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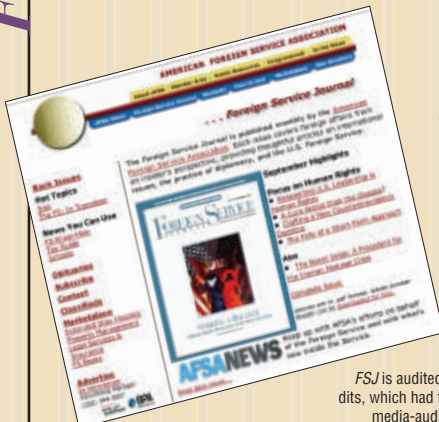
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PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

Past, Present and Future

BY JOHN K. NALAND

This is my last column as AFSA president. On July 15, the 2007-2009 AFSA Governing Board finishes its term and a new group of active-duty and retired colleagues takes over the responsibility for fighting to advance your interests. I urge all members to give our new board your support. Send them your suggestions, kudos and constructive criticism. In doing so, we will be continuing the proud tradition of mutual support dating back to 1924. And the Foreign Service will be the better for it.



As an AFSA officer for six of the past 10 years, it has been my honor to work in this organization that so vigilantly promotes the interests of the Foreign Service. I particularly enjoyed working alongside AFSA's talented professional staff. It is they who do the bulk of the work for our members. I thank them for their dedicated service.

One of my final acts as AFSA president was to participate in Foreign Affairs Day. After Secretary Clinton and I fulfilled the sad duty of unveiling the new names inscribed on the AFSA Memorial Plaques, I participated in a luncheon hosted by the State Department for its retirees. The main speaker

John K. Naland resigned the presidency of the American Foreign Service Association in June to transfer to Iraq to lead a Provincial Reconstruction Team.

was retired Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who gave an informed tour d'horizon of current foreign policy issues. However, he closed with some worrisome comments about the future of the Foreign Service.

After lauding the dedication of FS members who have joined since 9/11, Amb. Crocker criticized mid-level members who, he claimed, do not "get it" about the requirements of today's diplomacy. In his view, they are not stepping up to the plate to serve in dangerous postings where "the real work" of the Foreign Service is being done. So he looks forward to the replacement of that older generation by the supposedly more "expeditionary" new generation.

There are two fallacies in this reasoning. First, U.S. diplomacy does not begin and end with Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and a few other crisis countries. The Foreign Service also works to advance vital national interests in Asia, Europe, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. If promotions and senior assignments only go to those who excel in atypical crisis countries, then U.S. diplomacy in the world's other 250 nations will suffer.

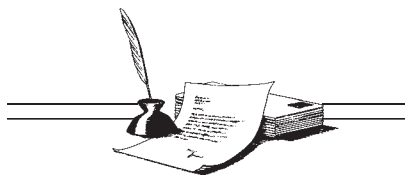
Secondly, if there are differences in the degree of war-zone volunteerism between new and veteran employees, it is because of demography, not dedication. It has always been true that, on average, junior employees are less en-

cumbered than veteran employees. More senior members are more likely to be married or have a life partner; to have school-age children (some with disabilities), to face child-custody issues, to have a medical limitation (often a result of previous unhealthy overseas service), to have a parent in failing health, or to face other constraints resulting from having a life outside of work.

A flippant commentator might respond that "If the State Department (or USAID, FCS, FAS or IBB) had wanted you to have a family, they would have issued you one." But the old military adage echoed in that statement is no longer used. Everyone from the Secretary of Defense on down agrees that military families are dangerously stressed by repeated unaccompanied tours. Thus, it makes no sense to argue that the Foreign Service (which lacks DOD's family support structures) should be more like the military.

My fervent hope is that the coming years do not see our Foreign Service morph into a diplomatic Foreign Legion. To avoid that fate, we need a larger cohort to share rotations into extreme hardship posts. And we need to reverse recent trends that have made the FS less family-friendly.

If we can instead make the Foreign Service a better supported and more satisfying place to spend a career and raise a family, we will be strengthening U.S. diplomacy. ■



LETTERS

Chairs for New Hires

I am a born pessimist; I admit that right up front. I read in the May *FSJ* about all of the new positions that have been requested in the Fiscal Year 2010 budget and that are to be contained in future budgets. I hope Congress comes up with the money, because there is no question the State Department is understaffed for the requirements that have been assigned to it over the past five years or so.

What I wonder about is where in the world will all of these new people sit? Never during my 32 years in the Foreign Service did I work in a mission that had empty offices just waiting for someone to occupy them. And rest assured that other agencies will want to increase their staffing, too.

With the security requirement of putting all employees under one roof, it seems to me that there will be severe overcrowding in many, if not all, of our missions. After all, acquiring new office space in existing buildings isn't as easy as hiring new people. The Office of Overseas Buildings Operations will certainly have its work cut out for it.

And then, what about sufficient administrative staff? Their workload will increase long before they receive additional resources to cope with it. But then again, we all know that the

political, economic and public affairs sections are far more important than admin staff, right?

Ah, retirement is good!

Kenneth R. Yeager

FSO, retired

Grosshansdorf, Germany

World of Faith Author Responds

I have but one major quarrel with David T. Jones' April review of my book, *World of Faith and Freedom: Why International Religious Liberty Is Vital to American National Security*. Jones thinks I'm "close to an absolutist" on religious freedom, a deficit which leads me to downplay other critical foreign policy problems.

It is an odd indictment. My book argues that religious freedom is vital to stable democracy and the elimination of religious extremism, especially in highly religious societies; that this reality has been ignored by the American foreign policy establishment; and that our national security has suffered as a result.

Virtually every foreign policy problem of the 21st century, including all those mentioned by Mr. Jones, is influenced (for better or worse) by religious ideas and actors. Properly understood, religious freedom provides a

framework within which to address those problem.

At its base, religious freedom means the right of every person to believe or not, and to enter or exit religious communities. It also guarantees the rights of religious communities — for example, to employ legal remedies against violent proselytizing or to engage in public policy debates.

A successful democracy nourishes public religious expression, while it also establishes broad limits that apply to all who enter the political realm, whether believers or secularists. Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Hindus and others are more likely to accept those limits if they do not banish religiously formed judgments to the private domain.

Democracies based on this kind of religious freedom are less likely to incubate the kind of religious violence and terrorism we have seen emerge from theocratic and secular autocracies such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Egypt, or unstable democracies such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Russia. Even in highly regimented societies such as China, movement toward religious freedom (even if it is unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future) is in the interests of both citizens and the state.

Unfortunately, for the past decade



our policy has focused on denouncing religious persecution, rather than facilitating the habits and institutions of religious freedom. Contrary to what Mr. Jones asserts, I do not believe religious freedom is superior to other fundamental rights, but is inextricably linked with them. Indeed, religious freedom is part of a “bundled commodity” of fundamental freedoms (e.g., freedom of speech and association, equality under the law) without which no democracy can endure.

Advancing religious freedom is necessary for justice and for protecting fundamental American interests. This isn’t absolutism, but realism. It requires us to understand the way the world is, rather than the way we would wish it to be.

*Thomas F. Farr
FSO, retired
Senior Fellow,
Berkley Center for
Religion, Peace and
World Affairs
Washington, D.C.*

Understanding Religion

David Jones’ critique of Thomas Farr’s new book about international religious liberty raises an important point about professional training for Foreign Service officers. Traditionally, FSOs have not been trained to look directly at religious traditions and convictions in foreign cultures. We operate in a secular professional culture that places greater weight on the political, economic and social aspects of foreign governments and leaders.

While Farr focuses on promoting religious freedom through government advocacy under the aegis of human rights, this is different in substance from understanding other people’s cultural and religious values and

how these influence and govern their political actions.

When I was a young, Farsi-speaking cultural affairs officer with the U.S. Information Service in Iran, I was ill-prepared to grasp the nuances of parochialism among the people I met regarding religious tolerance. There was almost no discussion or focus on this in the daily cable traffic from Embassy Tehran. How would policymakers in Washington have known of the convictions of religious leaders opposed to the shah? We weren’t reporting about them.

Today, FSOs would benefit from more training in analysis of cultural and religious values in other societies, because these often drive political decision-making. Had my colleagues and I spent more time learning about Iranian religious history and analyzing the statements of various religious leaders who opposed the shah’s policies and actions, we might have been able to exert more influence on our leaders in Washington. And they, in turn, might have better understood the emotional forces that drove so many Iranians to embrace Ayatollah Khomeini and the revolution, whether they liked his politics or not.

The liberty that millions of them were seeking at that time was one of a national identity free from Iran’s relationship with the United States and from the shah’s narrow, secular authoritarianism. The shah had persecuted, jailed and even executed religious dissidents who, he claimed, threatened his regime. At the same time, he periodically allowed the predominantly Shia Muslim population to vent by persecuting certain religious minorities.

In the years I served in India, I came to see a generally tolerant soci-

ety that accommodated believers of many different faiths. Yet even there, religious persecution sometimes boiled over in horrible crimes against minority communities. But we tended to search for the immediate political triggers for such acts rather than understanding the deeper, older substrata of religious values.

Certainly everyone should be free from persecution for her or his own convictions, whatever they may be. Yet for many people around the world, the practical consequences of professing one’s faith are discrimination and even death. It is exactly in this area that Foreign Service officers need to expand their knowledge of the interplay between religion and politics.

Perhaps this is already under way, as is evident in the actions of U.S. diplomats in China and other countries where religious minorities are persecuted. This effort should be expanded and additional training offered in understanding Islam and other faiths in their many manifestations in specific cultures.

In shaping a new diplomatic policy supporting greater religious liberty, we might start by analyzing what freedom of religion has meant in shaping our own pluralistic society. And then we might look at our own history of religious and cultural intolerance as a guide to analyzing that phenomenon in other societies.

*Bruce K. Byers
FSO, retired
Reston, Va.*

Commercial Diplomacy Matters

Speaking as someone who joined the United States & Foreign Commercial Service at its inception in 1981,

LETTERS



working there until I retired in 2002, I read the May article by Shawn Zeller (“Hoping for a Break: Foreign Trade Agencies Under Pressure”) about the Foreign Commercial Service and the Foreign Agricultural Service with great interest. But while Zeller provides a useful overview, he does understate a few points.

For instance, he describes the conflict between USFCS and the polyglot of Civil Service domestic elements that make up the Commerce Department (which is much more diverse than Agriculture, by the way). But I would add that USFCS has fought a mostly losing battle against its parent organization, the International Trade Administration, under which the FCS budget and personnel fall. It really is a zero-sum game, one in which USFCS is almost powerless to fight or defend itself.

Nor does the article give sufficient weight to the deeply rooted and structural conflict at overseas posts. This is not a conflict between commercial and economic officers; rather, it arises in the management of the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services agreement that governs budget, finance and general services functions at overseas posts. Most USFCS officers will admit privately that ICASS is the biggest obstacle to doing their job. In this turf battle for resources, the commercial officer is almost invariably the loser.

Almost all our competitor embassies overseas are export machines led by their ambassadors, whose first priority and highest mission is trade, exports and economic security. U.S. ambassadors have been exhorted to think of themselves as the Most Senior Commercial Officer, and a few manage to carry out that function

quite well. However, whether they are fighting wars, countering terrorism, promoting democracy, alleviating poverty, dealing with hostile regimes or worrying about environmental negotiations, many ambassadors — and State’s core political team — are overwhelmed with competing priorities. Or else they are just not interested or knowledgeable about business and trade.

In such situations, it is easy to toss the ball to the commercial officer and say, “Here, you deal with it.” But by doing so, the chief of mission denies U.S. business interests access to the host government’s senior-level decision-makers, to whom only ambassadors have access. Whether or not it would hinder commercial programs to put them back into the State bureaucracy, where they were until 1980, doing so would at least integrate U.S. economic interests and put the commercial agenda back into the ambassador’s portfolio.

Congress has a lot of influence over funding for USFCS, of course, but the hierarchy of the Commerce Department prevents FCS from effectively or independently making its case and promoting its services. At one time, we compiled a database of exporters that had been helped by the Foreign Commercial Service — organized by congressional district — showing how many jobs had been created in every state and district. If Congress had such data today, it would surely expand USFCS funding.

*Charles Kestenbaum
Senior Commercial Service
Officer, retired
President, B&K
International
Vienna, Va.*

Defending the Docs

Terese White-Henry’s letter in the May *FSJ*, “On-the-Job Training for FS Doctors?”, deserves a rebuttal. I suspect the author had an unfortunate experience. This, however, does not justify suggesting that doctors are “unethical” when accepting a post at which there might be conditions for which they do not have specialized training.

Although the Office of Medical Services is far from perfect, it does not, to my knowledge, hire doctors, nurse practitioners or physician’s assistants who have just graduated. Rather, based on my wife’s application process, MED requires a minimum of four years’ work experience in a family practice or an emergency room.

The new hires are given training in a variety of specialties, including tropical medicine, and all health providers attend at least one weeklong specialty area training session each year (one recent session was devoted to tropical medicine).

The State Department health provider community is relatively small, and those taking on a post typically receive a heads-up from the current occupant. On arrival at post, these personnel typically visit local hospitals and interview local specialists to find those competent to treat U.S. personnel. And when all else fails, the post practitioner can call upon all of MED’s resources, up to and including the Centers for Disease Control.

State’s medical providers are essentially the same as U.S. family practitioners, and are qualified to decide which conditions can be treated on site and which ought to be referred to an outside specialist.

Finally, let me offer a counterexample: Is it “unethical” for a first-tour generalist to accept on-the-job training



while interviewing 100 visa applicants per day to determine which may be a threat to U.S. security? I would rather rely on a State Department health provider for my safety and well being.

Bruce McKay
FS Family Member
Brasilia

Don't Encourage Them!

I read with astonishment FSO Steven Giegerich's lengthy Speaking Out column in the May *FSJ* calling for economic, career and quality-of-life improvements for gay and lesbian Foreign Service employees.

Is it really true (as he asserts) that his plea has "important implications for a significant segment of the Foreign Service corps"?

If so, and if their numbers are "significant" now, without the called-for improvements, the enactment of Mr. Giegerich's sweeping shopping list will produce greater numbers of those whose habits are unacceptable to most American taxpayers and, perhaps more significantly, to the religions and cultures of most countries where we operate. Accordingly, I would oppose the writer's proposals.

In my view, the issue is not one of equality and fairness. The issue turns on what is fair for the Foreign Service, what best enables it to accomplish its mission. And that depends, in large part, upon building relationships and projecting values.

The apparent vision of the author of this article — that of a Foreign Service whose members project controversial views on family, marriage and sex — could only serve to undermine our work abroad.

Richard W. Hoover
FSO, retired
Front Royal, Va.

Appreciation for 10 Years

It was great for the *FSJ* to recognize Steve Honley for his 10 years of service to the *Journal* as editor (April *AFSA News*). Steve was our desk officer when I was deputy chief of mission in Cameroon, during an especially turbulent period when our reporting was eagerly awaited and digested by Washington users. He provided outstanding support, guidance and, yes, editing for our submissions to make them more concise, readable and useful to principals.

When I heard Steve was going to the *Journal*, I knew *AFSA* would be gaining a first-rate editor, not only highly capable on the writing side, but also eminently fair — not just willing but eager to present all sides of an issue. During his tenure, the *Journal* has improved exponentially in scope, content and balance.

More recently, we invited Steve to talk to a number of our mass communication and honors classes at Texas Tech University. The students and faculty were delighted to interact with this talented and knowledgeable professional. I sincerely hope Steve stays for many more years overseeing our *FSJ*!

Tibor Nagy Jr.
Ambassador, retired
Ransom Canyon, Texas

(Note: Too modest to agree to publication of this letter, Steve was overruled by Editorial Board Chairman Ted Wilkinson, who requested that we run it.) ■

CORRECTION

In the June obituary for Edwin Melville Adams Jr., the deceased's name was misprinted in the two penultimate paragraphs. We regret the error.

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CYBERNOTES

A Boost for Public Diplomacy

The ingenuity and success of public diplomacy officers worldwide in “telling America’s story” and promoting foreign policy objectives — despite acute shortages in personnel and resources — was celebrated by the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association on May 3 (www.publicdiplomacy.org). The association announced this year’s recipients of its Award for Achievement in Public Diplomacy, naming three individuals and a State Department team for special recognition.

Embassy Skopje Public Affairs Officer Ryan Rowland and Assistant PAO Amy Storrow earned top honors for reaching youth and emerging leaders in a challenging, multi-ethnic society. Macedonian-speaker Rowland and Albanian-speaker Storrow created a systematic outreach to the younger generation in this fledgling democracy, where ethnicity shapes virtually all aspects of life. Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Bulgars, Bosnians and others comprise a society requiring remarkable ingenuity for PD outreach to be successful.

Highlights of their effort include youth camps for more than 1,100 young people, an expanded Fulbright program and a creative writing program. A day-break fest around the U.S. election hosted by Ambassador Philip Reeker drew more than 500 guests, including students and professionals.

Democracy promotion has no party. If anyone here thinks that democracy promotion is the property of Republicans or of Democrats, that it rises and falls with the polls and fades in and out from administration to administration, I am here to disabuse them. Democracy promotion is not the policy of President Bush or President Obama — it is the policy of the United States of America.

— House Majority Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., addressing the board of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems on June 2, www.ifes.org

Tristram Perry, assistant information officer for broadcast media in Jakarta, scored high for his initiative and professionalism. He masterminded the outstanding media exposure of Secretary Clinton during her February visit to Indonesia, which advanced her “smart power” approach. Her appearance on a trend-setting TV youth show, “Awesome,” triggered a wildly enthusiastic reaction. Perry also arranged for a popular Indonesian journalist to join Clinton’s traveling press team to produce major “inside” stories. And he organized a yearlong

“Go Green” theme involving Earth Day and supported by *National Geographic* that focused attention on the environmental challenges ahead.

The PDAA also saluted three PD officers in Washington’s International Information Program Bureau who produced the engaging worldwide video contest, “Democracy’s Video Challenge.” Outreach Coordinator Lori Brutton, Director of Publications George Clack and Director of Current Issues David Shelby planned and executed this creative program to involve foreign audiences, especially youth, in a global dialogue about democracy. Participants began their two-minute videos with the phrase “Democracy is...”

Ninety PD posts joined the “Challenge.” Nearly 900 videos were received — including 70 from Iran, along with many from China, Russia, Cuba and Burma. Entrants posted their videos on YouTube. Jurors selected from NGO partners will name the finalists, and the winners will be chosen by public voting on YouTube.

Meanwhile, on May 21, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved Judith McHale as the under secretary of State for public diplomacy. The former president and chief executive officer of Discovery Communications, McHale is the daughter of an FSO. She was born in New York City and grew up in Britain and apartheid-era South Africa.



Historically, PD under secretaries have stayed no more than a year at the job; but in welcoming her confirmation, Senator Richard Lugar, R-Ind., stated he was hopeful Ms. McHale would “buck this trend” (<http://lugar.senate.gov/sfrc/diplomacy.html>).

In related developments, the Senate also unanimously passed Sen. Lugar’s resolution, S. Res. 49, which calls for the Secretary of State to look into the re-establishment of publicly accessible American Centers around the world. And on May 27, the Government Accountability Office issued a report, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight,” to highlight concerns that need to be addressed in a new comprehensive communication strategy (www.gao.gov).

— Susan Brady Maitra,
Senior Editor

Carnegie Grant for Scenarios Initiative

The Scenarios Initiative at the New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies’ Center for Global Affairs received a \$250,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation foundation to support the program’s mediated workshop series testing alternative U.S. policies on China, Russia, Turkey and the Ukraine (www.scps.nyu.edu/about-scps/newsroom/news/2009/05/carnegie-grant-to-cga-scenarios-initiative.html). These countries are expected to be critical to U.S. interests over the next 10 years, either as rivals, collaborators or potential vectors of conflict.

The Scenarios Initiative is “designed to engage foreign policymakers directly in the scenario-building and policy-testing process, thus adding real value to policy deliberations. Our program also involves global and expert

participation to minimize mirror imaging and policy or cultural bias,” says Clinical Associate Professor Michael Oppenheimer, who leads the initiative.

The workshops and reports are built around a pressing issue or pivotal country that combines great importance to U.S. interests with high variability and uncertainty. The 10 to 15 invited participants discuss three or four possible scenarios that could arise within the area of focus. The group then builds out each of them, exploring relevant political, economic, cultural and global forces at play; critical, game-changing events; and possible responses by state and non-state actors.

In 2007, the center imagined the future of Iraq after a substantial draw-down of U.S. forces in 2010, and in 2008 it examined the future of Iran and its relationship with other Middle East actors. These reports are available online at www.scps.nyu.edu/cga.

— Susan Brady Maitra,
Senior Editor

Changing Tides for Cuba

Even before news broke in early June of the arrest of former State Department employee Walter Kendall Myers, who allegedly spied for Cuba for three decades, a flurry of activity pointed to a full-blown sea change in U.S.-Cuban diplomatic relations (www.reuters.com/article/companyNewsAndPR/idUSN0952878320090409).

In April and May, President Barack Obama eased remittance and travel restrictions for Cubans in America and reopened talks on migration. And in June, the Organization of American States repealed the 1962 resolution that had barred Cuba from its ranks and established a path for reintegration (www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=1976).

Interest in change is being expressed on many fronts — from grassroots movements in Miami, Fla., to politicians like Representatives Frank Wolf, R-Va., and Chris Smith, R-N.J., and Senator Richard Lugar, R-Ind.

In deciding the breadth and depth of actions to be taken, however, the U.S. faces a series of delicate considerations. Our lack of communication with, and understanding of the situation of, Cubans begs the question: Will opening the doors with Havana bolster the oppressive regime, or will it show the power of open dialogue to spread democratic values?

At the very least, American citizens agree with numerous commentators on one point: the U.S. sanctions have failed, and the policy must change. A recent joint poll by *YouGovPollimetrix* and *The Economist* revealed that 45 percent of Americans favor re-establishing diplomatic ties with Havana, with 23 percent opposing.

Even Cuban-Americans, more heavily invested in democratic outcomes in Cuba, seem to approve of moves toward greater diplomatic ties. According to a Bendixen & Associates poll, 64 percent of Cuban-Americans approve of Pres. Obama’s decision to loosen restrictions on travel to the island” (www.economist.com/).

Certainly most reporting coming from Cuba, often in the pages of the party newspaper, *Granma*, suggests that Raúl Castro’s reforms are fleeting, petty and covertly repressive (www.granma.cu/). Leader-turned-blogger Fidel Castro, writing on his brother’s seemingly conciliatory gestures, insists in his blog (*Reflections of Comrade Fidel*) that, “when the president of Cuba said he was ready to discuss any topic with the U.S. president, he meant he was not afraid of addressing



any issue. That shows his courage and confidence in the principles of the revolution” (www.radiohc.cu/viejo/ingles/portada-ref.htm).

Despite this bravado, rumblings of dissent have reached American shores from the Cuban underground. Since gaining access to the Internet in 2007, a Cuban citizen, Yoani Sánchez, has overcome government suppression to found and foster a pro-democratic community of bloggers. Sánchez’s exposés of the hardships of life in Cuba

led to an unsuccessful attempt by the government in May to block Cuban access to the Internet. Sánchez observes: “I think that if we had not raised a ruckus in recent days — denouncing such apartheid — we would have been deprived of the ability to connect. Yes, they cede when you push back; they have to amend the plan when we citizens raise our voices and the international media hears the echo” (desde.cuba.com/generationy/).

Thus it appears that the Cuban

state may be losing some of its powers of repression. Indeed, as Ray Walser, a senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, puts it: no matter how strong a regime may make itself appear, it can still quickly disappear “once a dissenter like Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet walks out of prison, when blogger Yoani Sanchez is free to write and travel without hindrance, and when a humble Afro-Cuban cane-cutter like Jorge Luis Garcia Pérez Antúnez is able to speak his mind without fear of retribution and imprisonment” (www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed052709a.cfm).

A February analysis by the Brookings Institute reflects this approach: “The goal of U.S. policy toward Cuba should be to support the emergence of a state where the Cuban people determine the political and economic future of their country through democratic means. A great lesson of democracy is that it cannot be imposed; it must come from within. Our policy should encompass the political, economic and diplomatic tools that are needed to help the Cuban people find the political space that is essential to engage in and direct the politics of their country” (www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2009/02_cuba_roadmap/02_cuba_roadmap.pdf).

— Mark Hay, *Editorial Intern*

Site of the Month: Gapminder.com

Officially, Ola Rosling, Anna Rosling Rönnlund and Hans Rosling’s mission statement for *Gapminder.com* offers the site as a tool for “promoting sustainable global development and achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by increased use and understanding of statistics and other information about social, economic and environmental development at local, national and global levels.”

Yet that description does not capture the beauty of this site. Much more than a tool, it is an engaging means to transform statistics into participatory art.

The main feature of the site is the Gapminder World graph. Upon loading that page, one may change either of the axes so as to compare any of the 350-plus variables (dealing with demographics, economics, health, environment, and more) to each other. Once the user selects the variables, the dots on the graph (each representing a nation and proportionate in size to their relative populations) fly about, settling into different patterns roughly revealing the relationships (or lack thereof) between, say, “Annual freshwater withdrawals, total (percent of internal resources)” and “CO₂ emissions (tons per person).”

Once the graph has been created to match conditions in the last year data was collected for both variables, one may, if the data goes far enough back, be able to rewind time and recreate the graph to show conditions as far back as 1800. Thereafter, the graph may be played like a film, showing trends evolving over as many as 200 years within seconds. Variants allow one to view segments of larger areas — for example, regions of China, India and the U.S. set against each other, specific regions of the world or all other nations. Given the amount of data made available and the variety of ways it may be ordered (the permutations are almost infinite and ever-increasing), one can easily induce a Rip van Winkle effect.

Whether one shares the Swedish trio’s ideals or not, their system offers almost limitless potential — for proving theories, finding unexpected trends of interest to investigate or just indulging a fascination for statistics and graphs. Whatever the use, Gapminder.com delivers on its tagline: “Unveiling the beauty of statistics for a fact-based world view.”

— Mark Hay, *Editorial Intern*

Are Governments Prolonging the Global Food Crisis?

Days before the first-ever meeting of Group of Eight agriculture ministers to address the world food crisis, held on April 18-20 in Italy, a study co-published by the International Policy Network and more than 20 research institutes around the world claimed that governments themselves were its primary cause (www.policynetwork.org).



50 Years Ago...

It is my belief that they [the State Department] are still dominated by the feeling of the Foreign Service. ... They still view themselves as emissaries from one government to another. And in this day and age, the problem has gone far beyond that. They must be ministers and, in a sense, missionaries to the people, even though they defend the interests of this nation at the same time.



— Senator Paul H. Douglas, D-Ill., on the use of counterpart funds during congressional discussion on the foreign aid bill in July 1959; cited in “Washington Letter,” *FSJ*, August 1959.

net/uploaded/pdf/feedtheworld_southgate_april2009.pdf).

In “Feed the World: The Challenge of Agricultural Development,” Ohio State University Prof. Douglas Southgate argues that governments’ responses — “such as bans on food exports in emerging economies, coddling of biofuels development and needless restrictions on agricultural biotechnology” — were the primary cause of the crisis that began in 2007 and certainly prolonged it.

“If governments are serious about solving the food crisis,” he writes, “they should eliminate the barriers to food production and distribution that they have created.” Southgate recommends scrapping agricultural subsidies; scrapping import and export restrictions on farm goods as well as inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides and new crop varieties; improving protection of property rights; eliminating subsidies and trade protection for bio-fuel development; and taking full advantage of biotechnology.

These, of course, are hot-button issues for farm lobbies everywhere, not least here in the U.S. But though the Obama administration ran into strong resistance to its effort to cut farm subsidies in next year’s budget, a recent poll by **WorldPublicOpinion.org**

sponsored by the Program on International Political Attitudes at the University of Maryland, found that the American public, even in farm states, favors eliminating most subsidies (www.worldpublicopinion.org).

— Susan Brady Maitra,
Senior Editor

No More Reports?

At an event marking the release of the Center for U.S. Global Engagement’s report, “Putting Smart Power to Work,” former Secretary of State Colin Powell said: “When I became Secretary of State, I had 20 reports waiting for me. And my staff said, let’s have a summary of the reports. I said, no, we’re not going to do any more reports, we’re not going to summarize anything; we’re going to go up to Congress and fight like dogs to get money. ... We could have a lovely chat here about all of this stuff, but I’m telling you, it comes down to trench warfare with the Congress.”

The report and a transcript of the lively, high-level discussion of development and diplomacy imperatives are available online (www.usglobalengagement.org/Events/PuttingSmartPowertoWork/tabid/3636/Default.aspx). ■

— Susan Brady Maitra,
Senior Editor

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SPEAKING OUT

Regaining Relevance: Five Steps to Strengthen State

BY WILLIAM I. BACCHUS

The strength and capability of the State Department as an institution usually receive less attention than the more visible power game among the key players in foreign policy — the secretaries of State and Defense, the national security adviser in the White House, and sometimes the vice president and other department heads. These figures constantly vie for the ear of the president, a contest that often makes for high drama.

Although the Secretary of State is limited in defining this equation, which is heavily dependent on personalities and relationships, he or she has a great deal of control over the department's institutional effectiveness. State's people and overseas establishment should be a major source of strength, not — as too often happens — a dead weight dragging down its leaders' efforts.

Here are five steps Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton should take to improve State's capabilities as an organization, and an assessment of progress to date on each.

1. Rebuild State's Competence

There is widespread agreement that State is currently badly understaffed and underfunded for its traditional responsibilities, and in even worse shape for new ones required by the broader emphasis on diplomacy and development that is the stated goal of the Obama administration. One compre-

Secretary Clinton must not let pressing policy matters limit her personal efforts to obtain needed resources.

hensive recent study, "A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future: Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness," issued by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center in October 2008, concluded (conservatively) that by Fiscal Year 2014, 4,735 additional people and an extra \$3.3 billion will be needed just to carry out core diplomatic functions, training, public diplomacy, foreign assistance (for USAID) and the reconstruction/stabilization of failed or failing states. Not included in that figure are administrative and management needs, which State believes can be met through increased efficiency and internal reprogramming, and the work of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, almost entirely funded from fees rather than appropriations and thus excluded from the study.

These figures represent a 46-percent increase in U.S. direct-hire personnel in the included categories, and about a 21-percent increase in funding, including both program costs and per-

sonnel, compared to the FY 2008 Congressional Budget Office Baseline. This is not the best time to obtain additional funding for foreign affairs, but the needs are modest compared to other expenditures, and would provide important improvements out of proportion to the cost.

As Defense Secretary Robert Gates noted in testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee on April 30, 2009: "I believe that the challenges confronting our nation cannot be dealt with by military means alone. They instead require whole-of-government approaches — but that can only be done if the State Department is given resources befitting the scope of its mission across the globe."

Initial executive branch and congressional reactions allow for cautious optimism. For FY 2009, State and USAID sources conclude that the recently passed Omnibus Appropriations Act provides for up to 1,267 new positions for State, up to 487 of them Foreign Service officers, and around 300 new FSOs for USAID.

Moreover, the Obama administration's initial budget document ("A New Era of Responsibility," Feb. 26) states that "The 2010 budget includes funding for the first year of a multiyear effort to significantly increase the size of the Foreign Service at both the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development."



While the 2010 figures will not be final until congressional appropriations action is completed in the fall, the president's budget as sent to Congress in April provided for comparable increases for that year. So far, so good. However, the congressional budget resolution (S. Con. Res. 13) agreed to at the end of April posited cuts in international affairs funding from the administration's request, leaving the size of the FY 2010 increases in funding and personnel in doubt.

This raises an obvious point: the Secretary must not let pressing policy matters limit her personal efforts to obtain needed resources. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

2. Simplify the Department's Structure

Actions taken since Jan. 20 to meet this goal are less promising. There has long been a penchant for proliferating senior officials at State. Some are in the normal chain of command: assistant secretaries, under secretaries and, currently, even a second Deputy Secretary of State. Then there are various other supernumeraries, such as (but not limited to) special envoys, special representatives, ambassadors-at-large and coordinators of all stripes.

Such appointments may be necessary to attract high-powered individuals; it is hard to imagine George Mitchell or Richard Holbrooke accepting assistant secretary positions. But they come at a cost to the role of assistant secretaries in the affected geographic bureaus. They also make line positions less attractive to talented individuals, whether career or political. And there is a real risk that the "specials" — or, as *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman has called them, "Super Sub-Secretaries of State"

— will cut off the Secretary from expertise in the bureaucracy.

Or consider the newly activated position of Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, created by Congress a decade ago but not established until this spring. This gives the Secretary an excuse to ignore resource issues (as all recent ones except Shultz and Powell have done) and minimizes the roles of the USAID Administrator (who loses oversight of foreign assistance resources), the under secretary for management and the assistant secretary for resource management. Arguably, it also diminishes the importance of the under secretary for political affairs, who has now been downgraded from the department's third-ranking position to number four.

Admittedly, many support the creation of the second deputy position, a view that is heavily reliant upon the reputation of Jacob Lew, the highly regarded budget and legislative affairs professional now in the job. He is likely to be a real asset, but at the cost of dislocations in State's hierarchy.

Once created, new offices and bureaus are very difficult to abolish, even when their time of relevance has passed. In short, the Secretary uses such special-purpose functionaries at her or his peril. This problem is exacerbated by tardiness in nominating new line officials who need Senate confirmation. It has apparently seemed easier to appoint "specials" not needing confirmation, a trend that may cause problems with Congress, and one that makes the problems suggested here even more pressing.

3. Rationalize State's Mission and Functions

It is vital for Sec. Clinton to reclaim natural State functions from other de-

partments and agencies while handing off those that do not fit. If the department is to be effective, there must be greater clarity about what it should do.

Nationbuilding activities that have migrated to DOD as a consequence of the Iraq War and State's lack of resources should be returned home, as discussed in the report previously cited. China policy must be defined more broadly than as trade-related, and primary responsibility for it brought back to Foggy Bottom from Treasury. Certain operational responsibilities should be retrieved from the National Security Council staff. And, while this will be much more difficult to accomplish, visa functions — shared with the Department of Homeland Security since the panic after 9/11 — should be reunified in State.

At the same time, some functions (e.g., international narcotics matters) might logically be located elsewhere. And some reconstruction and stabilization operations currently assigned to State would fit more appropriately within USAID, since they are heavily development-related. Finally, rationalization of the intelligence world could be a major help, not just to State but more generally.

4. Review Recruitment, Training and Assignments

Most observers agree that State and USAID have maintained high levels of competence among the Foreign Service personnel they recruit. However, an argument can be made that, especially at State, there should be more aggressive recruitment for specific subject-matter expertise, as opposed to broad academic knowledge.

How new recruits are trained and then assigned once on board is more questionable. Clearly, more hard-lan-



guage instruction is needed, as are program management and functional training for areas such as climate change and natural resources that are becoming more important parts of the policy agenda.

State's Foreign Service Institute is ready to meet such needs, and the general skepticism about most training in the FS corps may be moderating. But resources must be radically increased, and a thorough review of what competences and training today's circumstances require is essential. On the Civil Service side, State has significantly depleted its technical competence and institutional memory. So considerable rebuilding is needed there, as well.

Assignment reform on the Foreign Service side may be the toughest problem. State has always emphasized a

State should reclaim natural functions from other departments, while handing off those that do not fit.

broad range of assignments to prepare personnel for senior responsibilities and, not incidentally, to give them what they want. But this approach often comes at the expense of using specific expertise where it is most needed. To train an officer in Japanese and eco-

nomics, only to assign him to the Netherlands for consular work, may be broadening, but it is a poor use of scarce resources.

Greater assignment discipline should be accompanied by a significant expansion of the creative use of incentives (e.g., serve a tour now where most needed, with the promise of an assignment desired by the officer later) — not only to fill positions in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also to promote maximum utilization of scarce critical skills. The current approach is sometimes viewed by exasperated State managers as “letting the inmates run the asylum.”

5. Facilitate Overall Activities While Minimizing Turf Battles

Many in State forget the first law of



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SPEAKING OUT



relevance in Washington: “What have you done for me lately?” Giving others what they most need, rather than battling them for influence, would enhance State’s role.

The department is well-positioned to be a central point of information and coordination, thus being of substantial assistance to others in a complex policy environment. No other agency can capably look at particularistic elements within the larger context of overall U.S. interests. The views of the other organizations, with their more limited functions, are too narrow. Someone must mind the whole policy store.

But in addition to a required change in attitude — one that a Senate-schooled Secretary of State is ideally suited to impart to her departmental colleagues

— improvements in each of the other four areas discussed are vital. Sufficient resources, a streamlined structure, a more coherent mission portfolio and better utilization of personnel would all help carry out this function. To knit all these changes together, taking long-term strategic and budgetary planning seriously, would enhance the department’s ability to play this part.

One could easily list other changes that would improve State’s skills base and standing relative to the rest of the foreign affairs and national security universe. But even modest success on these five fronts would go a long way to help. ■

William I. Bacchus spent 27 years of his government career in management and legislative affairs positions at the De-

partment of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. He was a lead staffer in development and passage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980; executive secretary and co-director of the 1992-1993 task force that prepared State 2000: A New Model for Managing Foreign Affairs; and executive director of USAID’s Management Council and a predecessor organization, from 1993 to 2001. The author of four books on the State Department and the international affairs community, he is currently consulting and carrying out foreign affairs reform projects.

A longer version of this article, titled “How to Reinvigorate the State Department,” appeared originally in an online journal, The Smart Globalist, published by the Economic Strategy Institute (www.smartglobalist.com).

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THE ROADS ARE CLOSING

How

AN IMPROBABLE LIAISON THAT DIDN'T FIT INTO HIS MASTER PLAN HAUNTS AN AGING DIPLOMAT.

By PATRICIA MCARDLE

ow did I let her burrow so far into me that nearly 40 years later she still lingers just beyond the daylight, curling around my mind like tendrils of sweet cigar smoke, distracting me with the soft clink of ice cubes in her sweating glass of gin and tonic? The thing is, I never should have spoken to her the first time. She was not my type, not part of my plan.

Oh yes, my plan. Finish my master's in international relations, pass the Foreign Service exam, hustle my way to the top, marry the right girl — which I did, but it didn't last. I married even better the second time — the daughter of a former ambassador — but that didn't last either. I

got my own embassy, too, a small one in Africa — but even that minor victory could not dislodge the memory of her that I will forever savor and regret.

So you're curious about her, are you? Order another drink and I'll tell you the whole story. This is a long flight, and I assure you the movie is a bore.



Patricia McArdle was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Paraguay from 1972 to 1974. After service as a U.S. Navy officer in Morocco from 1974 to 1977, she attended the Thunderbird School of Global Management, receiving her MBA and then joining the Foreign Service in 1979. She retired in 2006 after tours of duty in South Africa, Barbados, France and Afghanistan. Since retirement, she has been promoting the use of solar cookers in the developing world. She is currently completing a novel based on her year at a British Army-run Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan.

This story won first place in the Journal's 2009 Foreign Service fiction contest.



I remember how miserable I was that long-ago Saturday morning in December — suffering from a perennial weekend gloom that was rapidly becoming a bad habit. I was 25, single, on my first overseas tour of duty in Asuncion — a newly minted political officer issuing nonimmigrant visas. I had degrees from Georgetown and Johns Hopkins. I tested at a 4/4 in French! Why, in God's name, did the State Department make me learn Spanish and bury me in the consular section of this South American backwater?

My air conditioner had given out three days ago. It was 6 a.m. and already 85 degrees inside my house. The early morning rain hammered on my tin roof.

If the rain stopped, the embassy pool would open at 10 a.m. The econ counselor's daughter would probably be there. She was tolerable, and pickings were slim in Asuncion. Would she wear a one-piece or a bikini? I only had three weeks to work on her before Christmas vacation ended and she went back to college in Boston.

Why had I been chosen to administer the Foreign Service exam today? Does the most junior officer in the embassy ever have a choice? Would anyone even show up? Probably not. Three days of rain had closed roads all over the country. I switched on the radio and toggled over to the shortwave band. VOA had too much static, but the BBC was coming in loud and clear.

Haldeman was testifying once again. Bob Hope would be leaving soon for Cam Ranh Bay to entertain the troops for the Christmas holidays. I switched it off. None of it seemed to matter much here. No one wanted to talk about Vietnam or Watergate. My student exemptions had shielded me from the draft, and I was thousands of miles from both places.

Oh, I've put you to sleep, have I? No problem. I'll pretend you're listening.

I can still recall the taste of her lips — that hint of mango and yerba maté, those musty, hand-rolled cigars we shared in the evening after dinner, the limes she plunged into her gin and tonic. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The newest batch of Peace Corps Volunteers had arrived in September, and the DCM had asked me to give them the standard political briefing before they went off to their villages.

The Peace Corps had never interested me. It seemed like such a waste of time. The thought of being out in the middle of nowhere for two years, speaking some godforsaken indigenous language and trying to improve the lot of a group of puzzled locals, did not seem like a useful stepping-stone for someone with my ambitions.

There were 32 of them. A scruffy lot. They filed into the library in their jeans and sandals, laughing, looking at me like I was an alien with my tropical suit and tie. The girls looked like the ones I didn't pay much attention to in college — dangling earrings and no bras, not that I minded.

I warned them that the Stroessner government was still a fairly brutal dictatorship, and gave them their instruc-

“So, Mr. Important American, do you have a pencil sharpener?”

tions from the ambassador: stay out of Paraguayan politics, don't advocate contraception or distribute the pill, don't use drugs, make your country proud — and don't come to the embassy unless there is an emergency.

When I finished my talk, I asked how many of them were taking the Foreign Service exam in December. They all looked at me with blank stares.

One volunteer raised her hand. “What's the Foreign Service exam?” Her headscarf, a cobalt blue, matched her eyes perfectly. I was staring. I blinked, looked away and explained to the whole group what the test was and how to sign up for it. “Would any of you like to take the exam in December?”

She raised her hand again, as did three of her male colleagues. Brave woman, I thought. Until a year ago, the State Department had a rule requiring female FSOs to resign if they got married. The four hopefuls filled out the necessary paperwork and departed with the rest of their colleagues.

I took the applications back to my office and read hers. Katherine Delaney, 26, from Portland, Ore. Born June 7, 1946. Her father must have returned from Europe right after V-E Day. Mine had been delayed for a year in Japan.



There were four exams in the sealed packet that damp December morning as I waited with the Marine guard at the entrance to the embassy. The streets were flooding, the rain incessant. No one was coming. I went back to the library, gathered up the pencils I had set out at the four testing stations and prepared to lock the exams in my office safe. The Marine guard rapped softly on my door. “Sir, someone is here for the exam. She's an hour late. Shall I send her away?”

“No, sergeant, send her in,” I said, with enough irritation in my voice to conceal my excitement.

Her chestnut hair was streaked with ochre mud. Her sandals oozed water, leaving damp imprints as she crossed the carpet. “I'm so sorry I'm late. They closed the dirt track through my village to all vehicles last night, so I had to ride my horse 15 miles down to the paved road.

“I left him with a volunteer in Carapequa on Route One and took an early bus into Asuncion. My host family did not understand why I would ride through the rain to get

here, so I made up a story about meeting an important American at the embassy this morning.

“So, Mr. Important American, do you have a pencil sharpener?” She pulled a stubby # 2 pencil from her macramé shoulder bag and began to laugh as she caught me staring at the water pooling around her feet. “I’m ruining your carpet!”

“I have pencils,” I stammered as my gaze rose to her thin cotton dress, which had been thoroughly soaked and made somewhat irrelevant by the rain.

“That’s OK, I’ll use my own.”

Her face, arms and legs were the color of my morning café con leche, but when she removed her soaked sandals at my suggestion, I could see the creamy white cross-hatchings where straps had covered her feet.

No one else came to take the exam that day. She finished at 2, and I desperately wanted to invite her to lunch. I was trembling inside as she handed me her essay and tossed the stub of her pencil into the trash. Scanning my bookshelf, she spotted *Travels with My Aunt*.

“Oh, I love Graham Greene,” she cried.

I didn’t, but I told her I did. That copy had belonged to my predecessor, who met the author when he came through Asuncion doing research for the book.

I handed it to her. “Take it. It’s signed by Greene himself.”

“Oh, I couldn’t,” she said, handing it back.

“He sent us a whole box of signed copies when the book was published,” I lied, pressing the book into her hands. “Take it.”

The sun had come out, summoning clouds of steam that rose like spectral ghosts from the streets and sidewalks. As she vanished around a brick wall draped in honeysuckle, I stood mute and immobilized in the driveway of the embassy.



“Is there a problem, sir?” asked the Marine.

I shook my head and went back to my office, where I fished her pencil out of the trash and dropped it into my pocket.

I locked the exams in my safe and headed for the pool, where the econ counselor’s daughter was deep in conver-

*She never invited me into
her room and she refused
to come to my apartment,
but we inhaled each
other’s kisses.*

sation with one of the Marine guards. Feigning disinterest, I plowed through a month-old copy of *The New York Times* and worked on my tan.

The following Monday, I called the Peace Corps office to ask where she was assigned. The deputy director told me she was the first volunteer they had ever sent to Acahay, a Guarani-speaking village 70 miles

south of Asuncion. She was working as a health educator. Her village had no electricity, no running water and no cars.

“Kat usually comes in once a month to pick up her mail,” he said. “She was just here this morning. Shall I tell her you called the next time we see her?”

I said no and struggled to put her out of my mind. She was not my type, after all. I had almost succeeded — until the evening I accepted an invitation from several junior officers, who frequented the city’s discos, to accompany them to the Safari after a long and boring dinner at the ambassador’s residence. I’m not a big dancer, never have been; but I agreed to go.

The place was dark, crowded and noisy. I did not plan to stay long, but then I spotted Kat dancing with a French coopérant volunteer, a tall skinny guy with dark, curly hair whose fingers meandered slowly down her back. She was laughing. I ordered a beer and hoped she would look my way so I could casually raise my glass in her direction.

An hour later, she was standing near me at the bar sipping something with ice and arguing with her dance partner. She had not yet acknowledged my presence. The Frenchman suddenly slammed his fist on the bar. “Putain!” he hissed at her before storming out of the room. I was on my third beer. She walked over to me as I was about to order a fourth.

“So, what books have you been reading lately?”

I stared at the hollow of her throat, then raised my eyes to meet hers, trying to remember what was on my nightstand.

“*The Winds of War*,” I stammered, “and Crichton’s *The Terminal Man*.”

“Guy books,” she laughed. “Don’t you dance?”

“I’m really not very good at it.”

She stood and extended her hand. Wasn’t I supposed to do that? The Rolling Stones’ “Satisfaction” was winding

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down. We melted into the crowd as Roberta Flack's voice flowed across the room like warm honey. I put my fingers where the Frenchman's had been, and we danced, barely touching until Kat moved into my arms and we kissed again and again.

The Safari closed at 4:30 a.m., and I waited with her in the cool pre-dawn air while one of the volunteers hailed a taxi. Kat squeezed my hand, planted a farewell kiss on my cheek, jumped in the cab with her friends and called out the window as they sped away, "Meet me this afternoon at 5 — La Terazza Hotel."

I had never been to that ancient hotel, favored by elderly Germans, shady businessmen and the odd traveler. It was a crumbling pink stucco confection perched on the edge of a cliff overlooking the Paraguay River.

Kat, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt, was lounging on a canvas chair that cast narrow shadows across the flagstone

As I reached up to take her hand, she wheeled her horse, kicked him into a gallop and buried her face in his mane.

terrace in the late afternoon sun. The muscles in her long legs flexed seductively as she played with her sandals. She was reading a book by some feminist writer I had never heard of.

"Let's go to the beer garden tonight," she whispered, sliding her fingers around the back of my neck and rubbing my hair with her thumbs.



Kat called me whenever she was in town. I would take her to dinner, where we would discuss the books we were reading and argue about Watergate, Vietnam and women's rights. Then I would walk her back to La Terazza. She never invited me into her room and she refused to come to my apartment, but we inhaled each other's kisses, which grew longer and more intense each time we parted.

In May, I arranged to travel to Acahay for the day with



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a USAID officer who was going to inspect a nearby agricultural project. I had sent her a note that I was coming, but I had no way of knowing whether she had received it.

Clouds of ocher dust chased our vehicle up the dirt road and settled on my hair and shoulders when I was dropped at the edge of her village. Crossing the square in front of the church, I could see a group of very pregnant women seated on low benches in front of a mud and thatch building. Kat was speaking to them in Guarani. I gathered from the posters behind her that she was talking to them about birth control.

As the women struggled to their feet at the end of her talk, she turned and smiled when she saw me watching her. “Well, hello, Mr. Diplomat. To what do I owe this honor?”

“Kat, you’re not supposed to be teaching these women about contraception. You’ll get yourself thrown out of the country!” I hadn’t meant to start our conversation that way. I had planned to say how wonderful she looked and tell her my sister had mailed me a copy of *The Feminine Mystique*, which I had almost finished and wanted to talk to her about. But I was gripped by a sudden fear that she might be sent home for breaking this sensitive taboo. I didn’t want her to leave.

She stared up at me, hands on her hips, eyes unreadable. “These women are desperate. One came in this morning bleeding and vomiting. She had tried to abort her baby with a curandera’s potion. She is 29, has eight children, was delirious with fever and was carrying her youngest, a 1-year-old with dysentery. He weighed 14 pounds and died in my arms just two hours ago. The mother is still in the health center. The doctor can’t stop the hemorrhaging, and we have no blood or plasma. Hell, we don’t even have a refrigerator. How can I just sit and watch this?” Dark clouds rolled in as she spoke.

“The rain will come soon and the roads will be closing. You’ll have to stay with us tonight,” she said.

Kat’s host family welcomed me warmly, and one of the servants prepared a rawhide cot on the covered patio where I would sleep. Soon after the evening meal of fried manioc and tomatoes, her family along with the rest of the village extinguished their kerosene lamps and went to bed. The rain had stopped, and I drifted into a fitful sleep until Kat, her face framed by a starry night sky, woke me gently, her fingers stroking my hair. She was sitting on the edge of the cot wearing a thin silk nightgown.

*I didn’t reply and
never tried to find her.
She was too impetuous.*

“You will never understand,” she whispered. “You shouldn’t have come today.” I reached up to touch her face and gently pulled her down. She brushed her parted lips against mine, and we melted into a wordless tangle of teeth and

tongue. Kat opened the folds of her gown and allowed me to caress her until a door creaked inside the house. Rising quickly from my cot and pulling her nightgown around her, she walked in silence back to her room.



By the time I awoke, she was dressed and saddling her horse for the three-hour trip to a school in the countryside. Women in rural Paraguay still rode sidesaddle, but Kat had purchased an English saddle in Asuncion and trained her horse to accept it. She was the only woman in the village, perhaps in the entire country, who rode “like a man.”

The morning sun had baked the road into a hard brown crust after last night’s rain. She swung into her saddle and looked down at me with tears in her eyes. “The roads are open again. Your friend should be here soon to get you. I am so sorry — about everything.”

As I reached up to take her hand, she wheeled her horse, kicked him into a gallop and buried her face in his mane. He carried her down the only road out of the village and vanished with her into a stand of palm trees.

Several men on the Acahay town council did complain about her talks at the health center, and a few weeks after my visit she was transferred out of the country. Just before I went on leave the following December, a Peace Corps friend who knew us both invited me for a bowl of fish soup at the Lido. When we finished our meal and our beers, he handed me a small package with a Lesotho postmark. “This came for you.”

It was a paperback copy of Norman Mailer’s book *The Prisoners of Sex*, with a note scribbled inside the cover. “Dear Mr. Diplomat, read this. You need it! – Love, Kat P.S. I know I was right to do what I did, and so do you. P.P.S. You’re a great kisser!”



I didn’t reply and never tried to find her. I don’t even know if she passed the exam. She was too impetuous; it would never have worked. I am so sorry, Kat, wherever you are. ■

IGLOO OF HAIRLESS WINOS

T

here is a saying, unique to my country, which roughly translates into English as “he who is laughing after the others have finished their own laughing is, in fact, the one who is having the most enjoyable laughter.” I must confess, however, that I was not confident that anyone would enjoy any laughter at all when the U.S. chargé d’affaires, Mr. Linus Handy, imperiled relations between our countries with his grievous insults of our foreign minister, his allegedly woman-like breasts and also his very motherland.

Our is not a wealthy, powerful or large country, but the spirit of national pride runs hot as burning ox dung in all our blood. No other country produces as we do the national dish of boiled thrush in sour snake bile for which we are justifiably famous. The world’s largest palacite meteorite fell to earth in our western desert and, moreover, the longest tapeworm ever discovered was passed here. So you could say we do not lack for the superlative.

There are certain of my relatives and friends who ask how it is that I can work so loyally for the embassy of the

Brian Aggeler entered the Foreign Service in 1990, and has served in Europe, Asia and Africa. He also contributes cartoons to the Journal.

This story won second place in this year’s FS fiction contest.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS POSE A PARTICULARLY THORNY PROBLEM FOR CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES LINUS HANDY.

BY BRIAN AGGELER

United States, an imperialist invader of other countries, imposing its will and also reruns of its older and least amusing sitcoms on the weaker members of the world community. I am not a scientist of politics, but what I know is that in my country, at least, the embassy of the United States is being staffed by good people who wish us no harm.

It is true that Mary Beth Fadoro once very vocally wished harm on my friend Osmo in the general services section, but that had less to do with any international misunderstanding and more with Mary Beth’s reaction to Osmo’s innocent observation that the dimensions of her posterior would necessitate the construction of a special office chair that would then be roomy enough to seat comfortably two of the local women on the staff. But such tempestuous exchanges are rare, and I am proud to work to benefit both of our countries, and to do so with a competitive salary.

I have worked at the embassy for 11 years and in that time several American supervisors have come and gone,



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each arriving with fresh ideas for how we should do things here exactly as they had done them at their previous post: Bob Gambini, lover of all things from China; Mordecai Heflin, who had learned all that need be known in Burkina Faso; and Mary Beth Fadoro, smitten with the workings of Embassy Vatican City. The one thing on which they have all agreed, however, is that they require my assistance as a translator for any official communication of complexity.

Among the greatnesses of our nation is the complexity of our language, which requires a mastery of subtle tones, wildly irregular grammar and a greater volume of phlegm than most foreigners can muster. Indeed, the most complicated phrase most Americans can manage in our tongue is “Hello, how are you?” Even that usually comes out as “Beef loins, I oppress your lemur,” but our people nonetheless appreciate the gesture.

Mr. Linus Handy, the new deputy chief of mission, was among the most dedicated students of our tongue. He had already mastered Vietnamese, Hungarian and several lesser tongues in his previous postings. One of those was apparently Spanish, accounting for his constantly referring to me as his “amigo.” A man of magnificent confidence in his own abilities, he regaled me with tales of his greatness in various other fields, as well. “I didn’t climb to the top in the world of competitive jump rope without stepping on some toes,” he declared. He brought this same zest to all endeavors, even though his fleshy form suggested that his days at the zenith of jump-rope greatness might be behind him.

Still, it was a certain clenching unease that I felt when Mr. Linus Handy told me he would deliver a *démarche* on an urgent United Nations vote in our native tongue. It happened that the ambassador was away for what was rumored to be urgent hair transplant surgery, so Mr. Linus was the *chargé d’affaires*. The instructions were to deliver the *démarche* at the highest appropriate level and, at Mr. Linus’ instruction, we had arranged a meeting for him alone with the foreign minister himself. “Mr. Linus,” I warned. “The foreign minister is not speaking any English at all. Surely you wish me to translate.”

Mr. Linus shrugged. “No worries there. You can come along if you insist, but just let me do the talking.”

“I see we also have our points written on a paper we may leave with the ministry. Perhaps I should bring this along to deliver, just for clarity.”

Mr. Linus snorted a chuckle. “Written points are for the weak, my friend. I’m performing without a net, doing

this all orally. Watch and learn, *amigo*. Watch and learn.”



Upon arrival at the ministry, we were ushered into the Great Hall of the Glorious Defeats, where we sat in the deep and somewhat mildewy official meeting chairs under a giant bust of our national hero, King Volmak the Very Nearly Victorious. The minister entered, an elderly man of great dignity and reserve, followed by my witless cousin, Bomzar, who works in his office. Mr. Linus began with pleasantries and fared well. He got through “Hello, how are you” without incident, and I unclenched slightly. Mr. Linus was mightily proud, his shirt buttons struggling more than usual to hold him in.

I believe Mr. Linus’ first point was intended to be “We are concerned about the upcoming resolution in the United Nations Security Council.” Because of some variance in tones and a questionable word choice, however, what came out was: “I vilify your noteworthy man-breasts.”

Bomzar stopped his notetaking and looked up at Mr. Linus and then at me. The minister raised one shaggy eyebrow and asked in a quiet tone if that was what Mr. Linus had meant to say. Mr. Linus interpreted this as evidence that he had made his point. I started to whisper in his ear, but he stopped me and smiled at the minister. “Indeed that is exactly what I meant to say to you, on behalf of the government and people of the United States.” This Mr. Linus managed without a mistake.

He then attempted to go into the details of the *démarche* and its implications on our bilateral relations. The depths of this new vocabulary were beyond Mr. Linus’ grasp, however. A downward tone instead of a rising one, a misconjugation and other seemingly small mistakes combined to make the words he said to the minister come out as: “You, sir, are the bastard son of a platypus and a merman.” The minister stared in disbelief as Mr. Linus added: “Also a would-be bedwetter in an igloo of hairless winos.”

Things went down the hill from there, the situation not helped by the unfortunate similarity in pronunciation of our words for “constructive dialogue” and “flatulent molester.” I yearned in vain for the power of ventriloquism to repair the damage. The minister did not shout, for this is not our custom when insulted. Instead, he rubbed his left eye with his thumb, a gesture which in our country equates with a phrase used by Americans that often ends with “and the horse you rode in on.” As Mr. Linus continued his barrage of inadvertent insults, the minister

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rubbed his eye even more vigorously.

Finally, the ordeal ended. Mr. Linus correctly navigated through the parting pleasantries and we left, the minister still rubbing his eye and Bomzar glowering. “You see, that’s how it’s done,” Mr. Linus said. “Hey, what do you think that dude had in his eye?”



Bamboozlement is not my way, so in the car on the way back to the embassy I attempted to explain frankly to Mr. Linus how his mispronunciation could be misinterpreted.

“For example: Sfloxnzdt,” I said.

“Sfloxnzdt,” he said.

“No, sfloxnzdt. You must adjust the tone.”

“That’s what I said: sfloxnzdt.”

“There is a slight difference, Mr. Linus. What I said means ‘textile tariff’ but the way you say it changes it to be an expression of intense surprise, with an additional mean-

*Things went down
the hill from there.*

ing of indecent relations with a duck.

“Sfloxnzdt!”

“You’re saying it again.”

He was silent for a few minutes

as we passed the Tapeworm of Greatness Monument. “OK, OK. What do we do now?”

“I will consult the minister’s office — perhaps the damage is not so bad.”



The damage was, in fact, very much so bad. I went to see Bomzar, who was buried behind stacks of dust-covered papers in his small cubicle next to the foreign minister’s office, cleaning his ear with a fork. “So, how is the lovely Jellima?” I asked, hoping to warm our encounter. Bomzar has long tried to interest me in marrying his sister-in-law, Jellima, a charming girl whose only flaw is a moustache slightly lusher than my own. But this day he was not partaking of banter.

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"It is wise that you have come to see me, as you may need my assistance to seek other employment soon," he declared with a note of superiority. He said the minister was preparing a letter insisting that the U.S. close its embassy in our country and suspend its diplomatic relations for the heinous insults hurled at the minister and our country by Mr. Linus.

I suggested that there must be a misunderstanding. Bomzar waved the dirty fork at me. "Calling our beloved motherland an igloo of hairless winos? By King Volmak's ghost, these are truly harsh and peculiar words!" I noted our honored national tradition that, before going to war with a rival, we invite that rival to share a meal and seek to resolve our differences. The downside to this tradition is that, if the differences cannot be resolved, the rival is then stripped naked, wrapped in bacon and dropped into a pit of badgers. Bomzar grudgingly, perhaps with visions of badgers dancing in his head, agreed to recommend that the minister host Mr. Linus at a dinner.

That evening, when Bomzar led Mr. Linus and me into the foreign minister's official residence, the minister greeted us courteously but coldly. In a dimly lit receiving room a television in the corner showed an early episode of "The Brady Bunch." We were given seats on cushions surrounding a low table with a large spoon in front of each of us. Mr. Linus, his usual gusto for once absent, said quietly, "Mr. Minister, I would like to express my most sincere and heartfelt —" The minister held up a hand for silence. I whispered to Mr. Linus, "First, we must share a taste of the same dish. It is our custom."

Mr. Linus nodded and we sat in silence for a few moments, Bomzar smirking a little at me. Then I experienced a sudden olfactory joy, catching a whiff of the boiled garden thrush in sour snake bile for which our nation is justifiably famous. A servant brought in a large clay pot of the thick mixture. Mr. Linus wrinkled his nose. "That smell — what's in this?"

"It is a turdine dish."

"What? Are you serious?"

"It is a great honor — you must share it with the minister."

Mr. Linus smiled nervously at the minister and smelled the dish again. "The smell — it's like someone microwaved an overflowing cat box."

"It is our national dish — turdine," I told him.

"I don't — that's not even a word."

*Bomzar tittered quietly,
and I knew his thoughts
were of bacon and badgers.*

"You could also call it turdoid. But you must eat it — to refuse would be the most grievous insult."

Mr. Linus swallowed hard, took a spoonful of the thick, brown mixture and put it in his mouth. The minister watched intently as Mr.

Linus closed his eyes tightly, then opened them. He swallowed the mouthful. "Actually, it's not bad."

"That is a most generous observation given that it is, after all, our national dish, amigo," I observed quietly.

Mr. Linus took another spoonful. "Tastes like chicken." "As I said, it is, in fact, turdoid."

"Stop saying that!"

Mr. Linus proceeded to eat with relish, and the minister nodded with approval. "You enjoy our great national dish?" he asked.

"Indeed, I do," Mr. Linus responded in our tongue. "I find it truly glandular."

"He means to say delicious," I whispered.

"Right, exactly!" Mr. Linus responded. "Glandulicious."

The minister nodded thoughtfully, weighing Mr. Linus' words. Bomzar tittered quietly, and I knew his thoughts were of bacon and badgers. We all took spoonfuls of the dish and chewed in silence. Finally the minister spoke. "Your efforts to master our most difficult language are indeed noble, sir. That it causes you difficulty is something we can understand. I know this because I myself have trouble speaking your language," and he switched to English to add: "It is a suck on the butt."

Switching back to our tongue, he went on: "Still, I salute your fearlessness in trying — it shows a respect for our national culture. I propose to you that we establish a group to work together to learn each other's languages, and increase mutual understanding. You are just the partner we have been seeking for such an endeavor. Bomzar, please prepare a proposal for me to share with the embassy of the United States, noting the key role of the chargé d'affaires here in providing the impetus for this initiative." Bomzar looked sadly at me as it dawned on him that the badgers would not be released that evening.

The fermented badger milk was served, and many heartfelt toasts were exchanged, with my discreet assistance in translation smoothing the process. By the end of the evening the minister had his arm around Mr. Linus. Another episode of "The Brady Bunch" started, and the minister gestured at the television. "Mr. Linus, my friend

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— what happened to the first Mrs. Brady? They never say, do they?”

We departed with hugs. On the way out, I passed Bomzar the paper with the points on the United Nations démarche Mr. Linus had attempted to deliver. Realizing his own comeuppance was at hand, Bomzar agreed to deliver them to the minister.



When the ambassador returned the next week with a newly luxuriant head of hair, Mr. Linus proudly reported on this new initiative and was promptly nominated for an award of great meritoriousness and superiority. He, in turn, nominated me for an Extra Mile Award (with cash) and called me to his office to express his appreciation. “Turns out the minister also supported our position at the United Nations — exactly what was in our position paper!”

“That is indeed fortunate,” I agreed.

Mr. Linus patted my shoulder. “And really, that national dish of yours isn’t so bad.”

“As I said, it is turdine.”

“You know, that’s not only a distasteful thing to say — it’s not even a word.”

“A synonym would be turdoid. That is to say, relating to the family of turdidae, which is the common thrush. That modest bird is, of course, the main ingredient in this most beloved dish.”

He stared at me. “Turdine? You’re a smart guy, amigo, but as a native English-speaker I have to tell you: You’re a little out of your depth here.”

I must declare that I am jiggy, and not only with the latest phrases. As a humble embassy employee I am not one to toot my own cat, but my English-language vocabulary is multitudinous. Yet my American colleagues sometimes, to put it in political parlance, underestimate me. “You may wish to consult Dictionary.com,” I ventured.

Mr. Linus went around his desk, sat down and tapped at his computer. I waited, permitting myself a small smile. He stared for a long time at the results, then looked up at me and declared: “Well, sfloxnzt...” ■

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THE DAY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY BURNED

HER FATHER HAD SHOWN HER THE WORLD,
BUT SHE NEVER REALLY SAW HIM. AND NOW
HE MIGHT BE GONE — FOREVER.

BY VICTORIA MONTES

I dragged my feet through the lawn of beige carpet outside the boulder-like mahogany door that shut me out of my father's world. The soft glow escaping under the door provided the only hint of life inside.

I paused, letting my fingertips brush the wall. Would he be busy? Should I bother him? With an ear to the door, I listened. The slow drone of exhaled and inhaled breath was the only sound.

I knocked. "Come in," he growled. He sat slumped over the desk, bifocals perched halfway down his nose. Had I awakened him? He didn't look up.

The desk occupied half the room. A faint odor of alcohol wipes and a splash of Old Spice after-shave filled the musty library. The books lining the walls crowded in on me.

I walked behind my father's chair. "I . . . I was just wondering. You know how they took those hostages at the embassy in Iran?" I waited and saw a slow nod of his head. "Well, could it happen here — in Pakistan?"

He didn't answer right away, so I studied the shelves, re-

Victoria Montes, the daughter of a Foreign Service officer, grew up in Nigeria, Morocco and Pakistan. She now lives in Tehachapi, Calif., where she teaches high school English. She is the author of three novels: A Diplomat's Daughter, Camouflage Venom and Hive of Hornets.

This story won third place in this year's FS fiction contest.

garding a picture of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, now dead, with my father. Bhutto had run Pakistan until he was arrested, and then executed by hanging seven months ago. The country was under the martial law declared by General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq. I knew Bhutto's son, Shah Nawaz, had once gone to my school, the International School of Islamabad.

What do you do when they kill your father? To whom do you turn to ask if you're safe?

My father didn't utter a word; I wondered if he'd fallen asleep. But then he reached for the water glass. "For reasons you're too young to understand, some students decided to hold those people hostage. They let 10 go today. It'll be over soon."

I bravely probed a little farther. "I know Iran wants the shah back. But we were friends with Bhutto, too. Maybe they're mad at us."

He inhaled deeply. "No, it's a different situation. The U.S. has a different relationship with Zia's government." He pushed his glasses back up his nose. "We're safe," he said.





Nov. 21, 1979, was the last day of school before the four-day Thanksgiving weekend. For my family, the holiday would be quiet. My mom and sister were on a field trip to Mojendaro. Dad and I had been invited out to dinner for Thanksgiving, but he had declined.

After lunch, I walked to world history class with my best friend, Ellen. “Steven’s coming on Thanksgiving to meet my parents,” she said, fingering the heart with his name inside it she had drawn on her binder. Steven was a 19-year old Marine security guard at the embassy.

The classroom walls featured huge maps of China, India, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pictures of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung with President Richard Nixon, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Ayatollah Khomeini and Mahatma Gandhi — and now some of the American hostages in Iran. Pieces of red, blue and green yarn connected places with newspaper articles. The bookshelf lining the front wall was stuffed with globes, a set of *World Books* and other encyclopedias.

“Your report should be at least 500 words long,” Mrs. Cook announced. A collective groan sounded around the classroom.

At 1:45, we heard a sharp rap at the door. Mr. Kain, our assistant principal, opened it and motioned to Mrs. Cook to step into the hallway. The two huddled, whispering too low for me to eavesdrop.

Mrs. Cook turned to the class and said, “Excuse me for a minute. Start your assignment.”

As the door closed, the volume in the room began to rise. “Who’s got lookout?” Ian asked.

Ellen pushed aside three globes, and stationed herself at the door.

Meanwhile, Dwight ran around balancing a meter stick between his lip and his braces. Ian pushed his desk up against mine while similar groups formed across the room.

“OK, brainiac, what do we write?”

“Shut up, Ian.”

Tracy pushed her glasses back up her nose and paced behind my desk.

“Let’s start with when Pakistan was part of India,” I suggested.

*He didn’t answer right away,
so I studied the shelves,
regarding a picture of Prime
Minister Bhutto, now dead,
with my father.*

“Too much information,” Darla said, pushing her midnight-black hair out of her eyes. “We have six other countries to cover, don’t forget.”

“India and Pakistan split 30 years ago,” I said.

“Should we write that?” Tracy asked, beads of perspiration breaking out on her forehead.

“I’m going to start with the hostages taken in Iran,” Dwight said as he stuffed a pencil in each nostril.

“It has to be 500 words long,” Ellen said.

I leafed through my notes, where I saw that Pakistan got its name as an acronym for all the Muslim provinces: P for Punjab, A for Afghans, K for Kashmir, S for Sind and then “istan,” the Persian word for “land of.” Put it all together and Pakistan means “Land of the Pure.”

“Maybe we should write, ‘Pakistan and India split due to religious differences,’” I said.

“I can’t find that in my notes,” Tracy said, flipping through her pages.

“Besides, this isn’t a religion paper,” Darla argued.

“All countries fight about religion,” I said. “Religion is the reason they hate each other.” I looked around in the silence. “Right?”

An eerie silence descended, broken only when Darla said, “India divided into three sections: West Pakistan, India and East Pakistan. Then East Pakistan became the new nation of Bangladesh.”

“Sounds good,” Tracy said using the sleeve of her shirt to polish her fogged-up lenses. “But what about Iran and Iraq?”

“Let’s all take a different country,” Ian suggested. “And share the facts.”

“Our papers can’t be the same,” Darla argued.

Dwight launched a paper airplane with the word ‘dumb’ scrawled on it. Ian grabbed it, jumped up on his desk, balled it up and chucked it forcefully at Dwight’s head.

A paper ball bounced off my binder and hit Tracy. She didn’t flinch, but continued to wring her hands. “We’ll get in trouble if Mrs. Cook walks in.”

Ian dove off the desk and tackled Dwight in mid-air, taking him down to the ground. Dwight let out a startled yelp, “My nose! You’re crushing me. Get off!”

Ellen called, "Someone's coming!" Everyone scrambled to pick up their papers. Dwight struggled to get a pencil eraser out of his nose.

I pushed desks around, while Tracy whimpered, "I didn't write anything. What if she checks?"

"Stop worrying. Just go sit down. Hurry!"



The classroom door opened just as I got back to my desk. I slumped down low in the seat.

Mrs. Cook didn't say anything at first. Ian called out, "What's up, Mrs. C? Talk to me."

"I'm afraid a civil disturbance has started down at the American embassy."

"What? No way, man," someone yelled.

I knew it. They'd taken hostages. My father was wrong, and now he was probably being blindfolded. My eyes met Ellen's.

"Wait, class. We don't have all the facts yet. After sixth period, we'll know more."

Tracy turned a paler shade of ivory and whispered, "Can I go to the nurse?"

"Let's just cancel school and go home," someone else exclaimed.

"If you have so much time on your hands," Mrs. Cook said, "we'll make it a 750-word report."

The bell rang and we jumped up. Pandemonium prevailed in the hallway. "OK, everyone," Coach Connors yelled. "Into the auditorium, now. Let's go!"

"Can't we just go home? It's the last day of school."

The whole school crammed into the auditorium, from kindergarten to seniors. The teachers stood guard over us in the aisles, shushing everyone.

I sat between Ian and Ellen. A few parents entered the auditorium, and pulled their kids out. My dad didn't get off until 6, so I had to wait until they excused us to take the bus.

"OK, settle down," Mr. Kain yelled from the stage. "The buses won't be running today."

"What'd he say? No way!"

"Quiet! There's a demonstration, and we can't risk operating the buses."

"It's our vacation! Come on, man."

"Yeah!" others yelled.

*There were loud voices,
smashed objects, broken
glass and a gunshot.*

"Your parents will have to pick you up," Mr. Kain said. But what if I didn't get picked up? Would my dad forget me in all the excitement?

"In the meantime," the assistant principal continued, "we're going

to watch a movie."

"North Dallas Forty!" More laughter from the crowd.

"Rocky II!"

"Yeah, Rocky rules!"

Mr. Kain ignored us, as Mr. Roberts, Ellen's dad, threaded the 1950s-era 8mm film of "U.S. Rodeos" through the projector.

Ian went to his locker. Twenty minutes later, he returned in a rush. "Ronni, the embassy's on fire."

"What?" Ellen grasped my hand.

"You can see it from the school, and some French guy said everyone's dead."

Ellen sobbed and her grip got tighter on my hand, so I felt nothing else.

When I was 7, I'd seen "I Never Sang for My Father." I couldn't stop crying, afraid of losing my father. I'd changed; I didn't cry anymore. My dad had shown me the world, but I never really saw him. And now he might be gone — forever.

"It's OK, Ellen," I said.

The lights came on. "We're moving to the gym," Mr. Kain said.

In the gym, Coach Connor passed out basketballs. Ian took one while Ellen and I sat in the bleachers and watched.

"They're here! They're coming to get us," a little girl ran into the gym yelling.

"Clear out. Everyone find a place to hide. Quick, move!" Coach shouted.

We dashed into the locker room and closed the door. Students crowded into showers, restroom stalls, under the benches and in lockers. As I huddled with Ellen, my ears filled with the pounding of my heart and the hush of our collectively held breaths.

There were loud voices, smashed objects, broken glass and a gunshot. I prayed, "Oh, my God," and shoved my hand in my mouth to keep from crying out.

Angry Arabic commands pierced the silence. After a few minutes, someone banged on the locker room door.

F O C U S

"Is anyone in there?" Coach asked.
"Come out now. It's over."



In the gym, Ian rushed toward us. "I was hiding under the curtain. Then five or six Pakistani guys came in, one with a shotgun, and I heard a bang. A chair came smashing through the window."

"Did they see you?"

"I don't think so. I got to the locker room and hid."

"Who were they?" I asked.

"A busload of students," Coach said, running a hand through his dark hair.

We moved across campus toward the music room. Outside, several school aides stood with hockey sticks and baseball bats. We froze, but Coach reassured us. "They helped chase away the bad guys with the sports equipment."

Ian saw his car, and Ellen and I followed him out to

***"OK, everyone," Coach
Connors yelled. "Into the
auditorium, now. Let's go!"***

Are you girls going to be able to get home? The streets are dangerous."

I shrugged. "I don't know."

"Oh that's right; your mom's on the field trip, Ronni. I'll make sure you get a ride home."

In the sound of the muffler, my response was lost. "No one's there."

When we got to the music room, Mr. Roberts said, "Ronni, Coach will drive you home."

"What about my dad?"

"Coach will stay with you until we know."

Ellen's father kissed her. "Honey, I love you very much, but I have some bad news. Steven was shot in the

question his mom. "Come on, Ian; it's getting dark," she yelled.

"Hi, Mrs. Datan. What's happening?"

"Well, a Marine got shot. The rest may still be alive, but they're trapped in the burning building.



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F O C U S

head. He didn't make it." I watched Ellen in stunned silence. Steven dead! How? Why? She buried her head in her father's shoulder and sobbed.

No! Steven couldn't be dead. Watching my best friend and her father, I was an intruder — out of place, with no one's arms wrapped around me.

I got into Coach's van and watched Ellen and her father wrapped in a silent embrace, until we turned the corner and they disappeared. Would my dad get out? Would he ever come home?

When I got home, our cook waited with dinner for two. He'd heard something on the radio, but he didn't know what to do.

The phone rang, but Coach beat me to it. I clung to his elbow, waiting. "Thank you," he said. "Yes, we understand. ... We will. Good night."

*What do you do when
they kill your father?*

*To whom do you turn to
ask if you're safe?*

"They got out," he told me. "They're at the British Embassy."

My father wasn't dead. He wasn't a hostage. He was safe! Did he know about Steven? What was it like?

At 6:57 p.m., Dad walked through the door. He brought in an overwhelming stench of smoke and a face solemn as the black ash lining his rumpled clothing.

He shook Coach's hand and said simply, "Thanks."

I looked down at his shirt. There was blood on it. "Dad, did you get hurt?"

He touched the blood and looked back at me. "I ... it's the Marine's." His eyes filled with tears.

Without thinking, I put my hand on his arm. He patted my hand. I said, "I know he's dead. Steven's dead." That's when my father put his arms around me, and I began sobbing. ■

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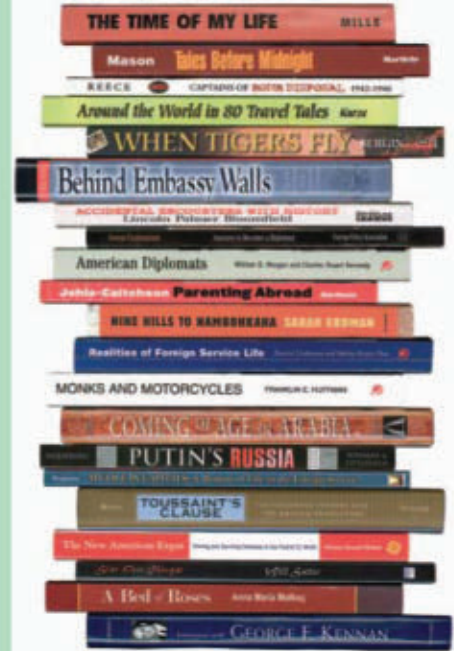


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ON THE ROAD TO CAPE TOWN

“W

AN AMERICAN HITCHHIKER TRAVELS
THROUGH THE MORAL DARKNESS
OF APARTHEID.

BY RICHARD S. SACKS

e had to use special tactics,” the driver said.

He rested a thin, hairy arm on the steering wheel and turned to me as he talked, rubbing his Adam’s apple. It stuck out from his throat like a walnut.

“At first they fooled us. They sent the women out in front like they were going to market. We didn’t think anything of it. Then after the women passed, they opened up.”

The truck hummed along the road. The country was wide open and drying up as we headed east. Birds wheeled high in the air above the brown hills.

A Foreign Service officer since 1989, Richard S. Sacks served in Mexico City, Casablanca, Hanoi, Seoul and Panama, before becoming deputy and acting director of the Pakistan/Bangladesh office in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, a post he held until July 2008. He completed a year of national security studies at the National War College in June. Prior to joining the Service, he was a wire service newsman for The Associated Press and a reporter for The Middlesex News, a suburban Boston daily. In 1991, he co-authored Paraguay: The Personalist Legacy (Westview Press). Mr. Sacks and his wife, Aida, live in McLean, Va., with their three children.

This story won fourth place in the Journal’s 2009 Foreign Service fiction contest.

“They got a few of us, but we wiped them out,” he continued. “We never made that mistake again. The next time we saw the women coming, we opened up on them.” He grinned, remembering it. He kept his eyes high and out of the sun as he talked. “Man, we blasted them to pieces. Ha! They never tried that again.

And it kept the roads clear for a while, too.”

Little shacks lined the empty road. Naked children herded ducks, chasing them through the dust with long, thin sticks. The road shot through the horizon ahead of us and into a mirage.

“Oh, the pay was good! I wanted to go back in ’64,” he said. “But by the time I got to Joburg, the recruiters were finished.” He spat out the window, then bent over and pulled out a tin canteen from below the seat.

“Whiskey,” he said. “Want some?” I shook my head. Winking, he unscrewed the cap and took a drink.

I took out my map. Some cows were crossing the road ahead of us. Cursing softly, the driver shifted gears and maneuvered to avoid them.



F O C U S

After Kimberley, there was Britstown, then Hopetown, Beaufort West, and the long ride through the Great Karroo — not sure what that was. Then Cape Town.

A boy whacked the animals with a pole again and again, herding them frantically off the road, his eyes wide with panic. As we passed, I could hear the slap of the wood on their flanks.

It would take about another day or two to get there, I figured. Probably two.

“I was in the Congo about a year. It was great,” he said, watching the road. “Simply fantastic. And the girls! There were always girls. As many as we liked. Plenty of young ones. About 14 or 15.” He grinned broadly. “Of course, we always shot them afterward.”

He fished around for the canteen and held it in his hand, shaking it. Then he drank. It was a long drink, and he strained his eyes down toward the road as he tilted his head. I looked at him as if for the first time: broken teeth; stubble; sharp, jutting jaw; blue eyes the color of faded enamelware; unkempt, thinning hair cut short.

After a moment he caught my glance and dropped the canteen clattering on the floor. He pounded the steering wheel.

“Of course we shot them! We always shot them! Ha! Wasn’t anything else we could do. Their families would never take them back.”

The Orange River was playing cat and mouse with the hills ahead of us. Now it was plainly visible, a broad, brown stream in the distance. Clouds were piling up. I thought of Joshua in the back of the truck. He’d be getting off soon, maybe before it started to rain.

The driver gave me a sullen stare, angry I was not more impressed. Then we were crossing a bridge. “That’s the Orange River,” he said. “The biggest river in this country.” The sun was getting low. It was big and white, falling slowly through a dark sky.



I had hitched down from Europe. It had been more than a year since I left the States, 12 days since I crossed the Rhodesian border. I pulled out my passport and looked at the newest stamp: March 31, 1970. Back home was the war. OK, so I’d make a few bucks in South Africa; then I’d see. An Australian told me about a construction company in Cape Town just before I left Uganda and crossed into the Congo. It was a big country. Dirt-poor.

At that moment there was a hard tapping on the roof of

the cab. Cursing, the driver pulled the truck off the road. It was Joshua. He spoke to the driver in Afrikaans from the back of the truck. The driver arched his neck out the window and twisted in his seat. I think he was saying, “Baas, I want to get off after a few miles.” Cursing, the driver snapped his head back inside and put the truck on the road.

“Stupid bastard!” he said, stamping his foot. “That dumb kaffir has to tell me where Hopetown is? I *know* where Hopetown is!”

Joshua and I had met at dawn about a hundred miles from Joburg, near Christiana. My last ride the day before had left me outside a small town at 3 in the afternoon, and I hadn’t moved after that. When night came, I camped out in the open a few yards from the tarmac. A crazy wind came up after midnight, blowing freezing dust all over the high veld. Slowly, the sky began to lighten. I was miserable and cold in my sleeping bag waiting for the sun, wondering how long it would take me to get to Cape Town at this rate, when I saw him lying a few feet away wrapped in newspapers.

“Hey! Hello,” I said.

“Hello.” He lifted the pages around his head to look at me, and they flew away. The wind was blowing so hard I had to shout. “It’s freezing,” I yelled. “Aren’t you cold?”

“Freezing!”

I got up and saw a fire flickering in the distance. Wrapping the sleeping bag around me, I walked toward it, then turned around, shivering.

“Come on. Let’s go over there.”

He let the newspapers fly away and got up, and we walked toward the fire. His name was Joshua. He was an African youth, slight, with short hair and honest eyes. His clothes looked new, but they were dirty, and he had a raggedy suitcase with him and some odd-shaped bundles wrapped in burlap he said were for his mother.

I said, “If it was any colder, I would have frozen to death last night.”

He gave me a questioning look, but then said, “Oh, I am suffering in this cold. I do not like it.” I suddenly realized that his newspapers couldn’t have been nearly as warm as my sleeping bag.

As we came up to the fire, I could see the men around it were coloreds. They huddled together and piled trash on the fire, but it gave very little heat. They smelled of cheap wine. Joshua stood close to the fire rubbing his hands and arms, hunching his shoulders and squeezing his hands between his legs. Thin cotton shirt. The sky was

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molten gold at sunrise and blue-black above.

"Pretty," I said. He turned to look. His head and neck were so black that I couldn't tell where his hair left off and his skin began. He nodded, looking at my dusty jeans and the sleeping bag I had pulled around me.

He rubbed his arms with both hands. "Are you on the thumb?"

"Yeah, hitching, but not getting anywhere. No way I could get out of here last night." I shivered uncontrollably. "God, it's cold."

"I think this is the coldest night of my life."

"Put this around your shoulders." I gave him an end of the sleeping bag. He took it, but not so eagerly that I would know he wanted it.

"Where are you going?"

"Hopetown. Going home."

"Oh, I saw that on the map. That's after Kimberley, just across the Orange River."

We talked. He told me about his jobs in the big city, about his bosses, about the months and years he'd been away. Maybe he'd go back after a few months or maybe to the mines.

"You miss your mother's cooking?" I teased him.

"Oh, I want to eat and eat." He closed his eyes, smiling, and sniffed the air as though he already smelled the food on the stove.

The road was absolutely quiet. I kept watching it, waiting for a car to break the monotony. It looked like a two-lane country road back home, although it was a main road between Cape Town and Johannesburg. When the store opened he took out some money, gave it to me and asked me to buy him a sandwich.

"Why don't you get it yourself?" I said. "I don't see any signs."

"No signs," he agreed, "but it's best to be careful." I looked over at the store. It was a grocery store, like a mom and pop place back home.

"This is still the Transvaal," he said. "I don't know the shopkeeper. He might not like it. It's just a little store."

I went and got him a hamburger. I got one for me, too. They were like hamburgers used to be when I was small. They were thick and juicy and on real bread, with lettuce, tomatoes, onion and mayonnaise, cut and wrapped by the shopkeeper's wife in white wax paper for about 40 cents each.

We ate the hamburgers in the morning light, and the dusty wind blew grit in our faces until we fixed the sleep-

ing bag to keep it out. We stayed sitting with it around us until the first car appeared. We split up, and Joshua went by himself about a hundred feet up the road.

Hours passed. The day turned clear and breezy with a hot sun mounting in a blinding sky. Vultures soared high above us. Every so often a car would whiz by, or maybe a truck, and then the road would get quiet like nothing would ever move on it again. Finally, a blue Vauxhall stopped. A young couple sat in the front seat, the man in his Sunday suit at the wheel.

"Get in," he said, clearing some things from the front seat to the back. I got in and told him I had a friend who needed a lift. He looked around, but he didn't see who I meant.

"Over there," I said, pointing to Joshua. He still didn't see Joshua. Then he said, "You mean that kaffir?" He accelerated hard and drove away. We didn't talk much after that, but they took me into Kimberley. I had a look at the big pit, which is so deep it makes you gulp — full of green water way down there at the bottom and probably lots of undug diamonds — and the museum, which houses relics of the boom times in the 1870s and a railway car that belonged to Cecil Rhodes. I had ice cream in the snack shop.

Lots of "whites only" signs. Apartheid was doomed, I thought; but until then, you had to keep to your side of the line. You were one thing, or you were the other.



Next I got a ride outside of town with a man who worked at the mines. He took me only about 20 miles. Then a boy in an ancient Ford out for a Sunday spin with his friends brought me to the Modder River.

I walked through the town and about two miles more until I thought I was past the local traffic. It was afternoon. The road was dead. The country was parched grass as far as I could see and mostly flat. It was hot. I headed for a tree I saw in the distance, the only tree for miles. After a while I could see someone standing near it, but it was still a long way off. It wasn't until I was nearly there that I recognized Joshua. He was just as surprised to see me. He'd had luck with rides, he said.

I had thought I would never see him again when that guy had driven away. Morning seemed a long time ago, but we both remembered the cold and the fire and the hamburgers and the cold, gritty wind.

Do you have any white friends? I asked him. (Hell, I thought, did I have any black friends?) He said he knew

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some whites in Joburg, but it wasn't easy. If you're black you have to be out of town by 6 or 7 every night because of the pass laws. You can't go most places with whites, so you have to meet at their place, which is OK unless the neighbors see you too often and complain, or get suspicious and call the police. Can't they come out to the locations where the blacks live and visit you there? Yes, sometimes. They're supposed to have a pass, but the police usually don't care. He laughed.

Sometime later an old Bedford flatbed stopped. The driver leaned his arm and his head out the window and waved.

"Where are you going?"

"Cape Town."

"That's where I'm going. Hop in."

"Could you take my friend here, too?" The driver looked at Joshua. "He's only going to Hopetown," I said. The driver stared at me. "He can ride in back," I added.

You had to keep to your side of the line. You were one thing, or you were the other.

For a moment he said nothing. He sat up in his seat and glared down the road. Then, without turning again, he jerked his thumb over his shoulder toward the back of the truck. Joshua climbed up, and I got in the cab.

"I don't like kaffirs. I don't pick 'em up, usually," he said after we got going. But that only reminded him of the good old days in the Congo. I didn't ask his name.

I didn't say much after he started talking. I would have been more comfortable in back, but I had to sit in the cab. Hell, it's a ride, I told myself. Joshua's going home, and I'm going to Cape Town. It's only a lousy ride.

After a while we were getting close to Hopetown. The Orange River was directly ahead of us. We crossed the steel bridge and went up the hill. Hopetown was at the top, a bunch of shacks on the hill overlooking the river.

Joshua was off the truck before it stopped rolling. I got out to shake his hand. He was trembling with excitement.

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Then he climbed back to hand down his suitcase and the bundles to me. We shook hands again.

"Dankie, baas," he said to the driver. He ran up toward the shacks, his suitcase flying from his side as he ran. The driver smirked at me when I climbed back in.

"Where'd you pick him up?"

"Outside Christiana. He's going home. He hasn't been home in four years."

"Is that what he told you?" Frowning, he let the engine idle.

He turned away from me, then something caught his attention outside. I tried to look around him to see what it was. Through the open window I saw it was Joshua. He was saying something to the driver from the side of the road. The driver seemed put out. I couldn't make out what they were saying, but I guessed Joshua had left something on the truck. The driver didn't want to bother. He put the truck in gear and we started to move, but suddenly he wheeled in his seat, hit the brakes and screamed something out the window. I slammed into the dashboard.

"What did you say to me? What? What did you say?" He grabbed a leather whip from under the seat and jumped out the door.

I saw Joshua's face when the driver started after him; then I jumped out and ran around to the back, but no one was there. I ran to the front of the truck. Joshua was standing between the driver and the truck with his back to the radiator. The driver had him by the throat, the whip raised in his hand.

I shouted at him. "Hey! Stop it! Let go!"

The driver ignored me. His face was inches from Joshua's. He jerked the whip over his head and snarled.

"I'll teach you something, kaffir!"

I grabbed him by the shoulder. He shook me off but lost his grip on Joshua's throat. Joshua wriggled free and darted into the road.

I didn't see the car until it was almost on top of him. It seemed to come out of nowhere, silently, a mechanical wraith, in slow motion almost, like it was hardly moving. There was a loud thud like a drum. Probably the brakes screeched, but I don't remember. I ran up to Joshua. He had fallen under the wheels. His head was flat as a broken pumpkin.

The car took its time stopping. It sat in the distance, brake lights on, for a long time. Then slowly it reversed.

People were gathering on a hill above the truck.

The truck driver looked down the road at the car, folding the whip. Then he put the whip back in the cab. I stood by the body but tried not to look at it again. I felt sick and

my knees were weak. I walked over to the truck and leaned against it.

"God damn you," I said to the driver, sobbing. "God damn you."



An obese red-faced man in a safari suit got out of the car and looked briefly at Joshua. He put his hands on his hips, shaking his head. Then he turned to the driver.

"It was his own fault, wasn't it? I mean, he ran out right in front of me, didn't he?"

The man's wife got out. She didn't look at Joshua. She held her left hand to her temple lightly, like she was afraid of cracking her skull if she pressed too hard. She tried to speak, but the words didn't come out. She stood there for a while, mouthing the words and very lightly touching her left temple. Finally she said something.

"Is he dead, Will?"

"Yes."

"Oh, no!"

"He's dead, all right."

"What can we do?"

"Nothing. I told you, he's dead."

"Just leave him here?"

"He won't care. It's too bad."

"Oh, Will."

"Well, what should we do? Put him in the boot and cart him to the nearest police station?"

"I don't know."

"Wait for his family to show up, I suppose."

"I don't know."

"I am not going to get involved with a bunch of screaming blacks!" He stamped his foot angrily. "It was his own fault. He's dead now and there's nothing we can do."

She held her head. "But we killed him."

"We can tell the police later."

"Oh, we should, shouldn't we, Will?" He looked at the body again and cursed.

Careful not to get blood on themselves, he and the truck driver dragged the body off the road. After they pushed it into a ditch, the husband handed a few 10-rand notes to the truck driver, who put them in his shirt pocket.

F O C U S

They were standing there looking toward Hopetown, and I turned and looked, too. People were gathering on a hill above the truck. The man told his wife to get in the car, and they drove off.

The driver climbed into the bed of the truck and threw a burlap sack on the grass by the road. Then quickly he was off the truck and back in the front seat.

"Get in," he said.

"I'm not going with you."

"Get in!"

"I want my pack."

"Fine. You want to explain it to them?" Ten or 20 blacks were running down the hill. He went to give me my pack, which was behind his seat. Then he stopped, sort of grinning, "They'll think you did it."

"So what? I didn't do it. It was you and that other bastard."

"Think they'll listen? Don't you know what they'll do to you?"

I looked at him for an instant.

"Don't be stupid. Get in!"

It started to rain. The drops hit the metal of the cab with a ting, ting sound. They made wet little circles on the faded green paint and shrank to nothing almost as fast. Big hard drops slapped the dust on the road.

I wasn't afraid of the Africans or what they might do to me. It wasn't that. It was that I didn't think I could bear their eyes on me. I just couldn't explain to Joshua's mother who I was and why her son was lying dead in the road. The police would come, but who would do anything to two white men for the death of a black, on the word of a foreigner? And anyway, hadn't it been an accident?

Now the rain was falling steadily. The truck's wipers creaked tiredly across the windshield. It was almost night. People were walking along the road toward Hopetown. Balancing tools and bundles on their heads, they tried to shield their eyes from the headlights. As they ran off the road to make room for the truck, they held the bundles on their heads with their hands. The truck roared along the black highway into the darkness. ■

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FS HERITAGE

LUCIUS BATTLE: SHAPER OF THE POSTWAR FOREIGN SERVICE

BATTLE HAS NEVER RECEIVED THE CREDIT HE DESERVES
FOR HELPING TO TRANSFORM THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

BY BOB RACKMALES

During much of 1948, the U.S. newspaper industry was roiled by escalating prices for newsprint, the bulk of which was imported from Canada. Publishers, union executives and members of Congress alike placed primary blame for what they termed “a grave threat to the free press” on Canadian wood-pulp producers, for refusing to expand production despite rising demand and the disruption of output from other sources.

The dispute was serious enough that the Washington, D.C., law firm of Covington & Burling sent Dean Acheson, a prestigious senior partner who had recently resigned as under secretary of State (the number-two position in the department), to Foggy Bottom to discuss the matter with senior officials. (In current parlance, that would be called lobbying.) Those officials, in turn, called in less senior officials until, finally, into a “fairly crowded room” walked a 30-year-old civil servant assigned to the Canadian desk named Lucius (Luke) Durham Battle.

Battle later recalled his exchange with Acheson on that day as consisting of (a) Acheson asking his opinion on the wood pulp issue, (b) Battle providing it, (c) Acheson challenging Battle’s statements as “diametrically opposed to the views of Ray

Atherton, the U.S. ambassador to Canada” and (d) Battle retorting, “He is entitled to his views and I am entitled to mine. He is wrong.”

In Battle’s recounting, there was a collective gasp at that point. In fact, the cheeky young man had just passed an unplanned oral examination that, far from ruining his career as some in the room seemed to think, marked the beginning of an exceptionally productive friendship, and launched a career that helped define the evolving nature of the postwar Foreign Service.

The Necessary Fortitude

Born in the “small, grossly unattractive town” of Dawson, Ga., in 1918, Battle moved with his family to Florida in 1925 and, a decade later, enrolled at the University of Florida. After graduation, he began law studies there in 1939, interrupting them to serve in logistical staff positions with the Navy in the South Pacific and with the Pacific Command in Hawaii. Following the war, he completed his law degree (though he would later observe that it “has never meant much to me”) and then left Florida to pursue a career in international affairs at the Department of State.

Worried about his meager language-learning ability, and sensitive at not having attended a “better” (i.e., Ivy League) institution, Battle opted not to take the Foreign Service examination, instead applying for a Civil Service position with State. On Oct. 1, 1946, he began his career in foreign affairs as a GS-11 management planner, moving to the Canadian desk as a GS-12 five months later.

Battle later described his two years in Canadian affairs as a “marvelous time,” but admitted he was more stimulated by two Civil Service colleagues (Margaret Tibbetts and David

Bob Rackmales’ 32-year Foreign Service career (1963-1995) included assignments in Lagos, Zagreb, Mogadishu, Trieste, Rome, Kaduna, Belgrade and Washington, D.C. A member of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, he teaches courses on U.S. diplomatic history at Belfast (Maine) Senior College. His FS Heritage article on John Paton Davies appeared in the July-August 2008 FSJ.

Linebaugh, both of whom also went on to distinguished Foreign Service careers) than by many Foreign Service colleagues, who were “considerably more rigid in their points of view than I was.” On one occasion, he commented that “the brightest and most imaginative people were on the economic side, but they were not Foreign Service officers.” Many of those people were, like Battle, sympathetic to the New Deal, and thus suspect to those worried about “leftist infiltration” into the Foreign Service.

Battle was one of many former military officers entering State Department service in 1946. Among them was an individual whose importance to Battle’s career is second only to Dean Acheson’s. Carlisle (Carl) Humelsine had served during the war as an assistant to General George C. Marshall, managing his incoming messages and organizing his daily briefings. A *Time* magazine article in 1950 described Humelsine as “relaxed and resourceful” and as “never having taken the time to be measured for striped pants.” Only three years older than Battle, whom he had come to know well, he was selected by Marshall — who in January 1947 replaced James Byrnes as Secretary of State — to direct a newly created executive secretariat.

When Dean Acheson replaced the ailing Marshall in January 1949, he immediately asked Humelsine to stay on as executive secretary, later promoting him to under secretary for administration. Another top priority for Acheson was to locate a special assistant on whom he could rely. On Humelsine’s recommendation, Acheson interviewed only one candidate — Luke Battle — for that job. In the interview, Acheson praised the courage Battle had shown in standing up to him and Ray Atherton on the wood-pulp issue. It was a quality, Acheson suggested, that Battle would need, because he risked becoming “the most unpopular man in the department” by standing between Acheson and senior officers.

With his selection of someone from outside the traditional Foreign Service as his closest personal aide, Acheson wanted to send a strong message. As under secretary to James Byrnes, he had fought a bitter and ultimately losing struggle with Foreign Service traditionalists and their congressional allies over his attempts to implement a decision by Truman to have the Secretary of State assume primary responsibility for foreign intelligence programs. If fully implemented, this decision would have averted the creation of an independent Central Intelligence Agency, about which Acheson expressed the “gravest foreboding” to Truman. (A small part of the loss was

later recouped when State’s residual intelligence functions were removed from the regional offices and centralized in what was to become the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.)

Acheson, who submitted his resignation over Secretary Byrnes’ failure to support him, angrily blamed a combination of misguided elitism, a knee-jerk defense of turf and “morbid anti-communism” for the vehement opposition to the proposal within the department. Among the leaders of that opposition was the then-chief of the Near Eastern Division, Loy Henderson. The anger from this episode was to linger, resurfacing in an unexpected way during Battle’s tenure as president of AFSA in the 1960s.

“The Battle Area Was Secure and Sound”

Battle demonstrated many skills beyond fortitude in the process of winning Acheson’s total trust, of course. He worked long hours under severe pressure without fading, accompanying Acheson on all of his trips. His organizational talent and drafting ability — Acheson frequently did not bother to check his memoranda before they were distributed — were also evident. In describing their relationship, however, one must begin with the fact that the two men, separated by more than a generation, became extraordinarily close.

In his memoir, *Present at the Creation*, Acheson writes: “Both my wife and I came to have the same regard and affection for Luke Battle that we had for our son.” The two families spent a great deal of time together long after the professional relationship came to an end. Perhaps the best source for understanding the personal side of the relationship from Acheson’s perspective is the series of letters that Battle received from him after the conclusion of their working relationship. One such letter, dated July 19, 1952, reads in part: “You must get happiness as you think back over these past years, because you have done every part and facet of this task perfectly. It hasn’t been easy. I am not easy. The whole setting has been somber. There have been major and minor prima donnas at every turn. . . . But you have never wavered from your concern for me and my duties. I have always been sure that the Battle area was secure and sound.”

To Acheson’s credit, he expected Battle to demonstrate independence of mind and spirit in their working relationship. Acheson appreciated that he himself could be a “prima donna” on occasion, especially when his anger was aroused, and that he needed someone like Battle to protect him from himself. “I dictate the letters. . . . Luke tears them up,” he wrote. But Bat-



Photos courtesy of Lynne Battle

Lucius Battle with Dean Acheson (undated photo).



Left: *The Battle family in Egypt (c. 1965).*
Above: *Lucius and Betty Battle on their wedding day (Oct. 1, 1949).*

protect others in the State Department more unjustly accused than Hiss.

During the Korean War, further sharp differences surfaced between the two men. Battle unsuccessfully tried to persuade Acheson to seek a congressional joint resolution approving Pres. Truman's decisions at the outset of the war. And

tle's interventions were not always successful.

On Jan. 24, 1950, Acheson told Battle that he intended to speak about Alger Hiss at a press conference scheduled for the next day, four days after Hiss' conviction on perjury charges. Suspecting that Acheson's deep feeling might overcome his judgment, Battle enlisted the help of Paul Nitze and Charles Bohlen in urging that Acheson

confine himself to a safe expression of regret. Brushing aside such advice as "pusillanimous," Acheson instead announced at the press conference that "I do not intend to turn my back on Alger Hiss." Outrage provoked by that phrase would reverberate through the political system for months, weakening Acheson's standing (his offer to resign was rejected by President Harry Truman) and undermining his ability to

two months later, Battle's efforts to enlist Acheson in an effort to put restraints on General Douglas MacArthur's operations north of the 38th parallel resulted in Acheson exploding at him: "How old are you, Battle, for God's sake? ... Are you willing to take on the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff?"

None of these disagreements, sharp as they sometimes were, impaired the openness, trust and personal warmth that characterized their close working relationship between March 1949 and July 1952. The problem for Battle was that matching the rewards of working for Acheson proved impossible in the years to come.

"A Rather Odd Career"

By the summer of 1952, it was clear to both Acheson and Battle that the Republicans, and John Foster Dulles (who viewed Battle as a "young squirt" and whom Battle saw in equally uncomplimentary terms), would probably soon be in office, so leaving Washington might be the better part of valor.

With the help of the ever-helpful Carl Humelsine, Battle obtained an assignment as political section chief in Copenhagen (1953-1955) and then spent a year in Paris as chief of staff to the NATO secretary general. However, those initial three years in the Foreign Service failed to provide the challenge and stimulus Battle was seeking. Perhaps prompted by Acheson's letters castigating the "cowardly fools" now in

Calling All Foreign Service Authors!

The November 2009 issue of the *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books written by Foreign Service-affiliated authors.

FS authors whose books have been published in 2008 or 2009, and have not been featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author to:

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Deadline for submissions is September 1.

charge of the department, in 1956 Battle resigned to work for Humelsine, who was now an employee of the Rockefellers, as vice president of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

In 1961 Battle came back into the Foreign Service, once again as special assistant to the Secretary of State, but with the additional title of executive secretary of the State Department. However, the Dean this time was Rusk, not Acheson. The relationship did not work well, and one senses that Battle left the position with a sigh of relief to become, in June 1962, assistant secretary of State for educational and cultural affairs. An excellent account of his productive tenure in that position can be found in Richard Arndt's book, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Potomac Books, 2005).

The best source for understanding what Battle himself, shortly after leav-

*To Dean Acheson's credit,
he expected Battle to
demonstrate independence
of mind and spirit in their
working relationship.*

ing the Foreign Service in October 1968, called "a rather odd career," is the series of oral histories in which he took part. Together, they add up to a substantial memoir, which is candid, often self-deprecating and frequently amusing. The series can be accessed online at the Truman and Kennedy Presidential Library Web sites (www.truman

library.org/oralhist/battle.htm; www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Summaries/col_battle_1.htm) and, in the case of his two interviews for the Johnson Library, on the Web site of the Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/>). Battle was also generous in granting interviews to historians, and has been cited by writers such as Robert Beisner, Walter Issacson, David Halberstam and Michael Oren as an accurate and reliable source for events and personalities of the 1950s and 1960s.

In those interviews, Battle is not afraid to turn his critical faculties upon himself: "I was ill-equipped for a lot of the things that came my way in my diplomatic career, and I don't hide it." He even expresses doubt about the appropriateness of his assignment as ambassador to Egypt (from September

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1964 to March 1967), given his lack of language or area expertise, but balances that assessment with anecdotes documenting the personal qualities that typically stood him in good stead.

His first encounter with Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, for example, has echoes of his first meeting with Acheson, described above. Nasser: "You are very young to be the American ambassador." Battle: "You are very young to be president. We are the same age, and you have done a lot better than I have." The fact that he and Nasser could laugh together helped him operate effectively, but he arrived at a time when U.S.-Egyptian relations were already on a downward slope, and there was little that personal diplomacy could do to reverse that process. The most lasting legacy of his time in Cairo was probably his early recognition of Anwar Sadat's potential future importance.


*Unfortunately, the
rewards of working for
Acheson did not continue
during the remainder of
Battle's career.*

Reviving an Old Dispute

In November 1962, shortly after taking the helm at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Battle took on the additional responsibility of the presidency of the American Foreign Service Association, at that time not a "day job." (His predecessor was Charles Bohlen; U. Alexis Johnson suc-

ceeded him.) His year in that position coincided with a debate, much of which took place in the pages of the *Foreign Service Journal*, over the recommendations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Personnel (generally known as the Herter Committee, after its chairman, former Secretary of State Christian Herter).

In January 1963, Battle invited Special Assistant to the President Ralph Dungan to offer a White House perspective on the personnel and resource needs of the Foreign Service at AFSA's monthly luncheon. (Seven months earlier President Kennedy had spoken on "The Great Period of the Foreign Service" before the same forum, the only occasion on which a U.S. president has spoken before an AFSA gathering.) Stressing, as did the Herter Report, the need to expand the "traditional concept of foreign policy," Dungan called for a new emphasis on operations and man-



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agement of programs. While acknowledging that traditional diplomatic skills were still needed, he urged State to bring in a “continual flow of intellectual and moral vitality” and broaden its skills base to adapt to new realities. Otherwise, “we shall not hesitate to go outside the Service when it is clear that the best interests of the United States would be better served thereby.”

Dungan’s luncheon address was published in the April 1963 *FSJ*, along with a rejoinder, “The Foreign Service as an Institution,” by Loy Henderson. (Henderson, Acheson’s old adversary from the struggle over State’s role in intelligence, had retired as under secretary of State for administration at the end of the Eisenhower presidency.) Warning of the risks of the slogan, “the best man in or out of the Service,” Henderson insisted that the Foreign Service must be treated as an institution and not merely as an “aggregation of individuals.” The New Frontier’s emphasis on youth clearly bothered him: “Filling the upper classes of the Service with comparatively young men ... can be demoralizing to those below them who find their promotions blocked.”

Henderson became even more polemical when he singled out for especially sharp censure “a distinguished Secretary [of State] who found it easier to select persons outside the Service ... who were recommended by friends ... As a result, when he left office, the Foreign Service was in an almost bankrupt position.”

Did Henderson intend this as an attack on Dean Acheson and his protégé, the current AFSA president? There is little question that Battle took it that way. In his valedictory address to the association in September 1963, he rejected Henderson’s insinuations and recalled the struggles of 1946 when, in his view, a “small elite corps” had failed to recognize the need for change. By “not training ... not broadening ... not bringing in economists ... people who

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know something about information and intelligence, the Foreign Service was dominated by others ... and that was the beginning of its decline.”

Underlying whatever personal feelings may have motivated Battle and Henderson in this testy exchange, the real dilemma they were trying to address — preserving or redefining a strong ethos and professional standards for the Foreign Service in the face of rapidly changing external demands — is as acute today as it was in 1946 or 1962. Readers of recent articles on the Foreign Service — such as J. Anthony Holmes’ “Where Are the Civilians? How to Rebuild the U.S. Foreign Service” (in the January-February issue of *Foreign Affairs*) or the three articles assessing transformational diplomacy in the January issue of this publication — will not find those earlier arguments quaint or outdated. While many of Luke Battle’s other professional ac-

*Throughout his career,
Battle demonstrated
fortitude, stamina,
organizational talent and
drafting ability.*

complishments have received due attention and praise, his role as a symbol of and advocate for change in the Foreign Service itself has been underappreciated.

Epilogue

Following his assignment in Cairo, Battle served from April 1967 until his

resignation from the Foreign Service in October 1968 as assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs. Although his next job was in the private sector, as vice president for corporate relations at the Communications Satellite Corporation, it should come as little surprise that the Ache-sons were again involved — the initial approach to Battle had been made by Dean’s son, David.

Thereafter, Battle served with distinction with a variety of private, educational and advocacy organizations, such as Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired; the School of Advanced International Studies at The Johns Hopkins University and the Middle East Institute, among many others. He died in Washington, D.C., on May 13, 2008; his *Foreign Service Journal* obituary ran in the July-August 2008 issue (www.afsa.org/fsj/julaug08/inMemory.pdf). ■

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AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • July-August 2009

CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AND OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE HONORED

2009 AFSA Award Winners Announced

BY ASGEIR SIGFUSSON

The American Foreign Service Association is pleased to announce the winners of the 2009 AFSA Constructive Dissent Awards and Outstanding Performance Awards. The awards ceremony was held on June 18 in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State. Each award winner received a certificate of recognition and a prize of \$2,500.

The AFSA Awards and Plaques Committee selects the Tex Harris, W. Averell Harriman and Christian A. Herter Constructive Dissent Award winners. The committee also nominates the recipient of the annual Lifetime Contributions to

Diplomacy Award, who is ultimately chosen by the AFSA Governing Board. The Rivkin Award winner is selected by the family of the late Ambassador William R. Rivkin and other prominent individuals connected to the Rivkin family. The winners of the three awards for outstanding performance are chosen by separate panels of judges. In addition, the Governing Board chooses the post representative of the year.

Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award

Former Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia was selected for the 2009 AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American

AFSA Election Update

Please check the AFSA Web site at www.afsa.org for the latest election results and/or updates. More information about the election will be published in the September issue of *AFSA News*.

Diplomacy.

Sen. Nunn is currently co-chairman and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a charitable organization working to reduce the global threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. He served as a United States senator representing Georgia for 24 years (1973-1997). Sen. Nunn attended Georgia Tech, Emory University and Emory Law School, from which he graduated with honors in 1962.

Continued on page 57

HISTORIC "FIRST" FOR AFSA

Commerce Secretary Meets AFSA Leaders

Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke met with AFSA President John Naland, AFSA FCS Vice President Keith Curtis, AFSA FCS Representative Rebecca Balogh and AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston on May 11. This is the first time in AFSA's history that a Commerce Secretary has met officially with AFSA leadership. In the meeting, Sec. Locke noted the important work that members of the Foreign Commercial Service carry out as his representatives in some 80 countries — not just as leaders in export promotion and support of U.S. trade, but also as the senior overseas representatives of the Department of Commerce on the full range of diplomatic issues.

Calling FCS a group of "extraordinary professionals," Sec. Locke acknowledged the need for additional funding and personnel in the years to come, and recognized the importance of "smart power." He also praised the key role AFSA plays, both in supporting his priorities and in promoting economic prosperity in a time when America needs jobs. However, the Secretary made clear that he could not push for resources beyond those that President Obama has already identified in the FY 2010 budget request. FCS VP Curtis reports, "We were pleased that he gave us time to express our views and concerns, is sincerely supportive of what we do, and sought to have a continuing relationship with us." □

SEC. RICE'S TENURE EVALUATED

New Foreign Affairs Council Report Released

BY ASGEIR SIGFUSSON

The biennial report of the Foreign Affairs Council assessing leadership and management at the Department of State was released on May 14. FAC President Ambassador Thomas D. Boyatt presided over a press conference at AFSA headquarters to present the report's findings. Representatives from CNN covered the briefing, a portion of which was later aired on the network's international news.

In assessing the last two years of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's

Continued on page 58

AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



2008 AFSA-PAC Treasurer's Report

Dear Colleagues:

The AFSA-PAC made significant strides in 2008 in tactically and creatively using our resources to draw greater attention from key decision-makers to vital Foreign Service issues. We had a seat at the table. We used our political action committee to advance the agenda on issues such as solving the overseas pay comparability problem and addressing Foreign Service staffing shortages.

Our fundraising metrics remained similar to those of years past. We raised slightly more money in 2008 (\$29,432) than in 2007 (\$28,967) and remained very steady on the number of donors. However, we fell far short of matching our record of \$49,000 collected during 2004. Following the trend of years past, 77 percent of the 477 donors to AFSA-PAC in 2008 were retirees. Roughly 20 percent of donations came from overseas. Also, the average donation was \$0.20 higher than in 2007, standing at \$61.70.

AFSA-PAC contributed \$25,000 to our congressional supporters' reelection efforts during 2008. We continued to divide our contributions equally between Democrats and Republicans, as called for in the AFSA-PAC bylaws. Our focus remained on the appropriating and authorizing committees with jurisdiction over Foreign Service management issues, Foreign Service staffing and general foreign affairs matters. We continued to enjoy good relations with key decision-makers at the highest levels in both parties. We also continued to expand our cultivation effort to include new faces.

In 2008, AFSA-PAC was persistent in raising the profile of the Foreign Service on Capitol Hill. I am proud of what we accomplished. We worked closely in conjunction with AFSA's legislative strategy to strengthen the voice of AFSA members. Our impact is cumulative, and we will continue to build upon a successful record in 2008 as we move ahead this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas D. Boyatt
Treasurer, AFSA-PAC

AFSA Award Donors Tapped by Obama Administration

Robert Rivkin was confirmed as general counsel to the Dept. of Transportation on April 29, and his brother Charles H. Rivkin was announced as the president's choice for ambassador to France on May 27. Along with their siblings, they fund AFSA's William R. Rivkin Constructive Dissent Award in memory of their father. Please read more about the history of the Rivkin Award online in the July-August 2008 *AFSA News* at www.fsjournal.org. This year, the Rivkin family announced two winners of the award (see pp. 50-51).

49th Annual Art & Bookfair – Mark Your Calendars

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Service Worldwide. The fair will open on Friday, Oct. 16, and continue through Sunday, Oct. 25. As usual, it will be held in the Diplomatic Exhibit Hall on the first floor of Main State (HST). The event will feature secondhand books from all over the world, an extensive display of art and collectible objects, rare books in the Collectors' Corner and an assortment of stamps and coins.

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David Firestein, Susan Malcik,

Sandy Robinson, Shayna Steinger,

Elaine Tiang-Chu, Daphne Titus, Andrea Tomaszewicz,

Christopher Tremann

USAID REP: Michael Henning

FCS REP: Rebecca Balogh

FAS REP: Kathryn Ting

IBB REP: Al Pessin

RETIREE REPS:

Janice Bay, Herman Cohen,

David Passage, Jonathan Sperling

The Tex Harris Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

Barron I. Rosen

Diplomatic couriers often face difficult conditions in their work, but until recently, couriers out of Miami worked under particularly challenging circumstances. What concerned Barron I. Rosen most about these circumstances was not the hardship of the travel, though considerable by any standards, but the fact that couriers were required to sign a waiver prior to traveling on a particular cargo carrier. By doing so, couriers gave up their right to bring legal action against the cargo company even in the event of gross negligence. In other words, even if the pilot flew intentionally into a mountain, a courier's family would have no recourse against the carrier.

State had contracted for many years with the same cargo company, which also required couriers to travel nearly 20 hours without rest on an old plane with no toilet facilities. Although the trips to Port of Spain, Paramaribo and Georgetown were physically and emotionally grueling, it was the waiver to which Rosen objected. He noted the danger and absurdity of this requirement, and questioned whether anyone else in the entire Foreign Service was obliged to sign such a waiver.

The initial response from management was discouraging, even dismissive. Rosen persisted in pointing out an unsafe practice, and discussions grew heated. Yet he refused to back down. Now the courier routes out of Miami are served via commercial airliners.

A successful courier, like Rosen, is mission-focused and has a sense of adventure. In his previous assignment, Rosen made nearly 15 visits to Pakistan, including numerous overland missions to the consulates. While accepting that risk is part of the job, he felt compelled to speak out in Miami when he encountered the waiver requirement, which he calls "a short-sighted policy."

The key requirement of the Harris Award for a Foreign Service specialist is evidence that



Barron Rosen (second from right) with U.S. embassy employees (left to right) Joseph Ronald, Cheryl Schaeffe, and Charles Hilaire, at the Port-au-Prince Airport, Haiti, May 14.



SHANE MOORE



Top: Rosen at the Miami Courier Vault at Miami International Airport, May 12. Bottom: Rosen with pilot Michael Ryan at Miami International Airport, prior to departure for Havana, May 21.

the winner has challenged the status quo, despite possible consequences. Not only did Rosen, who was an untenured FS-4 officer at the time, persevere on this issue to the potential detriment of his employment status, but he remained dedicated to the well-being and safety of his colleagues. Explains Rosen, "Speaking out was important, as it led to a positive change for all my colleagues in Miami."

Rosen is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Duke University School of Law. His major was East Asian studies and he speaks Mandarin Chinese. He joined the Foreign Service in 2005 and was previously assigned to Bangkok. Prior to joining the department, he worked as an attorney and as a teacher.

2009 AFSA CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AWARD WINNERS

(By Francesca Kelly with input from Leyla Ones)

William R. Rivkin Award

FOR A MID-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Jeffrey Collins

Jeff Collins has never had an easy assignment. He went from the consular line in Havana to Embassy Baghdad, then on TDY to a special counterterrorism mission on the Iraq-Iran border. As soon as he arrived in Ankara in 2006, Collins jumped into the hard work of promoting human rights in Turkey and raising awareness of the need to reform the State Department's system of human rights reporting. Collins' perseverance on these two critical issues has earned him the 2009 William R. Rivkin Award for Constructive Dissent.

In Turkey, issues such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion are still decidedly controversial; diplomats who raise such topics may find themselves shunned by government interlocutors. Collins was sensitive to the need to reach out to human rights activists while not alienating the Turkish government.

Collins strongly believed that the immense pressure faced by human rights activists — some of whom were receiving death threats — required the United States to provide all-out support. He called emergency human rights defender meetings at his home, spending his own money to host the events.

Tragically, in January 2007, human rights activist and Armenian Turk Hrant Dink was brutally gunned down in front of his Istanbul office. Collins immediately raised concerns within the diplomatic community, particularly with his European counterparts, regarding other human rights activists facing serious threats. Their pressure on the Turkish government resulted in 24-hour state security being provided to five prominent activists.

Recognizing that face-to-face meetings and in-the-field action achieve the best results, Collins began questioning the efficacy of State's current human rights reporting process, which mandates that each post produce a series of often-duplicative reports. Collins made it a personal mission to fix the process and offer creative solutions. Toward that end, he designed, created and managed the U.S. government's first Intellipedia site for human rights issues — a series of classified Web pages where officers from different agencies can update facts and add analysis.

On his own initiative, Collins introduced the concept to the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs during travel to



SALLY COLLINS

Top: Jeffrey Collins, left, has tea with Black Sea shepherds in the Kaçkar Mountains, Oct. 14, 2007. (Collins' dog Lucita is also in the photo.) Bottom: Collins on TDY in Timor-Leste, July 15, 2008.



ROBERTO QUIROZ

Washington, encouraging them to use Intellipedia or its unclassified counterpart, Diplopedia, as a way to streamline what is generally a labor-intensive annual exercise. Though generally welcomed, Collins' fresh proposals harnessing the latest communication technology have not yet produced an official change in human rights reporting procedures.

Yet Collins persevered in keeping a focus on his readily accessible solutions and initiatives, detailing his assessments in a memo to the political counselor and front office and timing it to coincide with the February release of this year's Human Rights Report. He then persuaded the ambassador to send the memo as a front-channel cable (09 Ankara 398) to DRL.

Collins is quick to credit others for the success he achieved in advancing human rights issues on the ground in Turkey "under frequently inhospitable conditions." In particular, he lauds Foreign Service National Jale Ersoy for "patiently educating me about the complex dynamics in Turkey and nudging me to reach out to marginalized minority groups."

Born in San Diego, Calif., Collins attended Stanford University and Northwestern Law School. He worked as a federal law clerk and attorney prior to joining the Foreign Service in 2002. One of his most unusual Foreign Service assignments was aboard the USNS *Mercy* in Timor-Leste. He is married to Sally Collins.

William R. Rivkin Award

FOR A MID-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Michael C. Gonzales

Michael Gonzales' understanding of Ethiopia comes from four years of work covering the region. Before assuming the post of political/economic counselor at Embassy Addis Ababa in 2007, Gonzales served as the Ethiopia desk officer/Horn of Africa unit chief in the Office of East African Affairs in Washington from 2005 to 2007. This four-year period coincided with an outbreak of political violence in Ethiopia that has starkly contradicted the prevailing U.S. view of the nation as the only stable, democratic country in the Horn of Africa.

Though Washington has relied on Addis Ababa for its peacekeeping missions throughout Africa, regarding it as a partner in counterterrorism initiatives, Gonzales was troubled by the ruling party's stifling of political dissent. In addition, Ethiopia's ill-conceived economic policies have led to chronic and widespread food insecurity and hyperinflation.

Gonzales courageously pointed out the risks and regional instability posed by these dynamics. He worked diligently, within the proper channels, to rebalance U.S. foreign policy toward Ethiopia to better advance long-term interests in the region. By systematically documenting events on the ground, Gonzales made the case to Washington that broader engagement at higher levels was needed to address more than the limited scope of security issues.

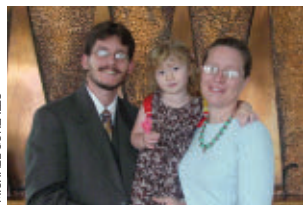
Because these issues were sensitive to Ethiopia and the U.S., Gonzales was unwaveringly cautious in his approach, ensuring that all his reporting cables, from both Washington and Addis Ababa, were cleared and endorsed by his entire chain of command before he sent them. Yet he still encountered great resistance from senior officials.

While still in Washington, Gonzales picked up leads from the press, NGOs and other sources and pursued them with colleagues at post, in other agencies and even other governments to get more complete information than that included in reports released by the embassy. He used these insights to inform his chain of command and interagency Ethiopia watchers. Gradually, he became a primary contact for those who wanted



YACOB WONDIMKUN

Michael Gonzales (center) discusses economic conditions with a graduate of the U.S.-supported Productive Safety Net Program in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, June 2008.



MICHAEL GONZALES

At home in Ethiopia with his wife, USAID FSO Carol Jenkins, and daughter Kaitlyn, Sept. 2008.

“the whole story.”

Once in Addis Ababa, Gonzales led the political/economic section in thorough reporting and strong analysis of the implications of in-country dynamics for U.S. interests.

During a severe drought in the Ogaden region affecting millions of Ethiopians, Gonzales provided critical assessments to interagency colleagues, who used them to craft talking points for their principals. Those principals, in turn, pressured Ethiopian officials to resolve the crisis. Gonzales also urged

the ambassador to lobby Washington for help. Ultimately, the USAID Administrator visited the Ogaden and succeeded in getting Ethiopia's permission for the U.S. to deploy Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance teams to open humanitarian assistance channels.

Finally, Gonzales produced numerous official/informal cables and talking points that argued passionately for addressing Ethiopia's internal policies, and laid out a road map for rebalancing the bilateral relationship to bolster regional stability and achieve bilateral objectives. While senior State Department officials ignored these messages, Gonzales's reports and policy recommendations, above and beyond his assigned duties, ultimately formed the basis for the embassy's recommendations to the transition team and may be incorporated into the new administration's policy toward Ethiopia. Throughout the process, Gonzales had to overcome dismissal of his reports by top Washington officials and even faced efforts to remove him from his desk and political counselor positions. For his courageous and constructive dissent, he has received the 2009 William R. Rivkin Award.

Before entering the Foreign Service in 2000, Gonzales was an economic analyst in the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. He has also served in Dhaka and Kampala. He is the recipient of one Superior Honor Award and five Meritorious Honor Awards. He holds a bachelor's degree in diplomacy and world affairs from Occidental College and a master's degree in international development from American University.

Gonzales speaks Spanish, Bengali, French and Italian and is married to USAID FSO Carol Jenkins. They have one daughter, Kaitlyn.

Avis Bohlen Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY MEMBER

Erica Krug

Erica Krug put her considerable skills to work just when Zimbabwe's citizens needed her most.

After a disputed election in March 2008, President Robert Mugabe's ruling party initiated a reign of terror to punish and intimidate voters, hoping to assure victory in the June runoff. Hundreds were killed and tens of thousands made homeless.

At the same time, the government banned the field operations of charitable organizations, hamstringing the efforts of the international community to assist the displaced.



Erica Krug shows U.S. Ambassador James McGee around the site of an urban food relief program in Mutare, Zimbabwe, in February.

Krug, an expert in humanitarian aid who had already been working at an international agency, began organizing meetings among other volunteers.

By mid-June 2008, thousands of people were flooding into Harare. Krug used her own time, money, vehicle and even pantry supplies to help provide internally displaced persons with housing, food, clothing and medical care, assisted by



Krug and other Help Line Trust field workers view progress on a low-input gardening project in Epworth, Zimbabwe in May.

what she describes as a small group of "housewives, Movement for Democratic Change activists and students." She established a nongovernmental organization called Project Vimbai and began collecting donations, ultimately raising \$20,000 that went directly to thousands of IDPs.

Krug is currently working on projects that can be sustained after her departure from post this summer, such as connecting needy children's schools to sister schools in the U.S., and providing support to those orphaned and widowed by political violence.

Deputy Chief of Mission Katherine Dhanani comments that Krug's volunteerism "speaks volumes about the American values of generosity, accountability and commitment to human rights."

Krug says she has to constantly balance discouragement and inspiration. "I remind myself that it's not a numbers game, but a change game; and if we can change one life we have succeeded."

Krug grew up in Washington, D.C. She received a B.A. in anthropology from the University of Maryland and an M.A. in international development from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vt. She has designed and managed programs in the areas of economic development, post-conflict transition and emergency food distributions, while working for the Peace Corps, the International Federation of the Red Cross and USAID. Her career has taken her to Jordan, Somalia, Sudan, Botswana, Kenya and Zimbabwe. She is married to FSO Mark Weinberg.

M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

Juliana (Lily) G. Hightower

Lily Hightower provides the social and emotional glue that holds the Embassy Addis Ababa community together, and is largely responsible for its remarkable improvement in morale in recent years.

An inspection four years ago criticized the mission for poor morale and lack of communication, turning up frequent complaints of isolation among community members. Meanwhile, the number of dependents at post expanded from three dozen to over 400, including 100 children, in less than a decade.

Hightower reached out to those family members who felt isolated, arranging welcome teas, luncheons at the residence, and social activities with other diplomatic missions and with Ethiopian families. She organized cultural tours and weekend hiking trips, and encouraged participation in volunteer work at orphanages and HIV/AIDS centers. She was also instrumental in helping spouses secure job opportunities with United Nations agencies and private foreign firms. And she coordinated assistance to Foreign Service National families who were under duress.

In a departure from the usual policy at many missions, Hightower arranged for FSNs to serve as briefing hosts for American newcomers. With fears rampant as a result of 10 terrorist bombings in and around Addis Ababa in the past year, Hightower helped instill mutual support between FSNs and Americans.

Hightower liaised with schools and State Department offices to help families with school-related problems. She offered support for families under stress due to domestic friction, culture shock and other issues. Amb. Donald Yamamoto calls her "the most responsive individual I have met in the Service, constantly listening to pleas for help or requests for support, always following up, finding solutions and making personal sacrifices to meet the needs of others."

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Lily Hightower was born in the Philippines and raised on the island of Guam. She met her husband Will, a Seabee engineer, when he was stationed on Guam in 1996. They have two sons, Robert, 18, and Khalil, 13.

"Helping people is in my nature," says Hightower. "It makes me happy that my job is ensuring that morale is positive." Hightower cites past and present co-CLOs Lesya Cely and Mary Trego for "great teamwork."

In May 2008, she received a Meritorious Honor Award along with Cely, and was also the first runner-up for the 2008 M. Juanita Guess Award.



MARY TREGO

Lily Hightower with "Baby Lily," an infant who is named for her, at Kebebe Tsehaye Orphanage, April 18.



Hightower (in red shirt), Amb. Donald Yamamoto (in jacket and tie) and embassy community members visiting a local neighborhood devastated by a fire, in Sidist Kilo, July 2008.

EMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

Megan Gallardo

Megan Gallardo was asked to curtail her assignment at The Hague to support newly minted Embassy Podgorica, a setting so challenging that even she, with considerable experience as an Office Management Specialist, could not have anticipated it. Gallardo was the first front-office OMS ever assigned to Montenegro, and the only Foreign Service OMS there. She was working for a first-time ambassador. And Podgorica was, as Amb. Roderick Moore describes it, “a neglected little mission whose elevation in status from consulate to embassy the previous year was real only on paper.”

Gallardo’s transformation of Embassy Podgorica from an isolated, undervalued post to a modern-age mission was a one-woman tour de force.

She revolutionized paper and information flows by digitalizing virtually everything, standardizing procedures and making the entire archives of the embassy accessible to all employees.

Podgorica had never previously had an ambassador’s residence. The staff was untrained, there were no guidelines for representational events and no sensible system for inviting guests. Gallardo secured training for the staff at nearby posts; oversaw the hiring of a new house manager; developed a detailed checklist for representational events that numerous other embassies have copied; introduced a new computerized system for handling residence finances; and procured a vast range of needed equipment. The residence is now considered Montenegro’s premier diplomatic representational facility.

According to Amb. Moore, the four words Gallardo hates most in the workplace are, “That’s not my job.” She planned a well-publicized Earth Day event that brought together local schoolchildren, environmental groups and journalists, and organized an American breakfast for the mission’s election event, showing up at the residence at 4 a.m. to cook pancakes for high-level guests.

“My favorite part of the day is teaching English classes,” she says of her lunchtime lessons for local staff. “I am proud of this particular accomplishment because the positive results will reverberate not only within the embassy, but in the students’ lives, as well.”

Gallardo joined the State Department in 2001 from Mexico City, where she was an American Citizen Hire. Her previous posts include Brasilia, Belgrade and The Hague. She holds a B.A. in English from Suffolk University (Boston) and speaks fluent Spanish.



TIM BONIURA

Megan Gallardo (fourth from right) with some of the members of the Local Guard Force English class, which she teaches five days a week. From left: Dario Vlahovic, Nebojsa Petrovic, Drasko Ivanovic, Natasa Raznatovic, Gallardo, Mila Djurusic, Sladjan Milicevic and Igor Dijanic, May 11.



Touring Plantaze Vineyards, Montenegro, 2008. From left: Gallardo, Consular Officer Gina Werth, USAID Officer Joe Taggart, Diplomacy Coordinator Carlos Gallardo.

AFSA Post Rep of the Year

Ken Kero-Mentz

Over the past year, political officer Ken Kero-Mentz performed superbly as the AFSA post representative at Embassy Berlin, a large and busy diplomatic mission. He effectively conveyed the concerns of AFSA members on a wide range of issues to the AFSA leadership, and conscientiously negotiated with post management on both collective and individual member issues.

In his capacity as AFSA rep, Kero-Mentz dealt with numerous member issues, including the impact of war-zone assignments, bidding problems, same-sex partner status and health worries related to a diesel fuel spill in the chancery. He made a point of following up on these issues and going to whatever lengths needed to get them resolved. And he helped to mediate conflicts between AFSA members and supervisors, organized member meetings at post, and sent out weekly AFSA updates.

During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, the front office issued a highly controversial notice prohibiting employees from attending a public speech that was scheduled to be given by then-presidential candidate Barack Obama, even though it would take place after working hours in a city square in Berlin. The notice provoked the anger and consternation of dozens of members at post. Kero-Mentz took the lead in confronting post management, challenging the legality of the ban and working with AFSA leadership to clarify the rights of employees with the highest levels of the department.

Kero-Mentz feels his experience has helped him be an effective AFSA rep. “I’ve been at the department long enough to know that you cannot win all your battles; that it’s best to pick and choose which ones are worth fighting; and that if the answer you get from the first person you talk to is not the one you were hoping for, find someone else.”

Kero-Mentz joined the Foreign Service in 2000, serving in Rio de Janeiro, Baghdad and Washington. He is departing Berlin this summer to serve as economic and commercial officer in Colombo. Earlier this year, he received the State Department’s Superior Honor Award for his work on arms control and disarmament issues.

Prior to joining State, Kero-Mentz was a legislative staffer on Capitol Hill. He grew up in Vermont and graduated from The George Washington University, where he earned a B.A. in international affairs and an M.A. in public administration. In his spare time, Ken and his husband David like to travel (and rest up from traveling).



DAVID KERO-MENTZ

Ken Kero-Mentz in front of the Reichstag Building, Berlin, on a rare sunny day, in April 2008.



ELISE JUNG-WOIFF

David Kero-Mentz and Ken Kero-Mentz on their wedding day, Berlin, Oct. 12, 2008.

2009 AFSA Merit Award Winners

AFSA is pleased to announce the 25 Foreign Service high school seniors who were selected as the 2009 AFSA Merit Award winners. These one-time-only awards, totaling \$35,700, were presented on May 1 during AFSA's Foreign Affairs Day reception. AFSA congratulates these students for their academic and artistic achievements. Winners received \$1,800 awards and honorable-mention winners received \$800 awards. The best-essay winner and the community service winner each received \$250. Judges were members of AFSA's Committee on Education and individuals from the Foreign Service community.

This year, 70 students competed for the 21 Academic Merit Awards. They were judged on grade-point average, SAT scores, essays, two letters of recommendation, extracurricular activities and any special circumstances. From the Academic Merit Award applicants, a best-essay winner (Sybil Bullock) and a community service winner (Kathryn Shull) were selected.

Nine students submitted art merit applications under one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, drama or creative writing. Art applicants were judged on their works of art, two letters of recommendation and an essay. Rachel Midura was selected as the Art Merit Award winner for her short story

and novel-excerpt submissions, and was also an Academic Merit Award winner. Joseph Kenny and Kirsten Salpini were selected as the Art Merit Award honorable-mention winners. Joseph submitted his paintings under the visual arts category, while Kirsten offered a poem and short story in the creative writing category.

Eight academic-merit named scholarships have been established to date, and these awards were bestowed on the highest-scoring students. The recipients of these scholarships are: Rachel Midura, receiving the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholarship; Joshua Downes, receiving the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholarship; Arjun Dheer and Christopher Wilson, receiving the Turner C. Cameron Memorial Scholarships; Katherine Neitzke, receiving the John C. Leary Memorial Scholarship; Zachary Charles and Torrin Marquardt, receiving the Joanna and Robert Martin Scholarships; and Adam Scott, receiving the Donald S. Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholarship.

For more information on the AFSA Merit Awards or the AFSA Scholarship Program, or how to establish or apply for a scholarship, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504 or at dec@afsa.org. Visit us online at www.afsa.org/scholar/.

Academic Merit Winners



Anna Berstein-Simpson – daughter of Rose Berstein (USIA) and Peter Simpson (deceased); graduate of the Holton-Arms School, Bethesda, Md.; attending Dartmouth College, majoring in European history and French.



Zachary Charles – son of Cleveland Charles (State) and Rose Beauchesne; graduate of McLean High School, McLean, Va.; attending the University of Pennsylvania, majoring in economics; designated the AFSA/Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.



Ian Christensen – son of W. Brent Christensen (State) and Brenda Christensen; graduate of the International School of Beijing; attending Brigham Young University, majoring in biology.



Arjun Dheer – son of Rajendra Dheer (FCS) and Archana Dheer (State); graduate of Walt Whitman High School, Bethesda, Md.; attending the University of Maryland-College Park, majoring in environmental science and policy; designated the AFSA/Turner C. Cameron Memorial Scholar.



Joshua Downes – son of Robert Downes (State) and Sara Downes; graduate of Wakefield High School, Arlington, Va.; attending the University of Texas-Austin, majoring in history; designated the AFSA/Priscilla and John Becker Family Scholar.



Torrin Marquardt – daughter of R. Niels Marquardt (State) and Judi Marquardt; graduate of the American School of Antananarivo; attending the University of California-Berkeley (has not declared a major); designated the AFSA/Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.



Rachel Midura – daughter of Christopher Midura (State) and Kelly Midura; graduate of South Lakes High School, Reston, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in history and creative writing; designated the AFSA/AAFSW Scholar and also the AFSA Art Merit Award winner for creative writing.



Katherine Neitzke – daughter of Jean Neitzke (State) and Ronald Neitzke (State); graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Alexandria, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in biology; designated the AFSA/John C. Leary Memorial Scholar.



Adam Scott – son of John F. Scott (State) and Rochelle Scott; graduate of McLean High School, McLean, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in business; designated the AFSA/Donald S. Spigler Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholar.



Nick Settje – son of Robert Settje (State) and Melanie Settje; graduate of George Mason High School, Falls Church, Va.; attending Cornell University, majoring in chemistry.



LORI DEC

Scholarship Winners Honored

AFSA student merit award winners at the Foreign Affairs Day merit awards reception, AFSA headquarters, May 1. Back row (left to right): Amb. C. Edward Dillery, Chairman of AFSA Committee on Education; Adam Scott, Zachary Charles, Joshua Downes, Arjun Dheer, Christopher Wilson, Joseph Kenny and AFSA President John Naland. Front row (left to right): Stephanie Hunt, Rachel Midura, Megan Tribble, Tomrin Marquardt, Katherine Neitzke and Anna Leah Berstein-Simpson.

PMA Funds AFSA Scholarship Winner

Mr. Nick Frankhouser (center), treasurer of the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service, presents PMA's \$3,200 scholarship check to Deborah Odell (right), State Representative on the AFSA Committee on Education, at PMA's annual luncheon on April 30. Cheryl Tyler (left) is the niece of Ersa Poston, in whose memory the 2009-2010 PMA Financial Aid Scholarship will be awarded this fall.



Neil Fennerty – son of John Fennerty (State) and Heather Fennerty (State); graduate of the American Embassy School, New Delhi; attending the College of William and Mary, majoring in history or business.



Eleanor Freund – daughter of James Freund (State) and Karen Gladding; graduate of the American International School of Vienna; attending the University of California-Santa Barbara, majoring in political science or economics.



Stephanie Hunt – daughter of Baxter Hunt (State) and Deborah Derrick; graduate of Yorktown High School, Arlington, Va.; attending Davidson College, majoring in pre-medicine.



Megan Tribble – daughter of Conrad Tribble (State) and Mary Woods; graduate of Lake Braddock High School, Burke, Va.; attending Fordham University, majoring in history and international relations.



Christopher Wilson – son of Ross Wilson (State) and Marguerite Squire (State); graduate of Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, Bethesda, Md.; attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, majoring in physics; designated the AFSA/Tomer C. Cameron Memorial Scholar.

Academic Merit Honorable Mention Award Winners

Michael Crawford – son of Paul Crawford (USAID) and Susan Crawford; graduate of W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, Va.; attending the University of Mary Washington, majoring in psychology and political science.

Elizabeth Huffaker – daughter of Thomas Huffaker (State) and Claire Huffaker (USIA); graduate of Webber Academy, Calgary, Alberta; attending Rice University, majoring in biology.

David Lee – son of Jin Lee (State) and Chris Lee; graduate of Shanghai American School Pudong New Area; attending Haverford College, majoring in biology and literature studies.

Caroline Perkinson – daughter of Jeff Perkinson (State) and Laurel Perkinson; graduate of Academic Magnet High School, Charleston, S.C.; attending Wake Forest University (has not declared a major).

Brendan Pierce – son of Theodore Pierce (State) and Salote Pierce (State); graduate of St. Andrew's College, Dublin, Ireland; attending Macalester College, majoring in environmental studies.

Aaron Price – son of Lonnie Price (State) and Barbara Price; graduate of Cairo American College; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in business administration.

Academic Merit Community Service Award Winner

Kathryn Shull – daughter of Philip Shull (FAS) and Jill Shull; graduate of Hong Kong International School; attending the College of Wooster in Ohio, majoring in international relations.

Art Merit Award Winner

Rachel Midura – see photo and listing under Academic Merit Award Winners. Rachel won the Art Merit Award for her creative writing (short story and novel excerpt) submissions.

Art Merit Honorable- Mention Award Winners

Joseph Kenny – son of Joseph Kenny, Jr. (State) and Sharon Kenny; graduate of Georgetown Preparatory School, North Bethesda, Md.; attending Catholic University, majoring in architecture. Joseph also won for his visual arts submissions (paintings).

Kirsten Salpini – daughter of Dean Salpini (USAID) and Joy Salpini (State); graduate of W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax, Va.; attending Shenandoah University, majoring in music theater. Kirsten won for her creative writing submissions (poem and short story).

Academic Merit Best Essay Award Winner

Sybil Bullock – daughter of James Bullock (State) and Carole Hoeveler-Bullock; graduate of the American School of Paris, St. Cloud, France; attending the American University of Cairo, majoring in Arabic. (Turn the page to read Sybil's essay.)

What's It Like to Go Back? Reflections of a Third-Culture Kid

BY SYBIL BULLOCK

I am a gypsy. I am a nomad. I carry my home in the suitcase of my heart.

Moscow.

Tunis.

Rabat.

Washington.

Cairo.

Paris.

Listing these cities is a habit as natural as stating how old I am or what my name is. Like beads on a necklace, each experience is separate. Strung together, unified, they compose who I am.

"Welcome aboard Flight 607."

What I hadn't realized until recently, however, is that once I move away, I must continue forward, without turning back. The places I leave don't wait for me the way my parents do, staying up until 1, 2, 3 o'clock in the morning to holler, "Where have you been?!"

The plane lurches into motion. My stomach lurches with emotion.

There is one place you can always go back to. For me, that place is Washington, D.C., where the school librarian still remembers that my favorite book in the third grade was *My Father's Dragon*, and that I was the only student who had already read two complete volumes of Shel Silverstein poems at the age of 9.

"We hope to make this a pleasant and restful flight. Refreshments will be served shortly."

Going back can sometimes feel as if I'd never left — but it's tricky; usually I can feel the space of time. Going back to Cairo for spring break after spending a year in Paris felt like the closest thing I can associate with going back home. "Home" is a funny word for kids who grew up as I did. We tend to give long, complicated answers to the question, "Where are you from?"

Listing these cities is a habit as natural as stating how old I am or what my name is. Like beads on a necklace, each experience is separate. Strung together, unified, they compose who I am.

Yet upon arriving in Cairo, I found no stale crumbs, no unopened letters, no dusty picture frames . . . only "Welcome Back" balloons. Salah, our former driver — and my stand-in father during Papa's yearlong service in Baghdad — picks me up at the airport and asks about my mother. Most taxi drivers in Paris only talk about the weather.

"We will be landing in approximately four hours and 20 minutes. Enjoy your flight."

There are some places I can always go back to. Other places must remain as frozen as a museum diorama: untouched, perfect and immutable. I am not speaking of cities, necessarily; but of a stone bench, or a sunny rooftop, or a moss-covered fountain. I cannot return to these little places because someone else is busy not realizing they are there — seeing them only as backdrops once a part of a bigger scene, unnoticed until they are all that is left on the stage. I have learned to avoid being a stranger in a past I am no longer a part of. I have learned not to endanger the memory of what I can no longer touch. I smile and nod from a distance. They remember, and so do I. Keep it that way.

On my last night in Egypt before returning to Paris, I camped in the White Desert with my (fifth) best friend. Picture blue-yellow-red-green Bedouin tents, bal-

adi bread baking in a mud brick oven, a wrinkled brown hand thumping a camel-skin drum.

Our legs are sore from riding donkeys. Our cheeks hurt from laughing, and my hands ache from holding on so tightly to the sand I am lying on. Above is a sky I have seen before, but have never seen before. The distant-dark-dependable blue hangs sober still above the hot, blowing sand; and the stars are not stars but July 4 sparklers, glistening-glittering-glowing sparkles, dripping down and tickling my face, and I am laughing.

I am laughing. I am thinking.

I am thinking about how people grow and places change, and it's beautiful, and the world is like a giant ant farm: nothing stands still, not even the earth. I am scurrying through the ant race like a toddler scrambling to a freshly-baked cookie, and I do stop to smell the flowers. I do think back, but I only move forward.

When the stewardess approaches and asks me the essential question, I reply without hesitation: "I'll have the chicken, please."

Do you want to know my Golden Rule for choosing airplane meals? Think of rock-paper-scissors. Always beef over fish, and always chicken over beef . . . but if they ever offer lamb, take it. Just don't hesitate to change your mind, because everything else changes, too.

This inconsistency doesn't make me weak; it helps me to grow. Nothing stays intact, and when enough belongings break or get lost in the moves, I remember. I remember that I carry my homes in the suitcase of my heart, because when the wind blows and the sand shifts, only there, in my suitcase, do they remain safe. The past is in the past, and that is where it must be. Bring on the new. □

Awards • Continued from page 47

After active-duty service in the U.S. Coast Guard, he spent six years in the Reserves.

He first entered politics as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives in 1968. While in Congress, Sen. Nunn held, among other positions, the chairmanship of the Senate Armed Services Committee. His legislative achievements include the landmark Department of Defense Reorganization Act, drafted with the late Senator Barry Goldwater, and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, which provides assistance to Russia and the former Soviet republics for securing and destroying their excess nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. As its name indicates, the latter piece of legislation was drafted with Senator Richard Lugar, a previous winner of the AFSA Lifetime Contributions to Diplomacy Award.

Constructive Dissent Awards

AFSA's Constructive Dissent Awards, unique in the U.S. government, recognize individuals in the Foreign Service who have the courage to speak out and challenge the system from within. For more than 40 years, AFSA has been honoring members of the Foreign Service who have the intellectual courage to question the status quo and take a stand, no matter the sensitivity of the issue or the career consequences of their actions. These awards demonstrate the willingness to question conventional wisdom and offer alternatives to current policy.

Several strong nominations were received for the **William R. Rivkin Award** for a mid-level Foreign Service officer. Members of the Rivkin family, who fund this award, decided to confer \$2,500 on two separate winners for demonstrating the courage to challenge the system on an issue of U.S. policy related to their work:

- **Jeffrey Collins** was selected for questioning the U.S. government's policies on human rights reporting while at Embassy Ankara. Mr. Collins also performed admirable work in attempting to improve the protection of human rights in Turkey.

- **Michael Gonzales** worked diligently within the proper channels to rebalance

U.S. foreign policy toward Ethiopia to better advance U.S. long-term interests. He drew attention to the authoritarian policies of the Ethiopian government despite significant resistance from the State department.

- The runner-up for the Rivkin Award is **Susan Ball**, Embassy Bratislava.

The committee this year chose one winner for the **Tex Harris Constructive Dissent Award** for specialists:

- **Barron Rosen** was selected for vigorously protesting that diplomatic couriers were forced to sign a waiver that voided any possible claims against the cargo company contracted by the U.S. government out of Miami. Rosen's successful challenge of the waiver also led to improved flight conditions for Miami couriers.

There were no winners this year in the other two categories for constructive dissent: the **W. Averell Harriman Award** for an entry-level officer and the **Christian A. Herter Award** for a Senior Foreign Service officer.

Outstanding Performance Awards

These awards recognize exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions to professionalism, morale and effectiveness. This year's winners are:

- **Megan Gallardo**, Embassy Podgorica, was selected as the winner of the **Delavan Award**, which recognizes extraordinary contributions to effectiveness, professionalism and morale by an office management specialist. The runner-up is **Kristina Lorenger** of Embassy Damascus.

- **Juliana "Lily" Hightower**, Embassy Addis Ababa, received the **M. Juanita**

Guess Award for outstanding service as a community liaison officer assisting American families serving at an overseas post. The runners-up are **Michelle Desitto** of Embassy Ankara and **Mary Knight** of Embassy Beirut.

- **Erica Krug**, Embassy Harare, received the **Avis Bohlen Award** for her outstanding accomplishments in volunteer service to advance the interests of the United States and foster positive relations with both the American and foreign communities at post. The runner-up is **Stephanie Tansey** of Embassy Abuja.

AFSA Post Representative of the Year

Ken Kero-Mentz has been chosen as **AFSA's Post Representative of the Year**. An active and effective rep at one of the largest missions in the world, Berlin, Kero-Mentz was critical in taking AFSA members' concerns, individually and collectively, both to post management and back to Washington if necessary.

AFSA wishes to thank all those who sent in a nomination or served as panel members this year. We place great importance on these awards, which serve to recognize the intellectual courage and outstanding achievements of our Foreign Service colleagues.

AFSA also thanks the director general for co-sponsoring the annual awards ceremony, which is open to any employee wishing to attend. Congratulations to all winners and runners-up for this well-deserved recognition. (Please see the next issue of *AFSA News* for full coverage of the June 18 awards ceremony.) □

AFSANEWSBRIEFS**Foreign Service Family Welcome-Back Potluck Picnic**

This annual event, sponsored by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, will take place on Sunday, Sept. 20, from 4 to 6:30 p.m. at Nottoway Park, 9601 Courthouse Road, Vienna, Va., 22181

All Foreign Service families are invited. FSYF will provide hot dogs and hamburgers; please bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share. In addition to food and fun, there will be a short presentation for parents, a program for teens and activities for younger children. Please RSVP to fsyf@fsyf.org by Sept. 18.

FAC Report • Continued from page 47

tenure, the report criticizes her failure to press hard enough to gain sufficient resources for funding of Foreign Service positions, as well as for the overall Foreign Affairs 150 account. But it praises her for ably handling the reorganization and management of foreign assistance. It also offers suggestions to Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton for future action.

Among the report's key findings are three main points:

- As Secretary, Rice failed to provide the necessary support for the Foreign Service and her department when it came to human capital and resources. During her first three years, she managed to add only eight Foreign Service positions overall. In contrast, Secretary Colin Powell's "Diplomatic Readiness Initiative" added 1,200



Amb. Tom Boyatt comments on the Foreign Affairs Council 2009 report at a press conference at AFSA HQ, May 14.

positions, most of which were absorbed by the added demands of Iraq, Afghanistan and other critical priority posts. As a manager, Secretary Rice did not adequately pursue the resources needed to remedy the various shortages facing the Foreign Service and the department.

- On the other hand, the report lauds Sec. Rice's efforts to reorganize foreign assistance, singling out her creation

of the so-called F Bureau. The report praises what it sees as a streamlining of policy-making and coordination that resulted from the naming of a new Director of Foreign Assistance, who is dual-hatted as the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

- Sec. Rice did an admirable job in supporting and continuing the activities of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, which had been put

in place by Sec. Powell. The report supports this effort and, in particular, the surge capacity that has been created as more active and retired officers are brought in to staff the operation.

The assessment makes a number of recommendations for future action, including seeking out increased resources for staff at the foreign affairs agencies and supporting the further expansion of the civilian response corps.

The assessment also highlights the October 2008 task force report, "A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future," compiled by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Henry L. Stimson Center (see the Dec. 2008 *AFSA News* for more details).

The Foreign Affairs Council is a non-partisan umbrella group of 11 organizations concerned about the processes of diplomacy and the leadership and management of the people of the Foreign Service and State Department. The entire report may be read online at www.afsa.org/fac/2009FACreport.pdf. □

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DACOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

DACOR Bacon House Foundation's Annual Conference will be held on Friday, Oct. 9, at 1801 F Street NW, Washington, D.C. The topic is "The International Financial Crisis." Speakers include Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post* and the Honorable Alan Larson of Covington & Burling. Contact: prog.coord@dacorbacon.org.

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BOOKS

PLAN AHEAD! Save some time for the **49th Annual Art & Bookfair** of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSSW) which will open on Friday, Oct. 16 and continue through Sunday, Oct. 25. As usual, it will be held in the Diplomatic Exhibit Hall of Main State (HST). The event will feature second-hand books from all over the world, an extensive display of art and collectible objects, rare books in The Collectors' Corner and an assortment of stamps and coins.

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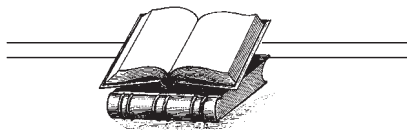
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BOOKS

A Rare Gift for Reflection

Witness to a Changing World

David D. Newsom, *New Academic Publishing*, 2008, \$28, paperback, 388 pages.

REVIEWED BY ROSCOE S. SUDDARTH

Some 40 years ago an outside consultant did a study of the culture of the Foreign Service. He discovered two kinds of archetypal leaders. One was the “ethnic”: extroverted, ebullient and inclusive — that could have described Phil Habib. The other was the “professional”: cool, confident, precise and eloquent — that could have been epitomized by David Newsom. Ten years after that study, Newsom succeeded Habib as under secretary for political affairs.

Newsom’s delightful memoir, *Witness to a Changing World*, finished just prior to his death at 90 last year, shows us David Newsom the man, as well as the professional; the wit as well as the sage. The formerly discreet diplomat is startlingly frank about his career and about his ancestors, noting the alcoholic ways of his paternal grandfather and the suicide of his adored father, a successful newspaper publisher but a chronic depressive.

The book’s title, however, is too modest, for Newsom was both an acute observer and key participant in many

The formerly discreet diplomat is startlingly frank about his career and life in this posthumously published memoir.



historic events. During a meeting in Baghdad in the early 1950s, Prime Minister Nuri Said told him that if the balance among the Kurds, Shia and Sunnis were ever destroyed, “Iraq will become ungovernable.” After quoting that warning, Newsom (who vigorously opposed the 2003 invasion of Iraq) adds just two words: “How prophetic.”

His journal of a trip with the Central African Republic’s “Emperor” Jean Bedelle Bokassa, an incompetent megalomaniac, is sidesplitting. Such passages bring to mind Secretary of State Edmund Muskie’s description of Newsom as the only Californian he knew with the sense of humor of a down-easterner from Maine.

As director of the Bureau of North African Affairs, Newsom shepherded U.S. relations with the newly independent nations of the region before being named ambassador to Libya, the home of major U.S. oil interests and Wheelus Air Base. His memoir contains an absorbing account of how he

dealt with the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the September 1969 coup d’état of Lieutenant Muammar Qadhafi.

The chapter reflecting on the author’s assignment as assistant secretary for African affairs (1969-1974) is titled “Eight Percent of the Black Vote.” That refers to the White House rejection of Newsom’s suggestion that President Richard Nixon give a speech on Africa, on the grounds that Nixon had received only a fraction of the African-American vote. Yet the administration’s indifference to Africa left him free to make and implement policy, leading to his most satisfying career assignment. For instance, Newsom used his 1970 trip to South Africa, the first by a sitting assistant secretary, to publicly condemn apartheid.

Newsom’s chapter title concerning his time as under secretary references a *New Yorker* cartoon showing a dejected man seated at a desk with his head in his hands, and a caption reading: “His concerns are global.” Newsom’s travails in dealing with the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and other crises bear out the aptness of the caption. The memoir publicly reveals for the first time Newsom’s courageous opposition to admitting the shah to the United States for medical treatment because of the heightened risk to our people in Iran. The hostage crisis certainly proved him right.

The book’s final chapters outline Newsom’s incisive views on foreign af-

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BOOKS

fairs during his amazing last 27 years (and six books) as an academic and writer. They reveal a rare gift of reflection by a diplomat with an almost unrivaled acquaintance with events, particularly in the developing world, since World War II.

He ends the memoir challengingly, with this thought: "I would be deeply disturbed to feel that my generation was passing on to those that will follow a nation vulnerable to the tragic instability I have observed in so many other societies in the six decades of my adult life."

Roscoe (Rocky) S. Suddarth is a retired Foreign Service officer who served under David Newsom as a political officer in Tripoli (1967-1969), Libyan desk officer (1969-1971) and executive assistant to the under secretary for political affairs (1979-1981).

Mr. America

Dean Acheson and the Creation of an American World Order

Robert J. McMahon, Potomac Books, 2009, \$16.95, paperback, 272 pages.

REVIEWED BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Now that I've been out of the Foreign Service for a dozen years, I think it is finally safe for me to confess a deep, dark secret: I've never read Dean Acheson's 1969 memoir, *Present at the Creation*. Somehow I've managed to lead a reasonably full, rich life despite that sin of omission, but my nagging sense of guilt over it has been rekindled by Robert J. McMahon's superb new biography, *Dean Acheson and the Creation of an American World Order*.

McMahon, the Mershon Distinguished Professor of History at Ohio

State University, has a rare gift for covering a lot of ground succinctly yet thoroughly. For instance, while McMahon appropriately devotes the bulk of the book to Acheson's performance as Secretary of State (1949-1953), he also discusses the six years his subject spent in Foggy Bottom prior to that.

The first of those stints, from 1941 to 1945, was as assistant secretary for economic affairs, an appointment that came about due to Acheson's political connections and his record as a high-powered Washington, D.C., attorney.

As the author notes, the responsibilities Acheson assumed were "as modest as they were ambiguous, offering a rather limited field of action for a man of Acheson's activist proclivities." But soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Acheson "began planning for the transition ... to a postwar world sure to face gargantuan readjustment and recovery challenges," a process he would continue to pursue as under secretary of State (the number-two position in the department at that time) from 1945 to 1947. And because Secretary James Byrnes was absent on travel for 350 of his 562 days in office, Acheson effectively ran the department during that period — invaluable preparation for succeeding George Marshall in 1949.

No revisionist, McMahon gives Acheson full credit for shaping many of the key U.S. foreign policy initiatives of the Cold War years: the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the rebuilding of Germany and Japan, among others. Yet he also cites Dean Rusk's damning observation that Acheson, a lifelong Anglophile, "did not give a damn about the brown, yellow, black and red people in various parts of the world." And he draws a convincing

BOOKS

link between that attitude — reinforced by the general arrogance that made him such an attractive target for Joe McCarthy and many other critics — and some of Acheson's serious policy miscalculations regarding China, Korea and other parts of the world.

Still, Acheson got the biggest challenge he faced exactly right: designing and implementing the U.S. strategy for containing the Soviet Union. As McMahon documents, he played an instrumental role in creating the institutions, alliances and economic arrangements that brought to life an American-dominated world order — and made “the West” a truly cohesive entity.

After stepping down as Secretary of State in 1953, Acheson continued to participate in major foreign policy decisions and debates right up until his death in 1971. Presidents of both parties sought his counsel. But unlike Truman, they often ignored his advice — a fact of life Acheson never fully accepted. After storming out of a meeting with Lyndon Johnson, Acheson instructed National Security Adviser Walt Rostow to “tell the president — and you can tell him in precisely these words — that he can take Vietnam and stick it up his ass.” But he agreed to return, once LBJ granted him full access to classified information and official briefings so he could conduct his own investigation of the war (which he soon came to see as unwinnable).

In a foreword, Melvyn Leffler notes that this is the first volume in a projected “Shapers of International History” series. Judging by this brilliant biography, geared to the general reader yet full of value for experts, I would say that is an exciting prospect, indeed. ■

Steven Alan Honley is editor of the Journal.

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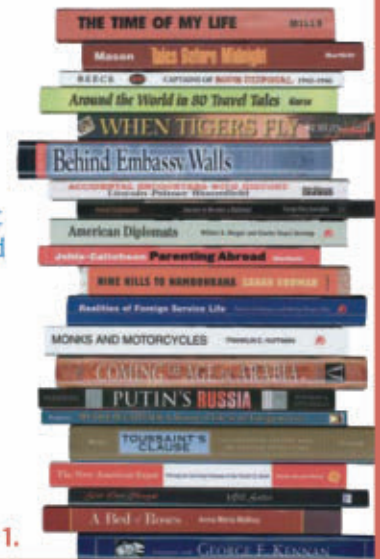
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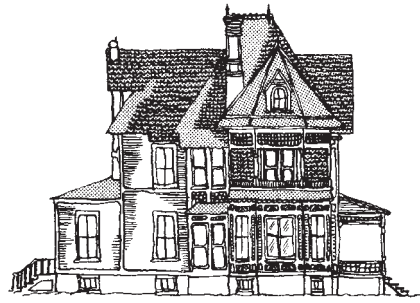
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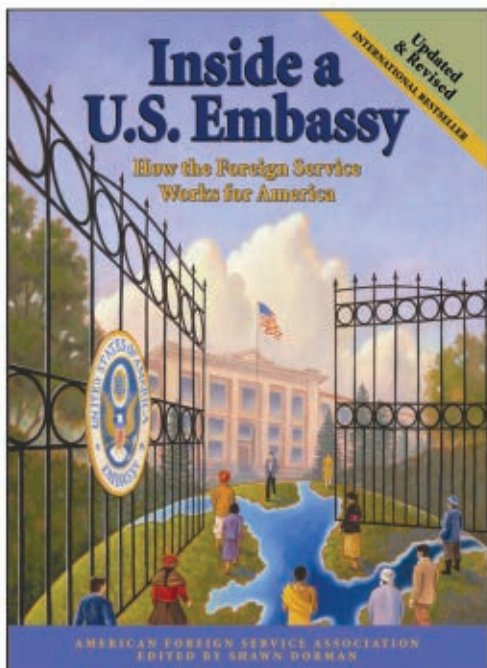
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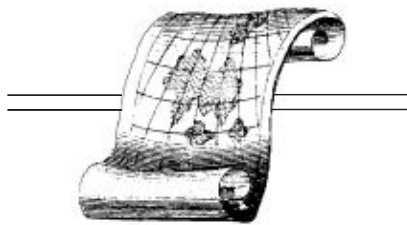
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REFLECTIONS

“Send Money or Will Sell Body”

BY VIRGINIA YOUNG

When the U.S. Foreign Service sent me to New Delhi as the new consul, nobody told me the job would be fun or that I would be good at it. But apparently, I was born to take care of feckless Americans in the India of the 1970s.

My clients were kids — as well as the not so young — the “Eat, Pray, Love” types searching for their inner beings. They followed a “hippie trail” from Goa in the winter, north to Nepal when the weather was warm. New Delhi was a stopping-off point, where they stayed at cheap places in Connaught Circus and used embassy channels to send messages home to indulgent parents.

“Send money or will sell body,” was the text of a request by a petite jeans-wearing blonde. The money arrived by return cable.

The Ashoka Hotel informed us that a young woman from the United States was streaking in the lobby. When I got there, she was wearing a bikini bottom, long cardigan sweater, platform sandals, a big hat and huge dark glasses. The hotel manager escorted the two of us upstairs — three actually, since I’d thoughtfully brought along a charismatic Punjabi doctor — where we found that two young men of Persian extraction were sharing her quarters. The room reeked of sweet smoke.

She was enamored of the doctor’s red turban and moved to his clinic, but was still getting drugs from somewhere. A brother visiting from Nepal provided the answer. “Look in the handle of her hairbrush,” he suggested. I finally per-

I finally persuaded her to take a direct flight home.



sued her to take a direct flight home.

Officially illegal, drugs were still everywhere. My Americans were astonished to find they could be arrested for chewing a form of opium that was common on the streets. Sometimes they were picked up for possession — or transporting — sterner stuff.

For my job, I’ve probably been in more jails than Joe Friday. Once, when the superintendent honored my request to see an actual cell, I was shown to a 30-square-foot room. My guy had seven roommates, all Europeans. As if at a diplomatic reception, they lined up to greet me, identifying themselves by name, nationality and crime.

“Alain Gautier, Francais, murder.”

“Virginia Carson, U.S. Embassy, um ...”

Eric Cameron Smith was neither crazy nor violent, though he was identified as such in the press after he tore his U.S. passport in two, leaped over the immigration desk and screamed, “You can’t deport me. I have no place to go.”

He’d found a guru living in a cave in Rishikesh and never wanted to leave. The Indians thought otherwise: they gave him a “quit India” notice for overstaying his visa. He’d actually cleared customs before his man-without-a-

country performance; so as far as local officials were concerned, he had already left the country.

Pan Am said it wouldn’t endanger passengers by allowing a lunatic on the flight. So Eric lived in the transit lounge at Palam Airport for six weeks while the Indian government, the airline and the U.S. passport office sorted things out. I visited him every week.

No one knew how Smith would react when, according to plan, he would be escorted onto the plane by a doctor (who was prepared to sedate him if necessary) and have a policeman at his side all the way to New York.

The prisoner asked one last question before boarding: “In the movie of my life, do you think I’ll be played by Jack Palance?”

That was not so wild a dream, actually. After all, Elizabeth Gilbert — the *Eat, Pray, Love* author, who married a Brazilian and lived happily ever after — will be portrayed by Julia Roberts.

My Americans found love, too. After I denied her Kashmiri houseboy a tourist visa, one middle-aged lady divorced her husband and married him. I was obliged to provide documentation giving him permanent U.S. residence.

I found love myself in the course of this inadvertent, delicious career. But that’s another story. ■

Virginia Young accompanied her late husband, Jim Carson, on several Foreign Service assignments before his death in 1973. Her memoir will be published by ADST next year.

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