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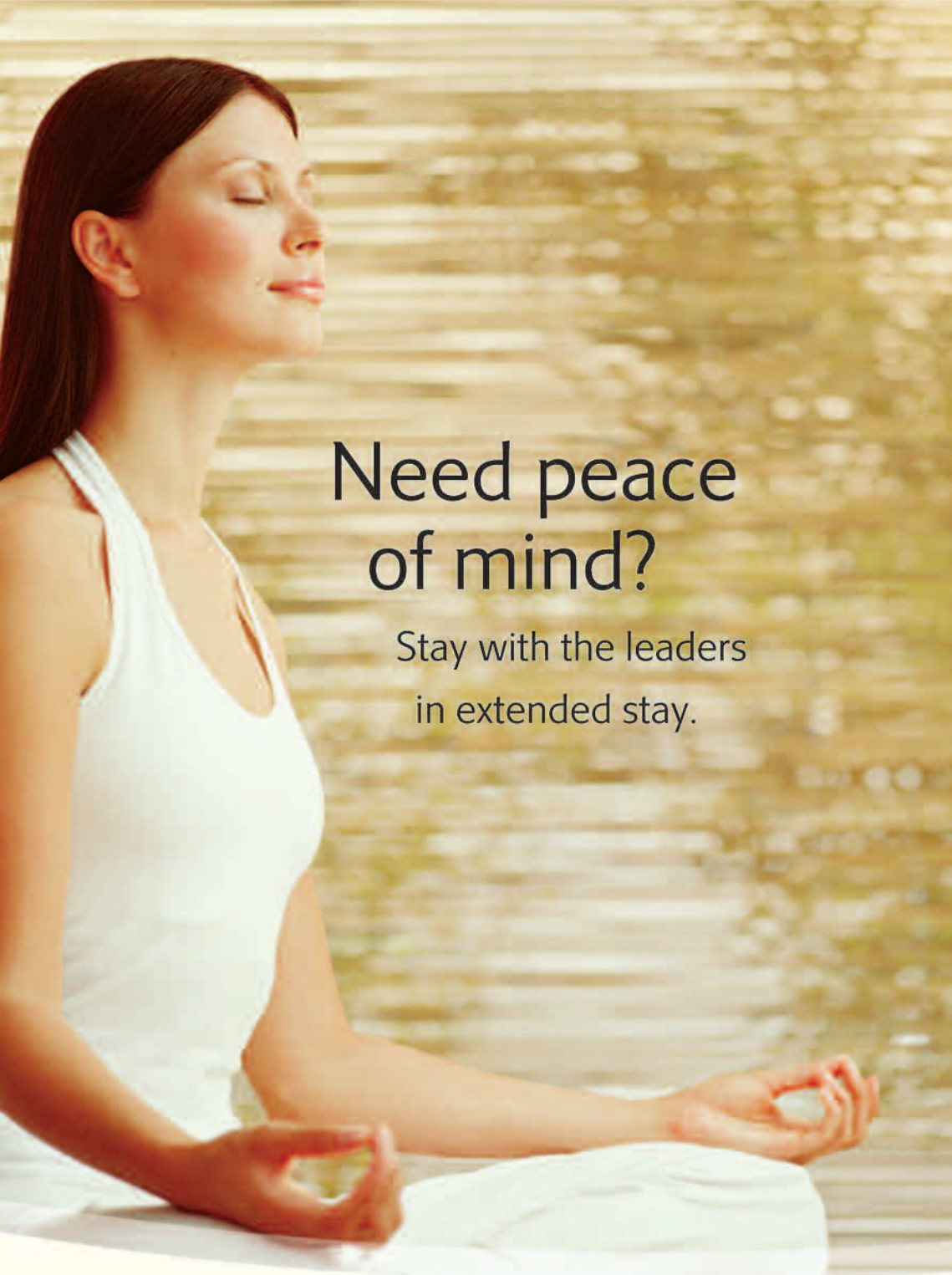
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Secretary of State Colin Powell speaking at the 2004 AFSA memorial plaques ceremony.

in the July/August  
*Foreign Service Journal*





# PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

## *In Memoriam*

BY LOUISE K. CRANE

This column will appear after Memorial Day, but I write it as I ponder what to say on Foreign Affairs Day, May 7, when AFSA pays annual tribute to our colleagues who have died in the service of their country and whose names are carved on the memorial plaques we placed in the State Department's lobby many years ago.



As of this writing, we do not have to carve any new Foreign Service names into the marble. So I guess one could say we are lucky this year. But every fresh report of a suicide bombing, convoy attack, roadside bomb or RPG launch makes me feel that our luck is that much closer to running out. The Foreign Service community came very close to suffering loss this year. It was the courage and sacrifice of others which kept one or more of us from getting killed.

Natividad Mendez Ramos, a Salvadoran soldier, was killed in April outside Najaf, Iraq. Our Foreign Service colleagues in Najaf have testified to the bravery of the Salvadoran soldiers when militias attacked them. The *Washington Post* recently reported: "Eight Blackwater contractors assigned to protect a building in Najaf fought alongside four Marines and three Salvadoran soldiers to defeat a determined attack by hundreds of Iraqi

*Louise K. Crane is AFSA vice president for State.*

*The next time you walk through the C Street lobby, stop and think about what each name on the AFSA Memorial Plaques represents.*

militia members." When helicopters finally reached the Najaf garrison to drop ammunition and retrieve a wounded Marine, the defenders were down to fewer than 10 rounds per man.

Nor was that a unique event — see the article on p. 28 of this issue, "Foreign Service Firefight," for an eyewitness account of one such incident. And last October, John Branchizio, John Linde Jr. and Mark Parson died when a remote-controlled bomb tore apart their car in a diplomatic convoy. The three DynCorp contractors were guarding U.S. diplomats entering the Gaza Strip to interview candidates for Fulbright scholarships.

Our colleagues in that convoy, like those caught in the attacks in Najaf, must wonder how and why they survived. Why were the lives of their protectors cut short, left to be mourned and memorialized on marble headstones, while they are allowed to fulfill their lives?

That is what the names on the

AFSA plaques represent — unfulfilled lives. That is what the names in all the national cemeteries represent — unfulfilled lives.

The names on our plaques go back to 1780 when William A. Palfrey drowned at sea en route to his post in Paris. When I first walked into the Main State lobby in April 1965 there was just one plaque and it was half-full. A few months later a terrorist bomb went off outside the U.S. embassy in Saigon, and the terror toll has not slackened since.

These plaques represent the Foreign Service's compact with the American people. We know the risks and acknowledge the dangers, yet we willingly expose ourselves to them to advance the cause of peace and security. In spite of the nightly litany of car bombings in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and Pakistan, our Foreign Service colleagues eagerly enter their bids for these posts. Fully one-third of the current entry-level class of generalists says they want to go to Iraq now. A reporter asked me to explain this dedication. He couldn't understand it.

The next time you walk through the C Street lobby, stop and think what each name on the AFSA Memorial Plaques represents. My Foreign Service classmate Dennis W. Keogh's name is there. He was blown up by a bomb in Namibia in 1984. He was part of a peacekeeping mission. And think about the names which are not on our list but represent lives equally unfulfilled, lives lost while protecting others. ■

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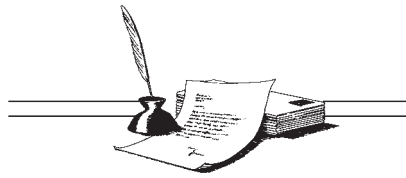
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# LETTERS

## **The DG on Iraq Service**

To suggest, as Peter Rice has done in his March letter to the editor, that employees who have served in Iraq might not receive equal treatment in assignments or for promotion “considering the disdain of some (perhaps many) FSOs toward President Bush and the Iraq War” is unfair and unwarranted.

The independence of selection boards, governed by precepts negotiated with the American Foreign Service Association, is a fundamental element of the Foreign Service system. Those precepts are clear and stress that creditable performance under unusually difficult or dangerous service is a particularly relevant criterion for promotion. The department, mindful of the special challenges involved, also has made a point of counseling and assisting employees serving in Iraq with their onward assignments.

The department’s employees, moreover, do not seem to share the apprehensions of the retired officer who wrote the letter. Their response to the call to service in Iraq has been remarkable. So far, more than 200 persons have filed more than 1,000 bids on approximately 140 positions. These men and women will build on the outstanding work done by their prede-

cessors and enjoy the respect and recognition of all of us at home and abroad.

*W. Robert Pearson  
Director General of the  
Foreign Service  
Washington, D.C.*

## **Our Foreign Service & Iraq**

I have two points to make about Peter Rice’s March letter, “Disincentives for Iraq Service?” First, he has spent too much time listening to the critics of the Foreign Service: those who falsely claim that the Foreign Service disdains issuing visas, that the Foreign Service disdains service at hardship posts, and that the Foreign Service disdains those who do both of the above. I don’t know whose Foreign Service Mr. Rice is writing about, but it isn’t ours. Our Foreign Service has logged more than 1,000 bids for the fewer than 200 positions posted for the new Baghdad embassy. Not bad for a group of employees Mr. Rice claims disdains serving there and elsewhere in a world increasingly difficult and dangerous.

Secondly, Rice seems to think the Foreign Service is based on incentives and bonuses. He seems to think that we need an incentive to serve at a hardship post, some sort of assurance that there is a bonus in our

future, whether that is a promotion or an assignment to what some Hill staffers call “cushy” posts like Paris or Canberra. That’s not our Foreign Service. Here the desire to “serve the country” still burns brightly and the condition of being worldwide available is accepted and understood. What Rice ignores is the powerful incentive of an opportunity “to do something important for our country,” as Hume Horan wrote in the same issue.

Finally, I want to disabuse Rice and other critics of the notion that there is no meaningful work to be done in Canberra, Berlin, Rome, Brussels or Paris. If there were not, then why are our missions in these allied capitals so large? The answer is inescapable: important diplomacy is being conducted there.

Promotions are based on performance. Promotion decisions are made by our Foreign Service peers. It is insulting to suggest that they will not give equal consideration to our colleagues who have served in Iraq or Kabul.

So, whose Foreign Service did Mr. Rice serve in, anyway?

*Louise K. Crane  
Acting President  
American Foreign Service  
Association  
Washington, D.C.*



### Explaining Iraq

Thank you so much for the March issue devoted to Iraq. We truly enjoyed it.

For the past year, I have been trying to explain to friends and acquaintances my frustration with the preemptive attack against Iraq. My first challenge came a year ago when I was asked to speak to a women's club in South Dade County about life in Saudi Arabia. The date was the night we bombed Baghdad in an attempt to eliminate Saddam Hussein. I tried to explain to the ladies present that this was a sad day for the United States and that it would be hard for me to speak about life in Saudi Arabia knowing how the Middle East and, indeed, probably much of the world, would be viewing the U.S. for a long time to come. Even now, a year later, it is hard to find persons who understand that this invasion did *not* increase the security of our country and that, in fact, it probably increased the number of people who wish us ill.

Reading the intelligent comments of my Foreign Service colleagues gave me some reassurance that my 30-year Foreign Service career was not a total waste.

*Elizabeth A. Powers*  
FSO, retired  
Gainesville, Fla.

### Iraq Coverage

I commend the *Journal* for its excellent coverage of Iraq in the March edition. The several articles on the subject were perceptive and informative.

*Talcott W. Seelye*  
FSO, retired  
Bethesda, Md.

### A Valuable Issue

Your Iraq issue provides what I think is an important record, from within the Coalition Provisional Authority, of the extraordinarily sim-

plistic mind-set that seems to have accompanied our effort to establish an imperial presence in Baghdad. The reports you have published constitute a valuable confirmation of, among other things, Dean Acheson's observation that (as I recall it approximately) "introducing force does not resolve a situation; it creates a new situation."

Costly as this experience may be, I hope it will at least help us to learn this lesson for the future, and remind us that the extraordinary success of the U.S. Cold War policies relied not just on "containment" of the Soviet threat, but also on the other half of George Kennan's paradigm — that "we remain true to our own goals and principles." This was also the second half of Paul Nitze's NSC 68, that we supplement anti-communism with active promotion of a viable world system of nation-states. In other words, it is not enough to declare what we are against; we have to engage in the far more difficult process of demonstrating what we are for.

*Bob Willner*  
FSO, retired  
Rickreall, Ore.

### 3,000 Years of History

Hume Horan, in "Restoring a Shattered Mosaic" (March *FSJ*), has elegantly and eloquently picked up some of the shards of the shattered "mosaic" that is Iraq.

Horan, from his vantage point on the heights as an ambassador many times over, sees reasons for optimism and for dreaming of "partial success." Iraq, once touted as the site of the Garden of Eden, may become with luck a sort of Near Eastern guide to nirvana.

The views from my vantage point in the depths, as a once-low-level FSO at four Near East posts, differs. For now, a series of puppets, quasi-official, alphabet soup groups and army juntas will seem to rule Iraq.

Our efforts to force-feed Iraq with Western "modern" political ideology will bear bitter fruit. Chaos will continue until at last, with American help — or in spite of it — an amoral strongman, standing astride the butchered bodies of his competitors, will anoint himself ruler.

In Mesopotamia — the eternal Land Between the Rivers, now Iraq — the living history of strong rulers began with king-priests in Sumer and Ur. Later, for 500 years, the Abbasid caliphs ruled from Baghdad in glory. They made the Arabic language and culture supreme among that "mosaic of peoples" from Persia to the Atlantic. Along the way they preserved much we claim as ours, and so enriched our "mosaic." Until today, latter-day Iraqi despots have continued one-man rule: 3,000 years of history cannot be denied.

*John D. Tinny*  
FSO, retired  
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

### CAJE Can Work

Thank you for the timely April article on CAJE by Alexis Ludwig. While I could not agree more with Mr. Ludwig's list of concerns, I also see many reasons to be optimistic. All of the CAJE professionals I have worked with have struck me as totally dedicated managers trying hard to solve a technical problem — not a political or financial one.

In late 2003, Embassy Cairo requested an exception grade for precisely the kind of "national treasure" Foreign Service National described in Mr. Ludwig's article. Washington replied that the exception grade procedure was unavailable, but offered to "CAJE" the position at once. We were as skeptical as Mr. Ludwig about a computer-based system adequately evaluating characteristics such as "charm" and "sophistication," so imagine our delight



## LETTERS

when the position was quickly "CAJE'ed" at precisely the higher level sought and the FSN was immediately promoted.

Granted, one data point does not a pattern make. However, the worst-case scenarios that some fear are not, in my view, realistic. An avalanche of complaints and appeals benefits no one and will almost certainly not be allowed to occur. If CAJE enjoys less than broad support as it unfolds, I am confident that appropriate modifications, including perhaps those proposed by Mr. Ludwig, can and will quickly be placed into service.

Ludwig's key point that CAJE still lends "disproportionate weight to the bureaucratic qualification at the expense of personal quality" is dead on. CAJE may prove to be the last great "repair job" on the "machine model" of large organizations that was brilliantly suited for the rapidly industrializing Western societies of the 19th century — but is totally inappropriate for the global Information Age of the 21st century.

My hope is that instead of resisting CAJE, we will accept it for the benefits it can offer us over the next decade or so, while acknowledging that its limitations lead directly to the real challenge before us: discarding the obsolete Civil Service employment structure altogether and replacing it with a brand new model that embraces not only demographic realities and social priorities, but also lifelong learning, institutionalized cross-training, stable and dignified careers for those of sufficient talent, and robust advancement opportunities for the most exceptional.

*Edward Yagi  
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**Public Diplomacy or Discretion?**

I enjoyed the April Speaking Out, “Weakest Link in Our Foreign Policy Arsenal,” by William P. Kiehl. Not fighting for the continued existence of USIA was one of the major mistakes of the Clinton administration. Many of the legislators who joined in the destruction are now moaning about the government’s lack of a means to combat the attacks on the U.S.

The State Department, too, watched with a smile while USIA was pulled apart. During 35 years working for the agency, I rarely met an FSO who didn’t despise the very idea of “public diplomacy.” Chiefs of mission and area directors frequently tried to pretend that they took the matter seriously, but their actions in terms of resource priorities belied their words. Most junior officers were more frank. Some of the senior agency officers had the same attitude. Oddly enough, some of the political appointees were more friendly to our work since they actually believed — and attempted to put into action — the words from the top, words that were only meant to put a little poetry into the lives of the USIA officers without changing the fact that the lowliest probationer at State was of more use than all of USIA!

The department cannot help itself in this matter. It is old and set in its ways. One of the ways it is set in is, in fact, quite a good one. Discretion is a major part of the soul of a diplomatic organization. But discretion is the very opposite of public diplomacy. On this level everything should be open, every question answered, every comment or attack countered. In this Internet world, we must be ready, willing and able to do so in an entirely truthful manner. Only a new version of USIA will be able to carry this out. A new name, a budget not attached to State’s, officers not trained

in A-100 courses, and a director who has made his reputation in fields other than politics, are necessary.

*Edward P. Dillon  
USIA FSO, retired  
Arlington, Va.*

**USAID & Contracting Out**

I enjoyed the April issue, which included an excellent collection of articles. The article by Ronald Spiers, “Toward a New U.S.-U.N. Rapprochement,” was most constructive and thoughtful. Yet Shawn Zeller’s article on USAID seemed like a “puff” piece for Natsios and Marshall.

Getting contract work out to the private sector, knowingly at prohibitive long-term costs to the taxpayer, was the press of political management for the last three decades. At USAID, with staffing downsized and contract oversight and regulations marginalized, potential for contracting out even more work increased. Management favored open grants or broad contracts to NGOs or other assorted organizations to minimize oversight and responsibility by USAID and involvement by local governments. Moreover, the best of loyal, senior and dedicated USAID FSNs were often relegated, overnight, to positions as contract staff under cafeteria or commissary contract employment mechanisms. Today, contract warrior employees are considered a politically expedient alternative to high-profile American soldiers in danger zones. As a result, contractors can now earn bigger salaries in hours than GIs guarding them earn in weeks. After 30 years of USAID’s increasing “contracting out,” a change in mentality as well as policy may be more important than USAID’s current staffing adjustments.

Having just rejoined AFSA after many years away, I encourage all retirees to read George Jones’ “Where Have All the Members Gone?” (in *AFSA News*). Recruiting

others is a laudable goal for us all. After more than 10 years out of the Service, I now realize political administrations thrive on public and professional complacency. I urge all foreign affairs professionals to speak out in whatever forums possible. As a former coordinating member of the State Department “Open Forum,” I am disturbed at how free thinking, constructive criticism and any form of dissent are essentially equated with “treason.”

*J. Kevin Burke  
USAID FSO, retired  
Cape Cod, Mass.*

**Praise for State VP Voice**

When I open the *Journal* I turn first to two or three sections. These are my regular reads. Over time I have found myself looking forward to Louise Crane’s VP Voice column as well (monthly in *AFSA News*). I find her comments constructive, thoughtful and encouraging. I’ve added her column to my regular reads. I encourage everyone else to do the same.

*David Casavis  
Department of Commerce  
New York, N.Y.*

**AFGE Let Me Down**

I was much impressed with last year’s June issue devoted to AFSA’s history and its efforts at the beginning of labor/management negotiations more than 30 years ago. There was, however, one aspect of the entire picture that was missing — AFGE, the American Federation of Government Employees.

Like many others in the Foreign Service, I had joined AFSA in order to partake of the professional aspects of the Foreign Service. I especially enjoyed the *Foreign Service Journal* and found the writings informative and illuminating. I had also joined AFGE for help with labor/management



## LETTERS



ment matters. For the most part, however, I simply paid my dues to AFGE and never asked them for any help. I found their literature on labor/management matters not especially informative about Foreign Service matters.

In 1971, I returned on assignment to the United States. I immediately contacted various storage companies asking that my effects from the respective companies be delivered to my newly purchased residence. All such effects were delivered with the exception of one shipment, from National Capital Storage and Moving Company, which was located in northeast Washington, D.C. The effects I had there contained valuable information on Lusophone Africa and my graduate research materials. Ironically, I had asked if I could send all of these materials to my designated home leave address in Texas, and my request was turned down. It was shocking to learn that the company concerned had gone bankrupt in 1964, two years after my effects had been placed in its care. I was advised that inasmuch as the company had gone bankrupt, my effects had been

placed there with no official authorization. This was refuted by the vouchers I had showing that during the period from 1964-1970, payments continued to be made to National Capital.

I turned to AFGE for assistance. Their response to my request for help was, "We do not elect to handle matters which are exclusively related to Foreign Service personnel." Given that my effects were valued at over \$100,000, I asked them where I could go for assistance. The reply: "Your matter pertains exclusively to the Foreign Service. We do not elect to handle such matters. The overwhelming majority of our members have no problem with storage and moving companies." I pointed out that I had regularly paid dues and now I wanted something for my dues. My comments were met with silence.

AFGE succeeded in making me wholly committed to AFSA. Their lack of care for the Foreign Service upsets me to this day.

*Roy A. Harrell, Jr.  
AFSA Lifetime Member  
FSO, retired  
Ozona, Texas ■*

**CORRECTIONS:** In the May issue, a typo in the article by David T. Jones and Stephen T. Smith, "Preparing for Promotion Panel Season," inaccurately rendered the amount of time panel members have, on average, to read each file as two minutes. The correct figure is 20 minutes.

In the April issue (Letters section), we inadvertently demoted Ben Read, identifying him as the head of MED in the late 1970s. He was actually the under secretary for management (M) at the time.

And in the March issue roundup of contributions by AFSA members serving in Iraq, we misinterpreted the acronym for the agency that sent John Malas to Iraq — DHS — stating that he was part of the Department of Homeland Security team when it was actually a Defense Humint Services team.

We regret the errors.

**CLARIFICATION:** A letter in the April issue commented on the assignments history of the new Director General of the Foreign Service, W. Robert Pearson. As *FSJ* Editor Steven Alan Honley's interview of the director general (February) noted, Director General Pearson served for three years as U.S. ambassador in Ankara, a differential post, before assuming his current duties.

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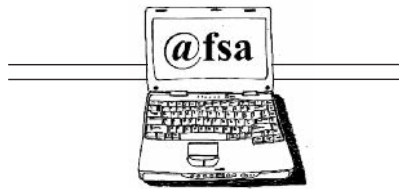
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# CYBERNOTES

## Middle East Policy Gets a One-Two Punch from Retired Diplomats

During the last week of April, 52 retired British diplomats kicked up a fuss in London and beyond with an open letter to Prime Minister Tony Blair. They urged him to influence the “doomed” U.S. policy in the Middle East as “a matter of the highest urgency,” or stop backing it altogether (for the full text of the letter, see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/3660837.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3660837.stm)). The letter focuses first on the Israel-Palestine dispute, and secondarily on Iraq.

The very next week, some 60 retired U.S. diplomats issued an open letter to President Bush, applauding their British colleagues and charging that the president’s “unqualified support” of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s policies and plans has cost the country its credibility, prestige and friends (for the full text, see <http://www.wrmea.com/>).

In contrast with the British statement, the American document focuses almost entirely on Israel. The American Educational Trust, publishers of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, hosted a press conference to make the letter public on May 4. Initiated by Andrew Killgore, former U.S. ambassador to Qatar, and Richard Curtiss, former chief inspector of the U.S. Information Agency, the letter calls for support for negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis, “with the U.S. serving as a truly honest broker.”

The British diplomats, including former ambassadors to Baghdad and Tel Aviv, said they had “watched with

deepening concern” as Britain followed the U.S. lead in Israel and Iraq, and called for a debate in Parliament. “A number of us felt that our opinions on these two subjects were pretty widely shared and we thought that we ought to make them public,” said the document’s coordinator, former British ambassador to Libya Oliver Miles.

Lord Howe, foreign secretary under Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, told the Radio 4 Today Programme that the diplomats’ comments reflect “great anxiety” in the Foreign Office. But not all British diplomats agreed. Lord Robbin Renwick, Britain’s ambassador to the U.S. from 1991 to 1995, ridiculed the letter-writers in an op-ed for *The Telegraph* for acting like members of a trade union and dismissed the signatories as former Arabists, “affectionately known as the Camel Corps” ([www.telegraph.co.uk/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/)).

But, according to Rosemary Hollis, head of the Middle East program at the Royal Institute for International

Affairs in London, “The charge that they are just old buffers and Arabists from the ‘camel corps’ won’t stick.” Hollis says the views of the retired letter-writers are most likely mirrored by serving diplomats. “Critics of foreign policy inside the Foreign Office have gone very quiet. There was an attempt a few years ago by a group still working there to complain about policy towards Iraq and Israel, but they were told they could forget their careers if they went public. The Arabists have seen what has happened in the [U.S.] State Department,” Hollis said ([www.newsvote.bbc.co.uk/](http://www.newsvote.bbc.co.uk/)).

## INR’s Track Record Highlighted

“Spy World Success Story” is the title of David Ignatius’ May 2 column in the *Washington Post* spotlighting State’s tiny Bureau of Intelligence and Research (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/opinion/columns/ignatiusdavid/>). “One of Washing-

### Site of the Month: [www.fsjournal.org](http://www.fsjournal.org)

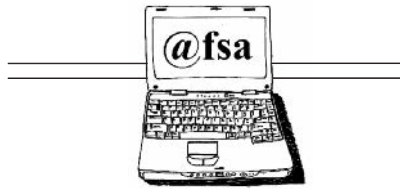
No more clicking your way through the AFSA Web site to find the *Foreign Service Journal*. Now, while you’re waiting for snail mail or the pouch to bring your *FSJ*, you can check out the latest issue with just one tap of the mouse. As part of an effort to broaden the *Journal’s* audience and raise its profile, the magazine now has its own URL: [www.fsjournal.org](http://www.fsjournal.org).

Posted are the current issue and all back issues from January 2000 to date. For each issue you can view

the table of contents; titles, authors and descriptions of all the focus articles and features; and links to the full text of four or five of the main articles. The *Journal* has been on the Web for a number of years, but was only accessible through the AFSA Web site.

The *Journal* Web site also gives general contact information as well as information to prospective readers on how to subscribe, and to contributors on how to submit a letter, column or article.





# CYBERNOTES

ton's hidden jewels," is the way Ignatius refers to INR, which inherited the responsibilities of the wartime Office of Strategic Services in 1945. The bureau now has some 300 analysts — a fifth of the manpower at CIA's Directorate of Intelligence and about a tenth of the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency.

"Despite its small size (or more likely because of it), the bureau has what many regard as the best track record in the government as far as assessing intelligence issues for policymakers," states Ignatius. For instance: INR provided more accurate bomb damage assessments during the Vietnam War than did the Pentagon; INR warned in the late 1970s that if the deposed shah of Iran entered the U.S. for medical treatment, there would be trouble in Tehran (in the end the U.S. embassy was seized).

But, emphasizes Ignatius, it is on Iraq that the INR has distinguished itself. A year ago INR criticized the administration's theory that Iraq would be the beginning of a pro-democracy toppling of dominoes in the Arab world. It warned that Turkey would feel sufficiently threatened by the prospect of Kurdish autonomy that it might not allow U.S. troops to transit its borders into Iraq. The bureau was consistently skeptical of administration claims of WMD in Iraq, and warned before the March 2003 invasion about the political and ethnic turmoil that was likely to follow.

State Department officials attribute the INR's effectiveness to the fact that it has maintained a culture that supports dissent — and demands expertise. The average INR analyst has 11

In the beginning some people thought the Americans were helping them. There was no hatred toward Americans. After what happened in Iraq, there is an unprecedented hatred and the Americans know it.

— Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, April 23,  
[www.metimes.com](http://www.metimes.com)

years of experience in his area of expertise, four times as long as the CIA average. It is a culture that rejects easy answers and shoddy work. INR analysts are typically skeptical and demand hard evidence.

Moreover, Ignatius reports, because the bureau is so intimately connected with State Department policymakers, it never loses sight of what the consumers of intelligence actually want: sound judgment.

## Global Warming: A National Security Issue?

A report, "An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security," prepared for Pentagon Defense Adviser Andrew Marshall's office last fall, caused a brief flurry in the international media early this year (full report at [http://www.ems.org/climate/pentagon\\_climatechange.pdf](http://www.ems.org/climate/pentagon_climatechange.pdf)).

Some activists hoped that publicity on the report would galvanize pressure on the Bush administration to reconsider its stance on the issue. That does not appear to have happened. Nonethe-

less, the fact that an agency such as the Pentagon decided to take a second look at climate change suggests this issue is not off the agenda yet.

Contention over the severity and even the existence of global warming has been brewing for nearly 30 years. For the casual observer sifting through material and discerning objective information from subjective rants can be a daunting task, but here are some online resources that can help.

Perhaps one of the best places to start is the Environmental Protection Agency (<http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/index.html>). The tone of EPA's analysis, especially under the current administration, is not alarmist. It tries to maintain a neutral tone while providing information with which the public can make its own decision. This site is a good introduction to the debate over global warming because it acknowledges the problem exists but also acknowledges uncertainty over its severity and impact.

An engaging, if less balanced, resource is "Global Warming: Early Warning Signs" (<http://www.climatehotmap.org/>). This Web site offers an interactive world map that shows the local consequences of global warming. There is also a comprehensive section titled "Solutions" that offers various solutions for the public. By contrast with the even-handed EPA, the organizations that have created this map consider global warming to be a serious and life-threatening problem.

This categorical view is also apparent at the Environmental Defense Web site (<http://www.environmental>



[defense.org/article.cfm?contentid=3322](http://defense.org/article.cfm?contentid=3322)). Here, each “myth” of global warming is answered by its respective “fact.” For example, in response to the “myth” that the impact of human activities on global warming is uncertain, the site counters: “There is international scientific consensus that most of the warming over the last 50 years is due to human activities, not natural causes.”

There are plenty of sites that are skeptical about the scenario of impending doom, to be sure, such as the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change (<http://www.co2science.org>). The center’s mission statement says it seeks “to disseminate factual reports and sound commentary” on new developments in the worldwide scientific quest to determine the climatic and biological consequences of the ongoing rise in the air’s

### 50 Years Ago...

I believe that the Foreign Service will never be any better nor any worse than the men and women who are in it make it, and that we in the last analysis deserve what we get. If we had believed in ourselves to the extent that we should, we never would have taken what has been meted out to us during the past few years.



— James B. Pilcher, Counselor of Embassy and Consul General at Tokyo, from “This I Believe,” an address to the Fourth Annual Consular Conference for Japan, reprinted in the *FSJ*, June 1954.

CO<sub>2</sub> content. Most of its articles are very detailed and scientific, and cite evidence that challenges the current global warming theory.

Another cautionary Web site is the Global Warming Information Page at (<http://www.globalwarming.org/>). This comprehensive site is divided into sections such as “updates,” “science,” “politics” and “economics.” Each sec-

tion presents recent news headlines and articles regarding that particular topic. The site is a part of the “Cooler Heads Coalition,” a subgroup of the National Consumer Coalition, which was formed to dispel the myths of global warming by exposing flawed economic, scientific and risk analysis.

— Dwijen Jaydev Mehta,  
Editorial Intern ■



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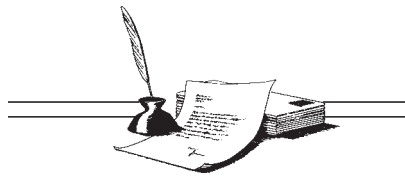
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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Normally, as regular readers know, a Speaking Out column appears in this space. However, for the first time since our June 2001 issue, and for only the second time since I began editing this department more than five years ago (as associate editor), there is none this month.

Having to skip one column in three years is not a big deal. But I am concerned that, as of this writing, there are not any Speaking Outs in the pipeline — something that has not been true in a long time. So let me take this opportunity to remind you all that this department is your forum to advocate policy, regulatory or statutory changes to the Foreign Service or U.S. foreign policy. Columns (approximately 1,500 words long) can be based on personal experience with an injustice or your insights into a foreign affairs-related issue.

There are many other ways you can share your insights on these pages. Each issue of the *Journal* features a focus section examining various facets of an issue related to the Foreign Service or international relations. We commission most of the articles for these sections from different sources, but warmly welcome contributions (2,000-3,000 words is the usual range) from FS personnel who are familiar with these issues.

Here is a list of the focus topics our Editorial Board has identified for the rest of this year (subject, of course, to revision). As you can see, several of these themes relate directly to Foreign Service professional and

*There are many ways you can share your insights on these pages. Let us hear from you.*



lifestyle issues, so I hope many of you will consider sharing your insights and expertise on them with your colleagues.

However, note that because of our lead time for publication, we need to receive submissions at least two months (preferably longer) prior to the issue's release date. Thus, we have already selected the winners of our annual summer fiction contest and have lined up several writers for

the fall issues, but there is still time to submit manuscripts for later months.

If those choices don't grab you, or if you feel we have not devoted enough space to a professional concern or functional issue, please consider writing a feature article (generally 2,000-3,000 words long) about it for us.

For those of you with a more literary bent, consider submitting a piece (600 words) for our Reflections department (formerly "Postcard from Abroad"). While Reflections are usually based on personal experiences while living or traveling overseas, they should center on insights gained as a result of interactions with other cultures, rather than being descriptive "travel pieces."

Don't forget that the monthly *AFSA News* section offers several different venues for members to share their experiences, thoughts and concerns regarding professional issues.

Finally, let me invite you to share your reactions, positive and negative, to what you read each month for publication in our Letters section. Just bear in mind that, as with all periodicals, the briefer and more focused your letter is, the more likely we'll be able to print it in full.

Please note that all submissions to the *Journal* must be approved by our Editorial Board and are subject to editing for style, length and format. For more information on how to submit a column, article or letter, please contact us at [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org) and we will be delighted to respond.

Let us hear from you. ■

## 2004 EDITORIAL CALENDAR for the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

JULY/AUGUST	Summer Fiction
SEPTEMBER	The War on Terror, 3 Years Later
OCTOBER	Foreign Policy & the U.S. Presidential Election (commentaries by foreign journalists)
NOVEMBER	"In Their Own Write" (annual roundup of books by FS authors)
DECEMBER	Medical Issues & Diplomacy

# NOT QUITE FAMILY: “MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD” AT STATE



Jennifer Kalis

**N** STATE’S “MEMBER OF HOUSEHOLD” POLICY IS NOW MORE THAN THREE YEARS OLD. HOW HAS IT FARED SO FAR AND WHAT ARE ITS PROSPECTS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD?

By BOB GULDIN

Not long ago, an FSO was preparing to move with his girlfriend to his next post when he got an e-mail from the post administrative officer titled, “Welcome to Dhaka!” After a warm greeting, the e-mail stated: “Although we welcome Ms. A at post, because she is not an Eligible Family Member [i.e., a spouse or minor dependent], she will not be able to receive or send mail through the pouch. Nor will she be eligible to obtain medical treatment from our medical unit, unless the ambassador approves this on an exceptional basis. She will not be able to receive support from the General Services Office. ... She will have neither diplo-



## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

matic privileges nor immunity.”

“Welcome, indeed!” quipped this employee in recounting his story to the *Foreign Service Journal*. He reported that “as a direct response to this message, we chose to marry earlier than we would have otherwise.”

Over the decades, the Foreign Service, like a bureaucratic Cupid, has undoubtedly been responsible for hundreds of marriages. That’s because the Service traditionally drew a sharp distinction between family members — who enjoyed numerous privileges — and non-family members (like girlfriends) who had to fend for themselves. It was simply easier to get married — at least where that was an option.

That rigid distinction was blurred significantly in the last days of the Clinton administration. On Dec. 26, 2000, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright issued a cable outlining a new policy for “members of the households (MOH) of State Department employees assigned to our missions abroad. Here I refer to those individuals who have accompanied the employee overseas and who the employee has declared to the chief of mission are part of his/her household and who will reside at post with the employee.”

Albright’s cable described the new policy as a way of attracting and retaining the best people in “the war for talent,” and it laid out a number of accommodations that posts should make. Perhaps the most important innovation was also the least specific: “COMs [chiefs of mission] shall work to ensure that the official American community environment is as welcoming as possible.” The cable also urged State Department staff to help MOHs with visa and residency permits, to give them access to Community Liaison Office and Family Liaison Office activities and social events, to consider them for employment, to include them in phone and address lists, and to make other such low-cost accommodations.

The new policy was a response to a rapidly changing world in which gays and lesbians were now “out”

***It’s been essential to the acceptance of the MOH policy that it applies to heterosexual couples and other family members, not only to gays and lesbians.***

in the Foreign Service, unmarried heterosexual couples frequently lived together, and other family arrangements were proliferating. In fact, MOH policy over the past three years has encompassed domestic partners (aka boyfriends and girlfriends), both gay and straight, children over 21 still living with Mom and/or Dad, elderly parents, and occasionally other relatives as well. (Even though a live-in

nanny — especially one who has accompanied an employee from post to post — may seem like a member of the family, such helpers don’t fall within the MOH category.)

MOH policy has been heartily welcomed, especially by gay and lesbian employees. But it has also created a tricky new, intermediate category of persons who, while part of the post community, are distinctly underprivileged compared to “eligible family members” such as spouses and children. Not surprisingly, some FS employees have raised questions and complaints about MOH policy, asking why the people they love and who have sacrificed to accompany them abroad can’t be treated better — more like Eligible Family Members.

Both “EFM” and “MOH” are defined in the Foreign Affairs Manual, which sets out the regulations under which the Foreign Service operates. EFMs, as defined by 6 FAM 111.3-1, include spouses; children under 21 (including those for whom the employee or spouse is guardian); and parents, sisters and brothers when they are dependent on the employee for support or are incapable of self-support. That definition has changed over the years, and does not seem to be specified by law. AFSA labor management specialist James Yorke tells the *Journal* that a quick review of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and other relevant laws did not turn up any statutory definitions of “family member” or “EFM.” Of course, that will have a bearing on whether State may legally tinker with the EFM-MOH distinction.

In 3 FAM 4180, MOHs are defined along the lines outlined in Secretary Albright’s cable, as are the privileges they are to be afforded. However, the provi-

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*Bob Guldin, a former editor of the Journal, is a freelance writer and editor in the Washington area.*

## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

sions spell out that overseas posts “may not request privileges, immunities or exemptions for MOHs” and must make clear to the host government that the MOH is not regarded as a member of the employee’s family for official purposes.

### **The Gay Vanguard**

AFSA President Louise Crane recalls that, “in the 1970s, if you were gay you couldn’t get a security clearance” in the Foreign Service, which effectively meant that you couldn’t serve as a professional. In some instances, closeted gays who wanted to bring their partners with them overseas had to allege that their significant others were, in fact, personal servants — a demeaning charade.

That stance began to change in the 1980s, as societal attitudes toward gays and lesbians became more tolerant. Patrick Linehan, an FSO formerly with USIA, recalls being told by a briefer from Diplomatic Security in 1984, “We used to spend 90 percent of our time fag-chasing, but we stopped that. You can be queer in the State Department; we just don’t want to hear about it.”

When President Bill Clinton took office in 1993, Foreign Service practice became more liberal, thanks in part to advocacy by Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies, which had formed the previous year. In 1998, the State Department officially added sexual orientation to the list of categories (like sex and race) for which employment discrimination is forbidden. That was a big step for gay Foreign Service employees, but it still left their significant others with no recognized status when the employees were posted abroad.

When GLIFAA began talking with AFSA and State management about additional measures, State thought about it long and hard, recalls John Naland, who was AFSA State vice president at the time and then AFSA president from 2001 to 2003.

“There was a clear fear,” Naland says, “that this would not be well received in some parts of the U.S. Congress. And Congress can put a stop to most anything.”

***For MOHs, FSI is like  
the Foreign Service  
in microcosm: a place  
where one is nominally  
welcome, but where the  
good stuff is unavailable.***

AFSA had never taken a stand on the issue, but decided to canvass its membership in 2000. Naland says the organization got its “greatest response to a poll ever.” With about 500 members answering, 85 percent said they supported limited accommodations for domestic partners at post, with 15 percent opposed. “That poll made it much easier for AFSA to go forward” and support the policy change, says Naland.

The State Department guidance cable was issued the day after Christmas in 2000, with no fanfare. “Secretary Albright was prudent, waiting until that time and doing it as quietly as she could,” Naland tells the *Journal*. “If it had been trumpeted, some people might feel ‘we have to knock this thing down.’ But, in fact, I don’t know of any fallout” from the policy change.

Advocates were of course nervous about whether the policy would be rolled back under the Bush administration, which took office the next month. But Secretary of State Colin Powell quietly accepted the MOH policy. The addition of MOH provisions to the FAM in 2003 made it official.

One key point to bear in mind: It’s been essential to the acceptance of MOH policy that — while its earliest and strongest advocate was GLIFAA — it applies equally to heterosexual couples and other family members. So it is widely seen as a necessary adjustment to the changing norms of family life, not an accommodation for gays.

### **FSI: The Half-Open Door**

For many MOHs, the first taste of Foreign Service life is the Foreign Service Institute. But while their partners are immersed in the A-100 Class and follow-on professional and language training, MOHs are left with little to do. Eligible Family Members are encouraged to take formal classes — for example in languages — when space is available, but Members of Household may not take any formal classes for which people register.

For these partners and relatives, FSI is like the



## *MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD*

Foreign Service in microcosm — a place where one is nominally welcome, but where the good stuff is unavailable.

The issue arises most urgently around the Security Overseas Seminar. That's not surprising, given the precarious security environment these days. Incoming FS personnel are required to take the SOS, and EFMs are strongly encouraged to do so, says Pat

Schofield, coordinator of the Training Division at FSI's Transition Center. MOHs, however, are not permitted to take the class.

As FSO Charles "Andy" Ball notes via e-mail, "Gay partners are now relegated to watching the class on videotape even though there may be empty seats at the seminar itself. Actual attendance and active participation are what is required to ensure the seminar's

### **My Cat Gets More Benefits Than My Domestic Partner**

We recently adopted a stray kitten we found on a street in Manila. Our kitten's travel expenses to future postings will be covered by the State Department. Augie, my domestic partner of 10 years, however, has to pay for his own travel. That's just one way even the full implementation of the Member of Household policy fails to end the disparate and unequal treatment of gays and lesbians in the Foreign Service. However, we would rather have MOH than not, and when it is implemented it improves our lives and livelihoods immensely, as we have discovered at Embassy Manila.

A major failure in the implementation of the MOH policy is in the area of security. Augie would be left to his own devices in the case of an ordered evacuation. We would be forced to choose whether he remained in a potentially dangerous environment or arranged and paid for his own evacuation. In a time of increased terrorism and heightened global security threats, the Department should allow the Foreign Service Institute to implement the recommendations of its own Security Overseas Seminar. One of the seminar instructors stressed the critical importance of learning the local language. However, FSI does not allow domestic partners to take language classes at all. When we tried to register Augie for Tagalog class, the Registrar's Office curtly dismissed us, and our questions about the MOH policy. Gays and lesbians, welcome to the State Department, where your security is your problem.

The department also took a step backward when FSI discontinued the policy of allowing gay partners to attend the Security Overseas Seminar. (Actually, Augie is barred from attending most classes at FSI otherwise available to

spouses.) Gay partners are now relegated to watching the class on videotape even though there may be empty seats at the seminar itself. Actual attendance and active participation are what is required to ensure the seminar's lessons are committed to memory and put into practice. If there is no difference between watching the seminar on video and actual attendance, then everyone should just watch the videotape.

The bright spot in our experience with the department has been in Manila where the implementation of the MOH policy has exceeded our expectations. Thanks to the ambassador, DCM, RSO, consul general, FSNs and even the front-gate guards, we have been integrated into the community. Augie is treated as an Eligible Family Member in nearly every respect. He has access to the embassy grounds, has check-cashing privileges, is invited to all CLO events and, very importantly, is eligible to work at the embassy. This last point is crucial given that Augie does not have a diplomatic passport or diplomatic protections or privileges, and it is never guaranteed he will be allowed to work in the local economy or even reside with me from post to post.

Our primary concern in bidding for posts is the extent to which a post implements the MOH policy. Since Augie receives no direct financial benefits, unlike our kitten, the MOH policy is our best hope for him to have a job. Pouch and mail privileges, the ability to purchase health insurance at government rates, and access to the medical unit, especially in the Third World, are vital lifelines as well. We can only hope that our next posting will be as positive an experience as Manila.

*Andy Ball (FSO) and Augie Paculdar (MOH)  
Embassy Manila*

## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

lessons are committed to memory and put into practice.”

Other Training Division courses in Foreign Service life skills — such as protocol, health, employment and cross-cultural challenges — are similarly unavailable to MOHs.

Managers at the Transition Center made it clear to the *Journal* that they wish they could do more. Schofield says, “We were delighted when the MOH policy came out, because we could embrace a more open policy.”

Adds Ray Leki, director of the Transition Center, “We try to make every accommodation we possibly can, but we can’t violate the rules of the Foreign Service Act. We do a lot of ad hoc counseling of people.”

The FSI facility most open to MOHs is the Overseas Briefing Center, which has a diverse collection of information about foreign posts and countries. MOHs are able to attend informal orientations given at the briefing center, as well as examine materials there.

### A Sensible Policy

I supported the development of the MOH policy for several reasons:

- People will bring family members to post whether or not the department so recognizes them, in the same way that people bring along both personal employees and pets. (Think of an MOH as a human pet, and it’s easy to understand.) That’s not going to change.
- It is inappropriate for individual FS personnel to be negotiating private deals with the host government to allow their family members to remain legally with them in the host country. That prospect has many negative implications for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.
- While such actions as diplomatic privileges and immunities require U.S. domestic and/or international legal changes that always follow, rather than precede, social changes, U.S. foreign policy can most effectively be implemented if all family members actually present at post are under the chief of mission’s authority.
- The essential element of the MOH policy is that the embassy, rather than the individual employee, is the party requesting a visa to allow the MOH to remain legally in the host country, thus bringing the MOHs under COM authority.

I would also like to pass along the following observations about the implementation of the MOH policy made to me by a Housing Board member at an EUR post (who wishes to remain anonymous):

“My official responsibility is to apply law, regulations, policy and common sense in order to support U.S. foreign policy most effectively. I take my oath of office seriously; as I recall, there’s something about ‘without par-

tiality or prejudice’ in it. ... While the major impetus for the MOH policy was unmarried partners (mostly of the same sex), I have been surprised to note that the most significant beneficiaries, in my experience as an EUR Housing Board member, are post-college adult daughters (rather than sons). I have also read some media coverage of the phenomenon in the U.S.

“I have suggested that our post housing questionnaire be amended to ask about MOHs to ensure that the Housing Board has all relevant information that the incoming employee chooses to provide. (We already ask about pets.) The maximum space allocation for a single person and a couple without children is the same, so unmarried partners are not an issue here. But within the maximum space allocation, apartment configurations (e.g., numbers of bedrooms) can be relevant when an adult son or daughter MOH is living at post. I imagine that similar considerations exist for other MOHs, though I have not encountered any such situations here.

“The fact remains that our lives overseas are not the same as our lives in the U.S. and it is essential that each member of the (extended) official American community treat every other with dignity and respect. You can still choose your friends, but you must accept that your personal and official social circles are different when you are overseas.”

*Karl Olson*  
*U.S. Delegation to OSCE*  
*Vienna*



## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

One indication of the OBC's inclusive approach is that it recently added a new question to the informal survey sent to all posts: "What factors might be of interest or concern to gay singles or couples at your post?"

As one might expect, the majority of A-100 students at FSI are quite welcoming to their gay and lesbian colleagues. Case in point: Patrick Wingate, probably the first FSO in a gay marriage, who recently graduated from his A-100 class. Wingate is married to Rami Shakra, a citizen of Canada, where same-sex marriage is legal. The couple is adopting a child from Guatemala, who was expected to join them in May or June. Wingate will adopt the baby, who will then be an EFM — though Rami will not be.

***The gaps between MOH policy and practice affect more than the employees and MOHs — they undermine the functioning of the Foreign Service itself.***

Wingate reports a very friendly atmosphere at FSI. "For example, the A-100 [class] pulled together and threw me and Rami a baby shower. Sixty-one out of 90 people contributed to the gift."

### **Different Strokes at Different Posts**

It's at overseas posts, of course, that MOH policy gets its real test. AFSA President Louise Crane says that from what she hears, "A majority of posts are welcoming."

The AFSA members who replied to the *Journal's* call for personal accounts with MOH policy report a great variety of experiences — some welcoming, some hostile, some indifferent. One gay FSO writes, "In practice, the extent to which domestic partners are

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\*for 2 years, using Dubai as sample post.



**Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies**



USUN FSOs and some of their "in"eligible family members: Special Assistant John Espinoza; Jaro Brezina, (partner of) POL Minister Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt; FSO Christopher Wittman; MGT Minister Counselor David Buss, partner David Larson; Press Spokesman and PD Minister Counselor Richard Grenell. Not pictured: Mr. Wittman's and Mr. Grenell's partners.

## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

recognized and accommodated is left entirely to the discretion of post management.”

The *Journal* received a number of e-mails telling of posts that went beyond the call of duty to make life as easy as possible for the FS employee and the MOH. FSO Andy Ball, for example, says that at Embassy Manila, his partner “is treated like an Eligible Family Member in nearly every respect. ... He is invited to all CLO events and, most importantly, is eligible to work at the embassy.”

Another FSO says that when stationed recently in South Africa, the embassy’s consular section “simply took care of” getting his same-sex partner residency permits and travel visas.

Ted Osius, a single FSO in Bangkok, had his

unmarried sister and 10-month-old nephew living with him. “For a time, ours was an unusual family,” he wrote, “and yet the embassy in Bangkok bent over backwards (within the rules) to welcome us.”

Even a Housing Board member at a European post who is not that pleased about helping out unmarried or gay couples says, “I may hold my nose, but not when I am speaking or acting as a government official.” So he tries to carry out his duties “without partiality or prejudice.”

But the *Journal* also received quite a few accounts of how the State Department or a particular post made life miserable for MOHs, especially when gay partners were involved. These complaints range from inability to get an ID badge or building pass for the

### Defense of Marriage?

**D**oes the Defense of Marriage Act prohibit the Foreign Service from giving additional privileges to same-sex partners? A number of Foreign Service sources who supplied information for this article said that they believed the act would bar such accommodation. But, surprisingly, all those sources — even the designated spokesperson for HR — stated they had not read the Defense of Marriage Act.

The Defense of Marriage Act was passed by Congress in 1996 and signed by President Clinton. It is one page long and is remarkably easy to understand. Regarding the federal government, it says the United States and its agencies must apply the words “marriage” and “spouse” only to “a legal union of one man and one woman as husband and wife.”

It would appear that the act poses no obstacle to increased accommodations to members of households — even same-sex partners — as long as the words “marriage” and “spouse” are not used to describe these persons.

There is one diplomatic sphere in which the Defense of Marriage Act holds sway, however. According to the State Department Office of Protocol, because of that law, the United States does not extend any privileges and immunities to same-sex partners of visiting diplomats.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations — to which the United States is a party — also has something to say about diplomatic families, but the key concern there is “privileges and immunities” such as immunity from arrest and prosecution. In addition, Eileen Denza, probably the leading commentator on the Vienna Convention, says that in practice there are few formal definitions of what constitutes “the members of the family of a diplomatic agent forming part of his household.” “Each receiving state applies its own rules ... and unusual cases are settled in negotiation,” she says.

Beyond that, in *Diplomatic Law: A Commentary on the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* (Clarendon Press, 1998), Denza says: “There are also signs that in many capitals an unmarried partner is accepted as a ‘spouse’ in the context of defining the diplomat’s family, though this does not seem to be widely acknowledged. The United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1997 for the first time announced that a British ambassador would be accompanied on his forthcoming posting by a partner who was not his wife, and added that the United Kingdom might request diplomatic immunity for her.”

— Bob Guldin

## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

partner to the embassy's refusal to invite same-sex MOHs to official functions or to handle MOH mail — all items that are covered by the current guidance and thus should not be problematic.

In some cases, these problems occur because the newness and vagueness of the policy make embassy officials uncertain about implementation, leading them to drag their feet. This is particularly true regarding visa requests on behalf of MOHs in more socially conservative countries. As one FS specialist notes, the regulations can easily be interpreted to mean, "Take no action if you somehow think there might be a negative reaction by the host government."

But in other cases, there is little doubt that the problems are within an embassy or bureau.

*Over the decades, the Foreign Service, like a bureaucratic Cupid, has been responsible for hundreds of marriages.*

One FSO in a European embassy tried to get a residency permit for his partner, but ran into a bureaucratic quagmire. People at Main State insisted that the request to the host country required "seventh floor clearance," which took months to get. The diplomatic note that was eventually sent was worded in such a negative way that it virtually asked the host country to deny the FSO's request — which is what the host government did. "The

State Department's efforts were obstructive and downright damaging," the FSO concluded.

Another FSO found that the U.S. embassy at which he was stationed was consistently hostile and uncooperative toward any requests he made on behalf of his same-sex partner. Violating MOH policy, for example,

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**AUTO & TRUCK PARTS**



## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

the embassy refused to help the partner obtain a visa. “In spite of the fact that my partner had been fully vetted by DS (just like a spouse), he was treated like a stranger off the street when he wanted to visit me at the embassy,” the FSO wrote. “He eventually stopped coming to the embassy altogether because he felt so unwelcome.”

It’s not just gay couples that have problems, either. One FSO who had his elderly mother accompany him ran into multiple obstacles (and large expenditures) involving her visa, a passport that went missing for months and health insurance requirements of the host government. The FSO attributes most of the problems to confusion and strict E.U. requirements, rather than ill will. “HR has been very helpful throughout the ordeal,” he writes, “but they are as confused as we about policy interpretation.”

Another FSO, posted in Europe, reports that he has encountered discouraging bureaucratic non-cooperation in trying to create a life for his female partner. “In every instance, from bringing my fiancée here, to

***In practice, the extent to which domestic partners are recognized and accommodated is left mostly to the discretion of post management.***

obtaining an ID for her and even receiving official invitations marked ‘John Doe and guest,’ it has been a humiliating experience in most every way.” He says that six months after arriving at post “we still have no ID for my fiancée.” He adds that “the RSO is now giving me various long, tedious, prodding forms to complete that, if one follows the FAM, are solely for certain sensitive positions.”

Then there are the bigger issues that current MOH guidance touches on but does not resolve, such as employment within the mission and access to medical care facilities. One major area of concern, given the increasingly parlous security situation in many parts of the world, is the fact that posts are currently forbidden to include Members of Household in their emergency evacuation plans — or to assist MOHs in leaving the country in case of crisis.

### **Effects on the Foreign Service**

The gaps between MOH policy and practice affect more than the employees and MOHs — they also undermine the functioning of the Foreign Service itself.

Various FS employees describe a range of impacts. Most often, employee morale suffers. A male FSO writes, “I have developed a negative opinion of this post management and of this place solely for their indifference to the fact that my fiancée is here and that our relationship is in jeopardy because of there being no mission effort to employ her.”

One FSO says that he curtailed his post because his partner “was tired of being treated like he did not exist.” Another will not bid on certain posts because his partner could not get decent health care there.

Those who want to get a sense of the social disconnection experienced by the gay partner overseas might check out the chapter “Just a Gay Spouse (JAGS)!” in the book *Realities of Foreign Service Life* (published by AAFSW in 2002). In a brief narrative, Nam Nguyen points out how marginal one can feel when one is a) “just a spouse,” b) not even an EFM and c) gay. Remarkably, Nguyen tells the tale with humor and panache.

### **Alphabet Soup**

Ah, the life of the alphabet in the Foreign Service. Long ago my wife was a DS (dependent spouse). Later, I became an EFM (eligible family member). Now I find that I am a MOH (member of household).

I rather prefer being a STUD (spouse trailing under duress). Introducing yourself that way at embassy cocktail parties can elicit hilarious responses.

But then some might prefer the title AD (accidental diplomat). That at least would move us up in the alphabet. (And it certainly applies to many of those who trail.)

*Dan Gamber*

*Former member of STUDS (spouses trailing under duress successfully)*

*Brussels*

## *MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD*

In some cases, the lack of rights and benefits for MOHs pushes employees out of the Foreign Service altogether. One FSO who has enjoyed his career and would like to continue it is instead taking retirement to help meet his partner's needs. He writes, "I will abandon this career and direct my energies elsewhere — hopefully to one of the many corporate employers that truly value their employees and the diversity they bring their organizations."

Despite this evidence of dissatisfaction, however, no Foreign Service employees have filed grievances with AFSA over any aspect of MOH policy.

### **Further Steps?**

There's little doubt that gay and lesbian FSOs — especially those who remember the 1980s and before — see the current situation as a marked improvement over the old days. But as benefits and rules begin to be liberalized in other Western democracies, some U.S. employees are asking AFSA and the Foreign Service to take the process further.

In the words of FSO Patrick Linehan, "The MOH policy is great as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It got us onto the bus — but we're still riding in the back."

MOHs are especially annoyed that, when it comes to travel benefits, they are treated worse than pets. Linehan notes that, "The department would pay toward the shipment of my dog, because — as stated in an admin memo a few years ago — 'pets are important for morale,' but they wouldn't give me a dime for my husband's ticket."

Nor is the persistent unhappiness of gay employees and partners (with the possible effects on retention), the only incentive for the department to consider further accommodations for MOHs. For one thing, says Director Ray Leki, FSI Transition Center, the policy affects straight couples too. "Many people enter the Foreign Service just out of grad school, and they're not married yet and not sure they want to be. If you say they have to get married before they go overseas, you're doing these people a disservice."

Beyond that, Karl Olson, an FSO in the European Affairs Bureau, points out that, "it is inappropriate for individual FS personnel to be negotiating private deals with the host government to allow their family members to remain legally with them in the host

country. That prospect has many negative implications for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. ... The essential element of the MOH policy is that the embassy, rather than the individual employee, is the party requesting a visa."

Olson makes an interesting point: If individual FS employees are negotiating with foreign governments for personal favors relating to their closest loved ones because the embassy refuses to assist them, it creates a situation in which the host government or its employees may ask the FS employee for favors in return.

### **Change in the Air**

Is further improvement in the status of MOHs likely in the near future? GLIFAA has proposed a number of changes that would essentially close the gap between MOHs and EFMs. Those include:

- Access to training, including language and security classes
- Access to post health units, and health insurance at group rates
- Inclusion in travel orders (though not travel expenses)
- Preferential status for employment at post comparable to that enjoyed by EFMs
- Emergency evacuation and medevac from post when necessary
- Improved visa rights, both abroad and in the United States (for foreign nationals).

The department has not yet responded to GLIFAA's proposal, but the preliminary indications are that there may be openness to at least some of these ideas.

One point in favor is what AFSA President Louise Crane calls "the generational factor" — that is, changing attitudes as new employees join the Foreign Service.

Crane points out that one-third of the Foreign Service has been hired since 1998. "I've met every class since August '01, and the vast majority support equal treatment for same-sex partners."

Former AFSA President John Naland agrees: "You talk to new hires and they can't believe how it was before."

AFSA attorney Zlatana Badrich adds that lots of people come into the Foreign Service from the pri-

## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

vate sector, and they're used to a tolerant approach there.

Crane tells the *Journal* that when she met with Secretary of State Colin Powell in March 2004, with Director General W. Robert Pearson also in attendance, one topic of discussion was the definition of EFMs.

Crane says of her talk with the Secretary and the DG, "We said, would you please look at broadening the definition of EFMs with an eye to including adult children, parents and siblings, as well as opposite-sex and same-sex partners? The director general piped up at that point, saying 'Everything we do conforms to

### The Back of the Bus

In June 1984 I proudly joined the Foreign Service as a member of the 80th USIA junior officer class. On day two of our training we were welcomed by the head of security, Bernard C. Dowling, who proceeded to tell us that there was no room for "homos" in USIA, and, "if you are queer, you're out." I thought, my career is over and I haven't even started yet. Our class then joined up with the new State A-100 class for training, where a briefer from DS told us of the department's policy on the issue saying, and I quote, "We used to spend 90 percent of our time fag-chasing, but we stopped that. You can be queer in the State Department, we just don't want to hear about it." Oh, good, I thought, maybe I can stay — and by the way, welcome to the Foreign Service.

Flash forward. Nineteen years, seven assignments, five promotions and four languages later, on Aug. 31, 2003, I arrived at my new post as counselor for public affairs in Brasilia. The following day, my Brazilian husband Emerson and I were welcomed to post at a lunch at the home of DCM Dick Virden and his wife Linda, joined by Ambassador Donna Hrinak. Their message to me was clear and explicit: both of you are very welcome to the U.S. mission in Brazil. I thought at that moment, "You've come a long way, baby."

A month later Amb. Hrinak hosted a welcome reception at the residence to introduce us to several hundred public affairs contacts. As we stood with her welcoming the guests she introduced us to one and all as "Patrick and his partner Emerson." The next day we made the Brazilian gossip columns with a short item in a Rio tabloid, "Modernity Comes to Diplomacy." It breathlessly told its readers how Amb. Hrinak had introduced her new counselor and his partner, "in the most intimate sense of that word," to Brasilia's elite.

I could not have found a more welcoming post than Embassy Brasilia, and we have come a long way since 1984 — but not far enough. The MOH policy was a huge advance, and it is nice to have the respect of the Secretary and senior management. But as Emerson and I transferred from Japan to Brazil via Washington, we hit a lot of closed doors where MOHs need not apply. The department did not give me a plane ticket for Emerson, nor would it give me no-cost travel orders so that I could at least buy a government rate ticket. For Emerson's ticket we paid full fare: Tokyo–Washington–Brasilia. Ouch!

The department would pay toward the shipment of my dog, because as stated in an admin memo a few years back, "pets are important for morale," but they wouldn't give me a dime for my husband's ticket. FSI refused to allow Emerson to attend the SOS Seminar. The course is required for FSOs and recommended for EFMs, because as we all know family members are subject to the same dangers as officers, but even after AFSA intervened on my behalf, FSI absolutely refused to allow him to attend.

What it comes down to is that the MOH policy stops at the water's edge where money is involved. MOHs get nothing that costs money — no plane tickets, no training, no health care coverage, no pension benefits, and for those of us not partnered with a U.S. citizen, no fiancée visas or expedited citizenship for our life partners. The MOH policy is great as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It got us onto the bus — but we're still riding in the back.

*Patrick J. Linehan*  
*Public Affairs Officer*  
*Chairman, U.S.- Brazil Fulbright Commission*  
*Embassy Brasilia*



## MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

the Defense of Marriage Act.” (See sidebar, p. 22.)

Crane also notes that “GLIFAA and I sent off a joint letter. We know [the department is] putting together a task force to look at the definition of ‘Eligible Family Member,’ and we sent a letter saying that we applaud this.”

Stepping outside the confines of the Foreign Service and diplomatic convention, it would appear that the rapid rate of change in the American family calls for a flexible response in defining the terms “household” and “family.”

Historian Stephanie Coontz, the author of *The Way We Really Are* (Basic Books, 1997), tells the *Journal*, “Marriage has changed more in the last 30 years than in the previous 500. Marriage and the family is not the package deal it used to be.” For exam-

***The majority of A-100 students at FSI are quite welcoming to their gay and lesbian colleagues.***

ple, Coontz said, “There’s a 700-percent increase in people living in unmarried couples since 1970.”

It appears that the State Department and the Foreign Service are moving in the direction of greater flexibility when it comes to defining family and allocating benefits for members of Foreign Service households. And perhaps that flexibility will benefit the Service as well as the indi-

viduals within it.

As one Foreign Service specialist puts it, “Why should we make changes? The people who are willing to buck the system and to encourage corporate change are the same innovative, hard-working, policy-driven people that any organization would like to keep within its ranks. By encouraging change, the department will help itself keep creative minds.” ■

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# FOREIGN SERVICE FIREFIGHT

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AN FSO DESCRIBES A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH  
IRAQI INSURGENTS ON THE ROAD FROM BAGHDAD TO NAJAF.

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BY PHILIP S. KOSNETT

**M**arch 5, 2004. We were southbound on the main highway from Baghdad to the Coalition Provisional Authority provincial headquarters in Najaf late on a Friday afternoon. Our three-car convoy carried six American personnel and a six-man Salvadoran personal security detachment from a Spanish/Salvadoran base in the city. By agreement with the Salvadoran commander, his U.S.-trained personal security team was assigned full-time to protect us. The Cuscatlan Battalion, based in Najaf, is the best in the Salvadoran army, as we were soon to learn.

Contract admin officer Lionel, a recently-retired 82nd Airborne NCO, was driving the lead car, an unarmored Chevy Suburban. He had his own AK-47 next to the seat and (along with everyone in the convoy save one) a Glock 9mm sidearm. Beside him was the “shotgun seat” shooter, our USAF staff sergeant Arabic linguist Sam, armed with an MP-5 machine pistol. In the right rear seat was our civilian contractor information technology officer Mike, armed with a folding-stock AK-47, designed to be easy to maneuver inside a vehicle. In the left rear seat was a Salvadoran sergeant nicknamed “Tauro,” armed with an M-4 — the short-stock carbine version of the M-16, also good for use inside vehicles.

The second vehicle was a fully armored Ford Excursion, with Private “German” driving and the detachment commander, Sergeant First Class “Gato,” in the right hand seat. Both were armed with M-4s. I was in the middle seat. In the rear seat were Rick, then the governorate coordinator (the senior CPA official in the province; I was his deputy) and our development program

manager Grace, a DOD civilian (the only unarmed passenger). Like everyone in the convoy, we wore ballistic vests and Kevlar helmets. In the trail car, another unarmored Suburban, were Corporal “Zorro” and Sergeants “Alcon” and “Cuervo,” armed with Glocks, M-4s ... and a surprise.

## Afternoon Ambush

Ahead of us, “non-compliant elements” or “NCEs” — a goofy new military acronym meaning “people still shooting at us in Iraq” — had attacked and disabled a truck, leading to a frenzy of looting by motorists who had stopped along the road, filling the highway with pedestrians. As we approached the scene, Lionel radioed the trailing vehicles to stay close and stay sharp. We had to slow down from our usual 100 mph to negotiate the crowd, whereupon shooters popped up on both sides of the road, from at least two cars a hundred meters apart on our left, and from behind a berm farther up on the right. They opened fire with AK-47s on full auto, shooting wildly (“spray and pray”).

Lionel increased speed to lead us through the ambush. Of the three shooters in the lead car, Mike was the first to return fire. He drew a bead on the guys behind the berm on the right and unloaded a full 30-round magazine, effectively suppressing their fire (i.e., they dove for cover). Mike then suffered our only injury — in his haste he had steadied the AK against the wrong shoulder, his left, and the brass cartridge casings consequently hit him in the chin, producing a little blood. Only later did he figure out why he was bleeding.

In the “hard car,” I was looking the wrong way and saw nothing when the shooting started, but Rick saw the first

team of NCEs on the left pop out of their car and raise their rifles. The distinctive pop-pop sound of multiple AKs started up, but although I'd heard and even fired AKs on the range, my brain refused to accept reality until Rick shouted, "They're shooting at us!" Since we couldn't fire back through the bullet-resistant windows, Rick, Grace and I hit the floor of the truck.

I could see nothing but truck flooring but here's what I heard: A steady drumbeat of AK fire. Gato shouting orders over the radio in Spanish. Lionel on the radio, asking if we were OK. Here's what I smelled: burning tire and the sulfurous odor of gunpowder.

All three cars had now lost a tire on the right side. Evidently the NCEs had planned to cripple the vehicles with fire from the berm on the right and finish us off with fire from the left and left rear. Our right front tire had been hit but German maintained control even as the tire shredded. Then the pop-pop of the 7.62mm AK's slacked off, replaced by another sound from our trail car: the zip of a 5.56mm light machine gun.

### **Mini-Me Strikes Back**

The enemy was used to seeing CPA and other civilian vehicles with riflemen poised to pump out fire from the sides. However, the rear is usually the weak spot of a CPA convoy (unlike a military convoy, which will have a humvee or other heavily armed combat vehicle bringing up the rear). So we think they were surprised when the sergeant the other Salvadorans called Cuervo, but whom the Americans had dubbed "Mini-Me" (from the Austin Powers movies) — a runty, shaven-headed guy with a gold tooth and a scary grin — opened up with disciplined, sustained Squad Automatic Weapon fire through the rear window of the trail car. He fired two full belts — 200 rounds — at the 12 or more guys now firing at us from behind, with such careful aim that he shot only a small circular hole through the rear windshield. (We later told him

he would have to pay for the windshield, horrifying him until he realized we were kidding.) Meanwhile, Tauro and Alcon were blazing away through side windows with their M-4s.

Mini-Me claimed one confirmed kill (I'll spare you the description) and two probables; Lionel saw them go down hard in the rear-view mirror as enemy tracers continued to pass the vehicles on both sides. Still lying on the floor, I felt the hard car vibrate as the right front tire disintegrated. We rolled on through the ambush and continued for perhaps two or three kilometers.

By now all three of our vehicles were running on three good tires and one wheel rim. It was enemy doctrine in such situations to pursue escaping vehicles to finish them off. Lionel observed that the heavy Excursion had slowed to about 60 mph and was unable to keep up. Demonstrating selfless courage, he turned the lead car around and radioed us

to stop and form a perimeter.

All southbound civilian traffic had stopped a couple hundred meters up the road from us and traffic was beginning to back up all the way to Baghdad. Unlike rubberneckers at your ordinary highway accident, the northbound drivers took one look at our little band across the median and hit the accelerator.

With Gato and Lionel directing the defense, the six Salvadorans went prone on the road and on the shoulder looking back at northbound traffic, waiting for the NCEs to come up on us from behind. Everybody, including the civilians, was calm and businesslike — until Mini-Me, repositioning, tripped, dropped his SAW in the dirt, and did a header. Black-clad, he looked like a Mayan bowling ball rolling down the shoulder, and those who happened to catch this sight couldn't help but laugh despite our circumstances. He laughed, too, shy and embarrassed, before recovering his weapon and resuming his position.

Sam, with his MP-5, knelt on the west side of the vehicles, scanning some mud huts and intermittent traffic on a dirt road a couple of hundred meters away. I couldn't see Mike, who was covering the east with his AK. Lionel and Rick, weapons at the ready, were using satellite phones to call for help and warn coalition forces of the danger. And I was kneeling in the dirt on the south side of our position, covering the traffic coming from the south with my sidearm in case the NCEs had another team in

***NCE, a goofy new military acronym, stands for "non-compliant elements" — in other words, the people still shooting at us in Iraq.***

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*Philip S. Kosnett, a 20-year FSO, was detailed to the Coalition Provincial Authority in Iraq as deputy governorate coordinator for Najaf. He is now the coordinator (the senior CPA official) in the province. He has also served in Ankara, Nagoya, The Hague, Pristina and Washington, D.C.*



place to swoop in while all our firepower was pointed in the other direction.

Let me be clear: I was not enjoying this. I was intensely aware that the first time in my life I had fired a handgun was in the Diplomatic Security Iraq course two months earlier. I had fired a total of maybe 40 rounds that day in West Virginia and subsequently at the firing range in Najaf. I had no illusions about my ability to hit a moving car or a concealed sniper with a pistol. I knew that if a carload of bad guys came zipping up the road with AKs hanging out the windows, the best I might manage would be to get off some rounds in the right direction to alert the Salvadorans to the threat to our rear.



C. Navas



P. Kosnett

Left: The author after the ambush. Center: The group recovers at Hilla. Bottom: Checking the damage to the car.

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*The Cuscatlan  
Battalion, based in  
Najaf, is the best  
in the Salvadoran army,  
as we were soon  
to learn.*

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The wait seemed to last a very long time, and my sidearm felt very small.

After maybe 15 minutes, I was relieved to see two U.S. soldiers in full battle rattle with M-16s come up and join me looking south. A couple of humvees full of Signals troops had happened upon us and stopped to help. By now, we were pretty sure the NCEs were not coming back, having lost any ardor for pursuit after Mini-Me opened up. A couple of our guys got out jacks and started to change tires. Grace, unarmed, was quite rightly still sitting in the “hard car,” complaining about not having a weapon. I asked her if she wanted to take some photos and she jumped out with my digital camera and started snapping away.

Then a group of vehicles approached at high speed from the north, weaving through the tangled mass of stopped Iraqi civilian traffic, and jumped the median to roar south in the north-bound lane. The Salvadorans drew a bead on them as they neared ... but it was another party of CPA participants from the conference we’d gone to in Baghdad, on their way home to the regional base at Hilla. Their personal security detail jumped out to strengthen the perimeter, which was now feeling quite secure. After a brief consultation, Rick, Grace and I hopped into the Hilla-bound cars for the 30-minute drive there.

Only after we were on the road did I realize that Mike, Sam, Lionel and the Salvadorans were staying behind to recover the vehicles. A wave of guilt hit me, even though I knew that they hardly needed me and my sidearm to stay behind; in fact, Rick, Grace and I were distractions.

At the heavily fortified Hilla camp, CPA security debriefed Grace, Rick and me while we were still fresh. I called my wife Alison in North Carolina, catching her at her office. We prayed together for the rest of the team to make it safely to Hilla. Almost immediately after I hung up, Lionel led our three vehicles onto the compound. It turned out that shortly after we had driven off, an MP patrol had come on the scene, securing the perimeter along with the Signals team until the tires were changed. So they had been in good hands.

### Lessons Learned

We started slapping backs and counting the bullet holes in all three vehicles. The ones in the “soft” cars should have disabled the drivers and caused everyone’s death; somehow, they had struck glancingly or buried themselves in the doorframes or roofs. One had hit the passenger

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*I have been counseled  
that my pink, Foreign  
Service-issue, button-  
down dress shirt is not a  
traditional choice  
for battlefield  
camouflage.*

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door of the hard car head on and been stopped by the armor. Had the vehicle been unarmored, it would likely have hit the person sitting there, who happened to be me (though I may have already been on the floor by the time that bullet hit).

Besides poor Iraqi marksmanship, I see two other reasons we survived the attack. One was the sheer speed and firepower we demonstrated — more than the enemy was used to from a CPA convoy. Needless to say, Lionel and Mike far exceeded their work requirements as contract admin staff, and Rick nominated them for Civilian Service medals. He also nominated the Salvadorans for the Bronze Star, one of America’s most distinguished decorations.

But in my view, the most important factor was divine intervention. Either you believe in this or you don’t. I do.

I also offer the following lessons for the 21st-century diplomat based on our experience:

1. If you are ever offered fire-arms training, take it. Then go find a range and practice.
2. If you are ever offered evasive driving training, take it. To my utter amazement, somebody decided that

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Foreign Service personnel would never need to drive in Iraq and dropped driver training from the DS Iraq course; in fact, I and other CPA FSOs have been behind the wheel in mixed CPA/military convoys, which takes some practice. More to the point, if a driver is disabled every passenger must be prepared to take over. And let's not sugar-coat what that could mean: it could mean climbing over the seat to shove a wounded or dead driver aside.

3. If you have the option of wearing earth tones to a firefight, take it. I have been counseled that my pink Foreign Service-issue, button-down dress shirt was not a traditional choice for battlefield camouflage.

#### **Afterward ...**

The rest of the day was anticlimactic. It was too late to drive on to Najaf before dark (plus the cars needed repairs and new spare tires), so we arranged to stay overnight at the Hilla HQ, a converted hotel. We had a steak dinner with real silverware. The hotel even had a bar, where the Salvadorans joined us to drink Corona, shoot pool, watch a little baseball on the Armed Forces Network, and analyze the day's events. There was no macho posturing; we all knew we'd been lucky. I found a few quiet minutes to sit alone on the hotel balcony looking down on the palm trees and the moonlit Euphrates — through a screen of RPG netting — and call my wife again. Throughout the evening, our Hilla-based friends and co-workers searched us out to offer congratulations and commiseration. Our good Spanish Army friend, Major "Kiké," had experienced two ambushes of his own in previous weeks, and it was a running joke that nobody wanted to ride with bad-luck Kiké. So his first words to me that evening were, "Phil, this time it's not my fault!"

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*We later told him he  
would have to pay for  
the windshield,  
horrifying him until he  
realized we were  
kidding.*

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The regional Women's Programs Coordinator, Fern Holland, rushed out along with her local assistant Salwa Oumashi to offer hugs and sodas. We last saw Fern late in the evening sorting piles of children's books for delivery to schools. Bob Zangas, a media development officer (and a Marine Reservist who had fought in the liberation of Iraq, then sought a CPA job so he could help to rebuild the country), joined us in the bar.

When Grace had gone off to her hotel room for the night, the rest of the team gathered in a cozy bunkroom of our own and prepared to sack out. It was a real bonding experience with the Salvadorans. None of them spoke more than a couple words of English; three of our team had good Spanish but for the rest of us, the relationship was built on pidgin and hand signals.

Over a final quiet drink in the bunkroom (the Salvadorans aren't supposed to drink in Iraq; please don't tell their colonel we made them, although he is intensely proud of them for bringing honor on the Salvadoran Army and might look the other way — once), we told them, not for the first time, that we were proud to have such professionals on our team, and that we always felt

safe with them. (Besides the odd firefight, these guys have stared down mobs for us.) They told us, also not for the first time, that they were proud to work with us and would willingly die to protect us. We responded with Patton's well-known line about how you're not supposed to die for your country; you're supposed to make the other guys die for their country. The squad found this quite funny.

Then Gato, who had been wounded in action as a teenage soldier fighting communist guerrillas in the 1980s, told us that he and his men were in Iraq to fight for peace, and they hoped Iraq would become a nation at peace. He added that they were especially pleased to be supporting the U.S., which had done so much to end terror and support democracy in El Salvador. Gato might barely have heard of Iraq a year earlier. He doesn't have the most nuanced view of geopolitics. But at that moment I would happily have put Gato on CNN or BBC to explain the concepts of good and evil to the talking heads who have forgotten.

Safely back in Najaf four days later, we learned from Kiké that Fern, Salwa, and Bob had been ambushed and murdered on the Karbala-Hilla road. They were the first CPA civilians to die in Iraq. Their deaths hit the Najaf team hard, in part because we knew them, and in part because of the reminder of how close to death we had also come on the highway. But we also grieved because Fern, Salwa and Bob had devoted themselves to helping Iraqis build a foundation for peace and freedom in their tormented country.

We grieved. Then we got back to work.

I am very proud of what we are trying to accomplish here, and proud of the people around me. ■



# NEW HIRES AND THE FOREIGN SERVICE

THE NEW GENERATION IS READY TO CONTRIBUTE.  
HERE'S WHAT THEY NEED IN RETURN.

BY SHAWN DORMAN

**T**he Foreign Service today resembles Antoine de Saint-Exupery's boa constrictor that swallowed the elephant, as a huge influx of employees hired under the State Department's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and the USAID New Entry Professional program begin to work their way through the system. Approximately one-third of all current State Department Foreign Service employees and one-fourth of all USAID employees have been hired since 1998. There is great hope that the "digestion" of so many new employees will result in greater health and vitality for the State Department and USAID, both of which suffered severe staffing cuts in the 1990s.

The "new generation" is, of course, not a generation at all, but a highly diverse group of employees. So why try to say anything about them as a group? Because, as a group, they make up a large portion of today's Foreign Service and the future of the Foreign Service depends on them. Most incoming A-100 classes at State are still composed of more men than women, but by a much smaller margin than a decade ago. The January 2004 class actually had more women than men. The median age for State A-100 classes during the past few years is 30 or 31, and the age range of most classes runs from 22 to 56. In most classes, about one-third to one-half are married. Most new hires come in with extensive work experience, which is not a particularly new phenomenon.

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*Shawn Dorman, a former Foreign Service political officer, is associate editor of the Foreign Service Journal and editor of the AFSA book, Inside a U.S. Embassy.*

In order to gain a sense of the "new generation" of employees and their expectations from the Foreign Service, we sent out a survey to a recent A-100 class and to the 7,500 subscribers to the AFSA e-mail listserve, asking for input from new hires who entered the Foreign Service between 2001 and the present. The purpose of the survey was to collect anecdotal input about issues of concern to those who have come into the FS in recent years: the survey was not a scientific study of their views. We also held a focus group for new employees studying at the Foreign Service Institute: five female State Department officers who entered the Service in 2003 attended to share their views and those of their peers.

The survey drew responses from 57 Foreign Service employees from State and USAID, including many joining as a second career. The respondents were about equally split between men and women. The group included 34 married employees, 18 single employees and five partnered employees. Seven respondents were from USAID and seven were specialists. All but a few of the respondents are currently serving overseas, most on their first Foreign Service assignment, and a few on their second. About half the respondents said we could use their names and half preferred not to be identified by name.

Overall, the new hires expect to be treated as professionals and not as "junior officers." The term "Junior Officer" is being replaced by "Entry-Level Professional" (State) and "New Entry Professional" (USAID) in the lexicon, which will be welcomed but not necessarily accompanied by a concurrent change in the realities of being an untenured employee.

The degree to which family satisfaction with the Foreign Service and spouse employment opportunities

play a role in this generation's commitment to the Service cannot be overstated. New hires from all groups expect their agencies to pay close attention to spousal employment issues, and to actively support efforts to expand opportunities for spouses overseas.

Today's entering employees want to be recognized for their achievements and promoted not on the basis of bureaucratic time-in-class restrictions, but on merit. They support worldwide availability and believe everyone should enter the Service worldwide available, but this does not mean they are all willing to go anywhere at any time. They do not believe that joining the Foreign Service is necessarily a lifetime commitment, though most of them express a strong desire to stay in for a full career if things go well.

**How has the reality of joining the Foreign Service differed from your expectations?**

Most survey respondents wrote that the reality of joining the Foreign Service did not differ significantly from what they had expected. A first-tour officer doing consular work in Seoul notes diplomatically that, "The job may have been advertised as more glamorous than it is." The key recurring concern raised by State generalists outside the consular cone is the requirement for most to serve for two or more years in consular positions before serving in their career cone. This is a sensitive issue, as everyone acknowledges that adjudicating visa applications is critical national security work. But not everyone wants to do it.

A public diplomacy officer serving in London points out, "I didn't expect to wait up to five years to work in the job I signed up for." Political officer Shannon Nagy — currently general services officer for Embassy Cotonou — will serve in

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***The degree to which spouse employment opportunities play a role in this generation's commitment to the Service cannot be overstated.***

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every cone but her own during her first two tours, and she remains optimistic about the career. "The Foreign Service has largely fulfilled my expectations," she says. "The work is exciting and challenging and there are many opportunities to explore different cultures and places that I would not normally experience."

Patrick Wingate, a consular officer, was pleasantly surprised by the reception he got coming in to the Service. "My partner and I have both received overwhelming social acceptance of our relationship," he writes. "Unfortunately, the institution and current regulations do make us feel like second-class members of the Foreign Service on issues like family security and family equality. The disparity in both is a real issue, and will damage the esprit de corps of the Service in the future if it is not addressed."

Two USAID officers serving in Egypt expressed serious disappointment with their early tours with USAID. One explains that "a major disappointment for me and many of my junior officer colleagues has been the disconnect between the kinds of skills that USAID appeared to have

sought during the selection process, and what is actually valued and used on the job." Another notes, "I expected USAID to be more in tune with the needs of its staff serving overseas. The reality is that the Foreign Service is less caring than the consulting companies with which I worked prior to joining the FS. I have been surprised by the depth of bureaucracy and paperwork. ... Often when a document is released it is nothing but pages of meaningless jargon; all meat has been stripped away."

**Describe your impression of the Foreign Service culture. How does it differ from what you thought it would be?**

Impressions of the culture were highly varied. Some were positive, such as this one from a management officer in Kuwait: "I am pleasantly surprised by how well-adapted most FS employees are to dealing with both the culture of the State Department and to the culture of the country of their assignment." But significant concerns were raised, as well. Three main issues arose: disappointment with an oppressive bureaucracy and conformist attitudes, concern from specialists at State about unequal status with generalists, and the belief that the new hires will change the culture of the Service for the better.

Justin Crevier, a management officer serving in Nouakchott, describes the Foreign Service culture this way: "It seems like an unhappy marriage between the military (very planning- and procedure-oriented) and academia (very little organization, promotion based on intellectual ability rather than demonstrated leadership ability), with the added complication of having a need for consensus built into almost every decision."

Several respondents raised the

concern that the culture of the Foreign Service treats specialists as second-class embassy citizens. “I thought the culture would be more inclusive but find there are many divisions and hierarchies that exist between cones, generalist vs. specialist, regional differences, etc.,” says Kerri Hannan, a public diplomacy officer now serving in New Delhi. A facilities maintenance specialist writes from a post in Latin America that, “Specialists are hired because they have a specialty — they have vast, valued experience in their field. It’s discomfiting to find that FS generalists believe themselves to be more important to the mission than specialists, and act this way. We had no clue this was the case before joining the Foreign Service.”

Speaking about a culture of bureaucracy at State, a management officer serving in Asia writes that,

“The vast majority of Foreign Service officers have been beaten down by an oppressive bureaucracy for so long that they have become apathetic and risk-averse. It is sad to see the talents of so many capable officers being squandered by an inefficient bureaucracy that does not reward individual initiative and creativity.”


“[The Service] is fairly conformist,” notes one of four new hires commenting from Seoul. “It seems like the tenuring and up-or-out systems encourage people to go with the flow. This stifles new ideas at times and can be especially discouraging to the newer people coming into the FS who have prior work experience.”

In the focus group session, the participants expressed frustration with a culture they see as assuming there is a spouse free to handle all family matters — usually the woman. Sara Lechtenberg Kasten, part of a

tandem couple, points out that for tandem couples, “There is a subtle assumption that the husband’s career is more important, that it’s okay to send him ahead and let the wife take care of pack-out and everything else. It’s unstated, but I don’t think people realize that modern families operate as a unit.”

“We will change the culture,” is a common refrain from new hires. As expressed in the focus group and through the survey, they assess their significance in terms of sheer numbers. “The large influx from the DRI will cause the FS culture to change over the next several years,” writes a single, male economic officer in Asia. “I believe for the better.” A management officer who joined in 2004 notes that, “I can tell that the Foreign Service culture is in the process of some major changes. My class is about as diverse as I had hoped, and I get the impression

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from old-timers that this was not always the case.”

“I’ve been a bit disappointed in the culture. There appears to be a well-established tradition of assuming that just because one is a junior officer one is incapable of doing certain things. This is exceptionally unfortunate as the vast majority of my JO colleagues are very accomplished people and are joining the FS as a second or third career,” says an economic officer who joined in 2001 and is back at FSI.

Not everyone saw problems with the culture. “FS culture is dynamic, progressive and filled with individuals who are absolutely committed to advancing and promoting U.S. policies,” says Jennifer Schaming-Ronan, a public diplomacy officer serving in Cotonou. “I don’t think the FS is resistant to change, as is a common concern. In fact, I think the FS is going through a period of tremendous change and is becoming an even more flexible workplace.”

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***Today’s employees want to be recognized for their achievements and promoted not on the basis of bureaucratic time-in-class restrictions, but on merit.***

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**Would you describe your agency as “family-friendly”? What do you think family-friendly should mean?**

Most respondents said State was doing fairly well in the family-friendly category. USAID respondents

criticized their agency for not being family-friendly enough, and for offering fewer benefits than State.

There was quite a wide divide between expectations of single and married State employees. Married employees with children generally called for more help from State on family issues, while a strong majority of single officers complained that State is too family-friendly. One officer calls State “disgustingly family-friendly.” The single employees point out that State leaves them at a disadvantage when it comes to bidding, vacation time and housing. A few single employees noted that they understand the special treatment for families, but would like to be compensated in other ways for being disadvantaged. In addition, many respondents noted that their agency is family-friendly toward “traditional” families only, not employees with partners.

The focus group discussion with female FSOs highlighted a strong desire for flexibility in the system to allow for “a balanced life.” As political officer Della Cavey explains, “We are a new generation of diplomats who come from non-traditional backgrounds. Our diversity is our strength and we bring a lot to the table. We should be allowed to grow and prosper as individuals so that, in turn, that wisdom and strength can permeate throughout our careers.” She adds that, “This is a dream job for me. I think this is a great institution, and I really see myself here for 30 years if I can make a well-balanced life.”

The focus group participants pointed out that if the FS wants to retain the greater number of women it has brought in in recent years, it is going to have to do better to accommodate the demands of women employees who are also mothers. They say that they share with their colleagues high hopes that the DRI

### **DRI & the New Generation**

The Diplomatic Readiness Initiative brought in thousands of eager officers with a broad range of talents, skills and experiences, all of them dedicated to government service abroad in a post-9/11 world. As someone who started the Foreign Service as a new career, not a first one, I was glad to train with these people, rather than the Service one ambassador described as the organization he joined twenty-some years ago; male, pale and Yale. It will be interesting to see if the effort pays off with similar attrition rates to those of the past, or if the bright-eyed, fledgling officers of today have too little patience for incompetence and bureaucratic inefficiency (I have been very surprised by the number of times I’ve heard, “That may be a good idea, but it would never work in the State Department, so just make the best of the existing process.”). The post-Generation X recruits of any organization are known to have little loyalty to any single employer without personal fulfillment (and admittedly, perhaps little respect for seniority for its own sake). While my experience with the Foreign Service so far in my first tour has been quite positive, I know more than a few officers in a variety of cones and geographic bureaus who are highly qualified and good at their jobs but who admit they are disenchanted enough with the State Department “culture” that they plan to quit after being tenured. That would be too bad for those of us who may remain in the Foreign Service.

— Jeff Mazur, a political officer serving in an economic position in Lagos

generation — what Cavey refers to as “a tidal wave” — will help bring greater flexibility to the system.

Succinctly summing up the opinions of many respondents, human resources officer Cassandra Hamblin writes: “To me, ‘family-friendly’ is a work/life balance supported by upper management with resources and programs targeted at all types of families.”

Here are a few more comments on what new hires want family-friendly to mean:

“Family-friendly to me means doing everything possible to ensure that one’s quality of life is enhanced by the ability to respond to family needs — regardless of how ‘family’ is defined,” says Douglas Sun, a partnered political officer in Taipei.

“Family-friendly means reasonable work hours of 50 hours or less per week,” says Deidra Avendasora, a married public diplomacy officer in London. “It means assistance with day care, adoption and maternity/paternity leave. It means adequate schooling and spousal employment options. It means providing health and dental services. It means encouraging employees to attend important family events such as parent-teacher conferences or weddings.”

“Family-friendly is the ability to quickly integrate family members into overseas settings, taking care of their health and safety, and ensuring that good schools and job and volunteer opportunities are readily available,” says Jennifer Schaming-Ronan. “The key to being family-friendly is simply being responsive to the needs and concerns of families. A little attention goes a long way.”

“Family-friendly means being flexible,” says a male consular officer who joined in 2002. “My wife is on a two-year leave of absence from her job in D.C. Luckily her employer is flexible enough to allow for that.

Unfortunately, it appears my employer won’t grant me the same chance and let me take a leave of absence so we can put her career first after this tour. It’s all about compromise. If I put my career first for a few years, my spouse will want to put her career first for a few years. It’s only fair and natural.”

Here is a sampling of the responses from single employees:

“Coming from 20 years in the private sector, I feel State is disgustingly family-friendly,” says a single, male economic officer headed to Asia. “Maybe it’s because spouses are so much more vocal than spouses in the private sector, but I can’t believe how much attention is paid to family issues and how much complaining about it still goes on.”

“State seems very family-friendly — perhaps too much so, as it is clear that family considerations trump all others in the bidding and assignment process,” says a male consular officer serving in the Middle East. “The fact that I’ll soon be married and benefit from the system does not make it good department policy.”

“The FS does quite a bit to support officers with families. What surprises me, given the fact that almost 70 percent of my A-100 class was single, is that posts do not do more to recruit single people. Every post profile I looked at in the Overseas Briefing Center contained a myriad of information about schools, spousal employment, family life at post — very few contained any information about what it would be like to serve as a single person,” says Mike Snyder, a single management officer heading to Moldova.

“I think the department is very family-friendly,” says Danna Brennan, a single public diplomacy officer currently serving in Dhaka. “As a result, the department has a tendency to neglect the needs of single FSOs. ... In the bidding process, I

have felt that people with family concerns often get first ‘dibs’ on the ‘nicest’ assignments.”

“It’s always the married-with-kids people who get to go home for the holidays and the single person who is assigned duty,” writes Rachel Scheller from Skopje.

“State is family-friendly to the point of being exclusively concerned with the nuclear family model. It should also put a greater focus on singles,” says a female officer with a partner.

“It appears that families get priority in almost every consideration over people without kids. ... I was told in orientation that childless people are expected to ‘deal with it’ so the department benefits as a whole,” says a management officer in Latin America.

“USAID is much less family-friendly than we expected, especially after all the discussions we had on this back at orientation,” says a USAID officer serving in Egypt. “There are many differences in the benefits and compensation that we receive compared to what officers from State receive. I am referring to student loan repayments, FSI spousal language training, FSI spousal area studies, business class travel and reimbursement of new hire expenses — all benefits new hires at State get, but we do not get at USAID.”

**Do you expect your spouse/partner to have a career? Will spouse employment options play a significant role in determining how long you stay in the Foreign Service?**

The issue of spouse employment is a key concern for new hires, many of whom come in with partners who are professionals expecting if not a traditional career, then at a minimum, a job that utilizes their training and experience. By about a 4-to-1 margin, employees of all types said

they expect their spouses to have a career. They want their agencies to do more on this issue, but many admit there is no simple solution.

A March 27 *International Herald Tribune* article, "Trailing Spouses' Job Needs Start to Get More Company Time," cites corporate surveys that show that "almost half of spouses of overseas employees have their own jobs and their unwillingness to give these up is an increasing impediment to mobility."

Societal changes in America have brought the Foreign Service a new generation of employees who are not accompanied by spouses willing to fill the "traditional" FS wife's role as the supporting player who accepts a Foreign Service life without individual career aspirations. The agencies may not have had retention problems before, but with more women in the Service and more spouses — male and female — demanding career

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***Married employees with children generally called for more help from State on family issues, while a strong majority of single officers complained that***

***State is too family-friendly.***

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options, this problem may emerge over the next decade as this generation of employees decides whether

or not to stick with the Foreign Service.

"The lack of support for unmarried officers with partners as well as spousal employment is a huge morale issue for me and other officers," writes Kerri Hannan, "especially since the makeup of the FS has changed so drastically. Often spouses are just as qualified, or more, to serve in the FS but choose not to. What options are they given overseas?"

"If my spouse does not have a professionally rewarding career, the Foreign Service will lose me," says a male, married officer serving in China.

"The State Department has to expect that nowadays professional, highly educated FSOs will be accompanied by professional, highly educated spouses," says a facilities maintenance specialist in Latin America.

"Spousal employment is going to be important to many officers," says a female officer in Seoul. "I can't expect the FS to provide my spouse with a job, but I feel strongly that at least work agreements have to be pursued very hard so that my spouse can accept local work when he manages to find it."

"There are many spouses out there who have a strong desire to work. That void needs to be filled with something or the State Department is going to lose qualified, valuable employees," says Ellen Eiseman, an attorney who spent six years as an FS accompanying spouse before joining the Foreign Service as a consular officer.

"I expect my husband to have a career. He has education, experience and the desire to work. I expect the embassy to make its positions available to spouses whenever possible at reasonable wages. I expect quality information about spousal employment opportunities during post research. I would like to see job

### **Gen Y**

The current Gen Y junior officers expect to have much more input into and control over their career progression than my generation had. We were trained to do what we were told and to assume that 'the System' would do its best to turn us into wonderful diplomats. Today's junior officers have a "show me the money" approach to career management. They want to know up front what they will be offered in terms of career training and they want to play a role in deciding what is best for them personally. .... The married officers I have worked with all expect that the needs of their spouses will be treated with just as much respect and urgency as the needs of the officers. They do not plan to have the two-level world we lived in, where the spouse is "just a spouse" and the officer is the only one visible to the HR system.

Today's JOs have not signed up for life and tend to evaluate the prospects of FS life in terms of five years — not 25 years. This means that senior managers need to change the way they try to motivate junior officers. Talking to them about job skills that will serve them well 20 years down the road is a waste of time. They want to know what they can do to get promoted in the next one to two years. Senior managers should not make the mistake of viewing this short-term approach as one that indicates a lack of dedication or commitment to the goals and objectives of the FS.

— *Ambassador Eileen Malloy, CG Sydney, who spent six months working in the Director General's office helping develop the DRI. Part of her research included focus group meetings with incoming employees.*



search assistance at post. Spousal employment is a major factor in my family's happiness and well-being, and is therefore key in determining my length of service," says Deidra Avendasora.

"My wife has a Ph.D. and is overqualified for the types of jobs that the embassy sets aside for eligible family members," explains a USAID officer serving in Egypt. "It often feels like we've walked onto a military base from the 1950s, where the wives are all expected to host tea parties or go shopping for curtains, and where spouse employment means working as social planner for the community liaison office. Sorry, but we are well-educated, modern, smart people and don't fit into that lifestyle very well. Instead, many other junior officers and I talk on a weekly basis about whether the FS is right for us, simply because our spouses cannot find meaningful jobs.

If our spouses are not happy with the Foreign Service or satisfied with their lives having no career path, then we will probably have to quit and move back to the States."

**The government does not specifically provide for maternity or paternity leave. Do you think the alternative types of leave available are sufficient?**

More women than men expressed concern about this issue. A few men said that paternity leave should be made more available to them. Many women employees complained that the requirement to use sick leave and/or annual leave to cover time off related to pregnancy and caring for a newborn creates a hardship, especially because of a requirement to leave post six weeks before the birth. New hires who get pregnant face a need for leave that may not be met by the amount they have accumulated.

"If the FS is serious about hiring and retaining a diverse work force, maternity and paternity leave (without having to draw down sick leave) are crucial," says USAID education officer Grace Lang. "USAID programming policy endorses exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. To make this possible for our employees, women must often take leave without pay. This substitute for paid maternity leave is discriminatory, especially in households where the female employee is the breadwinner."

**What does "worldwide availability" mean to you? Do you think all incoming FS employees should be worldwide available? Do you think most FS employees are worldwide available? How willing are you to accept an unaccompanied assignment?**

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agreeing to be available to serve worldwide. Almost all survey respondents agreed that Foreign Service employees should be worldwide available upon entry into the Service. Yet almost all of them also agreed that not all FS employees are, in fact, worldwide available. The interpretations of what exactly worldwide availability should mean throughout a career varied greatly depending on the employee's family and health status. In general, single employees support a strict interpretation of worldwide availability, and those with families want more flexibility.

Many respondents noted that worldwide availability must be looked at in relation to the individual employee's situation. Several respondents pointed out that "the Foreign Service is not the military." On the question of serving at an unaccompanied post, an issue very

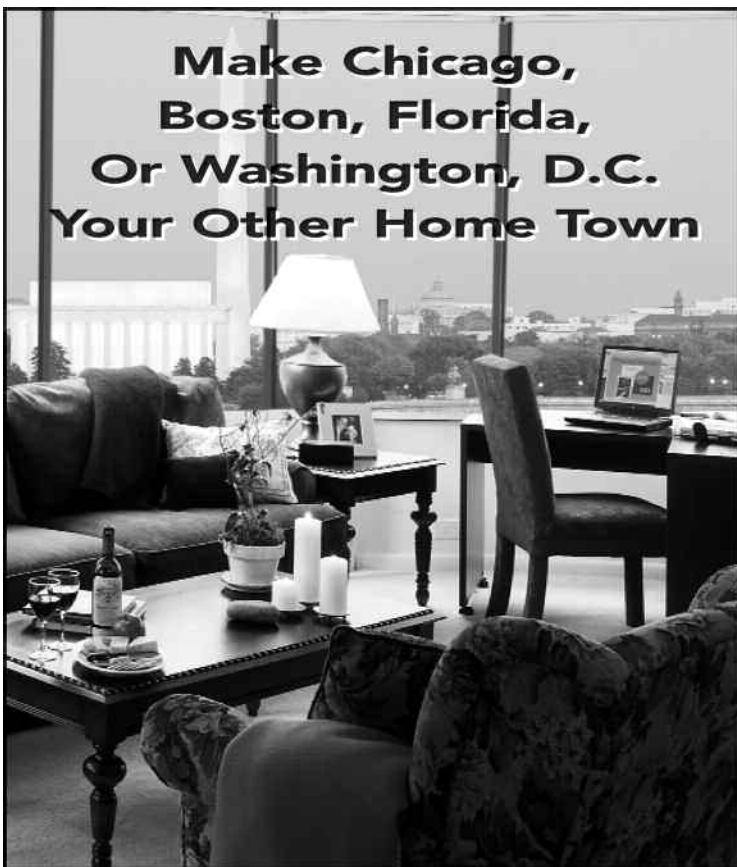
much tied to worldwide availability, it is the employees with young children who expressed a strong preference not to serve at an unaccompanied post. Several of them expressed a belief that worldwide availability should mean availability to serve in difficult hardship posts but not necessarily unaccompanied posts. In an increasingly dangerous world — as places like Saudi Arabia move to (possibly temporary) unaccompanied status and as more employees are needed in unaccompanied posts such as Baghdad and Kabul — this issue may rapidly rise in significance to the Service.

A view expressed by many survey respondents and by the focus group participants is that worldwide availability applies to the Foreign Service corps as a whole, not necessarily all individuals all the time. The diversity of the employee pool should ensure that all posts can be filled.

"There are many single women who want to go to Baghdad," says a married, female political officer heading to the Middle East. "If you want us to stay in for an entire career, let us work our own way up, in a way that makes sense for us."

The focus group participants stressed that flexibility was key. "Not every career needs to look the same. We have single females in our class who are already in Baghdad and can do that as single officers. But it's not an option for me right now (with an 8-month-old baby). I will do my duty when my country calls me when my child is a little older," says Sara Lechtenberg Kasten, heading to a posting in Jordan. "Look at Powell's policy guidance," she adds. "He's saying we're not hiring the person, we're bringing on the whole family. It's up to us to make sure that his policy guidance is implemented."

Ellen Eiseman points out that



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there are different kinds of hardship posts, some that are okay for families and others that are not. "So send me to the ones that are okay for families. I'll go. There's a long list of posts that are hard-to-fill."

Others express similar views:

"Worldwide availability should not mean the same thing to all employees at all ranks," says a soon-to-be married management officer serving in Europe. "I do not believe that directing employees to post will benefit either the FS or the U.S. government. The Service is full of people with different family commitments. There is no harm in treating them differently. As a single man, I would (and did) serve anywhere I was asked to serve. As a married man, I will expect more consideration. As a father, even more. This is an idea the military has used for years and one that makes sense. Some folks are better suited for some jobs than others."

"Worldwide availability means I'll go wherever my family can accompany me in relative safety," says an information management specialist serving in Latin America.

"I have been apart from my family (wife and three young children) for six months," says USAID FSO Brian Conklin. "I was willing to accept the situation because it was required. At the same time, I feel like it is critical time lost with my kids that I will never recover. A two-year unaccompanied assignment would not work for my family or me at this time."

"Being 'asked' to serve an unaccompanied assignment would severely test my commitment to the Foreign Service, as not being separated is a very high priority for my family," says a male management officer with a young child and a baby on the way.

"Worldwide availability means serving my country's interests and my family's interests at the same time.

## Bureaucracy

In the days when many new FSOs were just out of college or at least young and without much work experience, the "system" could get away with more. Now, when people coming in are older and have experience in the private sector, they simply cannot believe the bureaucracy they encounter. ... There is a disconnect in this sense: The new FS employees are held to high standards, as they should be. However, the bureaucracy that supports them as they enter the Foreign Service often does not seem to be held to the same high standards.

— *Mette Beecroft, who explains travel and transportation regulations to all State new hires, both generalists and specialists.*

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## The Transition Center: Focusing on Life in the Foreign Service

In the pastoral setting of the Foreign Service Institute's grounds in Arlington, Va., you'll find children outside during the summer months, standing in a circle and screaming at the top of their lungs. This is no cause for alarm — they are demonstrating their knowledge of what to do if in a dangerous situation, something they've learned by participating in the Youth Security Overseas Seminar, which is sponsored by the Transition Center's Training Division.

It's all part of the Transition Center's focus on life issues in the foreign affairs community. An organizational unit within the Foreign Service Institute, the Transition Center is unique in that it helps prepare employees and their family members for effectiveness in the foreign affairs community by facilitating transitions throughout — and after — their careers.

More than 22,000 people visit the TC annually. Officially opened in 2000, the center brings together under one roof three divisions that actually have been around for many years: the Overseas Briefing Center, the Foreign Affairs Training Division, and the Career Transition Center. The TC staff helps State Department specialists, junior officers, ambassadors, its own Civil Service people, as well as people from USAID, DEA, DOD, and all of these employees' family members.

As the information and research arm of the TC, the Overseas Briefing Center offers materials for perusal on-site and also electronically. The OBC offers a depth and breadth of information for foreign affairs community members not available elsewhere in a centralized location. In an informal, family-friendly setting, employees and authorized visitors can browse through the information in country briefing boxes. Multimedia presentations, a collection of cultural guides, and a library of cross-cultural reference books are also available. A cornerstone of OBC publications is the *Foreign Service Assignment Notebook: What Do I Do Now?*

Information gathering is only part of the process, however, and this brings us back to the screaming kids. Offered during the summer months for children in grades 2-12, the

YSOS workshops mentioned earlier are the children's equivalent of the well-known Security Overseas Seminar, which is a requirement for all foreign affairs employees going overseas. (It is recommended that eligible family members take it, too.) The Advanced Overseas Seminar provides an update to fulfill the five-year requirement. Other course offerings include Regulations, Allowances, and Finances, the ever-popular Protocol and U.S. Representation Abroad, Communicating Across Cultures, and Realities of Foreign Service Life.

The Career Transition Center provides training, counseling and other assistance to those planning for retirement. The CTC conducts two flagship programs: the Job Search Program and the Retirement Planning Seminar. In addition, the CTC offers a one-day Financial Management and Estate Planning Seminar and a one-day seminar on Annuities, Benefits, and Social Security, usually taken mid-career, far before retirement. The CTC also maintains a Talent Bank of employees and retirees who wish to be informed of job leads developed

by the Center. The CTC sends a monthly electronic newsletter containing job leads compiled from numerous sources to all participants in the Talent Bank.

TC employees have lived and worked abroad in countries all over the world and pass on information and knowledge from an insider's perspective. The face-to-face customer service the TC provides is enhanced by the information it offers electronically, via the Web, or through the use of take-away products such as CDs, DVDs, and videos.

Wherever you are in the world, at whatever stage of life in the foreign affairs community you may find yourself, the TC is ready to offer you guidance and resources.

The Transition Center is open weekdays from 8:15 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and on select Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. The Shultz Center is a controlled-access facility, and non-State personnel and eligible family members must be properly enrolled or registered for site access. For more information, call (703) 302-7272 or visit <http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/>.

— Heidi Whitesell, Transition Center

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*The OBC offers a depth  
and breadth of  
information on overseas  
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elsewhere in a  
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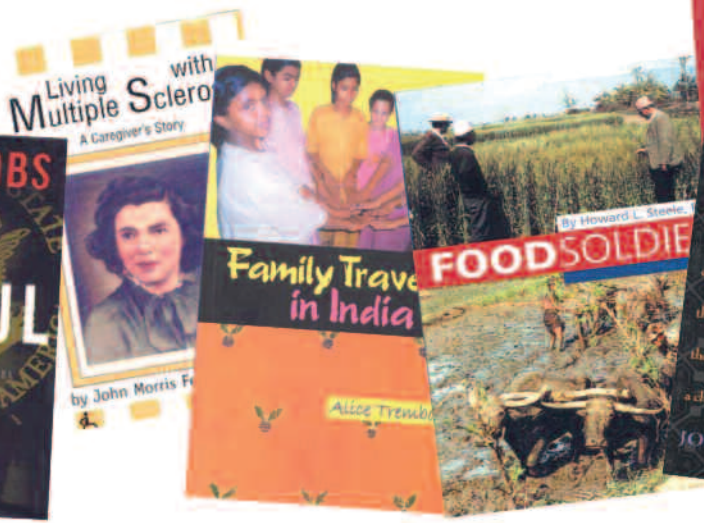
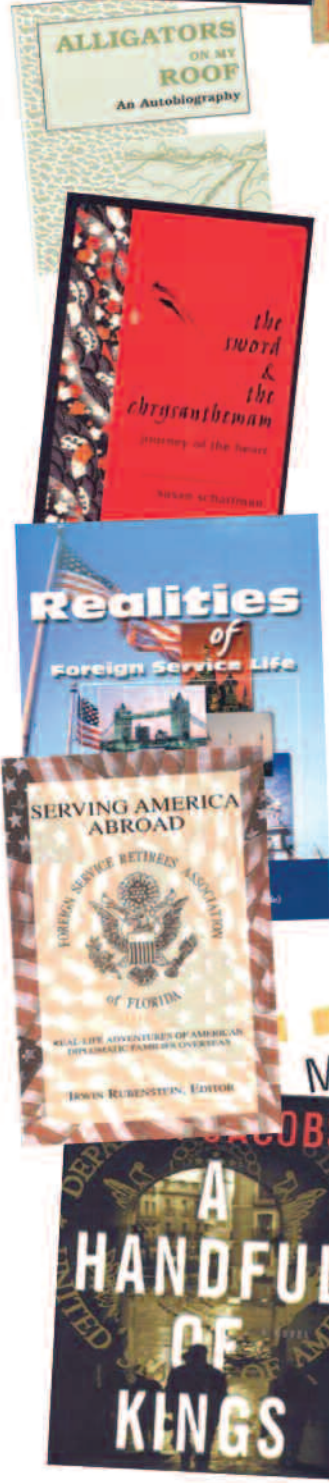
The November 2004 *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors.

## Calling All Foreign Service Authors!

FS authors who have had a book published in 2003 or 2004 that has not previously been featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author, to:

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Deadline for submissions is Sept. 1.





While our child is still in school, we expect to serve in countries that meet her educational needs. Once she leaves home, I expect to serve anywhere I am needed," says first-tour officer Lisa Swenarski de Herrera, from Jeddah. (Note: After Lisa responded to the survey, her post went on ordered departure, and she faces separation from her family.)

Many employees, especially single ones, expressed a sense of inequality in how worldwide availability is interpreted and implemented. Here are a few of these comments:

"How can I say no to an unaccompanied assignment when I agreed to worldwide availability as part of the employment agreement?" a female management officer writes from a Latin American post.

"I don't think the majority of FS employees are really worldwide available. At best, single officers and specialists without great connections are worldwide available," says a male consular officer in the Middle East.

"Worldwide availability means I am willing to serve wherever the government feels my skills can best be

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***If the FS wants to retain  
the greater number of  
women it has brought in,  
it is going to have to do  
better to accommodate  
the demands of women  
employees who are also  
mothers.***

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utilized," says Mike Snyder. "All incoming FS employees should be worldwide available. Unfortunately, I don't think some officers have fully digested what worldwide availability means when they enter the Service, or feel their particular situations or skills somehow exclude them from true worldwide availability."

### **Use Our Skills**

New Entry Professionals were hired by USAID for their advanced technical skills, analytical and creative abilities, and interpersonal communication facility. ... Once we started working in our first and second tours overseas, however, we found that the actual work involves almost no technical knowledge, and no creativity or real analytical skills. We spend all of our days writing and reviewing bureaucratic documents to obligate small amounts of money into contracts, and probably less than 10 percent of our time thinking about what's good for the development of the country where we work. It appeared to me initially that I was in the right place for me, once I got to know my new-hire colleagues during orientation and shortly thereafter. Since then, now that I have worked in USAID missions for a few years, I question nearly every day why a person whose fortes are in creativity and analysis and cross-cultural communication spends his entire working day inside his office writing tedious memos and participating in boring meetings about bureaucratic issues only with other Americans. Only because I hope that the situation will improve over time — as I move up the career ladder or into smaller missions — do I remain on this career path.

— *USAID new entry professional*

"If there is a requirement to be worldwide available, then it should be a hard-and-fast requirement," says a married economic officer. "Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case. ... It is widely believed that if you know how to 'work the system' you can avoid doing a hardship tour. Tying promotions to hardship service could fix this."

"Worldwide availability means worldwide availability," says a management officer. "The department sends out plenty of cables saying they will make directed assignments, but why am I here in Lagos with a dozen JOs and no middle management officers? The downside of refusing to enforce our stated policy stares us in the face every day in Lagos."

"I think anyone joining the Service should be worldwide available, including family members. Otherwise, the rest of us are required to fill in at places we may not want to go," says a single, female economic officer.

"I don't understand when I hear the talk about equity and hardship tours and then see people who have served three European tours in a row. If the department is serious about people serving periodic hardship tours, the policy should be enforced across the board," says a single, female officer heading to Asia.

"I have no problem for FSOs to say they won't go to certain posts because of family reasons, but those that do go to those posts should be better rewarded," says a single, male economic officer heading to Asia.

"Worldwide availability must be taken literally," says single public diplomacy officer Danna Brennan, from Dhaka. "The department is quite soft on this issue, in my opinion. Worldwide availability means that your family concerns should have little effect on the assignment



process. It is very distressing to those of us who have no family or medical concerns that certain people with such concerns will only ever be required to serve in modern, Western-style countries. There is a point at which the department must draw the line.”

**Do you anticipate being asked to serve in Iraq in the next five years? Do you plan to serve in Iraq?**

Iraq poses a special concern, given that so many employees will need to serve there over the coming months and years. Almost all of the single survey respondents wrote that they would be willing to serve in Iraq. Some said they had volunteered already. Respondents with families, not surprisingly, were not nearly as ready to volunteer. Only one married respondent said he had volunteered to serve in Iraq. About one out of three married respondents said they thought they would serve in Iraq. A number of married respondents said they would be willing to serve there once it becomes an accompanied post.

“I don’t anticipate being asked to serve in Iraq, because there are so many people who are volunteering for it. I won’t volunteer due to a promise I made to my folks, but if I’m sent then I would probably go rather than quit,” says a management officer in Latin America. Jennifer Schaming-Ronan notes that, “I anticipate that I may be called to serve in Iraq during the next few years. I think that serving in Iraq would provide an historic opportunity, and I believe many of my FS colleagues feel the same way.” From another perspective, General Services Specialist Joseph Vasquez points out that he retired from the military. “In the FS world, serving in Iraq should be voluntary,” he says.

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### **Do allowances play a role in your bidding decisions?**

Most respondents said that allowances — most significantly the special compensation given for service at hardship posts — do play a role in bidding decisions, though in most cases not the primary role. The allowances issue has become severely clouded by the Washington locality pay inequity for overseas employees. In the eyes of many FS employees, the fact that non-senior-level employees receive a 14-percent locality pay adjustment while working in Washington in effect serves to cut differentials overseas by the same amount.

A number of respondents raised the Washington locality pay disparity as a primary concern that will influence their future bidding decisions. It appears that many of them did not know about the locality pay issue when they submitted their bids for first assignments. “I serve in a hardship post based on salary. Of course, learning that I make the same in Washington as I do in a 15-percent differential post makes me think twice about serving in those places,” says a female FSO serving in a South Asia post.

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***By about a  
4-to-1 margin,  
employees of all types  
said they expect their  
spouses to have  
a career.***

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“It is absolutely not fair that I have to look for posts that have allowances just to keep my salary competitive with the normal job market, let alone with those who get 14 percent more just for living in Washington, D.C.,” says a single political officer. “We should automatically have incentives given to us for living abroad under the harsh circumstances and living conditions that we do.”

“Why should people in D.C. get a locality pay that effectively makes my 25-percent hardship post in reality a 10-percent hardship post?” says a

single female economic officer. “People in D.C. don’t have to wait 30 to 40 minutes in line for gas, experience fairly regular harassment from the police, see polio and landmine victims everyday, etc. I find the work here in Africa interesting and will go to more African posts, but hardship pay has to mean something to make people bid on places like Luanda.”

### **What percentage of your Foreign Service career do you intend to serve overseas?**

Most responses ranged between 70 and 80 percent, with no one stating an intention to spend over 50 percent of their career in the U.S.

### **The State Department has mandated leadership and management training at all levels of the Foreign Service. Should supervisors’ leadership abilities be mentioned in their annual employee evaluation reviews? Should the supervisor’s subordinates be polled on this subject and their input considered for the rating?**

Almost all respondents gave enthusiastic “Yes” votes for leadership abilities being covered by the EER and for input from subordinates to be included in ratings for supervisors. Several USAID respondents pointed out that the USAID evaluation process already includes a 360-degree review portion.

An economic officer who previously worked for a Fortune 20 company, writes: “One of the most significant weaknesses in the State EER process is the lack of something similar to a 360-degree evaluation. It is embarrassing, frankly, that there is so much talk about leadership in the FS and that leadership isn’t really evaluated through the

### **“Traditional” Families**

I think the State Department is extremely friendly toward traditional families, which to me means a male officer with a wife who has no career aspirations and is content to stay at home with children, do volunteer work, or perform secretarial work where she can get it. The Foreign Service is a very difficult lifestyle for less traditional families, including tandem couples and officers with highly educated spouses who want meaningful careers, not just clerical work as an EFM. The State Department has failed completely to meet the needs of same-sex couples. The new MOH policy is meaningless because it imposes no obligations on the department to accommodate the needs of same-sex couples, and it confers no actual benefits, rights or status on unmarried partners. The MOH policy has allowed the State Department to pretend that it is not discriminating against same-sex couples while doing absolutely nothing to make their lives easier.

— *Management officer with a same-sex partner*

feedback of those being led.”

“I sense in upper management a disdain for people management, a feeling that their role is foreign policy, cultivating contacts, writing brilliant cables and not making sure the people under them are mentored or well managed,” writes a female economic officer from a post in Africa. “Training is crucial at all levels.”

Public diplomacy officer Rachel Schneller writes from Skopje that, “I strongly support subordinate input for supervisors. Talented and dedicated supervisors may not be getting the recognition they have earned and poor supervisors are not getting the training they need.”

“360-degree review is critical,” writes Kerri Hannan. “More officers are coming with a private sector background and demand better supervision, leadership and training opportunities mirroring what they had in the private sector.

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***The allowances issue  
has become severely  
clouded by the  
Washington locality  
pay inequity for  
overseas employees.***

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Management in the FS is spotty at best. The FS must focus on training managers.”

Some respondents were surprised that leadership ratings were not already included in the supervisor EER form. “The FS is all about

leadership at a myriad of levels,” writes Patrick Wingate. “How can people be good leaders if those they lead do not see them as good leaders?”

**Do you plan to make the Foreign Service a career, and for how many years do you hope to serve? What is the most important factor in whether or not you make the Foreign Service a career, and what is the number-one issue your agency should pay attention to in order to keep you in the Foreign Service?**

Conventional wisdom tells us that this generation is not as loyal to an employer as were past generations. However, most respondents said they hoped and planned to make the Foreign Service a long-term career. A majority cited a number between 15 and 25 years as their anticipated length of service.

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By far the most frequently stated factors in determining whether or not an employee will stay in the FS were tied to family concerns and spouse employment. “Spousal employment options make up the single most important factor in determining how long I stay in the Foreign Service,” says political officer Shannon Nagy. Unmarried respondents with partners want recognition and benefits for their partners.

Other issues and concerns raised were the need for: better management and leadership, less bureaucracy, transparency in the assignment process, a good promotion system, the ability to make a positive contribution, intellectual stimulation and challenge, respect, and adequate living and working conditions. Several employees who joined the FS following a full career elsewhere pointed out that the retirement age would be the limiting factor for their FS career. No respondent indicated that money was the most important factor, though many did point out that they had taken a pay cut to join the Foreign Service.

Many State generalists and

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***Single employees  
support a strict  
interpretation of  
worldwide availability,  
and those with families  
want more flexibility.***

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USAID officers said they want to see a better use of their skills earlier in their careers. Many disagree with the current norm of serving for two to four years outside their career cone before being assigned a position in their cone.

“The idea of ‘paying dues’ needs to be changed,” says political officer Douglas Sun. “Those of us with 10 to 15 years of work experience and education in the real world outside the FS need to be matched with jobs

that are more commensurate with our level of ability. Life, including one’s career in the FS, did not begin on the first day of A-100. A more reasonable and equitable assignment process, particularly for entering FSOs, would serve the country much better than the current ‘boot camp’ mentality.”

Echoing that sentiment, a female consular officer writes that, “The number-one issue is making good use of the talents, skills and interests of FS officers, especially the new hires who need to have a good experience early in their careers in order to stay committed to a life in the FS.” And a male economic officer writes, “I wish the FS would do a better job of getting people with experience into positions where they could use that experience. I can’t believe I will be doing two years of consular work when I have so much experience with economic development in the developing world.”

Fairness and equity were other themes raised by many respondents. USAID employees expressed concern about the plans to bring in mid-level “limited-term appointment” employees. The worry is that this group will be able to convert to career status without going through the regular, slow promotion process to get to mid-level positions.

Following are some representative comments:

“My spouse’s employment options will be the main factor in determining how long I will stay in the FS,” says a male consular officer in Europe.

“As in the private sector, if someone is capable and promotable, they should be promoted at the earliest possible opportunity,” writes an economic officer who came to the FS from the private sector. “They should not be subject to somewhat arbitrary time-in-grade requirements. ... If someone is a capable

### **A Family Decision**

I believe that the State Department is trying to be more family-friendly and has made significant progress. However, it still has a long way to go. The government must understand that the commitment to be in the Foreign Service is a family decision. We make that commitment knowing the challenges that the Foreign Service lifestyle presents to families, but at the same time, we expect the State Department to try and alleviate some of those challenges to the maximum extent possible. Instead, we often find that the department is slow to react and does not place a priority on family issues. A standard delay of three to six months for a spouse to start working at post places a heavy strain on a Foreign Service family and negatively contributes to overall post morale. I absolutely believe that the State Department has a responsibility to assist spouses with employment. Many Foreign Service families consist of two working professionals who are both seeking satisfactory employment and compensation. ... They expect a certain sensitivity on the part of the State Department and an effort to provide meaningful opportunities at post.

— *Political officer Shannon Nagy*

leader and manager, promote them. Don't tell them, 'Hey, you're great, but we can't promote you because you haven't been an FS-3 for X number of years.' Where I come from, that's a sure recipe for losing good employees to competitors."

"Freedom of action and decision-making authority as a mid-level officer," is the main factor that will determine whether one consular officer serving in the Middle East will remain in the Foreign Service. He notes that he could return to military service, observing that "JOs these days have many options, some quite a bit more lucrative than State can offer, so eliminating a lot of the bad management and bureaucracy would go a long way in retaining people."

"All federal agencies need to have a realistic expectation of the modern-day job market and the attitudes of the age 20-to-40 crowd," says

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*Almost all of the  
single survey  
respondents say  
that they would be  
willing to serve  
in Iraq.*

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USAID Education Officer Grace Lang. "Most younger people nowadays make a distinction between career and job, with job being a subset of career. ... I think that benefits comparable to those found in the private sector would be the key to

### **It's Still Better**

My spouse will probably teach wherever she can, and work on things like Web-site design and public affairs whenever possible. It's not easy on her, but we will in the long run do better in terms of benefits, pay and life experience with me in the FS than we would in the corporate rat race in the U.S. with both of us working (and I have an MBA from a decent school). I think that the whole "I could do so much better in the corporate world but am nobly sacrificing myself for the good of American diplomacy" line of whining doesn't hold much water, unless the whiner left a CEO job to join the FS.

— *Management officer  
Justin Crevier*

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*Suzanne, just out of Boot Camp, proudly wears her Marine uniform, August 1984.*

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retaining me in the FS. Tuition assistance and maternity leave are two big ones.”

“Although I have learned much in my consular tour,” writes Rachel Schneller, “these past two years as a vice consul have been very difficult for me because this is not the area of international work that interests me and motivated me to join the Foreign Service. I feel as though my career aspirations have not been taken into account by the FS, and that I am here only to fill a slot at a visa window.”

“The headaches of negotiating the State Department bureaucracy have ruined an otherwise satisfying career,” writes a management officer in Hong Kong. “It is the massively inefficient bureaucracy that will eventually cause me to leave the Foreign Service. I had originally planned to make the FS a career and stay until retirement. Now I think I’ll leave within the next five years.”

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***Many State  
generalists and USAID  
officers said they want  
to see a better use of  
their skills earlier in  
their careers.***

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“Failure to address the MOH issue could adversely affect my long-term career in the FS,” writes Mike Snyder. “Hundreds of gay and lesbian officers are proudly serving at the Department of State and their families need to be recognized and given equal status as their straight col-

leagues. Not doing so gives us the impression that our service is not as valued and our families matter less than those we serve alongside. While I know none of my colleagues actually feels this way, the policies of the department give that impression.”

### **Digesting the Elephant**

The State Department and USAID were gutted during the 1990s by budget cuts, losing critical staff and the ability to adequately staff their missions. The new hires brought in under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative at the State Department and the New Entry Professional program at USAID are the ones to fill the gaps and bring staffing up to functional levels. Their concerns need to be considered, if for no other reason than because they make up a large part of today’s Foreign Service.

The good news is that this new “generation” is highly professional, enthusiastic to serve, and willing to spend their career in the Foreign Service. More than a few employees described the Foreign Service as their “dream career.” However, they also come in with expectations that the system will take care of them. There are broad cultural changes that many new hires are promoting, and there are also specific concrete changes in training, benefits, and information sharing that would help convince new hires that they chose the right career (see box).

It is too early to know if this generation will change the current system or simply be absorbed by it. Hopefully, Foreign Service leadership will not emulate Saint-Exupery’s boa — who swallows his prey whole and sleeps through the digestion — and will take seriously the needs of the new generation. How well the boa digests the elephant will determine the health and vigor of the Foreign Service for years to come. ■

### **Suggestions**

Following is a list of some of the concrete changes that were suggested by survey respondents and focus group participants. Some are changes management could make today, while others — such as paid parental leave and equal treatment for domestic partners — would require a change in U.S. government policy for all agencies.

- Management should resolve the inequity between Foreign Service salaries in Washington, which include locality pay, and salaries overseas, which do not.
- Management should ensure that all posts honor the legal requirement to allow untenured officers overtime and comp time.
- Customer service standards for all human resources personnel should be enforced.
- Human Resources should provide more information to recruits and new hires about the reality of spouse employment opportunities overseas.
- The State Department or AFSA should publish guidelines on how to navigate the system when planning a pregnancy and birth in the Foreign Service. Rules about leave options should be spelled out.
- The FSI day care center, which currently closes at 4:30 p.m., should stay open at least until 5:30 p.m. for those who need it.
- USAID should match the benefits given to State employees, especially to include language training for spouses.

— Shawn Dorman

# 50 YEARS AGO IN GUATEMALA

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THE U.S.-BACKED REMOVAL OF GUATEMALAN PRESIDENT JACOBO ARBENZ GUZMAN IN JUNE 1954 WAS NEITHER THE FIRST NOR THE LAST SUCH INTERVENTION. BUT DIFFERENT OBSERVERS HAVE DRAWN VERY DIFFERENT LESSONS FROM THE EPISODE.

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*By GEORGE GEDDA*

**P**reventive action to defend U.S. security interests is not a concept dreamed up by the current administration. It has been around for a long time. Fifty years ago, the Eisenhower administration helped depose a government in Guatemala that was thought to have communist leanings and the potential to inspire radical upheavals elsewhere in the region.

The Cold War dominated international politics in 1954. It was a time when the perceived dangers of the communist movement were at a zenith. Globally, things were not going well for the United States. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the Soviet Union was the world's only communist state. Within nine years, virtually all of Eastern Europe was run by communist governments, along with China. During that same period, the Korean conflict had ended in a stalemate, and Moscow blockaded Berlin and developed the atomic bomb.

To meet the Soviet challenge, the United States became decidedly more interventionist-minded. In 1948, largely with the encouragement of State Department Policy Planning Director George Kennan, the National Security Council approved Document 10/2, which expanded the realm of U.S. covert action.

The directive authorized economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups; and support of indigenous anticommunist elements.

In August 1953, the CIA helped depose an elected Iranian government that had nationalized the country's

oil industry and was viewed as a potential Soviet ally. The Guatemala intervention came less than a year later. Communists had made few inroads in Latin America until then, but some of the elements for a possible communist transformation seemed to be in place in Guatemala.

The country was led by President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, a former military officer democratically elected in 1950 who took office the following year.

## **Poisonous Fruit**

Arbenz was relatively indifferent to politics but embraced the progressive politics advocated by his Salvadoran wife, Maria. She believed socialist policies were needed in Central America to benefit the region's impoverished majorities, and the new president moved quickly to implement programs to do that. After he legalized the communist-affiliated Guatemalan Labor Party in 1952, communists gained considerable influence over important peasant organizations, labor unions and the governing political party.

The centerpiece of Arbenz's presidency was an ambitious land reform program. Like most Latin American land reform programs, Guatemala's did not go smoothly, however. Campesino attacks on landholders were common, as were land invasions. The local oligarchy staunchly opposed the initiative, as did the United Fruit Company, an American conglomerate that possessed vast tracts of territory and was the dominant player in the country's economic life.

As part of the initiative, Guatemala expropriated some 200,000 acres of United Fruit-owned land. Following international law, the government offered compensation

in the amount of \$600,000, a figure based on the underestimated land values the company itself had declared in order to avoid taxes. But United Fruit vigorously protested what it regarded as inadequate compensation.

Because both Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and his brother, CIA Director Allen Dulles, owned stock in United Fruit, some have speculated that personal financial interests influenced their policy decisions on Guatemala. In their 1982 book, *Bitter Fruit*, authors Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger assert that the company played a decisive role in encouraging the Eisenhower administration to depose Arbenz. However, there is no proof that United Fruit had any role in organizing the 1954 coup or in executing it, though the company presumably welcomed Arbenz's ouster.

In any case, José Manuel Fortuny, the former leader of the Guatemalan Communist Party, said United Fruit's role was irrelevant. "They [the U.S.] would have overthrown us even if we had grown no bananas," he said, as quoted in a study by Stephen M. Streeter of Canada's McMaster University.

John Foster Dulles concurred. Commenting just a few weeks before the coup against Arbenz, he said, "If the United Fruit matter were settled, if they gave a gold piece for every banana, the problem would remain as it is today as far as the presence of communist infiltration in Guatemala is concerned."

Against this background, the Eisenhower administration launched a public relations campaign to demonize Arbenz as a communist, even though there was scant evidence to support that view. In March 1954 the *New York Times* published a story headlined "How the Communists Won Control in Guatemala" — just four days before an Organization of American States meeting in Caracas. At that session, John Foster Dulles goaded Latin American foreign ministers into adopting a resolution insinuating that Arbenz was indeed a communist. The vote was 17-1, with the lone negative vote cast by Guatemalan Foreign Minister Guillermo Toriello, who had delivered an impassioned plea for rejection of the measure.

### A Coup Is Born

Undeterred by American opposition to his policies, Arbenz carried his activism beyond Guatemala's borders. His government became allied with a group called the Caribbean Legion, which took a strong stand against rightist dictatorships in the region. Many of the Legion's

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*George Gedda, a frequent contributor to the Journal, is the State Department correspondent for the Associated Press.*

targets were friendly to the United States, including Nicaragua, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.

With the Cold War at a peak, American officials were concerned that Latin American democracies might not have the spine to deal with communists and other non-democratic elements in their midst. This certainly was the view of Kennan, one of the State Department's leading Soviet-affairs experts.

In particular, they were concerned that Arbenz's land reform program could plant the seeds of peasant rebellion elsewhere in the region. In his 1991 book, *Shattered Hope*, historian Piero Gleijeses writes that a State Department official warned in late 1953 that Guatemala threatened the stability of Honduras and El Salvador because "its agrarian reform is a powerful propaganda weapon; [and] its broad social program of aiding the workers and peasants in a victorious struggle against the upper classes and large foreign enterprises has a strong appeal to the populations of Central American neighbors where similar conditions prevail."

It was in this late-1953 period that the Eisenhower administration dispatched career Foreign Service officer John Peurifoy to Guatemala as ambassador. Peurifoy had a well-deserved reputation for toughness. He was asked to assess the degree of communist infiltration in Guatemala and to inform Arbenz that any such penetration must be rooted out. As he reported back to Dulles, there were indeed communists in the government and the Congress. They were small in number but nonetheless served as lightning rods for U.S. disapproval of the Arbenz government.

Understandably feeling insecure, Arbenz was in the market for weapons by early 1954. (The United States had cut off military aid to Guatemala in 1944 after a revolution deposed the dictatorship of President Jorge Ubico.) So Arbenz's government looked for help in Europe, where his agents purchased several hundred thousand dollars worth of arms from a dealer in Czechoslovakia, a loyal Soviet ally. When the shipment was discovered aboard the freighter *Alfem* in May 1954, American suspicions about Soviet bloc influence in Guatemala were reinforced. But the shipment turned out to be less of a smoking gun than many people initially thought. The State Department concluded that the Czech dealer had no links to the Czech government. The weapons also turned out to have an odd pedigree: they were leftovers from the Nazi era.

In any case, the CIA-backed operation against Arbenz, code-named "PBSuccess," was already unfolding at the time of the weapons discovery. On June 17, 1954, Carlos Castillo Armas, a retired Guatemalan colonel recruited by



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*At a minimum, it is clear  
that the Eisenhower  
administration  
intervened without much  
of a plan beyond getting  
rid of Arbenz.*

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the CIA, entered the country with his "Liberation Army," a ragtag group of 150 CIA-trained and armed Guatemalan rebels. In a paper written in 2001, before he joined the State Department, Latin American historian Douglas Kraft describes what transpired:

"Fully aware of Castillo Armas' weakness, Arbenz held the utmost trust in Guatemala's ability to defeat the rebels. When they attacked by land in Zacapa and by sea at Puerto Barrios, the rebels encountered fierce opposition. ... With the Liberation Army stalled, the CIA launched a psychological attack on Arbenz. Jamming Guatemalan radio waves and broadcasting fictitious reports of an advancing rebel force, the CIA worked to unnerve the Guatemalan Army. Simultaneously, CIA bombers strafed Guatemala City streets and dropped small bombs to arouse fear among the local population. ... Senior Guatemalan officers began to fear that the United States might invade should the rebel incursion fail.

"By June 25, these fears circulated at the front, and Guatemala's military forces at Zacapa refused to engage the Liberation Army. The military had effectively turned

against Arbenz. His alternatives narrowed, the Guatemalan president ordered the military to arm peasant and labor organizations in a last-ditch effort to stop Castillo Armas. The order represented Arbenz's fatal error. Entrusting the nation's defense to a band of peasants represented a vote of no confidence in the military. What little loyalty Arbenz still enjoyed evaporated."

Arbenz was forced out of office just 10 days after the coup began. He resigned the presidency on June 27, 1954, after seeking refuge in the Mexican embassy. He went into exile shortly thereafter, dying in 1971 at age 58 in Mexico without ever again seeing his beloved homeland. His ashes were returned in October 1995 and sit in a white tomb topped with a pyramid shaped monument in the capital's Central Cemetery.

Disingenuously, the State Department said Arbenz was the victim of a popular uprising. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter American Affairs Henry Holland, without referring to the CIA role, said, "The people of Guatemala rose and dispersed the little group of traitors who had tried to subvert their government into another communist satellite." Arbenz, not surprisingly, had a different perspective. "Our crime," Arbenz explained in his resignation speech, "is having enacted an agrarian reform which affected the interests of the United Fruit Company."

As part of CIA planning before the invasion, the agency compiled a list of Guatemalans to be neutralized through murder, imprisonment or exile, according to declassified CIA documents. Latin America researcher Peter Kornbluh, of the private National Security Archives, said the "A" list of those to be assassinated contained 58 names. Planning for

assassinations included budgeting, training programs, creation of hit teams and transfer of armaments. The CIA has said it did not implement the assassination strategy, but Kornbluh points out that the names of the targeted individuals were deleted from the declassified documents, making it impossible to know whether any were killed in the aftermath of the coup.

The United States maneuvered to have Castillo Armas lead the new government, a choice viewed with revulsion by many military and non-military Guatemalans both because he had conspired with a foreign power against the sovereignty of the Guatemalan nation and because he lacked credentials to lead the country. One of Castillo Armas' first acts was to suspend the constitution. He also reversed the confiscation of United Fruit's land. In 1956, the Eisenhower administration gave him a red-carpet welcome to Washington and arranged for a ticker-tape parade in New York. But Castillo Armas never won the affections of Guatemalans; he was assassinated by a member of the presidential guard in July 1957.

### A Terrible Legacy

The United States paid a steep price internationally for its role in bringing Arbenz down, especially in Latin America. Adolphe Berle, the State Department's troubleshooter for Latin America, told his diary: "We eliminated a communist regime at the expense of having antagonized half the hemisphere." Kalman Silvert, a Latin American studies specialist, reported in 1956 that a famous Mexican bookstore had sold thousands of books by Arbenz's supporters, but only five copies of the most prominent book by a defender of the coup.

About a decade later, a ferocious civil war began in Guatemala.

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*Disingenuously,  
the State Department  
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Peasants, perhaps inspired by the Cuban revolution, launched an insurgency in response to increasingly extreme inequalities in income and a political system that ignored calls for reform. The conflict was to last 30 years.

A 1999 report by the independent "Historical Clarification Com-

mission" estimated that 150,000 Guatemalans were killed in the war and 50,000 more disappeared, almost all civilians; the army razed a reported 440 villages suspected of pro-guerrilla sympathies. Because most of the dead were indigenous Mayans, who represent more than half the country's total population, the commission concluded that the state had committed "acts of genocide." Although the war received scant international attention, the death toll exceeded the combined total of killings in the far more publicized Chilean, Argentine and El Salvadoran conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s. The fighting did not end until the 1996 signing of a peace agreement between the Guatemalan government and the URNG rebel group. The agreement was designed to lay the groundwork for significant reforms and lasting peace. It called for a reduction in the size of the mil-

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itary, recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and altering the drastically unequal system of land ownership.

The promise of the accords has never been fulfilled, however. A major setback occurred in 1999, when a referendum on proposed constitutional reforms — a key to implementation of the accords — failed by 55 to 45 percent. For unexplained reasons, the turnout was disappointingly small: only 19 percent of those eligible voted. Defeat meant a significant loss of momentum toward a demilitarized, multi-ethnic democracy.

Another setback occurred when Guatemala failed to qualify for significant postwar reconstruction assistance from international lending institutions. Isaac Cohen, a Washington-based Guatemalan who keeps tabs on the country's politics, says the country's internal tax revenues fell short of these institutions' requirements. Accordingly, Guatemala received only about half the funding it would otherwise have been entitled to, and lacked the resources to carry out the promised reforms.

The end of the war failed to yield a significant improvement in the human rights situation. An August 2002 report by the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala documented "threats of assassination of human rights defenders, church workers, judges, witnesses, journalists, political activists and labor unionists." Lynchings and mob violence continued. Illegal groups and clandestine structures operated with impunity. In January 2003, the newspaper *Prensa Libre* reported that 134 judges had received death threats over the preceding several years.

But 2003 may have represented a turning point. Last November, Guatemalan voters emphatically

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*Like most*

*Latin American land  
reform programs,  
Guatemala's did  
not go smoothly.*

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rejected the presidential candidacy of Efraín Ríos Montt, a retired general who led the country as military dictator in 1982-83, one of the bloodiest civil war periods. He finished a distant third. The country's new president, Oscar Berger, is seen by many Guatemalans as a welcome change from his discredited predecessor, Alfonso Portillo, who fled the country soon after Berger's inauguration in late December, apparently to avoid corruption charges.

Berger indeed seems determined to clean up government. He has required all the members of his cabinet and subordinates to abide by a code of ethics. He has taken steps to cut down on crime and to improve the rights of women as well as the traditionally marginalized indigenous population. He also wants to cut armed forces personnel to 14,000 from 31,000, for a savings of \$44 million. Some of these funds will be used to upgrade public transportation. Some military personnel who agree to accept voluntary retirement will be offered new positions as police officers or prison system employees.

These changes suggest that the military no longer will enjoy the highly privileged position it acquired during the post-Arbenz years when

it made common cause with the oligarchy. The goal of that alliance was to ensure that Arbenz-style social reformers were kept at bay. In large measure, this objective was achieved — but at extraordinarily high cost.

### **The Lessons of History**

Drawing lessons from the 1954 experience in Guatemala is not easy; no two situations that feed U.S. interventionist impulses are exactly alike. The Guatemala of 50 years ago was different from the Iran of 1953, the Cuba of 1961, the Dominican Republic of 1965, the Chile of 1973, the Grenada of 1983, the Panama of 1989, or the Iraq of 2003. In each case, the United States stepped in to protect its interests against perceived threats, with varying results.

Did the CIA intervention rob Guatemala of a democratic hero and lay the groundwork for the civil war that followed? Or did the agency's actions merely tip the balance against an unpopular government that may have eventually fallen from its own weight? State Department researchers embrace the latter thesis. They say that Arbenz's support had dwindled sharply, consisting mostly of the estimated 100,000 peasant families who had benefited from his agrarian reform. They also believe that the link between his ouster and the 30-year civil war that followed is tenuous, noting that the conflict did not begin until 10 or so years after Arbenz fled.

Others have a less charitable view about what the CIA action wrought. "The CIA intervention began a ghastly cycle of violence, assassination and torture in Guatemala," says Stephen G. Rabe, a historian from the University of Texas at Dallas. "The Guatemalan intervention of 1954 is the most important event in the history of U.S. relations with Latin America. It really set the



NSC Document 10/2,  
 issued in 1948,  
 authorized economic  
 warfare, preventive direct  
 action, subversion against  
 hostile states, and support  
 of indigenous  
 anticomunist elements.

precedent for later interventions in Cuba, British Guiana (now Guyana), Brazil and Chile. The tactics were the same, the mindset was the same, and in many cases the people who directed those covert interventions were the same.”

The truth probably lies somewhere between those two extremes. Given the perceived need among those in power in Washington to contain communism, the choices they made in Guatemala were not entirely unreasonable, at least in the short term. Indeed, the coup may have helped prevent Guatemala from becoming a Soviet beachhead in the Americas, or (more likely) from serving as a model for radicals elsewhere in Central America.

But at a minimum, it is clear that the Eisenhower administration intervened without much of a plan beyond getting rid of Arbenz. And the horrors Guatemala endured during the final decades of the last century suggest that U.S. interventions sometimes lead to less-than-sunny outcomes for the targeted countries. ■



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**Susan Maitra, Foreign Service Journal**  
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**Deadline for submissions is Sept. 1.**

# THE AFRICA FILE, PART II: HELPING TO BUILD SUCCESS

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MEMBERS SHARE MORE STORIES OF PROGRESS FROM AROUND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

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*Last month, we presented some of the responses to our AFSANet invitation for Africa hands to share success stories. Here are more of those vignettes. Again, our thanks to all who contributed.*

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

## **Bicycle Diplomacy**

John Osiri is a village elder in a remote region of western Kenya, who is also the chairman of a rural AIDS support group. He became HIV-positive after inheriting his dead brother's wife, who had been infected by her husband. Osiri knew he could get the disease but was caught in a dilemma, as the culture of his Luo tribe dictates that the family line be continued through the practice of wife inheritance.

In June 2001, Osiri met an American photographer, Andrew Petkun, who had been documenting the human face of HIV/AIDS since 1999 throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Petkun was touring Kenya on behalf of Embassy Nairobi's public affairs section, working with local photojournalists.

"We are sometimes visited by people who take our pictures and show their concern, but then they go, and we never hear from them again," Osiri told Petkun. "If only we had a bicycle, so that we could visit other members of our group in the countryside whom we comfort..."

"You come from the land of Mr. Bush," Osiri continued. "All we ask is to live what is left of our lives with some dignity."

Petkun explained that working independently, without the backing of a charitable organization, he would be unable to help in a sustained way, but said he would tell Osiri's story to anyone who would listen back in America. In addition, from his own pocket Petkun gave Osiri \$100, enough money to feed the elder and his group for a month.

Petkun kept his promise and told Osiri's story to the people he lectured throughout the U.S. One State Department

colleague in Washington was so moved that she offered to help pay for a bicycle, as did Embassy Nairobi employees.

In March 2004, Public Affairs programmed Petkun once more, this time to travel with another group of Kenyan photojournalists to visit urban slums and villages and to talk to sex workers, widows, students, orphans, as well as volunteers and scientists who are making a difference in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

In three years, considerable progress had been made, with greater acknowledgement of the disease and positive actions being taken at numerous counseling and self-help centers throughout the country, with the commitment of the U.S. mission in Kenya, including USAID, the Centers for Disease Control, the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit and the Peace Corps.

There was also hope and progress for John Osiri. When Petkun returned to Osiri's village, the first words from a healthier and younger-looking Osiri were: "This is the bicycle." He then proceeded to introduce his two-year-old son, Andrew Petkun Osiri.

*Richard Mei Jr.  
Information Officer  
Embassy Nairobi*

## **The Last Flight to Enugu: A Slice of Life in Lagos**

Anybody who knows anything about Nigeria and Nigerian politics, an admittedly deep and perplexing topic, knows that April 18, 2003, was the day before Nigeria's presidential elections (and Good Friday to boot). Yet, I was foolhardy enough to think that we could leave our place on Victoria Island at 2:30, make an intermittent stop on Ikoyi to collect my colleague Kate, her husband Larry and their 2-year-old daughter Sara and still make a 5:30 flight. Boy, was I naïve and in for some very interesting life lessons. ...

As we meandered toward the airport, we became increasingly entangled in a traffic standoff with what I would

call a “crushmobile.” You guessed it: a small sedan maneuvered its way into the intersection blocking our heavy truck. Ahead of us lay the open road. In the midst of a gentle rain, I jumped out of the vehicle and, taking advantage of my thick American accent, appealed to the driver’s sense of patriotism. “We’re international election observers here to support Nigeria’s democratic dispensation; please let us pass.” (I later learned that was too much grammar. I could have just said “ejo-o” or “A-beg-o.”) Finally, she relented. Relieved, I signaled to our driver to move, but no sooner had the first obstacle been removed than another took its place.

Finally, we reached the airport, which was, in a word, chaos: people, cars, luggage. Our travel assistants said that as they did not have our tickets, they could not get boarding passes and that we had to talk to the airline manager, Chase. Despite our appeals, he did not or could not help us. At last he said, “Just go. We’ll work it out.”

We waited and waited, until finally the call came: “EAC Airline announces its flight to Enugu.” The ground crew had us queue in about four different lines and locations, ever careful to keep us off the plane. “Mothers with young children, please form a line here,” one attendant said. This game went on and on for an hour and 25 minutes. We could have flown to Enugu in the time it took us to queue. At one point, the word came that there were no more seats. Sorry-o. Kate was beside herself: she, Larry and Sara left.

Then, as the ground crew began to remove the stairs, a rich oga clad in a beautiful agbada appeared asking for seats for the family. I believe he ordinarily would have succeeded in getting his way but his entourage, including a wife and three children, was just too big. Watching the oga, my husband Zac said: “Wait here. We’re going to make it.”

And, almost as if by magic or divine intervention, Nigeria again surprised me. The crew returned the stairs and allowed us to board. A member of the flight crew gave me his seat and escorted Zac to the cockpit. We had boarded the last flight to Enugu.

The journey, I believe, holds lessons for Nigeria’s democratic dispensation. There will be obstacles along the path to national development. No sooner do you clear one than another will emerge. There will be points along the way where you won’t agree or don’t communicate effectively. Nevertheless, drawing upon your spirit of creativity, resourcefulness, persistence and love of country, I

am persuaded you will soar to even greater heights.

*Atim Eneida George  
Public Affairs Officer  
Consulate General Lagos*

### **Protecting Child Witnesses in South Africa**

Thousands of child witnesses pass through South Africa’s courts. As 33 courts handle sexual offenses alone and crime is endemic, the justice system depends to a great extent on the testimonies of young witnesses and victims of crime. Child witnesses, many of whom have endured abuse and

emotional trauma, lack an understanding of the court process. As a result, they provide ineffective testimony which, in turn, leads to fewer convictions.

With the support of USAID, the Unit for Child Witness Research and Training has developed and piloted South Africa’s first child witness preparation program. Dr. Karen Muller, a lawyer and researcher who

has devoted her career to assisting child witnesses, stores her most useful tools in a plain white plastic box in the office she and a colleague share at Cape Town’s Vista University. From the box emerge a puzzle, a court procedure timeline, role-playing games and “Zack and Thandi,” characters from a story of two child witnesses that allows children to feel they are not alone in witnessing crime.

Extensive research, 500 interviews with young witnesses and consultative workshops with judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers and police, have helped Child Witness Research gain an understanding of the fears and misperceptions that hamper children in the court room. Common misunderstandings relate to court terminology; many children, for example, confuse prosecutor with executor. Ninety percent of young witnesses wet themselves on the stand. Most children suffer emotional stress during long waiting periods before trials.

By law, child testimony in South Africa must take place in a separate room and be broadcast live in court on a closed-circuit TV system. Only the most distraught youngsters have access to an intermediary — a trained social worker who simplifies complex questions. Most children endure the intimidating trial process alone.

Child Witness Research developed a witness preparation program for children between the ages of 6 and 12. The children are introduced to the courtroom and its procedures; they are told how to talk, what to wear to trial, the meaning of an oath, their role in court and what happens on trial day.

## ***The journey, I believe, holds lessons for Nigeria’s democratic dispensation.***



From the first trial test, the behavioral transformation among the children was beyond what any of the team had hoped. Children previously isolated by abuse and fear learned to trust each other. Reticent children started to speak, interact and participate. The program's impact may be best described by a mother interviewed after the pilot, "This program has given me back my child; her character has come back."

The Child Witness Research unit has finalized 10 hour-long modules that are highly adaptable to any context of work with young witnesses. The South African Justice Department has been closely consulted throughout the design of the program. New legislation is under consideration that would grant all child witnesses assistance from a court intermediary. The innovative child witness preparation program has already attracted the attention of international donors who have suggested it be adopted in other regions of Africa.

*Reverie Zurba  
Information Officer  
USAID, Pretoria*

### **Adventure and Hard Work in Niger**

Niger's problems remain enormous, perhaps insoluble. It's the world's second poorest country, with fragile institutions, and it's located in an environmentally harsh and politically turbulent region.

I title my orientation presentation to newly arrived Peace Corps trainees "Adventures in Service," emphasizing that to be successful in Niger they will need a taste for adventure as well as dedication to serving others. Most of them seem to have both in abundance. One recent event highlighted the adventure side of the ledger.

Three of our current Volunteers decided for their vacation to retrace the voyage down the Niger River of Mungo Park, the 19th-century explor-

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## ***The people of Volunteer Brendan St. Amant's village wanted one of these health huts, and Brendan made sure that they got it.***

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er who discovered and mapped its course. They took a bus from Niamey to Gao, in Mali, where they rented a bush taxi to take them to Timbuktu. After a couple of days there, they purchased a typical wooden pirogue and spent the next 18 days floating down the river from Timbuktu to Niamey. Just writing the place names evokes *National Geographic* images. What an adventure!

But the Peace Corps experience in Niger isn't all adventure. In fact, it's mostly hot, hard, frustrating work in difficult conditions and with few resources. Yet the Volunteers are able to accomplish a great deal for the people they are here to serve, and the satisfaction they get from this service matches the excitement life here can bring.

In Niger, the health system is rudimentary at best. There are hospitals, staffed by doctors, in a dozen of the largest towns; and clinics, staffed by nurses, in some of the larger regional villages. Most people, however, have little, if any, access to health care. Niger has fewer than 250 doctors (about the same number you would expect to find in an American city of 100,000 people) to serve a population of 12 million; and annual per capita expenditure on health care is about \$10 (compared to \$5,440 in the U.S.).

To bring some limited, very basic

health care to more of the population, the government has a program to build "health huts" in 1,000 rural villages over a five-year period. These are one- or two-room buildings staffed by a high-school graduate with a few weeks of medical training and stocked with some basic medicines and first aid supplies.

The people of Volunteer Brendan St. Amant's village, located 17 kilometers from the nearest rural clinic, wanted one of these health huts, and Brendan made sure they got it. He went with village leaders to approach government officials (access is much easier if you have a foreigner along), worked with the building contractor during construction, arranged training for a young man from the village to become the health worker, and persuaded Catholic Relief Services to provide the initial stock of medicine and supplies when the government proved unable to do so. In short, he was the driving force behind the project.

We visited Brendan and his health hut in December 2003, and he told us about some of the many obstacles he had to overcome and the frustrations he experienced. Such a facility might not be a very difficult project in America, but in rural Niger it is a monumental accomplishment.

Activities like this — multiplied by an average of 100 Volunteers a year and extended over the 42 years that the Peace Corps has been active in Niger — have surely had a positive impact on how Americans and America are perceived by the people of this country.

*J.R. Bullington  
Peace Corps Country  
Director  
Niamey*

### **Tennis as a Tool of Diplomacy in Madagascar**

Upon my arrival in Antananarivo, Madagascar, in August 1981, it was clear that the government of President Didier Ratsiraka adhered to a policy of

anti-Americanism. Public pronouncements and media coverage left no ambiguity on the subject. Ratsiraka, a self-proclaimed Marxist, admired North Korea's Kim Il Sung and counted as his allies the Soviet Union, East Germany, Cuba and Libya. Madagascar was one of the few countries voting at the U.N. in favor of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

I was the chargé d'affaires and, as a keen tennis player, I made friends with several tennis buffs among President Ratsiraka's more moderate advisers. Both the president and I exchanged views and information through these individuals, minimizing the need for face-to-face contact where Ratsiraka might have become defensive. Gradually he came to realize, through our persistent personal diplomacy, that we were not working at odds with his regime.

With Ambassador Fred Rondon in

Washington, I led the first bilateral negotiations (PL-480, Title I) with the socialist regime as my initial task in the country. The Reagan White House and the Malagasy leadership fully expected the negotiations to break down, though for different reasons. Our team remained steadfast, however, determined to see an agreement come to fruition. An agreement was achieved through a lot of tweaking and resulted in unexpected favorable publicity for the U.S.

Natural disasters, such as a series of five cyclones, subsequently gave us an opportunity to build upon this initial gesture of good will by providing economic and humanitarian assistance. As we worked to assist Madagascar in recognizing its self-inflicted economic problems, Ratsiraka remained obstinate, but his resistance gradually wore down.

The keys to American efforts in

turning his pro-Soviet regime to a more acceptable nonaligned policy were several. The constancy of the message delivered in a non-provocative manner to the Malagasy government by the U.S. embassy along with our Western allies and neutral colleagues was a major factor. The great support that we received from USAID's Regional Economic Development Support Offices in Kenya and backup in Washington provided the embassy with the means to demonstrate our good intentions.

President Ratsiraka's position on the U.S. softened to the point of acceptance of a greater American role in his country. This led to initiating a self-help program, inviting a Peace Corps contingent, establishing a USAID mission and close ties to American and French military training programs. Such activities were impossible to achieve in the political

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climate that existed in 1981.

One particular event stood out and was cited on numerous occasions by Ratsiraka as proof that he was attentive to American concerns. The question of Puerto Rico seemed destined to become an agenda item at the U.N. General Assembly in the autumn of 1982. It was an issue being monitored closely by the White House. As chargé, I explained the status and circumstances of Puerto Rico to several of my Malagasy tennis partners, asking specifically that this information be conveyed to Ratsiraka. He had already committed his support to his Cuban friends who were behind the initiative.

However, Ratsiraka became convinced by my argument and changed his position to an abstention. Although he felt he was betraying Cuba, President Ratsiraka used his change of vote as a showpiece of his good will toward the U.S. He was actively lobbying the radical non-aligned leaders for elite status in their select club at the time.

*William Boudreau*  
*FSO, Retired*  
*Seabrook Island, S.C.*

### **Assisting Nigeria's Gum Arabic Exports Boom**

"Two years ago, Nigeria could not export its gum arabic to the United States market, but today the story is different. We cannot even meet the U.S. demand," says Bello Abba Yakasai, national coordinator for the U.S. Agency for International Development's gum arabic program.

In early 2002, USAID began a gum arabic farming training program to ensure both higher yields and better quality of Nigerian-produced gum arabic, a natural compound used in many processed foods. Yakasai says the program helped establish the National Association of Gum Arabic Producers, Processors and Exporters of Nigeria, developed and upheld

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*At the age of 12,  
Mercy found herself  
living on the streets of  
Lagos with no education,  
no family and  
no home.*

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industry standards, enhanced the gum arabic trade and created jobs.

Working closely with private companies, the program has developed a profitable gum arabic market in northern Nigeria, Yakasai says. While Nigeria has exported 11,000 tons of gum arabic to the U.S. since the program began, he says U.S. companies are placing more orders for Grade 1, which is the highest grade.

"The U.S. market is ready to buy every ton of Grade 1-type gum arabic produced in Nigeria, but we do not have the capacity to supply them," says Bello Dantata, NAGAPPEN assistant national secretary and export manager of Dansa Food Processing, a subsidiary of the Dangote Group.

Dansa's collaboration with USAID is an excellent example of the program's benefits. Just two years into the program, Dantata gives proud tours of the Dansa quality control laboratory and of gum arabic warehouses, where scientifically produced, high-grade Nigerian gum arabic is ready for export to the U.S. and European markets.

Overall, the USAID program trained approximately 200 farmers and traders from Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kano and Yobe states. These stakeholders learned better practices for the management of gum arabic

plantations to improve output and marketing. Meanwhile, the U.S. private sector helped by defining product standards, preparing training materials and providing technical advice during training workshops.

USAID also bought and installed laboratory equipment used to ensure and certify the quality of gum produced.

*Sani Mohammed*  
*Embassy Abuja*

### **"The Patient Dog Eats the Fattest Bone," Says U.S. Scholarship Winner**

Mercy Ighodalo was born on June 15, 1988, in Uromi, a village in Nigeria's Edo state. Her mother was a hairdresser, but due to financial constraints Mercy was handed over to a friend of her mother's in Lagos when she was 4 years old.

For seven years, Mercy lived in Ikeja, where she attended primary school until her mother's friend suddenly traveled overseas. Before traveling, the friend placed Mercy in another house and left money for Mercy to continue her education. However, the new guardian refused to further Mercy's education and decided to use her as house help instead.

In the new house, Mercy's foster siblings treated her badly, teasing her that she was an orphan. One day, after a bout of incessant teasing, Mercy fought back. Unfortunately, her will to stand up for herself prompted this newest guardian to throw Mercy out onto the Lagos streets. At the age of 12, Mercy found herself living on the streets of Lagos with no education, no family and no home.

Luckily, a policewoman found Mercy and took her to a police station, where she waited two months for the police to track down her guardian. By that time, the guardian had moved, forcing the police to place Mercy in



the Government Remand Home in Lagos. A social welfare officer there interviewed Mercy, discovered she was from Uromi and transferred her back to the Government Remand Home in Edo State.

In Edo, though, no one accepted Mercy's identity. Rejected by her own people in Uromi, she was placed in the St. Maria Goretti Girls Grammar School in Benin City. The principal of the school graciously accepted her, even though money was lacking to pay for her studies.

Finally, in January 2003, Mercy received an application for the U.S. ambassador's Girls' Scholarship Program. The program offered Mercy the possibility of finally completing her education. She applied and was accepted.

"I never knew of the possibility of having a scholarship," Mercy says. "It is a surprise to me and I thank God for

it." Mercy's scholarship was disbursed this year and is intended to cover one term's school fees.

"So the patient dog eventually ate the fattest bone," Mercy says, thanks to the U.S. scholarship program.

*Mike Hankey*

*Information Officer*

*Consulate General Lagos*

### **Exchange Program Fuels Progress in Ghana**

As a participant in this year's Senior Seminar, I did an individual research project that looked at the impact of time spent in North America on 12 Ghanaians who studied or worked abroad and then returned home, where they became agents of social change. My research focused not on the technical skills and knowledge the Ghanaians acquired in the U.S. and Canada, but on changes in their perspectives, attitudes and

values, and on how those changes affected their behavior and their aspirations for themselves and their country.

Their experiences provide valuable insights into how the United States, by offering academic and work opportunities to people from other countries, can contribute to building better, more liberal societies in the developing world.

These 12 (and many more like them) are putting into practice their new liberal values and attitudes in a broad range of fields, contributing to Ghana's development and serving as role models for the wider society. Their actions support and strengthen Ghana's reform program, which our government endorses and supports. With their American-style "can do" approach and a new willingness to take risks for change, they are setting a new standard, and paving the way

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for yet further progress. And where they can, they are building institutions inspired by their American experiences.

Without exception, they believe that their North American exposure is a key factor in making them who they are today. One of them summed it up nicely: "A lot of the people in Ghana who are making a difference are people who've developed a certain 'Western edge' to their skills, knowledge and values. Those who have lived and worked abroad, in responsible jobs where they had to be accountable, had to operate in a more democratic environment; they tend to bring something extra. ... There are very few people in Ghana [otherwise] who are likely to approach their work in a like manner."

For us as Americans (and as foreign policy professionals), an impor-

*When foreigners  
come here, they do more  
than gain skills and  
learn what America  
is like.*

tant lesson to be drawn from the transformation these Ghanaians experienced is that U.S. government exchange programs — and policies that make it possible for foreigners to come here through other means — are important tools in our foreign policy package. When foreigners

come here, they do more than gain skills and learn what America is like. Living and working in the United States can help them become people whose values, attitudes, and aspirations for their own countries are in harmony with our country's policies.

By practicing democratic values and modeling participatory citizenship — in big ways and small, in their classrooms and offices, in their everyday lives and on the public stage — these pioneers are building an environment in which democracy as a political system will have a better chance of surviving. And this is all part of a process that can help build a world that is better, and perhaps ultimately safer, for all of us.

*Brooks Anne Robinson  
Senior Seminar  
National Foreign Affairs  
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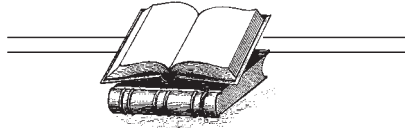
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# BOOKS

## The Post-9/11 World

### **After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy**

Noah Feldman, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003, \$24.00, hardback, 264 pages.

### **An Alliance at Risk: The United States and Europe Since September 11**

Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, translated by George A. Holoch Jr., The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003, \$19.95, hardback, 140 pages.

REVIEWED BY  
BENJAMIN R. JUSTESEN

The coming U.S. presidential campaign promises more fireworks than light on such issues as Iraqi-style democracy and the fragile Western alliance. Thoughtful readers should welcome Noah Feldman's *After Jihad* and Laurent Cohen-Tanugi's *An Alliance at Risk*, both written before the Iraq War, as food for sober thought.

In *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy*, Feldman, a New York University law professor with a doctorate in Islamic thought, explores prospects for the emergence of Islamic democracy in the post-9/11 world. American leaders, he argues, should beware of supporting Middle Eastern regimes which lack popular support. Even if democracy may be unpredictable in the short term, encouraging its development is the only way to

*Feldman carefully distinguishes between Islamic democrats and far more radical Islamists, who reject Western values.*



ensure global peace. Feldman's message is timely, as Iraq approaches its new crossroads.

Western skeptics may warn that Islam and democracy are incompatible, and that popularly elected regimes — particularly those led by strong Islamist parties — may lead to less stability, not more. But Feldman sees a worse scenario: the inevitable “tragedy” if Islamic democracy does not emerge because America sticks to its present policies for fear of unleashing unknown, potentially destructive forces.

A synthesis of incompatible ideas like Islam and democracy could well produce a hybrid ideological “bastard,” like Germany's National Socialism, as Feldman puts it, in a vast range of possible outcomes. Fortunately, a middle ground between autocratic Saudi leaders and ayatollah-led Iran — made up of peaceful, secular states with popularly-elected leaders who observe Islam but disavow jihad as a rallying cry and sharia as law — is possible.

Feldman carefully distinguishes between Islamic democrats — who would incorporate religion and its values into the greater life of a moderate, stable democratic state — and far more radical Islamists, who confound Western sensibilities by insisting Islam is “the only and comprehensive source of law and decision-making.”

Cautiously optimistic, he carefully explores current examples of political practice in Muslim nations, from the curious, gradual democratization in hard-line Iran to the emergence of a powerful role for religious parties in militantly secular Turkey. Conspicuously, longtime U.S. allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates remain decidedly and ironically undemocratic, having never allowed elections, he notes.

America's tenuous relationship with its truly democratic allies concerns Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, a Tunisian-born, Harvard-educated international lawyer. His cogent treatise — *An Alliance at Risk: The United States and Europe since September 11* — pleads for a “new Atlanticism,” a calm reconsideration of mutual interests by leaders on both sides.

Since 9/11, America has redefined its foreign policy toward a unilateral approach, a shift caused partly by the absence of European diplomatic and strategic leadership. Meanwhile, the fast-expanding European Union — an unwieldy body the author fears may soon bear





a “strange resemblance to the defunct League of Nations” — has only undermined once-solid Western goals, as evidenced in the Iraqi War run-up.

The question is not who is right — for neither side is, really — but what both sides can and should do to ward off a permanent estrangement, according to the author. Europe must learn to speak with a single voice on foreign policy issues, if it hopes to become an equal partner in world matters, or watch its strategic weakness spiral into virtual irrelevance. “In its own interests, even more than in the interests of its relationship with the United States, the European Union must therefore add to its multilateralist culture ... a genuine strategic dimension,” Cohen-Tanugi writes. To exert real influence on the United States, Europe must strengthen the transatlantic alliance and its own credibility by assuming a “more significant portion of the financial and military burdens of international security.” In other words, stop complaining and step up, cash and troops in hand.

What can America do for its part? Meet Europe halfway by re-emphasizing credible diplomacy and re-assuming its role as the international community’s leader, not just global policeman. In short, Cohen-Tanugi declares, the United States must “redefine its attitude to the developing world, and to the major global issues,” encouraging Arab democratization and integration into the world economy.

While hardly light summer reading, both volumes are well worth the effort.

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*Benjamin R. Justesen, a former Foreign Service officer, is the author of George Henry White: An Even Chance in the Race of Life (Louisiana State Press, 2001).*

## What Diplomacy Can Do

### Breaking the Real Axis of Evil: How to Oust the World’s Last Dictators by 2025

*Ambassador Mark Palmer, Rowman and Littlefield, 2003, \$27.95, hardcover, 321 pages.*

REVIEWED BY  
ELIZABETH SPIRO CLARK

The real “axis of evil” in the world, according to Mark Palmer, is its 45 remaining dictators. In *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil: How to Oust the World’s Last Dictators by 2025*, he calls on the U.S. to make the goal of getting rid of them a core objective of its foreign policy.

To make his case, the former ambassador to Hungary takes on two pillars of conventional wisdom: that it is naive to think we can impose democracy on other countries, and that U.S. interests require working with dictators to guarantee stability. Palmer rejects both claims, making a strong case that dictatorships are never in the U.S. interest. Far from guaranteeing stability, they harbor and support terrorists, criminals and each other. Furthermore, “our moral interest in democracy coincides completely with our interest in security and prosperity ... the world is really not divided between cultures, religions and economies but between democrats and dictators.” Even where the U.S. must work with strongmen, diplomats can and should also support internal democratic movements.

The most engrossing sections of the book are detailed accounts of the key roles diplomats Michael Armacost and Harry Barnes played in bringing democracy to the Philippines and Chile, respectively.

Armacost’s decision to attend the funeral of assassinated Filipino opposition leader Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino in 1983 kicked off a long diplomatic chess game to put Washington on the side of the democratic movement his murder energized. In Chile, Barnes played a key role, also at many junctures, in the 1988 plebiscite that led to Gen. Augusto Pinochet’s ouster. And in very different circumstances, Amb. Smith Hempstone in Kenya and Palmer himself in Hungary demonstrated how embassies (and groups of embassies) can become what the author calls “Freedom Houses,” pushing or nudging dynamic political situations to favor democracy.

Intriguingly, Palmer outlines what a nonviolent strategy for removing Saddam Hussein after the first Persian Gulf War might have looked like. Its centerpiece would have been an internationally recognized “Transitional Council” in the north and, ultimately, internationally supported strikes and mass demonstrations that would force Saddam’s removal. Given what we now know of Saddam’s slide into non-functionality, the case that this strategy would have been successful is plausible.

Palmer’s emphasis on targeting the dictators as individuals has pluses and minuses. He keeps the focus on overcoming the main obstacles to democratization (i.e., those in power) and avoids getting bogged down in determining what the “preconditions” for democracy are. But there is some artificiality in his “least-wanted 45” list (for example, China’s non-democracy is not really a dictatorship). And Palmer’s focus on individuals keeps him from taking up tricky issues of national and cultural pride.

Still, there is no disputing Palmer’s central point that, as in the period immediately following World War II, the world needs “new structures to

## BOOKS

reflect new realities.” For Palmer, the new reality is that dictators must be replaced by democracies. He does not rule out the use of military power, most promisingly in the context of international law enforcement, but his focus is on using the full range of non-violent options available to the U.S. and its allies. Toward that end, Palmer is for flooding the world with democracy-supporting organizations, such as “Global Students for Democracy” and “Business Community for Democracy.” He would also strengthen a movement he has helped organize, the intergovernmental Community of Democracies, and the nongovernmental World Movement for Democracy. And he would have the U.S. aim at a United

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*Even where the  
U.S. must work with  
strongmen,  
diplomats can and  
should also support  
internal democratic  
movements,  
Palmer says.*

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Nations that is a “democracy club.”

As those examples suggest, the “Palmer toolkit” properly emphasizes multilateral tactics, as these are most likely to overcome reactions to the U.S. as a democracy “crusade” leader. One hopes that this part of his message, in particular, reaches a wide audience. ■

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*Elizabeth Spiro Clark, a longtime member of the Journal's Editorial Board, was a Foreign Service officer from 1980 to 2000. A former fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy's International Forum for Democratic Studies, she is currently an associate at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University.*

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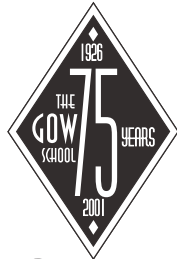
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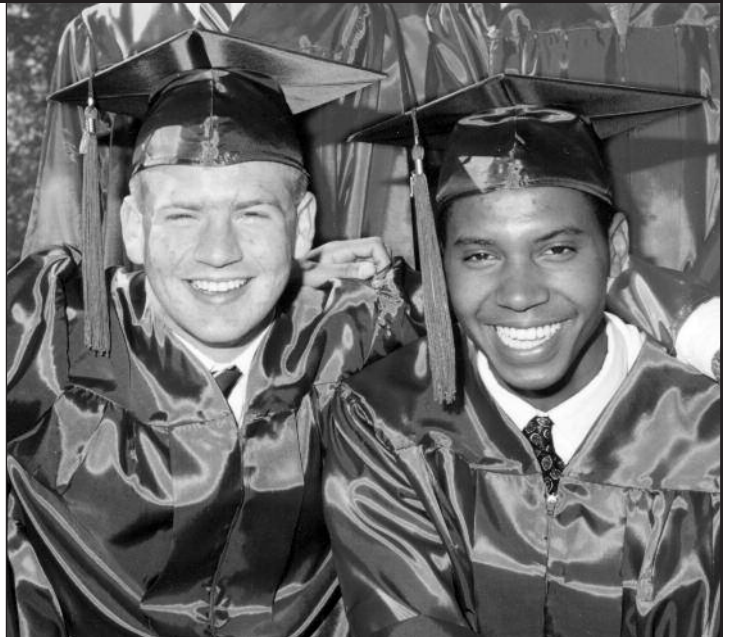
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A large, detailed sculpture of a hand holding a pen is the central focus on the left. To the right, the text 'Idyllwild arts academy' is displayed. Below the text, there are several smaller images: a student writing at a desk, a large orchestra performing, a dancer in mid-air, and a theater stage with performers.

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# A VILLAGE TO CALL HOME — GLOBAL NOMADS INTERNATIONAL

DESPITE SOMETIMES FEELING LIKE YOU'RE LIVING A FELLINI FILM,  
LIFE AFTER A FOREIGN SERVICE CHILDHOOD  
CAN INCLUDE A CLUB CALLED HOME.

By MIKKELA THOMPSON

**L**ong before Marshall McLuhan coined the phrase “Global Village” in 1967, the world was an actual village for the Foreign Service. But in all villages, you are not always part of the club. You can do drama, play sports, be a scout and play in the orchestra, but no matter how well-adjusted you are — despite your country-hopping and language dexterity — sometimes it’s nice to find others who are just like you. There are clubs for you which transcend time and place, virtual and actual. Last fall I was impressed to find my “tribe” — and their temporary village — at the Global Nomads conference at George Mason University (Oct. 24-26, 2003).

According to the organization’s founder, Norma McCaig, a Global Nomad is “anyone who has ever lived abroad before adulthood because of a parent’s occupational choice (with, for example, the diplomatic corps, religious or non-governmental missions, international business) or whose parents were/are abroad independently for career purposes.” This includes military brats, diplomatic brats, banking brats, missionary brats, teaching brats, expats, etc. There are many other terms for those who have had an internationally mobile childhood. “TCK” — or third culture kid — has been used since the 1960s, and there were representatives from that field of research at the conference too.

## Tantalizing Workshops

The Global Nomad conference brought together 100 participants from as far as Japan and Finland ranging in age from 18 to 70-plus, primarily women. It was sponsored by

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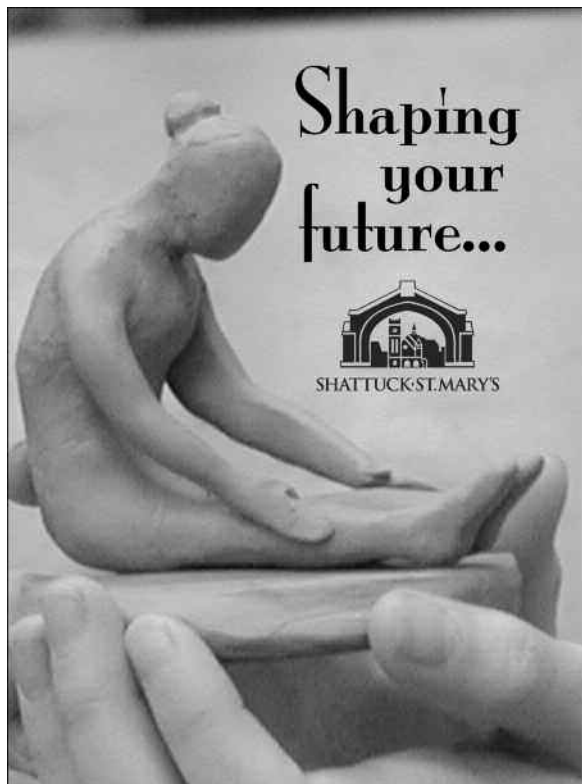
*Mikkela Thompson, a former FS child, is the Journal's Business Manager.*

Global Nomads International and Global Nomad Programs and Services of the Multicultural Research and Resource Center of George Mason University in cooperation with the Global Nomad Special Interest Group of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers: The Association of International Educators. The majority of the attendees were American passport-holders, but no one claimed to be only one thing. Although most wore Western-style clothes, one of the open sessions did involve a discussion about which clothes people had in their closet. More than one person admitted to not being willing to give up those “costumes” from other cultures. When asked to participate in a flag ceremony, no one was willing to walk with only one flag — as this would be disloyal to the others that represent who they are.


The weekend consisted of workshops, lectures, networking and socializing opportunities. The workshops included “Global Nomads As Cultural Bridges for the New Millennium,” “Images from the Journey: Writing as Process,” “Moving Past Uniqueness: Weaving the Threads of Shared Experience” — and many more tantalizingly self-reflective and psychologically stimulating courses such as “Growing Up Globally: Insights and A-ha’s;” “Together with (or without) Children: Global Nomads as Parents and Life Partners;” “Spirituality: Exploring Its Impact Then and Now;” “Are You Talking to *Moi*?: Global Nomads and Authority;” “If Only I’d Known!: Student Discussion about Life on Campus;” and “Onions or Artichokes: Exploring the Layers of the Rest of Our Lives.”

Unfortunately there was not time to attend all the sessions. After the general session, we raced around, talking in small groups, like electrons in a compression chamber — business cards zipping through the air. One young woman said to me, “Give me your card. I want to know you. But

*Continued on page 70*



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*Tradition moves  
but very slowly.*

you live here so we don't have to do it here." I completely concurred. And we have since struck up a pleasant friendship — locally.

**Life As a Fellini Film**

Each session started with a round of introductions in which all participants gave the rundown of passports, countries and schools they had attended. The first session I attended was "Spooks, Spies and Necessary Lies: Growing Up in the CIA," and I was fascinated to hear David Sanford's story. He had spent his childhood growing up as a Foreign Service child. After college he joined the Peace Corps. Then one day he went to his parents' home and noticed a new plaque on the mantel. The plaque commemorated a quarter-century with the CIA. It was his father's!

As David explained, it was as if his life had become a Fellini film. When he looked back on the last 25 years — his childhood — he could see all the events and coincidences that now suddenly made sense. He told about the time that he was in Iran in the Peace Corps — where mail took six days by caravan from Tehran. He received a letter three days after his mother had written it. He now understood that his father had been in the area on a covert mission, and had "dropped off" the letter. He recalled that when he called his father at the "office" — he never got him, but his father would get the message and call back. And as a result of his international childhood, he was a liberal. He demonstrated against Vietnam — while his father was the section chief for Southeast Asia.

After more frenetic greetings and business card exchanges in the hallways, I chose to attend "Between

*Continued on page 72*

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Continued from page 70

Borders: Experiences and Voices of Non-U.S. Global Nomads.” There I learned how problems are compounded when you are not a passport-holder of the country that you grew up in and choose to live in as an adult. One Japanese “nomad” spent many years in New York as the child of a corporate father, only to discover after college that she could not stay in the U.S. — no matter how American she felt or sounded. And then there was the United Nations-based nomad who had never lived in her native Mali. Once she became an adult and lost her U.N. passport, she discovered that there were countries in the world she could not visit — because they do not give Mali passport-holders entry! I heard many a “God Bless Canada” in this session — apparently the easiest way to live a life of freedom in the U.S. is to become a “landed immigrant” in Canada. For similar reasons, many non-U.S. nomads are highly educated — not out of studiousness, but to stay in the country of their choice.

For many in this category, especially the women, gender issues play a huge role. As one global nomad said, “tradition moves but very slowly.” The Malian explained how she did not even walk like a good Malian girl, but when she was back home she was expected to behave like a good daughter. As the eldest sibling and a female, she was expected to carry on the traditions of her family and keep in touch with her extended family. She felt like an outsider in her own country, so she chose to move to the U.S. as an adult. She said that she was not willing to step back into the expected role as a torch-bearer for tradition. In Mali, with her upbringing, she was told that she should be an ambassador’s wife. “No, I’d rather be the ambassador,” she replied.

The third session I joined was “The Heart of the Matter: Courting Global Nomad Style,” led by Anne-Marie Atkinson, a therapist specializing in relationships and herself a former FS child. The psychological game she used at the beginning of the session to

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*For many of the non-U.S. “nomads,” especially the women, gender issues play a huge role.*

demonstrate how extroverted nomads are was great fun. She then addressed the question of whether nomads approach dating differently because of their upbringing. Do we have different strengths and can we comfortably date people who have not moved around as children?

Global nomads tend to have had rich experiences in life and are therefore usually interesting to others. Global nomads know that they are fascinating, but generally do not come across as arrogant. As they are at ease talking to new people and have met people from all over, they see many more people as potential mates. But because they are used to a transient lifestyle, they can be too quick to dive into relationships. Global nomads find it easy to talk about rather personal matters quickly — a “confessional impulse” — so what a nomad may see as simply being chatty, others may interpret as real interest. Global nomads may rush into things: there is always a sense of urgency because they grew up knowing that there is always a departure date.

The weekend included the full spectrum of global life from morning yoga to “Schmoozing and Smooth Jazz” in the evening and lunches with sponsor-specific tables — e.g., Diplomatic Corps, Business, Military Brats. The last keynote speaker was Atsushi Furuiye from the Japanese chapter of Global Nomads. He explained how the Japanese government, until the 1980s, did not really recognize the children of their “foreign service (usually corporate)” and

*Continued on page 74*

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Continued from page 73

that the rigid Japanese education system did not bend for its expats. With the economic boom of the 1980s, Japan began to recognize that their urbane, English-speaking citizens were an asset — and hence Japanese nomads have a better situation now than they did 50 years ago.

The conference ended with special interest group meetings for writers, counselors, practitioners, advocates, campus and local group leaders, educators, coaches/cross-cultural trainers, researchers, conference 2004, GNI's Vision, mission and action, healing arts practitioners, information technology, and a farewell lunch and speeches. Lastly, there was a marketplace featuring the different organizations for the globally active — careers, volunteer work and projects. Representatives from the fields of international education and international development, NGOs, entrepreneurial efforts, cross-cultural training and intercultural edu-

*Most of the attendees claim five or more countries as part of their identity, and many have several passports.*

cation were all available for consultation. They also distributed material.

### A Hometown Club


Attending a conference like the GNI conference is a great way to make friends, but also a way to realize that you are not alone in your “specialness.” Most of the people at the conference speak three or more languages, claim five or more countries

as part of their identity, and many have several passports. It's wonderful to be part of a club where every introduction is a laundry list of countries of residence. Once the background information is out of the way, the friendships can commence.

Initially I was wary of the event — worried that it would be a bunch of hippies sitting around in a circle singing “Kumbaya.” While there was some of that, modern global nomads are less hippie and more hip. And there is room for both the hand-holding and the applause.




As a result of the conference, I joined the local chapter of Global Nomads International, Global Nomads Washington Area. (To join the list, send a blank message to [gnwa-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:gnwa-subscribe@yahoo.com).) They function primarily as a social group and meet about once a month for brunches, movie nights, etc., includ-

*Continued on page 77*



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In a large school, how do you hear the quiet voice, the thoughtful comment, the fresh insight? How do you notice the new confidence, the curiosity about chromosomes, the accurate corner kick? In a large school, you may recognize a girl by her face, but in a small school, you also know her by her sense of humor, that she always has M&Ms in her backpack, and that she wants to be a neuroscientist.

In his popular book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell offers examples of groups, from ancient religious sects to today's powerful corporations, that have known the value of "small." There is, in fact, something nearly magical about groupings of 150. "The Rule of 150," says Gladwell, "suggests that the size of a group...can make a big difference." As teachers and mentors, we know he is right.

In a small school, no one can hide. The 12th grade science teacher knows who in the ninth grade loves physics. The soccer coach knows the tennis players and the basketball fanatics. The yearbook advisor can tell you who has a great collection of jazz CDs. In a small school, every teacher knows every student, at least to say hello, to ask a question, to have a short conversation. And most teachers know many students extremely well—how they approach a new book or a problem, how they organize ideas, and what kind of praise means the most. In a small school, teachers truly can teach individuals—instead of just classes.

We can do better than "survival of the fittest" when it comes to educating girls. In a small school, there is no need to waste energy trying to be noticed. Every student has a front-row seat and can be seen for who she is, what she believes, and what she can do. Small is powerful. For girls especially, small means the difference in being heard, in being recognized, in making her mark. The goal, after all, has never been to shrink back but to step forward, to get involved, to be your best possible self.

In a small school, every girl learns that her participation and contribution make a difference. She becomes known for her leadership, determination, compassion, and honesty. And when she realizes how much her school (and the world) is depending on her and believes in her, she has the confidence to be bold, to risk failure, to stretch.

There is something impressive about girls working together, when they are happy, contributing, when they have ownership in their community. They will set their own standards and define their own expectations. Sure in the belief that they are valued and heard, they will have the confidence to resist the definitions our culture presents to them. They will decide on their own that history is more interesting than following the crowd, that writing poetry offers more reward than worrying about dress size, that genuine friendships are based on much more than looks or race or status.


The fact is, thinking big happens best in a small school. We want girls to dream big about their futures and create large visions of what they can do in the world. In a small school, we can know everyone well. And for girls to be known for something more than the color of their hair, or their baby tees, or their platforms, or their power beads, to be known instead for their skills and talents—for their intellects—what could be more powerful for girls than that?



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“For more information, contact the International Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools ([www.artsschoolsnetwork.org](http://www.artsschoolsnetwork.org)).”



Continued from page 74

*As one of the nomads said,  
“the hometown for global  
nomads is other people.”*

*It will be good to be  
home again.*

ing the annual cherry blossom parade and an annual holiday party. In a town of transients, it is a good way to meet others who are like you. And in what seems characteristic, wherever we go, we are always the most raucous and entertaining group. Yet it is also a very tolerant group. There is even room for the introverts.

Not surprisingly, there is an international trend toward studying the effects of a global upbringing. As I was raving about the conference to a friend in London in an e-mail, she forwarded information about a similar seminar in London. This seminar was on how growing up outside of the passport country can have a tremendous impact on a child. “Whether the experience is for as little as one year living in one foreign country, or for several moves between countries over a period of many years, the experience can change a child’s outlook forever,” stated the literature for this seminar, led by a “global nomad” who herself attended eight schools in three different languages before completing her secondary education. We are not alone. Almost word for word, the message is the same. This global nomad is now head of admissions at an international school in England.

It seems that much like many clubs, one cannot leave the global nomad lifestyle even as an adult. And who would want to? I am already eagerly awaiting the next global village meeting in the Washington, D.C., area in October 2004. As one of the nomads said, “the hometown for global nomads is other people.” It will be good to be home again. ■

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**FROM THE DECEMBER 2000 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT**  
**Pat Olsen, “Homeschooling FS Kids? It Worked for Us”**

“**B**ack in 1989, if you had asked me whether homeschooling might be a good option for my children, I would have answered with an emphatic ‘No!’ A Foreign Service spouse with three young boys, I was sure that homeschool was an option chosen only by missionaries and a few counter-culture types.

“Times have changed. Homeschooling is now a popular and culturally acceptable choice. Many resources exist to support homeschools and state education laws have been written to respond to the rise in homeschooled children. Here are some of them:

**WWW.HOME-ED-MAGAZINE.COM**

Library, resources, online newsletter, monthly publication. Look for their online Pocket Field Guide to Homeschooling. Click on “Resources – State Laws and Regulations.”

**WWW.NHEN.ORG**

The National Home Education Network

**WWW.UNSCHOOLING.COM**

Creating non-school learning environments

**WWW.CALVERTSCHOOL.ORG**

The Calvert School has offered homeschooling courses for almost 100 years.

**WWW.STATE.GOV/WWW.FLO/EDUCATION.HTML**

Family Liaison Office, Education. See Direct Communication Project Paper No. 30, The Home Study Option, available online

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[www.kentshill.org](http://www.kentshill.org)  
207-685-4914

### FROM THE DECEMBER 2003 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT Aster Grahn, "Getting an Internship: Some Tips"

"Internships are the best way to get real job experience and to start figuring out what you want to do professionally. Even if you don't yet know what field you are going into, an internship can be a great experience, and maybe help you to figure it out. Here, briefly, are some tools and tips to make the process as easy and painless as possible, from someone who has just done it. (For more detail, you may want to consult "An Internship Can Open Many Doors," by Tanja Trenz, in the June 2002 *FSJ*.)

"First things first: figure out what you're interested in and how to pursue it. Find out which companies dominate the field, or which organizations support your specific interests. Research is crucial in every step of the process; the more you know the better. Simple as it sounds, most companies and organizations list their internships on their Web sites, usually under "employment" or "vacancies." If you are in school, there is probably a career office or similar service on campus, and often they can put you in touch with alumni who are in positions that might interest you.

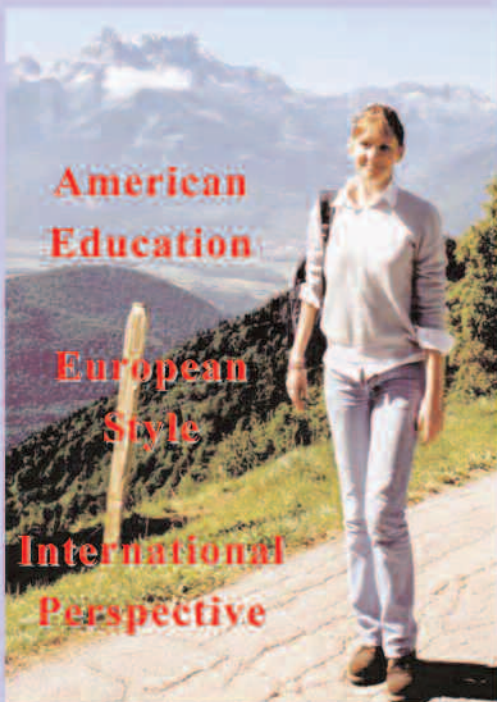
"If you don't have a professional field in mind, or don't know much about the job market in that field, start with a Web site like *MonsterTrak.com* ([www.monstertrak.com](http://www.monstertrak.com)). The main attraction is a database of companies looking for interns in fields from accounting to waste management and everything in-between. The site has a number of other useful features, including a major-to-career converter, a resumé center and a virtual interview program, to help out with the all-important application process.

"Begin applying for positions early, at least two to four months before you hope to start; longer if you're looking for a government position that requires a security clearance or background check, as nearly all do. Ask people you know whether they know of an opening or opportunity; they'll often be glad to help. Apply for more than one position; even if you have your heart set on one or think you're a shoo-in, it's always good to have a backup plan. Good luck!"





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 Web site: [www.las.ch](http://www.las.ch)

**FROM THE JUNE 2001 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT  
 Melanie Kerber, "In Search of That Special School"**

"An estimated 5 percent of students attending public school have been diagnosed with a specific learning disability. Improved assessment tools have helped with the process of identifying significantly more students with weaknesses not severe enough to qualify for academic support under the current federal guidelines. Frequently, parents of these students are frustrated by the lack of placement options, limiting them to selecting an academic program with few accommodations or a special class full of students with behavioral difficulties and low standards.

"Most Foreign Service families I speak with have made good use of the Family Liaison Office at State, which offers information, support, networking and referrals to a variety of agencies including schools, hospitals, outpatient services and testing

facilities. Other families use area educational consultants." Washington-area resources include:

**School Counseling Group**  
 (202) 333-3530  
[www.schoolcounseling.com](http://www.schoolcounseling.com)  
 E-mail: [guidance@schoolcounseling.com](mailto:guidance@schoolcounseling.com)

**Georgia K. Irvin & Associates**  
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[www.girvin.com](http://www.girvin.com)  
 E-mail: [girvin@aol.com](mailto:girvin@aol.com)

**Petersen Academic Group**  
 (703) 391-1280  
[www.petersenag.com](http://www.petersenag.com)  
 E-mail: [PetersonAG@aol.com](mailto:PetersonAG@aol.com)

**Washington Independent Services for Educational Resources (WISER)**  
 (301) 816-0432  
[www.wiser-dc.com](http://www.wiser-dc.com)  
 E-mail: [wiser@comcast.net](mailto:wiser@comcast.net)

# USEFUL LINKS:

## EXPAT EXCHANGE

An online resource for information, employment, services, and shopping overseas.

[www.expatexchange.com](http://www.expatexchange.com)

## FOREIGN SERVICE LIFELINES

Web site created by FS spouses

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

## FOREIGN SERVICE YOUTH FOUNDATION AROUND THE WORLD IN A LIFETIME (AWAL)

Provides information, advocacy and activities for internationally mobile youth.

[www.state.gov/www/flo/fsyf.html](http://www.state.gov/www/flo/fsyf.html)

## TCK WORLD

Web site for the support and understanding of Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

[www.tckworld.com](http://www.tckworld.com)



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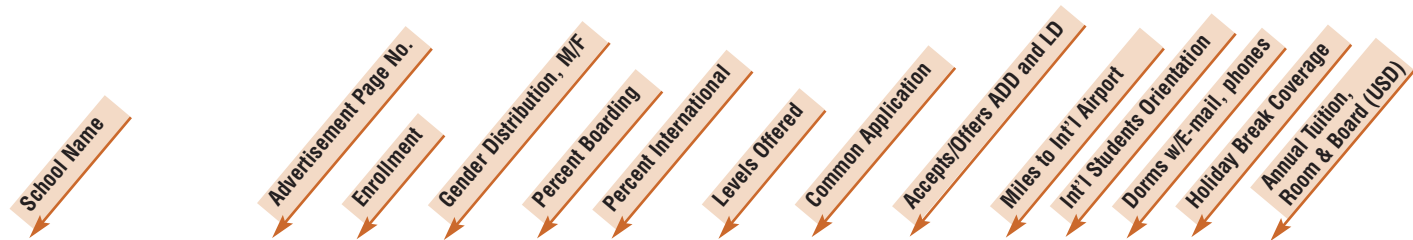
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Jeanne M. Pacheco, Director of Admission & Placement

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# Schools at a Glance

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## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Alexandria Country Day School	92	250	50/50	NA	NA	K-8	N	N	20	NA	NA	NA	15,000
Rock Creek International School	81	220	40/60	0	60	PK-8	N	Y	20	Y	NA	Y	16,975
Washington International School	72	825	49/51	0	37	PK-12	N	Limited	8	Y	NA	NA	18,500-20,850

## JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

North Country School	93	78	58/42	95	16	4-9	Y	Y	125	N	N	N	36,400
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## JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Dana Hall School	70	454	All girls	50	11	6-12	Y	Limited	12	Y	Y	N	34,425
Grier School	78	192	All girls	100	50	7-12	Y	Y	120	N	Y	Y	29,500
Oldfields	93	185	All girls	80	16	8-12, PG	Y	Limited	35	N	N	Y	33,700
Perkiomen School	74	265	60/40	60	20	5-12, PG	Y	Y	50	Y	Y	N	31,200
Shattuck - St. Mary's School	70	300	61/39	80	15	6-12, PG	Y	N	45	Y	Y	N	25,600
St Michael's University School	79	880	50/50	40	26	8-12	N	N	15	Y	Y	Y	26,200

## SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Buxton School	91	90	50/50	100	5		Y	Limited	45	N	N	N	32,500
Cranbrook Schools	77	760	53/47	34	10	9-12	Y	N	25	Y	T3/Y	Y	29,290
Foxcroft School	92	186	All girls	75	13	9-12	Y	N	30	Y	Y	Y	34,000
Garrison Forest School	73	215	All girls	40	10	8-12	Y	N	35	Y	Y	N	30,250
Idyllwild Arts Academy	68	262	40/60	85	27	9-12, PG	Y	N	120	Y	Y	N	35,800
Interlochen Arts Academy	81	455	39/61	93	20	9-12, PG	N	N	16	Y	Y	N	28,700
Kents Hill School	79	215	60/40	70	20	9-12, PG	Y	Y	50	Y	Y	Limited	33,900
Kimball Union Academy	89	305	60/40	66	11	9-12, PG	Y	N	130	Y	Y/N	Y	33,500
La Lumiere School	87	120	52/48	50	20	9-12, PG	Y	Limited	70	N	N	Y	20,550
Madeira School	91	302	All girls	52	13	9-12	Y	Y	15	Y	Y	Limited	32,800
Miss Hall's School	75	165	All girls	75	18	9-12	Y	NA	40	Y	Y	N	33,800
Montverde Academy	83	170	55/45	71	50	7-12	Y	Limited	22	Y	Y	Limited	18,455
Northfield Mount Hermon School	90	860	51/49	80	25	9-12, PG	N	Limited	70	Y	Y	N	33,000
Oregon Episcopal School	93	250	50/50	25	25	9-12	Y	Limited	20	Y	Y	Y	29,835
Purnell School	88	100	All girls	85	10	9-12	Y	Y	35	Y	Y	N	33,975

\* NA - Not Applicable

CONTINUED ON PAGE 84



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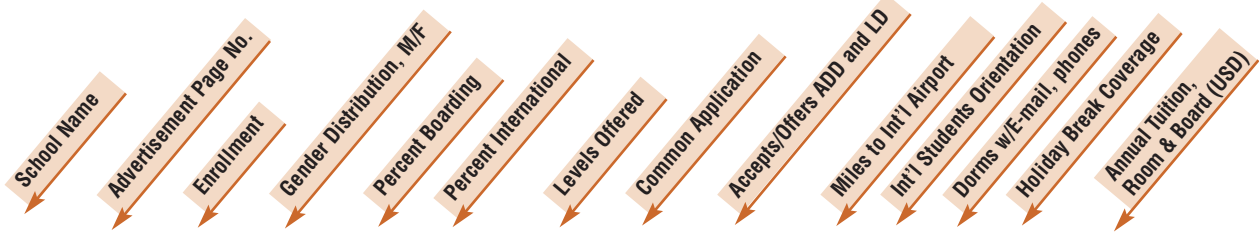
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## SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Salem Academy	83	200	All girls	52	6	9-12	Y	N	20	N	Y/N	Y	24,600
Tilton School	76	200	65/35	70	17	9-12, PG	Y	Y	40	Y	Y	Y	33,125
Wentworth Military Academy	71	200	80/20	100	4	9-12, PG	N	Y	50	Y	Y	N	21,995
Western Reserve Academy	73	375	55/45	65	11	9-12, PG	N	N	35	Y	Y	Y	26,700

## DISTANCE LEARNING/HOMESCHOOLING

Calvert School	85	Homeschooling program. K-8. For more info. go to: <a href="http://www.calvertschool.org">www.calvertschool.org</a>											
University of Missouri (at Columbia)	72	21,000	Independent study: 3-12, PG, accredited HS diploma. Go to: <a href="http://cds.missouri.edu/go/fds3.asp">cds.missouri.edu/go/fds3.asp</a>										

## MILITARY SCHOOLS

Valley Forge Military Academy	87	700	All boys	100	12	7-12, PG	Y	N	15	Y	Y	N	26,450
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## SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOLS

Gow School	68	143	All boys	100	20	7-12, PG	N	All LD	20	Y	Y	N	37,250
Mount Bachelor Academy	78	95	60/40	100	5	7-12	N	Y	173	N	N	N	62,400
Riverview School	81	182	50/50	100	Limited	7-12, PG	N	Y	75	Y	N	N	55,643
Vanguard School	87	136	41/59	90	26	5-12, PG	N	Y	50	Y	Y	N	34,750

## OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

American International School in Salzburg	76	85	52/48	90	100	7-12, PG	Y	N	2.5	Y	N	N	27,000
American Overseas School of Rome	76	600	50/50	5	65	PK-PG	N	Y	30	Y	Y	N	44,000
John F. Kennedy International School Switzerland	74	65	50/50	50	70	K-8	N	Limited	90	Y	Y/N	N	34,600
Leysin American School in Switzerland	80	330	55/44	100	65	9-12, PG	Y	Limited	75	Y	Y	N	31,000
TASIS, The American School in England	85	659	51/49	25	35	Nursery-13	Y	Limited	8	Y	Y	N	33,000
TASIS, The American School in Switzerland	85	325	50/50	84	55	7-PG	Y	N	5	Y	Y	N	33,000

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THANK YOU

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March 20, 2004:  
As part of a community service project, Foreign Service youth introduce refugee youth to American games.

Foreign Service Youth Foundation  
fsyf@fsyf.org • 301-404-6655 • www.fsyf.org

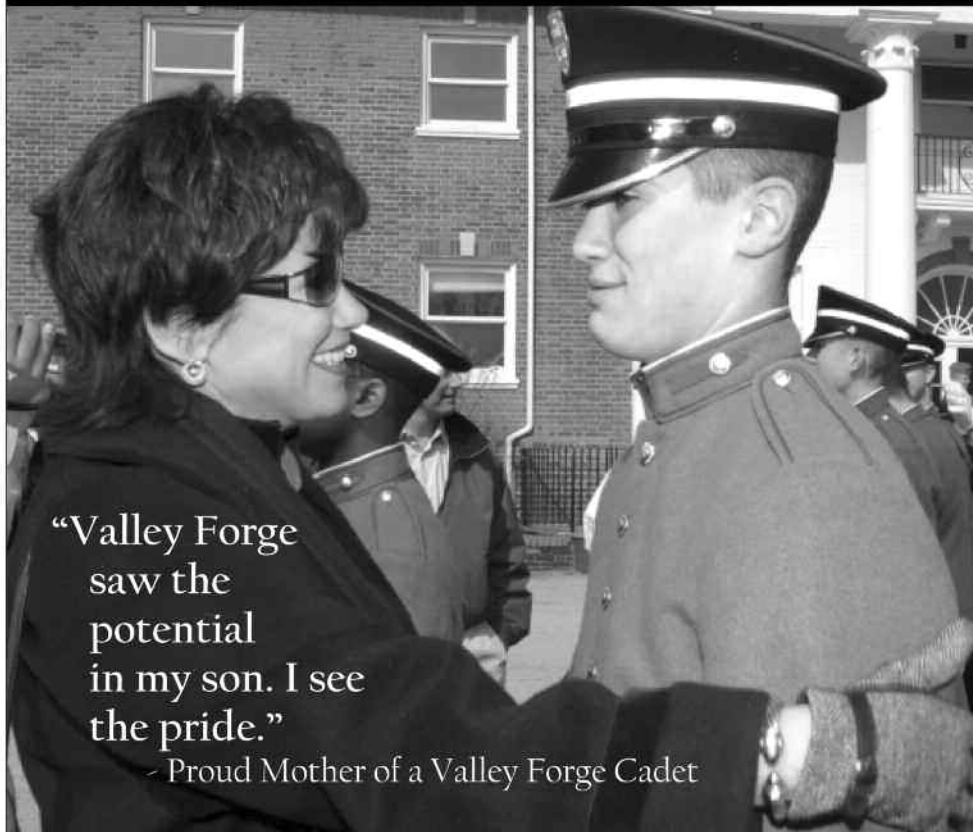
## Foreign Service Youth Foundation

Counterintuitive as it seems to most parents, returning to the United States is often the most difficult move for our children. Though the years in the Washington area may be the strangest years in a lifetime of exotic locations, FS children can still benefit from the efforts made on their behalf. In this cyber age, the Foreign Service Youth Foundation sponsors a perpetual virtual club house — and a tangible place for kids who are in the DC area. The FSYF is a 501 (C)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1989 to inform and assist Foreign Service youth and their families with their internationally mobile lifestyle. FSYF's youth development programs include a myriad of educational and social activities. Through the FSYF programs children discuss pertinent issues such as returning to the U.S., coping with the first week of school, making new friends, preparing for a move, saying goodbye and staying in touch.

For 5-to-8-year-old FS children, "Diplokids" provides a fun place to meet other kids who have lived around the world. The pre-teen group, "Globe Trotters," meets for social activities and hosts transition, leadership training and re-entry workshops. The oldest group, "AWAL (Around the World in a Lifetime)," for FS teens, includes the elements of the other programs and a community service project (funded by a grant from the Una Chapman Cox Foundation). This year's community service project is dedicated to introducing refugee children to American life.

FSYF sponsors many other activities including the FSYF community service awards, annual welcome-back potluck picnic, parenting programs and the Kid Video Contest (in conjunction with FSI's Transition Center). FSYF membership is \$30 for three years per FS family. **For more information on FSYF's activities, go to its Web site, [www.fsyf.org](http://www.fsyf.org), or e-mail [fsyf@fsyf.org](mailto:fsyf@fsyf.org).**





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## FROM THE DECEMBER 2001 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT Pia Schou Nielsen, "Looking for a Good School Abroad?"

“According to the State Department’s Family Liaison Office, there are approximately 10,000 children in Foreign Service families, of whom about 7,200 are school-age. Around 93 percent of those children attend local schools located in the city of assignment. Five percent enroll in boarding schools, and the other 2 percent are homeschooled by their parents.

“Foreign Service life offers these children many rewards: excitement, diversity, intellectual stimulation and a sense of self-sufficiency. But it also poses many challenges, a major one being the identification of schools that nurture educational and social development rather than disrupting it. Even in developed nations, finding schools with high educational standards that also give American students the opportunity to interact with the local culture can be difficult. And the selection process must be repeated every few years, often in very different settings. Fortunately, help is available!”

### USEFUL CONTACTS:

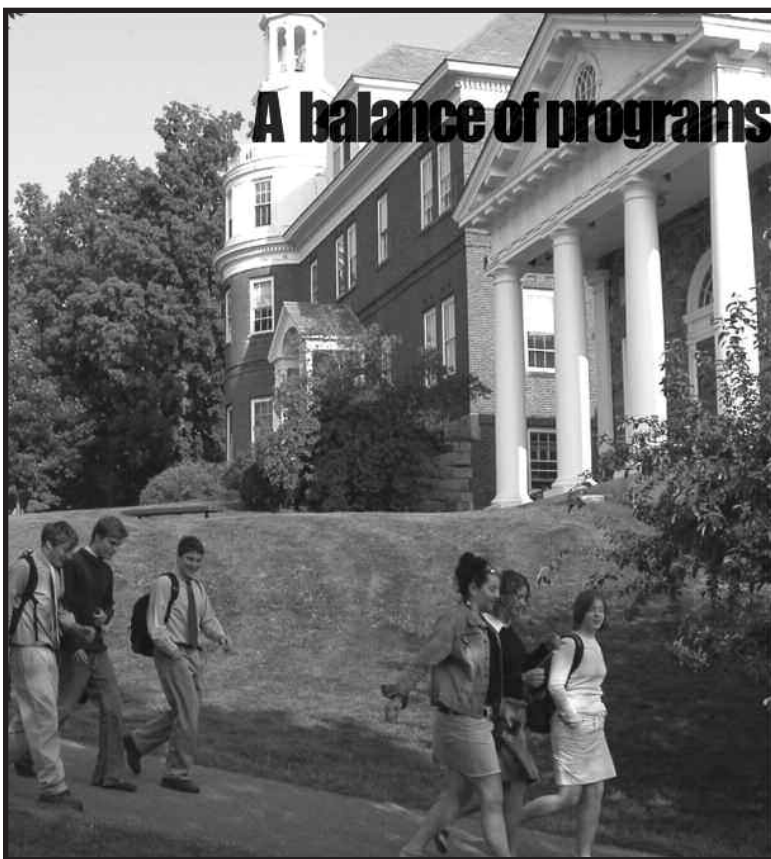
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Department of State  
M/DGP/FLO Room 1  
Washington, D.C.  
20520  
(202) 647-1076  
[www.state.gov/www/flo](http://www.state.gov/www/flo)  
E-mail: [FLO@perms.us-state.gov](mailto:FLO@perms.us-state.gov)

**Office of Overseas Schools**  
Department of State  
[www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/school](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/school)  
E-mail: [overseas.school@dos.us-state.gov](mailto:overseas.school@dos.us-state.gov)

**The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS)**  
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**Peterson’s Directory of Private Secondary Schools**  
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**FROM THE DECEMBER 2002 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT  
Stephen Yeater, “Surfing the Net for Secondary Schools”**

There are many helpful online options for researching and comparing secondary schools (high schools), both overseas and in the United States. The sites listed below encompass boarding schools, art schools and schools that accommodate students with learning disabilities, as well as homeschooling resources. And they're all free.

“Benjamin Franklin wrote, ‘Genius without education is like silver in the mine.’ Whatever your child’s educational needs, these online resources should help you polish that silver to its full shine.”

**State Department Links**

<http://www.state.gov/www/flo/> —  
Family Liaison Office (M/FLO)  
[http://state.gov/m/  
dghr/flo/c1958.htm](http://state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c1958.htm) —  
Education and Youth Officer  
[http://www.state.gov/www/about  
state/schools/index.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about/state/schools/index.html) —  
Office of Overseas Schools

**Other Sites of Interest**

<http://www.edulink.com/> — Ed-U-Link Services  
<http://www.artschools.com/> — ArtSchools.com  
<http://www.ibo.org> — International Baccalaureate Organization  
<http://www.schools.com> — The Association of Boarding Schools  
<http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/> — National Center for Educational  
Statistics  
<http://www.ncld.org/map.cfm> — National Center for Learning  
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**FROM THE JUNE 2002 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT  
Tanja Trezn,  
"An Internship Can Open Many Doors"**

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"The following Web sites offer links dedicated to internships:

- www.monster.com      www.jobweb.de
- www.jobtrak.com      www.4internships.com
- www.idealists.com      www.careerplanit.com

"Another excellent resource for internships in the U.S. is the home page of Rising Star Internships (www.rsinternships.com), which provides a lot of information on jobs divided by fields and subjects.

"The following Web sites not only describe available internships but provide helpful information about the country and culture, including any special circumstances you should be aware of:

- www.intern.studyabroad.com
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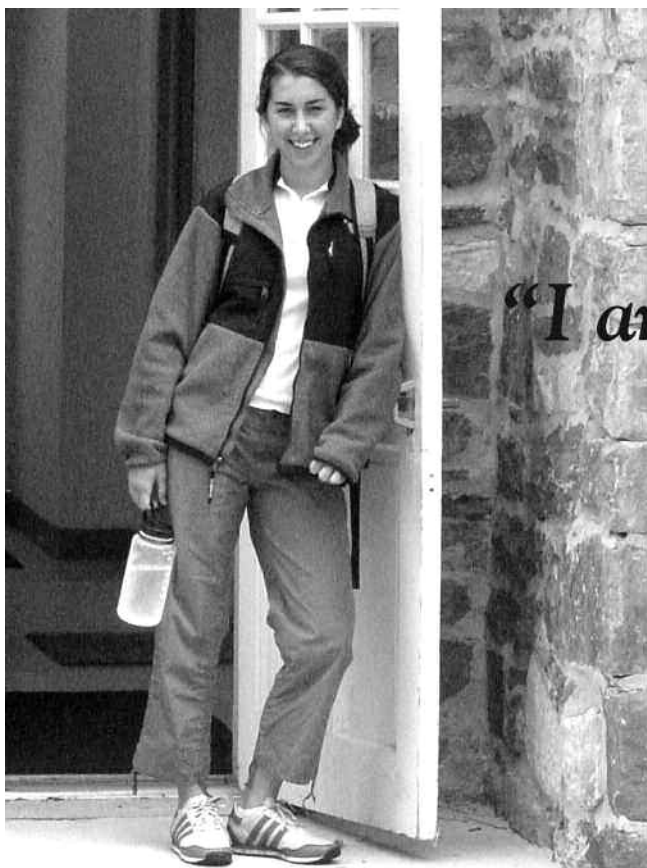
### FROM THE JUNE 2003 SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT Mikkela Thompson, "Christmas in July: Holidays as a Foreign Service Child"

“For a Foreign Service child, the old adage ‘the only constant is change’ truly applies. One bastion of stability in an FS child’s life, and sometimes the only one, is his or her family and their traditions. Foreign Service families celebrate a plethora of holidays — American and foreign — and many assimilate traditions as they move around the world. But despite this, it is the celebration itself, a time spent with one’s family, home from school, that can provide an emotional oasis in a childhood lived overseas.

“For FS children, holidays and celebrations are not particularly wedded to specific dates and seasons. And even the idea of what constitutes a holiday is flexible. The Fourth of July and Thanksgiving are the two most traditionally ‘American’ holidays, but FS kids are perhaps more lenient in their expectations of these occasions, given that opportunities to celebrate them in a foreign country are necessarily limited. So for FS children, such holidays are mainly occasions involving informal gatherings with their families for big meals. Indeed, for some, what makes such holidays distinctly ‘American’ are the customs and recipes that are passed down from one generation to another.

“A child raised in the Foreign Service can retain a sense of tradition while also appreciating new and diverse cultures, including their holidays. But while most FS children would agree that they enjoy holidays, it is the people with whom they spend these holidays that make all the difference. Schools come and go, but one’s family and friends are the true sources of stability. Family and celebrations, whether wearing candles on your head or eating marillen knoedel, can provide the rarest of gifts in a nomadic childhood — a tradition of continuity.”





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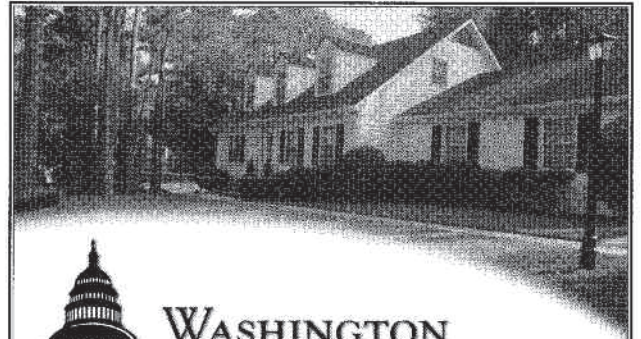
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# REFLECTIONS

## *Unpacking: Morning with My HHE*

BY WILLIAM V. ROEBUCK

I.  
Dust, Mozart, and a faint whiff of fading mildew  
Blend in the background.  
A ripping sound, as covers stuck together, are pulled apart.  
Idle thoughts: Do paperback books go to the Old Books'  
Home?  
New arrivals invite: *My Traitor's Heart* speaks to *The  
Promise of a New South*.  
An old-timer, *World of Our Fathers*, looks on, too long  
ignored.  
With broken spines, papers falling out,  
old reading projects on Faulkner, Conrad, and George  
Eliot, completed  
or abandoned,  
speak of youthful seductions and more mature affairs,  
broken off.  
Remnants of now-dried intellectual guts and youth lie  
splattered all over the floor.

Truman precedes Wilde, *The Little Prince*  
studies *Exiles' Return*, while the Constitution  
sniffs at Thoreau.  
Palestinians peer out at Flanders  
While Pascal and Nietzsche sit astride Rousseau;  
*Criticism in the Wilderness* meets Raymond Williams' *The  
Country and the City*,  
Abroad.  
A small New Testament, a survivor from childhood,  
Lies forlornly in the corner.  
Education sought, accomplished, and frustrated;  
Knowledge and art claimed and sometimes possessed.  
A library, an organization, an alphabetization of a love,  
a recurring urge, a disappointment.

The boxes from the Jerusalem shippers, with books spilling  
out here, some unpacked there,  
Speak of transitions, previous shipments, occasional  
destinations;  
Travels and careers blur, previous locations call out:  
Dijon, Abidjan, Kingston, Athens.

II.  
Idle thoughts recur: Did the knowledge gained with the  
reading  
Equal the distance of the voyages, plus the fun of the  
adventures,  
Divided by the absence of his company all those years?  
  
The old battles had played out mostly between the covers  
of these volumes,  
Whose titles and authors hint at the specific campaigns  
waged:  
Did it matter that I had read James Baldwin's *The Fire  
Next Time* as a young person and run away from home  
briefly in a nocturnal act of readerly solidarity?  
Or that Rousseau and Simone Weil and Henry Fielding  
and company had pushed me to leave home and sent  
me to West Africa years ago?  
Or that I could recite by heart Hopkins' "As Kingfishers  
Catch Fire," even if at his funeral?

There should have been more boxes,  
More books read, things known, stands taken, issues grap-  
pled with, adventures enjoyed;  
Another dark night of the soul or two, here and there;  
Perhaps the shippers had made a mistake, perhaps not;  
Empty shelves beckon.  
A kind of order ensues.  
Idle thoughts have to be filed, stuffed in a book on the  
shelf,  
Perhaps, where they will fit well, in Turgenev's slim vol-  
ume, *Fathers and Sons*,  
On the last shelf, at the end of all the novels. ■

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*William Roebuck joined the Foreign Service in 1992 and has served in Kingston, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. He is currently assigned to Damascus. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair "Stamp Corner."*

# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • June 2004

AWARDEES TO BE HONORED AT JUNE 24 CEREMONY

## 2004 AFSA AWARD WINNERS

The American Foreign Service Association is proud to announce the winners of the 2004 AFSA Awards. AFSA places great emphasis on these awards, which serve to recognize the intellectual courage and outstanding achievement of our Foreign Service personnel. AFSA will confer its annual awards on Thursday, June 24, at 4 p.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room of the Department of State. Each award winner will receive a certificate of recognition and a monetary prize of \$2,500. Everyone is welcome. To RSVP for the awards event, call (202) 338-4045, ext. 515. For more information, call Awards Coordinator Barbara Berger at (202) 338-4045, ext. 521.

### Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy: Ambassador Richard Parker

AFSA's annual award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy will be conferred on Ambassador Richard Parker. Secretary of State Colin Powell has been invited to present the award. Last year's recipient was former Secretary of State George Shultz, and the 2002 winner was Ambassador Thomas Pickering. Secretary Powell presented the awards to them. Previous recipients were U. Alexis Johnson, Frank Carlucci, George H.W. Bush, Lawrence Eagleburger, Cyrus Vance, David Newsom, and Lee Hamilton. (Look for the interview with Amb. Parker in the July *Foreign Service Journal*.)

### CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AWARDS

This year's AFSA awards for intellectual courage, initiative and integrity in the context of constructive dissent will be presented to the following Foreign Service employees who demonstrated the courage to speak out and challenge the system on a subject related to their work:

- The **Christian A. Herter Award**, for a senior officer:  
Ronald Schlicher, CPA Provincial Coordinator, Baghdad.
- The **William R. Rivkin Award**, for a mid-career officer:  
Keith Mines, Embassy Budapest.
- The **W. Averell Harriman Award**, for a junior officer:  
Steven Weston, Embassy Luxembourg.
- The **Tex Harris Award**, for a Foreign Service specialist:  
Elizabeth Orlando, Consulate General Frankfurt.  
Runner-up: Susan Harville, Embassy Bangkok.

### EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARDS

These awards, which recognize exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions to professionalism, morale and effectiveness, are:

- The **Avis Bohlen Award**, for a Foreign Service family member whose relations with the American and foreign communities at a Foreign Service post have done the most to advance American interests: Helene DeJong and Dawn McKeever,



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### ON THE SECRETARY'S AGENDA

## AFSA Meets with Secretary Powell

In late March, AFSA met with Secretary Powell, an annual tradition. AFSA used the opportunity to thank the Secretary for using the good will he enjoys in such abundance on the Hill to get the resources the department so sorely needs. The funds have been put to good use and have vastly improved the professional lives of Foreign Service members. AFSA then used the rest of the session to raise issues that have generated the most e-mail from its members over the past year or so.

**LOCALITY PAY:** In response to AFSA's request for a progress update on efforts to secure locality pay for FS-1 employees and below, the Secretary said we have to be patient. We told him that in our conversations with the Office of Management & Budget and on the Hill, we have made the point that the Foreign Service is already a pay-for-performance system. Powell said he will try again to persuade OMB to approve paying Washington locality pay to everyone in the Foreign Service.

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# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



## AFSA Success on DS New-Hire Per Diem

Thanks to AFSA's representation on their behalf, all new hires with Diplomatic Security now receive per diem during their three-week orientation class. Previously, State assigned some DS agents to Washington ahead of their arrival for orientation. Because they were assigned to Washington, this meant they were not eligible for per diem, yet were living in very expensive temporary quarters. AFSA spoke out repeatedly and insistently on their behalf, and has been successful.

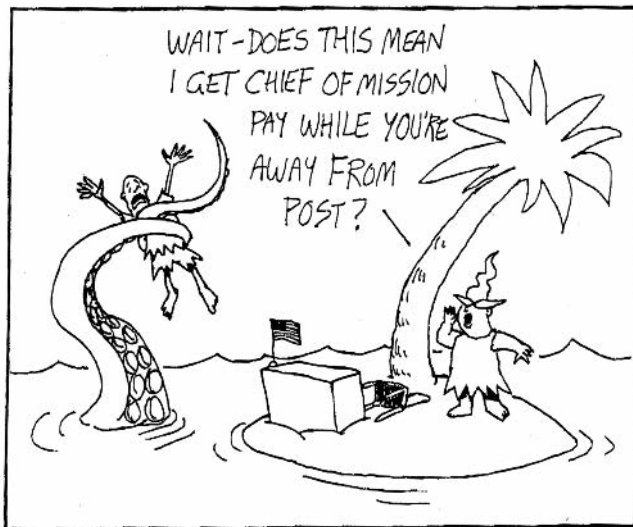
## USAA Eligibility "Hot Line"

In recent months, at least a few specialists have had difficulty applying for USAA insurance coverage. It seems that not all USAA employees know that State Department specialists are eligible for coverage. We recently learned about an eligibility hot line, which has been successfully tested by one of our specialist members who was having trouble obtaining the insurance.

The number to call is 1 (800) 531-8080; then ask for the eligibility hot line. According to our member, "the person answering the phone knew all the answers to my questions and was very courteous and nice. She 'put me in the system' first, and we went from there. I am very pleased!"

## Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER, FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER



## Seeking Writers

We are seeking submissions for various *AFSA News* periodic features — Of Special(ist) Concern, Family Member Matters, On the Lighter Side, Where to Retire — and encourage you to consider writing for them. There are no deadlines for submissions for these features: We accept submissions at any time, and seriously consider them all. We have not yet received any submissions from specialists for the "Of Special(ist) Concern" feature, so would be especially glad to hear from you. Please send your 450- to 550-word submissions to [afsanews@afsa.org](mailto:afsanews@afsa.org).

## Input for *AFSA News*

*AFSA News* is not just for news from and about AFSA, but includes news of interest to AFSA members and the Foreign Service community. We welcome your suggestions on what types of features and information you would like to see in *AFSA News*. Let us know what you find useful and what you don't find useful. Send input to [afsanews@afsa.org](mailto:afsanews@afsa.org).

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**FAS REPRESENTATIVE:** Michael Conlon

**SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT:** Acting AFSA President Louise Crane explained that the issue of spouse employment is so sensitive that when one post pays an eligible family member less than that person is entitled to based on previous experience, it strikes a very sore nerve. She thanked him for what appears to be the resolution of the EFM employment issue at AIT Taiwan, which was treating EFMs as though they had no prior U.S. work history of any kind.

Raising the retirement age would “age the force and restrict opportunity,” Powell said. “It isn’t that we can’t perform; the issue is flow-through.”

**RETIREMENT AGE:** AFSA raised the question of compulsory retirement at age 65, noting that many members believe that the compulsory age should be raised to coincide with the age at which one can receive full Social Security benefits. Powell responded that raising the age would “age the force and restrict opportunity.” He said that the retirement age for the military is 55, and that “In my former employment, I had to get an exception to stay until age 56. It isn’t that we can’t perform; the issue is flow-through.”

**MOH:** AFSA raised the Members of Household issue, which was discussed at recent entry-level conferences attended by AFSA, and informed the Secretary that AFSA had forwarded to management suggestions for adjusting the MOH regulations on issues such as the definition of EFM.

**ASSIGNMENT PROCESS:** Because the Secretary has mentioned more than once

Continued on page 7

## AFSA Wants YOU as a Rep!



It’s summer transfer season. If you are the AFSA representative at your post, please put this item on your check-out sheet: arrange for successor. If you arrive at your new post and find there is no AFSA rep, consider taking up the mantle. You will be doing a good deed.

Several years ago, AFSA approved the inclusion of “community service” in the Procedural Precepts. This meant that not only could rating and reviewing officers mention service — including service on the school board, the cafeteria committee, a selection board or a review panel — in employees’ annual evaluations, but that promotion panels could give such service weight in their deliberations. Then-Director General Ruth Davis thought, and AFSA agreed, that community service was important in strengthening the institution of the Foreign Service.

Such “community service” also includes contributing to employee welfare. So, yes, being an AFSA rep is a valuable form of community service, one that makes a major contribution to the strength of the Foreign Service.

AFSA reps around the world are invaluable to us here at headquarters. They alert us to members’ concerns. From the AFSA e-mail bag, here are some recent issues taken on by AFSA reps: discrimination faced by administrative and technical staff resulting from their exclusion from the diplomatic list; inequity in administering allowances; and problems with the post-9/11 requirement for a personal appearance to apply for a driver’s license renewal, something that previously could be done by mail.

Then there is that hardy perennial, overtime. Untenured employees and most specialists are entitled by law to overtime. Certain procedures have to be observed; e.g., overtime must be approved in advance. However, there are posts that ignore the overtime rules. Employees, especially at the entry level, are often reluctant to approach a supervisor to request overtime compensation, for fear they may be branded as troublemakers. But it is precisely the entry-level employees who need either the overtime, or more likely, the comp time. At hardship posts, employees get R&R, but entry-level employees have not accumulated enough leave to take their R&R — comp time can cover the gap.

The AFSA rep provides helpful cover for employees with complaints or problems. Where an individual might be reluctant to approach post management, the AFSA rep is expected to do so, and can simply say he/she has been asked by “employees” to discuss this problem or that. The employees remain anonymous. Energetic AFSA reps at dangerous posts are included in security discussions. Post management sees them as a valuable link between management and employees. The 2002 AFSA Representative of the Year awardee had served in Tel Aviv and worked very closely with post management on critical security issues. In addition, AFSA reps can sit in on interviews with DS and the OIG to help protect employees’ rights.

Your service can be recognized in your EER. While direct references to AFSA in the EER are prohibited, there are circumlocutions to describe your efforts that will be easily understood by the selection panel.

So, do good by helping your colleagues and seeing that management plays by the rules. Volunteer to be the AFSA rep at your post! □

## Virtual FS Community Suggestions Reach the DG

A couple of months ago, I learned that I would have the opportunity, along with other spouses at post, to meet with Director General W. Robert Pearson to discuss issues of concern to Foreign Service spouses and to offer suggestions for improvement. In an effort to better prepare myself and to make the most of this rare opportunity, I posted a note about the upcoming meeting on *Livelines* — an online discussion group sponsored by the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide — asking for input on how State can better address “spouse issues.” The *Livelines* messages go to over 1,000 members worldwide, including State and other agency employees, spouses, retirees and new hires, who use it as a forum to ask questions and share experiences and advice on all things Foreign Service (to join, go to [www.aafsw.org](http://www.aafsw.org)). I figured I was bound to get some input this way. Boy, did I ever!

After reviewing countless e-mails and *Livelines* postings, I put together a list of concerns and suggestions to give to the Director General. Many thanks to all the *Livelines* contributors for their honesty and creativity, and to Amb. Pearson, his staff and the Family Liaison Office, for taking an active interest in spouse and family matters. Here is the list of issues we raised:

### “Telling it straight” to recruits, new hires and their spouses.

Many Foreign Service employees and spouses find the realities of Foreign Service life different from their initial expectations, especially regarding spousal employment. To close the information gap, a more aggressive, direct communication campaign is needed.

**SUGGESTIONS:** Management should provide an information packet regarding “family issues” to those who successfully pass the oral exam; add more family-focused, lifestyle content to the State recruitment Web site and highlight clear links to the FLO

Web site, the AAFSW site and the AFSA site; inform passers about *Livelines* and any other online resources concerning Foreign Service life; and communicate with recruits and spouses during the entire testing/screening/hiring process (e.g., via e-mail newsletter or by assigning a State contact person to each recruit).



JOSH

### Helping families cover costs during training at the Foreign Service Institute.

Per diem, which is allotted to the employee only on a sliding scale, often does not cover the entire family’s expenses during this transition period. Spouses who would like to participate in training often cannot due to the high cost of day care, even at the on-campus facility. In other cases, families separate to avoid the D.C. area’s high cost of living or keep the spouse employed to generate needed income. In either case, spouses miss out on language and/or professional training that would enable them to “hit the ground running” once at post. Some families are not bidding on hard-language posts to avoid extended periods at FSI.

**SUGGESTIONS:** By offering free or subsidized day care, both parents could better take advantage of training opportunities to invest in their well-being at post. Other suggestions include offering free “drop-in” days at the FSI day care center so unenrolled spouses could attend shorter training sessions or visit the Overseas Briefing Center,

increasing per diem amounts to account for accompanying family members and providing separate maintenance allowance to separated spouses and children.

### Expanding spousal employment placement services.

While trailing spouses agree it takes self-motivation, flexibility and persistence to find meaningful work abroad, it is disheartening to lose networks, contacts, reputation and seniority with each move. Helping spouses achieve employment continuity would improve morale and help reduce the financial burden many families experience when the spouse is unemployed, especially during the initial months at post when the job search is on. Many recruits and new hires come to the Foreign Service with talented, educated spouses who also seek professional growth. A robust spousal employment program that focuses on opportunities both inside and outside the mission would help bolster recruitment and retention.

**SUGGESTIONS:** The agencies should invest further in FLO’s Strategic Networking Assistance Program (SNAP) by including more posts in the program, increasing recruitment and training of local employment advisers and better publicizing the program. Global resource management specialists from the private sector could also offer fresh ideas and best practices.

To help spouses find work in the mission, FLO has a new initiative to better communicate job openings at posts so incoming spouses can apply and potentially be hired in advance and receive training before going to post. State could take further advantage of spouses’ abilities, while offering professional and financial growth, by considering spousal professional skill sets when assigning employees or by developing an official Eligible Family Member “corps” from which each post’s Human Resources office could draw. Finally, maintaining a spouses’ professional database/



online group would allow spouses to communicate with others in their field and share information and opportunities.

### **Supporting spouses' efforts to work free-lance, telecommute and start their own businesses abroad.**

Through the Internet, freelancing, telecommuting and creating a business abroad are real and attractive career possibilities for today's FS spouses. However, State policies concerning independent work are often confusing and misunderstood, as are local laws at post.

**SUGGESTIONS:** Management should encourage these ambitions by offering high-speed Internet service in government housing, allowing spouses to use the embassy mail system for their businesses on a limited basis where the local mail system is unreliable and providing local legal advice. In addition, spouses could be offered training courses in portable skills, such as technical writing and Web design. A general course in "operating a freelance business abroad" covering rules and regulations would show support, boost morale and help spouses expand their horizons.

### **Providing high-speed Internet access in all embassy/consulate housing worldwide.**

A fast, reliable Internet connection is as important as a telephone (or more so) in many Foreign Service homes. Beyond e-mails and Web surfing, the Internet is essential to Foreign Service children for completing school work and to many spouses for pursuing long-distance learning programs, free-lance work, telecommuting options or management of their own businesses.

**SUGGESTIONS:** To avoid lost work and educational opportunities and the frustration associated with slow, sporadic Internet service, missions could provide high-speed service in the form of dedicated servers, Wi-Fi hotspots or pre-negotiated contracts with local providers.

Liveliners also suggested embassies hire more IT personnel, including EFMs, to handle the increased workload and establish clear guidelines on technical support to ensure the service would not be abused. Considering Internet access as a key factor when choosing new housing will help create housing pools that fit the needs of today's Foreign Service families.

### **Providing easier, more direct access to unclassified materials relating to families.**

Currently, unclassified materials concerning spouse and family matters are difficult to obtain as they are either on the Intranet or buried in the State Department Web site. Although Intranet kiosks are popping up at missions worldwide, some spouses find them inconvenient to use when the Internet is available at home.

**SUGGESTIONS:** Management should reorganize Intranet information and post it on a new Internet site (i.e., <http://families.state.gov>) or give more prominence to FLO's Web site. This would reduce frustrating and often fruitless searching.

### **Giving preference to spouses on the Foreign Service officer candidate register.**

Qualified spouses who, without help or special treatment, pass the written and oral exams and medical, security and other clearances and who are already on the candidate register should be given hiring preference. Tandem couples save State money (i.e., housing) and these spouses are a "sure thing" since they are already in the Foreign Service community and their spouses are employed. FLO's efforts in this area have been so far unsuccessful.

*Leslie Ashby — mother, free-lance writer/editor and Foreign Service spouse — currently lives in Montreal with her husband Stephen, a second-tour officer, and their one-year-old daughter.*

#### **Awards • Continued from page 1**

both from Embassy Kampala.

Runner-up: Charlotte Davnie, Embassy Vilnius.

■ **The Delavan Award**, for extraordinary contributions to effectiveness, professionalism and morale by an Office Management Specialist: Mary Jo Fuhrer, Embassy Luxembourg; and Jenny A. Jeras, Embassy Kabul.

Runner-up: Margaret R. Gray, Embassy Riyadh.

■ **The M. Juanita Guess Award**, for outstanding service as a Community Liaison officer assisting American families serving at an overseas post: Susanne A. Turner, Embassy Bishkek.

Runners-up: Janne Hicks, Embassy Manama; and Tahmina Islam Novak, Embassy Colombo.

### **AFSA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

■ **The AFSA Achievement Awards** honor AFSA members (active and retired) for their significant contributions to AFSA and its members during the past year.

#### **■ Post Reps of the Year:**

David Jesser, Pretoria.

Randy Kreft, Moscow.

#### **■ Member Achievement Award:**

Ambassador Edward Dillery.

*AFSA greatly appreciates the efforts of all those who sent in nominations or served on a panel this year. A warm thank you also goes to Director General W. Robert Pearson for co-sponsoring our annual awards ceremony, which is open to any employee wishing to attend. Articles about the award winners will appear in the July/August issue of AFSA News. □*

### **TSP Open Season**

Don't forget that open season for the Thrift Savings Plan ends June 30. Go to your human resources office or [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) for more information.

## Pay, Performance and Service

At the end of my first year on the AFSA board, I am struck by the incredible depth and range of issues we now face. In addition to normal concerns with grievances, miscalculated time-in-class dates or retirement calculations, much of my time in the foreseeable future will be spent addressing fundamental issues of pay, performance assessment and recognition, and broader reforms of our personnel system. The budget-driven movement to reinvent public sector personnel systems appears likely only to intensify and shake the very foundations of the Foreign Service.



With the elimination of the existing Senior Foreign Service and its pay structure in January, the fundamental question of compensation levels and structure leaped to the top of my agenda. The issue of converting the overseas FCS senior officers to the new system at the same level of SFS pay as in Washington was resolved in a fair and equitable manner, yet a host of basic questions remain.

**I urge FCS members to share their concerns and offer solutions or alternative proposals.**

First, after converting all SFS officers to Washington pay, the Commerce Department went ahead and gave Washington-based SFS officers with outstanding performance a further 2.2-percent increase in line with a similar raise given to their Senior Executive Service officers. We now need to

figure out how to make this available to the entire SFS based on the same performance criteria. Second, as of April the FCS promotion list into the SFS had not been approved by the Senate. We need to consult on the compensation levels to establish for newly promoted SFS officers, because the old system doesn't exist and we are not sure when the new system will be approved. Finally, we need to work to obtain approval of our performance management system so that the expanded pay band for SFS officers can be put in place and overseas comparability pay granted for all officers regardless of rank. I didn't realize when I joined the board that we would be immersed in consultations over something as basic as our pay structure.

An equally important area for work is the training of all officers on the new FCS performance management system and precepts for selection boards to become effective with the 2005 Selection Boards. The appraisal form is significantly different, with the initial one-page statement coming from the rated officer. The famous suicide box goes right up front. The selection boards will have new criteria on performance management to take into account and there are new assignment-related requirements for promotion into and within the SFS. If we are to avoid future harm to officers or grievances that will invariably grow out of misunderstandings over the new form and criteria for promotion, training and dialogue are crucial in the run-up to June 2005 when the new system becomes effective.

Finally, we have an action plan to modernize and automate our Office of Foreign Service Human Resources in order to improve service to officers and at the same time address critical issues such as spousal employment, member-of-household policy and medical clearances. All of these have an impact on our ability/willingness to be worldwide available, and our difficulties complying with this requirement undermine the very foundation of our Foreign Service system. I urge FCS members to share their concerns and offer solutions or alternative proposals. Our active engagement in the ongoing debate is essential. □

### MEETING WITH THE MEMBERSHIP

## AFSA FCS in the Field

To signal a new spirit of cooperation and partnership, the Commercial Service for the first time arranged for AFSA FCS Vice President Charles "Chuck" Ford to attend and participate in all four of their annual regional management conferences. The Western Hemisphere conference took place last November, with East Asia /Pacific and the Africa, Near East and South Asia meetings in February. The cycle for the year ended in March with the European conference. By participating in these events, Ford was able to meet directly with 90 of the 190 AFSA members from FCS. These sessions provided invaluable opportunities to brief everyone on the FCS work program and to hear concerns of individual members.

The issues generating most interest, and some confusion, were changes to the Senior Foreign Service and overseas comparability pay. All members are now more aware and concerned about overseas comparability pay and the need to equalize basic pay to Washington levels if appropriate incentives for overseas service are to be maintained.

The new FCS performance management system and selection board precepts was another area of great interest, and AFSA FCS has been instrumental in advocating a yearlong training program to ensure that raters and rated officers fully understand the new system that was many years in development.

Ford took away from the conferences three key issues that need to be addressed: spousal employment opportunities; efforts to improve the member-of-household policy; and a more responsive, automated human resources office. The concerns raised by members in the field will set the AFSA FCS agenda for the coming year.

Thanks go to Acting Director General Carlos Poza and Karen Zens, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Operations, who had the vision and foresight to create this new opportunity that has served as an incredibly useful building block for a new, cooperative partnership with AFSA. □

that he is looking at possibly changing the assignment process, AFSA asked if there was any information to pass to our membership about potential changes to the way assignments are made. He said no, but noted that it makes him “uneasy” every spring when the work force goes around begging, traveling, etc., to get a job. He made a comparison to the military, where you can indicate preferences

Sharing the burden of dangerous and difficult service is one demonstration of the exceptional nature of the Foreign Service.

for onward assignments, and that’s it. “There is a problem with ‘hard to fill.’ I should be able to send people where I need them,” he said. He added that he needs to better understand the current system before deciding on any changes.

AFSA reiterated what it has done with regard to “fair share.” Crane noted that AFSA had advocated adding a hardship service requirement for crossing the threshold into the Senior Foreign Service and this has now been mandated. AFSA also supports the fair share rules, and this year agreed to tighten them. AFSA told the Secretary the fair share process should not just be a way to fill hardship posts, but a way to help promote shared sacrifice, which is why “fair share” is the appropriate term. Crane also mentioned the AFSA Governing Board’s initiative to study the background to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to look at what the record says about the “exceptionalism” of the Foreign Service, with a view toward preserving and maintaining its unique status. Sharing the burden of dangerous and difficult service is one demonstration of the exceptional nature of the Foreign Service.

In closing, the Secretary said AFSA has been “a great supporter of what we have wanted to do.” □

## FOREIGN SERVICE HEALTH WATCH

## Antimalarial Medications

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
EURONA TILLEY

Many embassies and consulates are in locations where malaria is a real everyday threat. The disease still causes over one million deaths a year worldwide. Malaria prevention must be taken seriously.

While dangerous, malaria is preventable through proper medication and the avoidance of mosquito bites. Protect your family from mosquitoes by wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts during the dawn and dusk hours, using insecticide on exposed areas and eliminating standing water near household dwellings.

Taking antimalarial drugs is often at the top of the “To Do” list for many families preparing to leave for post. There are five different medications commonly prescribed, depending on the patient’s age and health status as well as the location of the post. To be effective, antimalarial medications must be taken according to the exact prescribed schedule, according to a doctor’s orders.

Mefloquine, Doxycycline or Malarone are taken if travel includes malaria risk areas in South America, Africa, the Indian subcontinent, Asia and the South Pacific. If travel includes malaria risk areas in Mexico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, certain locations in Central America, the Middle East or Eastern Europe, either chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine sulfate is usually prescribed.

Mefloquine — brand name Lariam — is given to adults in 250 mg tablets and should be taken once a week with food. Side effects associated with mefloquine include nausea, dizziness, insomnia and lucid dreams. Occasionally, in extreme cases, this drug can cause serious problems such as seizures, hallucinations and severe anxiety. Mefloquine should not be taken in the case of a previous allergic reaction to the drug or in the case of a medical history of seizures, a psychiatric disorder or an irregular heartbeat.

Doxycycline is given once per day in 100 mg doses for adults. It is not recommended for pregnant women or children under the age of 8, because it causes permanent teeth discoloration. Doxycycline use is also associated with an increased susceptibility to sunburn, yeast infections, and nausea which can be avoided by taking the medication on a full stomach.

The latest antimalarial drug, Malarone, is actually a combination of two drugs, atovaquone and proguanil. It should be taken once per day with food or milk. Side effects are uncommon but can involve nausea, stomach pain, vomiting and headaches. Malarone should never be prescribed to patients with kidney problems, pregnant women, infants weighing less than 24 pounds or women breastfeeding infants who weigh less than 24 pounds.

Chloroquine, brand name Aralen, and hydroxychloroquine sulfate, brand name Plaquenil, are both taken once per week in dosages of 500 mg and 400 mg, respectively. Pregnant or nursing women should consult their doctor before taking these drugs. In a limited number of incidences, these drugs have caused headaches, dizziness, blurred vision, itching, vomiting and nausea. The usage of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine may worsen the symptoms of psoriasis.

Infants and children are particularly susceptible to the malaria parasite; consequently, extreme caution should be maintained. Small amounts of antimalarial drugs can be passed through breast milk, though these amounts will not protect the baby from malaria. Medication for infants should be considered only in consultation with a doctor. Antimalarial drugs must be stored out of the reach of children: an overdose can be fatal.

Continued on page 9



# No Change in Sight for Mandatory Retirement Age

BY JAMES YORKE, AFSA LABOR MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

**M**any AFSA members have been asking about the mandatory retirement age of 65. Questions such as these keep being raised: Is there any chance that the age will be raised? What would need to be done to change the age? What is AFSA's position on this issue?

These questions come from two distinct groups of members:

- Those who want to go on working in the Foreign Service after age 65. They are generally fit, feel they have several more years of valuable service to offer, and do not want to change careers, usually again, at age 65; and
- Those who are concerned because of the timing of when they become eligible for full Social Security payments.

## Background

The current Foreign Service mandatory retirement age of 65 dates from the passing of the new Foreign Service Act of 1980. Prior to 1980, the mandatory retirement age was 60. In the 1970s, a group of Foreign Service officers filed an unsuccessful class action suit to protest their mandatory retirement at age 60. The case (*Vance v. Bradley*) went all the way to the Supreme Court, where the majority opinion held that the mandatory retirement age for the Foreign Service that is lower than the Civil Service does not violate the Equal Protection Clause. The court held that a mandatory retirement age of 60 was rationally related to further a legitimate state interest. The court distinguished the Foreign Service from the Civil Service, saying, "it was quite rational to avoid the risks connected with having older employees in the Foreign Service but to tolerate those risks in the Civil Service."

The court also noted that although

societal facts such as increasing life expectancy of Americans are valid, it is up to Congress to determine public policy. With the Foreign Service Act of 1980, Congress duly obliged by raising the mandatory retirement age to 65. Any future change in the retirement age requires congressional action. There are a number of considerations that Congress must take into account when evaluating another age change.

**Upward mobility comes through selection for promotion to a higher rank, and the number of vacancies at those higher ranks depends on an adequate rate of flow-through.**

## The Up-and-Out System

First among these considerations is the rank-in-person system upon which the whole Foreign Service is based. Upward mobility comes through selection for promotion to a higher rank, and the number of vacancies at those higher ranks depends on an adequate rate of flow-through. If people did not move out of the upper end of the promotion ladder, space would not become available for younger talent to move upwards.

Congress has provided several ways to encourage this flow-through. First, it required the State Department to institute time-in-class and time-in-service limits so that employees who do not achieve promotion to a higher rank are required to retire after a specified time, thereby allowing room for promotions. Within this requirement, they provided a second incentive so that those who reach their

TIC or TIS dates at the FS-1 level or in the Senior Foreign Service will be eligible for full retirement benefits.

Thirdly, recognizing that many employees may look for a change to a less stressful way of life after age 50, Congress provided that anyone under the Foreign Service Retirement system could retire with full annuity at age 50 after 20 years of government service, of which five years must be in the Foreign Service. A further

wrinkle here is that those who retire under the Foreign Service Pension System (FSPS, the "new" system), for whom Social Security forms a part of their annuity, will receive an annuity supplement until they reach age 62, the earliest age at which one can draw Social Security. Finally, of course, recognizing that older employees are, generally, more likely to have health problems and to be less available for assignment worldwide, it legislated the requirement to retire at age 65.

## The Social Security Dilemma

In the early 1980s, Congress became aware that the Social Security system might run into funding problems in the foreseeable future, and also recognized that people generally wanted to work longer. Accordingly, Congress passed legislation gradually raising the age at which employees could collect full Social Security benefits. Beginning with those born in 1938, eligibility for full Social Security payments is moving slowly upwards until it reaches 67 for those born in 1960 and later. The table shows the progression (see p. 9).

Conventional wisdom has always been that you should start drawing Social Security as soon as you are eligible — those under FSPS who retire from the Foreign Service, for instance, should apply at age 62. The rationale for this is

## Age at which you become eligible to receive full Social Security

Year of Birth	Age to Receive Full Social Security	Percentage of Full S/S you receive at Age 62	Percentage of Full S/S you receive at age 65
1937	65	80	100
1938	65 and 2 months	79.2	98.9
1939	65 and 4 months	78.3	97.8
1940	65 and 6 months	77.5	96.7
1941	65 and 8 months	76.7	95.6
1942	65 and 10 months	75.8	94.4
1943-54	66	75	93.3
1955	66 and 2 months	74.2	92.2
1956	66 and 4 months	73.3	91.1
1957	66 and 6 months	72.5	90.0
1958	66 and 8 months	71.7	88.9
1959	66 and 10 months	70.8	87.8
1960	67	70	86.7

Go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) for more information.

that, although you may draw less each month, you draw it for a longer time and therefore over the long haul you receive a similar amount.

In fact, if you were born in 1937 and you started drawing Social Security at age 62, at age 77 you will have received exactly the same total amount of Social Security as you would have if you had delayed drawing until age 65. The age at which you will have received the same total amount creeps slowly upwards, as the age at which you can start receiving full benefits creeps upwards, as shown in the table above. For instance, if you were born between 1943 and 1954 and you start drawing at age 62, by age 78 you will have received the same amount of total Social Security as if you had delayed drawing until age 65. For those born in 1960 or later, the age is about 79.

On the other hand, the effect is quite small of electing to draw Social Security at age 65 instead of at the age at which you qualify for full payments. For all dates of birth after 1938, age 80 is the age at which you will have received the same amount as if you had delayed until the full eligibility age. Even at age 90 for dates of birth after 1960, there is a reduction of only just under 6 percent in the total amount of Social Security you will have

received. For dates of birth between 1943 and 1954, that reduction is less than 3 percent.

AFSA can provide more details of these reductions for the range of dates of birth from 1937 to 1960 and for Social Security starting ages of 62 and 65.

### AFSA's Position

In response to member concerns, during AFSA's recent annual meeting with Secretary Powell, AFSA Acting President Louise Crane raised the retirement age issue (see p. 1). In light of the Secretary's comments, it is apparent the department will not support an attempt to change the Foreign Service Act at this time. We are very cognizant of the need to ensure a rate of flow-through that provides opportunity for talent to rise from the lower ranks. We also recognize that any proposal from AFSA would require the department's support to gain congressional approval.

Further, raising the retirement age may very well prompt Congress to reconsider the Foreign Service retirement plan with a view to making it less generous. AFSA does not want to provoke any such scrutiny.

Politics is the art of the possible, and though this may become possible in the future, it is not so in 2004. □

### Health Watch • Continued from page 7

Malaria is caused by one of four parasites — *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Plasmodium vivax*, *Plasmodium ovale* and *Plasmodium malariae* — that are transmitted by mosquitoes. A mosquito acquires the parasite after biting an infected person. It then grows inside the insect for about a week before it can be passed to another human being. When the infected mosquito bites another person, the parasite travels from the mosquito's mouth into the person's blood stream.

Once inside the human body, the parasite moves to the liver where it uses these cells to replicate. Then it moves to the red blood cells and begins to multiply inside of them. The red blood cells eventually burst, releasing not only new parasites but toxins that make the person feel sick with flu-like symptoms including fever, shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Due to the loss of red blood cells, malaria may also cause anemia and jaundice. These symptoms usually occur 10 days to four weeks after infection but onset may be delayed until up to one year later. □

### Position with FSFY

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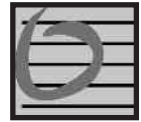
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**WASHINGTON STATE ISLANDS:** Spectacular views, wonderful community, climate, boating, hiking. Access Seattle & Vancouver, B.C. Former FSO Jan Zehner, Windermere Real Estate/ Orcas Island. Tel: (800) 842-5770. www.orcas-island.com. www.orcashomes.net. E-mail: janz@rockisland.com

## FLORIDA

**LONGBOAT KEY, BRADENTON/ SARASOTA:** Area will exceed expectations. Don't miss owning in Florida. Resales, new homes, rental management and vacation rentals. Dynamic growing company offering personalized professional service. Contact: Sharon E. Oper, Realtor (AFSA Member) Wagner Realty. Tel: (941) 387-7199. E-mail: lbk@comcast.net

**NO STATE INCOME TAX** enhances gracious living in Sarasota, the cultural capital of Florida's Gulf Coast. Contact former FSO **Paul Byrnes**, Coldwell Banker residential sales specialist, by e-mail: byrnes@family-net.org, or **Toll-Free: (877) 924-9001**.

**BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC:** 15 min. from Asheville, named 8th most ideal place to live in USA. Many FSOs retiring here — but not just a retirement community. Ideal family home full of light, 5 bedrooms, 3 full baths, big custom kitchen, hardwood floors, energy efficient, 2 fireplaces, 3,100 sq. ft. plus 1,800 on ground level (above ground) possible for office, recreation or apt. In county (less taxes), close to town and interstate. Stimulating community, many cultural and intellectual opportunities and recreation, golf, tennis, swimming, hiking, exercise programs. Plenty of volunteer opportunities, too — come join us for the good life. Gay Currie Fox Real Estate, Inc. (828) 669-8027, P.O. Box 308, Black Mountain, NC 28711, www.gaycurriefox.com. E-mail: gaycurriefox@aol.com.

## VACATION

**JUPITER BEACH, FL:** Ocean Front, 3-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath condo available with pool, gym and tennis. Golf courses close by. Minimum three months rental. Tel: (703) 960-3386. E-mail: addygene@yahoo.com.

**PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA:** Beautiful house, 3 BR, 3 baths, spectacular mountain views, jacuzzi, private. Available winter 2004. \$3,000 monthly three-month minimum. E-Mail: pscadoc@hotmail.com.

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**HOME LEAVE ON SANIBEL:** Former FSO offers 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo on Sanibel Island, Florida. Steps from famous seashells and pristine beach of this vacation paradise. Available on monthly and weekly basis. Call: (703) 827-0312, or e-mail: rmcdonnell@morino.com for availability and rates.

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**NORMANDY, FRANCE:** Large farmhouse estate near D-Day beaches. www.laporteroirouge.net Contact: Michele Lemmon, (202) 667-6756

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