey.

“Dr. Tordorov has been beside himself with worry about this meeting,” I said, sticking my nose into the mug and breathing in deeply the alcohol’s fumes. “He’s been working hard for months now to conclude an agreement on turtle excluder devices. Even though the agreement’s not yet finalized, Fleet was planning to have the under secretary announce it as a deliverable. That would have been a setback for Tordorov’s negotiations.”

“Even his own people didn’t like him,” volunteered Ellen. “When the General Council Chairman started screaming at Fleet when he found him switching around name cards at the head table just before the official dinner started, the rest of the advance team just snickered.”

We laughed. Somehow it made us all feel better.

---

*Nancy Nelson, an economic cone officer, joined the Foreign Service in 1989. She has served in Caracas, Managua, Tallinn and Washington, D.C., and recently began a two-year tour on the Canada desk.*

“Your name, Mademoiselle?” The young gendarme, poised with a clipboard and pen, startled me.

When I had spotted a small crowd of people — some with cameras — milling around the WTO’s front entrance that morning, I detoured to a door at the back. The Swiss policeman was standing just inside.

I stated my name, showing him my ID badge at the same time.

“Liza Heywood,” he said as he ran his eyes down a list of names. After making a check mark with his pen he said, “Captain Lauer would like to speak with you in Conference Room 3.”

I had already met Captain Lauer the day before; despite the stressful circumstances, he had managed to put me at ease. Within minutes he had me telling him everything I knew about Eric Fleet — not that I could tell the police anything of interest. Now he stood up to greet me as I came in.

“Bonjour, Mademoiselle Heywood. I hope you are rested today.”

“I am feeling much better,” I said sitting down at the small table he indicated. He sat across from me and lit a cigarette. The smoke from his Gauloise curled gently in the air between us.

“You have more questions for me?” I said. Judging from the ashtray already overflowing with butts, the captain had spent the entire night at the WTO.

“Not more questions, just the same ones as yesterday. I am sorry to have to bother you again, but would you please repeat the circumstances, as you remember them, surrounding your discovery of Monsieur Fleet’s body.”

So I did. I don’t think he learned anything new from me. When I finished talking, Captain Lauer was silent for a moment. He said, “No one went past you in the hallway?”

“No.”

The ash on his cigarette was getting long. He tapped it into the ashtray, then returned the Gauloise to his mouth. He didn’t say anything.

“I’m the main suspect,” I said challengingly. Captain Lauer didn’t rise to the bait.



*The murderer had to be experienced — the stabbing caused almost instantaneous death, and the wound hardly bled.*

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“It is not necessary to alarm yourself unduly, Mademoiselle,” he said. “We are merely investigating all possibilities. Although you had the opportunity, you do not appear to have a motive.” He cocked his eyebrows as if in query.

“Eric Fleet was a very annoying man...” I began.

For the first time I saw the officer crack a smile. “I have already come to that conclusion, Mademoiselle. Monsieur Fleet appears to have displeased many people during his short stay.”

Captain Lauer’s statement was still ringing in my ears an hour later as I sat in a meeting of the CTE — Committee on Trade and Environment. The other 15 or so members were discussing sea turtles — where they swim, who catches them, and whether the U.S. was justified in banning shrimp imports from foreign fleets whose nets weren’t equipped with turtle excluder devices, or TEDs. The issue was important for the U.S. — several countries had filed lawsuits against us over it — but I had a hard time following the debate. My interviews with the police kept running through my head.

I sought out the committee chairman, Dr. Stefan Todorov, to apologize after the meeting was over, and found him back in his office. Gray-haired and dark-suited, he was busily putting away his papers from the meeting. The wall behind his desk was lined from floor to ceiling with books; on the facing wall were hung an overlapping assortment of turtle excluder devices — circular metal frames measuring about three feet across covered with webbing.

I cleared my throat apologetically. “I couldn’t concentrate today; I’m sorry. This murder and all the policemen make it hard to work.”

Although Dr. Todorov took pains to speak distinctly, I had to listen carefully to understand his Eastern European accent.

“Yes, the authorities have also questioned me. They are talking to everyone. But since you were the one to discover Mr. Fleet’s body, I suppose you are being asked even more questions.”

“I’m the main suspect.” I meant to be flip, but only succeeded in sounding tense.

“Surely they can’t think such a thing, Liza. No one who knows you would even suggest it.” Todorov gave me a reassuring smile, then swiveled his chair around and peered into a glass terrarium sitting on a small side table. Two small turtles basked in a sunbeam.

“Eric Fleet was murdered just a few minutes before I found him, and I was the only one in the hallway during that time. I told them that no one went in or out any of the doors. The police have come to a very logical conclusion.”

“The police are tyrants,” he said with an unexpected intensity. He stared broodingly at his turtles. “In my native Bulgaria, I was imprisoned when I protested the poor working conditions at my hospital. I had been a successful doctor there for seven years but after my release, I was no longer allowed to practice my profession. I wasted decades of my life repairing tractors on a collective farm.”

“But you are here now.” I felt embarrassed to have raked up painful memories.

“Yes, I am here now,” he said with a half-smile, looking up. “Friendly people came to power in my country and gave me the opportunity to work as a professional once again. Of course I have been too long away from medicine to serve any more as a doctor, but I still may accomplish some small good in my role as a bureaucrat.”

Jay was being ghoulish again. I pushed aside my plate as he expounded on the details of the murder.

“The weapon was a steak knife from the cafeteria. At first the police planned to talk with everyone who ate here yesterday, but then I explained it was common to take trays back to our offices and forget to return them for days. You can find kitchen utensils in practically every office in the WTO.” Jay paused in the middle of cutting his meat and held up his knife, gravy dripping down, as if to examine it for clues. The noise level rose briefly as a small group at a nearby table finished their meal and got up to leave. A cafeteria worker quickly

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moved to clear off the dirty dishes.

"Captain Lauer made a mistake by letting the under secretary's delegation fly back to the States," I said. "They were the ones who worked with Fleet. If we detested him after knowing him for just a few days, they must have been desperate."

"He checked — they all had alibis. The security people were in the front lobby with the local guards. The rest of the staff was busy catering to the under secretary's every whim. Everyone was in full public view at the time Fleet was murdered."

"Except for me."

"And me," Jay grinned, as he speared another piece of meat. "But neither of us has a motive. And we don't have the expertise either. Captain Lauer said the murderer had to be experienced — he had to know where to put the knife. The stabbing caused almost instantaneous death, and the wound hardly bled."

"Talking about such distressing events is not appropriate at a meal," said Dr. Tordorov as he came up behind us and placed his tray down on the table.

"I'm sorry," apologized Jay, immediately contrite. "I didn't know you were friends with Eric Fleet."

Tordorov snorted. "We were not friends. Mr. Fleet was a horrible man and I regret the murderer didn't kill him earlier. When we are at the dinner table, however, we should think of our digestions." Jay and I fell silent as he began to eat.

Captain Lauer wasn't nearly so patient the third time around. He kept me for almost an hour in his makeshift office going over my previous testimony as he chain-smoked. "You were there when it happened; you must have noticed something!" he accused me. "Are you going to tell me about it or not?"

When I was finally allowed to leave, I sank down on a bench just outside the door. I was in a bind. If the Swiss police were focusing back on me, it meant they were in the dark about the murderer's identity. I watched as the committee chairman was escorted into Lauer's office by a police officer. Poor Dr. Tordorov — to have had such

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*Within minutes Captain Lauer had me telling him everything I knew about Eric Fleet — not that I could tell the police anything of interest.*

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a bad experience with police authorities in his own country, only to have to face them once again in Geneva. I could hear the policeman's voice as he began his questioning anew.

"Although we never met, I understand Mr. Fleet was a very difficult personality," Tordorov's calm, measured tones now came from inside Lauer's office. "But I will go over again what happened if you think that will help."

The captain's reply was inaudible. I got up and slowly walked down the corridor. I had another committee meeting that afternoon and was behind in my paperwork. People make fun of bureaucrats, but the truth is we work hard and accomplish a lot. When Tordorov had expressed his hope to do some good in his role, he had put into words what many of us feel deep down.

Yet as I headed back to my office, something kept niggling at the back of my mind — something that didn't quite fit. I slowed my pace, then stopped for a moment in the middle of the hallway to try and catch the thought. Nothing. I turned around and walked back to Captain Lauer's office. Poking my head in the doorway, I coughed slightly at the cigarette smoke. The captain looked up from his table.

"Dr. Tordorov?"

Captain Lauer's eyes narrowed at the interruption. "I finished questioning him, Mademoiselle. He is free to go wherever he wishes — just as you are."

Most likely he'd be in his office. Not bothering to say anything more, I went back into the hall and up two flights. Dr. Tordorov's office was halfway down the cor-

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*He looked over at me curiously, as if I had suddenly become some sort of interesting specimen to be examined under a microscope.*

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ridor to the right. I found him standing at his terrarium feeding his turtles.

"Liza, do you need something for this afternoon's committee meeting?"

"You were just in with Captain Lauer talking about Eric Fleet again." I was breathing hard from my hike up the stairs.

"It is quite unpleasant, but it appears we must all do so." Tordorov opened a small pillbox and brought something out — dead flies.

Suddenly I realized what didn't fit. "You told Captain Lauer you never met Fleet. But you did — you told both Jay and me that he was a horrible man. How would you know that if you had never met him?"

Tordorov became still for a moment, then slowly dropped several flies into the turtles' dish. "I didn't *formally* meet him. Mr. Fleet just burst into my office yesterday and started talking about your under secretary's keynote address. He never introduced himself or asked my name. He even ignored my hand when I offered to shake." Dr. Tordorov's voice was tight with anger.

"Eric Fleet was going to have the under secretary take the credit for the convention on TEDs," I said. "A premature announcement would have jeopardized the agreement's success."

"You think it would only have jeopardized the agreement? Oh no, an announcement would have *killed* the agreement! All the committee members, all the WTO delegates, they all would have listened respectfully to the under secretary and applauded his words, but they would have been secretly laughing at me. Because they all knew that when we went back to the committee once more, the members would no longer respect my leadership or be willing to follow my guidance. The entire negotiation would have failed. I would have been a failure!"

I wanted to step back from the venom in his words, but instead I took a step forward and spoke more softly. "And that's why you followed Eric Fleet down the corridor the other night. You wanted to talk to him — to convince him that the under secretary shouldn't talk about the TEDs."

Tordorov looked over at me curiously, as if I had suddenly become some sort of interesting specimen to be

examined under a microscope. I pressed on.

"I can imagine Eric Fleet didn't welcome your request; he was probably very rude. It's easy to see how it could have happened. Fleet was behaving obnoxiously; you, Dr. Tordorov, were desperate. And someone had conveniently left a cafeteria tray with the dirty dishes near by. Since you were trained as a physician, it must have been easy to stab Fleet so that he made no cry and bled so little."

"You misjudge me, Liza; it wasn't easy." His voice was bleak. "It was very uncivilized, but it was necessary to protect my work. After the many years I lost in my own country, I had this one opportunity for professional respect. But in order to get more glory for his own boss, Mr. Fleet was going to destroy it all. That, of course, I could not allow."

He continued, "When I heard you coming down the hall looking for him, I went into the connecting supply room and waited until a crowd had gathered. No one noticed me coming out."

It was then that I realized I had ventured too far into Tordorov's office. We were now in the middle of the room facing each other, and it would be difficult to back out gracefully. In fact, it would be difficult to get out at all if he didn't cooperate. His eyes followed mine as I glanced at the doorway and he reached the same conclusion.

"Poor Liza," he said. "You just wanted to find out what had happened so those policemen would stop harassing you, but that was a mistake. I must continue my work. This is my last chance, and I will not allow anyone to stop me."

Tordorov took a step forward. I took a step back.

"What Eric Fleet did was wrong," I agreed. "He was evil. We should tell the police so that everyone will learn the truth of how he was trying to destroy what we had worked on." I continued slowly backing up as he moved forward.

"That would not be very productive, Liza. I cannot work if I am locked up in prison. The authorities put me there once, and I will not go back."

I was glad to see it wasn't a knife Dr. Tordorov held in his hand, until I realized that the heavy paperweight could be just as effective a weapon. I had completely

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backed up against the wall and could feel the metal frame and the webbing of one of the turtle excluder devices bite into my back.

“You don’t have to do this, Dr. Tordorov.”

“I think I do, Liza. I’m really very sorry.”

As he raised his arm over his head, I raised both mine in reflex and came up against the TED. Acting instinctively, I grabbed on to the opposite sides of its circular metal frame and brought it down hard onto Tordorov’s upraised arm. The paperweight was knocked from his hand as the metal frame was propelled over his torso, the webbing enveloping the top half of his body. The momentum carried me forward onto Tordorov and, losing our balance, we both toppled awkwardly onto the floor.

I heard a discreet cough behind me. I looked up, breathing hard, and saw Captain Lauer in the doorway. He inhaled deeply on his Gauloise.

“I am glad to see, Mademoiselle, that my instincts about you were correct — you were the key to explaining this murder.”

“I had nothing to do with it!” I protested, scrambling to my feet.

“I never thought you did,” the captain replied. “But all the same, here we are and there is the murderer — snared in a trap just like the turtles he wished to save.”

I turned to look down at Tordorov. He was lying motionless on the floor with the TED’s frame and webbing still draped over him. His face was unnaturally pale — likely the same shade his skin would soon fade to once he was back in prison.

Several months later the U.S. government successfully defended its TEDs policy against the lawsuit brought against it. I had to testify then, just as I had to testify a few weeks later at Stefan Tordorov’s murder trial. Neither action gave me any joy.

I gave away his pet turtles to a member of the Venezuelan delegation who sat across from me in the General Council. ■

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# FRANK GOES FOR BAROQUE

**I**t started innocently enough when Frank spotted Ambassador Denise Lefevre listing down the dusty linoleum of a sixth-floor hall in Main State.

“Excuse me, Madam Ambassador. Please allow me to introduce myself. I’m Frank Lee, and I’ll be starting in the Pol/Econ Section in Guineatown next month.” The ambassador was a pinched, elderly woman. Lank hair at the nape of her neck trailed dandruff on the back of a frayed seersucker suit. She smiled blankly.

“Yes, yes ... I’ve heard good things about you. I hope you’ll be ready to hit the ground running.”

Frank paused. There was no trace of irony in her delivery. For the flicker of an instant, he considered replying, “In fact, I was planning on slowly easing myself into the job, and was hoping you’d approve a week or two of leave as soon as I arrive at post. And I assume it won’t be a problem for me to work half-days for the first few months, until I get settled in?” Instead, Frank flashed a tight smile and said as earnestly as he could: “Yes, I’m really looking forward to jumping in with both feet and hitting the ground running, as it were.”

The ambassador grinned warmly. Hearing her hoary phrase pass his lips seemed to rejuvenate her. Even the seersucker looked crisper. “Good, good. I’m looking forward to working with you.”

A few weeks later, when Frank arrived at post, he regretted not heeding the advice of a senior colleague who had warned him: “Never bid on any post with ‘Guinea’ in its name.” There was precious little with which to amuse himself as an upwardly mobile junior officer in the Pol/Econ Section. The substantive issues seemed pedestrian, and it soon became clear that only a devoted cult of two people back in Washington — a beleaguered desk officer and his maniacally micro-managing office director — ever read anything he wrote.

He began to wonder why “hit the ground crawling” had not become the department’s jargon of choice. And then he remembered the talismanic power that parroting a cliché seemed to have on the ambassador.

Proceeding cautiously at first, Frank began to lard his reporting with soggy diction. A simple “now” became “currently,” or, if he was feeling especially bold, “at this point in time.” After he realized that no one seemed to know the original English meaning of the word anyway, Frank also used (er, “utilized,” or “availed himself of”) “presently.” No one seemed to object.

Warming to his mission, Frank pressed ahead. In one memo, he substituted “prior to” for “before” in four different sentences. Instead of getting bounced back for editing by the political counselor, the memo fairly flew to the ambassador’s desk. When she graced it with a “Solid Work” — accented with a jaunty smiley face from the DCM on the



Janet Cleland

AN UPWARDLY  
MOBILE JUNIOR OFFICER  
IN A BACKWATER  
DISCOVERS THE SECRET  
TO SUCCESS.

By HANSCOM SMITH

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way back down — he felt like displaying the memo on his fridge like a grade-school triumph. Frank knew he had found a winning formula.

Suddenly, “try” expanded to “endeavor” and, on one occasion when Frank overflowed with confidence, “endeavor to try.” In a memo designed to “express strong concern” that the host government wasn’t “forward-leaning” in implementing “robust” protection of intellectual property rights, Frank urged Washington agencies to put the government’s “feet to the fire” and “cross the Rubicon” to revocation of trade preferences. If impact could be measured by applause, then Washington “end-users” were on their feet, and the ovation was thunderous. Like a shower of angry meteorites, Washington “principals” (inevitably, some idiot kept using “principles”) fell all over themselves to “impact” the situation. The timorous desk officer pleaded for consideration of all the “nuances” to the decision, although he was careful “not/not” to oppose any “emerging consensus.” The embassy was summarily authorized to counterattack with a robust IPR enforcement policy of its own. Frank felt ... rich, full-bodied, and aromatic.

At the next weekly staff meeting, the ambassador singled Frank out for special praise. “It strikes me (Frank made a subconscious note to use that one in his next decision memo) that you’ve done some very solid work on the IPR issue, Frank.” Frank beamed in gratitude, although he was becoming a bit concerned at the scatological tinge that seemed to be creeping into embassy parlance. The previous week’s CODEL had been rife with “solid” meetings and endless motorcade “movements,” at least one of which the GSO described as having gone “smoothly.” Even the DCM insisted on pronouncing “processes” as “pro-cess-ease,” a name which Frank thought evoked nothing more than a laxative.

As the clichés spewed forth with inexorable flow, the change in the mission was palpable. No longer a bureaucratic backwater struggling just to be the merest blip on the Washington “radar screen,” the embassy was emerging as a white-hot nerve center of U.S. foreign policy. Frank’s peerless way with a tired turn of phrase

attracted eager attention from his colleagues at post. As the deadline for submission of the annual Mission Program Plan loomed, the administrative counselor engaged in a breathless process of “back-and-forthing” (or was it “to-and-fro-ing”?) over how best to justify fresh funding. Frank transformed a straightforward “Post has no money” into a “Mission lacks sufficient program resources,” a net gain of five syllables.

Unsatisfied, however, Frank persevered and produced “Operating in a negative resource climate, mission agencies lack sufficient resources for implementation of program goals.” Even though he had more than quadrupled the original syllable count, Frank couldn’t be sure the sentence would produce the hoped-for largesse back in Foggy Bottom. Then, from a recent meeting with his USAID counterparts, Frank recalled the shining allure of “sustainable.” If all “development” was “sustainable,” then why not all “implementation?”

And, like a warm puppy, a State Department favorite nuzzled his ear. How could he have forgotten? “Appropriate!” The department seemed obsessed with the notion that the embassy might somehow decide to intervene with inappropriate officials. Perhaps, Frank imagined, a hapless junior officer had once delivered a human rights demarche to the minister of posts and telecommunications, and FSOs were now forever burdened with “appropriate.” In any case, the final sentence read: “Operating in a negative resource climate, mission agencies lack sufficient resources for sustainable implementation of appropriate program goals.” The administrative counselor squealed with glee when she saw Frank’s handiwork and Washington duly authorized a 10-percent budget increase, further embellishing Frank’s aura of memo-writing mojo.

Soon his influence was everywhere. The embassy cafeteria no longer sold “diet soda,” but did a brisk business in “low-calorie carbonated beverages.” If you asked the counter staff for the specials, they’d chirp cheerfully: “In terms of sandwiches, we have tuna and Spam. In terms of burgers, we have cheese and Spam ...” Frank caught himself referring to his own car as “my privately-owned vehicle” and even, on one disturbing occasion, pronouncing the “h” in “vehicle.” And in a late-night revelation, he remembered that his name was not actually “Frank,” but “Franklin,” and that Franklin was, in fact, one of his middle names. So he became “J. Franklin Lee,” and secretly toyed with the idea of converting “Lee” to “Leigh.”

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*Hanscom Smith, an FSO since 1990, has served in Yaounde, Copenhagen, Phnom Penh and Washington, D.C. He is now an economic officer in Bangkok.*

*Frank couldn't be sure the sentence would produce  
the hoped-for largesse back in Foggy Bottom.*

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Only the Defense Attaché's Office seemed immune to his powers, probably because the DATT once said "POTUS and FLOTUS are in CONUS" with a straight face. Frank was, however, attracted to DAO's seemingly bottomless supply of laser pointers, and found they unlocked the gateway to a dizzying world of increasingly elaborate Power Point presentations to serve as glitzy vehicles for his jargon. The embassy soon resembled a summer evening in the Loire Valley, as Power Point sound-and-light extravaganzas dazzled meeting participants into submission.

Frank's passion for foggy phrases had a particularly pronounced effect on Amb. Lefevre. He was soon "tasked" ("assigned" has the same number of syllables, but suffers the relative disadvantage of being an actual word) to write all of her speeches. His grandiose mangling of the English language scratched some sort of inner itch for the ambassador, who took to styling herself as a cut-rate Margaret Thatcher. Her coif grew steadily in volume, and the frayed seersucker and scuffed flats were replaced with blinding black patent leather pumps and stiff wool suits festooned with brass buttons. Although singularly inappropriate for the tropical climate, the woolen armor induced rivulets of sweat that resolved the ambassador's dandruff problem.

The ambassador began calling press conferences to announce even the most mundane of new initiatives from Washington, hectoring the press into obeisance with her hortatory renditions of Frank's prose. At a joint press conference with the foreign minister, the moderator tried to cut her off with a gentle "I'm afraid we've run out of time, so I must stop you there, Madam Ambassador." "No, you must not!" she trilled. "Robust implementation of appropriately sustainable initiatives will impact all of us, now and forever." "On the margins" of the press conference after her speech, the ambassador "expressed regret" that her "tour d'horizon" was so cruelly "nipped in the bud." I had all of my "ducks in a row," she lamented.

Too late, Frank realized he had created the proverbial monster. The ambassador decreed that, "henceforth," the

Pol/Econ Section would be known as the "Political and Economic Analysis and Policy Reform Implementation Division" (PEAPRID), and the counselor made a petition, speedily granted, to become the "senior PEAPRID chief." A few days later, he overcame the DCM's initial resistance and succeeded in adding "Regional" to his title, despite the fact that he didn't even have a constituent post under his jurisdiction. Frank himself morphed from "Pol/Econ Officer" to "Foreign Policy Implementation Specialist." In the linguistic megalomania sweeping the embassy, he took small solace that his EER testified to the fact that he had performed all of his duties "with aplomb," single-handedly saved the American Republic from certain demise, and, indeed, "walked on water."

The last straw (Frank didn't even have the energy to dredge up "the straw that broke the camel's back," which would have offered a nice "segue" to a "camel's nose under the tent," particularly loved by NEA "types") came when the Senior Regional Political and Economic Analysis and Policy Reform Implementation Division Chief changed "happy" to "glad" in what would have been yet another robust policy memo. He should have cared that he'd lost a syllable and "reclama-ed" the decision since he had vital "equities" at stake. But he didn't. Frank longed for simple, plain-spoken language once again.

At that moment, Amb. Lefevre burst into his office. Afternoon sunlight shone through her bouffant and sparkled on her brass-buttoned epaulets. "Franklin," she announced, "the strength of my work here has led me to be named the first career ambassador to France in living memory. I hereby invite you to join me and serve as my speechwriter."

Sweet salvation! The tortuous clauses and impenetrably layered tenses of French presented a virgin field on which to do linguistic battle. After all, the natural turgidity of the French language only enhanced its value as a target for abuse. Small flecks of foam formed on his lips as he contemplated the damage he could inflict on la belle langue française.

His thoughts raced ahead to the prospects of Paris. Perhaps there the euphonious sound of "J. Franklin Leigh" might pass muster... ■



# A COUNSELOR IN ROME

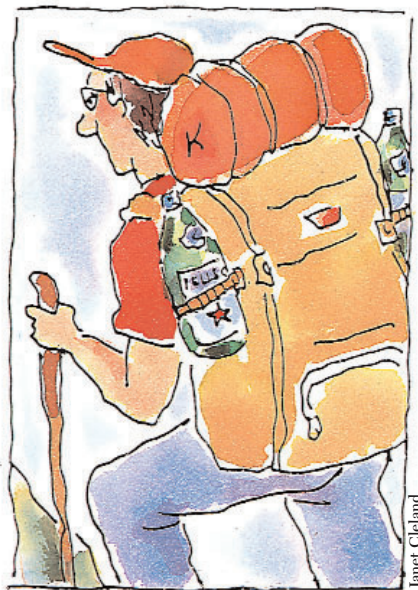
I love my ambassador, thought John Lang. That's not the same as saying I love my job. It was six in the morning, on a day in April, and the sun was beginning to shine on the rooftops. Lang was doing his fourth loop around Piazza Navona. As he ran he had the place to himself, save for the crazy old fellow who always came out of the bar when he ran by, to wave at him and yell "Ho-ho-ho!" No matter. What mattered was running, and spring. And love.

In 10 minutes more, he was back in his apartment on the top floor of the oldest building on Via del Governo Vecchio. The building's dirty stone facade bore the date 1490. Inside, though, his apartment had been lately redone, and it was bright with the early sunshine now, while the street below remained in shadow.

Lang had come to Rome from Quito a year ago, to head the embassy's political section. The admin people had wanted him to move into the big apartment on Via Pinciana that political counselors had occupied for decades. No, said Lang. His wife had left him two years before, he had no children, and he did not want so big a place. Let the consul general take it. Eventually she did. The place on Governo Vecchio had only one bedroom, but it had a large living room and a good-sized dining room, just right for small dinners which were the only entertaining he did at home.

A dozen years earlier, Lang had spent three years in Rome as a vice consul. His Italian had become — and it still was — fluent. He had gotten to know the country and its politics, and he had acquired a wide range of Italian friends. A number of them were fellow hikers and climbers, with whom he had spent many Sunday excursions in the Apennines. Some of these hikers, he found when he returned to the embassy as counselor, were now prominent persons. Valerio Arata, a career magistrate, had recently become Procurator General of the Republic. Pietro Ardito, an unassuming man who possessed a thousand acres of pastures and vineyards and the title of Marchese di Monteleone, was now president of the association of large agriculturists; his wife Maria Teresa had just published her second book on the Etruscans. Franco Fioret, an expert climber and a member of the Society of Jesus, was the Substitute Secretary of State in the Vatican. It was fun to come back and pick up again with these friends, and Lang was all the more content when he found that the high ridge of Pizzo Deta and the beech woods under Monte Autore were as unspoiled as ever.

In the city, on weekdays, Lang had worked hard this past year at befriending members of parliament, top journalists and writers, office directors in the foreign ministry. His six subordinate officers were competent and assiduous. Lang thought his number two, Jane Farnham, might be the very best



Janet Cleland

AN FSO HAS AN  
UNEXPECTEDLY  
FULFILLING SECOND  
TOUR IN THE  
ETERNAL CITY.

BY PETER BRIDGES

## F O C U S

Foreign Service officer of Class 1. The department had recently complimented the embassy, with some warmth, on its political reporting and analysis. Lang was satisfied with his first year as the counselor for political affairs.

He had, however, encountered problems in the embassy. They did not include the ambassador. Her name was Sally Lamkin and for 10 years she had represented a prosperous part of Connecticut in the House of Representatives — and had been a leading force among the Italian-American members of the House; her mother, who had raised her after Mr. Lamkin abandoned his family, was a Caracciolo from Calabria. Congresswoman Lamkin had been rewarded for her services to the Republican cause, by a Republican president who gave her the Rome embassy a year before John Lang arrived there. She came to Rome alone; she had had loves but never a husband. She quickly decided she liked Lang's frankness, which seemed to be coupled with both a good understanding of Italian matters and a sort of cold objectivity that she had not often seen in Washington.

The deputy chief of mission, Fred Dustman, was another matter. Dustman had been consul in Florence, Italian desk officer in the department, consul general in Milan — and he was going nowhere in Political-Military Affairs in the department when he convinced a friend in Human Resources to put him on the list of candidates for the job as Ambassador Lamkin's DCM. He had more Italian experience than the others, so she picked him. For two years now he had sat in his large office in the Palazzo Margherita, administering an oversized embassy that contained attachés from 30 federal agencies. He complained audibly that his burdens were such that he had no time to get out and see Italians. He also made

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*Peter Bridges entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and served in Panama, Moscow, Prague, Rome, Mogadishu and Washington. After his second tour of duty in Rome, as Deputy Chief of Mission in 1981-84, he was named ambassador to Somalia and served there from 1984 to 1986. Since retirement from government service, he has served as executive director of the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, manager for international affairs of Shell Oil Company and the resident representative of the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development in Prague. He has published two books, Safirka: An American Envoy and Pen of Fire: John Moncure Daniel, and around four dozen articles, some in the Foreign Service Journal.*

clear that he did not much care for Romans, although he was living in their city. Florentines and Lombards, he did not mind saying, were finer and more honest people. What he did not say was that his Italian was at best halting, and that he had no more friends among Florentines or Lombards than he did in Rome. Dustman and his rather awkward wife liked best to stay home evenings and watch a video or two. Amb. Lamkin did not, Dustman knew, dote on him. At staff meetings he sometimes sensed that she was mocking, if always very gently, things he said.

He was soon jealous of Lang, who had no wife; who spoke fine Italian; who, it seemed, had quickly gotten to know everyone who counted in the capital — and whom the ambassador clearly doted on.

John Lang was no fool. He could suffer if he got caught between the ambassador's liking for him and the DCM's mistrust. After Lang had been in Rome for a couple of months, Sally Lamkin began calling him into her office for information and advice. The approach to her office was through the large room where the ambassador's secretary sat. The secretary was Marie Takala, who had served with Lang in Prague. She was a good friend ... and to the left of her desk a door opened into Fred Dustman's office, and the door was usually open. If he liked, Dustman could see Lang going into Sally Lamkin's office, and Lang had no doubt that Dustman did see. John Lang therefore took pains to keep the DCM well briefed on his conversations with the ambassador. At least he did so until one Friday afternoon in February.

It was a dreary day for Rome, cold and cloudy. Lang walked into the ambassador's opulent office, which had been a ballroom when, a century earlier, the palace had belonged to Margherita, Italy's queen mother.

"Good afternoon, Madame Ambassador. What's up?"

"Sit down, John, and tell me all I need to know about Italy's relations with Korea. This instruction says I have to weigh in, in person, with the foreign minister. I would rather that you did so, but orders are orders. So tell me what I don't know — but for God's sake don't tell me anything I don't really need to know."

He talked for 10 minutes. Fine, she said; just what I needed; thanks. She looked at him, and he at her. Sally Lamkin, Lang thought, was a really beautiful woman. She was, he knew, just his age, 42. She was blonde, slim; not tall. When she smiled, and she was smiling at him now, she dazzled him.

*She quickly decided she liked Lang's frankness, which seemed to be coupled with a good understanding of Italian matters.*

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Sally Lamkin looked at John Lang, fit and trim and handsome. He was smiling, too.

"John," she said, "Sometime I think we would do well to have a talk outside the office. I do like to escape from bureaucracy sometimes."

"And so do I. ... I know how full your schedule is. You wouldn't, by chance, be free for dinner tomorrow evening? Saturday, I mean."

"I know tomorrow's Saturday. I can ask Marie to check my schedule, but — yes, I'm sure I'm free. Shall we do it?"

And they did. A security officer was supposed to accompany the ambassador whenever she left Villa Taverna, her residence set in seven acres of walled gardens. But there was nothing scheduled for her, that Saturday evening. At eight o'clock Lang drove up to the villa gate and was instantly admitted by the guards. Ten minutes later he and Sally Lamkin drove out.

Lang had thought carefully where they might have dinner with less chance that the American ambassador would be recognized. He settled on the Osteria da Nerone, on the hill above the Colosseum. It was much frequented by Americans who, he thought, were less likely to recognize her, or anyway to comment on her presence, than people in a restaurant where most guests were Romans. It was a warm evening for February so they sat outside and no one paid attention. The waiters recognized him; he ate there often. Their greeting for the lady seemed simple politeness. The two Americans had antipasto and spaghetti alle vongole and broccoletti and almost a liter of the house's white wine.

They talked of nothing serious. Sally Lamkin said how happy she was to get away from the round of diplomatic dinners. John Lang said that he could stomach the diplomatic life six days a week, but he tried to keep weekends, or anyway Sundays, free.

He looked at her and said, "You know, I live near Piazza Navona. What would you say to a coffee at the Bar Navona?" "Fine," she said, smiling.

He parked his Lancia in Via del Governo Vecchio, a few yards from where he lived. They had their coffee in Rome's grandest piazza, and walked back toward the car.

"Would you like to see my modest apartment? No Villa Taverna, to be sure." "Why ... yes, thanks. Just for a minute."

In 10 minutes, or it may have been 20, they were in bed. He thought afterward, she is glorious. She thought, he is fine, strong, good. They slept then, and at dawn on Sunday he woke her and took her home. He was committed to a hike that day, and went with six friends to climb Monte Navegna. That afternoon, back in Rome, he called her.

"I hope you do not think I am guilty of disrespect to the Chief of Mission."

"You are my good counselor. My good friend. My buddy."

"If I am violating laws and regulations and protocol ... I want to do it again."

"Me, too."

The question was, when. The next week passed quickly. The ambassador told Marie Takala that she thought she had been overscheduled recently. She was not blaming Marie, but henceforth she wanted to keep Saturday evenings and Sundays free. That shouldn't be too hard, Marie said; other ambassadors, and prominent Italians, certainly did all they could to keep time free for themselves and their families.

Over the next two months, Lang and his ambassador spent every Saturday night together, in his apartment, except for one weekend when she had to visit Turin and another when she had a speaking engagement in Naples. On Sundays, Lang took her to the mountains with his friends. Her Italian was not bad, and she was a strong hiker. Lang wondered what people might be saying about the two of them, but he said nothing to her about that.

Now it was April. The cruelest month, Lang thought as he dressed. He ate a quick breakfast, and skimmed the pages of the *Corriere della Sera* and *La Stampa*. He opened the window and took a long look at the street below. No one waiting, so far as he could see. Well, he hoped not. It was 7:15; time to go to work.

*“Everyone in this embassy knows, Americans and Italians alike. Even I know, and nobody likes to share confidences with the DCM.”*

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Lang varied his routes through the city, for security reasons and for pleasure. Today, as he walked through the piazza in front of the Pantheon, he thought of the annual efficiency reports due on his staff. He needed to complete them this week. It would not be too hard. He had done as the book said, carefully keeping a folder on each officer and reviewing their performance with each, several times. He had some hope that his report on Jane Farnham might get her promoted to senior ranks. But what sort of report was Fred Dustman going to do on him? The DCM had given him no clue.

It was just after nine when Dustman summoned Lang. Dustman shut both doors to his office, pointed Lang to a place at his long conference table, and sat down across from him.

“John,” he said. “You know it is all coming out. I mean about you and the ambassador. I have told the regional security officer not to say anything to the department, but I think they know. And I suspect everyone in this embassy knows, Americans and Italians alike. Even I know, and nobody likes to share confidences with the DCM. It is a bad situation. Certainly if you were married to the lady you couldn’t be here, since the anti-nepotism laws preclude one spouse supervising the other. You know all that. I don’t suppose you realize, or care, what kind of position you have put me in. What should I do? I’ll tell you what I’m going to do. I am going to write an efficiency report that rates you very low on discretion and judgment, and you are going to agree with it. You may want to ask for a transfer.”

“Fred,” said John Lang. “Do whatever you want to. You are, you know, the perfect bureaucrat. As for me, I’ll consider my best course.” And he walked out. But he knew Dustman was right; he could not stay in this embassy.

As the week progressed, Lang completed his staff’s efficiency reports, in between conversations at the foreign ministry and the drafting of many cables and successive luncheons with an editor, a deputy trade minister, a senator, and Italy’s best political analyst. Jane Farnham glowed when he gave her the report he had done on her; his other officers seemed pleased enough.

On Friday, Lang told the DCM that he wanted to take a week of leave. There were no pressing matters, and Farnham could handle anything that came up. Dustman had done his damning report on him, and it had gone forward to the ambassador to add her reviewing statement — when she returned; she had been called back to the department for consultations, and had left the previous day. She and John Lang had seen each other only briefly before her departure, that Thursday morning in the embassy.

Dustman agreed to his taking a week off, but added, “What then, John?”

“I’ll let you know.”

At ten on Saturday morning, at Roma Tiburtina, a sturdy-looking hiker bought a ticket for Arsoli and boarded the Pescara express. He was clearly off on more than a Saturday excursion; he had a large backpack with a sleeping bag on top. Lang had decided to do something he had long dreamed of, a three-day walk southeastward along the ridges of the Apennines, starting at the Arsoli station and ending on the summit of Monte Viglio, the highest peak in the Lazio region. From there, he would come down to the village of Filetino, to take a bus for Rome. If he reached Filetino too late in the day — buses generally left villages for Rome in early morning — he could always spend another night in the woods. Before he left home, he phoned Marie Takala and told her his plan, just so someone in the embassy would know. No need, he said, to tell the ambassador (who was due back from Washington later that day); he would come see her when he returned.

It was past noon when he got off the train at the little Arsoli station, and started tramping down the road. The first five miles, he knew, were all on road; no help for it. Before two o’clock, though, he had reached the three-monk monastery of the Madonna dei Bisognosi, a thousand meters above sea level. From there he started up the faint path along the rising ridge. He passed through oaks, then pastures that alternated with

## F O C U S

### *He took a two-hour detour to walk down to the village of Cappadocia for two liters of San Pellegrino.*

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copses of huge stout beeches. Sundown was near when he reached the high point, the Cima di Vallevona, eighteen hundred meters above the sea. He gathered wood, and made a fire below the ridge and out of the wind. His dinner was simple, and not long after dark he was asleep on the mountain.

The second day he started out at dawn. As he had expected, there was no water along his way, and he took a two-hour detour to walk down to the village of Cappadocia for two liters of San Pellegrino. That evening he reached his intended goal, the high round top of Monte Cotento, and camped there. The weather was holding; the stars were brilliant. It was a good omen for his future. But what future?

The next day he reached the summit of Monte Viglio, 2,156 meters, in early afternoon, after clambering gingerly across the steep pitch called the Gendarme. He had done it! Now for Filetino ... Another hiker was coming up, someone in a red wind-breaker climbing fast. A woman with blonde hair. Lang sat down and waited.

She said, "I thought I'd do Viglio now, since I can't be sure when I'll get back to Italy."

"I'm leaving. You don't need to."

"We're leaving together. Basta, per ora. You can marry me at the National Cathedral. They have an hour open next month."

And that settled that. ■

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# THROUGH THE GLASS

I'm not quite sure how I came to be here, in a crowded, dingy room in the U.S. embassy, staring through a thick sheet of glass at an American girl, not much older than me. She shouts through the glass, introducing herself in accented Russian. She is the vice consul, she says, and she has some questions for me. Questions for me? What can she possibly ask that I'm not already asking myself? My palms are sweating, and I see my reflection in the glass, distorted. I see myself clutching a thick envelope of papers. I see my coat with the fur collar — normally I think it flatters my figure, the shape of my face, but somehow, reflected in the glass, it looks dirty, a bit disheveled. I see my makeup, so carefully applied just a few hours ago, but already looking mask-like. I'm sure this vice consul can see my lips shaking as I fix my face into a smile. And I wonder again, how did I get here? Why am I here, staring past my reflection at some American girl in a crisp business outfit? Is she staring back at me? Or is she simply admiring her own reflection on the other side of the glass?

It was seven months ago today when I celebrated my 20th birthday with a group of university friends. We went downtown, bought some drinks from a street

vendor, and wandered through Red Square, laughing loudly and enjoying the warm evening air. The poplars were just beginning to bloom, and the parks were full of young people like us, out enjoying the night. We happened past a shop with a sign in the window: "Internet Café." It was Olga's idea to go in, just for a laugh, she said. She's studying computers at MGU, just like me, so it was easy enough for us to find the Internet bride sites. We laughed as we read the entries

— so brash, so pathetic, so obviously untrue! Did anyone truly fall for this stuff? So she entered her own application into the registry. Of course, none of it was true, but she made us all laugh. Next it was Nina's turn. "Laugh if you want," she said, "but I don't think it's a joke. Who wouldn't want to marry an American?" Next was Lena's turn, and the mood had turned serious. We all helped her think of the right phrases, anything that could help catch an American's eye. Then my turn came. Name: Ivanova, Valentina Alexandrovna. Age: 20. Brown hair. Green eyes. Computer science major. Never been married. Down the list I went, trying to explain to this computer exactly who I was.

When we were done, we went back out into the city. The air had turned cold while we'd sat inside, and we shivered in our miniskirts. Olga raised her can of beer in a mock toast and said, "May we all celebrate Valentina's next birthday in America."



Janet Cleland

A RUSSIAN GIRL  
CONTEMPLATES  
MORE THAN JUST  
MARRIAGE AS SHE  
APPLIES FOR A VISA.

BY DONNA GORMAN

*This American vice consul, when she married, would marry her equal, would marry for love.*

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The American girl had a badge around her neck, but I couldn't see the name that was printed on it. She told me to raise my right hand and repeat after her, and so it was that I took an oath to tell the truth. I saw a ring sparkling on her left hand, sending flashes of light my way. She asked for my name, and I told her. She looked down at my passport and nodded, satisfied. She asked for the name of my fiancée, and I told her: Michael Evans. When she repeated the name, it sounded so foreign to my ears that for a moment, I thought she'd made a mistake. How could one name sound so different each time it was said? Michael. Mai-cull. My-call. Different every time. "How did you and Michael meet?"

When Michael Evans first sent me an e-mail, I rushed to tell my friends. Lena translated the letter while the rest of us sat around the table, eyes glued to that sheet of paper. I was secretly thrilled that I'd been chosen, and chosen first, but I pretended to think it funny, scoffing at each new bit of information. "Dear Valentina," he'd written. "My name is Michael Evans. I am 38 years old, and I work in a bank in Los Angeles ..." Los Angeles! Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Malibu, Rodeo Drive ... my friends and I called all of these locations to mind, and before I knew quite what I was doing, I wrote an e-mail back. My English was practically nonexistent, but Lena helped translate the ideas that the rest of us put to paper. We hit "send."

Every evening after school, we met to read Michael's latest letter. He wrote every day, without fail, flowery letters whose meaning was lost on me without Lena. And every night, we wrote him back, my friends and I.

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*Donna Gorman is a free-lance writer who is currently posted in Almaty with her RSO husband, Bart, and their son Shay. Before her husband joined the Foreign Service, Donna worked as an advertising executive in Los Angeles. She has a master's degree in Slavic languages and literature.*

One day, Lena squealed out loud as she read: "He's coming to see us! He's coming to see you! He'll be here in four weeks. What will you wear?"

Four weeks later, true to his word, he came to Moscow. We spent three days together, and without my friends standing by, I couldn't understand what he was telling me. When he talked, I smiled brightly and tried not to notice his hair, thinning on top and gray around the edges. I tried not to look at his body, 18 years older than my own and showing its age. I focused on his eyes, grayish and flat behind glasses, and I smiled harder so I wouldn't cry. What was I doing here? Where were my friends? What was this man saying to me? We toured Moscow together each afternoon, and the heat was stifling. The poplars were shedding thick, white, cottony pukh — Moscow's summertime snow. The fluff made my eyes sting, made it hard to breathe. I explained to Michael how, during Soviet times, Stalin ordered his city gardeners to plant fast-growing trees to beautify Moscow. The gardeners came up with a plan to plant female poplars, the fastest-growing trees they knew. But every summer the females drop this snowy fluff, and no one knows what to do about it. Everywhere, people sneezing, coughing, covered with pukh. Michael didn't cough once. But I couldn't breathe.

I took him to meet my mother on the last day. She primped and preened and fussed over him at our cramped table. He ate seconds, he ate thirds, and still she forced more food on him. She fanned herself with her apron — the stifling heat of Moscow's summer lay heavy over our table — and she poured him shot after shot of the vodka she'd been hiding under her bed, waiting for a special occasion. When dinner was finally over, Michael reached into his pocket and pulled out a small box. He said something I couldn't understand and pried open the box, revealing a shiny golden ring set with a tiny stone. I stared at this stranger, not knowing what to say. My mother kicked me hard under the table. "Da, da, da! Yes, she will!" she exclaimed, and joyfully poured more vodka.

*Continued on page 39*



# ...IN ACTION

## Refusing to Reverse a Visa Decision

This year's Christian Herter Award for dissent by a senior-level Foreign Service officer was given to four members of the Embassy Moscow Consular Section: Consul General James Warlick, Deputy Consul General June Kinsman, Consul Kim Marie Sonn, and Vice Consul Natasha Franceschi. By refusing to reverse a controversial visa decision, these officers stood firm in their commitment to uphold the law and protect U.S. security interests, in the face of strong pressure to disregard both. Consul General James Warlick (right), is shown here giving Secretary of State Colin Powell a tour of the Embassy Moscow Consular Section, accompanied by Ambassador Alexander Vershbow.



## A Win for the Rule of Law

Dean Kaplan was a first-tour officer at Embassy Abuja when he questioned the U.S. government decision to accept the Nigerian government's offer to hand over four criminal suspects during a special 48-hour window of opportunity. The handover bypassed judicial extradition procedures, and Kaplan was vocal in his opinion that expediency in the area of law enforcement could not be reconciled with the mission's commitment to help Nigeria build greater respect for the rule of law. His dissent was instrumental in the eventual Washington decision to urge reform toward legal extraditions and not to accept future offers that did not follow legal procedures. By 2002, the first judicial extradition from Nigeria had been accomplished. Kaplan is pictured here (left) in Kaduna, Nigeria.



## Lending a Helping Hand in Greece

Bonnie Miller is a psychotherapist and an educator who has been assisting battered women and victims of human trafficking for many years. She is being honored by AFSA for making a difference in the lives of countless women and children in Greece through her courageous work combating human trafficking, and for her work on behalf of children with learning disabilities and the organizations that assist them. She is shown here with her husband, U.S. Ambassador to Greece Tom Miller, at a school for children with physical handicaps in Athens. The Millers arranged for donations of dozens of wheelchairs for the children of this school.



## A Lifetime of Advocacy for Foreign Service Families

Mette Beecroft is being honored in 2003 with a special AFSA achievement award celebrating over 33 years of service to the Foreign Service community. She has been, and continues to be, a strong and successful advocate for Foreign Service families. She played a vital role in the creation of the Family Liaison Office and the broadening of its mission over the years. She is shown here in October 2001, when she was president of the American Associates of the Foreign Service Worldwide, with Mrs. Alma Powell opening the AAFSW Bookfair.



*He wrote every day, without fail, flowery letters whose meaning was lost on me.*

---

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*Continued from page 37*

Michael smiled, relieved, and kissed me hard. Sweat from his forehead dripped onto my cheek.

And I was engaged.

“How did you and Michael meet?” she continued in Russian.

I wanted to tell my story to the American vice consul, to tell her how my friends wrote the letters and my mother said “yes,” while I coughed and sneezed and the poplars shed their fluffy seeds. But I didn’t know where to start. So when she asked how we met, I smiled my bright smile and replied simply, “on the Internet!”

She frowned slightly and made a note in my file. “How many times have you seen each other?”

“Just once. For three days. But I have all of these letters —”

She cut me off with a quick wave of her hand, her ring glinting under the harsh fluorescent lights. “Thank you, but I don’t need to see those.” Still I clutched that envelope, useless now, and damp with sweat. “Do you speak English?”

“A little,” I lied.

“Does he speak Russian?”

I shook my head no.

“How do you communicate?”

Again, I thought of telling her about my friend Lena, the English translator, about my mother who kicked me under the table and said “yes” for me. But I was too embarrassed. This girl, this American girl, would she understand? Would she laugh? Was she perhaps in love right now, with her very own American? Would she go home tonight and laugh with him and tell him about her day, tell him about this girl who couldn’t speak English but had a whole packet of letters from a man she’d met just once? This American vice consul, when she married, would marry her equal, would marry for love. She wouldn’t

think about her future, about her children’s future. Her mother wouldn’t push her, saying, “Think of your family, Valentina. Think of the opportunity this gives us.” My brain was spinning, and I couldn’t answer her question. She looked at me closely, through the glass, and some glimmer of recognition seemed to cross her face. I opened my mouth, but no answer came out.

I closed my mouth and she looked back at my file. When she looked up again, she asked in a soft voice, so soft I could barely hear her through the glass, “Are you aware that Michael has invited three other women to the States on fiancée visas, but he’s sent them all back?”

My vision narrowed. All I could see was that thick pane of glass, with the vice consul behind it and my reflection still in it. “No,” my reflection said. “No, I didn’t know. Does it matter?”

“Does it matter to you?” she asked.

I thought again of my mother. Of my friends. Of the poplar dust that choked me every summer. I pictured Los Angeles. Hollywood. Malibu. I imagined my friends coming to visit me. I’d casually show them the sights as we drove through town. “Oh,” I’d remark indifferently, “I almost forgot to point out Rodeo Drive. Michael and I were there just last weekend.”

I watched my face in the reflection as it stretched into that same big smile. I heard my own voice say to the American vice consul, “Of course it doesn’t matter. I love him.”

She stared at me and I at her. I kept my smile frozen neatly in place while the seconds passed. I waited for her to tell me that no, she was sorry, but she couldn’t give me a visa today. I would thank her politely, of course, gather my purse and my grimy envelope of letters and head back outside, to where my friends were waiting across the street. She would set my file aside and call the next woman forward, forgetting all about me. I smiled, waiting for all of this to happen, but she just looked at me, silent.

She fidgeted with her badge while she watched me.

## F O C U S

### *I saw my reflection in the glass, still smiling at me.*

She spun her ring around on her finger, once, twice. She looked down at the ring pensively, and when she looked up, I thought she would say something to me. But she just sighed, picked up her pen, made a notation, and pushed a paper under the glass. Our hands didn't touch. "Congratulations," she said in a quiet voice. "Your visa will be ready this afternoon at 2 p.m. Please show this paper when you return to the embassy." She picked up my file from her desk, adding, "Good luck in America." And she walked away.

I stood for a moment, looking at the space where she'd been. I wanted to ask her about America, to ask her

about herself. I wanted to know if she was engaged too, and if this is what it was supposed to feel like. I wanted to ask: what do I do now? But she was already gone, and anyway, I didn't have the words for those questions.

I saw my reflection in the glass, still smiling at me. I straightened out my crooked collar and wound my scarf tightly around my neck. I picked up my packet of letters and checked to make sure my own small ring was still firmly on my finger. I turned away from the glass, away from the space where the vice consul had been, and headed back out into Moscow, where the air was already chilly with the onset of winter and my friends were circling impatiently, waiting to hear my news. ■

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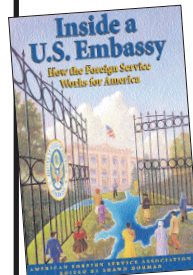


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# NITA AND THE FIRST NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

**T**he Buddha never met an ambassador's wife, yet he comprehended that life is rooted in suffering. This is only one example of his perspicacity.

Before narrating the unfortunate incident of the 150 Cats of Labor and the All-Night Full

Moon Residence Rave, I feel obligated to inform my hon-

ored reader about the circumstances of my humble narrative. My name is Nita, and I am a cook at the residence of the U.S. ambassador. As such, I am situated far from the ambassador's office, which means that the gossip and other news of importance are often intolerably late. Still, I am an important link in the chain of humble laborers of this embassy, and equally dedicated to the attempt to control our well-meaning if headstrong American masters and their families and prevent them from losing face.

I am mindful of the many contributions of those fortunate and brave enough to have preceded me into the homes of the American diplomats. During my long apprenticeship in the ambassador's kitchen under my aunt, my ears were filled with chronicles, exploration and analysis of our Americans' lamentable ignorance of certain truths as revealed by the Buddha. Especially memorable was the assessment of the Honorable Tontai, beloved to all for his twin achievements as a

plumber and a Buddhist social theologian. Tontai pointed out that the concept of Right Speech, perhaps the most important of the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Paths, with its emphasis on abstention from telling lies, harsh and abusive language, idle gossip, and backbiting, is essentially at odds with the job of a modern diplomat as practiced in our world. May I suggest that we do not give them sufficient credit for the difficulty of their situation?

This is particularly the case with our Mrs. Ambassador.

I feel she has her heart in the right place. I found her master's thesis in art history (which I had an opportunity to examine in the cleaning process resulting from the decision to pack it for shipment in the same box as Mr. Ambassador's beloved maple syrup) to show an active and inquisitive mind. However, experts in pre-Raphaelite line drawing are sadly underappreciated here, and it is therefore somewhat natural that she should get herself mixed up in an inauspicious, if well-intentioned, scheme with untoward consequences.

His Excellency, the ambassador, by contrast, is apparently lacking in cultural refinement: he puts ketchup on his eggs and has an unfortunate aversion to our national cuisine when it is prepared with the appropriate amount of chili peppers. Yet, the gardeners, maids, security staff and I grow fond of him, as his unprepossessing presence inexplicably keeps his family under control. So, it was with apprehension that we heard the



MRS. AMBASSADOR  
GETS MIXED UP IN A  
WELL-INTENTIONED  
SCHEME WITH BIZARRE  
CONSEQUENCES.

BY DAVID MCAULEY

## F O C U S

news one sultry morning in May of his imminent two-month departure to attend to his duties as president of the American Fly-Fishing Enthusiasts' Association.

Events moved with the speed of a Peace Corps volunteer to a buffet table. The day after Mr. Ambassador's departure, Mrs. Ambassador was in the small receiving room with Mrs. Williamson. Sixteen-year-old Fawn and her 12-year-old brother Cassidy were at school, and I had settled in for a morning of contemplative papaya-chopping when Mrs. Ambassador came into the kitchen.

"Nita, please," she said, holding up two fingers. "Two ... coffee ... cups. Understand?"

To be honest, I have not shown Mrs. Ambassador the true level of my mastery of English.

I nodded my head with the socially appropriate level of servitude.

"One cup ... black ... you know black?" she asked.

"Yah, ..." I said. "Black ... coffee."

"O.K.," she said. "One ... cup ... black ... and ... one ... cup ... with milk. O.K., understand?"

"Uhhh," I said, affirmatively. She returned to Mrs. Williamson.

It only takes a moment to set up a coffee maker, so I was able to quickly get into position near the small receiving room door to document their remarks.

"They just have one terrible problem and all," Mrs. Williamson said. "I mean, there are some perfectly nice young men trying to get an eco-tourism operation started and all. They are doing the whole thing out of bamboo, I mean, bamboo everything, walls, floors, dining rooms. They'd do bamboo pillows and all if they could, I mean. It's very charming, really."

"So what is this problem?" Mrs. Ambassador asked.

"I mean, the rats and all," Mrs. Williamson said. "Just so many. I mean, everywhere. I saw a young German lady leap the bamboo counter top and hurl an entire set of darling bamboo beer steins off the back of the bar at a family of them. They're everywhere. And poison is so expensive and all, and using poison would really be against their principles; I mean, eco-tourism is all natural, right?"

---

*David McAuley, an English teacher and husband of Vientiane DCM Susan M. Sutton, has worked for the State Department in London, Bucharest, Chisinau and Washington. No ambassadors' wives were harmed in the making of this story.*

I could hear the ghostly sigh of the coffee maker completing its duty, so I had to retreat. I arranged the second-best cups, poured, and walked into the room to serve.

"I don't understand," Mrs. Ambassador said. "Why do you need to bring cats to them? Why don't they have their own cats already? Thank you, Nita: black for Mrs. Williamson."

"Because they've used them already and all. For food, I mean," Mrs. Williamson said.

"Eeeewww," Mrs. Ambassador said, not unreasonably.

"Don't be that way," Mrs. Williamson said. "They're poor, very poor, after all. It's heartbreaking just to see the children sometimes. That's why they need this eco-tourism project to work. And that's why I need you."

Thus did Mrs. Williamson entangle Mrs. Ambassador in the plan of the 150 Cats of Labor. It was Mrs. Williamson's plan to take in as many strays as she could, rent a truck and driver, and deliver her feline cargo to her friends in the eco-tourism business. On its face, the plan was levelheaded enough, as our capital is overburdened with pitiful strays and the cost of renting a truck is minimal for a group of wealthy foreigners.

But the difficulties were also obvious, as Mrs. Williamson knew. Trapping even the leanest and hungriest cat is a time- and labor-intensive process. Trapping 150, especially if you are a foreign guest in our society and eager to escape unfavorable attention, takes time. While you search for your 50th cat, your 100th cat, or your 150th cat, you need a place to put your first, second, and etc., cats. The place must be isolated and free from prying eyes and wagging tongues. It must be well secured and well guarded. The ambassador's residence, she calculated, is the ideal spot. But for Mrs. Williamson, there was one drawback to the residence: Mr. Ambassador already lived there. Now, although the ambassador tolerates Mrs. Williamson's presence, he still remembers the incident in the large reception room with the string quartet, when Mrs. Williamson interrupted a violin solo to announce that the embassy's money would be better spent on condoms for local teenagers. She later apologized to the ambassador, but certain things, once said, cannot be unsaid. Thus we see one of the advantages of Right Speech.

So, when Mrs. Williamson saw the photo in the newspaper of the ambassador boarding the flight to the United States with fishing rods strapped to his briefcase, she felt that the heavens had come into alignment in order to favor her plan. It is at moments like these that one should be on keenest lookout for disaster.

## F O C U S

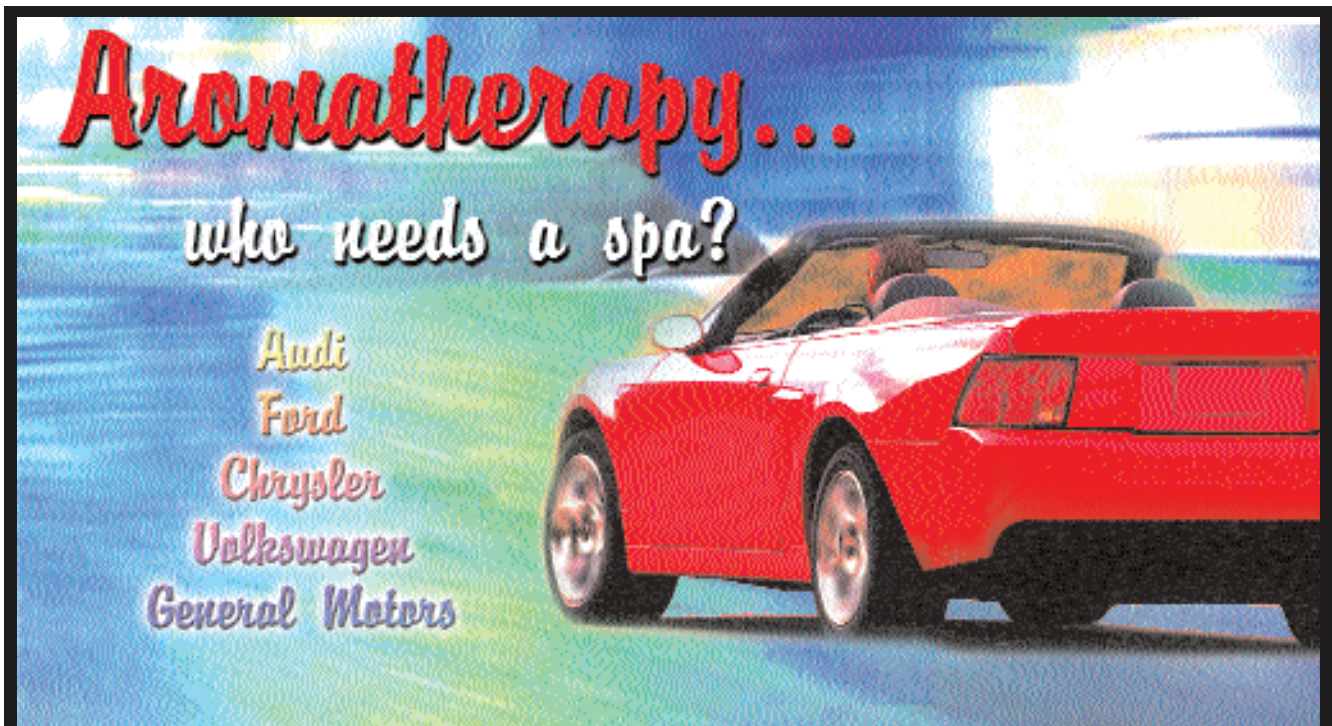
Although the classic definition of Right Speech is “speaking truthfully,” that is, calling a green thing green, and not purple, it has also been observed that silence is a paradoxical component of Right Speech. In this case, Mrs. Ambassador, by keeping silent, failed to participate in Right Speech. She kept silent about the 150 Cats of Labor when Mr. Ambassador called to see how Mrs. Ambassador was doing in his absence. She kept silent to the regional security officer when he called the next day to schedule the installation of new security lighting, and to the general services officer when she came the following day to inventory the crested glassware.

She kept silent to the local employees as well, of course, but our vigilant network sprang into action, alerting all sections about this imminent threat to the embassy’s tranquility. Mrs. Williamson’s plan called for the cats to reside in the large reception room, which all agreed was inappropriate. Therefore, suitable cages were hastily procured and “aged” by rubbing dirt in them and hitting them with shovels. They then were placed in the rear shed by the night security team, so as to be “found”

the next day by the gardener. (They were later invoiced as smoke detectors.) This, too, was a violation of the precept of Right Speech, but one feels it is for our Americans’ own good that we act this way.

I felt Mrs. Ambassador’s enthusiasm for this complicated act of charity grow as she enjoyed both the suddenly clandestine element in her life and the sense of using privileged surroundings to serve a worthy goal. Mrs. Ambassador and her willful daughter Fawn even declared a truce in their ongoing battle over how much midriff it is seemly for a teenage girl to expose for public consideration at school. A brief but memorable period of domestic harmony reigned over the residence, which was broken when Mrs. Williamson, carried away by her own enthusiasm, added a new wrinkle to the plan.

“It will be a great adventure,” Mrs. Williamson said one day, inspecting the rows of cages with the relaxed panache of a contented commander-in-chief. “I mean, you must come. I found this very nice man and all, and his truck is very reasonable, but I just decided that I had to follow the truck myself in my car to make sure that it was done right.



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## F O C U S

One has to think of the poor kitties and all.”

Mrs. Ambassador did not require much convincing. A departure was set for the next Saturday morning, and Mrs. Ambassador and Fawn happily discussed appropriate attire for an ambassador’s wife on such an outing.

Many of us are blinded by love. Mrs. Ambassador did not notice that Fawn’s enthusiasm for her mother’s trip was not motivated by an interest in promoting ecotourism. While promising to spend a quiet evening babysitting Cassidy, Fawn — in the most extreme abuse of Right Speech in this narrative — put out the word at the International High School that an All-Night Full Moon Residence Rave would take place on Saturday, blissfully bereft of parental supervision.

We waved good-bye that Saturday morning to Mrs. Ambassador and Mrs. Williamson, following the aged Chinese truck in Mrs. Williamson’s Ultra-Destroyer 6000 Sport Utility Vehicle. We feigned cheerfulness, but the gardeners, maids, security staff and I were uneasy. We knew that young amateur chemists at the International High School were harvesting local plants and mixing them

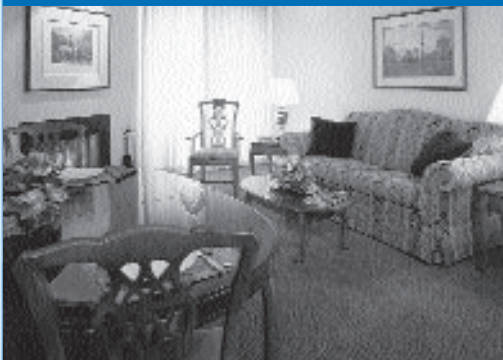
with various compounds to make a potent new substance, which improved their popularity with their peers. Fawn exercised her charms on one young chemist and, inspired, he came up with a new mood-altering substance, based on the species *Valeriana officinalis*. Fawn gained face amongst her peers by announcing that this new substance would debut at the All-Night Full Moon Residence Rave. This ensured attendance by many, because the substance was both novel and not yet, technically, illegal.

In such circumstances, a cook can take refuge in her art. I cooked my specialities for the assembled youth, who perhaps lack discernment but not appetite. I endured the hours of loud repetitive music from the back yard, unpleasant smells, mock-outraged screams of young ladies being thrown into the pool, and the occasional interruption of my kitchen solitude by trysting youth in search of privacy.

The party was entering an especially fevered state when Soh, the security guard at the front gate, came run-

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## F O C U S

ning in, his eyes betraying panic. "They're here!" he hissed.

"Who?" I asked.

"Mrs. Ambassador and Mrs. Williamson! And the truck! Outside! They came back! I had to pretend to break the key in the lock on the gate to keep her out!" Soh said. "What should I do?"

"I'll come outside," I said.

Soh informed me of further details as we walked to the front gate. Mrs. Ambassador and Mrs. Williamson said that the driver had gotten partway to the destination. He had stopped the truck for a snack at Long Ning Village. After he was finished, the driver announced that the truck was broken, and he would go no further. After some disagreement, the driver agreed to drive back to the capital, even though the truck was "broken."

Mrs. Ambassador and Mrs. Williamson were deep in an argument about what to do next, so I was able to make my way to the driver unnoticed.

"Look here," I said. "What's all this about? Do you want more money?"

"I wouldn't drive this truck there for all the money in the world," the driver said.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Spirits. The people at Long Ning Village told me that the previous driver of this same truck had died right there in the parking lot, at the wheel, after a meal of Peppered Ants' Eggs in Spicy River Weed. Clearly the truck must be cleansed of spirits before we proceed," he said grimly.

Mrs. Ambassador was at my shoulder. "What's going on here? Can you ask him what's the matter?" she said.

"He ... say ... brake ... no ... good," I said.

At this point, the driver turned off the motor of his Chinese truck, which idles with the sound of a disabled jet landing in a thunderstorm. In the comparative quiet that followed, the noise of the All-Night Full Moon Residence Rave was painfully clear.

"What on earth is that?" said Mrs. Ambassador.

As successive expressions of bewilderment, comprehension, and rage crossed her face, Soh opened the gates. The vehicles rumbled onto the grounds. Mrs.



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Ambassador seemed to rumble herself as she strode toward the epicenter of the noise. Then, she turned around and came back to us.

“Not a single one of our ... *guests* leaves this place until I say so, understand?” she said. “Anyone disobeying me will be looking for a new job.”

The guards locked the gates as Mrs. Ambassador strode off into the darkness along the side of the house, and let herself in the back door. A moment later, the music burped to a stop, followed a moment later by thin and anguished shrieks. A phalanx of expatriate youth ran toward us, only to find an embarrassed yet determined guard force blocking their departure. Mrs. Williamson came and announced Mrs. Ambassador’s intention to call the parents of all in attendance. One pale and sullen boy, whom I recognized as Fawn’s amateur chemist, pulled several similar-looking creatures into a tight conspiratorial circle. Then they ambled off with studied casualness.

Mrs. Ambassador stalked out of the front door in a towering rage. She glared for quite some time.

Young people sometimes have a gift for low cunning. It seems that the mild mood-altering effect of *Valeriana officinalis* on humans is achieved only by chemical alteration, whereas the plant has a much stronger effect on cats even before being artificially intensified. So, while Mrs. Ambassador seethed, the son of the embassy’s engineering security officer — the best friend of the young chemist — silently picked the flimsy lock on the Chinese truck. The chemist then dosed the caged cats with modified *Valeriana officinalis* and released them.

“You people are in big trouble! Big trouble! You’ll be collecting social security by the time your parents are done punishing you. ...” Mrs. Ambassador began.

Her speech was interrupted by the howl of a single cat, drunken and wild, followed by a second, then two more in duet, and finally by dozens more. A gray tabby shot past a crowd of girls and mounted Mrs. Williamson’s trouser leg as if it were a teak tree. Mrs. Williamson shrieked and batted the cat away. It fell limply to the ground and lay there, serenely content.



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Other cats appeared running, walking, waddling, howling, alternating between placid happiness and manic agitation.

"My God," Mrs. Williamson said. "My cats, they're out! They ..."

Cassidy came running from the house. "Mom, Mom, Mom!" he said.

"Not now, Cassidy," Mrs. Ambassador said.

"But Mom, Dad's on the phone from the U.S.," Cassidy said.

Cassidy suddenly had Mrs. Ambassador's attention.

"And Fawn's talking to him!" Cassidy said. "She says to tell you to let her friends go right now or she'll tell him all about Mrs. Williamson and the cats. She says if I'm not back in 60 seconds she's gonna tell him anyway!"

At this moment, many emotions ranged over Mrs. Ambassador's face. I even thought I saw, for a brief moment, as she sighed and turned toward the house to take Mr. Ambassador's call, a comprehension of the importance of Right Speech.

I am happy to report that a suitable shaman was found to cast out the spirit of the dead man from the truck (later invoiced to the embassy as "consultant fees"). The cats, mostly in a drowsy, drugged stupor in the upper limbs of various trees on the residence grounds, were recovered and recaged. Mrs. Ambassador and Mrs. Williamson followed the truck to the eco-tourism site a few days later.

Unfortunately, news of the arrival of the cats had spread, and too many people showed up for their distribution. Discord followed. Residents of the south side of the village accused residents of the north side of taking all the cats for themselves. In the resulting riot, the entire village, including the eco-tourism site, was consumed in a bamboo conflagration, which also eliminated most of the rats.

However, the eco-tourism site was insured separately for 800 percent of its actual value by both the World Bank and the Regional International Bank development authorities, so the village is being rebuilt. In concrete. ■

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# STILL TELLING THEIR STORIES: ADST'S ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR DIPLOMATIC STUDIES AND TRAINING IS ABOUT TO GO ONLINE WITH ITS EVER-GROWING COLLECTION OF ORAL HISTORIES. HERE ARE SOME EXCERPTS.

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BY KENNETH L. BROWN AND VEDA ENGEL

**L**arry Eagleburger, Chas Freeman, Arthur Hartman, Robert and Phyllis Oakley, Robert Strauss, Terry Todman, John Whitehead — these are but a few of the American diplomats whose stories can be found in the Diplomatic Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. The collection has grown considerably since the Foreign Service Journal last profiled ADST (“In Their Own Words,” May 1999).

In addition to recording oral histories, the association increases knowledge of U.S. diplomacy through its book pub-

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*Ambassador Kenneth L. Brown has been the president of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) since May 2001. His many overseas postings as a career FSO from 1961 to 1995 included ambassadorships in Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. In Washington, he served as deputy director of U.N. Political Affairs, associate spokesman for the State Department, director of the Office of Central African Affairs, and deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs. After retiring from the Foreign Service in 1995, he was director of the Dean Rusk Program in International Studies at Davidson College until 2001.*

*Veda Engel has been on detail from the State Department as executive director of ADST since July 2002. After accompanying her husband on five assignments overseas, she became a career member of the Civil Service. Before joining ADST she was the branch chief of the Recruitment Division in State's Bureau of Human Resources. She has also served as deputy editor of State magazine and as a Navy Department editor.*

lishing program, which includes such authors as former ambassadors Herman J. Cohen, James Goodby, Francis Terry McNamara, and Robert H. Miller. It also produces exhibits, and inspired the “Brief History of American Diplomacy” exhibit on long-term display in the State Department's central hall and at the Foreign Service Institute. (See sidebar, p. 52.)

ADST was founded in 1986 to enhance training at FSI and advance understanding of U.S. diplomacy. Although it is located at the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center, it is a private, nonprofit organization. This special public-private partnership links ADST with U.S. diplomats and the profession of diplomacy, past, present and future.

## Providing a Legacy

Under the direction of retired senior FSO Stu Kennedy and with the assistance of a small staff and a few volunteers and interns, the personal oral histories of more than 1,400 former career Foreign Service members and political appointees have been recorded thus far. These efforts preserve for posterity and future historians diplomatic experiences and insights that would otherwise be lost. The process continues daily and involves hours of interviews, recording on audiotape, editing by the interviewee and a volunteer editor, corrections, and final transfer to disk and hard copy.

Some 1,300 of the interviews are available to the public on three CD-ROMs produced by ADST. In a major new development, ADST plans to begin putting the entire current collection and future interviews on the Internet in 2004 at the Web site of the Library of Congress ([loc.gov](http://loc.gov)) for free access by the public.

ADST has consistently stressed the importance of having a thriving oral history program to provide a legacy for

younger members of the Foreign Service, who can learn from their retired colleagues how difficult situations were handled, policies were formulated and implemented, and insights were gained into foreign cultures and personalities. Using a military analogy, Oral History Program Director Kennedy sees the collection as continuing and inspiring the Foreign Service's own "long grey line" of tradition and linking past generations of American diplomats to their successors.

"All of the interviewees have something valuable to impart to current members of the service and to anyone else interested in U.S. diplomacy," Kennedy adds. "Most are candid as well, and the subjects mentioned run the gamut of issues important to the United States since the 1920s and the problems of daily life and career common to the Foreign Service."

Former ambassador to Israel and ADST board member Samuel Lewis notes that "the most significant diplomatic exchanges rarely get into official documents in this age of secure telephones and overwhelming fear of leaks." He believes that without oral histories to draw on, "tomorrow's scholars would get much of the history wrong."

In the past, the great majority of interviewees were white males, but that has changed with the shift in the demographics of the Foreign Service. The number of women and minorities interviewed has increased significantly. Jim Dandridge, a retired senior Foreign Service officer and a Senior Fellow at ADST, is documenting an important element in the changes in demographics as he heads up a project to interview retired minority officers under a grant from the Mellon Foundation. Dandridge's interviews will also be available on videotape.

To give some idea of the scope of the program, here are just a few excerpts from the hundreds of oral histories added to ADST's collection in the past few years.

**Ambassador Frances D. Cook recalls her first tour as a U.S. Information Service officer in Paris during the Vietnam peace talks.**

I was commandeered to work in our press center (because I was a USIS officer), which was the entire ballroom of the Hotel Crillon. I forget how many hundreds, I think at least six hundred journalists came from the United States to cover the opening of the Vietnam peace talks. Every journalist that I had ever heard of or seen on television the whole time I was growing up was there. Walter Cronkite, Charles Collingwood, you name it, they were there. And I was working with them a week after I got off

the plane. It was a very exciting way to start.

I was sent as the American government representative to the North Vietnamese press conferences. Now, they were held, the peace talks were generally on Thursday, and the North Vietnamese would give their press briefing in one place and we would give ours in another afterwards. But we would wait until theirs was over. So I had to go with a tape recorder and take full notes on their press conference, and then call our delegation to give them a briefing on what they had said. ... I had to basically then fight the journalists because there were only a certain number of pay phones at this site where the North Vietnamese had their press conference, and I would have to compose my cable in my head from the time I left my chair until I got to the telephone and then fight the journalists to use the phone. All I can say is, if somebody asked me to do that now, I'd be too nervous to do it. But when you're 22, you can do anything.

The press conferences were only in Vietnamese and French. There was no English used, so I'd be translating and writing my cable in my head and running to the telephone and really, basically competing with the wires to try to do something. Then I would have to go back to the embassy, and I'd completely transcribe the entire text from French to English and do a textual transmission to Washington by immediate [cable] of the press conference.

**Ambassador Tony Quinton found himself in Nicaragua among nuns and priests calling for the overthrow of the U.S. government in 1982.**

Throughout the time, I maintained an open-door policy. Any American citizen who wanted to come and see me could do so. There were enormous numbers that came. They came from all sorts of different perspectives, although the vast majority were hostile to the Reagan administration. There was a steady stream of journalists, church men and women from all the major denominations, etc. They were very suspicious of the Reagan administration's policy toward Central America. They were much caught up with the social justice agenda propounded by the Sandinista government.

I remember one of the very first groups that came to see me was a group of priests and nuns. After I had laid out for them our policy with regard to Nicaragua, they asked if they might pray. This was a new experience for me, at least in the ambassador's office, but we all stood up. They asked to join hands. So there was the American ambassador holding

*The personal oral histories of more than 1,400 former career Foreign Service members and political appointees have been recorded thus far.*

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*ADST has consistently stressed the importance of having a thriving oral history program to provide a legacy for younger members of the Foreign Service.*

hands with a group of nuns and priests [who were] praying for the overthrow of the Reagan administration! After that, I decided I would always be accompanied by at least one junior officer who needed this exposure to the views of his/her fellow citizens.

**A**s consul general in Sao Paulo in 1985, Stephen Dachi discovered the physical anomaly that led to the identification of the remains of Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele.

[Forensic specialists] projected a chart of the skull on the wall. On that slide, they had over 40 numbers or labels attached to each anatomical angle, curvature, and point on the skull. Through a technique called craniometry, you can match that up with photographs of the person you are trying to identify and measure those same features. Then you overlap them and if they match, you can make a pretty good identification. Well, they put this thing up on the wall. They had everything on that skull numbered for every single anatomical feature of the skull. There was only one thing on that skull that didn't have a number next to it. That was a hole in the left

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cheekbone which was clearly not an anatomical feature. It was a hole that, to me at least, was obviously caused by a pathological process. With all the experts and scientists who were sitting there looking at it, not one of them had noticed it.

I took a look and said, "What the hell is that hole doing there?" They said, "What hole?" I said, "See that hole over there? You don't have a number by that one and that's not an anatomical hole." They said, "Really? What do you know about it?" I said, "Well, in my younger days I not only was a dentist, but I happen to have specialized in oral pathology and was a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology. Come and take a look at this skull." We took a closer look at the skull and, sure enough, it became apparent to everyone that this was most likely to be a pathological hole, not an anatomical feature. I am skipping over a lot of details. After sever-

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***"At least 600 journalists  
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peace talks. And I was  
working with them a  
week after I got off  
the plane."***

— *Amb. Frances Cook*

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al days of discussing and weighing the options, they asked me to do the pathology work together with a Brazilian specialist and try to establish that this hole really was a pathological

abnormality and not an anatomical feature.

**W**hile ambassador to Chile from 1988 to 1991, Tony Gillespie helped alleviate Chilean ire when cyanide was discovered in a shipment of grapes, and fruit imports into the U.S. were halted.

This incident presented me and our embassy with a challenge which was not unique but not often paralleled in the Foreign Service. It was really something, because it colored and continues to color, to some degree, U.S. and Chilean relations. This incident probably cost the Chileans something in the neighborhood of \$350 million, which is not inconsequential.

In any event, in seven days we got the exports of fruit to the United States going again. I must say that the U.S. and Chilean governments worked together to this end. The incident completely changed the relation-

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## ADST's Other Activities

ADST facilitates the publication of books on foreign affairs through its Diplomats and Diplomacy Book Series in cooperation with Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR). Under the direction of Margery Thompson, the series is designed to increase public knowledge and appreciation of the involvement of American diplomats in world history.

Eighteen books have been published so far, and many more are in various stages of production. Two received the American Academy of Diplomacy's Dillon Award for a book of distinction on the practice of American diplomacy: *Cursed Is the Peacemaker: The American Diplomat Versus the Israeli General, Beirut 1982*, by John Boykin, and *Intervening in Africa: Superpower Peacemaking in a Troubled Continent*, by Herman J. Cohen. A third, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies*, by Dennis Kux, received "Special Recognition" from the academy.

A second ADST publication program is its Memoirs and Occasional Papers Book Series. Through it, with support from the authors, the association arranges for the publication of diplomatic memoirs and related works that may not command a sufficient market to meet the financial needs of trade and scholarly presses. Copies of the books are produced on a "print on demand" basis. The first book in the series, currently in production, is *American Diplomats*, by William Morgan and Stuart Kennedy.

Enhancing training at the Foreign Service Institute has been central to ADST's mission since its inception. This role has been pursued through programs ranging from the sponsorship of practice diplomatic receptions and other events for the Officer Orientation Course to provision of logistical support for foreign policy seminars and international language roundtables. Every year ADST also organizes the competition and judging for the Una Chapman Cox Excellence in Language Teaching Award for FSI instructors. Two Cox awards and two honorable mentions are funded jointly by the State Department and the Una Chapman Cox Foundation.

Biennially, the association recognizes excellence in diplomacy by presenting its Ralph J. Bunche Award for Diplomatic Excellence. Since its creation four years ago, the Bunche Award has been bestowed on Amb. Donald McHenry, former Sen. Sam Nunn, and former Secretary of State and Treasury George Shultz. ADST gave its first International Business Leadership Award to AOL founder James V. Kimsey in 1999 and will resume presentation of that honor, along with the Bunche Award, next year at a gala dinner.

ADST is an active participant in preparations for the diplomacy center and museum being created in the east wing of the Harry S Truman building (Main State). A member of the concept committee, the association will make available to the center its oral histories, books and diplomatic artifacts, as well as services to organize museum docents.

As a membership organization, ADST offers its members the opportunity to join in its activities in support of U.S. diplomacy. They also benefit from discounts on association products and access to the Ralph Bunche Award dinner.

ADST's oral histories and publications are available to the public through its Web site at [www.adst.org](http://www.adst.org). Anyone interested in the association's programs can learn more by visiting that site or by calling (703) 302-6990.

— Kenneth L. Brown and Veda Engel

*“So there was the American ambassador holding hands with a group of nuns and priests praying for the overthrow of the Reagan administration!”*

— *Amb. Tony Quainton*

ship of the U.S. ambassador and the foreign minister and, to a large degree, the U.S. embassy and the Foreign Ministry. Not necessarily other parts of the Chilean government, but we developed that shared sense of having been through a crisis together, having agreed on an objective, and having achieved it. Even though there had previously been some differences and antagonisms which did not disappear on certain issues, nonetheless we had this shared and positive experience which you cannot discount. At that point I was Tony to the foreign minister, and he was Don Felipe to me. It was possible, then, to deal with a lot of other issues in probably a different tone of voice than might otherwise have been the case.

**Cynthia Perry describes some of the challenges of serving as U.S. ambassador to Burundi from 1989 to 1993.**

I was not the first female American ambassador [there], nor the first black American ambassador — I was the first who was both black and a woman. Although the women embraced my strength and felt empowered by my presence, the men

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in government were somewhat threatened. Traditionally, the ambassador had been a male — all of my colleagues heading the 15 or so embassies were male. Some men (and especially the military) made a point to salute my husband when he accompanied me.

I found all the people to be very gentle, kind, and respectful — but inscrutable. It was impossible to read their thoughts. They would say that Burundi is one country, with one people, with one language, but you had the sense it wasn't a nation of peace or one without division. For all my time in the country, I did not always know which were Hutu and which were Tutsi by their features or their speech patterns. But I learned to recognize differences, although they were not consistently identifiable due to the pattern of intermarriages between the two. They were all handsome and intelligent people.

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***“I turned to one of the  
Burundian authorities  
and said, ‘Who’s the  
enemy?’ He looked at  
me like ‘Stupid.’”***

***– Amb. Cynthia Perry***

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I guess my first real memory of coming face to face with the underlying friction was my first attendance at Armed Forces Day. All ambassadors were invited to come out and sit in covered stands to watch the parade of French-made tanks and mounted guns. They were polished, shining in the bright sunlight like new money,

ready for combat; the troops all stood tall, disciplined; the drums were fearsome, their deep and strong sounds reverberating through one's chest, stomach, head. The army in its state of readiness was indeed impressive.

I turned to one of the Burundian authorities and said, “Who's the enemy?” He looked at me like “Stupid.” I continued to ask that question. If there is no threat from the outside, why such a war effort? Rwanda has no interest in Burundi; Zaire doesn't want any part of it; Tanzania shows no interest. Who is the enemy? When I finally asked the right person, he informed me that it's the Hutus — they are the enemy, the internal threat. So that well-oiled military machine I was looking at was all Tutsi; no Hutu could serve in the fighting military. Of course, I had been briefed about this, but it was nearly overwhelming to observe the hundreds of these men, six-foot and

## **Year-End Roundup of FOREIGN SERVICE AUTHORS**

As we have done each year since 2000, the November 2003 *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors in a special section: “In Their Own Write.” FS authors who have had a book published either by a commercial or academic publisher last year or this year (2002-2003) that has not previously been featured in the roundup are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder with information on the author, to:

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over, pass before you. When you hear at the same time the amazing drummers of Burundi, definitely a part of the war machinery, not just drummers, you saw them as a part of this ferocious military. The ceremonial drums built fear in the hearts of the Hutus. That's the impression I had of the country on my arrival.

**Chas Freeman recalls serving as ambassador to Saudi Arabia during the Persian Gulf War.**

General Norman Schwarzkopf and I had a very close and cooperative relationship, rather unusually. As part of that relationship, although I never took part in military planning sessions, during visits by Secretary [of Defense Dick] Cheney, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Colin Powell, and others associated with them, Gen. Schwarzkopf would fill me in, in broad terms, about his thinking, not only before they arrived, but also about the results of

these conferences. The result was that we were able to help each other a good deal.

I knew from, I suppose, mid-November, two prospective dates that were crucial. One was the date of Jan. 17, 2:40 in the morning, which was the moment that Gen. Schwarzkopf had recommended for the air assault on Iraq to unfold. The second was the date of Feb. 21, 1991, which was the date that he had set for the unfolding of the ground assault. ... I was quite clear on the general nature of the battle plan [and so] was rather surprised, in January 1991, to discover that the president and Sec. Cheney had not confided it to Secretary of State Baker.

He came to Saudi Arabia to meet with the king and various others, especially Foreign Minister Saud al-Faysal. During that meeting, a couple of things happened that I found really rather shocking. One was a meeting, actually in a sort of side room of the

king's guest hotel in Riyadh, between Baker, several of his entourage, Schwarzkopf, and me (now mind you, this was Jan. 10, only seven days before the actual unfolding of the battle for Kuwait), at which Baker mused out loud that he wondered what our war aims ought to be. ... So it was clear that there had really been no thought at all given in Washington, at high levels, to what specific results we wished to achieve from the war, notwithstanding the many telegrams that I had sent and the many representations Gen. Schwarzkopf had made in military channels, asking for two things: a definition of war objectives and, second, a war termination strategy.

That led me, several days later, on the eve of the attack, having failed to get for Gen. Schwarzkopf and myself and others any statement of war aims, to draft a cable saying that, unless instructed otherwise, here is what he believes he has authority to do — a

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cable that was informally coordinated with Gen. Schwarzkopf and that sank without a trace into the Washington morass.

**While in North Korea in 1995, as part of a delegation to oversee that country's compliance with the new framework agreement on nuclear energy, Kenneth Yates discovered that high-tech isn't necessarily the last word.**

Some of the positions of the North Koreans that we thought did not have any merit turned out to be based on things of which we had no understanding. That happened a number of times in my North Korean experience.

You may remember in the press a couple of years ago, we had accused the North Koreans of siphoning off the fuel oil of the first shipment and diverting it to other purposes. Their tally of how much had been taken in was different from ours. Theirs

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***“In fact, the North Koreans were right and our figures were wrong, despite all of our high-tech equipment.”***

— **Kenneth Yates**

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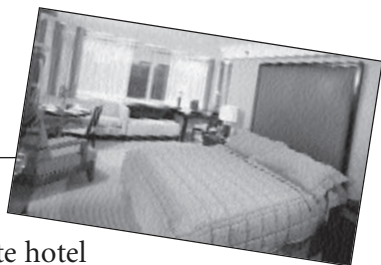
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showed less and ours showed more. We said, “Aha!” The press had a field day saying that they were stealing the fuel. It turned out that our technology was overly sophisticated and had given us incorrect readings. We used technology utilizing sound waves to measure the flow of the heavy fuel oil,

which meant we did not have to put anything into the fuel flow itself. It was an acoustic process by which you could tell the rate of flow by, I suppose, the Doppler effects on the reflected sound.

The North Koreans were adamant that their figures were correct. They used an old propeller system directly in the flow of the oil. The number of times it went around indicated the amount of fuel flow. What happened, as it turned out, was that the fuel going through the line was at a colder temperature than we expected. Since the acoustic properties of the fuel change under those conditions, we had to recalculate our own totals. In fact, the North Koreans were right and our figures were wrong, despite all of our high-tech equipment. Nonetheless, the American press had made much about the possible fraud, but made much less about our foul-up of the data. ■

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# REMEMBERING USIA

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THIS YEAR MARKS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY'S FOUNDING. A RETIRED USIA OFFICER RECALLS THE AGENCY'S MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

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BY WILSON DIZARD JR.

**T**his year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United States Information Agency. Set up in August 1953 as part of the new Eisenhower administration's determination to deal with the growing propaganda challenge coming from the Soviet Union, the agency thrived for over 45 years before it was closed down in 1999 and its remaining operations transferred to the State Department.

Defunct federal agencies do not normally encourage nostalgia. But there is a case for revisiting USIA's role in U.S. diplomatic history. In many ways the agency was an extraordinary undertaking, carried out with a distinct American flair. It set important precedents on what to do

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*Wilson Dizard Jr. is a retired Senior Foreign Service officer who specialized in international communications policy until his retirement in 1980. During his 28-year career in USIA and the State Department, he served in Istanbul, Athens, Dacca, Warsaw and Saigon. A former writer and editor for Time, Inc., he is the author of seven books: The Strategy of Truth (Public Affairs Press, 1961), Television: A World View (Syracuse University Press, 1966), The Coming of the Information Age (Longman, 1985), Gorbachev's Information Revolution: Controlling Glasnost in the New Electronic Era (CSIS/Westview, 1988), Old Media, New Media (Longman, 1993), Meganet (Westview, 1997), and Digital Diplomacy: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Information Age (Praeger, 2001). His latest work, Inventing Public Diplomacy, will be published next year in the ADST-DACOR Diplomats and Diplomacy Series.*

*Dizard has taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and was affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies from 1983 to 2000.*

(and what not to do) in practicing the uncertain art of influencing overseas public opinion about this country, its ideas and its global policy agenda. This subject, now relabeled "public diplomacy," has taken on new urgency since the events of 9/11.

In that regard, it is noteworthy that the United States was a latecomer to the practice of international propaganda. Before World War II, it was the only major power that did not have a strategy, with a supporting bureaucracy, for carrying out ideological programs beyond its borders. But after Pearl Harbor, that changed: an Office of War Information was given the double mission of strengthening home-front morale and explaining American war aims to foreign audiences.

Within two years the OWI was running the largest propaganda operation in the world, including the radio network still known as the "Voice of America." Yet the whole operation was closed down just two weeks after the war ended. Its tattered remains were relegated to the third level of the State Department while Congress and government officials debated whether we should be in the propaganda business at all.

A few years later, however, Cold War developments convinced the Eisenhower White House that a new organization, separate from the State Department, was needed to deal with the Soviet ideological threat. The decision to create an independent agency was prompted in large part by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' belief that propaganda operations were not a proper diplomatic function — an attitude many Foreign Service officers would continue to hold long afterward.

## The Early Years

The U.S. Information Agency began with several strikes against it. Its operations were weakened by a

# Year-End Roundup of FOREIGN SERVICE AUTHORS

As we have done each year since 2000, the November 2003 *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors in a special section: "In Their Own Write." FS authors who have had a book published either by a commercial or academic publisher last year or this year (2002-2003) that has not previously been featured in the roundup are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder with information on the author, to:

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*The United States was a  
latecomer to the practice  
of international  
propaganda.*

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rogue investigation by Sen. Joseph McCarthy, R-Wis., centered on allegations of left-wing influences within the information program. Other congressmen were also suspicious of the new agency and its operations. The result was a one-third cut in USIA's first budget, and the firing of 25 percent of its employees.

Despite this inauspicious start, the agency quickly thrived. Within a few years, it had operations in over 270 cities and towns around the world, with the major expansion taking place in Asia and Latin America. This was a broader overseas presence than that of any other U.S. government agency, then or since. The U.S. Information Service — USIS (as the overseas offices of USIA were known) — post in Kathmandu predated the establishment of the embassy by five years. Similarly, USIA was operating in Kirkuk in northern Iraq well before State opened a consulate there. For many years, USIS posts were the sole American presence in scores of other cities, from Rajshahi, Bangladesh, to the Norwegian town of Tromsø, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

Most USIS posts were small, staffed by two or three officers (initially limited to Foreign Service Reserve status) together with a local support staff. The posts' most prominent feature was usually a street-front library, which was often the first open-shelf lending library in the

city. Available to all comers, the libraries were filled with students throughout the day. In Morocco, the traffic was so heavy that USIS issued library cards in seven colors, allowing borrowers entry only once a week. In Calcutta, students had to sign up in advance to assure a reading-room seat.

Most libraries had large street-front windows which became convenient targets for political demonstrations by students and others. A *New Yorker* cartoon in the 1960s depicted a USIA training class where employees were being taught window glazing. In agency lore, the libraries were wryly described as being just a stone's throw from the local university.

The agency's officer corps was, by and large, a pick-up crew that got its training as propagandists on the job. As such, they were exceptions to the traditional Foreign Service officer pattern. Most came from the media industries or from academia. Several were Hollywood actors, including one who had starred as a child in the "Our Gang" comedies. Gene Karst had been a press agent for the St. Louis Cardinals. John Maddux was a former Jesuit. Ed Harper wrote successful detective-story paperbacks. Patricia van Delden served in the anti-Nazi underground, later returning to Europe to run the USIS post in Holland. Steve Dachi had been a dentist in Budapest, while Frank Snowden had been head of Howard University's classics department.

Overall, USIA officers brought professional diversity and different perspectives to the Foreign Service. John McKnight, a former newspaper reporter, illustrated this new nimbleness. As head of the USIS post in Rome, he was once summoned to testify before a congressional budget committee. What would he do, one congressman

asked, if he had only \$15 to spend for post operations for the year? McKnight replied that he would take the minister of education to lunch and lobby him on the need for more American studies programs in Italian universities.

### On the Air

By the 1970s, the reconstituted Voice of America radio network was broadcasting in over 40 languages. It used communications satellites to link its stateside transmitters with a network of overseas relay bases in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Perhaps the best-known of VOA's hundreds of radio professionals was Willis Conover, host to the station's jazz show, "Music USA." A Washington disk jockey, Conover was hired temporarily in 1954 to host the program, despite warnings from some VOA officials that the project was frivolous. The show was, in fact, an instant success and stood as the

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## *Despite attacks by Sen. Joseph McCarthy and a one-third cut in USIA's first budget, the agency quickly thrived.*

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VOA's most popular single offering for over 30 years. Conover, a knowledgeable jazz fan, built his program around his own large collection of records, interspersed with interviews with leading musicians, from Duke Ellington to Frank Sinatra. His interviews and commentaries, delivered in a smooth, bottled-in-cream tone, made him arguably the most recognizable American voice abroad for decades.

In addition to the Voice of America, USIA managed a wide variety of other media programs. The "Wireless File" was a daily news transmission of official U.S. government statements and other materials that kept American embassies and other missions informed on current policy. Translated into dozens of languages, the file was also a primary channel for reaching local newspapers and other opinion outlets. The Wireless File tradition continues today as a round-the-clock Internet service.

Before long, USIA became the biggest international publisher of books, magazines, pamphlets and other printed materials. One of its most successful projects was to encourage a consortium of U.S. book companies to sponsor an overseas project, Franklin Publications, which set up a string of affiliates throughout the Middle East and Asia to produce and market low-

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*The agency's officer  
corps was, by and large,  
a pick-up crew that got  
its training as  
propagandists on the job.*

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priced paperbacks in local languages. Tens of millions of books were issued under the program, with the additional benefit of giving American publishing firms their first significant export presence in markets previously dominated by British, French and Soviet publishers.

The agency also became the largest producer of documentary films on earth, including hundreds produced by the agency's local posts. These productions attracted large audiences in urban movie theaters and in remote villages. The means of delivery in rural areas without electricity was by "mobile units" — sturdy jeeps equipped with a generator, together with a reinforced roof from which a film could be projected at night over the heads of audiences in town squares, often against a whitewashed wall. During the Cold War years, over 350 USIS mobile units roamed the world's outbacks.

### **Cultural Diplomacy**

Any assessment of USIA's long-term effectiveness would have to give major credit to its cultural operations. These included the library network as well as the cultural centers the agency helped set up with local sponsors in over a hundred

large cities abroad. However, the most lasting impact was made by the cultural exchange programs, which were jointly managed by USIS posts overseas and by the State Department in Washington. Beginning with a small Fulbright scholarship program in 1947, the scope of cultural exchanges was expanded to encompass students, academics, media leaders and government officials, along with performing groups ranging from the New York Philharmonic to Appalachian square dancers.

In the 1940s there were fewer than twenty thousand foreign students in American colleges and universities; today there are a half-million, with students from China making up the largest overseas contingent. Several years ago, an industrious researcher attempted to calculate the federal government's total financial contribution to cultural exchange operations during the postwar decades. He put the overall figure at about \$5 billion, arguably one of the most effective budgetary outlays in U.S. government history.

USIS posts in Communist-bloc countries operated under particularly tight restrictions imposed by local regimes. Eventually, cultural agreements with the Soviet government (and, less successfully, with the Chinese) provided limited openings for agency operations. USIA's pavilion-size exhibits in the USSR and Eastern Europe attracted enormous audiences eager for a look at the world beyond their closed borders. The results were often startling: on the opening day of a Moscow exhibit in 1959, visitors stole dozens of books from a display sponsored by American publishers. The Kremlin insisted that the replacement volumes be bolted down — a demand that was rejected.

A particularly useful exchange operation focused on inviting up-

and-coming young foreign leaders here for a first-hand look at American society. The trick was to spot them early. It didn't always work, but when it did it was effective. In the early 1980s, the embassy in Kabul proposed a relatively unknown young journalist, Hamid Karzai, for a grant. It was a good hunch, given Karzai's later prominence as the interim president of Afghanistan following the overthrow of the Taliban regime. Other leader grantees included Britain's Tony Blair and Margaret Thatcher, Egypt's Anwar Sadat, and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere. During the USIA years, over 40 other leader grantees became heads of government or chiefs of state.

The pattern of their visits varied. Tours usually lasted about a month, involving a personalized itinerary. Given the shortness of time, most grantees traveled by plane. An exception was Eleni Vlachou, publisher of a leading Athens newspaper, *Kathimerini*. She asked for a Greyhound bus ticket and then crossed the country meeting with mayors, editors and ordinary citizens before returning to Greece where, years later, she played an important role in helping bring down an authoritarian government in the 1970s.

### Assessing USIA

How effective were USIA programs? Television reporter Edward R. Murrow, the best known of the agency's directors, famously told a congressional committee that no cash register rang when someone overseas changed his or her opinion as a result of a USIA program. The agency had a large research operation to track overseas public opinion in general and the impact of USIA operations in particular. When polling focused on specific short-term opinion trends, it was often helpful as a measure of local

attitudes. At other times, the results were less useful. One example was a poll that sought to measure international opinion on which country was the greatest threat to world peace. The expectation was that the Soviet Union would head the list. In Bolivia, the local polling response was loud and clear: the greatest threat to world peace came from Paraguay.

What are USIA's lessons for today's more complex public diplomacy tasks? Despite some mishaps and bad judgment calls, its media and cultural operations clearly had an impact. The agency's most obvious failure, despite its best efforts, was its inability to establish itself firmly as a strong influence in the formation of key foreign policy decisions. Ed Murrow identified this shortcoming 40 years ago when he said that USIA should be in on the takeoffs as well as the landings in such decisions.

The agency's influence on policy was strongest at the embassy level. Good ambassadors listened to their USIS staff and factored in local public attitudes when making policy recommendations to the State Department. This still happens, but public diplomacy concerns tend to get diluted in the mix of other interests back in Washington.

There is no formulaic solution for this problem. If anything, diplomacy is more complex than ever today, given the fact that policy decisions increasingly involve dealing with shadowy international forces that are immune to conventional appeals. The answer does not lie in resurrecting old USIA practices; changes in global information and cultural patterns have outmoded many of them. Yet it is undeniable that USIA set a standard of imaginative nimbleness in projecting American ideas abroad that continues to have relevance today. ■



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# TO ANITA KILLED BY THE BANDITS

BY GORDON KING

Such improbable names: Dadshah, King's Gift; Dozdab, Thieves' Water; Pip, near where you ended, clad in a light summer dress. Had you offended a man called Ghaderdad? Was Dadshah miffed because you would not cry? Kevin, we know, was killed before your eyes. So were the rest. What were your thoughts? I judge from how you dressed, white shoes, dark glasses, frock like a rainbow,

that nothing could have been further off than death, nothing more improbable in your life than leaving; only the death of birds was cause for grieving; and then suddenly to turn a corner in your thirtieth year, off in that God-forsaken Baluchistan, and face the fury of bullets. What did you feel seeing the metal tear through the United States' seal on the door of that old workhorse of a Jeep? American

certainties were abruptly gone, terrible cries jerked out of the dying men, the bandits came plunging down from the rocks, shouting. You, dumb with shock, took the sunglasses slowly off your eyes with your left hand. Did you then remember, fleetingly, that I had driven there first some months earlier, told you about it in a burst of enthusiasm? You would only tremble.

Panic was not your way. When I had told you about the bird my driver had tried to kill, you stopped at the kitchen door, and looked, until, silenced, I felt the shame of it, and knew he would not do that again. In your left hand the sunglasses were still clutched as if the time had come to go indoors, wash off the grime. Instead, you were pulled along by that wild band. Dadshah must have, in his way, been as aghast to find his trap for gendarmes had brought these pale-skinned Feranghee. His inhumanities had been against his own. Suddenly this last insurgency was of a different scale, men cursing against men and Ghaderdad

louder than all the rest. Sense may have forbade violence against the woman but fear would prevail

and at some stage, perhaps within the hour, someone (men say Ghaderdad) turned with a gun and shot you. Their dusky women would have run screeching about, then come close to you to stare at the blond hair, at the pale foreign face, before listening to the shouting of their men... I joined the searching parties in Kerman, scoured the Baluchi Mountains, but no trace

of you. We heard that you had left us clues of scraps of cloth. We heard Dadshah would save your life to sell you into Africa, a slave to some dark chief. We heard Dadshah would use your charms himself but that his jealous wife sided with Ghaderdad against such cold and foreign love. We heard Dadshah, of old, had been a Sardar's bodyguard whose knife

killed his then-wife and her lover. He set off as a brigand, and when I traveled through those months earlier — before I came to know you and your Kevin — I very nearly met his band, but the gendarmes were there first and I was spared to come to you and display my fateful zest. Above Pip on the day the gendarmes found you, when the final worst

was known, a plane from Tehran en route with VIPs, I built an air strip for you — for them — marshalling together a motley crew of tribal kids, a ragged destitute forgotten bunch, but we together cleared and marked the strip, found the white stones to form an arrow. Here were unknowns working for an unknown. Here where you disappeared

a modest housewife, you became the star, wheeling up in an Army truck, boarding



the little plane, all of us according  
you total attention. Back at Iranshahr,  
generals saluted you, garlands of scarce flowers  
softened the sky for you, we were your court  
and all paid quiet tribute. The airport  
held its breath. The silences were yours

until we sent you skyward with a plane's roar  
and turned and went our ways. I sent a kind  
colleague to collect what he could find  
of yours and Kevin's things. There were far more  
in Kerman at your home, all the household  
to be accounted for and packed in sturdy wood  
(except for the items damaged by your blood)  
and shipped to Tehran and home. We were controlled,

efficient and dispassionate. Were forms  
required we did them, cabled the embassy,  
counseled the local staff, did the emergency  
things, wrote kudos to the gendarmes,  
but eventually it ended and we made  
our way back to the consulate. Dadshah  
was cornered by the gendarmerie and saw  
his men and women killed, his renegade

existence ended. Sooner than because  
of you. And you and yours because of me.  
Well ... time explains some things. This could be,  
had I not met you. Death might not pause  
for agents or contrivances. You wanted  
peace, and it came, but in a way  
you had not dreamed of. You wished to stay  
with Kevin, and your desire was granted.

It is here in what you had not wished that I  
remember you: your quietness stopped with sound,  
your caring blasted away by a rifle round,  
your fine mind trashed by an illiterate Baluchi,  
your love a casualty of an ignorant hate.  
I think the universe was lessened when you left.  
Everywhere people, but without you we are bereft.  
We should have known you better, but too late

for all such wishes. I still relive those days.  
God made the funny world that it should be  
left to bemused inheritors like me.  
The world's forgotten, but the scene replays:  
on an earth where mass killing numbs the heart,  
yours was a personal, distinctive end  
to someone meaningful. And now we tend  
you still, those few of us who played a part. ■

#### Author's Note:

I was the American consul in Isfahan, the consular district covering all of southern Iran, from 1955 to 1957. In the fall of 1956, I made a very rugged trip, down through the Baluchi Mountains of southeastern Iran to a town called Chakhansur on the coast (a possible warm-water port for the Iranians?), the first American ever to do so. The next spring, from their headquarters in Kerman, perhaps inspired by me, the regional USAID director for southern Iran and his wife, Kevin and Anita Carrol, accompanied by their American staff member (whose name, I think, was Brewster Wilson), an interpreter and a driver, attempted the same trip.

They were ambushed in the mountains by a Baluchi bandit gang. All were killed in the initial clash — except for Anita, who was kidnapped. A delegation of embassy officers and Iranian officials came down. Two search planes scoured the area (with me as navigator). In a light Cub plane over the actual ambush spot (which only I knew) we took photos, then tried to fly out of that savage terrain — when the plane's engine stopped. The pilot, a crop duster, calmly changed tanks as the engine sputtered, and we stopped just short of becoming more American casualties.

In a couple of days Anita's body was found; the bandits had killed her too. With the help of a Baluchi village, I rapidly cleared a mountain spur for an airstrip; an Iranian military plane came in, Anita was carted off and that sad chapter was closed.

That's about it. The poem itself may leave out a couple of details — but what's in it is all accurate. I also remember that the Carrols were from Washington state originally. I suppose there may be details of the affair hidden somewhere in the department's archives — but I should think the above will suffice to give the readers the background of this poem.

---

*Gordon King grew up in central Illinois, Abraham Lincoln country, attended Illinois Wesleyan University and saw service in World War II in northeast India. Later, with a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University, he served for 30 years in the U.S. diplomatic corps, posted to embassies or consulates in cities as diverse as Kabul, Peshawar and Lahore, Tehran and Isfahan, as well as Bonn, London, and Washington, D.C. (at Peace Corps Headquarters and the National War College). Retired, he and his wife, the artist Josephine deBeauchamp, moved in 1998 from the coast of Maine to Surrey, to be near their daughter and her English family. Three books of his poetry have been published in the U.S. Individual poems have appeared in a number of U.S. and U.K. magazines including The Spectator.*

# CAPITALISM AND THE MEXICAN POOR

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UNTIL USAID AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES LEARN HOW THE LIVES OF THE WORKING POOR REALLY FUNCTION, THEIR AID AND LOANS WON'T BENEFIT THOSE WHO NEED HELP THE MOST.

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By JAMES OLSEN

It's early on a Monday morning on the streets of Mexico City but the street vendors are already lined up hawking their wares. These men and women offer everything from television sets, auto supplies, CDs and all kinds of appliances, to hot tamales and fresh tortillas. If one has any doubt about how vital capitalism is in Mexico, one need only see all 250,000 of these entrepreneurs busily buying and selling from their small, cramped and crowded locations on the city's many streets and sidewalks.

In fact, only a very small fraction of the Mexican working poor are employed in factories or in medium-size companies. Many, perhaps the vast majority (we don't really know), are out on the streets. The street vendors may well outnumber the portion of the Mexican working poor employed in factories or in medium-size companies.

Yet until fairly recently, the economic activity of this group was never even counted as part of Mexico's gross domestic product (the sum of all goods and services produced within a nation's borders). After all, what self-respecting Mexican government official or World Bank economist would walk the dirty streets to count the number of vendors, calculate their annual sales volume, or

assess how they operated their stalls? So until about 20 years ago, this part of the economy simply didn't exist as far as officialdom was concerned.

When the World Bank, the International Development Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other international development agencies finally began to examine this sector globally in the 1980s, they were surprised at how productive it was. In fact, the analysts were so shocked that they had trouble even coming up with a label for it.

At first they called it the "parallel economy," which implied that this economic stream of goods and services went along with the formal national economy but functioned outside it. Then the terminology changed and the people selling matches, single cigarettes, candy bars, sodas, food, clothes, motor oil, and building supplies were classified as the "informal sector." Through this shift the economists belatedly acknowledged that businesses operated by the poor do indeed constitute a significant, productive "sector" like housing or health or education.

In fact, subsequent studies have found that the informal sector contributes from 20 to 40 percent to the GDP of many countries. Thus, the real engine of capitalistic growth in any country, Third World or developed, is not the corporation — which, on average, requires a capital investment of one million dollars to create one new job — but new small businesses, many of which are micro-businesses started and managed by the poor. Reflecting that finding, the "informal sector" has now graduated to a new term: "micro-business."

## Taking Care of Business

What is it like to manage a micro-business on the streets of the capital?

---

*James T. Olsen is an international consultant currently living in Mexico. He has been an editor-in-chief at McGraw-Hill Publishing, an educational expert for the Organization of American States, and a chief of party with USAID in the Dominican Republic. He holds a B.A. and M.A., both in 17th-century English literature, from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in international education and economics from The Union.*

To answer that question I took to the streets to talk to these vendors. In a series of interviews they explained that to operate a stall, a vendor has to pay five levels of weekly (and some monthly) bribes (*mordidas*). Every level of authority has a hand out, from the cop who walks the beat to the police in the patrol cars and the local politicians. In addition, for lack of any alternative, many of the vendors store their goods overnight in the subway system, so they count this “rent” as a bribe as well.

Based on these conversations and other research I have conducted, I estimate that approximately \$1.2 billion is being paid in bribes every year just in Mexico City. Even granting that there are fewer vendors in the cities of the other 20 states that comprise Mexico, we are still talking about many billions of dollars on a national basis — to say nothing of the dozens of other countries around the world with similar systems.

In addition, because the vast majority of micro-businesses do not officially exist even now, they are ineligible for short-term loans from commercial banks or finance companies. Thus, most vendors have to borrow from moneylenders to cover their ad hoc capital needs. (Since the going interest rate is 15 percent per week or 780 percent per year, perhaps a better term for these moneylenders would be “loan sharks.”) Needless to say, if a loan isn’t repaid, the consequences for the debtor and his family can be dire.

Between the cost of bribery and the cost of capital, vendors have a hard time of it. But their troubles don’t end there. Even when they pay up, their business can be destroyed in one fell swoop by greedy or overzealous law enforcement officials who want to make a point that the bribe was late or not the agreed-upon amount, or by the goons who work for the moneylenders. In such cases, the vendors have no legal recourse.

There is one other hardship street vendors all face: the cost of acquiring merchandise to sell. In many cases, such goods are brought into Mexican ports in large shipping containers, off-loaded at the docks, and then trucked to their destination. We are not talking about single cigarettes or packs of gum here, but huge items like washing machines, furniture, stoves and refrigerators, toilets, sinks, bathtubs, and all kinds of building supplies — the sort of goods known as *fayuca*, the old Spanish buccaneer term for bootlegged goods or contraband. The cost of purchasing such items is significantly higher than it would be for established stores or companies.

With all these disincentives in mind, I asked these entrepreneurs whether they would prefer to be officially

recognized by government authorities, even though they would then have to pay taxes. They unanimously asserted they would. First of all, if they were recognized as legitimate vendors, they and their families couldn’t be harassed by criminals, cops and low-level bureaucrats. For a change, the law would work for them. Similarly, if they held legal title to their businesses, they could collateralize their assets and obtain loans from established financial institutions instead of paying extortionate rates to loan sharks.

Second, it would be far cheaper for them to pay taxes of up to 2½ percent on their first \$250,000 worth of business to the Mexican Treasury (*Hacienda*) and have something to show for it than to keep paying multiple bribes, which end up being many times greater anyway.

Finally, making this change would likely increase respect for the law throughout society, since everyone knows that the only people who benefit from the current system are the corrupt officials who exploit the working poor.

### **The De Soto Example**

Fortunately, there are signs that at least some governments have recognized the wisdom of legitimizing and nurturing micro-businesses instead of harassing them. A key crusader in such efforts has been the noted economist Hernando de Soto, who has long focused on the problem of obtaining access for the poor capitalist.

Curiously, de Soto didn’t start out with any special interest in poor people. Born in southern Peru some 60 years ago, the son of a diplomat stationed in Geneva, he went to college in Peru and then on to Switzerland for his master’s degree. After working for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for awhile, he ran a Paris-based organization of copper-exporting nations. Swiss bank executives lured him away from that job to become the CEO of an engineering company owned by the bank. By the age of 39 he was financially independent and no longer had to work, so he decided to return to Peru.

As he walked down the busy streets of Lima one day, he observed the intense commercial activities of the stalls selling everything under the sun: food, building supplies, appliances, equipment, car parts, etc. All of these stalls were illegal, yet they were supporting entire extended families. A short distance outside the capital he saw innumerable squatter shacks; they, too, were illegal despite the fact that tens of thousands of families lived in them.

In 1983 he began to study these “micro-businesses”



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***Until fairly recently, the  
economic activity of  
street vendors was not  
counted as part of  
Mexico's gross domestic  
product.***

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and concluded that the traditional Marxian analysis, which saw the poor as exploited proletarians rather than budding capitalists, was, at best, inadequate and, at worst, misleading. True, they are exploited and discriminated against, not by greedy capitalist bosses but by the legal system itself, which leaves them at the mercy of corrupt officials and venal moneylenders. Nevertheless, he recently calculated that the assets of the world's poor exceed nine trillion dollars, which is 20 times the total amount of direct foreign investment in the Third World.

In 1986, de Soto wrote a book setting forth these conclusions, *The Other Path*, which made him well-known throughout Latin America. When Alberto Fujimori became president of Peru in 1990, de Soto became one of his top advisers. Soon 1.6 million of the country's 2.3 million illegal buildings were registered and titled. For the first time in Peru's history, this type of asset could be used as collateral by the poor to finance the start of a small business or to meet the needs of an ongoing one. In addition, 280,000 formerly illegal businesses were made legal so that their owners didn't have to pay corrupt cops or greedy politicians any more bribes. Nor did they have to go

to loan sharks for their financing.

The next step was for the banks to formalize the phase of the project that was to grant short-term credits and loans. Unfortunately, at this point de Soto broke with President Fujimori because of his refusal to enact democratic reforms of Peru's political process, and not long afterward, Fujimori was ousted as president and forced into exile. As a result, de Soto's credit reforms have not yet been implemented in Peru, but he has turned his attention abroad. Several major politicians have contacted him in the past several years to discuss implementing his ideas, including President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, former President Joseph Estrada of the Philippines, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti, several African presidents, and the president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn.

As de Soto has consistently pointed out, by changing their legal system to recognize micro-businesses, governments are simply acknowledging something that already exists and functions. He calls the current system "legal apartheid" and points out that the major difference between the developed and developing world is that in the former realm, legal titles, property rights, and business licenses are taken for granted at all levels of society. In developing countries, only the upper and middle classes are able to acquire titles and pay taxes.

Clearly, the change will take time and effort to implement on a practical level. The initial process of assigning title to individual owners, and resolving the inevitable spate of ownership disputes, will be tricky. (This is especially true because many of the beneficiaries of the change lack education or even literacy, and are used to operating in the shadows.) But in countries like Mexico where the state already owns all land, trans-

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*Whether classified as the  
“parallel economy,”  
the “informal sector,”  
or “micro-business,”  
the working poor’s  
output is substantial.*

---

ferring titles should be relatively simple.

It will also be crucial to simplify the labyrinthine requirements for obtaining deeds, titles and licenses and complying with the regulations governing business activity, to make compliance easier and less costly, particularly for those who can least afford to do so.

#### **A Revolution from Below**

Existing businesses will be sure to object to any steps that make life easier for street vendors, contending that they already underprice them thanks to lower operating expenses (for example, their electricity is often stolen from power lines) and bootlegged goods. This concern is certainly understandable, but given the huge disparity in scale of economic activity and the strong constituency for keeping established businesses going, such small owners are not likely to have a major impact. But even if they did, some special consideration by the government to legitimate retail shop owners would level the playing field.

Similarly, there will be political and social conflict because all those who currently profit from the system will suddenly be denied their ill-gotten gains. In particular, the

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police, some politicians and union officials, and moneylenders will be pre-empted because the poor will no longer be dependent upon them. However, to implement what is tantamount to a social revolution will give whatever political administration implements it enormous power and credibility with the people.

Why? It means that poor people who work at their own businesses — perhaps five to 10 million people in Mexico — will no longer have to live in fear that they will be discovered, thrown off their land, have their business disrupted or closed down, and be denied the commercial tools they need to make a living. With legal title as collateral, they should be able to secure loans at current rates like any other businessperson. With proper documentation, they should be able to transfer assets to heirs. In short, they will be able to sleep better at night because, for the first time in

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***It is likely that Mexico  
would not need foreign  
investment at all if it  
could turn its  
“dead capital” into  
money for growth.***

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their lives, they will be legitimate businesspeople with all of the rights and prerogatives due them.

It is likely that Mexico would not need foreign investment at all if it could turn its “dead capital” into money for growth. After all, Mexicans are already respected around the world for how hard they work and the

long hours they put in with only the most limited tools. Imagine how much more productive they could be if they had legal title to what they own, like land and buildings and houses, and could collateralize those assets for financing.

While he was still governor of the state of Guanajuato, before being elected president of Mexico in 2000, Vicente Fox consulted closely with Hernando de Soto about his ideas. As a businessman, Fox was already sympathetic to de Soto's approach and well-equipped to implement it. Yet even though de Soto has consistently warned that the process takes from 10 to 15 years to carry out, President Fox has done little to start. So the question is: when will Mexico begin?

It is long past time for the Mexican government to put into practice its recognition that micro-businesses not only exist but benefit the national economy. Doing so will bring in additional public tax revenues, which are badly needed to finance schools, health services, and other social services for the working poor.

Last fall, Hernando de Soto's new book, *The Mystery of Capital*, was published. It has sold 100,000 copies in Peru alone and is currently being translated into a dozen languages. De Soto has a wonderful metaphor for his work as an economist: in Bali, when you cross onto someone else's property, a different dog barks. He says his job is to translate those barks onto paper so that people can use these documents productively.

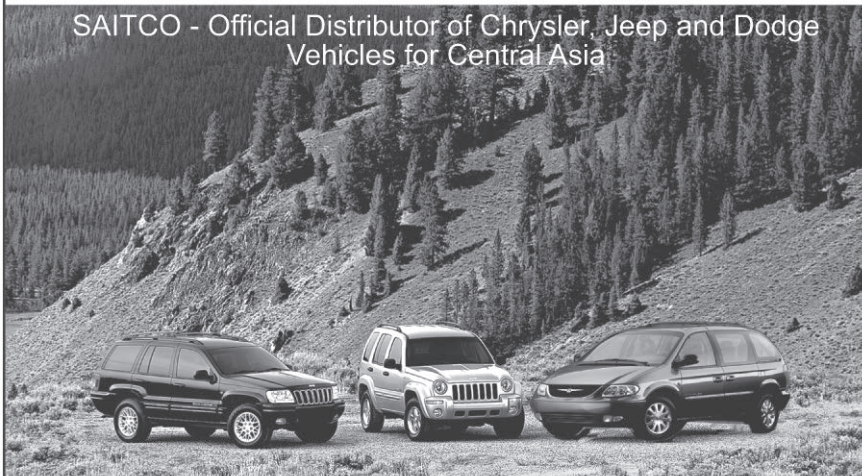
The same is true for USAID and the other international development agencies operating throughout the Third World. Until they learn the culture of the streets and how the lives of the working poor really function, and encourage governments to act on that knowledge, their aid and loans won't benefit those who need help the most. ■

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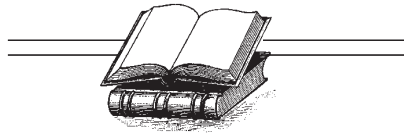


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# BOOKS

## The Problem of Nails

### Of Paradise and Power

Robert Kagan, Alfred A. Knopf, 2003, \$18.00, hardcover, 103 pages.

REVIEWED BY PAULO ALMEIDA

“A vulgar extravagance...” When Europe’s top diplomat — E.U. Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten — says that about an analysis of transatlantic relations, then the analyst (like a good clinician) must have been probing a sore spot.

Published in February, *Of Power and Paradise* is an elaboration of an essay Robert Kagan wrote last summer for *Policy Review* which sought to explain why the U.S. and the E.U. approach international problems differently. So what is it that Kagan said that provoked Patten’s decidedly undiplomatic comment to the *Financial Times* in March?

Truth be told, it could have been any number of things, but I suspect the final straw was Kagan’s assertion that Europe’s common foreign policy is the most “anemic” of the European Union’s institutions. That sounds like fightin’ words, but that’s Kagan’s point: the Europeans won’t fight.

Or, to put it more precisely, they have chosen instead to follow the path of incremental economic integration, which is the E.U.’s model for international conflict resolution.

Ever since the end of the Cold War, Kagan contends, the U.S. has been able to project power around the world unchallenged; the Europeans,

*“When you have  
a hammer,”  
Kagan quotes a  
British critic, “all  
problems start to  
look like nails.”*



for all their economic strength, cannot. Besides representing a competing model, the American predilection to resort to military might to settle conflicts also implicitly reminds the Europeans that their present paradise was only made possible by the application of large doses of U.S. military power, first to destroy Nazi Germany, then to contain the Soviet Union. This disparity in power is at the root of the differences between the U.S. and Europe on the best way to deal with terrorism and other threats.

One of Kagan’s many droll (and possibly even “vulgar”) analogies for the two sides’ respective perceptions of such threats is a Wild West town where the U.S. is the sheriff and Europe tends the bar. “Outlaws shoot sheriffs, not saloonkeepers,” Kagan observes. “In fact, from the saloonkeeper’s point of view, the sheriff trying to impose order by force can sometimes be more threatening than the outlaws, who, at least for the time being, may just want to buy a drink.” But while Kagan grants the European complaint that the U.S.

sometimes acts like a cowboy in certain situations, he maintains that in general, America is a benign cowboy — in other words, a sheriff, trying to keep the peace.

Or, to use another of Kagan’s analogies, the U.S. is from Mars, responding to threats with military force, and Europe is from Venus, responding “through engagement and seduction, through commercial and political ties, through forbearance and patience.” Indeed, throughout the book he seems to reduce threat perception to a simple function of response capability, or lack thereof. “When you have a hammer,” Kagan quotes a British critic, “all problems start to look like nails.” Choosing which nails need hitting, as was the case in the first Persian Gulf War in 1991 and in Kosovo in 1999, is the unaddressed challenge in the transatlantic relationship.

Disappointingly, Kagan’s slim volume tells only half the story. He dedicates himself largely to analyzing the preconditions and consequences of the lack of power in Europe, giving less attention to the analysis of how and why the U.S. wields its overwhelming military force ... rather ironic for a book about “paradise and power.” For example, Kagan simplistically implies that there is a uniform American response to external threats, heedless of possible internal constraints (e.g., political opposition, economic costs, body-bag syndrome, public indifference, isolationism) on the continuing projection of American power around the globe.

Still, despite such shortcomings, *Of Paradise and Power* is a thoughtful, sometimes witty, description of why so



many Europeans react the way they do to their American allies.

*Paulo Almeida was an FSO from 1985 to 1992, serving in Lisbon, Oporto, Harare and Washington, D.C. Since 1992, he has been an international affairs specialist at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

## It Is Glorious to Be Rich

### Red Capitalists in China: The Party, Private Entrepreneurs, and Prospects for Political Change

*Bruce J. Dickson, Cambridge University Press, 2003, \$65.00 (hardcover), \$23.00 (paperback), 187 pages.*

REVIEWED BY DAVID REUTHER

Western political scientists have long noticed that wealth and education, and a few other variables, correlate with the development of democracy. As Barrington Moore succinctly put it, “no bourgeoisie, no democracy.” Since the late 1980s, scholars have been studying economic reforms and the resurgence of private entrepreneurs in China. Acknowledging the role of entrepreneurs, the Communist Party accepted businesspersons into its ranks in 2001. *Red Capitalists in China: The Party, Private Entrepreneurs, and Prospects for Political Change* is based on research Professor Bruce Dickson carried out to test whether these “Red Capitalists” will be agents of future political reform as foreign liberals assume and Chinese conservatives fear.

He conducted surveys in 1997 and 1999 of entrepreneurs and Chinese government officials in eight widely scattered counties. These counties

were chosen to represent a variety of economic circumstances from robust markets to struggling backwaters. Part of the survey had been used in Taiwan, where it demonstrated that entrepreneurs were indeed agents for political change.

The survey results make clear that today’s Red Capitalists come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are Communist Party officials who quit the party to start a business, some are self-made entrepreneurs. On the emerging belief structure of Chinese entrepreneurs, the survey finds that all engage in some charitable activities, with businesspeople from the poorest counties more supportive of local civic activities than those in richer counties. Dickson concludes that the local entrepreneur is providing common goods that a poorly funded local government cannot supply.

Crucial to the Western theoretical debate about entrepreneurs and the road to pluralism and democracy is their ability to influence government policy. So the survey queried entrepreneurs and officials on the efficacy of business organizations, examining whether these associations are responsive to businesspeople or merely organs of control by the Leninist authorities. Strikingly, almost 70 percent of the businesspeople believe business associations can influence policy, whereas 75 percent of the government officials responded that business associations cannot influence policy. The survey also indicates that the likelihood of a convergence of interests between the state and business associations rises with economic development. Entrepreneurs in the most developed counties were much more likely to agree that their business associations represented the government’s point of view than those in the less developed counties.

Western political theory assumes

that the entrepreneur seeks autonomy in his dealings with the state and that achievement of autonomy is part of the path to political change. In reality, in market economies we often see Western businesses establish government affairs offices to engage in influence peddling and attempt to influence policy. Prof. Dickson’s survey suggests that contrary to theory, increased embeddedness, not greater autonomy, is the current preferred path for the successful businessperson. He concludes that these shared interests make it “less likely that entrepreneurs will serve as agents of political change...”

That conclusion may be premature. For one thing, at this stage in China’s development, government policy is decidedly business-friendly, so there is little incentive for friction. In addition, Dickson’s data indicates that entrepreneurs strongly favor the government’s policy of more transparent laws and regulations instead of the traditional Chinese personalized way of doing business.

One pending test of the current business-government relationship will be China’s implementation of its WTO responsibilities. We can expect Chinese entrepreneurs to support WTO rules which, in their eyes, help the economy to grow — but if the government, or the local entrepreneurs, want to be more protectionist, there may come a parting of the ways, opening a new path to political change.

All in all, Dickson’s findings will be disconcerting to those who seek to portray China in totalitarian terms and confounding to those Chinese conservatives and Western liberals who want to label the Red Capitalists a *prima facie* agent of change. ■

*David Reuther, a retired Foreign Service officer, is a member of the AFSA Governing Board.*



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# REFLECTIONS

## *A Peaceful Sunday in Guanajuato*

BY JOHN J. ST. JOHN

The year was 1962. The place was the Teatro Juárez, a tiny, century-old jewel of an opera house in the colonial Mexican city of Guanajuato.

On leave from my first Foreign Service posting as vice consul in industry-rich Monterrey, I had set out to see the “real Mexico.” At the recommendation of several Mexican friends, I put Guanajuato, a hidden gem and, in its day, the source of more than half the world’s silver, at the top of my list. As the guide proudly showed us the gold-leaf and red-velvet richness of the Teatro, he noted sadly that it now remained dark most of the year. He added, however, that the following day would bring an opportunity to see the theater come to life as three young opera singers from Mexico City’s Conservatory were coming to give a one-time concert.

I almost didn’t go. My vacation time was limited, and my appreciation of opera nearly nonexistent. And I thought, in my gringo complacency, how good could three unknowns from Mexico City be? How good indeed! The performance the following day was spectacular!

During the first, and for me the

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*Jack St. John began his Foreign Service career in Monterrey in 1961, and retired as director of Mexican Affairs in 1989. He also served in London, Managua and Geneva, and held two office directorships in the Economic Affairs Bureau. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair “Stamp Corner.”*

*That day in  
Guanajuato  
introduced me to a  
world of musical  
pleasure that  
brightened the  
subsequent 40 years.*



best, part of the recital, each of the three took turns at the piano while one or both of the others sang from a generous selection of the best known arias and duets in the popular repertoire, including much of the first act of “La Boheme,” the glorious duet from “The Pearl Fishers” and many, many more. And the voices! I had never heard such singing! No one was protecting their voice or giving a minimal effort to a provincial audience. To the contrary, they sometimes put the crystal lamps at the rear of the auditorium at serious risk. The atmosphere in the theater was electric. For over two hours the public and performers fed off each other. The three artists were obviously enjoying every moment, and we in the audience were ecstatic. After intermission, they staged — in its brief entirety — Gian Carlo Menotti’s “The Telephone.” The standing ovation at the end was long and heartfelt.

After the show, I wandered around the Jardín Unión, the triangle-shaped plaza adjacent to the Teatro. As I passed the theater, the three singers emerged together from the front entrance. Reflexively, I checked my shirt pocket. Yes, the concert program was still there. It would be easy to walk up and ask the three to autograph my program. But wouldn’t that be a bit undignified? I was a vice consul of the United States, for God’s sake. And wouldn’t I be invading their privacy? So I walked away. Big mistake!

I wondered then, and for a couple of years thereafter, if what my untrained ears had heard that day was really as good as I thought. I decided I would commit the performers’ names to memory, just in case one of them might some day make it to “the big time.” One of the three, Javier (stage name “Franco”) Iglesias, was from Monterrey, and thus already familiar. The name of the other male singer, the one I thought was perhaps even better than Iglesias, would have been harder to remember, but luckily I noticed it could — by stretching a point — be translated into English as “Peaceful Sunday.”

That day in Guanajuato introduced me to a world of musical pleasure that brightened the subsequent 40 years. And although I don’t have an autographed program to show off to friends, I do have one helluva good cocktail party story and the knowledge that I was one of the very first Norteamericanos to be enthralled by the voice of Plácido Domingo. ■

# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • July-August 2003

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY

### AFSA Hosts Retirees and Adds Names to Plaque

Hundreds of Foreign Service retirees came together for Foreign Affairs Day 2003, a day of homecoming ceremonies and briefings celebrated on May 9.

AFSA's main event tied to Foreign Affairs Day was the dedication of six new names to the AFSA Memorial Plaque in honor of Foreign Service mem-

bers who died in the line of duty, a solemn reminder of the danger and hardship that can be part of a Foreign Service career. AFSA also hosted a ceremony during Foreign Affairs Day to bestow Merit Awards on talented Foreign Service students (see page 10).

Foreign Affairs Day began with a keynote address by Director General Ruth A. Davis that included her reading of a presidential proclamation. (The full text of President Bush's message is posted on the AFSA Web site at [www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org).) The day concluded with an informal reception at AFSA headquarters offering a chance for retirees to relax and catch up with old friends.

AFSA also took advantage of the presence of the retirees in Washington to host our third annual Day on the Hill on May 8 (see page 4).

#### Memorial Plaque Ceremony

This year, the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony was held in front of the plaque in the C St. lobby before a gathering of some



Secretary of State Colin Powell dedicates this year's additions to the AFSA Memorial Plaque.

#### This Issue in Brief:



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#### LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN DIPLOMACY

### George Shultz

AFSA is honored to present the 2003 AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy to former Secretary of State George Shultz. Previous recipients of this award were U. Alexis Johnson, Frank Carlucci, George H.W. Bush, Lawrence Eagleburger, Cyrus Vance, David Newsom and Lee Hamilton. "His is a name that the American people connect with selfless public service and solid integrity," Secretary of State Colin Powell said about Shultz, "a name that is synonymous with American statesmanship, a name that people all over the world recognize and which they associate with principled international engagement."



Shultz was a beloved Secretary of State from 1982 to 1989, one who always looked out for the interests of the Foreign Service and all State Department employees.

Secretary Powell is scheduled to present the award to George Shultz at the AFSA Award Ceremony on June 26 in the Department of State's Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room. All of this year's awards will be presented at this ceremony. (See the interview with Secretary Shultz in the June *Foreign Service Journal*, p. 47. Articles about the Dissent Award winners and the Exemplary Performance Award winners start on page 5 of this issue of *AFSA News*. Look for coverage of the awards ceremony in the September *AFSA News*.)

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 5



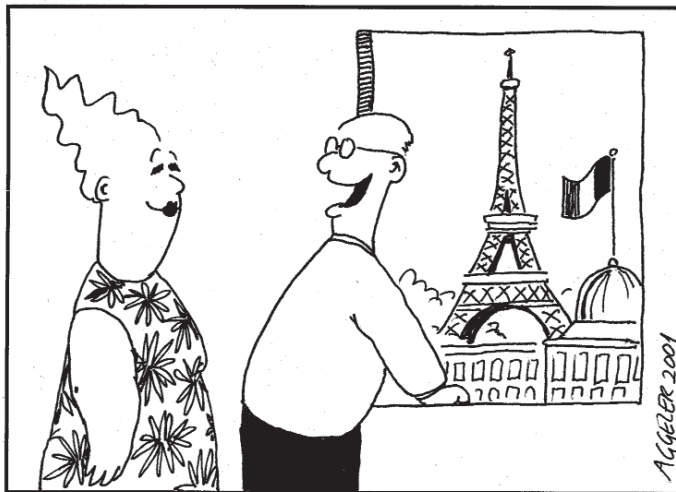
## AFSA Achieves Success for Retirees

AFSA has been urging State to give Foreign Service retirees the same annuity deduction options as Civil Service retirees. We have had success on this for AFSA dues, CFC donations, long-term care premiums and savings bonds. What was still pending until recently was Medicare B premiums, which required more software. The condition from Medicare was that at least 20 annuitants had to request it. AFSA put the word out to retirees, which resulted in 50 requests to State. Because of this, State will soon offer such allotments.

AFSA is pleased to have achieved this success on behalf of current – and future – retirees.

## Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER, FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER & CARTOONIST



“I SEE WHY THEY CALL IT THE PARIS OF FRANCE.”

## New Staff at AFSA

AFSA welcomed two new staff members in May, Steven Tipton and Bonnie Brown. Steven has joined the AFSA staff as our accounting assistant. He is a graduate of the University of South Alabama and currently enrolled at the University of Maryland as an accounting major.

Bonnie Brown has taken over responsibilities for AFSA liaison with retirees as the retiree activities coordinator. Bonnie is an attorney and Foreign Service spouse with many years of distinguished service overseas.

## AFSA Building Constituency for the Foreign Service

The mission of the Fund for American Diplomacy, a nonprofit organization coordinated by AFSA, is to build a domestic constituency for the Foreign Service. It does this by conducting outreach and education programs throughout the U.S. For the first time in 2002, the FAD participated in the Combined Federal Campaign, the federal employee workplace fund drive. With reporting from 80 percent of the more than 430 individual campaigns that comprise the federal CFC, pledges to the FAD total \$7,000. Of that, \$5,000 came from the National Capital Area CFC (Washington, D.C.-area) while the remaining \$2,000 was donated from folks across the U.S. and overseas. Given that pledges are just that, the FAD should expect to receive about 80 percent of any pledge figure as individuals can stop their CFC deduction at any time (and for any reason, including change of employment).

The CFC contributions to the FAD illustrate that there is an interest in supporting public affairs initiatives that stress the importance of America's leadership role abroad. The FAD will continue to participate in the CFC and offer programs such as Elderhostel and AFSA's Speakers Bureau.

For more information on the Fund for American Diplomacy, contact Lori Dec at 1 (800) 704-2372, ext. 504 or [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org).

Briefs continued on page 12

## How to Contact Us:

### AFSA HEADQUARTERS:

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

### STATE DEPARTMENT AFSA OFFICE:

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

### USAID AFSA OFFICE:

(202) 712-1941; Fax: (202) 216-3710

### AFSA Internet and E-mail addresses:

AFSA WEB SITE: [www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org)

AFSA E-MAIL: [afsa@afsa.org](mailto:afsa@afsa.org)

AFSA NEWS: [afsanews@afsa.org](mailto:afsanews@afsa.org)

FSJ: [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org)

PRESIDENT: [naland@afsa.org](mailto:naland@afsa.org)

STATE VP: [cranek@state.gov](mailto:cranek@state.gov)

RETIREE VP: [farrand@member.afsa.org](mailto:farrand@member.afsa.org)

USAID VP: [jpastic@usaid.gov](mailto:jpastic@usaid.gov)

FAS VP: [afsafas@fas.usda.gov](mailto:afsafas@fas.usda.gov)

FCS VP: [peter.frederick@mail.doc.gov](mailto:peter.frederick@mail.doc.gov)

### AFSA News

Editor Shawn Dorman: [dorman@afsa.org](mailto:dorman@afsa.org)  
(202) 338-4045 x 503; Fax: (202) 338-8244

On the Web: [www.afsa.org/news](http://www.afsa.org/news)

### Staff:

Executive Director Susan Reardon: [reardon@afsa.org](mailto:reardon@afsa.org)

### Business Department

Controller Kalpna Simal: [simal@afsa.org](mailto:simal@afsa.org)

Accounting Assistant Steven Tipton: [tipton@afsa.org](mailto:tipton@afsa.org)

### Labor Management

General Counsel Sharon Papp: [papps@state.gov](mailto:papps@state.gov)

Labor Management Attorney Zlatana Badrich: [badrichz@state.gov](mailto:badrichz@state.gov)

Labor Management Specialist James Yorke: [yorkej@state.gov](mailto:yorkej@state.gov)

USAID Senior Labor Management Advisor Douglas Broome: [dbroome@usaid.gov](mailto:dbroome@usaid.gov)

USAID Office Manager Suzan Reager: [sreager@usaid.gov](mailto:sreager@usaid.gov)

Grievance Attorneys Harry Sizer: [sizerhs@state.gov](mailto:sizerhs@state.gov), and Neera Parikh: [parikhn@state.gov](mailto:parikhn@state.gov)

Office Manager Christine Warren: [warrenc@state.gov](mailto:warrenc@state.gov)

### Member Services

Director Janet Hedrick: [hedrick@afsa.org](mailto:hedrick@afsa.org)

Representative Lindsay Peyton: [peyton@afsa.org](mailto:peyton@afsa.org)

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

### Outreach Programs

Retiree Liaison Bonnie Brown: [brown@afsa.org](mailto:brown@afsa.org)

Director of Communications Thomas Switzer: [switzer@afsa.org](mailto:switzer@afsa.org)

Congressional Affairs Director Ken Nakamura: [nakamura@afsa.org](mailto:nakamura@afsa.org)

Corporate Relations/Executive Assistant Marc Goldberg: [goldberg@afsa.org](mailto:goldberg@afsa.org)

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

Professional Issues Coordinator Barbara Berger: [berger@afsa.org](mailto:berger@afsa.org)

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IBB REPRESENTATIVE: Vacant

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# FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY

Continued from page 1

400 people. Secretary of State Colin Powell and USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios assisted AFSA President John Naland in dedicating six new names inscribed on the plaque. Five of the six died in years past but were honored now due to the 2001 change in the criteria to include Foreign Service members who died overseas in the line of duty (in addition to the previous criteria of “heroic or other inspirational circumstances”). This year’s honorees were:

- Laurence Foley, USAID, Jordan 2002
- Jerry Cook, State, Madagascar 1978
- Richard Coulter, State, Iran 1975
- Howard Funk Jr., State, Kenya 1972
- Oscar Holder, USAID, Nepal 1962
- Sidney Jacques, USAID, Nepal 1962

Among the guests at the ceremony were the families and friends of these six Foreign Service members who paid the ultimate price for serving our country. AFSA President Naland extended to them AFSA’s sincere gratitude for the contributions that their loved ones had made serving America. He also recognized the family members and friends for the sacrifices that they had made and the pain that they had endured. The Jordanian ambassador to the U.S. was

among the attendees honoring the memory of USAID FSO Laurence Foley.

Secretary Powell, in his remarks, said: “It is fitting that these memorial plaques grace our lobby. They remind all of us who work here, and visitors from across the globe who enter this hall, that ours is a mission of service: service to the nation, service to each other, service to mankind. ... It is also a mission that frequently entails hardship, and often, all too often, it is a mission that carries great risks, for surely, as our fellow Americans in uniform do, the dedicated men and women of the Department of State family serve and sacrifice on the front lines of freedom ... The men and women whose names are etched before you ... did not expect to leave the people they loved so soon. But on the day that they died, each one of them got out of bed and set forth on their chosen mission of service, service to their fellow citizens and to the values that we hold dear and share with the rest of the world, and service to the men, women and children of other lands whose hopes for a better future are linked to ours.”

The AFSA Memorial Plaque ceremony received substantial coverage by the broadcast media. CNN, MSNBC, and FOX carried excerpts. NBC and ABC fed coverage for use by their local affiliates. C-SPAN Radio and Associated Press radio also broadcast the ceremony.

The first memorial plaque was erected by AFSA in 1933 at a ceremony presided over by Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson. With this year’s additions, the AFSA Memorial Plaque honors a total of 215 fallen colleagues. The first, William Palfrey, was chosen by the Continental Congress in 1780 to serve as Consul General in France, but was lost at sea en route to post. During the following 180 years, 73 other Americans died while serving abroad in foreign affairs. Sadly,



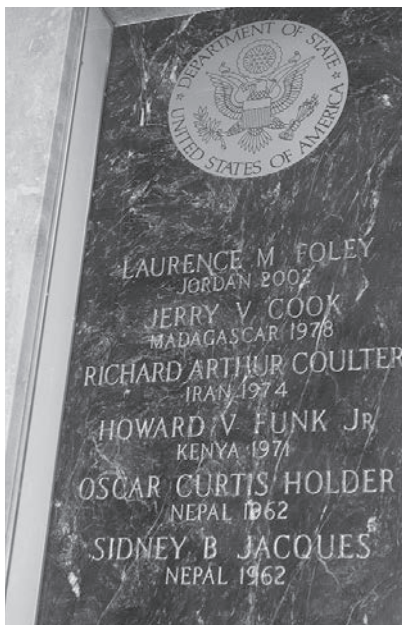
USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios speaks at the plaque ceremony.

over the most recent 43 years another 141 names have been added to the plaque — a rate of more than three a year. Since 1975, employees have been killed in 36 different countries.



Family members and guests at the plaque ceremony.

AFSA warmly thanks Secretary Powell, Director General Davis, and Foreign Affairs Day Coordinator Peter Whaley for helping to make the Memorial Plaque ceremony such a success. Thanks also go to the following AFSA staff: Executive Director Susan Reardon, Executive Assistant Marc Goldberg, Professional Issues Coordinator Barbara Berger, Legislative Affairs Director Ken Nakamura, Communications Director Tom Switzer, and legislative intern Suzanne Sivertsen. □



New names added to the memorial plaque.

# DAY ON THE HILL

## AFSA Members Go to the Hill

BY ASGEIR SIGFUSSON, PUBLIC AFFAIRS INTERN

A group of approximately 50 Foreign Service retirees, AFSA Governing Board officials and AFSA staff made the journey to Capitol Hill on May 8. This was AFSA's third annual Day on the Hill event, timed to coincide with the visit of many State Department retirees to Washington for Foreign Affairs Day. The day was a great success. Following a rough start in 2001, when Day on the Hill took place on Sept. 11, this event has become one of AFSA's highest-profile efforts to increase its visibility and secure congressional support for legislative initiatives of greatest importance to the FS.

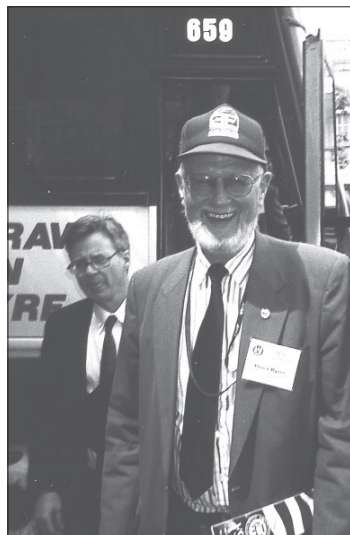
The AFSA delegation went to speak to lawmakers about the administration's Fiscal Year 2004 budget request for international affairs as well as other professional and bread-and-butter issues. The group urged increased funding for securing "soft targets" abroad. There has been progress making U.S. embassies more secure, but less has been

done to provide security for members of the Foreign Service and their families when not on the embassy or consulate grounds. The tragic October 2002 murder of USAID employee Laurence Foley in Amman, Jordan, while standing in his driveway, further illustrates the serious need for more resources.

This year, the AFSA delegation included members from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, California, Idaho, Ohio, New York and Florida. During a brunch at AFSA headquarters, the participants received a briefing, as well as talking points, from AFSA on key issues of concern for the Foreign Service. Following the preparatory meet-

ings, the group boarded a bus and headed to the Hill.

The first stop was the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing room in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Brian McKeon (Democratic Chief Counsel for the Foreign Relations Committee and a staffer for Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del.) addressed the group and answered questions. He welcomed the AFSA members and thanked them for the dedication that they had shown throughout their careers.



Retired FSO Bruce Byers and other retirees arrive at Capitol Hill (left). AFSA Governing Board members and retirees are briefed by a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffer.

He then discussed the recent agenda of both the committee as well as the Senate itself. McKeon acknowledged that in the post-Sept. 11 era, there is a natural increase in awareness of foreign affairs and diplomacy, which could lead to further funding in some cases. However, he cautioned that the current situation does not look promising for further increases in foreign assistance funding.

Following McKeon's speech, the AFSA group fanned out and met with 23 different congressional offices, including meetings with four members of the House of Representatives. The AFSA groups were warmly received during their meetings, and many members of Congress

provided a sympathetic ear. Frederic Baron, a member of Maryland Democratic Senator Barbara Mikulski's staff, was especially enthusiastic receiving the AFSA delegation, since he had been a Foreign Service officer himself. He emphasized the senator's support for the Foreign Service and its concerns, but warned that because of a potentially "ugly budget year" ahead, increased budget allocations might be hard to come by. The AFSA delegation visiting Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif.,

was pleased when his office promised strong support on the issue of securing soft targets.

Overall, the AFSA Day on the Hill participants received a positive and supportive reception and left the Hill satisfied that their concerns were heard by those with the power to address them.

Thanks go to AFSA's Legislative Director Ken Nakamura, Legislative Affairs Intern Suzanne Sivertsen, and Executive Assistant Marc Goldberg for the tremendous effort that made the visit a success. AFSA will build on the success of this year's visit to Congress to ensure even greater success on the legislative front in the coming year. □

## AFSA'S 2003 DISSENT AWARD WINNERS

These awards publicly recognize individuals who have demonstrated the courage to challenge the system from within.

### Christian A. Herter Award

FOR A SENIOR-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

*James B. Warlick, June H. Kunsman,  
Kim Marie Gendin, Natasha Franceschi*



Left to right: Vice Consul Natasha Franceschi, Deputy Consul General June Kunsman, Consul General James Warlick and Consul Kim Gendin.

A member of Congress invited Dragomir Karic, a Serb resident in Moscow, to attend the February 2003 National Prayer Breakfast in Washington. When Karic applied for a visa at Embassy Moscow, the visa was denied. Karic had been a key aide to then-President Slobodan Milosevic; he and his family were on a European Union list of people — a list including the Milosevic family and other war criminals — banned from entering E.U. countries. Karic's name was also in the visa lookout system.

The congressman did not take no for an answer, and began to put pressure on the State Department to expedite processing and to issue the visa. Pressure to issue was then put on the Embassy Moscow consular section, under the leadership of Consul General James Warlick, from several bureaus in the department, including by senior-level personnel.

James Warlick, Deputy Consul General June Kunsman, Consul Kim Marie (Gendin) Sonn, and Vice Consul Natasha Franceschi — working together and in agreement — sent a message back to Washington stating that “someone may want to check further into Karic's background (and) carefully consider whether authorization is warranted. Post is not in a position to recommend authorization.” The Consular Affairs Bureau in the department supported Embassy Moscow's position, but further urging to issue the visa came to the embassy from another bureau. Still the embassy refused, a decision subsequently upheld by the Department of Justice.

Embassy Moscow's consular officials stood firm in their commitment to upholding the law and protecting U.S. security interests in the face of strong pressure to disregard both. It is well-known within the Foreign Service that many members of Congress routinely question visa decisions made by consular officers around the world and often urge reversal of a visa denial if they have an interest in a particular case. Consular officers respond to these inquiries with professionalism, and each case is reviewed on its merits. The handling of the Karic case by officials of the Embassy Moscow consular section further illustrates the integrity that is present in our consular corps.

James Warlick is minister counselor for consular affairs and consul general in Moscow. Previous posts include Bonn, Manila, Dhaka, and Washington, where positions included special assistant to Secretary of State Eagleburger and a stint on the executive secretariat of the Operations Center. Kim Marie Sonn joined the Foreign Service in 1997 and has served in Shanghai and Sarajevo. Natasha Franceschi was a Presidential Management Intern at State before joining the Foreign Service. Embassy Moscow is her first Foreign Service posting. June Kunsman has served in Mexico City, San Jose, Krakow, Islamabad and Washington.

### The W. Averell Harriman Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE JUNIOR OFFICER

*Dean Kaplan*

During his first tour in the Foreign Service, Dean Kaplan exercised his right to dissent in a bold and professional manner, and he got results.

In late 2000, the government of Nigeria offered a 48-hour window of opportunity for the U.S. to take custody of four criminal suspects whose extradition the U.S. had been seeking for over five years. The U.S. government accepted the offer, pleased to take custody of the suspects, even though the full legal extradition process was not completed. First-tour officer Dean Kaplan questioned the wisdom of circumventing the judicial extradition process, asking how expediency in the area of law enforcement could be reconciled



Dean Kaplan in Ghana.

with the mission's explicit commitment, stated in the Mission Performance Plan, to help Nigeria build greater respect for the rule of law.

Kaplan worked his way through the embassy chain of command,

arguing that in this case, the goal of combating narcotics trafficking and international crime conflicted with its goal of promoting the rule of law, due process and respect for human rights. He then drafted a dissent cable arguing for a change of policy that would emphasize legal extradition as the means of access to criminal suspects in Nigeria. Before sending the cable, he sought the advice of the principal officer, who encouraged Kaplan to hold the cable until the arrival of the incoming ambassador. Kaplan did so, and then discussed the issue with the newly-arrived ambassador. He informed him of his discontent with the policy and suggested that he seek the opinions of the law enforcement community, the former chargé and others, before reaching a conclusion. The ambassador convened a meeting, during which Kaplan argued his position. The ambassador decided the mission would make the case to Washington that the U.S. government should reject such renditions, while urging reform toward legal extraditions.

By the time the Nigerian authorities offered up three more suspects for rendition, a new policy was in place and the offer was rejected. While there was considerable dissatisfaction in some quarters with the new policy, the clear U.S. stance that judicial extraditions were the only route to stronger bilateral law enforcement cooperation focused Nigerian attention on the importance of adhering to the rule of law. By 2002, the first judicial extradition from Nigeria had been accomplished.

“The outcome would not have been possible,” says Kaplan, “without the open-minded and flexible management of Ambassador Howard Jeter, Chargé Nancy Serpa, PO/DCM Tim Andrews, Political Counselor John Bauman, and the support — whether in agreement or disagreement — of many colleagues in Abuja and Lagos.”

Kaplan is part of a tandem couple with his wife, Crystal. They have one daughter. His next posting is to Kathmandu.

Dissent Awards • Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

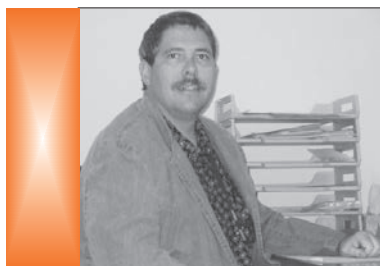
## The Tex Harris Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

### Charles A. O'Malley

Charles O'Malley served in New Delhi, India, from 1999 to 2002 as the information programs supervisor. He also served the community as the AFSA representative at this large embassy, and it is in that position that he was instrumental in calling attention to the serious and deleterious work environment and poor morale at post. His activism led to improvement in the situation.

As an active AFSA rep, O'Malley kept his finger on the pulse of staff morale. He kept his constituents informed by setting up an AFSA page on the embassy's Web site, which fast became a well-appreciated source of useful information. Embassy New Delhi was already one of the busiest missions in the world before



Charles O'Malley

it became a front-line state in the war against terrorism. In the fall of 2001, following the arrival of a new chief of mission, embassy morale began a dramatic decline.

Demands from the ambassador exacerbated pressures already imposed by

the tense political climate. Some staff members requested their tours of duty be cut short. Many of those that did not curtail argued that the front office's requests were diverting resources and attention from more urgent tasks. The work environment deteriorated further.

Out of concern for the staff and the impact poor morale was having on the mission's ability to meet important national security objectives, O'Malley alerted AFSA headquarters to the situation. His action focused AFSA's attention on what had largely been anecdotal evidence forwarded to AFSA via individual e-mails and phone conversations. He later briefed the Inspector General's staff as well.

It was O'Malley's balanced, non-polemical approach that made the difference. It was clear he bore no personal grudge; his was an concerned but objective voice. When department staff went to post to investigate the actual state of morale, O'Malley was one person every visitor needed to meet, and his voice was heard.

The department's focus on New Delhi had an impact; working conditions and morale improved. O'Malley credits AFSA with keeping him on track, "during a time when many others encouraged me to drop the issue for fear it would hurt my career." This case serves as an example of how AFSA can help focus the problems of individuals into a coherent call for change for the whole mission, a call that management must answer.

O'Malley has also served in Bujumbura and Singapore, and is currently serving in Bridgetown. He was the AFSA representative in Singapore and is playing the same role in Bridgetown. He joined the Foreign Service as an information management specialist in 1994 following 10 years as a U.S. Navy cryptologic technician. He tells us, "My career with the Department of State has been amazing and I cannot possibly imagine myself doing anything else, anywhere else." He and his wife Salvacion Agero O'Malley have a 7-year-old son.

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

## Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

### Laura Baer

"Her dedication, interpersonal grace and professional excellence have sustained this post during the most trying times," writes Embassy Islamabad's economic counselor. "She is an extraordinary example for all of us in the Foreign Service and her performance in Islamabad warrants extraordinary recognition."

During two of the most challenging years ever for Embassy Islamabad — including the aftermath of 9/11, Operation Enduring Freedom in neighboring Afghanistan, two war scares with India, the March 2002 terrorist attack on a church that took the lives of two members of the embassy community, and several evacuations (including evacuation of her three children) —



Laura Baer

Economic Section Office Management Specialist Laura Baer served as a constant source of strength for the mission. As Pakistan was transformed into a front-line state in the war on terrorism, Baer became the obvious choice for coordination of the flood of high-level visitors and 200 temporary-duty personnel. She worked day and night to support the numerous visits by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Treasury Secretary and over 40 members of Congress.

Baer played a central role in the embassy's response to the tragic church attack, serving as the de facto crisis secretariat, relaying information to embassy staff and families and tracking down unaccounted-for staff. Embassy staff and families found comfort and strength in her calm demeanor as news of the death of two members of the embassy community came in and the full depth of the tragedy was realized.

Her extraordinary professional skills and performance attracted assignments usually reserved for FSOs. In 2001 and 2002, Baer coordinated the Mission Program Plan review and drafted reporting cables relating to U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. She was an essential resource for newcomers to post, as she expertly oriented them on everything from life in Islamabad to the drafting of cables. Her carefully cultivated contacts in the Pakistani bureaucracy ensured that almost any appointment needed would be secured.

When the commissary was without American management due to the evacuations, Baer served as acting general manager and cut costs in response to sharply decreased business. Displaying creative problem-solving skills and sensitivity to the needs of others, she launched a successful charity drive to donate unused food to a local orphanage. The commissary avoided a financial loss, the orphanage received needed assistance, and the embassy projected a positive image to the local community.

Baer joined the department 20 years ago, and has served in Damascus, Brussels, Khartoum, Rabat, Paris and Islamabad. Her next posting is Beirut. "I love my job," says Baer, "and the people I have worked with who are the very best of the Foreign Service. After all these years, I am as thrilled going to Beirut this summer as 20 years ago when I went off to my first assignment in Damascus."

## Avis Bohlen Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY MEMBER

### Bonnie Miller

Described as “an elemental and positive force of nature in the rocky Greek-American landscape,” Bonnie Miller has made a difference in the lives of countless women and children in Greece. She courageously moved obstacles thought immovable in the war against human trafficking, and brought a warm light of empathy to thousands of families in Greece struggling with their children’s learning disabilities.



Her interweaving of the personal and political, whether in a classroom or on Greek national television, has advanced America’s interests in Greece in unexpected ways and beyond the normal channels of conventional diplomacy.

Miller first became involved in efforts to end human trafficking in Bosnia, and continued this involvement in Greece. Her 30-plus years as a psychotherapist and her skills as an educator, organizer and networker, have made her a truly effective advocate for victims of trafficking. Miller’s efforts helped build the public momentum that led to the successful passage of a tough new law to prosecute human traffickers.

Working on many fronts, Miller’s influence has been broad. As a psychotherapist who has worked with battered women, she has assisted non-governmental organizations in establishing programs to help rescued women. As an



Embassy Athens volunteers with kids from the Ark, an organization that provides food, clothing, recreation, and education for refugee and homeless children.

organizer and master networker, she has forged productive links between NGO activists and Greek officials. As an educator, she has taught Greek college students about the problems of human trafficking. As a noted personality with a high media profile in Greece, and as the ambassador’s wife, she has brought wider attention to the human trafficking issue.

A strong advocate for children with learning problems, Bonnie Miller is a founding member of the Greek Institute for the Study of Learning Disabilities and has mobilized educators and parents to actively seek to help children with learning disabilities. She wrote and produced a training video on learning disabilities that has been distributed to educators and interested parents through the Greek Ministry of Education and UNESCO. She has also authored books on parenting and educational reform, which have been translated into both Bosnian and Greek and distributed to thousands of educators in both countries, as well as in neighboring countries.

“All of our Foreign Service posts have been interesting in their own unique ways and offered much opportunity for growth,” says Miller. She was the runner-up for the Bohlen Award in 2001 and 2002 for her work in Bosnia. Bonnie is married to Tom Miller, ambassador to Greece, and they have been part of the Foreign Service family for 27 years, serving in Chiang Mai, Sarajevo, Athens and Washington, D.C.

## M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

### Joy Bacik

Joy Bacik could not be a better community liaison officer. Her indispensable support to the Embassy Jakarta community during the longest-lasting drawdown from Jakarta in five years serves as an illustration of the true and best meaning of the words “community liaison.”



With little notice, Bacik was evacuated from Jakarta along with all other embassy family members and half of the embassy staff. During the five-month evacuation, Bacik stood watch over the community from the Family Liaison Office in the State Department. “Joy’s enthusiasm motivates everyone with whom she comes in contact. I receive weekly testimonials from grateful evacuees and their family members still at post about the extent to which their ability to withstand the months of separation is due largely to Joy’s great efforts,” says Ambassador Ralph Boyce in Jakarta.

In his nomination, the ambassador called Bacik “a superb communicator, a staunch advocate, a creative planner, an enthusiastic organizer, a terrific motivator, and a tremendously effective CLO coordinator.” During months away from post, Bacik served as the critical focal point in Washington for evacuees and for embassy staff still in Jakarta. She routinely telephoned and e-mailed evacuees wherever they were to check in, listen to their concerns and pass these concerns on to the right people. In this way, many problems were solved before they turned into crises. Bacik wrote weekly newsletters to the evacuee community to keep them informed and help them with administrative processes. She organized town meetings and maintained a dialogue with department management and with the ambassador in Jakarta.

Evacuations can be extremely stressful, especially when weeks and months go by without a clear indication of when community members might return to post. Bacik was always ready to listen to individual concerns of evacuees and then to help them navigate the sometimes overwhelming bureaucracy and unfamiliar territory of the State Department.



Joy Bacik on a visit to the island of Bali.

In April, the evacuation ended and Bacik returned to post to continue her impressive activities there. Her many other activities in Jakarta included facilitating a teen-produced video on life in Jakarta for the Overseas Briefing Center; setting up an innovative teen security program; lining up informative and

entertaining lunchtime guest speakers; and developing a two-day orientation program for newcomers.

Joy is married to Byron Bacik, the assistant regional security officer at the embassy. She was born in Malaysia and came to the U.S. in 1989 to study music. She has a bachelor of music in piano performance from Pittsburg State University in Kansas and an MBA from the same university. She has worked as a senior consultant for Cap Gemini Ernst and Young in Chicago. She was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 2001. Jakarta is her first Foreign Service posting.

## AFSA Special Achievement Award Mette Beecroft

The unifying theme in Mette Beecroft's 33 years of Foreign Service life (as both spouse and employee) has been advocacy for "quality of life" issues for FS employees and their families. AFSA is honoring her with a special achievement award for her countless efforts and achievements that have made life better for members of the Foreign Service community.

A quarter-century ago, as a board member of the Association of American Foreign Service Women (now the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide, or AAFSW), Beecroft was a driving force behind the creation of the Family Liaison Office and the overseas Community Liaison Offices. A major AAFSW report — based on a 6,000-person survey — proposed the opening of a family liaison office to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in 1978, and Beecroft was selected as the first deputy director of the newly-created FLO. "As we had no specific instruction, it was up to Janet Lloyd (the first FLO director) and me to shape the program," Beecroft says.

Over the next 15 years, accompanying her husband abroad, Beecroft worked tirelessly and imaginatively to expand and strengthen the FLO-CLO infrastructure. She served as CLO in Bonn (1980-83) and in Brussels (1991-94), and as temporary CLO or CLO adviser in Cairo (1983-85), Ouagadougou (1988-91) and Amman (1994-96).

Since 1996 Beecroft has been in Washington, D.C., where she has served three terms as AAFSW president. She is now AAFSW president-emerita. Wearing her AAFSW hat, she has worked with AFSA on numerous initiatives, including scholarships, Elderhostel, legislative initiatives and other programs. Since 2000 Beecroft has also been a full-time employee of the State Department's Transportation office, helping make the division more customer-friendly.

The winner of many previous awards, including the Department of State Superior Honor Award, Beecroft cites the FLO/CLO "mentality" to explain her extraordinary career of outstanding dedication and energy in the service of FS families. "This mentality is characterized by the will to safeguard and improve the quality of life for us all, the patience to advocate for change no matter how tedious, the concern to provide people with individual, non-bureaucratic support when they need it, and," says Beecroft, "a sense of outrage in the face of situations, regulations or practices that are unacceptable and need to be changed."

Mette Beecroft attended Wellesley College and Middlebury College, and received a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Her husband, Robert Mason Beecroft, is currently serving as ambassador and chief of mission at the OSCE in Sarajevo. The Beecrofts have two grown children, Pamela and Christopher.



Mette Beecroft (right) with Alma Powell in May 2001.



Beecroft, joined by Sec. Powell, presenting the AAFSW/Secretary of State Awards for Outstanding Volunteerism in May 2002.

## AFSA Retired Member Achievement Award Richard (Dick) Thompson

Richard (Dick) Thompson is a dedicated member of AFSA who has given of himself in the past and continues to give to the association and to the Foreign Service. "I am very grateful to AFSA for this honor," Dick said, on being named for the award. "My years of involvement with AFSA have made me understand clearly the importance of the work of the association, which many members of the Foreign Service do not seem to recognize."

Following retirement in January 1988, Dick joined the AFSA staff as coordinator for professional issues, a position he held until 2000. Throughout these 12 years, Dick's service went far beyond

his part-time salary. "Dick came to the office on an almost full-time basis although he was only paid for a half-time position," says AFSA Executive Director Susan Reardon. "I believe he did this due to his dedication and love of both the Foreign Service and AFSA."

As professional issues coordinator, Dick's chief responsibility was for the memorial plaque and awards programs. But he also organized speaker



Dick Thompson

lunches, served as acting scholarship administrator and development director, helped establish AFSA's speakers bureau and minority internships in the State Department, and staffed AFSA elections.

After retiring from the AFSA staff, Dick has continued to serve as a volunteer on the AFSA Election and Awards and Memorial Plaque Committees. He also proofreads the *Foreign Service Journal* each month, and his eye for detail and extensive knowledge of the Foreign Service and key personnel contribute significantly to the accuracy of the *Journal*. He continues to be a fount of knowledge — shared regularly and with good cheer — on the history of AFSA and the Foreign Service for AFSA staff members.

Dick was born in Spokane, Wash., in 1933, and grew up in Pullman, Wash., home of Washington State University, where his father was a professor of French and later Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dick received a B.A. in political science from WSU in 1955, an M.A. (Oxon.) from Oxford University in England as a Rhodes Scholar, and an M.A. in government from Georgetown University.

Following two years of service in the U.S. Army, Dick entered the Foreign Service in 1960. Service included postings to Aruba, Curacao, Niamey, Saigon (two and one-half tours), Paris, Algeria and Washington, D.C. The highlights of his Foreign Service career were participation in the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam, which led to the 1973 Paris Agreement, and supporting the talks in Algiers that resulted in the freeing of the Tehran hostages in January 1981.

## AFSA Active-Duty Achievement Award Cecile Shea



As AFSA representative at Embassy Tel Aviv, Cecile Shea has been tireless in her advocacy on behalf of embassy employees. Her term in Tel Aviv has coincided with a period of extreme tension in Israel: suicide bombs have been frequent in residential neighborhoods and the intifada has reached all corners of the country. Issues of safety and security have been paramount in the minds of members of the Foreign Service community in Israel, and they have relied on AFSA Representative Shea to represent them with embassy management. Their trust was well placed.

When the U.S. was getting ready to go to war with Iraq and the State Department and post management were considering whether to authorize an evacuation, Shea ensured that the concerns of employees and of AFSA were heard. Her representation was effective, and evacuation was authorized.

She also worked with post management on a number of morale-boosting measures. These included successfully advocating for a second R&R for employees on the grounds that they needed to get away from the constant stress of life in Israel and that they needed to visit family and friends who were not comfortable coming to Israel to see



Cecile Shea and ARSOs Tony Neves and Laura Williams survey the damage at the site of a suicide bombing near the embassy.

them. This issue was of special concern for non-custodial parents. Shea also pushed for a danger pay allowance for employees, which was established. She also enlisted AFSA's help to correct a longstanding error in the calculation of Thrift Savings Plan payments to a class of diplomatic security agents.

Shea's work to ensure that the evacuation policy taken during the 1991 Gulf War — no evacuation was implemented — was not repeated in the 2003 Iraq War, and her other employee morale-building efforts had a positive impact on the whole mission. Employees were confident that their interests were being taken into consideration. As Shea moves on to another assignment, her advocacy has left a legacy. Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are seen as posts that take employee concerns seriously. This should help keep these crucial posts fully staffed.

## Secretary of State's Volunteer Awards

AFSA congratulates the winners of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide/Secretary of State's Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad. The winners were presented with their awards by Secretary of State Colin Powell during Foreign Affairs Day on May 9.

The volunteer winners demonstrated a remarkable commitment to their respective communities and showed that one person can make a difference. The awards were created in 1990 by Susan Baker (wife of former Secretary of State James A. Baker III), who was impressed by the outstanding volunteer service performed by Foreign Service families abroad and who wanted to ensure that it was recognized.

The 2003 winners, by bureau, are:

*African Affairs:* Christopher P. "Norman" Bates, Dakar

*East Asian and Pacific Affairs:* Frank J. Weicks, Chiang Mai

*European and Eurasian Affairs:* Anne C. Bridgman, Prague

*South Asian Affairs:* Karie Ennis, New Delhi

*Western Hemisphere Affairs:* Kristine Luoma-Overstreet, Merida



PAUL KOCSAK

Volunteer Award winners at the May 9 ceremony. Left to right: Frank J. Weicks; Christopher Paul "Norman" Bates; Kristine Luoma-Overstreet and Karie Ennis.

**CHRISTOPHER PAUL "NORMAN" BATES, DAKAR:** An information management specialist, Norman Bates solicited sporting equipment from manufacturers and secured hundreds of dollars worth of balls, bats and gloves for poor Senegalese children. He also organized events for the West African Invitational Softball Tournament.

**FRANK J. WEICKS, CHIANG MAI:** During his five years with the DEA in Chiang Mai, Frank Weicks supported a fledgling foster care program at a government orphanage by organizing a gala dinner and auction that raised an unprecedented \$10,000. He served as vice chairman for the Foundation for the Education of Rural Children. He led fundraising efforts to build a preschool in a remote Karen hill tribe village, to supplement basic education with music and field trips and to provide volunteer medical professionals for routine health care. He also wrote grants to Rotary International to match retired teachers from the U.S. with communities in Thailand and to aid infants with poor vision.

**ANNE C. BRIDGMAN, PRAGUE:** Anne Bridgman helped organize the Green Tree Early Learning Center for preschoolers making it affordable for embassy families. She wrote the book *Prague for Kids*, which provides a wealth of information in English for Prague's non-Czech speaking population and generates profits for

Continued on page 13

# 2003 AFSA Merit Award Winners

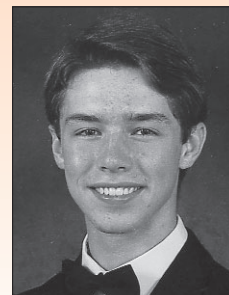
AFSA IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNERS OF THE 2003 Merit Award competition. There were 27 Foreign Service high school seniors chosen to receive the awards this year. The total amount awarded was \$27,600. The one-time-only awards were bestowed during a ceremony on Foreign Affairs Day on May 9. AFSA congratulates these students for their academic and artistic achievements. Winners received \$1,500 awards and honorable-mention winners received \$500 awards.

This year, 62 students competed for the 14 Academic Merit Awards. Applicants were judged on their grade point average and Scholastic Assessment Test score, a two-page essay, two letters of recommendation, extracurricular activities, and any special circumstances. A best essay winner (Sarah Taylor) and a community service winner (Jane Symington) were selected from the Academic Merit Award applicants.

Applications were received from 17 students for the Art Merit Awards, each submitted in one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, drama, dance or creative writing. Jacob Thielman was the Art Merit winner for his piano submission.

To date, four named Academic Merit scholarships have been established for the highest-scoring students in the competition. The named scholarships are: Association of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholarship, John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholarship, John C. Leary Scholarship, and Donald S. and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholarship.

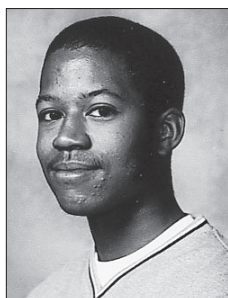
For more information on the AFSA Merit competition, the AFSA Scholarship program, or how to establish a named scholarship, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504 or [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org). Please visit the AFSA Web site at [www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/scholar/index.cfm).



## Art Merit Winner

Jacob Thielman: son of Sara and Sam Thielman (State), graduate of Rosslyn Academy, Nairobi, Kenya; attending Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill. Awarded for his piano performance.

## Academic Merit Winners



Brandon Cook: son of Sabrina (State) and Jeffrey Cook (State); graduate of American International School of Budapest, Budapest, Hungary; will be attending Yale University.



Christine Elliott: daughter of Angela and William Elliott (USAID); graduate of G.C. Marshall High School, Falls Church, Va.; will be attending University of Virginia.



Matthew Keegan: son of Sally Lindfors and David Keegan (State); graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Alexandria, Va.; will be attending Williams College.



Jesse Laeuchli: son of Elizabeth and Samuel Laeuchli (State); homeschooled in Chengdu, China and Budapest, Hungary; will be attending University of Notre Dame.



Mariel Murray: daughter of Vigdis Jacobsen and Jeffrey Murray (State); graduate of American International School of Lisbon, Sintra, Portugal; will be attending University of Pennsylvania. Also AFSA Honorable Mention Art Award winner for flute.



Peter Quinzio: son of Connie and Tom Quinzio (State); graduate of HB Woodlawn High School, Arlington, Va.; will be attending Princeton University. Also AFSA Honorable Mention Art Award winner for alto saxophone.



Erica Schlaikjer: daughter of Imoi and Stephen Schlaikjer (State); graduate of Watkins Mill High School, Gaithersburg, Md.; will be attending Northwestern University.



Julie Schwartz: daughter of Ellen and Larry Schwartz (State); graduate of Walter Johnson High School, Bethesda, Md.; will be attending Brandeis University.



Johanna Smyth: daughter of Janice Sullivan Smyth (State) and Richard Smyth (State); graduate of American International School of Kingston, Kingston, Jamaica; will be attending College of William and Mary.



James Steele: son of Naiyana and Earl James Steele (State); graduate of Herndon High School, Herndon, Va.; will be attending Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, Calif.





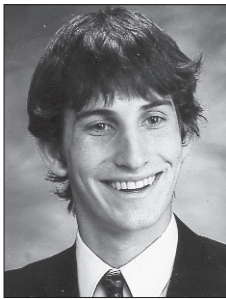
Winning scholars at the May 9 ceremony. Back row, from left: James Steel, Michael Swigert, Jessica Barth, Jane Symington, Matthew Keegan. Front row, from left: Peter Booth, Sarah Wood, Julie Schwartz, Odette Brock, and Christine Elliott.

## PMA Donation to AFSA Scholarship Fund

On the occasion of its 35th anniversary in May, the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service presented two \$3,500 scholarship checks to AFSA to be awarded under AFSA's Financial Aid Scholarship Program. These awards were given in memory of Dr. R. Gordon Hoxie, PMA president from 1973 to 1979, and in memory of the founding members of PMA. A Foreign Service child who is a college junior or senior majoring in foreign affairs will be the recipient of each award. PMA members sit on promotion panels of Foreign Service employees.



Ambassador Ed Dillery accepts two scholarship checks from PMA's Nick Frankhouser and Rita Johnston.



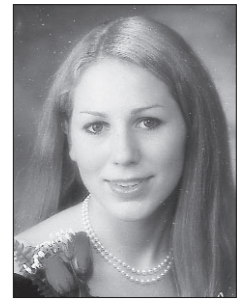
Michael Swigert: son of Nancy Neubert and James Swigert (State); graduate of Washington-Lee High School, Alexandria, Va.; will be attending Tufts University.



Jane Symington: daughter of Susan and Stuart Symington (State); graduate of American School of Niamey, Niamey, Niger; will be attending Yale University. Jane is also the AFSA Community Service Award winner.



Sarah Taylor: daughter of Betsy and Dr. Brooks Taylor (State); graduate of American School, New Delhi, India; will be attending Haverford College in Pennsylvania. Sarah is also the AFSA Best Essay winner.



Sarah Wood: daughter of Cynthia (State) and Robert Wood (State); graduate of Washington-Lee High School in Arlington, Va.; will be attending Furman University in Greenville, S.C.

### Academic Merit Honorable Mention Winners

Peter Booth: son of Anita (State) and Donald Booth (State); graduate of McLean High School, McLean, Va.; will be attending University of Virginia.

William Hendrickson: son of Anne Derse (State) and Hank Hendrickson (State); graduate of International School of Brussels, Brussels, Belgium; will be attending University of Virginia.

Courtney Keene: daughter of Sharon Cromer (USAID) and Arnold Sobers; graduate of The

American School in Switzerland, Montagnola, Switzerland; will be attending Barnard College at Columbia University.

Jesse Robbins: son of Katrin and Gary Robbins (State); graduate of St. Stephen's School, Rome, Italy; will be attending Brown University.

Shayda Vance: daughter of Ladan Doorandish-Vance (State) and Anthony Vance (USAID); graduate of Cairo American College, Cairo, Egypt; will be attending Harvard University.

### Art Merit Honorable Mention Winners

Angela Garland: daughter of Gail and Rick Garland (USAID); graduate of Academia Cotopaxi, Quito, Ecuador; will be attending Seattle Pacific University. Angela won for her vocal performance submission.

Jessica Barth: daughter of Debbi and Philip Barth (State); graduate of W. T. Woodson High School, Arlington, Va.; will be attending James Madison University. Jessica won for her mixed-media (visual arts) submission.

Maribel Murray: Maribel won for her flute submission.

Peter Quinzio: Peter won for his alto saxophone submission.

**Art Merit Special Commendation Winner**  
Odette Brock: daughter of Odile and Samuel Brock (State); graduate of The Washington Lab School, Washington, D.C.; will be attending Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Md.

### Best Essay Winner

Sarah Taylor: Sarah's essay, entitled "Tinctures for a Gaping Wound," will be published in an upcoming issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*.

### Community Service Winner

Jane Symington

## The Foreign Service Tribe

Recently an AFSA member wrote to question the custom of having FS employees serve as “duty officer,” the individual on call to deal with weekend and after-hours emergencies. Employees at overseas posts rotate the responsibility weekly. American citizens get arrested or injured; parents back home call to ask for help in locating a child who hasn’t phoned home in a while. Sometimes an important cable arrives in the middle of the night: the duty officer must go to the embassy to read it and decide whether its contents warrant waking the ambassador. At larger missions, employees may be tapped no more than once a year, while at the smaller ones, duty is more frequent.



Like former Marines, as soon as you learn that a stranger you’ve just met was in the Foreign Service, you immediately feel a kinship.

The complaint prompted me to think about the role of duty, of hardship tours, of other experiences unique to the Foreign Service and how they serve to bond us into a distinct clan or tribe.

Recently there has been a spate of movies about the bonding experienced by those in the military. “Band of Brothers” extols the ties forged by combat. Marines share boot camp. Members of the Foreign Service share similar bonds, like duty.

Foreign Service employees routinely take themselves and their families off to difficult places and work long hours to advance America’s foreign policy objectives. They do this not for the compensation, the glory or the ease of life overseas, but to serve their country. As I write this, many posts are bidding farewell to families departing due to a SARS outbreak or terrorist bombings. As Secretary Powell noted in recent congressional testimony, “I send State Department officers out to the most difficult places ... where they may be separated from their families for a longer period of time than the average soldier gets separated from his family.” Like former Marines, as soon as you learn that a stranger you’ve just met was in the Foreign Service, you immediately feel a kinship.

The value of these shared experiences may have been what prompted Director General Ruth A. Davis to suggest that promotion boards take into consideration community service such as serving on a promotion panel, participating in a mentoring program, or serving on a housing board. She understands that these activities contribute to employee welfare and strengthen the State Department and the Foreign Service as institutions.

AFSA concurred with her request and it also chose not to challenge the custom of “taking the duty,” believing instead that it strengthens the bonds among us.

I recently had a moment to roam the Web site of the Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired ([www.dacorbacon.org](http://www.dacorbacon.org)) and read several accounts of incidents of life in the Foreign Service. One gentleman posted the account of his role in saving State employees when the American Embassy in Benghazi was stormed by mobs in 1967; they all got out alive, but the embassy was reduced to a burned shell. There’s the former consul general in Tangier who valiantly rescued two American staff of a USIS center during the 1984 riots in Tetuan, Morocco. And there are colleagues who lifted off from the embassy compound in Somalia just as it was being overrun and those who lived for months in Embassy Kuwait under Iraqi occupation in 1991.

Is there another career that, in spite of the danger and hardship, can provide such satisfaction? I doubt it. □

Continued from page 3

### AFSA Participates in “Michigan and the World”

The U.S. Department of State, the Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (which includes AFSA), the city of Dearborn, and numerous national and Michigan-based organizations co-sponsored a state-wide conference titled: “Michigan and the World.”

The conference explored the issues, views and roles of Michigan citizens and citizen-based organizations regarding U.S. foreign policy and world affairs. It took place on May 6, 2003, at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center in Dearborn. Some 200 members of the Michigan foreign affairs community participated, and follow-up activities are being planned.

### BOOKFAIR

The Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide need your donations for BOOKFAIR, an annual October event for the last 43 years. Books in good condition (but no textbooks except for language instruction), artwork, collectibles, stamps and coins would all be gratefully accepted. Handicrafts from around the world are especially welcome — such items are popular and sell quickly.

In the Washington, D.C. area, pick-ups can be arranged by calling Virginia Jones at (202) 223-5796.

In the State Department, donations may be dropped off at the BOOKROOM (now located in B816) Monday through Friday, from noon to 2 p.m. or by appointment. Call (202) 223-5796.

From Overseas, donations may be pouched to: AAFSW BOOKROOM, B816 Main State (HST).

### FSYF Reminder

The Annual Welcome Back Potluck Picnic, hosted by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, will be held on Sunday, Sept. 21, 4 p.m., at Lubber Run Park in Arlington. For more information e-mail [fsyf@fsyf.org](mailto:fsyf@fsyf.org). □

charities. She writes a monthly magazine column, "Things To Do with Kids." She also resurrected an ineffective soup kitchen to feed needy Czechs.

**KARIE ENNIS, NEW DELHI:** OMS Karie Ennis spent several hours each weekend at the Missionaries of Charity Orphanage for Handicapped Children in New Delhi. She provided physical therapy for the children, taught Indian staff to feed the children properly and spent time talking, playing with and holding the children. She organized the Marines Toys for Tots campaign to benefit the orphanage, and obtained a grant from the J. Kirby Simon Trust to buy mattresses, therapy mats and other supplies. She also promoted, organized and facilitated the first "Health Fair" for Embassy New Delhi attended by over 500 staff.

**KRISTINE LUOMA-OVERSTREET, MERIDA:** In a city without an international school, Kristine Luoma-Overstreet worked with a local school to create a "Reading is Fun" program increasing English-language literacy. She organized story hours, introduced the concept of a lending library, obtained donations of books and began what is now an annual catalogue book sale where members of the community purchased over \$2,000 worth of books. She is also the mainstay of the Merida English Library, an all-volunteer operation that serves as Merida's premier public library.

**The following nominees received honorable mention for their contributions to their respective communities:**

*Athens:* Bonnie Miller

*Bangkok:* Theodore Osius

*Berlin:* Barbara and Jim Brown

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## A New Start

I want to thank you for your vote in the recent AFSA election. Bill Crawford, our new representative, and I are anxious to take up our responsibilities and work effectively with you to advance our professional interests. We look forward to turning a new page and starting a new chapter in our relationship with USFCS management.

Our Director General Maria Cino, Deputy Director General Carlos Poza, and DAS Karen Zens are making great strides in modernizing our profession and redefining our mission. We look forward to working together as a team on the development of new initiatives to advance the cause of commercial diplomacy and professional development, while also engaging constructively on the range of issues that influence our working conditions and quality of life.

As I indicated in my campaign statement, I believe that our profession as commercial diplomats is at a crossroads, and I am excited about the opportunity to be your vice president at this crucial time. When I return to Washington in August, I will contact you directly to solicit your views on what should be our most important priorities.

I see our program as having three components, and would welcome your thoughts on each of them: personnel issues, USFCS working conditions, and professional development and outreach. Together, we will set realistic and achievable objectives for the first year of our term.

Peter Frederick, our outgoing vice president, has done an outstanding job. I look forward to building on his achievements. As I write this column in May in Brussels, the business agenda that I inherit includes key issues like: adoption of our new selection board precepts; agreement on a new, long-term language training pilot program; and USFCS support for the new AFSA immediate insurance benefit program. Later this month, at the worldwide USFCS managers conference in Washington, Peter and I will have a chance to discuss these and other issues with our members.

I made the commitment in the campaign to involve everyone in both the definition of our agenda and in the position we take on the issues. Many of you know that that is my management style anyway. I will use our e-mail network plus an informal committee system with members in each region and in the U.S. to ensure that all of your views are taken into account every step of the way.

For those of you who don't know me, I joined the USFCS in 1982 after eight years in the private sector. It has been my privilege to serve in Latin America and Europe as well as in senior positions at headquarters. My ambition now is to give something back to a profession and to an agency that have given so much opportunity to me. I very much look forward to establishing a new partnership with management. □



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