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Cover photo by Rebecca Fong: Referendum Day in Baghdad, Oct. 15, 2005.

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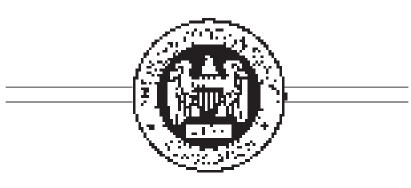
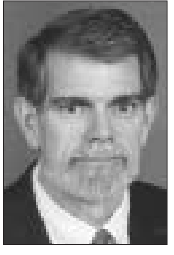


President's Views

Protecting Our Members and Our Service

By J. Anthony Holmes



This issue of the *Journal* focuses on the impact of diplomatic service in Iraq on the Foreign Service, both the institution and individual FS personnel and their families. Whatever one thinks of the war, we all have heard repeatedly that finding volunteers for Embassy Baghdad and the 16 new Provincial Reconstruction Teams is a top priority for Secretary Rice — and an important topic for this magazine to examine.

The centerpiece of our coverage (see p. 17) is a compilation of responses to our recent survey on this subject conducted via AFSANET. The survey's goal was not to draw statistically valid conclusions, but rather to use the more than 200 responses — more than a quarter of them from those who have served in Iraq — to define the issues most pressing in the eyes of FS members and explore their impact on us all. At a minimum, they reveal that current sentiment in the Foreign Service is varied and nuanced on this crucial issue and its components.

After three decades of effort to have a diplomatic corps as diverse as our nation, today's Foreign Service is a microcosm of American society. It reflects the same values and the same concerns, including about a number of issues related to Iraq service. Probably the two largest are why we have so many people there when it is impossible to do their jobs in a way they would describe as adequate anyplace else, and why we have this stark double standard on security that leads to the department's relentless search for volunteers to work in circumstances an order of magnitude more dangerous than what would lead to the immediate closure of any other post in the world.

To get the volunteers it seeks, State Department management needs to make a convincing case for service in Iraq, much as President Bush did this past fall to the American people. In addition to answering these staffing and security questions, it should also provide specific information about job content, the implications of not speaking Arabic, and the role of FS personnel vis-à-vis far more numerous contractors, political appointees, and military personnel at the mission.

> *No compromises are acceptable when it comes to the security of Foreign Service personnel serving in Iraq.*

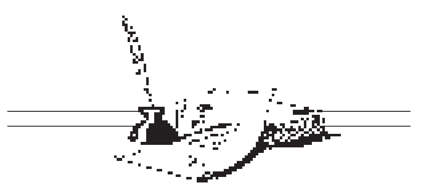
Much of what people know about Iraq service comes from the rumor mill and is outdated information from TDYers who served in the CPA and the early phases of our presence there. The survey shows that potential volunteers need information on what is happening with housing and other basic living issues and why it takes two to three days to get out and back on R&R. They also want to know what the department is doing to expand incentives for Iraq service, both on its own and in ways that require congressional approval.

The announced creation of 16 Provincial Reconstruction Teams has raised its own questions. Given widely publicized DOD opposition to them, SecDef Rumsfeld's references to bringing home about 20 percent of U.S. troops this year, and perceived political pressure on the administration to start disengaging in Iraq before the November midterm elections, potential volunteers are asking how PRTs will do their jobs and how they will be protected.

As the representative of the Foreign Service, AFSA's core position on service in Iraq must be that our personnel need all the information about service there so they can make fully informed decisions about volunteering. AFSA also has strong positions on several related issues. No compromises are acceptable when it comes to their security. Career rewards must be transparent and based on quality of service, not just showing up. Every effort must be made to work with Congress and OMB to get the resources to be able to offer sufficient incentives to maintain a staffing model based on volunteers.

The Foreign Service has repeatedly shown itself willing to serve in the most difficult and dangerous places in the world. It is, however, not political cannon fodder. Iraq is a war zone. Foreign Service personnel joined the diplomatic service, not the military. While the Foreign Service has a clear and vital role to play, blurring the distinction between diplomatic and military service is not in our nation's interest. ■

J. Anthony Holmes is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.



LETTERS

Follow the Money

Daniel Zussman is to be commended for his research on global warming (December Cybernotes, "Hurricane Season 2005: A Global Warming Link?"). I especially appreciated his links to useful Web sites.

Zussman correctly cites Dr. Patrick Michaels, of the University of Virginia, as one of the more notable critics of global warming studies. What he does not mention is that Dr. Michaels is also a fellow at the Cato Institute and has numerous ties to seven groups funded by ExxonMobil.

In all, there are 40 public policy groups dealing with the environment that have two things in common: they are all funded by ExxonMobil and they all seek to undermine the science that underlies global warming studies. I recommend the articles "Some Like It Hot" by Chris Mooney and "Snowed" by Ross Gelbspan in the May/June 2005 issue of *Mother Jones* magazine for a closer look at the unprecedented influence ExxonMobil, and its surrogates, wield in the Bush administration's environmental decisions.

John C. Garon
FSO, retired
Placerville, Calif.

So Much for Debate

I enjoyed the December Cybernotes article on global warming, and appreciated the different perspectives on the link between climate change and the recent worldwide spate of destructive hurricanes. It was telling but not surprising, however, to read that reviewers from the magazines *Science* and *Nature* refused to publish the findings of researchers whose work casts doubt on the link between global warming and human activity. So much for rigorous academic debate in the sciences!

The icing on the politically-correct cake was the statement by Sir John Lawton, chairman of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, who said, referring to the hurricanes along the Gulf Coast in 2005, "If this makes the climate loonies in the (United) States realize we've got a problem, some good will come out of a truly awful situation." Chicken Little couldn't have said it better.

Steve Hubler
FSO
Embassy Skopje

Defending DS

It is unfortunate that Diplomatic Security is often misunderstood and criticized for doing its job in this dangerous world. In response to the December letter, "One Service," by Stephen Muller, I feel compelled to defend DS from those who seem, by choice or not, to be ignorant of the realities of the profession.

As an agent on the Secretary of State's detail, it saddens me to hear an FSO belittle our mission. We don't merely spend our time "sitting outside a hotel room," as charged. DS is unique, but in ways that the writer simply doesn't, or doesn't want to, understand. Such ignorance of our culture and responsibilities are unfortunately commonplace. All would be better served if persons who are unaware of our mission simply learned a little bit about what we do, instead of charging that we don't understand, respect or appreciate what they do.

C.S. Belcher
Special Agent, DS
Washington, D.C.

Doing Our Jobs

As a DS agent with six years' experience, I would like to respond to the December letter from retired FSO Stephen Muller. He first derides DS agents for receiving, as he puts it, "overtime pay for doing their job." Muller also wonders why FSOs "expect and accept the need to work long hours without compensation" while DS agents "earn overtime for sitting outside a hotel room."

DS agents receive no more additional compensation than any other federal law enforcement agents in the U.S. government. Like all federal law enforcement agents, DS agents are expected to protect human life and take the life of another if necessary. The consequences for mistakes are at the very least life-altering (dismissal or prison), if not life-ending. Congress and the president have recognized that the willing acceptance of these responsibilities deserves recognition in the form of additional compensation. While I do not doubt that Muller and other FSOs do invaluable work in the service of their country and deserve every penny they make and much more, I doubt that any of the hundreds, or even thousands, of people who are alive today because DS agents have willingly risked their lives would agree with him that they are overpaid.

Second, Muller writes that "DS service seems to attract a different kind of person than is drawn to traditional Foreign Service work." Most agents join the Foreign Service for the same reasons he and I did, including an interest in international affairs and a desire to experience life in other cultures. Furthermore, they come from all types of backgrounds: lawyers, university professors, computer programmers and stockbrokers, as well as law enforcement service.

Third, Muller states that "many DS officers appear to have little interest in the substance of work done by their Foreign Service colleagues." In my overseas assignment I regularly met with cabinet ministers, high-ranking police officials and presidential chiefs of staff to raise issues, discuss law enforcement cooperation and to offer training and U.S. government support to the host government. I fail to see how the substance of this type of work differs from that performed by other Foreign Service officers, nor do I understand how anyone could say that these interactions are not an important part of helping the United States achieve its foreign policy objectives.

Finally, Muller opines that DS agents "see themselves primarily as law enforcement personnel whose job is to separate official Americans from the world at large." This comment strikes at the very heart of the conundrum of security. When nothing happens, when no one is attacked or killed and bombs don't destroy our facilities, we wonder why we need all this security and we question whether a threat even exists. Yet when something does happen, we wonder why we didn't have more security to deter an attack or to defend against it. There are no easy answers and someone is always left dissatisfied. However, diplomacy cannot be conducted in a vacuum where people regard as chimerical the notion that people and organizations want to hurt and kill Americans, especially official ones.

DS is not out to prevent anyone in the Foreign Service from doing his or her job. Yet our agents would not be doing their jobs if they allowed the department or our Foreign Service colleagues to blithely ignore sound security practices in today's world.

Andrew West
Special Agent, DS
Detroit Joint Terrorism Task Force

Discrimination at State

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Security consistently use the term "alternative lifestyle" as a euphemism for homosexuality. While this is an improvement over some of the terms State has employed for gay FSOs such as myself, it is still offensive.

Admittedly, if you are not gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, you may not understand why what sounds like a neutral expression is actually pejorative. But suppose I told a female colleague that she belonged to an "alternative gender," or told an African-American officer that he belonged to an "alternative race," or said that Jewish officers espouse an "alternative religion."

Then there is the term "lifestyle," as in the "lifestyles of the rich and famous." While seemingly innocent, this noun carries the inaccurate and hurtful implication that people choose to be gay — a concept at the very heart of the debate over gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people's rights.

In fact, medical, psychiatric and psychological experts are in complete agreement that one's sexual orientation is fixed and, with rare exceptions, cannot be changed. Yes, there are groups of so-called "ex-gays," who say that everyone has a choice. They insist that if you pray hard enough, you can permanently alter your sexual orientation. Well, believe me, I've done more praying than you can possibly imagine, but I'm still gay. My only "choice" is whether to be who I am, and live openly in a faithful, committed, monogamous, loving relationship with my domestic partner — or to pretend to be straight and to suffer severe mental and emotional distress.

I realize that some readers may reject the very notion of gay rights, or believe that such discrimination is rare within the Foreign Service and is not really worth trying to extirpate, especially with all the other problems employees face. Still, regardless of what you believe on that score, it has been the practice with regard to other minorities to allow the oppressed group to decide what epithets are offensive when applied to it. In other words, it is not up to the dominant culture to dictate to the oppressed what terms are acceptable.

Whether or not State Department officials intend to be neutral or even polite in using the term "alternative lifestyle," it is deeply offensive to gay people. If officials in HR or DS have any doubts about this, I encourage them to contact the organization Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies for confirmation.

Every Secretary of State since Warren Christopher has issued a statement declaring that the Department of State will not discriminate on the basis of "sexual orientation." The Office of Civil Rights (formerly the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity) uses that term, as well.

GLIFAA made the elimination of the term "alternative lifestyle" one of its top requests to Secretary Rice soon after she arrived at State last year. We still hope she will issue a directive banning its use and mandating the term "sexual orientation" in all departmental correspondence and regulations.

Will making that change eliminate bigotry against the gay community? Of course not. However, it is a good first step, one which will underscore the department's commitment to treating all its employees fairly and equally. It is also, quite simply, the right thing to do.

Bruce Knotts
FSO
Falls Church, Va.

Iraq and Public Diplomacy

Nearing the third anniversary of the Iraq invasion, the nation is awash in analysis. Since 9/11, public and cultural diplomacy alone has attracted 31 studies. In these, the cultural dimension gets conspicuously short shrift. Yet if culture is removed from public diplomacy, nothing but spin remains — some call it "propaganda."

It was culture, not spin, that helped re-educate Germany and Japan and fed the Soviet implosion. Huntington and Nye discovered the dominant cultural issues in world affairs in the 1990s, a bit late. Looking at Iraq since 1945, a decent cultural diplomacy might have nurtured the very elements we miss today. Those who remember the Near East missionary-educators and Baghdad College know about reservoirs of good will.

A modest cultural investment in Iraq begun in the 1940s might have produced, 60 years later, 2,000 or more sophisticated cultural intermediaries in Iraq and the U.S. who would have understood each other's languages and conceptual frameworks. With private support, as well as Fulbright, Defense Department and Education Act funding, new Iraq centers at U.S. universities would have broadened intellectual relations and stretched diplomatic and military minds. The network could have supported a rotating advisory panel of Iraq experts to monitor relations, brief outgoing officers, debate policy options, and suggest growth-areas. Younger scholars could have been recruited for longer- and shorter-term area assignments. State might have tried harder to defend its Arabists against recurrent slander.

Instead, the U.S. stumbled into the very holocaust Saddam promised. When the Pentagon trashed State's multivolume pre-invasion advice, it was clear that the U.S. political culture was again trumping diplomacy. Advice about protecting Iraq's cultural heritage, delivered in the Oval Office several months before invasion by a delegation of scholars, was similarly ignored. Early reactions to the impending invasion from some of our closest allies and from neighboring countries, especially Turkey, went

unheard. Strategists overlooked dangers of extended guerilla street-fighting. Drafters of constitutions were unprepared for participants who preferred independence. Election observers expected miracles. Half-understood analogies from history like Japanese re-education ran wild, as did repellent code-names like "Shock and Awe" and metaphors like the Crusades.

No one seemed to believe that intractable tensions were, in fact, intractable between Shia and Sunni, Muslim and Christian, Kurd and Arab, Hashemite and Saudi — and, more generally, between modernizers and traditionalists. And no one took seriously the long-held grievances of the world's Muslims.

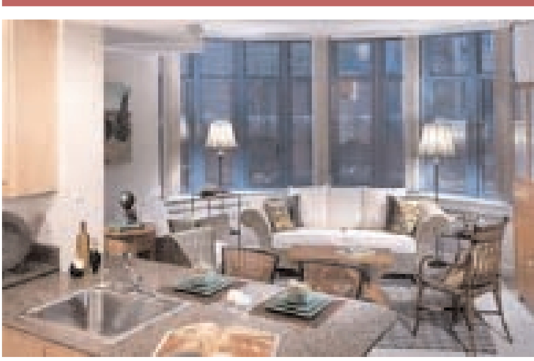
Iraq dramatizes the cultural contradictions of the reluctant U.S. hegemon. Do Americans want empire or only leadership? In either case, are they ready to bear the costs and to accept the responsibilities? While awaiting answers via a Great Debate, can we count on spinning America's shocking and awesome power to reassure a world shrouded in mistrust and cultural fog?

Richard T. Arndt
FSO, retired
Washington, D.C.

Female Chiefs of Mission

I was very interested to read Ann Wright's informative article, "Breaking through Diplomacy's Glass Ceiling" (October). I would like to provide one small addition to Chart 7 (Near East Area). After discussing female ambassadors, Wright correctly notes that: "A woman has served once as consul general in Jerusalem," but fails to mention that my predecessor, Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, served as CG in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 2002 to 2005.

Tatiana C. Gfoeller-Volkoff
FSO
Consulate General Jeddah ■



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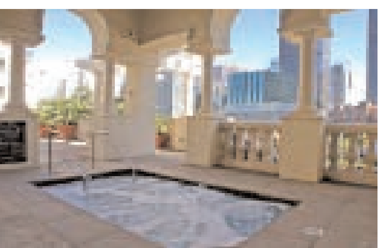

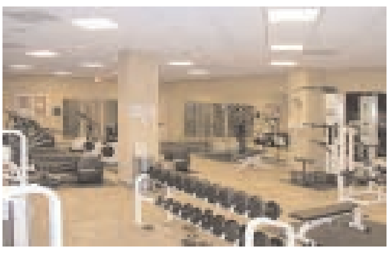

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Iraq Reconstruction: Fiscal and Political Realities

Recently, two reports based on audits of the Iraq reconstruction process have been released — one by the Government Accountability Office, and one by the office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. Both reports, presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Feb. 8, evaluate the progress of the reconstruction effort and identify challenges ahead.

The GAO's "Rebuilding Iraq: Stabilization, Reconstruction and Financing Challenges," based on four reports issued to Congress since July 2005 and additional audit work conducted in late 2005 and early 2006, was presented by GAO Director of International Affairs and Trade Joseph A. Christoff (**http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06428t.pdf**). Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction Stuart W. Bowen Jr. presented the latest quarterly statement by his office, documenting SIGIR's accomplishments (especially in the area of investigation financial oversight), the progress of rebuilding efforts and the challenges the program faces (**http://www.sigir.mil/reports/QuarterlyReports/Jan06/pdf/Report_-_January_2006.pdf**).

The GAO expresses its concern over three main issues related to the reconstruction of Iraq: the correlation between the deteriorating security situation and rising costs, the lack of information regarding various projects (leading to reduced accountability), and the instability of Iraq's infrastructure. In addition, the GAO analyzes the financial difficulties faced by the fledgling Iraqi government. It is estimated that Iraq will require more for reconstruction from 2004 to 2007 than the $56 billion estimated by several agencies, including the World Bank, the United Nations and the Coalition Provincial Authority.

The GAO conclusions are also based on earlier public reports of the progress in rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, efforts in the water and sanitation sector, assistance for the January 2005 elections and a classified report on U.S. efforts to stabilize the security situation in Iraq.

The SIGIR report points out that although electricity, oil and gas, and water projects completed in the last 18 months have delivered expected outputs, they have not enabled the overall Iraqi infrastructure to meet current demand. In many cases, services are still not up to pre-war levels.

Now the reconstruction effort in Iraq is entering a transition phase, states Special Investigator Bowen, as

Site of the Month: http://earth.google.com

Do detailed, constantly updated maps interest you? If so, you'll want to take a look at *Google Earth*, a software program that allows users to peruse high-resolution satellite and aerial images of various locations around the world. It is possible to view many cities in spectacular detail (down to individual buildings), from various angles and levels of magnification. For certain cities of the United States, it is even possible to superimpose three-dimensional models of major buildings onto the map.

While *Google Earth* may be entertaining, it can be a useful resource as well. Users can search for addresses and driving directions between them for locations in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada. Although this feature is not yet available for other parts of the world, one can assume that it will be, as *Google Earth* is a work in progress.

The program is not without its critics, however, who cite it as another example of the dangers of dual-use technology, fearing its potential use by hostile actors for intelligence-gathering purposes.

At this writing, complete high-resolution images of urban areas are only available for cities in Western Europe and North America. While Berlin is depicted with stunning clarity and detail, for example, a similar search for St. Petersburg only brings up a half-complete image of the city. But the software and the images are updated on a regular basis, and Google claims that all of the images have been taken within the past three years.

Google Earth is available in three versions — the first and simplest is free; the latter two have more features — and is designed to run on moderate system requirements.

— Shawn Guan, Editorial Intern

CYBERNOTES

completed projects and related assets are handed over to the new Iraqi government. It is expected that the last 20 percent of the $18.4 billion reconstruction budget will be allocated by the end of the year, and the Bush administration has not included new funding in its 2007 budget request. SIGIR has announced an audit to review overall transition planning; the agency wants to make sure that the U.S. has effectively planned to sustain what it has built.

Among the continuing challenges identified is one that Inspector General Bowen calls the "reconstruction gap" — the difference between project plans and expectations and actual outcomes. Covered in the quarterly report, this topic is also documented in a separate report (**http://www.sigir.mil/reports/pdf/audits/05-029_Final_SIGIR_Audit_Report_-_Challenges_Faced_-_IRRF.pdf**).

SIGIR auditors attribute the gap to funding reallocations made in late 2004, prompted by the unanticipated persistence of the insurgency and the need for high-impact programs that would show immediate results in terms of employment and living conditions. In the areas of electricity and water resources, for example, funding was cut by 23 percent and 50 percent, respectively, and shifted to security and justice and to private-sector development. Further, auditors found that on any given project security costs eat up from 10 to 25 percent of the budget, noting that since the Iraq War began in March 2003, 467 private contractors have been killed there.

The SIGIR, whose mandate was extended by Congress in November to 10 months after 80 percent of the IRRF funds have been expended, also broke a significant bribery and kickback scheme involving millions of dollars and prosecuted four Americans involved. Besides fighting corruption, the office investigates the sustainability of the projects undertaken and the validity of their cost-to-complete estimates, and has initiated a "Lessons Learned" series of reports evaluating the management processes for Iraq reconstruction.

— *Susan Maitra*

50 Years Ago...

The most important thing the American people can do to improve the effectiveness of our representation abroad is to put aside evocative phrases which have been confused with foreign policy. They should develop a practical, specific and comprehensive view of the political world, of America's position in the world, and a dispassionate logic for determining where the interest of the United States lies.

— Norman B. Hannah, "American People: Foreign Policy and the Foreign Service," *FSJ*, March 1956.

Anti-America Card Trumped in Canadian Election

"I understand political expediency," U.S. Ambassador to Canada David Wilkins said in a speech to the Canadian Club in Ottawa Dec. 13. "But the last time I looked, the United States was not on the ballot." The remarks were aimed at former Prime Minister Paul Martin, who tried to tip the balance in the run-up to Canada's Jan. 23 federal election by playing the anti-America card.

Martin, whose two-year-old government was toppled in November in a no-confidence motion over a financial scandal, adopted America-bashing at the outset of his campaign. In late December, he turned up the volume with pointed criticism of the U.S. position on softwood lumber duties and failure to ratify the Kyoto accord. He also began issuing attack ads accusing his Conservative Party opponent, Stephen Harper, of being too close to the U.S. Harper is "Bush's new best friend," proclaimed one ad. "Mr. Harper, the United States is our neighbor, not our nation," warned another — the kind of accusations that had sunk Harper's candidacy in 2004.

In the event, it was Martin's Liberal Party that lost out, ending its 12-year reign on Jan. 23 when voters gave the

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Conservative Party 124 seats in the 308-seat House of Commons to the Liberals' 103. A CBC-Radio Canada survey found that more than half of those who voted Conservative did so because they simply felt it was time for a change, not out of concern over relations with the U.S. (**http://www.cbc.ca/story/canadavotes2006/**).

No one expects a *big* change, however. Prime Minister Harper, who was sworn in on Feb. 6, pledged that his minority government would begin work immediately on his priorities: clean up the government, reduce taxes, reform the criminal justice system and improve services for day care and health care. "They have to be careful about taking a very different direction for the country," Donna Dasko, the senior vice-president of Environics Research Group, says. "The support they gained is not support for radical change."

As far as bilateral relations are concerned, it is significant that Prime Minister Harper has tapped former Industry Minister Donald Emerson, the man who has been point-person on the Canadian logging industry's dispute with the U.S., to handle the international trade portfolio. For his own part, Mr. Harper put a focus on Canada as "sovereign, strong, united and free," even promising that his tenure would represent "a change of government, not a change of country."

— Susan Maitra

Davos Summit Showcases Global Trends

The World Economic Forum's annual Davos summit took on a new focus this year, one that foreshadows the economic future of the world (**http://www.weforum.org/**). The primary topic of discussion was the economic rise of India and China. As former World Bank president James Wolfensohn stated, "We're moving from six billion to nine billion people in the next 50 years, and all but 200 million are going to be added to the developing world."

Topics involving China and India ranged from their increasing strain on global resources and continued integration into the world economy to potential future scenarios for each of the countries. Summit participant James Turley, chairman and CEO of Ernst & Young, said of India and China, "These countries are transforming more rapidly than the developed economies did, and the knowledge and potential of their people appear limitless."

Despite the focus on China, its delegation was relatively small, mainly because the annual summits happen to fall on the Lunar New Year. This has prompted WEF officials to consider a new conference to be held yearly in China in the summer.

While a large portion of the summit was dedicated to these countries, other issues were also discussed. These included global poverty, Iraq, Iran's nuclear development and Hamas' electoral victory. Angela Merkel, Germany's first female chancellor, served as the keynote speaker at the opening session. She criticized Iran's renewed nuclear efforts, saying, "Iran is not just a threat to Israel, but also to the democratic countries of this world."

Former President Bill Clinton advocated leaving the door open for dialogue with Hamas and Iran, in hopes of a peaceful resolution to both issues, and recommended that the United States maintain a military presence in Iraq until the situation had been stabilized.

— Shawn Guan, Editorial Intern

I've been Secretary of State for almost exactly one year now, and in that time I have become more convinced than ever that we have the finest diplomatic service in the world. I've seen the noble spirit of that service, a service that defines the men and women of our Foreign Service and Civil Service and our Foreign Service Nationals, many of whom are serving in dangerous places far away from their families.

— Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Georgetown University, Jan. 18, *http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/59306.htm.*

Avian Influenza: a Multilateral Challenge

Millions of birds have succumbed to avian influenza, and millions more have been purged to stem its spread in the past year. Almost 100 humans have already died from the disease. Although the disease mainly originated in Asia, reports of human infections surface on a regular basis, with each report seeming to signify a newly endangered region — Turkey being one of the most recent. The World Health Organization estimates that a pandemic caused by a mutation of the virus could last for up to three years, and that anywhere from 2 to 50 million people could die (**www.who.int/topics/avian_influenza/en/**). The last such pandemic was the Hong Kong Flu of 1968-1969, which killed an estimated 1.5 million people. That's the bad news.

The good news is that the virus has not yet mutated to the point where it can easily be transmitted by human-to-human contact. However, each new case of human infection increases the risk of viral mutation, and new cases could continue for years in underdeveloped areas where people keep live poultry in their homes, and where the slaughter and marketing of poultry are carried out without the proper sanitary precautions.

While difficult, it is not out of the realm of possibility to achieve containment and perhaps even prevention of a widespread outbreak of the disease. If a global pandemic is prevented, or at least mitigated, it will be a watershed for international cooperation.

"Fighting the avian influenza virus in animals is the most effective and cost-effective way to reduce the likelihood of H5N1 [the avian flu virus] mutating or re-assorting to cause a human flu pandemic," Food and Agriculture Organization Deputy Director-General David Harcharik told the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza in Beijing on Jan. 18 (**www.ft.com/birdflu**). The movements of animals, products and people from endemic areas to other regions should be strictly controlled, says the FAO, and this requires close cooperation among health, agricultural and veterinary authorities.

The FAO, which plays a major role in this campaign, also urges countries along the routes of migratory birds to increase vigilance and be prepared to intervene (**www.fao.org**). At the Beijing meeting, the international community pledged $1.9 billion to fight avian flu in the worst-affected countries.

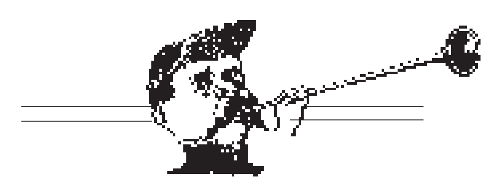
According to the World Health Organization, the world is still inadequately prepared for a flu pandemic. Although Tamiflu is an effective method of early prevention, it is estimated by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health that it would take more than a decade to manufacture enough to treat even 20 percent of the global population (**http://www.jhsph.edu/flu/**). Furthermore, the cost of the medication has been cited as another drawback, at least for developing nations that are among the most affected by the disease.

In the U.S., health officials have developed a catastrophic scenario against which to plan measures to meet a potential flu pandemic. In November, President Bush issued the "National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza" outlining the U.S. approach to handling such an emergency (**www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html**).

For individuals, perhaps the best advice is to stay informed. The WHO's Web site on bird flu, listed above, provides information, news and a status report on the disease. The Centers for Disease Control also maintains an informative site on the topic (**http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/**). The U.S. government's official site features official travel notices, articles from the National Institute of Health, and general information on developments at the state and national level in the U.S. (**http://www.pandemicflu.gov/**). The E.U. Web site on the subject provides a more relevant perspective for people currently living in Europe (**http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/influenza/index.cfm**).

Whatever its outcome, this issue already marks an important test of diplomacy for the 21st century. ◆

— Shawn Guan, Editorial Intern



SPEAKING OUT

Micromanagement and the Culture of Fear

BY LLYWELYN C. GRAEME

Most of you are afraid. No, really, you are. But don't worry; I've got your back. Shelly down the hall does, too, and so does Rich in the other section. Heck, even Condi (if I may be so bold) is taking care of us.

So why are you still so nervous?

There is a problem in the culture of the State Department, one that saps our will, damages our morale and lowers our productivity. I am referring to a pervasive lack of trust I have seen supervisors display toward their subordinates.

Did fear produce over-cautious behavior, or is it the other way around? When today's minister-counselors were wet-behind-the-ears junior officers, they were often micromanaged, and our institutional memory got skewed. Reasonably cautious behavior grew in time to ... well, not paranoia — we are not that far along yet, thankfully — but certainly a lack of trust. It's not any one person's fault, but it needs to be addressed sooner, not later.

This anxiety is a nebulous thing, hard to pin down, and therefore hard to counter with reasoned arguments. Partly, of course, it's fear of making a mistake (did we address that memo to Condolleza instead of Condoleezza?). After all, everyone wants the 7th floor to know his or her name, but for the right reason, not the wrong one. And for most supervisors, particularly ambassadors and DCMs at high-profile posts, the cost of being wrong is far greater than the reward for being right.

> *The pervasive lack of trust many supervisors display toward their subordinates damages morale and lowers productivity.*

Admittedly, it can be very hard to quantify the damage that overcautious attitude inflicts. The sad truth is that embassies with poor morale often still do great work and, conversely, posts with high morale are sometimes poor performers. But the sort of micromanagement I am talking about is more than just annoying. It results in genuine harm to the national interest.

A Time-and-Motion Study

Let us suppose that an FS-1 section head asks an FS-3 officer to write a cable on bluefish migration patterns in Balao. The subordinate works on it for three hours, then the boss spends an hour marking it up and sends it back for a rewrite. That takes another hour. Then the FS-1 spends another hour getting it ready for the ambassador.

Total staff time: six hours. Estimated cost: $230 (not including post differential and so forth).

OK, in absolute terms, that may seem to be a pretty low outlay to get a really good cable on bluefish migration patterns. But analyze it another way. Let's say the two individuals in our story each work an average of 10 hours a day (pretty average, really). That means the drafter in our example above spent 40 percent of his day on one task, and the section chief spent 20 percent of her day redoing it.

Lest I be dismissed as a crank, let me say here that my relationship with my most recent supervisor was stellar. He trusted me implicitly and, when time was short, would sign what I put in front of him, knowing that I had completed the staff work and would never steer him wrong.

But in all too many instances, supervisors get down "in the weeds" to follow up the most miniscule details. This is contrary to the whole idea of empowering employees, which says that when you give a subordinate a task, you trust him or her to carry it out. Of course, you have a duty to follow through, and it can be dangerous, to put it mildly, to put your career in the hands of a person on their second tour. But that is what we

need to do wherever possible. If you follow up and follow up, if you give overly-detailed instructions and repeat points ad nauseum, the message you are sending your staff is that you don't trust them.

Happy-to-Glad Editing

A colleague serving at a large Western European post (where they do a lot of reporting!) tells me that the supervisors there do frantic, end-of-the-day editing of perfectly acceptable draft cables. Because the subordinate's word choice or syntax is not quite the way they would have said it, the boss makes the writer change it. Now, if we were talking about substantive changes or corrections of factual errors, that would be one thing. But in most cases, the phrasing does not make a whit of difference to the recipients back in Washington: "The tree has leaves on it" and "There are leaves on the tree" really say the same thing. In addition, a supervisor who is focused on making sure that "his" (or her) voice is present in the cable or memo may miss far more serious flaws.

Or consider another example of over-editing: interoffice memos and fax cover sheets. I know one officer who routinely edits requests for something within a consulate before they go out. If you write, "Please send us a copy of the book, *Politics in America*," he'll change it to, "Please send us one copy of the book, *Politics in America*," wasting his time, his subordinate's time and paper!

Trust Us

This attitude manifests itself in other ways, too. One day a colleague delivered mail to her section chief, who expressed surprise that a box he was expecting was not included. She explained that she'd brought the entire pouch shipment for the day and then continued on her way. She happened to walk back in his office a few minutes later and found him on the phone with the mailroom staff demanding "his" box.

Trust your staff to do their jobs. Expect the best; they might just surprise you.

Here's another example. A section chief of my acquaintance was asked to chair the embassy award committee. But according to post practice, the ambassador was the only one who could convene the group, and always sat in on meetings. This produced the worst of both worlds: the ambassador's and section chief's time was wasted, and relations between the two were anything but "professional and pleasant."

And we've probably all seen cases where an ambassador gives an instruction to the DCM, then repeats it to the political counselor and on down the line. And is it really a good use of a Senior Foreign Service officer's time to follow up on a subordinate's motor pool request? Interactions like these, particularly when they take place in front of non-State employees or local staff, are lethal to morale and the concept of a "team."

Of course, there has to be a transition period for new employees to settle in, and perhaps that needs to be longer in State Department offices than it would be for other large organizations. But by the end of any officer's first six months, you should either trust him or her to carry out instructions and work without constant supervision — or be looking for ways to ease them out of the Service.

Fix the Problem

I suspect that some of you are shaking your heads and muttering, "But I *must* follow up; our work is that important and my staff need that much direction." Sorry, but that means they are not measuring up. So instead of peering over their shoulders all day long, you should be taking the time to document poor performance and look for ways to help them improve it. Yes, this will produce squeals of outrage, and perhaps even a grievance. But we are not here just to have fun; we are here to carry out transformational diplomacy. Plus, keeping poor performers on staff is a disservice to the American people we work for and the thousands of highly motivated, qualified candidates who fail the Foreign Service exam every year not for lack of ability, but for lack of slots to fill.

Documenting performance problems and counseling employees before giving them a poor EER is part of every supervisor's duty to train and prepare the next generation of State Department leaders, especially since doing so improves the chances of an honest evaluation standing up to challenge. If the problem is lack of skills or training, not motivation, then make certain to address that. Let that mid-level officer go for the training they need in management. Have real, honest counseling sessions. In short, if your staff frustrates you, teach them and guide them. Don't do their job for them.

What are some of the rewards of

By the end of any officer's first six months, you should either trust them to carry out instructions, or be looking for ways to ease them out of the Service.

placing more trust in subordinates? Well, when was the last time you had 30 minutes to contemplate the role that think-tanks and NGOs play in your host government? When was the last time you met a contact for tea or coffee just to get to know them? How about brainstorming the perfect press event to showcase American radio? There is a huge dividend in time you can reap from trusting your staff. Yes, your neck is potentially on the line. But don't you think the rewards could be worth the risk?

Let us all do what we can to rid our organization of the culture of fear. Start by trusting your staff to do their jobs. When you set a deadline for a draft, wait until it comes up to ask where that cable is. Expect the best; they might just surprise you.

This is the big leagues; we all work with and for the smartest, most innovative people in America. It's a big world and a short day; let's make the most of it. ■

Llywelyn C. Graeme has served as an office management specialist in Abuja and Beijing. He is currently an OMS in Wellington.

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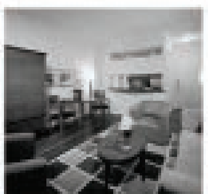

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IRAQ SERVICE AND BEYOND

Rebecca Fong

THE WAR IN IRAQ IS HAVING A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE FOREIGN SERVICE. IT IS TIME TO DISCUSS WHAT IS HAPPENING AND HOW TO MEET THE CHALLENGES.

BY SHAWN DORMAN

The Bush administration has created the largest diplomatic mission in the world in Iraq, a country that has become arguably the most dangerous place on earth for American diplomats. Since the president and the Secretary of State have determined that bringing peace and democracy to Iraq is the number-one foreign policy priority for the United States, the career professionals of the Foreign Service are answering the call to staff both our embassy in Baghdad and the 16 Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Close to a thousand members of the U.S. Foreign

Service have volunteered to serve in Iraq since 2003, despite the dangers of serving in war-zone conditions.

Staffing Iraq has become a central issue for the Foreign Service and promises to continue to be significant for the foreseeable future. The impact is being felt not only in Baghdad, but in Washington and throughout the world. The so-called "Iraq Tax" is pulling resources for the U.S. mission there — both in personnel and in funding — from other offices and posts around the world. Few would deny that the demands of staffing and supporting our Iraq mission (with little additional Congressional funding for human resources) have put a strain on the Foreign Service.

In an effort to obtain the clearest possible picture of the conditions of daily life and work in Iraq — and how Iraq service and staffing are affecting the broader Foreign Service — the *Foreign Service Journal* requested input from the field by way of an AFSANET e-mail message to Foreign Service members. We asked those who have served or are serving in Iraq to comment on their experiences and asked all respondents, including those who have not served there, to comment on what they see as the impact of Iraq staffing on the Service.

Despite the fact that hundreds of Foreign Service members have served there since the 2003 invasion (note: not all of those who volunteer are selected to go), the topic of Iraq service is surrounded by rumors, out-of-date stories from the era of the Coalition Provisional Authority and even misinformation. The goal of sending out a request for input was not to conduct a scientific survey, but to collect enough input to provide a window into the day-to-day reality of Iraq service, a set of impressions that can help foster dialogue and inform discussions of the Foreign Service role in this front-line country.

Talking Points

It is time for a closer look at what is happening to the Foreign Service because of the Iraq mission. Hopefully, the input we received from the field can serve to open the doors for discussion on how the Foreign Service can meet the tremendous challenges ahead.

Responses to the survey illustrate that serving in Iraq comes with serious challenges, including how to play a relevant diplomatic role while the U.S. military is still fighting a war there, and how to cope with an extremely stressful and dangerous 24/7-type work environment. Staffing Iraq with the right number of qualified Foreign Service members is thus of paramount importance. Many respondents question the staffing levels for Iraq posts given the security situation. Those who have served in Iraq raise serious questions about the effect on the mission of the hundreds of non-career appointees serving there. In addition, finding ways to better integrate the civilian diplomatic and military "dual command structure" is a concern. Employees serving in Baghdad are particularly concerned about the security of their housing.

The picture that emerges from this survey is one of courageous, patriotic and often selfless service by those Foreign Service members who have volunteered to go to Iraq. Many of those who have served there want their colleagues to "step up" and do the same. At the same time, many who have not served there feel their own contributions elsewhere – including in other hardship and danger posts — no longer count, and some resent a perceived attitude from senior management that only Iraq service matters today.

Shawn Dorman, a former Foreign Service officer, is associate editor of the Foreign Service Journal.

The war in Iraq is having a profound effect on the Foreign Service. Our people are being called upon to serve — and to risk their lives — under extraordinary conditions at the embassy in Baghdad and at other locations throughout the country. Many hundreds have volunteered. The American Foreign Service Association believes it is vital to support our members serving in Iraq, and we think that the difficult issues surrounding the conditions of Iraq service require special attention. We need a clear picture of those conditions if we are to credibly address the concerns of our members. For this reason, AFSA supported the decision by the editors of the Foreign Service Journal *to undertake the survey described in this article. The strong and candid responses to this survey, both from current and recent veterans of Iraq postings and from members who have not (yet) served there, tell an important story. We hope the results of this survey will help inform the foreign affairs community and will guide AFSA's efforts on behalf of Foreign Service members in Iraq.*

J. Anthony Holmes, AFSA President

The responses also indicate that the Foreign Service community wants more information about service in Iraq and what it means for onward assignments and promotions. They want management to be up-front with them about the realities and impact of Iraq service.

Who We Heard From

The *Journal* took the highly unusual step of guaranteeing anonymity to the survey respondents, a decision not taken lightly. We felt it was important for Foreign Service members to be able to speak openly, and we did not think many would share their views if attribution was required.

We heard from 210 active-duty members of the U.S. Foreign Service. Of the 210, more than a quarter — 57 — have served or are currently serving in Iraq. We were struck by how candid and thoughtful the responses were, both from those who have served in Iraq and those who have not. While it is entirely true that the respondents represent a self-selected group, they are not a group of "complainers," as some might be quick to presume, but loyal employees serving their country under difficult conditions, offering an inside perspective on issues of concern to the Foreign Service, *their* Service.

We list the questions asked in the survey, along with a sampling of responses. Clear themes emerged, and we tried to choose representative comments to illustrate them. The first set of questions was addressed to those who have served in Iraq; the second set, examining staffing issues more broadly, was addressed to the entire Foreign Service.

Of the 57 respondents who have served in Iraq, about half were currently serving there. We heard from people who have served in Baghdad, in other cities as State Embedded Team officers with the U.S. military and in the Regional Embassy Offices — in Basra, Kirkuk, Hilla and Mosul — now being converted to Provincial Reconstruction Teams, known as PRTs. (Secretary Rice announced plans in January to establish 16 PRTs in the Iraqi provinces.)

Most of the 210 survey respondents were State Department employees, but we also heard from 14 USAID Foreign Service officers and one Foreign Agricultural Service officer. We heard from generalists as well as specialists, including diplomatic security agents, office management specialists and IT professionals. Respondents ranged from first-tour to senior-level employees. (Photos were submitted by FS members, not all of whom answered the survey.)

What motivated you to volunteer for Iraq service?

The most frequently stated response was, in various iterations, "to serve my country." Many spoke of a desire to serve where they are most needed. Some respondents mentioned an additional hope that Iraq service would be career-enhancing, while others pointed to the financial incentives.

"This is the most important U.S. government mission we have, and I wanted to contribute," writes a senior-level officer serving in Iraq. A public affairs officer in Baghdad cites "the opportunity to make a difference in a challenging environment," as the reason, echoing sentiment shared by several others. "Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, adventure and (the fact that) the department needed people to go," says an FSO who served in Baghdad from 2004 to 2005.

"The opportunity for grass-roots diplomacy was too great to pass up," writes an officer who served in one of the provinces during 2003. "I went to serve and to make a difference. I did both and am glad that I did."

Some of the Arabic-language and area specialists made comments such as this one from an officer currently serving in a regional embassy office: "I speak Arabic, have been following Iraq with interest since it invaded Kuwait in 1990, understand what the administration is trying to accomplish and consider it important to our own national interest."

"A sincere desire to give back to my country and serve where others did not want to venture," declares a specialist who served in Baghdad. She continues: "[I had a] youthful degree of hope that if I worked very hard — along with everyone else — we could get this war over and done with and send our young men home, alive."

Several people commented on volunteering, in part, to get out of a current job or post. A personnel officer writes that, "There have been numerous volunteers from many posts, both for Iraq and Afghanistan. Some have volunteered because they want to serve, some hope it will advance their careers and some are volunteering just to get out of assignments or supervisors they are dissatisfied with." One senior-level DS agent illustrates in his response the combined reasons for volunteering: "A belief that senior agents needed to step up to lead the

newer agents volunteering, and a desire to curtail from previous post."

How does the way you work in Iraq differ from the way you worked at other posts?

The three top ways working in Iraq differs from other places, according to the respondents, are: the level of danger, the extreme work hours and the non-integrated command structure between the embassy, the military and the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. (IRMO is a temporary organization that was established to oversee and monitor all U.S. government spending on reconstruction that does not come from Defense Department coffers.) Another factor raised by many survey respondents was the impact of having so many appointees and contractors at the mission, many of whom have never served in an embassy or overseas before.

Eric Watnik

A vandalized Saddam mural on the Kirkuk Airbase

"We don't get shot at in Berlin," comments an FSO who served in Baghdad and regional embassy offices, summing up the general sentiment on the level of danger working in Iraq.

One officer notes the difference by describing a trip to the Red Zone he had just taken the day before to meet with an Iraqi contact. (The Red Zone is all of Iraq outside the protected central-Baghdad area previously known as the Green Zone and, more recently, renamed the International Zone.) "I traveled to the meeting with three armored vehicles and 14 fully-armed contractors in assault gear as my personal security escort. I was met by six more of the same at the site who had secured the building before my arrival. As we entered Check Point One on our return to the International Zone, a car bomb detonated at Check Point Two, killing two and injuring many more. Timing is everything."

"It is very different from other posts in that we are assisting an ongoing major U.S. war effort and the level of risk is higher," notes an FSO serving in Iraq. "In other countries, like Algeria and Burundi, the ongoing civil conflict was not aimed at us, but here, it is [aimed at us] as well as at all those who support us." Working conditions are such, observes a retired FSO who served in a contract position in Iraq, that "in any other place the embassy would have been closed or drawn down to a skeletal staff."

Many respondents commented on the "extreme" work hours. It is clear that the pace in Baghdad is fre-

A Day in the Life of ...

Rebecca Fong

Political Officer | Baghdad | January 2006

0630	Stand at Checkpoint One to identify and escort a Ministry of Foreign Affairs convoy that needs to enter the Green Zone.
0815	Attend staff meeting.
0900	Meet with embassy Foreign Service Nationals.
1000	Drive in Green Zone to the Transitional National Assembly. Talk to [Iraqi] congressmen about certain issues, monitor proceedings, have lunch with congressmen and discuss legislation.
1500	Red Zone run to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, brief deputy foreign ministers on various business, and take notes for the [Iraqi] prime minister's meeting with a U.S. congressional delegation.
1800	Have dinner in Green Zone with the adviser to the deputy president.
2100	Write cables.

netic and the flow of incoming taskings is relentless. "The day begins at 8 a.m. or before, with meetings scheduled as late as 8 p.m.," explains an FSO serving in Baghdad. "People routinely work until 11 p.m., and there never seems to be a break. It creates a kind of Vegas casino atmosphere where you don't know if it's night or day outside because the activity level is constant. We have Friday 'off' but since Washington works on Friday, we need to be here then as well."

Work is similar to other posts, explains an officer in Baghdad, "except that the workload is triple (10-16 hours a day, seven days a week), and doing anything (leaving the embassy, scheduling meetings, making a phone call, getting anywhere) is 100 times more complex. And, of course, this is the most dangerous location to be."

"We work 75-plus hours a week for months on end with few holidays, no normal weekends, maybe two days off a month when in country," writes an officer serving in a regional embassy office. He goes on to say that, "The security situation makes it very difficult to travel and to

Bob Holby

Iraqi and American interpreters in Tikrit

get beneath the surface politically. Frequent turnover makes for much reinventing of the wheel. The vagaries of military transport make it incredibly difficult to travel."

A security agent in Baghdad writes that his days start at around 5:30 a.m. and end around 10:30 p.m. A politi-

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cal officer in Baghdad notes: "Our days in the political section begin at 8:15 a.m. and usually don't end until 10 or 11 at night. Our official days off — Friday and Saturday — are a joke. The front office makes periodic statements of the need to take time, but then tasks indiscriminately on the days off. Congressional delegations and VIP visits eliminate most holidays."

"Fourteen-hour workdays seven days a week are the norm," says a Foreign Service officer in Baghdad. "In view of the security situation, access to Iraqis and travel opportunities are severely constrained. Mortar and rocket shellings are routine. Foreign Service National staff are risking their lives daily merely by showing up for work."

One officer calls the key difference in the working environment the "dual command structure" between the embassy and the military. It's "not a workable model — one leader [is] needed for the U.S. government mission in Iraq. Ongoing fighting of the war conflicts with acknowledging Iraqi sovereignty and strengthening the Iraqi government. The two structures have competing and conflicting goals."

Echoing the same concern, a specialist serving in Baghdad writes that "there are some frustrating aspects of working in an organization this large with two leaders — military and State. There doesn't seem to be a big push for a joining of the two, even though we occupy the same building. There isn't even a comprehensive telephone listing, which is extremely frustrating."

"Working in Iraq is totally different from any other embassy," says another officer serving in Baghdad. "First, the mission is huge. It is impossible to know who is who and who is working on what. Portfolios overlap … between the embassy, the military, IRMO, USAID and many other agencies that are bumping into each other out here. Many of the people here have never served overseas or in an embassy and are pretty much clueless about how an embassy works. … Second, the military dominates everything we do. They have manpower and resources to throw at every issue. … Third, security is an ever-present issue. You can never forget you are in a war zone and that you are a target of attack at all times. Fourth, the workload is overwhelming. There is no such thing as free time, at least not for those of us who work in substantive sections. We have standing meetings that start at 8 p.m.! Entreaties by the front office to take time off ring hollow in the face of never-ending taskers, e-mails, … phone calls from Washington, and the daily crises that always need to be handled 'immediately.' … There is no privacy. … We work in cramped conditions, nearly on top of each other. There is no place to 'get away' and there's certainly no going 'home' at the end of the day."

The work differs, says an FSO serving in Baghdad, "in every way possible. … FSOs spend much of their time serving as administrative assistants to contractors. The contractors have money to fund their operations fully, while State is running on a shoestring. All the FSOs in the political and public affairs sections spend inordinate time … escorting contacts into the Green Zone for meetings. … Our local employees cannot tell friends and family where they work; several employees have been killed. We cannot do contact work for the most part, because to travel into the Red Zone is to alienate most contacts, as well as hundreds of Iraqis who are terrified of our motorcades (Iraqis are run off the road if they don't get out of the way). On the plus side, every day is a challenge that keeps all your senses alive. It's a lab and a school and a bomb shelter rolled into one. Often job descriptions change daily because of massive turnover and staffing gaps. There is almost *no* institutional memory."

A Day in the Life of …

Richard Bell

Provincial Action Officer | Kirkuk | 2005

Eat copious hot buffet breakfast at KBR-run dining facility, drop off clothes at KBR-run laundry, don body-armor and helmet, get into armored vehicle and set off with heavily armed motorcade that barrels down the road at high speed, often "counterflow" (that is, on the wrong side of the road, purposely, to avoid roadside bombs).

At destination, march into building surrounded by bodyguards, take off body armor, have cordial meetings with Iraqi officials who provide tea and other refreshments as a matter of course. Then head home to regional embassy office, a small compound protected by armed guards and watchtowers.

Send and receive a lot of e-mails (classified and unclassified) late into the evening, then go to bed in single room with air conditioning and color TV that gets AFN, CNN, Fox, Eurosport, Star Movies, Fashion TV …

Michael Nehrbass

Rocket-damaged truck at Camp Striker, Baghdad

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Those working in Information Resource Management seem to find the work similar to that at other posts. It does not depend on contact with Iraqis, and is primarily done on-site in the office. One IRM employee in Baghdad summed up his views this way: "Less work, longer hours, Baghdad overstaffed."

"Extreme perseverance, determination and stubbornness are required to perform diplomatic duties."

— An FSO serving in Baghdad

Are you able to do your job effectively, as one might expect at another post if you had the same portfolio? Can you see or talk to the people you need to? Can you communicate effectively with them (i.e., in Arabic, English)?

The most common response to the question about effectiveness was a conditional yes. The security situation is by far the most limiting factor. This includes both the difficulty of arranging meetings outside the Green Zone and the restrictions resulting from traveling to those meetings with armed guards.

"I've been able to do my job effectively," explains a management officer serving in Baghdad, "starting at the point that I realized that the paradigm here is completely different from any other embassy."

"Extreme perseverance, determination and stubbornness are required to overcome the myriad of difficulties of performing diplomatic duties," writes an FSO serving in Baghdad. "However, often security restrictions keep us overly locked down and in a bubble, where we can not accurately track or influence events."

"I am able to do my job effectively," says an officer in Baghdad, "except that everything requires five times the effort, 10 times the time and 20 times the patience as elsewhere."

"Considering the circumstances, we are surprisingly effective," says an FSO serving in a regional embassy office. "Sometimes it takes a long time to make a meeting happen, but eventually it does happen. Communication can be a challenge, but there are always translators around. … The limiting factor here is how thin the FS is spread."

"I don't think I'm very effective," writes a first-tour officer serving in Baghdad. "I seem to spin my wheels a lot. I truly believe first-tour officers should not be allowed to serve in Iraq. It's hard to see the people you need to talk to if they're in the Red Zone. It's not effective communication, and I wasn't given Arabic [-language training] so that's another problem."

Several other officers expressed frustration at not having Arabic-language skills. Only 10 respondents reported that they speak Arabic. A number of respondents noted that not having Arabic was a factor, but most explained that interpreters were available as needed. One political officer notes, "I should have had Arabic training for my position. I am hampered by the need to use a Foreign Service National for translation/interpreter purposes. It takes longer to establish a rapport without the language. Access is my biggest beef — there are folks you just can't get to meet."

Do security precautions limit your ability to do your job, and if so, how?

Almost every respondent said yes, sometimes accompanied by something akin to "Are you kidding?!" The security restrictions have the most impact on reporting officers, who need to meet with Iraqis outside the Green Zone. A number of reporting officers expressed the view that security precautions for meetings in the Red Zone were too restrictive to allow for fully effective job performance. However, almost all explained that they understand the need for these same security precautions.

"It is not possible to leave the Green Zone without bodyguards," says an FSO serving in Baghdad, "and it is necessary to request them at least two days prior to any trip out. Many times security conditions will make it necessary to cancel or postpone a planned trip. The heavy security presence that accompanies us into the Red Zone also puts a damper on meetings. These security precautions are, however, absolutely necessary. This is a war zone and there are people out there who are actively trying to kill us. Anyone who doubts the need for the security precautions in place should be immediately removed from the mission."

"Security limits everything," says an FSO who has served in Baghdad and a regional embassy office. "We have to travel to other cities only in helicopters. … We

wear bulletproof vests and helmets that complicate movement. There is no such thing as casual movement, so you can never stop in a store, grab a sandwich or get in a cab. Thus, it's almost impossible to talk to the 'man in the street.' There are whole parts of the country we can't get into, or only with the Army, which then makes us a bigger target." Another FSO comments on security restrictions: "The message is mixed. Get out, but don't get out. It makes things tough."

"Security limits everything. … There is no such thing as casual movement."

— An FSO who has served in Baghdad

"Getting Red Zone moves approved is a big problem," says an FSO in Baghdad. "Many of our contacts won't come to the embassy or the International Zone because they don't want others to know they are talking to the U.S. embassy or because they don't want to put up with the search procedures at the checkpoints."

"Security limits my ability to work," writes one officer serving in Baghdad. "Iraqis don't want me to visit their ministry with my personal security detail in town because that makes them a target. At the same time it is such a hassle to put in for and be approved for a Personal Security Detail and to coordinate the movement. There is very little flexibility, so no spontaneous action is ever possible."

The situation is the same for those serving in the regional embassy offices, except they do not have a protected international zone. An FSO at a regional post writes that security precautions "definitely" limit her ability to do her job. "Our meetings frequently get canceled at the last minute because of security threats. … We have to plan weeks in advance for some meetings. Getting outside

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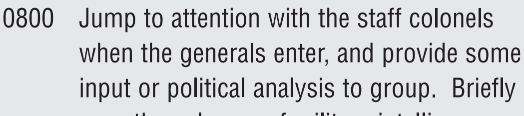
A Day in the Life of ...

Lane Bahl
FSO on State Embedded Team | Ramadi
January 2006

Iraqi Prime Minister Jafari (seated, center) visits Ramadi

0730 Rise in my run-down steel trailer. It is surprisingly cold in the desert during the winter and my heat's been out for months. Quickly trot along the kilometer of our tiny base on the banks of the Euphrates River for the staff huddle.



0800 Jump to attention with the staff colonels when the generals enter, and provide some input or political analysis to group. Briefly scan the volumes of military intelligence and embassy products at desk that I share with four Civil Affairs Group officers.

1000 Usually head over for the convoy brief. Always ride with Humvee 2, my trusted staff sergeant, gunner 'Trigger' and skilled 19-year-old driver. Tear out of the base, while other Marines hold up a huge line of traffic, negotiate a broken water pipe on the opposite side of the barrage that has created a meter-deep pothole, whip around the traffic circle and make a beeline for the government center in wartorn, downtown Ramadi.

1100 Meetings with sheiks, the governor, provincial council or ministry representatives usually go for three, four, five hours. We often take mortar or sniper rounds during the sessions, but the building's a fortress and a dedicated platoon snipes at improvised explosive devices periodically from the towers surrounding the enclosure. Then it's "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride" home to the regular intelligence briefing (if I don't stay down at the Civil Military Operations Center behind the Government Center).

1600 Attend intelligence briefing.

1700 Perhaps a KBR dinner of yellow iceberg lettuce and mystery-meat burger.

1800 Return to the Civil Affairs trailer to write my cable. During more pleasant times, I join my Marine colleagues for an evening cigar, and then get back to typing.

2200 Walk back to the trailer in the pitch blackness (no lights allowed on base at night to make it harder for the insurgents to aim), shower (almost always water on base!), read for 15 minutes (no TV). Then I'm out.

---

the compound is very difficult to arrange and extremely dangerous because there are improvised explosive devices everywhere."

An FSO who served in a regional embassy office in 2005 comments that "Political contact work was extremely difficult in that it a) took 48 hours of planning for a simple meeting, b) required 20 armed guards as an escort, and c) put the lives of our contacts in danger for the simple fact of having met with an American official."

Several respondents in administrative and IT positions say that security precautions do not limit their ability to do their jobs.

Is housing adequate and sufficiently secure?

Housing security is described by respondents as a significant problem for Foreign Service personnel serving in Baghdad who are not with USAID. Without being specific (though respondents were very specific) about the security problems, suffice it to say that most respondents feel that the trailers — informally referred to as "hooches" — are unsafe.

While a few State respondents said the housing is fine, the vast majority commented on the vulnerability of the trailers. Looking to their USAID colleagues, respondents commented that their sister agency had built far superior housing for its people in Baghdad.

Each USAID employee gets one of the small houses on a grassy compound with a dining hall (State employees eat in the large dining facility run by KBR). The houses have Internet access, Direct-TV and small kitchenettes as well. According to a USAID officer who was in Baghdad as the housing was being constructed, the agency contracted locally for the job and completed the project in nine months.

Many respondents — both from USAID and State — pointed to USAID housing as much more secure and more comfortable than the trailers. Several employees from both agencies noted that they were under the impression that the USAID housing cost the government less money than the trailers and is not only more

Top: FSO Bob Holby (in vest) heading to a meeting in Tikrit

Left: Dinner with Falluja City Council, provincial governor and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq

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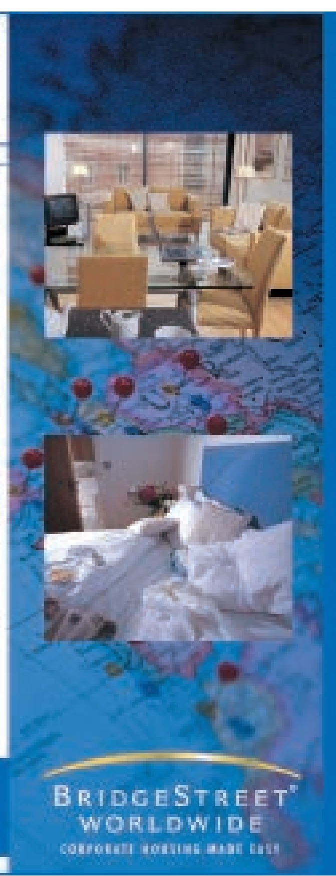


A Day in the Life of ...

Rich Schmierer

Public Affairs Officer | Baghdad | April 2005

After a quick breakfast in the "DFAC" (dining facility) in the Republican Palace, joined by visiting U.S. speakers Leslie Gelb and Fouad Ajami, along with a Defense Department reservist whose "day job" is serving as a delegate in the Maryland State Legislature, I head off to my office to check e-mail and the overnight newspaper headlines before attending the 8:30 a.m. country-team meeting.

Following country team, Gelb, Ajami and I — donning flak jackets and helmets — are escorted by my Personal Security Detail to the landing zone on the edge of the palace grounds for a Blackhawk flight to the regional embassy office in Kirkuk, where Gelb and Ajami's embassy-sponsored speaker program would continue for the coming two days. The two-hour flight, with two refueling stops, flying about 100 feet above ground on a hazy morning, is scenic and uneventful (although it was probably worth asking why the crew didn't bother to close the chopper doors).

Upon arrival in Kirkuk we are transferred by armored motorcade from the military base to the embassy office on the other side of the city. After being shown our quarters and freshening up, we head to the food hall, where we are pleasantly (if enviously) surprised to find that the food at Regional Embassy Office Kirkuk is better than at Embassy Baghdad (something about the on-site food preparation capability and the "scale" of the operation).

In mid-afternoon we start putting our speakers to work. First, Gelb and Ajami engage representatives of Kirkuk's various ethnic communities at a roundtable hosted at the REO, where the discussion centers on the multiethnic nature of the city, its recent history of "ethnic cleansing" and displacement and the region's great oil wealth. This session was followed by a dinner event with members of Kirkuk's regional governing council, also at the REO.

In these meetings, representatives of the various ethnic communities invariably use "the floor" to outline their history, their grievances and their claims on Kirkuk's resources and future. Anger is expressed by all communities that Kirkuk's oil wealth has not benefited the city; under the old regime, 100 percent of the revenues from Kirkuk's oil production was taken by the central government for use elsewhere in the country. When the issue of internally-displaced persons comes up, pandemonium almost breaks out, and the speakers have to intervene to move the discussion away from that contentious topic.

One obvious aspect of these sessions is that they provide a "therapeutic" opportunity for those from the various Kirkuk communities — who rarely met and communicated with one another — to air their grievances. Such dialogue facilitation is perhaps one of the most valuable contributions which we outsiders could make.

After wrapping up the evening session, we adjourn for a walk in the warm spring air in a small woods on the REO compound, and then — after partaking of some "mid-rats," or midnight rations, in the food hall — head to our rooms to prepare for an excursion the following day. We are going to the Kurdish regional capital of Sulaimaniya, a two-hour drive from Kirkuk, to meet with the newly-elected provincial governor, the Kurdistan Regional Authority deputy governor and a large group of academics, to discuss Kurdish needs in the new federal Iraq.

secure but is of better quality in general.

"USAID housing is fantastic and very cost-effective and secure," writes a mid-level USAID employee serving in Baghdad. "They should do a case study on how USAID did it versus how the other U.S. agencies did theirs, and [look at] the resulting impact on morale and performance."

A diplomatic security agent writes from Baghdad that the housing "is not nearly as secure as it should be." An FSO in Baghdad comments: "Half a trailer with a miniscule shared bathroom is pathetically inadequate. Stray bullets and shrapnel can, and do, pierce trailers."

"Not only is housing inadequate," writes an FSO serving in Baghdad, "[but] basic privacy is not respected. The

housing contractor, KBR, regularly goes into private housing for inspections without notice. Three such recent 'inspections' to my hooch did not result in needed repairs. … When there is indirect mortar or rocket fire (a fairly common occurrence), the announcement tells us to seek cover under our beds (eight-inch clearance) or under our flimsy desks. I certainly do not feel safe when the entire hooch shakes violently from a nearby hit (five occurrences during four months so far)."

"I spent many a night listening as the rockets literally whooshed over my head," says one FS specialist who served in Baghdad in 2004 and 2005. "I had two AK-47 bullets come through my roof. One landed two feet from my head."

A comment from an FSO at a regional embassy office illustrates possible issues that will come up as all the PRTs are staffed in upcoming months. "The recent expansion of this office without the necessary administrative support (e.g., additional housing) [means] people are being shoved into smaller and smaller spaces. At one point, a member of management was considering housing one of our officers in a walk-in closet underneath the stairs, just like Harry Potter. The biggest problem now is that this place is way too overcrowded. This enhances the fishbowl effect. All of this wears on morale."

Is enough being done to protect FS employees in Iraq? If not, please suggest what should be done to improve security.

There was almost complete agreement among respondents that security personnel — civilian and military — take extremely seriously the protection of Foreign Service personnel. The security of housing was the exception frequently mentioned as an area needing improvement. A few respondents expressed concern about the relative lack of security for their travel within the Green Zone. One explained, "FSOs are regularly required to go to checkpoints (extremely dangerous — several of us have been shot at) to escort visitors …"

"Aside from the housing issue, in my mind everything that is humanly possible to do is being done to safeguard those persons assigned there," says a diplomatic security agent serving in Baghdad.

"I believe the department tries sincerely to protect employees," writes an FSO who served in a regional embassy office in 2005, "Obviously, there is a balance between running a functioning critical-threat embassy and a minimum-security prison. Employees have to be willing to take personal risks, within security guidelines of course, in order to get the job done. As someone instructed us, 'Stay safe, but not too safe.'"

"The best way to protect FS employees would be to ensure that no one is assigned to Baghdad unnecessarily," writes an officer who served in Baghdad from 2004 to 2005. "As of May 2005, there were too many people in the embassy and in the constituent posts."

"I think that enough is being done, and in some cases, too much is done," says an officer serving in Baghdad. "If we are so protected that we can't get out to see Iraqis, how can we do our work?"

"It seems that almost everyone who works on this compound is allowed to carry a weapon for personal

A Day in the Life of …

Marlene Wurdeman

Information Management Specialist | Baghdad
July 2004–July 2005

Our workdays were typically 12 to 15 hours.

My life consisted of getting up, walking from Palisades to the chow hall for breakfast, and proceeding to the north end of the palace into the IPC [Information Program Center] to work.

My work varied from day to day. It consisted of fielding customer service requests, reading a ton of e-mails, doing video teleconferencing meetings, preparing for our three-day classified pouch run.

At noontime, we went to the chow hall for lunch.

After lunch, we went back to the IPC for more of the same.

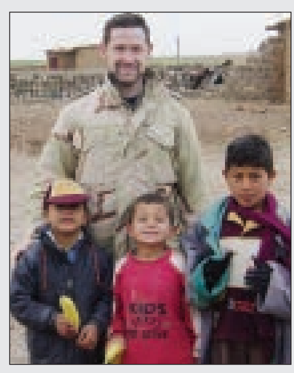
Toward the end of the day, I would try and go to the gym for half an hour or so, then walk back to my trailer, where I would stay tucked in for the rest of the evening.

The same thing would start the next morning.

It was definitely [like the movie] "Groundhog Day" for the majority of the time there, except we never traveled out of our 1/4-mile-square area. On rare occasions, I might walk to the PX [post exchange, military grocery store] across the street from the palace; or even more rarely, go to the Al-Rashid Hotel's chow hall.

A Day in the Life of ...

Eric Watnik
Political Officer | Kirkuk | Summer 2004



FSO Eric Watnik with Iraqi kids in Tikrit

0700	Awake, shower, eat breakfast at the compound cafeteria.
0730	Get to work, check e-mail, finalize prior day's cables.
0830	Attend staff meeting. Discuss issues I'm working on.
0930	Go to Kirkuk Provincial Council office, talk with local politicians and attend meetings for a few hours. Speak with politicians and other interest groups about current U.S. activities and try to get a feel for their activities. Speak with U.S. military representatives at the Provincial Council to see what they are working on. *(Note: Every day was different. I often took day trips with the military to small towns to meet with locals.)*
1300	Go back to the compound and eat lunch at the cafeteria.
1400	Start writing that day's cables about the Iraqi political movements of the day, interspersed with a series of phone calls to contacts to make sure I have the events of the day and the politics surrounding those events correct.
1800	Dinner at the cafeteria around 6 p.m.
1900	Go back to office to edit cables and work on public affairs issues/upcoming press conferences.
2200	Cards/TV/workout.

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protection except Foreign Service employees," writes an FSO currently serving in Baghdad. "Many of these people never leave the compound. I, on the other hand, am required to move around the Green Zone to attend meetings. When my senior colleagues or military counterparts arrive at these meetings, they are accompanied by Personal Security Details who deliver them in armored vehicles to the door of the building and escort them to their meetings. I arrive in a soft car, am required to park hundreds of yards away and get myself into the meeting. I also visit sites in the field and travel into the Red Zone in Baghdad. … Foreign Service employees who feel comfortable with firearms and are qualified to use them should be allowed to carry them when off-compound."

Many positions in Iraq have been and continue to be filled by non-career appointees, contractors and detailees from outside the Foreign Service. What has been the impact of this?

Out of some 2,000-plus people working on the U.S. embassy compound in Baghdad, fewer than 200 are career Foreign Service. Of course, at many embassies State and the other foreign affairs agencies are a minority compared to the other federal agencies represented, but there is no other embassy in the world that is host to so many non-Foreign Service employees, political appointees and contractors.

According to the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, there are about 155 employees currently in Iraq serving in "3161" positions working for the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. (Under 5 USC 3161, the authority was established to create and staff temporary organizations such as IRMO.)

Some 3161s are retired U.S. government personnel, but most have not had prior overseas or U.S. government experience. Some of them come with political backgrounds from campaigns. IRMO is also staffed by U.S. government personnel on detail from other agencies, active-duty military and contractors.

Comments on the impact of the large number of non-FS staff working in Iraq were mixed, but most were negative. By far the biggest concern was that most of the appointees, contractors and detailees lack the understanding of how an embassy functions and the way U.S. policy work is coordinated. Some respondents did express appreciation for the specific skills brought in by outsiders.

"Frankly, I think a lot of the political appointees were disasters," writes an officer who served in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. "They seemed to be ideologues rather than diplomats. A lot of the contractors and other detailees I met seemed quite capable."

"Seasoned professional FSOs bring skill and knowledge to the table that others do not have, no matter how much substantive knowledge they may have on specific matters," comments an FSO serving in Baghdad. "The high concentration of non-Foreign Service staff in Baghdad in significant positions serves to 1) undermine the influence of State vis-à-vis the military, as many of the [non-FS] State interlocutors are not seen by the military as qualified; and 2) undermine State's ability to conduct business in Iraq according to Foreign Service norms."

"Policy is being made in some cases by 3161s or contractors with minimal appreciation for larger foreign policy goals, minimal experience to judge how best to accomplish them, and ineptness in how to structure or manage bureaucracies to produce what is wanted," writes an officer from a regional embassy office. "3161s with no background in civilian U.S. government operations often look down on FSOs (or other federal/civilian employees) and ignore their input."

"The non-career appointees and contractors who fill these positions are a detriment to the U.S. mission in Iraq," says one officer serving in Baghdad, "because they lack the basic diplomatic skills necessary to develop strong bilateral ties with the Iraqi government. In many instances they are experts in one field, yet more often than not they lack the necessary basic interpersonal skills … treating Iraqi government officials as if they worked for the contractors. …. These non-career appointees will often make statements on other issues outside their lane that cause confusion and problems that the mission is then forced to clean up."

"The 3161s are the bane of our existence," says a diplomatic security agent who recently served in Baghdad. "For the most part, they have no clue how an embassy runs, still think and act like they are in the private sector and can do as they like, and have no concept of how or why to protect classified information."

An FSO serving in Baghdad writes that the non-FS employees "make it much more difficult because they

don't understand the operations of State and many believe they are above the regulations and should be treated like VIPs."

"Many of our 3161 colleagues seem fairly competent, but many are not," writes an officer serving in Baghdad. "There is a developing community of 'permanent' denizens of the Green Zone. Many of these people have never worked in an embassy before, have no clue how one works, and seemingly don't want to learn. Several times I've seen cables sent that have received no clearances… Other times I've been pulled from pressing assignments to take time to 'mentor' a well-intentioned 3161 who wants to write a cable but has received no training on how to do so. I really don't have time to give individual political tradecraft classes. … I wonder what image these 3161s are giving the Foreign Service. They pass themselves off as Foreign Service officers, but they are not. Their poor reputation with our military colleagues rubs off on us."

"Policy is being made in some cases by 3161s or contractors with minimal appreciation for larger foreign policy goals."

— An officer in a regional embassy office

"There is a class system here," writes an FSO in Baghdad, "Contractors are making three or four times as much [as we are], asking a lot of their FS colleagues who actually know how the system works. … It is a political minefield as well, given that so many employees are administration appointees."

An officer in a regional embassy office says, "I think there is some resentment about the pay differences between employees and contractors (sometimes more than double the pay). The contractors don't always display a willingness to do more than the minimum."

This is not a universal view, however. Another officer in the same regional embassy office writes that "On the whole, I do not think this has been a bad thing. Non-FS people bring some useful perspectives and skills. People here pretty much bond together with others in their office. You don't see the kind of rivalries — at least not in the field — that one gets in Washington (and maybe Baghdad)."

One management officer serving in Baghdad says that "What these people lack in Foreign Service experience, they more than make up for in initiative and desire. Most fill positions that have a direct relation to their private or government service careers. The great shame is the lack of volunteers among Foreign Service personnel who have the 10-15 years' experience needed to work interagency issues. Junior officers have the desire, but not the experience."

The view from a retired FSO who served in a 3161 position was that "until the FS gets enough seasoned officers in to do the jobs, others — military, 3161s, contractors — will do what needs to be done. This is not the worst thing in the world that could happen. Many are quite competent and willing to serve."

Do you believe that Iraq service has helped or not helped your career? How?

Service in Iraq may give a boost for employees when they come up for review for promotion, but no conclusion could be drawn from the input we received on this question. For many people it is too early to tell what Iraq service will do for their career.

An office management specialist who recently served in Iraq writes that "I certainly hope it has helped my career! I would hate to think that I served a year in a war zone and did not get proper recognition. I learned a lot and was challenged to perform tasks outside my realm of expertise. I also learned a lot about myself and what stress level I can handle. I'm proud to have served in Iraq. It is an experience that will serve me well throughout my career."

"For a political officer, the Iraq assignment is considered the big leagues," says an officer serving in Baghdad. "It is a historical time and a hectic one. It hones your craft under the worst conditions."

"It has not helped my career at all," says a diplomatic security agent who left Iraq in 2005. An FSO serving in Baghdad reflects: "In a very small way, I may have made a difference here. I've been part of an amazing history. That's what I wanted in a career. It's also given me the jolt I needed to begin planning my departure from State. … Iraq has made State irrelevant

to foreign policy in a large sense … and the department does not care a whit for its employees."

"I don't know what Iraq service has done for my career," writes an FSO from Baghdad, "other than make me question why I joined the Foreign Service when I'm sitting in a windowless room during a mortar attack on the embassy compound."

What experience did you have getting your onward assignment from Iraq?

One of the more contentious issues surrounding Iraq staffing is the question of onward assignments. A perception that serving in Iraq will help get you a choice onward assignment is widespread, and that perception is not disavowed by the bureau memos and cables seeking volunteers to bid on Iraq positions. Comparison of input from those who served in the earlier period, 2003 and possibly 2004, and those who are serving in Iraq now or recently left the country, appears to indicate that early service in Iraq did help people get a top-choice onward assignment, but this is becoming less and less true as more people cycle through.

Many respondents who have served recently or are serving in Iraq now do not think they are getting any boost from Iraq service. And indeed, career development officers are in a tight spot because there is an inherent conflict in trying to take care of those coming out of Iraq while choosing the best qualified person for each job they need to fill.

"I got my first choice," says one entry-level officer serving in Baghdad, representing the minority view. "The theory that we get better jobs because of our service is simply not true," writes an officer who served in Iraq in 2004. "Word on the street in Iraq now is that service there does not generally help you with your onward assignment (except for entry-level officers)," writes a political officer who served in Iraq for 15 months. "There are simply too many people who have served in Iraq. Also, those who decide how to fill positions consider that (and rightly so, in my opinion) the most important thing is not that you have served in Iraq, but what your skills are."

"Serving in Iraq has made me a better Foreign Service officer," says an officer serving in a regional embassy office. "I've had great exposure and incredible assignments. But in terms of a follow-on assignment, I only got what I probably would have gotten anyway at this point in my career, a small desk in a not-so-important part of the world."

"The vaunted 'Baghdad advantage' in bidding was nothing but a mirage in my case."

— An FSO in Baghdad

"The vaunted 'Baghdad advantage' in bidding was nothing but a mirage in my case," writes one officer who was still struggling to find an onward assignment in mid-January. He notes that "I cannot, in good faith, tell bidders who may be interested in my job that coming to Baghdad will help with career development and onward assignments."

"The experience has not been good," writes an officer from Baghdad. "I have bid on [many] positions, but have yet to receive a handshake. Most of the slots I bid on have been offered to others."

The experience has been "disappointing," writes another officer serving in the embassy. "No assistance from the department is normal, but serving in Baghdad with no time to lobby is not normal. Had I been forewarned that I was on my own, I would have lined up a job before departing for Baghdad."

"One of the biggest problems now is that people who serve in Iraq, while publicly praised, are privately frightening to managers who don't want to hire someone who might put a hole in their section," explains an officer who served in Iraq from 2003 to 2004. "I was actually told by someone [outside the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau] when bidding that they were hesitant to hire me because they thought I might go on temporary duty somewhere. One guy I know who went to Iraq twice was quietly told not to look for work in that [non-NEA] bureau again."

One FSO serving in Baghdad writes that "only the high-profile untenured officers were given their top choices. This is my second hardship tour in a row. It is clear to me, at least at the untenured level, that the process has absolutely nothing to do with service rendered."

A diplomatic security agent in Bagdad points out that "Contrary to promises to assist us with onward assignments, when it came time to make good on that

promise … many of us had to go hat in hand to other sections looking for an assignment more in line with our individual interests."

"I serve in a nice European city, and I see an increasing number of new arrivals coming from Iraq," writes an FS-3 who has not served in Iraq. "I think those who stepped up to serve in Iraq will have an advantage in assignments and promotions for a long time to come, which is the way it should be. As someone who has not gone to Iraq, and probably never will, I believe those who volunteered deserve to be recognized by the system, even if that means those of us who don't go will be disadvantaged as a result."

"Iraq is not really a Foreign Service environment."

— An officer serving in Baghdad

Please describe one day on the job anywhere in Iraq.

Nine of the day-in-the-life submissions we received are printed along with this report. We selected days primarily from personnel who leave the embassy compound in the course of their work rather than those confined to an office inside the compound. Many people wrote that there *is* no typical day in Iraq, and many others noted that they were simply too busy to write up a day.

What do you see as the main issues for the Foreign Service in staffing Iraq?

This question was addressed to both those who have and those who have not served in Iraq. The issues most frequently raised were: how to get enough qualified people to serve there, how the Foreign Service can play a relevant role there and how staffing Iraq affects other missions around the world. Many respondents expressed the view that if the level of danger in Iraq existed anywhere else, that embassy would have been either evacuated or drawn down.

"The ability to get the most qualified (language and regional experience) to serve there" is a key issue, writes a senior-level officer who has served in Iraq. Echoing this sentiment, an officer comments from Baghdad: "The department is staffing Iraq with junior officers, 3161s, Civil Service and others with little Foreign Service experience. They do not have the training, judgment and experience to provide the top-quality work expected of more senior FSOs. We need our best and most experienced people in Iraq, including a strong cadre of mid-level officers."

The main issue facing the Foreign Service, according to an officer serving in Baghdad, is "staying relevant as DOD contracts out the same functions, as political appointees and IRMO contractors take key policy roles. No one makes an effort to explain State to these actors, so in the end it is ignored. … State needs to see itself as vital and pitch itself as such to military commanders, who are willing and eager to integrate us. As long as there's combat, State can only be a force multiplier; we are not intelligently integrating ourselves into what is essentially a military environment. I would shake the whole system up, put a political adviser at every military command equal to or larger than a division, and put State officers at key deployment centers in the U.S. Have a State officer with recent Iraq experience explain what State's role is, give cultural awareness, Middle East background, current Iraq updates, etc. Also, have these officers do orientation for the companies with major contracts in Iraq."

"Security" is the main issue, says one officer serving in Baghdad. "It seems crazy that we have so many diplomats in Iraq, given that our military is still sorting things out. With daily car bombings and an insurgency that doesn't want us there, it's way too soon for a large diplomatic presence. What can we really hope to accomplish, if security considerations force many diplomats to stay within the Green Zone? Members of the military can defend themselves, but diplomats don't carry guns and thus are sitting ducks."

"Iraq is not really a Foreign Service environment," writes an officer serving in Baghdad. "The embassy is a civilian [entity] embedded within a large military establishment. Military procedures and culture dictate the daily routine. Lack of individual autonomy — to travel or engage outside contacts — is very unlike a normal embassy environment. Foreign Service [personnel] on the ground in Iraq are caught between the military on one side and close Washington oversight on the other. Not a lot of freedom of action."

"For many people," writes a political officer who

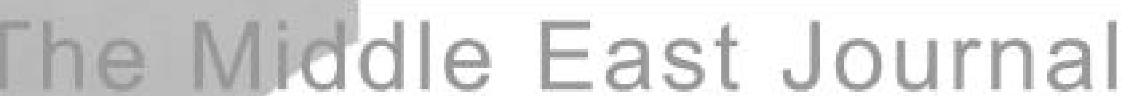
hasn't served in Iraq, "the most important issue is that it is clear that our embassy in Iraq is being staffed at its current levels for purely political reasons, not on the objective basis of what is best for the safety and security of employees. If any other country were faced with the same security challenges … embassy staffing would be drawn down, not on the increase."

"It is beginning to affect our ability to attract people to learn Arabic," notes an officer from the NEA Bureau, "because [there are] rumors of directed assignments for Arabic speakers to Iraq. … At the language school in Tunis, it is a major concern that people will begin to be 'drafted.'"

What effect, if any, is staffing Iraq having on the Foreign Service?

This is an evolving issue, but clear themes emerge from the respondents' comments. One is a sense that Iraq (and, to a lesser extent, Afghanistan) is dividing the Service into the have-served and the have-nots. Some of those who volunteer for Iraq service resent those who do not volunteer, while some of those who do not or cannot volunteer resent the perceived benefits for those who go in promotions and onward assignments. Comments indicate that this division is having a negative impact on Foreign Service morale.

Another significant effect mentioned repeatedly is the so-called "Iraq Tax" and the return to a "do more with less" refrain. The Iraq tax represents the resources — both in funds and in personnel — that are pulled from a post or a bureau to support the Iraq mission. This term, or the equivalent verb phrase "to be Iraq-taxed," is widely used throughout the State Department Foreign Service, though it does not appear in official communications. A number of respondents lamented the serious decline (some said disappearance) of the "training float" (having enough personnel to both staff positions and allow for training) that was restored under Secretary Colin Powell with the intake of many new Foreign Service employees



Since 1947, *The Middle East Journal* has been the most widely read and circulated scholarly quarterly available on the ever crucial Middle East region, with foreign service officers and other policy experts regularly turning to its pages for original thinking and objective analysis. The *Journal* provides source material on the area from Western Sahara to Pakistan and the new countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. It contains the background and current information necessary for an understanding and appreciation of the region's political and economic development, cultural heritage, and ethnic and religious diversity.

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through the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative. Many respondents expressed concern that the personnel gains made because of the DRI are being erased by the creation of so many new positions to fill in Iraq and, to some extent, Afghanistan.

Iraq staffing is creating "a lot of uncertainties everywhere else," writes an officer who has served in Iraq. "We don't know what positions will be offered up to the Iraq tax. I also think it creates an unfair perception. Lots of people serve in very difficult places, but those who served in Iraq (and Afghanistan) are perceived as having served in a much more dangerous or difficult place. My hat goes off to the individual who spends two years in the Congo or Karachi as much as to someone who served in Iraq or Afghanistan."

"Other priorities that used to be important are being shifted to the back burner so that Iraq can be staffed," says an officer who has not served in Iraq. Another says, "the Iraq tax is keeping important jobs vacant."

"My current position has been 'Iraq-taxed,'" comments a public diplomacy officer serving in Latin America. "In other words, it will go vacant for a year (2006-2007). This had a negative effect on my family and career since I was not allowed to extend at post, even though I've only been here two years. My supervisors wanted me to stay on for another year. My spouse has a great job with the Department of Homeland Security and his supervisor also lobbied for us to stay at post, and our child is excelling here. [Yet] these factors could not outweigh the 'Iraq tax.'"

"It has made getting my successor harder," writes an officer in a Russian-language-designated position. "As part of the Iraq tax, no language training will be available for anybody bidding on my language-designated position."

"The Iraq tax is reducing assignments elsewhere and breaking some assignments," says one mid-level officer. "My post is about to lose an employee for several months to Iraq — he does a key administrative job here." An FSO serving in a hardship post in Africa notes: "Staffing in Iraq is having a negative ripple effect all over the world. … Posts around the world have lost positions and resources to support Iraq. The military got extra money for Iraq; why can't the Foreign Service?"

"From experience in my last post in Africa," writes an officer now serving in Iraq, "it is reducing resources (both human and financial) available to other posts. The administration's new policy of transformational diplomacy just signals more shifting of resources away from lower-profile posts to political hot spots."

"Do we need to have hundreds of officers in Iraq?" asks an FSO who has not served there. "If so, why? What is the justification for destroying the benefits of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative?" A mid-level officer who has not served in Iraq notes: "It appears that the same mistake is being made now as when the Soviet Union broke up. We try to take on a bigger world with-

A Day in the Life of ...

Rachel Schneller

Provincial Action Officer | Basra | 2005

At 6 a.m. I am waiting for a helicopter to come to take me and others to the monthly meeting on reconstruction and development. The helicopter ride lasts about an hour, during which time all 12 or so of us are wearing body armor, helmets and ear plugs to block out the noise. My colleagues are representatives from USAID, the United Nations, the British Department for International Development and other partners.

Once we arrive at 8 a.m., we have a hurried meeting in a military tent over a cup of instant coffee. We discuss the issues that are going to come up in the meeting and how to present a unified voice to our Iraqi partners as donors. We then go to the meeting in a heavily-armored military vehicle. Once we arrive at the government building where the meeting is to take place, we are escorted by armed guards to the meeting room.

The meeting generally lasts about three hours. The different sectors for development — water, power, health, etc. — present their accomplishments along with lists of needs. The local government representatives ask questions about donor funding and procedures for submitting grant proposals.

During breaks, I snatch much-needed brief meetings with local officials, journalists and others to find out about developments in the province.

When the meeting is over, we head back to the military camp to wait for our return flight.

out increasing our human resources, and wind up getting stretched too thin everywhere."

"We have lost one officer slot in my office to the Iraq tax," says a management officer in Washington, "and several positions at each of the posts I manage. We are back to the old 'do more with less' syndrome that we experienced before Secretary Powell, and people are getting exhausted." Another FSO in Washington comments: "The Iraq tax has resurrected the 'do more with less' mantra among managers, leaving many employees overworked. … If we are to have human-resources constraints due to our staffing needs in Iraq, then managers need to re-evaluate work priorities."

"Right or wrong, I believe there is a divide being created," writes an FSO who has not served in Iraq, "especially when the general perception is that service in Iraq equates to instant promotions and/or preferred onward assignments. Those of us serving elsewhere often feel that no matter how hard we work or how deserving [we are], we'll be overlooked for someone who has 'done time' in Iraq."

"The whole world has to stop for Iraq," observes a mid-level officer who has not served there. "It's like nothing else exists, which is wrong. And, the people who go are supposed to get special treatment later, which I don't think they are getting, so they must be getting awfully bitter."

"It's creating extreme dissatisfaction," comments an FSO serving in Baghdad, "because anyone who doesn't serve here is unhappy that those who do receive special perks, yet those who serve here are disdainful of those who refuse to contemplate a tour at a danger post. We're facing the distinct possibility of [repeating] the Foreign Service experience during the Vietnam War, when personnel were forced to serve their first tour in Southeast Asia on directed tours." In addition, a number of respondents note that single people feel pressure to take on more of the burden of unaccompanied assignments, especially Iraq, and some resent this.

One FSO who has served in Iraq notes: "Over time, the placement of Iraq veterans in plum jobs primarily to reward [their] service is going to distort the assignments and promotion system. Good work needs to be done throughout the department at every post. We should not overcompensate Iraq service (beyond the financial incentives) or we risk permanently distorting the department's internal professional development."

"The effect is draining. Iraq is like a giant vacuum sucking up all resources."

— A mid-level FSO who has served in Afghanistan

An officer working on staffing another extreme-hardship post notes that the big issue for the Foreign Service is figuring out how to reward service in high-priority posts such as Iraq without penalizing officers "who serve in areas just as horrible, but considerably less glamorous."

"Iraq and Afghanistan are a generational marker," explains a retired FSO who served in Iraq in 2003. "There were the Vietnam/CORDS [Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support] people and now we will have the Baghdad/Kabul group. This will shape and flavor the Foreign Service for the next generation."

"I think it has lowered morale because of the whole chain of events," says a public diplomacy officer serving in Washington, "It has ill-used the Foreign Service; early on, the State Department's Future of Iraq Project was deep-sixed, and now the Foreign Service is pressed into very difficult and dangerous duty in circumstances that might have been less bad had the State Department been paid any attention at early phases."

"It's hard to keep up the efforts to effectively represent the U.S. in other parts of the world when the message is that if it's not Iraq, it doesn't matter," writes a personnel officer from Washington. "If Iraq is such a high priority to the president, why doesn't he support the Secretary of State by providing additional resources for that embassy? Instead it seems that we are heading back to the days of the mid-1990s when we were cutting operations to the bone, deferring maintenance. …"

"The effect," says a mid-level FSO who has served in Afghanistan, "is draining. Iraq is like a giant vacuum sucking up all resources." Budgets elsewhere are shrinking, notes an FSO serving in a Middle East post, "workloads increasing, overtime increasing, staffing gaps increasing. … This is the first under-resourced

organization I have ever worked for. I hope we'll bring the resources in line with the commitments."

Have you felt pressure to accept an Iraq assignment?

Most respondents said they had not felt direct pressure to volunteer. Many did point to indirect pressure, including the messages being sent out by various bureaus calling on people to volunteer.

A number of respondents pointed out that the staffing difficulties exist at the mid- and senior levels. Because entry-level assignments are essentially directed assignments, this is not surprising. Several entry-level respondents note that they had volunteered to serve in Iraq but were not selected to go. "As a JO, I desperately want to serve in Iraq," says an FSO bidding on her second post. She cannot bid on the one Baghdad position on the list because it includes language training and she's already had language training. "I find it frustrating that I want to serve, but can't. … Let those of us who want to serve, serve. … We are intelligent people who learn quickly. That is why they hired us. We can do the job."

A Day in the Life of …

A Senior-level FSO

Baghdad | May 2003

My favorite memory is of the "Giant Voice" that would boom "Take cover!" whenever there was an incoming mortar. We were instructed, when in our trailers, to dive under our beds whenever the Giant Voice directed us to take cover. The first time the Giant Voice did so when I was in my little box of a home [during the night], I dutifully attempted to dive under my bed, only to discover that it was impossible, because there were only four inches between my bed and the floor.

Then, as an alternative, in something of a dither, I attempted to pull my mattress on top of myself. I succeeded only in tipping over my bed lamp and the bedside dresser, and then, to my dismay, discovered that the floor space was not ample enough to accommodate the mattress. So, I gave up, put my mattress back on the bed, and crawled back into bed. Ten minutes later the Giant Voice boomed "All clear" and I turned off the light and went to sleep.

Later, I never paid much attention to the Giant Voice. I always thought that it would have been more appropriate for the Giant Voice to have said something like "Repent, and prepare to meet your maker" or "Kiss your rear end goodbye." But no one asked my advice on the matter.

What can management do to make Iraq service more attractive to volunteers?

Many respondents said that until the security situation improves, there is nothing management can do to make service more attractive. Beyond security, suggestions included better financial incentives and calls for management to provide more information to employees about the reality of the working and living conditions in Iraq. Among those who have served in Iraq, many say more experienced officers are needed there, and call for more assistance to families during those postings as well as more assistance with onward assignments.

A number of respondents, focusing on the Iraq benefits package, call for immediate implementation of the law passed in December that raises the cap on hardship and danger-pay differentials from 25 percent to 35 percent. A management officer serving in Baghdad echoed the comments of many colleagues: "The new 35-percent danger-pay and 35-percent hardship-differential caps need to be implemented now." A number of people serving in Iraq suggested that efforts be made to make Iraq pay tax-free. Several point out that military personnel have tax-free status when serving in a combat zone, and the same should apply to the Foreign Service.

Others point to a need for more information about the realities of service in Iraq. Several respondents called for management to invite recent returnees to hold informal meetings with possible volunteers to give a clearer sense of what it is really like to serve in Iraq. One employee who served in the Iraq Support Unit in Amman doing in-processing for Foreign Service personnel heading there comments: "I was always surprised by the number of people who seemed to realize they were headed to a war zone only when we issued them Personal Protective Equipment. People who had all the information, warts and all, were the people who seemed happiest."

"Management doesn't have the will to listen to 'graduates' [of Iraq and Afghanistan service] and then put the

A Day in the Life of …

Keith Mines
FSO Governance Coordinator
Al Anbar Province | 2004

Iraqi business leaders select their representative to the Anbar Provincial Council, January 2004

Steven Bitner

0500 Wake up.
0515 Check e-mails while the system is working.
0520 System goes down.
0530 Run and work out.
0630 Queue up for shower; if no water, resort to three bottles of water poured over head behind the barracks — one for dousing, one for washing, one for rinsing. (Reflect on the fact that most Iraqis have running water but we do not; as occupations go, this one is a little strange.)
0730 Chow at mess hall, catch up with 82nd Airborne Division staff officers.
0815 Attend daily intelligence and operations briefing with 82nd Command and staff.
0830 Join Civil Affairs convoy for trip downtown.
0900 Arrive at Governance Building in downtown Ramadi.
0915 Check in with Governor Burgis and go over day's work plan with Civil Affairs chief and contractor chief.
0930 Attend meeting with key provincial governorate officials; discuss police development, infrastructure projects, provision of basic services. Usually [there are] a litany of things that we don't have the resources to fix, but we generally get a few things moving from these meetings.
1130 Meet with local sheik seeking information on his nephew who has been detained by local security forces.
1200 Meet with the Falluja Scientific Development Council, a startup NGO.
1300 Go over agenda for next provincial council meeting with council head.
1330 Review project proposals with team project coordinator, select contactors and get them lined up.
1500 Visit Sheik Ammer at his home with commander.
1600 Return to base.
1700 Chow.
1800 Attend coordination meeting with Civil Affairs unit.
1900 Check in with 82nd Commander and staff officers.
2000 Write daily reports and memos to the Coalition Provisional Authority.
2200 End day.

political force and funds into a solution that is out there," writes an FSO serving in Iraq. "When we staffed [the first] Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq, not one person in management thought it would be useful to convene a conference to study lessons learned from Afghanistan. The inefficiencies and duplication and wasted efforts we tolerate [are] beyond comprehension."

"There is virtually no internal communication about day-to-day service/life at post and this only leads to rumor and speculation," observes a public affairs officer in Washington.

"What is needed is leadership from the top down," comments one mid-level security officer who has not served in Iraq. "There are many senior positions that are filled by stretch employees and such job openings are always couched in terms of 'this is a great opportunity for

Michael Nehrbass

Eric Watnik

Top: Saddam heads

Left: A view of Sulaimaniya

less senior officers to show what they are made of.' While this is admirable in some circumstances, it can be extremely dangerous in situations like Iraq. It would be easier to sell a posting to junior people if the senior people could say: 'I'm going; why don't you come along, too?' That way, the senior people could mentor on the ground as opposed to from thousands of miles away."

"The department needs to step in and ensure that all Iraq volunteers — perhaps along with volunteers to places like Kabul and Liberia — are treated well and with respect and not punished for their decision to answer the Secretary's call to serve in these dangerous places," writes an FSO serving in a hardship post in Africa. "I'm talking about real action and real leadership here, not some vague cable that no one pays attention to."

Many of those with families who have served or are serving in Iraq suggested that more be done to support these families during the Iraq assignment. Getting in and out of the country was also identified as a problem. Several employees with families suggested that efforts be made to locate families in nearby countries (such as Jordan) rather than Washington. Closer proximity and easier communication would make a significant differ-

ence for those leaving families behind. Another suggestion was to allow families to stay at the losing post for the duration of the Iraq tour. Moving a family to Washington, leaving that family on the meager (according to everyone who commented on it) Separate Maintenance Allowance while the employee serves in Iraq for a one-year tour, and then relocating again for the follow-on assignment — requiring a likely three moves in 14 months — can put more stress on the family than do other hardship tours that are not unaccompanied.

"Offer something for people with families," writes a female officer who has not served in Iraq. "At present, the financial costs of someone serving in Iraq versus another hardship post is not particularly favorable to an assignment in Iraq. In an accompanied hardship post, I receive 25-percent hardship pay, plus housing and school benefits for my children. In Iraq, I would get SMA and 50-percent hardship/danger pay, but would have to pay for housing in Washington and there would be no school benefits."

"Allow people to tack on service in Iraq at the beginning or end of another assignment," urges an FSO who served in Iraq, "so it is less disruptive for the family (one move rather than two). Go back to six-month assignments, extendable to 12 months or beyond with special incentives for longer service. Six months in these places used to be the norm and is a long time. Give bureaus quotas they have to fill."

"Advertise breadth of authority and the amount of improvement many of us are seeing in the Iraqi government as a direct relationship to our service," suggests an FSO from a regional embassy office, who adds that pay should be improved as well.

Some respondents called for shorter tours, six months being most typical, but others called for longer tours. Shorter tours were suggested because of the extreme stress and danger of serving in Iraq. Longer tours were suggested (for reporting officers) because it takes time to get to know the situation on the ground and appropriate contacts. ■

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Staffing Baghdad: Time for Directed Assignments

The Foreign Service must recognize that service in wartime necessitates a complete commitment by *all* personnel.

By Henry S. Ensher

Foreign Service officers have had a good war in Iraq — the Foreign Service has not. There is still time for the Service to redeem itself and demonstrate that it is a disciplined member in good standing of the national security community. With the advent of Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the likelihood of an ongoing need for a surge presence in Iraq, the question of how to staff "extreme diplomacy" posts is not just for long-term planning, but one that needs to be addressed as an immediate operational issue.

Foreign Service personnel provided much of the leadership of the Coalition Provisional Authority's presence outside Baghdad by service as regional and governance coordinators, as their deputies and in other roles, including political, project and public affairs officers. FSOs were present in the field throughout CPA's lifespan beginning in the spring of 2003 and ending on June 28, 2004. All were volunteers and went through a cumbersome application and deployment process for the privilege of serving our country in a war zone, in circumstances ranging from the merely uncomfortable to the life-threateningly dangerous. The fact that we have lost only a few Foreign Service personnel reflects good fortune and the great skill of security professionals, who have taken most of the casualties, rather than the lack of ill intent on the part of our enemies.

Now, more than two years after the entry of the Foreign Service into Iraq, it is becoming increasingly difficult to staff key positions in the embassy and, particularly, at posts outside Baghdad. The most qualified volunteers, in terms of language capability and area expertise, have already served their tours. A few have done much more than their time, signing up for a second stint or going out on short-term surge teams to cover special events, such as the Dec. 15 national assembly elections. Meanwhile, the Foreign Service and the State Department, continue to contort themselves to find ever-more-exotic inducements to get Foreign Service personnel to go to Iraq. Beyond the Iraq service package, which can now total up to 80 percent of salary for a tenured Foreign Service officer, plus free food and housing and frequent trips home, the department is also considering allowing family members to reside at posts near Iraq and adding additional trips home. State is also still allowing TDY excursions of less than one year, although experience has shown that, at least for reporting officers, it takes longer than that to know the Iraqi personalities involved in an issue, much less the issue itself.

Continued on page 44

Staffing Baghdad: Input from the Field

"As pressure mounts to fill more positions in Iraq, talk turns to the possibility of directed assignments. Please give us your thoughts on this possibility."

The final question on the Iraq service survey (sent to Foreign Service members by AFSANET) asked for opinions about the possibility of directed assignments to Iraq. More than 200 employees chose to answer this question. Of the 153 respondents who had not served in Iraq, the majority (96) expressed sentiments against directed assignments. Twenty-nine thought directed assignments would be appropriate, 22 did not lean clearly one way or the other and six declined to answer the question. Of the 55 who had served in Iraq, the opinions were evenly split between being in favor and being opposed to directed assignments to Iraq.

Several issues arose repeatedly. One was concern about how directed assignments could be made fairly. Another was the question of whether worldwide availability should apply to war zones. From those who have served in Iraq, many noted that they did not want people working in a combat zone who are there against their will, while others wanted the burden of staffing Iraq to be shared more broadly in the Service. Here is a sampling of the opinions expressed.

— *The Editors*

I don't think the department should send a lot of people to Iraq who don't want to be there. They simply wouldn't be effective working in that environment.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

My family and I are serving my country every day under difficult conditions. Iraq has a different, far harsher set of security conditions, which would ordinarily call for drawing down operations. The goal of our civilian Department of State in Iraq has never been explained clearly.

Entry-level FSO

Upon entering the Foreign Service, we swore to uphold the U.S. Constitution and agreed to worldwide availability. If directed assignments are necessary, we should either serve or resign.

Mid-level USAID FSO who has served in Iraq

I believe attrition rates will jump. … They ought to first consider fair-share bidders, as many officers have already served and will continue to serve in hardship posts.

Mid-level FSO

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The question of how to staff "extreme diplomacy" posts needs to be addressed as an immediate operational issue.

The Time Is Now

The Foreign Service is becoming increasingly irrelevant to the highest priority foreign-policy issue — winning in Iraq — because it has refused to take the one step that would guarantee it a key role, demonstrate seriousness of purpose to the military, and develop a cadre of true area specialists with extreme diplomacy skills. Specifically, the Foreign Service has refused to recognize that service in wartime necessitates a complete commitment by all its personnel. Such a commitment requires, at minimum, the unambiguous authority to order Foreign Service personnel to serve in Iraq through directed assignments. While some Middle East specialists and Arabists have served with distinction and courage in Iraq, others have not shown up at all. They should be told clearly that they are needed by their Service and their country now in Iraq, or their services are not required at all. The Foreign Service, State Department and U.S. taxpayers did not spend the money to teach Arabic and develop area expertise to enable the beneficiaries of that training to avoid using their skills where they are most needed.

With a couple of promotion and assignment seasons now past after the liberation of Iraq, we are hearing the first hints of blowback against those who have served in Iraq and are perceived to have been rewarded in the only two ways most FSOs care about: promotions and assignments. Foreign Service personnel coming out of Iraq have typically been quite happy with their onward assignments, and anecdotal evidence suggests promotion rates are high as well.

If there were the clear possibility of directed assignments as well as continued recruitment of volunteers, there could be no concerns about unfairness, because everyone would have the same possibility of being sent to Iraq. Some officers have indicated that directed assignments would also reduce family pressures, given that officers would no longer have a choice about going to Iraq and would no longer have to explain that they were choosing career over home. Instead, they could point out that they were complying with a well-known condition of service, just as is the case for military personnel. It is said that directed assignments risk significant resignations or the tearing apart of the Service for reasons of policy differences, but suspicion that those who volunteer for Iraq are being unfairly advantaged is a much shorter route to bad morale and a divided service than the certainty that everyone is equally exposed to service there.

Qualified Foreign Service personnel can have an impact out of all proportion to their numbers in Iraq. That is a good thing, because we are outnumbered by about 1,000 to one, comparing uniformed military personnel to Department of State direct hires. In the province of Anbar, the heartland of the Sunni insurgency, there is one department employee (not an FSO) posted at the headquarters of the Marine unit charged with securing the province. That officer has provided valuable political advice, based on intimate knowledge of the local leadership, to the Marine commander and has served as a liaison with the policy-makers in Embassy Baghdad on both policy and development issues. He has been the walking, talking pivot point that has enabled the differing civilian and military cultures to work well together. A key element of his utility in these multifaceted roles has been his length of service — that employee has been in the desert for almost two years.

Given the importance of his mission, that employee should be a widely imitated example, not the exception he has become. In other key postings, such as Najaf, the Foreign Service has never managed to fill the two slots mandated for that city, sometimes described as the Vatican of Shia Islam. The same is true for other critical locations throughout Iraq. In Najaf, several officers have rotated through a single slot for up to a year each, but the lack of experience and language skills has kept them from being as effective with government and religious figures as personnel with those skills could have been. They did the best that could be done with the skill they had. The Service is at fault for

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failing to send qualified officers to that city.

The inability of the Service to provide more experienced personnel for this vital mission connotes a lack of seriousness to Iraqis. It also deprives entry-level officers of the full benefit of the unique experience they would have received by having on-site a more experienced, better-qualified mentor. Thus, the Service has lost an opportunity to meet fully its duty both to our country and to its own next generation. What conclusions about the importance of duty in the FS culture are junior officers supposed to draw when they are left alone to fend for themselves, while on an important mission in a dangerous place? The Foreign Service needs to match the courage and dedication of such officers; it has not done so.

The combination of service in a war zone and the policy necessity of exposure to danger makes the Foreign Service experience in Iraq unique.

A Paradigm, Not an Anomaly

Many reasons for this institutional failure can be heard in corridor conversations: that Foreign Service personnel did not sign up to work in combat zones; that the disagreements of some officers with Iraq policy would force them to resign if they were ordered to go there; and that such resignations would damage the Service, as some say happened during the Vietnam era.

The problem with all these arguments is that they rest on the assumption that Iraq is an anomaly in both policy and practice, rather than the paradigm it is likely to become. In an ever-more-chaotic world in which we face a multiplicity of relatively small-scale threats, all of which require a multifaceted and integrated response from the United States, this assumption seems unfounded.

It is also the case, based on anecdotal evidence, that military commanders are eager to have more Foreign Service personnel, not fewer, in the field with them — both because they respect our expertise in both civilian policy and local culture, and because of the policy cover they get by having a direct policy connection next to them when they veer rapidly from war-fighting to politicking and project management. If the Foreign Service cannot provide these services, the military will take one or both of the following actions. It will either contract these services out, so that field foreign policy companies will take their place alongside the private security contractors already so prevalent in Iraq. Or the military will simply create its own policy service by picking a few thousand of its best and brightest and sending them to school. In either case, the Foreign Service is headed for irrelevancy, unless one thinks that service in Bridgetown is equivalent to service in Baghdad.

Foreign Service personnel are serving honorably in several difficult posts throughout the world, but the level of danger in Iraq combined with the policy requirement that we stay engaged with the Iraqis causes us to cross security red lines every day. It is that combination of service in a war zone and the policy necessity of exposure to danger there that makes the FS experience in Iraq unique.

There are short-term and long-term fixes to this issue. Over the long term, we have to make clear to current personnel and recruits that being "worldwide available" means just that, and that all personnel should expect unaccompanied assignments in dangerous places in the course of a normal career. In the short term — to deal with the fact that we have used up all the volunteers for Iraq, at least those most qualified to be there — the Service has to identify qualified personnel, focusing on language and area expertise. It must make clear that failure to volunteer by a date certain will be followed by directed assignment, and that a refusal to serve under those conditions should have a resignation letter attached to it.

Blunt, unnuanced directives are rare in our Service, reflecting an overall institutional predilection for cooperation and consensus — except, of course, when it comes to assignments or promotions. But every war, such as the one we are fighting in Iraq, has its own rules and creates its own imperatives. The Service cannot expect to apply its peacetime rules to staffing its part of the war in Iraq, if it expects to be as effective as it is able to be. The harshness of war, reflected in the death of several of our American and Iraqi colleagues, requires not a corresponding harshness, but rather the willingness of our Service to demand the best of its members in its most important work. ■

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The Defense Department prefers not to have a military draft because it is easier to work with true volunteers. A lot of flexibility and tolerance is required for Iraq service, something likely to be in shorter supply among directed assignees. Our country is divided over the administration's Iraq policy, and I believe this division is reflected to some extent within the Foreign Service.

Senior-level FSO who has served in Iraq

If the administration or Congress want us to involuntarily serve in combat areas, then we should go through boot camp.

I have no problem with directed assignments. Officers who have the skills and background required to do the job out here should be required to serve, particularly those who have not served in a hardship post. [For those] who have Arabic but who have not served in Iraq, [it is] time to repay the investment the department made in their language training.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

If the administration or Congress want us to involuntarily serve in combat areas, then we should go through boot camp, be issued weapons and protective uniforms, receive combat pay and other analogous benefits provided to the military, etc. — and receive the respect and honor accorded to the military (which the FS does not ordinarily receive).

Senior-level FSO

Stand by for LOTS of attendees at upcoming retirement seminars.

Diplomatic Security agent who has served in Iraq

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Members of the Foreign Service are extremely well educated and trained and usually have a strong work background. Those who do not wish to be forced to go to Iraq will vote with their feet and leave the Service. Although I have served in the military and understand the reasoning behind directed assignments, I believe it would not work well in the Foreign Service and could lead to high rates of attrition. If the FS does go to a policy of directed assignments, it needs to be fair. … Any directed assignments should start with fair-share bidders!

Mid-level FSO

~

Directed assignments are the only way to go: the mission will not succeed without the professionals, especially mid-level professionals. Shorten the time between fair-share tours and make exceptions only for severe physical disability of the employee. If a position needs certain qualifications, direct-assign to get them.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

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Four of my five overseas tours were hardship tours, and I'll gladly serve at another hardship post — as long as I bid on it. I have the age and years of service to retire; if Human Resources turns to directed assignments on Iraq, I'll retire immediately. I doubt I'm alone in that sentiment.

Mid-level FSO

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It's really only fair. … The name of the game is governance and we need many more qualified State officers at all levels to salvage this experiment. We're close, but failure in Iraq will lead to many more hardship tours and exposure to terrorism in our FSO futures.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

~

When I arrived in Iraq, I thought that only volunteers should serve. After one year, I changed my mind — every FSO should have to serve in Iraq for at least six months so they understand what it is like. The only exception should be on medical grounds.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

~

This would be a huge mistake. Aside from the effect on morale and productivity that forcing someone into a directed assignment always produces, Iraq is still an extremely dangerous place and it's a fact of life that people die there every day. While we all agreed to worldwide availability and accept that diplomatic service has become inherently more dangerous, we didn't anticipate being compelled into assignments in a war zone or to be forcibly separated from our families for extended periods. … The Foreign Service isn't the U.S. military.

Mid-level FSO

~

Do it. Yes, the State Department is not the military, but when folks signed that initial pledge to go where directed, they should have realized it might be invoked one day. Those that refuse to go to a directed assignment without a valid justification should resign or retire.

Mid-level FSO

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Directed assignments must affect all levels. … If the "pain" were spread universally and without special exceptions due to department connections or rank, I would accept a directed assignment and my husband would either have to put his career on hold to take care of our child or ask me to resign if it was his "red line." However, if directed assignments are not imposed fairly, I would not be willing to go.

Mid-level FSO

~

I would quit before going to Iraq involuntarily, and I suspect there are many others who feel the same way. I don't even agree that we should have opened an embassy in Baghdad in the first place. If the kinds of dangers employees in Iraq face on a daily basis existed at any other post in the world, we would have evacuated the embassy long ago. I think it is unconscionable that we are exposing so many people to very real dangers to their lives and safety simply to make a symbolic political statement. Instead of forcing unwilling officers to serve in Iraq, the department should focus on ways to create a lean skeleton crew of necessary personnel, instead of trying to pretend that this is a "real" embassy with a normal range of services.

Mid-level FSO

~

I would not want someone on a directed assignment in a combat zone who is really unhappy about it. They could be a danger to themselves and to many around them. People could die because of this. Get a contractor or leave the slot empty.

Retired FSO who served in Iraq

I think a "draft" is a terrible idea. I know we all signed on for "worldwide availability," but [where] should still remain a choice, especially if it is a family issue or if an officer has also volunteered for other kinds of hardship tours. If I or my husband were directed to an Iraq assignment I would think seriously about resigning my commission.

Entry-level FSO

I would quit before going to Iraq involuntarily, and I suspect there are many others who feel the same way.

This is, after all, the U.S. government's number-one foreign policy issue, so the director general should ultimately tell all those who've been identified by senior State Department leadership that they're needed. If they can't or won't go, they should be thinking about a Civil Service rather than a Foreign Service career.

Mid-level FSO

This is probably inevitable. It may not be all bad, either. There are far too many people running around this Service who've spent their entire careers in Milan, Paris, Budapest, with a "hardship" tour in Cape Town, etc. … I was the "cowboy" of my A-100 class and have enjoyed my time in the hotspots, but even I'm feeling a little tired.

An FSO who has served in Iraq

Forget it; nothing in the State Department literature said I could be forced to serve in a war zone. Directing somebody to go there is simply the wrong thing to do, especially if they have a family which could be affected. We are not the military! AFSA should fight this tooth and nail.

Mid-level FSO

I would probably resign rather than take a directed assignment to Iraq. I served in [two difficult and dangerous posts]. Between the two, I have heard and felt terrorist bombings five times in the past three years. I would serve in Afghanistan, a dangerous but worthwhile cause. I consider myself extraordinarily brave, as are most of my FS colleagues. However, I am not stupid. And I feel strongly that serving in Iraq would be just that, stupid.

Mid-level FSO

I would resign if they forced me to go — I believe that if the conditions there were present anywhere else in the world, the embassy would have been on ordered departure and then evacuated and closed down long ago. I support service in hardship posts. … We've all signed on the line saying we're worldwide available — but I believe that forcing service in Iraq is frivolously unsafe and it is irresponsible to put that many lives in such severe danger. I definitely value my life more than I do our policy in Iraq, so I would resign if forced to go.

Entry-level FSO

[Directed assignments] would obviously have a negative effect on morale, especially if the department doesn't make more of an effort to justify why so many positions are needed there.

Mid-level FSO who has served in Iraq

I don't think the department should send a lot of people to Iraq who don't want to be there. They simply wouldn't be effective working in that environment.

Senior-level FSO who has served in Iraq

I do not believe that the department would be successful with directed assignments to Iraq. If all the employees had to deal with was poor conditions, they might grudgingly accept such an assignment. However, Iraq is a unique situation. The people that go there not only need to be competent, but they need to have the proper mindset to work in this environment. I would not be surprised if many people would rather resign than accept this duty.

A Diplomatic Security agent who has served in Iraq

Perhaps a realistic evaluation of the number of personnel required and the ability of the Foreign Service to support that level would be a better question.

Employee who has served in the Iraq Support Unit in Amman ■

A Horizontal Model for Transformational Diplomacy

The post-post–Cold War World demands new thinking and new approaches to diplomacy that are invariably more "horizontal" than "vertical."

By Keith W. Mines

In describing the contemporary world, Thomas Friedman offers three images — sumo wrestlers, sprinters and a flat world. The Cold War world, Friedman suggests, was akin to two sumo wrestlers, each jostling for position until he could push his opponent out of the ring. The post-Cold War world was a series of sprints, where at the conclusion of each the runners quickly lined up and raced again. The "post-post–Cold War" world is simply flat, a "global, Web-enabled playing field that allows for multiple forms of collaboration in real time without regard to geography, distance or language."

If there were any doubts that the world has indeed gotten flatter, the 9/11 attacks should have dispelled them. The fact that a demented Saudi jihadist living in the mountains of Afghanistan could pull together a network of educated terrorists, whose travels took them through Europe and into America where they mounted the most spectacular terrorist attack in history, speaks volumes about how global hierarchies are crumbling.

The post-conflict realities in Iraq and Afghanistan have only sharpened the point. Stabilization and reconstruction operations in the context of weak and failing states appear increasingly to be the central foreign policy challenge of the new, post-post–Cold War world. And this demands new thinking and new approaches to diplomacy — approaches that are invariably more "horizontal" than "vertical."

Two Models of Diplomacy

Friedman's message is a simple one, and it would seem to apply just as well to the business of diplomacy as it does to the business of business. To be successful, organizations must spread out, and it is the horizontal concerns, not the vertical, that own the future. Successful players in today's world are those who are on site when something happens — able to influence events, report on them and immediately engage key players. And those who require engaging are no longer clustered in capitals.

The latter point could be key. The core function of diplomacy has traditionally been to influence governments — something that is done in capitals by embassies, largely through formal channels. Consulates in this model are an extension of embassies, and exist primarily to offer a geographic augmentation of the embassy's reach in limited core functions. This organizational chart rests on the assumption, however, that all of a nation's interests can be met by other central governments and that national governments are informed

about and manage all that happens on their territory. Iraq and Afghanistan are prime examples of key countries in which this model does not work.

But even before the war in Iraq, the traditional approach had begun to come under scrutiny. The Canadian government, for example, has come to the realization that many of its core interests with the United States cannot be successfully managed through Washington alone because of the diffusion of power in the American political and judicial systems. Canada has initiated a major push to establish small consulates throughout the U.S. to promote its interests from the bottom up, starting with states that are involved in water and key trade issues. Some Canadian officials even speak of the need to have a presence in all 50 states.

The case for a new architecture to manage our national interest is being made by others as well. In what he refers to as the "post-Westphalian world," security policy analyst Sebestyen Gorka suggests that "for centuries the tools of national security matched the threat. Today the threats operate in a milieu that is transnational and not limited by the shell of nation-state architecture. The foe moves in a world that is unrestricted by international convention, by physical borders, or the dictates of government. Yet the members of the transatlantic community that won the Cold War inherited a toolbox to provide for security that has not changed and which is very much still bound to the architecture of the Westphalian nation-state." Gorka envisions more flexible and integrated intelligence, law enforcement, and diplomatic and counterterrorism institutions, all placed where they are needed as opposed to where they have always been.

Keith Mines joined the Foreign Service in 1992. He has served in Tel Aviv, San Salvador, Port-au-Prince, Budapest and Washington (Brazil desk), and done temporary duty in Mogadishu, Kabul and the Al Anbar province of Iraq. He was the 2004 winner of AFSA's William R. Rivkin Award for constructive dissent by a mid-level FSO for his May 2003 Dissent Channel message, "Let the U.N. Manage the Political Transition in Iraq."

Even before the experience in Iraq, the traditional approach had begun to come under scrutiny.

The Idea of Micro-Posts

Such a horizontal model for diplomacy — as opposed to a vertical one — has similarly been suggested by a number of senior U.S. policy-makers and analysts, including, most recently, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. While serving as U.S. envoy to Moscow, Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering traveled extensively throughout the Russian Federation. The vastness of the country left him sobered, especially considering that he was attempting to gather information and represent U.S. interests from the embassy in Moscow and the consulates in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinberg and Vladivostok.

Amb. Pickering was determined to expand the U.S. presence in Russia through the establishment of micro-posts — consulates with two or three American officials who could explain U.S. policies, coordinate with local officials and civic groups, collect information and provide a platform for U.S. programs. He was especially interested in filling in the gaps in the vast, remote corners of Russia, where local developments were having an impact on national developments and policies but the United States was flying blind.

He explored the idea further while serving as under secretary for political affairs during the mid-1990s, but always came up against the centralizing tendencies of the foreign affairs bureaucracy and the reality of cost and security concerns. Several new posts were established in France through the initiative of Ambassador Felix Rohatyn, but not, presumably, on the scale Pickering envisioned. If anything, in the wake of the Dar es Salaam and Nairobi bombings, the drive was to further consolidate our overseas presence. Some senior officials believed the U.S. could get by with regional embassies in Africa: as the Brazil desk officer in the mid-1990s, I was asked to justify why the U.S. needed consulates in both Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro — an astounding question, given the size and activity of these key posts.

Another push for micro-posts came from Hoover Institution Fellow and former NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary Charles Hill in an interview with the *Hoover Institution Newsletter* (Fall 2004). Focusing on the lack of good information about the pre-9/11 terrorist threat, he suggested that "opening small, inexpensive three-to-

four-person offices staffed by Foreign Service officers with excellent language and cultural skills, operating wholly in the open, could give us a much better sense of what is really going on in vast parts of the world where terrorists have taken up residence." He believes that the information these posts could generate would be a tremendous bargain, especially considering how failure to "connect the dots" had already "proved costly beyond our worst nightmare."

The civil-military teams that are now being led by diplomats in Iraq developed without any overarching plan.

Thomas Barnett, author of the provocative *The Pentagon's New Map* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2004), is the ultimate believer in transformational diplomacy. Barnett sees success for the United States in the battle against extremism as coming down to the ability to bring the disconnected "gap" countries, into the successful and connected "core." On a tactical note, he similarly believes that the majority of the information we need to find and fix terrorists is readily and openly available if we would only position ourselves in the right places. In his trademark slash-and-burn style, Barnett questioned in a recent speech the yield of the covert services in the war on terror, suggesting that most of what we need to know "is not a secret; all you have to do is ask people or go live with them." In his book he suggests that to achieve this, "the State Department is in desperate need of its own transformation. Unlike a Treasury or Justice [Department] that is forced to keep up with changes in the private sector, the State Department has become a seriously ossified culture operating in an ever-changing global landscape."

The Force of Events

While not employing the kind of micro-posts envisioned by Pickering, Hill and Barnett, the department has been forced by events in Iraq and Afghanistan to flatten its structure to meet the requirements of post-conflict societies. The concept of placing civil-military teams in the field to help quell an insurgency or assist with post-conflict stabilization is not new. It was the basic concept behind the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program in Vietnam, which placed up to 1,100 civilians in all 250 districts and 44 provinces of South Vietnam to coordinate reconstruction efforts and provide a kind of "shadow government" for the struggling Saigon regime. The concept was sketched out but not employed in Somalia, and was used in a very limited way in the Balkans; it is the basic operating method for United Nations peacekeeping missions.

However, Washington treated all of these operations as once-offs, so there was no template or organization to implant a field presence throughout a country when we began the Afghan stabilization program. Rather, it evolved out of simple necessity when it became clear fairly soon after the fall of the Taliban that the Afghan government would not be fully functional in the provinces for years and, in order to avert a fallback to the chaotic conditions that spawned the Taliban, the international community would be forced to fill in the breach. The military had been carrying the reconstruction load, primarily with its very skilled civil affairs teams, but there was a desire on the part of Afghans to see the operation move away from a uniformed occupation and in the direction of a civil partnership. There was also a need for an expansion of the military skill sets that were then available, and the military was anxious to return to its core functions and not carry the entire reconstruction load alone. The Provincial Reconstruction Team concept was born and, from all indications, has been a very successful way to further stabilization and create the needed support for the new Afghan government. PRTs are currently being led by a number of NATO nations throughout Afghanistan and include a mix of civilian specialists, generalist diplomats and military security personnel.

The combined civil-military teams that are now being led by diplomats in Iraq similarly developed without any overarching plan, propelled forward by the simple evolution of events on the ground. In the summer of 2003 Coalition Provisional Authority head L. Paul (Jerry) Bremer found himself trying to govern a country that was highly resistant to foreign domination, without any civilian teams to insert in order to take the edge off the military occupation. International members of his staff with experience in the Balkans and East Timor devised a fairly logical structure of regional teams in each of the country's 18 provinces under three large headquarters in Basra, Mosul and Hilla. The teams were to include gov-

ernance specialists, public affairs officers, contractors, project managers and linguists, and were intended to provide a base for a larger governance presence managed by a USAID contractor, the Research Triangle Institute. But without an established civilian structure to draw from, the teams took over eight months to reach full staffing and even then struggled until the end of the CPA mandate in mid-2004 to place the right people in the right places.

At the close of the CPA era, the Embassy Baghdad country team decided to maintain these teams in each of the provinces under the same three headquarters. After the handover of authority to the Interim Iraqi Government, the teams were to change from direct involvement in governing to supporting the IIG in a variety of capacities. At times, the PRTs would be a kind of shadow administration that could improve the reach of the new government into the provinces; at other times, they would put a civilian face on the U.S. military occupation. They also constituted a direct link to the embassy, which was rightly seen as one of the most powerful institutions in the country. The provincial teams also provided Baghdad and Washington with valuable reporting and public affairs outreach, as well as the development of key regional contacts. A further advance occurred recently as part of the new "clear, hold, build" strategy, in which PRTs would be established quickly in towns that had recently been wrested from insurgents in order to maintain stability there.

But the biggest boost to micro-posts occurred as this article was going to press, when Secretary Rice, in her Jan. 18 speech at Georgetown University, stated: "To advance transformational diplomacy, we must change our diplomatic posture. ... Transformational diplomacy requires us to move our diplomatic presence out of foreign capitals and to spread it more widely across countries. ... There are nearly 200 cities worldwide with over one million people in which the United States has no diplomatic presence. This is where the action is today and this is where we must be." The Secretary suggested the development of "American Presence Posts" to further this objective.

Such a paradigm shift, when taken with the open-ended missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, will require some fundamental changes.

Institutionalizing Micro-Posts

Micro-posts would serve a number of key functions. First, they would facilitate the establishment of key contacts with local and regional host country officials whose cooperation and trust are central to pursuing U.S. interests. Second, they would help put a face on U.S. policies and allow for wide-ranging public diplomacy programs that have been identified as one of the most seriously lagging of our efforts in the war on terror. Third, they would provide a platform for other agencies (primarily law enforcement, foreign assistance and homeland security) to perform their work. Fourth, they would allow for reporting on key regions and the development of biographic and political profiles. Fifth, micro-posts in some places would put a civilian face on an otherwise purely military U.S. presence.

There are a number of good country candidates for establishing micro-posts:

- Indonesia, a country with one quarter of the world's Muslim population but where the U.S. has only one full-fledged consulate outside Jakarta (in Surabaya);
- Brazil, where the consulate in Porto Alegre that covered the entire south of the country was closed in the mid-1990s, and a presence in the dicey tri-border area has never been established;
- India, whose three consulates are oriented primarily to travel and commercial issues;
- The states of the former Soviet Union, none of which have consulates;
- Yemen, which has only an embassy;
- The Philippines, with only a consular agent outside Manila; and
- China, where before the Second World War we had twice as many consulates as we do now, including Urumugi and Xiamen (Amoy).

This list doesn't take into account Africa, which Barnett considers the heart of the "gap" in the new international environment.

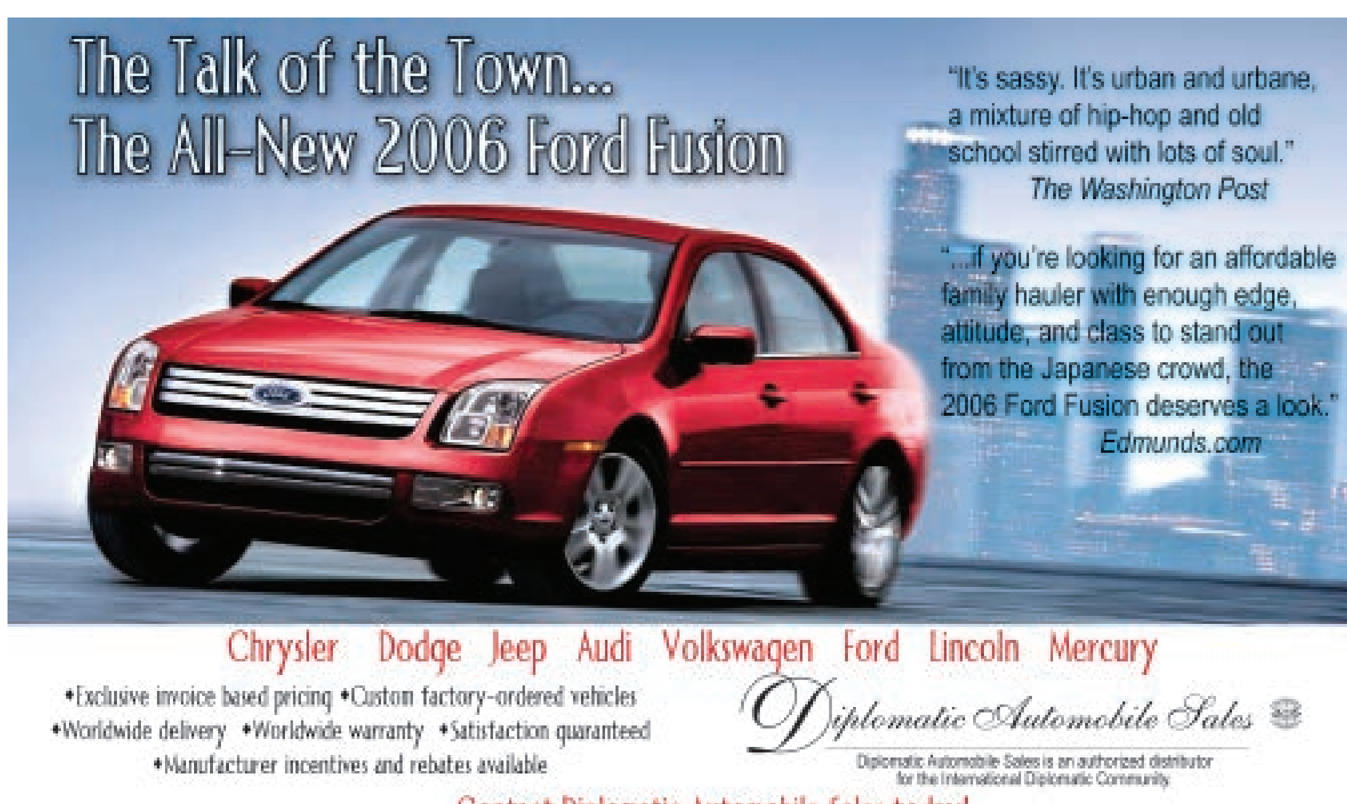
Such a paradigm shift, when taken with the open-ended missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, will require some fundamental changes in the nature of the Foreign Service. Certainly it will require personnel who are more

independent, who better understand the interagency process, possess real leadership skills and have the flexibility to move quickly and perhaps more frequently. The personnel system will also be forced to change to meet this new dynamic, with a buffer for families, appropriate incentives and career protection for those who are willing to serve, and the ability to quickly identify the right people for the right positions, rather than just hoping for the best from volunteers. And the system may need to develop even greater flexibility the further we move away from the vertical, Cold-War-era mega-embassies in favor of a more horizontal model of micro-posts.

The immediate reaction to this idea will, of course, be shock and awe — shock from security specialists, and awe from the green eyeshade types. Both reactions can be addressed, however. Security risks can be mitigated through a combination of lowering the operating profile of a post and establishing templates for conducting engagement in a safe, neutral area. It would not be ideal, but could be managed without too great a loss of effectiveness. The cost could be worked around largely by shifting people and resources away from large, comfortable, "legacy"-era posts, and into the new front. This would be painful, but not necessarily more expensive over time. And whatever additional costs and risks are incurred must be considered in the context of what these posts could accomplish. If a $5-million-a-year micro-post turns up a vital link to shut down a terrorist organization or slowly starts to shape the environment against extremism in a key region, it would presumably be worth both the risk and the cost.

If we take Barnett's map, overlay it on Friedman's flat world, add in the pushpins from Karen Hughes' public diplomacy campaign, and consider the persistent requirements for regional teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have a revolution in how we are organized and deployed — a horizontal model for transformational diplomacy.

According to Woody Allen, 90 percent of success is just showing up. Micro-posts would facilitate our showing up in places where we can do some good. ■



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MILITARY-CIVILIAN COOPERATION: A FIELD PERSPECTIVE

AS HEAD OF USAID'S IRAQ MISSION, AN FSO LEARNED VALUABLE LESSONS ABOUT MELDING TWO VERY DIFFERENT CULTURES — MILITARY AND CIVILIAN — TO DELIVER ASSISTANCE.

BY JAMES "SPIKE" STEPHENSON

In the fall of 2003, I was asked to lead the U.S. Agency for International Development's assistance effort in Iraq because of my prior experience in high-threat, post-conflict reconstruction programs (I had also served in Vietnam as a U.S. Army officer). I therefore had a keen appreciation of the critical need for USAID to be able to work in tighter coordination with multinational coalition forces in Iraq.

But even with 25 years of development experience exclusively in conflict and post-conflict environments, I had never actually worked closely with the military on reconstruction efforts. In the Balkans, where there were large U.S. peacekeeping forces, some foreign assistance was coordinated with U.S. military civil affairs units, but nationbuilding was most often the province of civilian implementing agencies. The war on terror and the consequent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq introduced a paradigm shift, with a vastly increased role for U.S. and coalition forces in nationbuilding and reconstruction.

U.S. civilian agencies, including USAID, were presented with serious challenges in adapting to this new reality. Conflict and post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations are very different from "foreign aid." To be effective, they must be extraordinarily flexible and agile. Interventions that can be developed over a period of months in a normal environment must be commenced in days or even hours. In Iraq, we often joked that every day was a Monday and that every workday in Iraq was equal to a week anywhere else. If you did not move quickly, you were irrelevant.

During the 13 months I spent there, I found that the melding of two very different cultures — military and civilian — to achieve cohesive and effective implementation of assistance was often painful and ineffective. Nevertheless, we learned valuable lessons from the mistakes as well as from our successes.

An Unwieldy Process

The structure of the reconstruction effort in Iraq was unique. The unexpected continuation of state-of-war conditions in Baghdad and other parts of the country, together with the lack of prior planning for the complex and lengthy nationbuilding process that is characteristic of post-conflict transitions, led to ad hoc decision-making. This, in turn, resulted in waste of resources and inefficiency.

Even before the start of hostilities in March 2003, USAID was an integral part of the Department of

Defense's planning effort. The agency deployed to Kuwait and Iraq with the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, which was initially tasked with implementing approximately $2 billion of assistance. Unfortunately, however, ORHA planners were more concerned with possible humanitarian crises that could be spawned by military operations, and had not planned for post-conflict reconstruction. ORHA was barely on the ground in Iraq in May 2003, when Ambassador L. Paul Bremer was appointed administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, and its resources and mission were subsumed by the CPA.

By the time I arrived in February 2004, USAID was essentially an executing agency for the CPA. Congress had recently approved the FY 2004 supplemental appropriation that provided an additional $18.4 billion for Iraq reconstruction, to be managed by the CPA, reporting primarily to DOD. USAID had very little input in the development of the priorities contained in the supplemental request, and it was left to the CPA to determine what portions of the program would be implemented by USAID and other executing agencies.

The FY 2004 supplemental — Public Law 108-106, hereafter referred to as "the 2207," after Section 2207 of the law — essentially funded a list of large infrastructure projects in a dozen or so sectors. Congress limited the CPA's authority to make adjustments between sectors and sub-sectors, and to delete or add projects. Even projects already contained in the 2207 had to be approved for execution by the CPA Project Management Office; the CPA senior adviser within whose ministry or area of responsibility the project fell; Amb. Bremer; and the Office of Management & Budget — a cumbersome and time-consuming procedure. Adding a new project could only be accomplished by canceling an existing one.

James "Spike" Stephenson, a recently retired USAID Senior Foreign Service officer, has spent 25 years in the field of development in conflict and post-conflict environments. He spent 13 months as mission director in Iraq (2004-2005) and until his retirement was a senior adviser to the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. He has also served as a USAID mission director in Serbia/Montenegro and Lebanon, and in a variety of positions in Egypt, Barbados, Grenada, El Salvador, the Philippines and Washington. He is now the senior adviser for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction at Creative Associates International, Inc.

We saw much that was lacking in the program dictated by the 2207, at both the strategic and tactical level. In particular, I was deeply concerned at the heavy concentration of large infrastructure projects that would be slow to develop, generate little employment, and be largely invisible to the average Iraqi. The whole approach ignored the lessons learned over a half-century of foreign assistance, particularly with regard to post-conflict transitions. There was virtually no funding for reforms in agriculture, economic policy, health, education, public administration and rule of law; and inadequate funding for democracy activities across the board, including election support. In my judgment, the 2207 resembled the Point Four program that the U.S. had implemented in the Middle East in the early 1950s — with little impact.

But we were stymied in efforts to make needed adjustments by the structure of the CPA; the difficulty of making changes to the 2207; and the conviction of the CPA leadership and senior management that the reconstruction effort was on the right course.

Meanwhile, On the Ground

During the first year of post-conflict operations, military-civilian coordination in civil affairs at the policy level was virtually nonexistent. U.S. forces had, for the most part, adequate Commander's Emergency Response Program funds, which were a combination of DOD appropriations and funds seized from the former regime. Accordingly, commander's had less incentive to approach executing agencies for assistance. Although we reached out to the civil affairs commander at Combined Joint Task Force 7 (and later the Multi-National Force–Iraq), and he to us, meaningful cooperation was ad hoc and generally only occurred at the operational level.

In mid-March 2004, a month after I arrived in Iraq, I was contacted by an aide to Major General Peter Chiarelli, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, which was deploying to assume responsibility for Baghdad and its environs. Gen. Chiarelli came to my office in the Republican Palace on March 28. He immediately made it clear that he was seeking a close working relationship with USAID. While I welcomed

his approach to us, my experience so far in Iraq and with the CPA offered little encouragement that we would be able to establish any meaningful partnership. But both of us said the right things and agreed to meet again.

Within days of our meeting, the entire landscape in Iraq worsened dramatically. The first eruption was in Sadr City, where the lst CAV took and inflicted heavy casualties on the Mesh Mehdi of Mouktada al Sadr. Fighting quickly spread to south-central Iraq and enveloped dozens of towns, resulting in the Coalition's loss of control and evacuations of CPA personnel. Falluja and other towns in the "Sunni Triangle" became strongholds of the insurgents.

Coalition supply convoys were attacked in dramatic fashion, and deliveries of food, water, ammunition and fuel slowed. U.S. casualties soared. Most expatriate contractors evacuated to Kuwait or Jordan, waiting to see if conditions would permit their return. No area of Baghdad was even marginally safe, and the 1st CAV was heavily engaged in fighting. All of this had significant impact on USAID operations and the safety of our personnel; and I had little time to think of the offered partnership with Gen. Chiarelli.

Then, in mid-April 2004, I received an invitation to a dinner at the Bechtel compound, in honor of the 1st CAV commander. With over $1 billion in USAID construction contracts, many in Baghdad, Bechtel was one of our most important partners and depended on the 1st CAV to maintain a relatively permissive environment. Accompanying Gen. Chiarelli were several of his senior staff, most notably his Engineer Brigade commander, Colonel Kendall Cox.

Seize the Moment

As was his custom, Bechtel chief-of-party Cliff Mumm began the dinner with a slide presentation of Bechtel's program, which consisted primarily of large infrastructure projects. At about the fourth slide, Gen. Chiarelli interrupted the presentation. He said (I paraphrase): "Just stop. Look, I know that Bechtel is an excellent company and I am sure that the things you are doing are worthwhile. But you are never going to complete them unless I can get the sewage off the streets of Sadr City and get potable water into the houses of the people who live on those streets — because, unless that happens fast, I am going to be run out of Baghdad and will not be able to protect you." There was stunned silence around the table.

The real key was the fact that Gen. Chiarelli and I had a shared vision of what was needed in Baghdad.

Gen. Chiarelli then asked if he could put up some of his own slides to explain what he thought was needed. During the next half-hour, he and Col. Cox described a program that would concentrate on projects to install water and sewer pipe; restore electricity; remove and landfill solid waste; generate short-term employment; and immediately improve the lives of the population of eastern Baghdad. He asked if some of the funds that were slated for large infrastructure projects in Baghdad could be redirected to electricity distribution, water distribution and sewage collection.

The central thrust of his plan was that we needed to quickly demonstrate to the communities that we were engaged and that the condition of their lives was going to improve. Unfortunately, the perception of the average Iraqi in 2004, one year after the end of major combat operations, was that nothing was being done. That perception aided the insurgency.

It was a studied and cogent presentation, describing a tactical approach that matched my own views about what we should be doing. My only reservation was that there had been no discussion of community participation, something we knew was critical to success. When I raised this, his entire staff practically shouted, "We have it," explaining that all of the activities described had been either requested or vetted by Neighborhood Advisory Councils and District Advisory Councils. My infrastructure lead Tom Wheelock, Cliff Mumm and I looked at each other across the table and nodded — we could do this.

In the days that followed, Gen. Chiarelli and I met and expanded his plan to incorporate other programs that we could tailor to our mutual needs, including private-sector development programs designed to create economic growth and long-term employment. For his part, Gen. Chiarelli made available helicopters and fer-

ried our staff to the brigade combat teams to meet with the commanders and civil affairs staff. I impressed upon my staff — many of whom had reservations about working closely with the military and had expressed that their partners also held strong views on the subject — the need to help the 1st CAV and thus help ourselves by seizing the moment. The obvious strategic importance of Baghdad justified such a concentrated effort.

MNF–I recognized that the "1st CAV Model" held great promise in those cities, if it could be immediately employed after combat operations to take them back.

We delegated design and implementation responsibility to teams working on various aspects of the program. The infrastructure team had identified $162 million of unfunded needs in water, sewage and electricity distribution. Funding the requirement would involve getting CPA approval to cut something else out of the 2207, and that meant obtaining the broad consensus previously described. It was my judgment that the only way consensus would ever be obtained was if Amb. Bremer basically directed that it happen; and I suggested to the general that he and I approach the ambassador directly.

We met with Amb. Bremer in early May. He enthusiastically supported our plans, directing the Project Management Office to identify the funding. Development Fund for Iraq monies (seized funds and Oil For Food) was made available to establish a visible presence in a few "strategic cities." But it was not until the transition to State Department control in July 2004 that a serious realignment of priorities was undertaken.

The 1st CAV Model

In the meantime, we brought both the PMO and the Army Corps of Engineers into the program. Gen. Chiarelli initiated and chaired a weekly briefing, with all parties present, to track progress and deal with problems. There was the inevitable friction between the Army's style and desire to move at the speed of light, and the more cautious approach of civilian professionals with years of experience working in less developed, post-conflict environments. But we learned from each other.

One critical initiative was the contribution of USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, created to work in post-conflict transitions. In Iraq OTI had an extraordinary leader, who immediately grasped the need to put large numbers of Iraqi men to work and refined the mechanisms to do it virtually anywhere in the country on literally a few hours' notice. This capacity had tremendous appeal to the 1st CAV, which was trying to pry young men away from the insurgency with jobs. Thanks to OTI, USAID was able to commit to employing 40,000 people per month, and at times was employing over 60,000.

OTI became so closely integrated with 1st CAV planning that we requested and received a liaison officer who worked, lived and ate with us. This contributed enormously to communications and helped to educate both sides to the limitations and capabilities of each. But the real key was the fact that Gen. Chiarelli and I had a shared vision of what was needed in Baghdad; political awareness that enabled us to assess the way ahead; and — most importantly — the firm conviction that ours was a partnership with little place for ego or petty squabbling with each other or among our staffs, which we encouraged to work together at all levels.

Our partnership showed immediate results in parts of Baghdad, such as Al Rashid and Nine Nissan, in the reduction of violence levels and improved cooperation of the populace. But areas such as Sadr City remained under the sway of insurgents, as did cities such as Najaf, Karbala, Falluja, Sammara and Tal Afar. Nevertheless, MNF–I recognized that the "1st CAV Model" held great promise in those cities, if it could be immediately employed after combat operations to take them back. Such a sudden strategic shift, however, involved herculean efforts to overcome the 2207 framework restrictions.

The model was first employed in Najaf, and involved close cooperation between MNF–I and a multiagency team deployed immediately after the successful conclusion of combat operations. The team worked close-

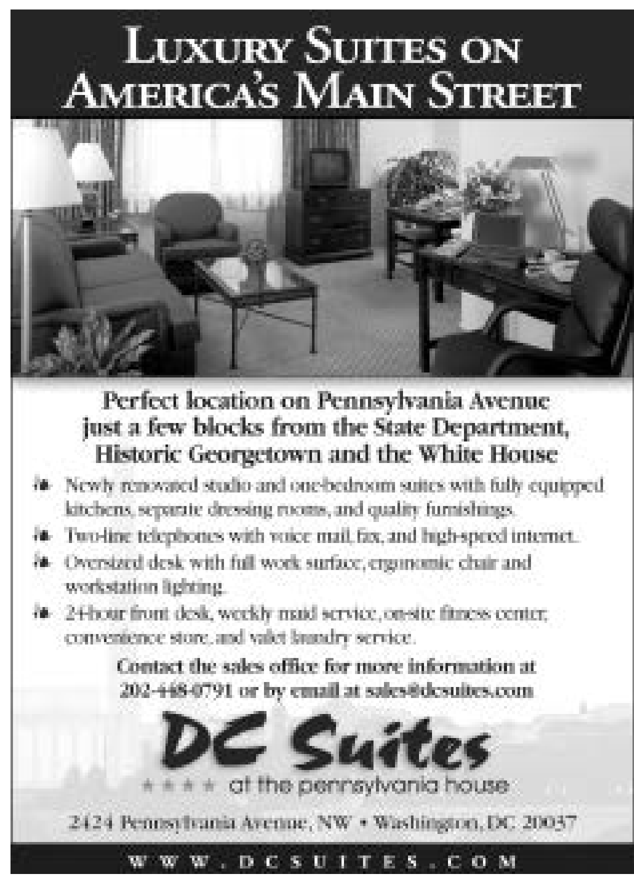
ly with local leaders and military commanders to identify priorities, particularly those that could be immediately addressed. Again, the ability of OTI to immediately put large numbers of Iraqis to work, often at cleaning up the damage and removing accumulated solid waste, was highly beneficial. The model worked best in Najaf, Falluja and Sadr City, once MNF-I was able to establish a relatively secure environment and local leaders supported the effort. As soon as the local population was convinced that the Coalition was there to provide security and improve the lives of the population, security incidents and the influence of insurgents decreased rapidly.

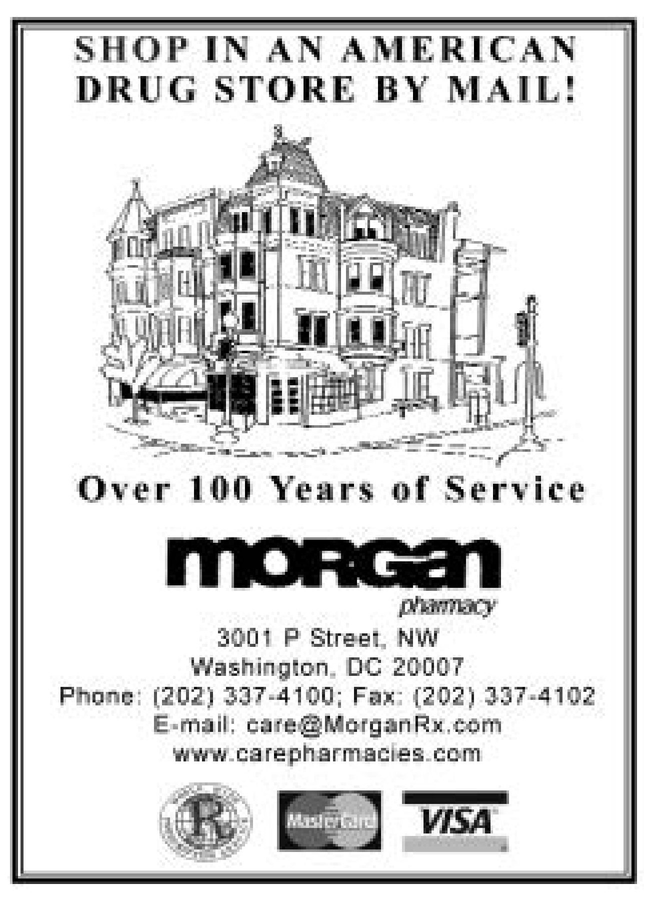
Administrative officers, controllers and first-rate contracting officers are very hard to attract to a war zone.

In Sammara and Tal Afar, however, security was not sustained, and reconstruction efforts again stalled. Even where the tactic was successful, subsequent reliance on the Interim Iraqi Government and the central ministries to implement projects was misplaced. In particular, the IIG's slow response in making agreed compensation payments, to enable the rebuilding of businesses and homes destroyed in the fighting, diminished the impact of the Coalition's rapid response.

The Right Stuff

Iraq remains the most dangerous operating environment for civilians since Vietnam. Implementing multibillion-dollar programs in a country the size of California, under deadly peril, is a supreme challenge that requires both civilian and military involvement. (The USAID program had 9,000 projects spread across all 18 governorates of Iraq.) My experience on the



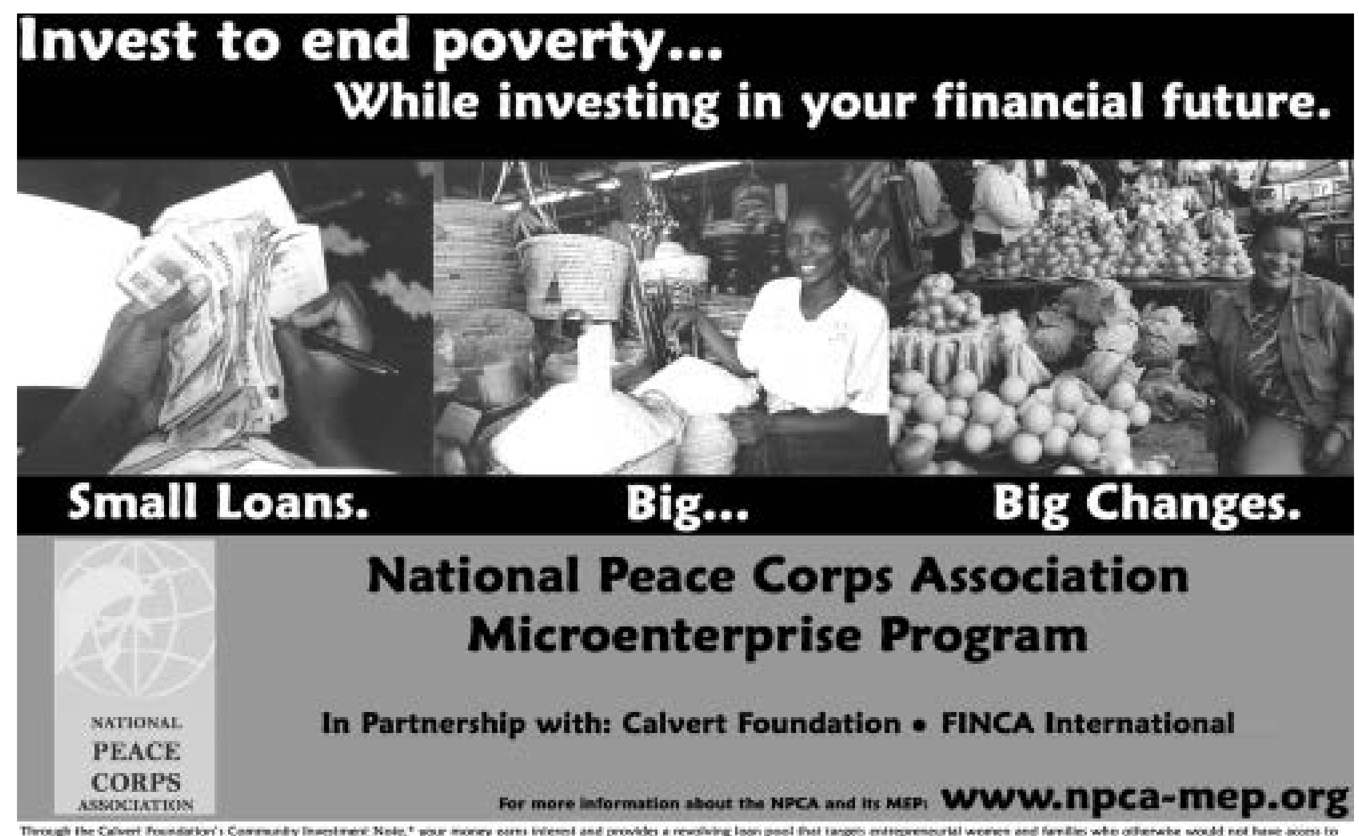


ground from February 2004 to March 2005 underlined the importance of two factors for success in such missions: the capacity to place the right officers on the ground, and a truly synergistic relationship between civilian and military components.

The standing capacity to place the right officers, anywhere in the world, within a few days, is essential for effective post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations, but is currently nonexistent. Without it, the process is inevitably improvised — as was strikingly the case in Iraq. This was not particularly surprising to me; in my experience, USAID's response to post-conflict transition has always been fairly ad hoc. Though the agency is often portrayed as a massive bureaucracy, in reality it has only about 1,000 Foreign Service officers. The cadre of officers willing, able and competent to serve in dangerous, primitive postings, far from their families, is very small indeed. The same is true, to a lesser extent, in the State Department, though its ranks of Foreign Service officers are far larger.

Our collaboration with the 1st CAV worked, in part, because my staff was empowered to say 'no' to the military.

Accordingly, one tends to see the same small cadre again and again in the hot zones. Although this contingent is highly competent, it is too thin. The current effort of the State Department to expand this capacity, through the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, is on the right track. But the uncertainty of funding may militate in favor of a smaller permanent staff to conduct planning, gaming and monitoring and a ready reserve of serving officers, contractors and preselected institutional contractors.



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One approach could be to establish a financial incentive for an interagency ready reserve of Foreign Service officers, on call and willing to leave their current assignments on 24 hours' notice, to serve anywhere for up to one year. Senior management in overseas missions would have to adjust to the possibility that they may lose some of their best officers, and the promotion system cannot be permitted to punish those who answer the call of duty. Training of these officers and joint exercises with the military are essential. When they deploy to a rally point, they must be a team, already known to each other and their military counterparts.

We also found that the military was far more centralized than USAID, and our highly decentralized operations were often hard for the military to comprehend.

In addition, one cannot stress enough the value of seasoned administrative officers, controllers and first-rate contracting officers — but they are very hard to attract to a war zone. They are needed to facilitate the startup of a mission, securing and assembling the myriad equipment needed — communications, armored transportation, generators, secure lodging and offices, desks, chairs, computers, rations and so forth. Missions-in-a-box need to be prepositioned to be delivered when needed by military or pre-chartered aircraft.

Contracting officers are also needed to deal with the Federal Acquisition Regulations. All agencies in Iraq experienced problems using and complying with the FAR, whose requirements delay implementation, increase costs, and are often unworkable in a war zone. Waivers of some FAR provisions helped, but the most effective instrument was the bidding of indefinite-quantity contracts, well in advance of their need. IQCs are competitively bid and enable rapid responses, particularly in dangerous environments where the pool of realistic bidders is very small. However, they were not popular with Congress, and there was pressure to bid every activity anew.

In Iraq, USAID's partner NGOs and contractors deployed rapidly and efficiently. They were consistently able to field qualified personnel who were the sharp end of the spear. Often, they operated where military and official personnel could not. However, NGO and contractor personnel must be trained with the teams with which they will work.

The Civilian-Military Equation

The Iraq experience also shows that success depends critically on a synergy between the military and civilian professionals. The military could go places and meet with community leaders when we could not. We had financial resources and expertise that they did not; and they had human and security resources that we lacked. When we had a good partnership and understood each other's equities, we worked together to maximize these complementarities. The recent DOD directive (3000.05, issued in November 2005) raising stability operations to the same level of importance as combat operations should help to make this practice standard.

Prior to deployment to Iraq, the 1st CAV had gone out of its way to prepare, investing the time to have key staff sit with the municipal government and basic service utilities of Austin and Killeen, Texas, to learn how local government and services worked. This facilitated their engagement with the Baghdad city government and utilities, and generally gave them a much better understanding of post-conflict reconstruction and transition than other units. Deploying units have subsequently requested and received USAID participation in mission-readiness exercises. It is critical that USAID and other civilian agencies not only participate, but do so with highly experienced practitioners of post-conflict transitions.

Having a 1st CAV liaison officer working in the mission was a godsend. It helped us communicate better — we often use mutually exclusive versions of the English language — and enabled better understanding of each other's mission, operating procedures, limitations and strengths. In retrospect, I should have put a civilian liaison in the 1st CAV headquarters, as well. State, DOD and USAID, at a minimum, should second highly-qualified officers to each others' policy and planning operations in Washington and the field.

Fortunately, this is beginning to happen.

To facilitate integration, there is much to be gained by having military and civilian decision-makers co-located, enabling respective staffs to work closely together. This is very different, however, than embedding civilian staff within military units, or vice versa. It is critical that decision-makers have a shared vision and that both sides understand that they are partners. This is often difficult for the war-fighting commander who "owns his area of responsibility."

There needs to be a coordinated effort — from the interagency level on down — to define what data should be collected and how it will be shared.

While unity of command and control is vital in war-fighting, nation-building requires partnerships within a universe of disparate, independent players who each bring unique skills to the effort. If co-location is viewed by either party as an instrument of control, the partnership never develops. Our collaboration with the 1st CAV worked, in part, because my staff was empowered to say 'no' to the military. This checks-and-balances approach ensured that bad ideas were not pursued, though I am sure it frustrated the military on occasion.

Give and Take

Civilian practitioners of foreign assistance often take the long view, based upon years of experience. By contrast, the military is mission-oriented and tends to throw massive resources at a problem with the objective of overcoming it as quickly as possible. Both views have merit. Civilian agencies implementing post-conflict reconstruction have to recognize that the initial efforts must obtain rapid results, in order to win trust — from the military and, more importantly, from local residents — and establish the base for the vital long-term, transformational efforts in structural reform, across all sectors.

Work programs, such as those we accomplished with OTI, win hearts and minds and offer force protection. They are an element of stabilization, but they are expensive and transitory. They buy time for the preparatory work for the reconstruction phase to take root so that jobs are provided by the private sector. In a hot war, this initial phase may last for years, longer than in more stable environments. The short-term effects are seductive, particularly for the rotation-driven military; but if continued too long, and if not complemented by real economic growth, these programs can prove counterproductive. For their part, military practitioners must recognize that projects are rarely the end-state and must exercise the patience to allow conditions to gel.

Civilians and the military also tend to measure results differently. DOD and military commanders have an insatiable appetite for data to enable them to track "metrics." Often, USAID did not track the same data and was unable to provide the military with what it had requested. Further, we were reluctant to release raw data, particularly grid coordinates, as dissemination could endanger our contractor and NGO partners as well as project beneficiaries. We also found that the military was far more centralized than USAID, and our highly decentralized operations were often hard for the military to comprehend. For instance, we were sometimes unable to report precisely which community projects would be initiated in the next 90 days, and where, because we let the communities decide their own priorities.

There needs to be a coordinated effort — from the interagency level on down — to define what data should be collected and how it will be shared. It is also critically important, in the age of videoconferencing, that too-detailed metrics do not become the lure that pulls Washington policy-makers into the weeds of project management and implementation.

Finally, productive relationships between organizations often depend on personalities, rather than a procedural template. Pete Chiarelli and I clicked, and we made sure that the spirit of our relationship permeated both organizations, at every level. There were rough spots and some stumbles, but the partnership we had with the 1st CAV was the most rewarding of my career. ■

PRTs in Afghanistan: Model or Muddle?

PRTs are becoming a model for stabilization and reconstruction missions. Here is a look at their evolution in Afghanistan.

By Michael J. McNerney

On Oct. 7, 2001, a U.S.-led military coalition launched Operation Enduring Freedom against Afghanistan's Taliban government, toppling it after just two months of fighting. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 established an International Security Assistance Force on Dec. 20 of that year to help the Afghan Interim Authority maintain security in and around Kabul. In light of the ISAF's relative success, Afghan President Hamid Karzai, U.N. officials and others soon called for the force to expand its operations into the provinces. U.S. officials were not interested, however, believing that a traditional peacekeeping approach would be ineffective in Afghanistan. And U.S. allies were unwilling to deploy large numbers of troops to patrol Afghanistan's remote cities and towns.

During the summer of 2002, U.S. officials developed the concept of Provincial Reconstruction Teams to spread the "ISAF effect," without expanding the ISAF itself. First established in early 2003, PRTs consisted of 60 to 100 soldiers plus, eventually, Afghan advisers and representatives from civilian agencies like the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Agriculture.

PRTs have the potential to become a model for future stabilization and reconstruction operations. Representatives from more than a dozen countries are now participating in 22 teams to enhance security, reconstruction, and the reach of the Afghan central government. PRTs have achieved great success in building support for the U.S.-led coalition and respect for the Afghan government. They have played important roles in everything from election support to school-building to disarmament to mediating factional conflicts.

Despite their potential and record of success, however, PRTs always have been a bit of a muddle. Inconsistent mission statements, unclear roles and responsibilities, ad hoc preparation and, most important, limited resources have confused potential partners and prevented PRTs from having a greater effect.

PRTs: All Things to All People?

From their earliest incarnation, PRTs had a role in stabilization and reconstruction — but what kind of role? The PRTs were originally called Joint Regional Teams. It was President Karzai who asked that they be called PRTs. "Warlords rule regions; governors rule provinces," he said. Moreover, President Karzai wanted to emphasize the importance of reconstruction for these teams.

PRTs were born in an environment of change, so it is not surprising that their mission and structure evolved

over time. Flexibility was a key aspect of the PRTs' effectiveness, but at times it seemed to be a euphemism for ambiguity. A November 2002 briefing from the Coalition headquarters was vague in its description of the mission: (1) "Monitor ..." (2) "Assist ... coordinating bodies" (3) "Facilitate cooperation... ." The impression was that the PRTs were to observe and facilitate everything — be all things to all people — but not actually accomplish anything vital to the political or military missions.

The initial PRT organizational chart focused on the military structure, with a dotted line connecting to "Afghan government, U.S. government organizations (e.g., USAID), State Department, NGOs and U.N." lumped together at the far end of the page. Later charts proposed integrating State and USAID, as well as the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education and Agriculture, and other agencies. For many months, competing PRT organizational charts floated around Washington, the U.S. Central Command and Coalition headquarters.

In their first months of life, PRTs struggled to be relevant to the broader political and military mission, but suffered from limited resources and civil-military tensions. PRT military personnel used DOD's Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid funds to build schools, dig wells, repair clinics and so forth. But OHDACA was limited in its application to basic humanitarian projects, identical to those performed by NGOs. OHDACA authorities did not provide the PRTs with the flexibility to implement projects like repairing major infrastructure, building police stations or prisons and training or equipping security forces. The teams had no other resources for projects. Their resources for operations were completely inadequate. Communications were poor, and their few vehicles came straight from a post-apocalyptic "Mad Max" movie: a motley assortment of dirty, duct-taped SUVs. High demand for vehicles, communications and dedicated military personnel limited the ability of civilians — who relied on the military's vehicles and security escorts — to pursue their own objectives.

A vague mission, vague roles and insufficient resources created significant civil-military tensions at the PRTs, particularly over mission priorities. Many of the State Department personnel and other civilians on the team had military experience, but this did not reduce tensions. In fact, some of the harshest criticisms of the military personnel on PRTs came from retired military members of the team. During one of the author's trips to a PRT, a member of the team confided: "Those briefing slides look good, but this place is completely dysfunctional."

Civilians complained that the military personnel on the PRTs were reluctant to support them and treated them as outsiders. Military personnel were discouraged that civilians showed up with no resources, little authority vested in them by the State Department or Embassy Kabul, and sometimes little understanding of their role. PRTs often had only one civilian, frequently a junior-level person compared to the lieutenant-colonel level of the PRT commander. That civilian was sometimes on a 90-day visit, which was not enough time to develop situational awareness, much less play any kind of leadership role. Military personnel frequently asked about finding civilian agency representatives with technical skills who could assist in reconstructing Afghan agriculture, education, health-care and justice systems, but often had to make do with a junior-level diplomat and a busy USAID representative.

After these first months of limited operations, the PRT mission began to coalesce around three basic objectives: enhancing security, strengthening the reach of the Afghan central government and facilitating reconstruction. Though they could not simply "create security," as some observers demanded, they eventually helped defuse factional fighting, supported deployments of the Afghan National Army and police, conducted patrols and reinforced security efforts during the disarming of militias. They strengthened the reach of the central government by having Afghan officials serve on the PRTs and by providing monitoring, registration and security support for events like the constitutional convention (the Loya Jirga) and elections. They facilitated reconstruction by funding projects like school repairs or, more important over time, by helping the State Department, USAID and

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Michael J. McNerney is the director of international policy and capabilities in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations. He visited six of the first eight provincial reconstruction teams while working on PRT policy for the Office of the Secretary of Defense from October 2002 until July 2004. *This article is excerpted with permission from his fully documented study, "Stabilization and Reconstruction in Afghanistan: Are PRTs a Model or a Muddle?," published in* Parameters *(Winter 2005-2006). The complete article is available at http://carlislewww.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05winter/mcnerney.pdf.*

Department of Agriculture representatives on the PRTs to implement civilian-funded projects.

Toward the end of 2003, civilians began to play a stronger role in the PRTs. Most teams soon had one representative each from State, USAID and Agriculture. One-year tours were planned to provide continuity and to allow time for relationship-building. Coordination improved between military-led PRT activities and civilian projects under way in a team's area of operations. Most important, civilians obtained access to State Department Economic Support Funds, which could support projects that OHDACA could not.

Not everyone supported the evolution of the PRTs beyond military-funded, quick-impact projects, however. Some complained they were becoming a "Motel 6" for civilians involved in disarmament, police training and economic reconstruction programs. One senior officer in Bagram complained that the PRTs were becoming a "Christmas tree that everyone wants to hang their ornaments on." Some of these complaints were justified, as U.S. government officials at times called for PRTs to take on new missions without offering additional resources. Ideally, they would play the role of catalysts for a range of stabilization and reconstruction efforts, with civilians not just advising the military, but using the PRTs to help accomplish their own missions as well.

A Growing Impact

As they got a better focus and a stronger contingent of civilian representation, the PRTs began to have a far greater impact. Lieutenant General David Barno recognized their importance when he took over command of Coalition forces in November 2003. He sped up the establishment of new teams, increasing their number from eight to 14 in less than a year. He tried to change the attitude that PRTs were a "civil affairs thing," separate from the main effort, by grouping them under the control of regional brigade commanders. Barno also changed the strategic context in ways that made PRTs more effective. He adopted a more classic counterinsurgency strategy for

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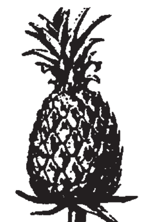

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his maneuver elements, dispatching units as small as 40 soldiers to live in Afghan villages rather than conducting raids from the large Coalition base at Bagram. He adjusted the chain of command by putting a senior colonel in charge of all the forces and PRTs in each of five areas of responsibility (including a NATO area). Barno also moved his military headquarters to Kabul to facilitate the integration of military, political and economic efforts.

NATO recognized the utility of the PRTs and used them to extend ISAF operations — previously restricted to Kabul — to northern Afghanistan, operating five teams by fall 2004. ISAF operations extended into western Afghanistan in the summer of 2005 through four additional teams. Because PRTs emphasized flexibility in approach, their structure and operations could vary depending on their location and national leadership. The ISAF's adoption of the PRT model brought much-needed additional personnel and funding from other governments to the effort, as well as the greater perceived legitimacy that increased multinational participation carries. But such participation also created challenges in maintaining a common mission and coordinating an increasingly diverse group of stakeholders.

NATO — operating in the more secure north and west, where NGOs and other reconstruction actors have been able to operate more freely than in the coalition area of operations — has focused more on the role of PRTs in supporting a secure environment and on security sector reform (police, army, judiciary) than on assistance projects. The U.K.-led PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif has taken pains to distance itself from the reconstruction component of its mission: "There is a common misconception that the PRT is all about the physical reconstruction of Afghanistan. This is not the way we do business. Our concept of operations and development priorities are primarily concerned with: government institution-building and security-sector reform." The German-led PRT in Konduz actively and skillfully implemented assistance projects but kept a strict separation between the military and civilian components of their team, with the civilians reporting

directly to Berlin.

Some other European countries at times expressed concern that military activities would somehow "taint" softer, gentler civilian activities, as if the two groups were not pursuing the same overall mission. In order to ensure that PRT activities were integrated with Afghanistan's broader political, military and economic goals, the Coalition supported the establishment of the PRT Executive Steering Committee, chaired by the Afghan interior minister and co-chaired by the Coalition forces' commander and the ISAF commander.

Assessing the PRTs

The most common measure of success cited to the author by PRT representatives was (no kidding) "the number of smiling Afghan children." Anecdotal evidence abounds of the positive impact the teams have had on changing the attitudes of local Afghans, as villagers went from throwing rocks at PRT convoys to smiling and waving as they saw the benefits of a PRT presence in their region. In areas of Taliban influence in southern and eastern Afghanistan, Coalition forces under Lieutenant General Barno highlighted the cooperation from locals in identifying weapon caches as another measure of success.

Obviously, however, the PRTs needed a more systematic approach to measuring their success. The amount of OHDACA funds spent and the number of assistance projects completed (e.g., schools, clinics) were easily quantified, but they were a poor metric. These projects were effective only to the extent that they improved the ability of the PRTs to influence local events. Three good measures for PRT performance should be how well they improve tactical-level coordination, build relationships and build capacity. Even absent clear metrics, it is still possible to begin to assess success along these parameters on the basis of the information that is available.

Civil-military coordination was a challenge for the PRTs. Military commanders and civilian officials were not always sure about the role civilians should play on the teams. Regarding the U.S.-led PRTs, military units

deployed with limited preparation for working with civilian government officials. Civilians deployed in an ad hoc manner, with only a few meetings at the Pentagon and around Washington for their preparation. The civilian and military members of the U.K.-led PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif, by comparison, trained and deployed together and understood that their mission was to support both military and civilian objectives. One example of the results of these different approaches was that while the Mazar PRT made it a priority to support civilian-led missions like police training, disarmament and judicial reform efforts, the team in Gardez initially resisted State Department requests for police training assistance. Civil-military coordination on the U.S.-led PRTs has certainly improved over time, but limited pre-deployment preparation, strained resources and confusion over priorities continue.

Despite these challenges, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams have been one of the few efforts in Afghanistan to approach civil and military stabilization and reconstruction tasks in a coordinated fashion at the tactical level. Military patrols, demining, school repairs (with either military or civilian oversight), U.N. assessments, police training and other tasks all take place within a single province. The diversity of nations, organizations and personalities struggling to implement their particular programs impedes even the most concerted efforts to pull things together. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan uses regional offices to share information, but real coordination is more than information-sharing; it is integrated action. Integration among national, functional and civil-military stovepipes generally occurs only in the host-nation's capital, at best. PRTs, however, have achieved at least some unity of effort in the field by serving as a hub for both military and civilian activities and by closely aligning their efforts with [those of] the Afghan central government.

As with coordination, the U.K.-led PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif was particularly effective in building relationships. The team commander in September 2003 had extensive diagrams detailing frequently-changing factional loyalties and interactions. PRT members traveled extensively through their area of operations. When tensions rose, PRT members stepped into the middle of the action, sometimes physically placing themselves between armed groups. Their efforts prevented factional fighting from breaking out or escalating on a number of occasions. In contrast, the German-led PRT in Konduz could travel only within a 30-kilometer radius and was accused by U.N. and NGO staff of avoiding areas where factional tensions were high. Team members took a delegation (including the author) to visit the Konduz governor in February 2004, and described their close relationship with him. They did not seem aware, however, that the governor would be replaced the next day by the central government.

Building Relationships

The other challenge for the PRTs in building relationships was balancing carrots and sticks, both of which were quite limited. The U.S.-led PRTs used DOD's OHDACA funds as their primary carrot until 2004, when State and USAID began to provide funds for projects tied to the teams. DOD also obtained Commander's Emergency Response Program funds in 2004, a more flexible source of funds first used in Iraq. More diverse sources of funds were helpful in allowing the PRTs to address a broader range of local needs, such as repairing police stations and jails and purchasing police equipment. Ironically, the military's lack of funds beyond OHDACA initially required it to focus on humanitarian assistance projects, while the State Department drew more on resources for security-related efforts like police training and disarmament. The U.K. military relied on its government's Department for International Development for funding assistance projects. While this limited the military's freedom of action, it may well have been a blessing in disguise. U.K. military personnel coordinated closely with their civilian agency counterparts in order to access their funding. They also tended to focus more on building relationships based on security-related cooperation with local authorities.

PRTs could, in extremis, call on the ultimate stick — bombs from above. But military air strikes lack subtlety, and even the threat of them was generally not helpful for day-to-day interactions. PRT members relied primarily on trying to reward good behavior, but there was one stick President Karzai used that the teams could reinforce, as appropriate, in the murky world of provincial diplomacy: job insecurity. Karzai was not shy about firing ineffective or corrupt governors and police chiefs. PRTs were in some cases instrumental in supporting leadership changes. For example, the team in Gardez helped the governor, a trusted appointee of President Karzai, to transfer the corrupt provincial police chief to Kabul. When the new police chief arrived with a well-trained

police unit to assist in the transfer process, the presence of PRT soldiers demonstrated U.S. support for the central government and helped prevent a firefight between the newcomers and the departing police chief's private militia.

PRTs were most effective in relationship-building when they could both reward cooperative local partners and hold uncooperative partners accountable. The appointment of an Afghan Ministry of Interior official to each PRT in 2004 was particularly helpful in improving their ability to build relationships and strengthen the reach of the central government.

With regard to capacity-building, NGOs frequently criticized PRT assistance projects in general (though never citing specific examples) as unsustainable and lacking in community input, but these criticisms were overstated. PRTs did an excellent job involving local communities, hiring local workers and sometimes trying to incorporate training components into their various projects.

An Expanding Security Training Role

Despite initial reluctance among some PRT commanders, the teams grew increasingly effective in supporting security-sector-related capacity-building in the provinces. As the Afghan National Army began to deploy with coalition forces, PRTs often facilitated their deployments. They also supported many officials and contractors implementing police training and disarmament projects, and even conducted some ad hoc security-force training. PRTs worked closely with provincial and district police chiefs to help them prioritize their many resource requirements and to share information on illegal checkpoints, narcotics trafficking and other criminal activity.

The PRTs will likely play a supporting role in the U.S. government's expanded police training efforts. Congress provided $360 million in Fiscal Year 2005 supplemental funding for these efforts, which include a mentoring program based on the coalition's successful Afghan National Army embedded trainer program. It would be beneficial if the PRTs could also play a role in supporting judicial

CORDS: A Lesson in True Interagency Cooperation

By Mitchell J. Thompson

Culturally and organizationally, the geographic combatant commands are by far the most structured tools with which the United States can wield all the elements of its national power. But despite innovations such as the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups, evidence from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom demonstrates that true unified action among the interagency construct remains a distant, elusive goal.

It is supremely ironic that an example from Vietnam, our only "lost" war, may offer a way out of this paradigm. The pacification program's capstone organization, Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support, while ultimately unsuccessful in its stated mission, offers a lesson in true interagency coordination.

Taking the CORDS example one step further, our current geographic combatant commands should be redesigned to break their heavy military orientation. [They should] be transformed into truly interagency organizations, under civilian leadership, and prepared to conduct the full spectrum of operations using all elements of national power within their assigned region.

There is no good reason that the commander of a U.S. unified command in the post-9/11 world should be a uniformed military officer.

Poor Coordination

The Joint Experimentation Directorate of Joint Forces Command today defines stability operations as "activities conducted by military and other government components to establish, re-establish or support a foreign government's ability to assure rule of law and internal security, to provide basic human services (health care, water, electricity, education)." Forty years ago, something very much like this was called pacification, or "The Other War."

U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam Ellsworth Bunker disliked the latter formulation, saying in strikingly modern terms, "To me this is all one war. Everything we do is an aspect of the total effort to achieve our objectives here." But by January 1967, American pacification efforts in Vietnam were characterized by poor coordination between the military and the numerous civilian agencies involved. The results of this critical component of the overall effort were not impressive.

In May 1967, President Lyndon Johnson named a close friend and confidant, Robert Komer, to be a civilian operational deputy to General William Westmoreland, commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. The president appointed Komer with ambassadorial rank, and charged him with bringing unity of effort to the entire pacification campaign.

Westmoreland and Komer named the new entity "Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support," and Komer's title was "Deputy to COMUSMACV for CORDS." He ranked third at MACV, after Westmoreland's deputy, General Creighton Abrams. This status gave him direct authority over everyone in his organization and direct access to Westmoreland, without having to go through the MACV chief of staff. Komer did not have command authority over military forces, but he was now the sole authority over the entire U.S. pacification effort, "for the first time bringing together its civilian and military aspects under unified management and a single chain of command."

A Single Chain of Command

Komer appointed new deputy commanders for pacification in each of the four corps regions, giving them the same command relationship to their respective corps commanders that he had to Westmoreland. These four individuals (usually civilians; one of them was John Paul Vann) "were, in effect, his corps commanders." Serving under these "Corps DepCORDS" were province senior advisers in each of South Vietnam's 44 provinces. The PSAs were roughly half military and half civilian, though those in less secure provinces were usually military. They were in charge of fully-integrated military and civilian agency province teams; under them were small, usually four-person, district teams in each of the 250 districts. The district teams were, again, a mixture of military and civilian agency personnel.

CORDS activities varied by province. In more secure areas, they were able to focus on economic development, but security con-

cerns and refugee issues were the priorities in contested areas. The allocation of South Vietnamese territorial militia from the MACV J-3 to CORDS gave the latter a meaningful capability to deal with local security issues.

The interagency integration at all levels was a most impressive feature of CORDS.

The interagency integration at all levels was a most impressive feature of CORDS. In addition to the military, the State Department, CIA, USAID, U.S. Information Agency and even the White House staff were all represented at all levels in its ranks. Throughout the hierarchy, civilian advisers had military deputies and vice versa. Civilians wrote performance reports on military subordinates, and military officers did the same for Foreign Service officers. South Vietnamese officials were also integrated at every level from MACV to hamlet with their American counterparts.

Obviously, CORDS failed to bring about the progress in the pacification campaign for which it had been designed. Yet that failure should be attributed not to institutional shortcomings so much as to external causes, including the relatively late date in the overall Vietnam campaign in which it was instituted, and the rapid dwindling of U.S. popular support for the war, particularly in the aftermath of the 1968 Tet offensive. In terms of organizations and their cultures, CORDS was decades ahead of its time.

The CORDS model offers a way out of the current institutional sclerosis, but only as a starting point. There is no good reason that the commander of a U.S. unified command in the post-9/11 world should be a uniformed military officer. Turning the CORDS model on its head, the commanders of geographic commands could be senior civilians with the experience of long and distinguished careers representing key governmental agencies in the National Security Council. The president would nominate them to their new role with full ambassadorial rank, and they would report to the national security adviser.

The CORDS Model

Interagency synergy would be achieved through deputy-director positions based on the elements of power — DIME (diplomatic, informational, military and economic). Reversing the command relationship in CORDS, the military director would be the current four-star combatant commander. This officer would retain command authority over military forces, and responsibility for planning efforts, albeit with augmentation from the diplomatic, informational and economic directorates. Military billets might be staffed by officers from an "Interagency Officer" career field, proposed by Colonel Harry Tomlin, with the same underlying philosophy as the Army's foreign area officer field.

Diplomatic, informational and economic directors, each with ministerial rank, would come from appropriate Cabinet departments and be responsible for integrating planning with the military within their spheres of expertise, and for coordination and interface with embassy country teams. Interagency intelligence centers, staffed by regional and topical specialists from the Defense Intelligence Agency, the CIA and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, would replace the current Joint Intelligence Centers at the commands.

General Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during an April 2002 briefing when he was vice chairman, rightly credited the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act for having "forced the military together." He went on, however, to bemoan the fact that the "jointness" engendered in DOD by Goldwater-Nichols did not extend to the broader interagency construct, admitting somewhat plaintively that "I don't know what it is that will help us force all our agencies together."

The multiagency imperative of the global war on terrorism, the poor interagency coordination in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and the successful historical example of CORDS all indicate that nothing less than a Goldwater-Nichols Act for the interagency structure will suffice to meet the challenge.

Mitchell J. Thompson (Lieutenant Colonel, USA Ret.) is a civilian faculty instructor at the Defense Intelligence Agency's Joint Military Attaché School. While on active duty, he served as a Middle East foreign area officer in a variety of assignments, including as a military attaché in Israel and Jordan and as an intelligence advisor to Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator L. Paul Bremer in Baghdad. He holds master's degrees in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Texas at Austin, and in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

This article is excerpted with permission from a fully documented study, "Breaking the Proconsulate: A New Design for National Power," published in Parameters *(Winter 2005-2006). The complete study is available at http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05winter/thompson.pdf.*

capacity-building programs, which the international community has implemented far too slowly.

There is one area of capacity-building that has enormous potential but has enjoyed little attention from the PRTs, or from any other source: governance — specifically, provincial administrator training and civil society development. Effective security forces must operate in the context of good governance for the United States to truly declare success in Afghanistan. The U.N., U.S. and other donors are implementing some training and mentoring programs at the central-government level, but at the provincial and district level there are teacher training programs and very little else.

Broadly assessed against these measures, the PRTs are clearly having a positive impact in Afghanistan. But this assessment is still only partially better than the "smiles on Afghan faces" methodology. More robust metrics are needed to fully determine the effectiveness of the PRT program, individual teams and specific initiatives. Such metrics are under development.

Finally, for such an assessment to be truly useful, it must not only measure the effectiveness of individual PRTs, but it must look at the relevance of the program to the overall stabilization and reconstruction mission. Will PRTs eventually be viewed as having made a small but positive contribution, or will they be seen as an integral component of stabilization and reconstruction operations in Afghanistan? Unless their civilian component (personnel and funding) is strengthened and the number of PRTs or their reach is increased dramatically, the answer will probably be the former rather than the latter.

While civilians now play a larger role on the PRTs, they still lack adequate resources and too often play more of an advisory role than a leadership role. Moreover, even after the addition of four PRTs in the summer of 2005, there were only 13 coalition and nine ISAF PRTs. Given Afghanistan's size (almost as large as Texas), brutal geography, factional complexities, and continued insecurity, PRTs should have a presence in all but a couple of its 34 provinces, plus in a number of high-priority districts. ■

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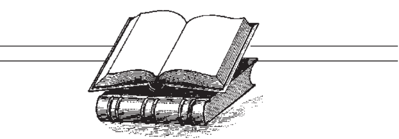

Books

The Human Dimension

Behind Embassy Walls: The Life and Times of an American Diplomat
Brandon Grove, University of Missouri Press, 2005, $34.95, hardcover, 328 pages.

Reviewed by Xenia Wilkinson

In *Behind Embassy Walls: The Life and Times of an American Diplomat*, a senior career FSO whose service spanned administrations from Dwight Eisenhower to Bill Clinton offers a penetrating insider's look at the Foreign Service. Consider just a few of the events and developments Brandon Grove experienced: the Cold War in Berlin, Arab-Israeli negotiations in Jerusalem, mass suicides of Americans in Guyana, Mobutu's kleptocracy in Zaire, and crisis management in Somalia.

Colleagues might expect Ambassador Grove's memoirs to be a dignified and restrained account of these and other highlights of his Foreign Service career. Instead, he has written a refreshingly candid book, which adds a compelling human dimension often missing from such accounts.

The son of an American oil executive and a Polish emigré mother, Brandon Grove grew up in an international environment. He attended private elementary school in Hitler's Germany, an English school in Holland and a French lycée in Franco's Spain, before World War II forced the family back to the U.S. in 1941. By 1946, his father was transferred to occupied Vienna, where Grove, then a college student, helped to smuggle his friend, Polish pianist Andrzej Wasoski, out of the Soviet sector in a caper reminiscent of the film, "The Third Man." With that background, it is not surprising that Grove chose an FS career.

Grove explores the professional and personal challenges of serving our country in very different settings. Charged with representing the Allied occupation authorities in West Berlin and, later, opening our embassy in East Berlin with instructions to maintain minimal relations with the host government, Grove's accounts of divided Berlin during the 1960s and 1970s capture the shadowy and ambivalent world of Cold War diplomacy. While consul general in Jerusalem, where he was not accredited to any government, Grove strove to maintain good relations with both Israelis and Palestinians. As ambassador to Zaire, Grove urged economic reforms on the incorrigibly corrupt dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, a key Cold War ally.

Although most of Grove's odyssey took place in the context of the Cold War, much of his experience is still relevant to the challenges that a rising American diplomat might encounter today. With incisiveness and humor, he explains how the system worked from within, including insights into the day-to-day activities of American diplomats overseas to support key U.S. foreign policy objectives.

In his first Washington assignment, Grove had the good fortune to work as special assistant to two under secretaries, Chester Bowles and George Ball. His performance was noticed by the leadership of the State Department, auguring well for future assignments. His assessments of the character and abilities of the politicians and statesmen with whom he worked, including Bobby Kennedy, Willy Brandt, Chester Bowles, George Ball and Phil Habib, are astute, frank and witty. Kennedy had no patience for host-country protocol, while Bowles' disorganized management style led to a rift with his boss, Dean Rusk. Grove's vignettes about socialite Lorraine Cooper, a powerful ambassador's wife with extravagant ideas about decorating the residence in a drab communist country (to create the ambiance of entering a big, red rose!), are particularly vivid.

The upheavals of Foreign Service life took a toll on Grove's family, causing his first marriage to dissolve. Happily, he met his lovely second wife, Mariana Moran, at a Washington dinner party in honor of President Mobutu. In a touching epilogue, Grove shares a momentous encounter with his adult son, Mark, who finally reveals to his father that he is gay. Both father and son contribute their own versions of Mark's coming out, leaving no doubt that their family life was strengthened by open communication.

Grove never lost his zest for the diplomatic career, despite his keen awareness of the political constraints that limit what individual diplomats can accomplish. He put his career on the line when, as director of the Foreign Service Institute, he circumvented his boss, Under Secretary for

Management Ivan Selin, and advocated successfully with Deputy Secretary Larry Eagleburger for the construction of the George Shultz Foreign Affairs Training Center in Arlington. Aware that the post-Cold War era requires new tools and training, Grove was determined to give coming generations of American diplomats an educational facility equal to the task.

Anyone interested in life and work in the Foreign Service will find *Behind Embassy Walls* fascinating reading.

Xenia Wilkinson, a retired Foreign Service officer, served in Brazil, Mexico, Honduras, New York and Washington.

Pakistan: Ally and Adversary?

Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military
Husain Haqqani, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, $17.95, paperback, 380 pages.

REVIEWED BY KAPIL GUPTA

Husain Haqqani's *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* is a notable contribution to scholarship on South Asia. Haqqani provides a solid introduction to Pakistan's history, including details on its relations within the subcontinent and with the United States. The book also has relevance beyond South Asia as a case study of the political use of religion.

Haqqani brings personal experience to his scholarship. He advised three of Pakistan's prime ministers: Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto. And from 1992 to 1993, Haqqani was Pakistan's ambassador to Sri Lanka. An internationally published journalist, he has suffered the risks of being an independent voice: in 1999 his articles landed him in a Pakistani jail. Based in the United States since 2002, Haqqani has lectured widely, and is now teaching at Boston University.

Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military proposes that Pakistan has faced three key policy challenges. The first is its effort to define itself as an Islamic state. Haqqani documents how Pakistan's security establishment has consistently used the forces of Islamicism to the detriment of progressive political development. The second challenge has been Pakistan's consuming pursuit of national security, primarily to counter threats posed by India. Haqqani explains how Pakistan's national security fixation is both a cause and consequence of the institutional strength of Pakistan's military and intelligence services.

The third policy objective should be of particular interest to the Foreign Service audience: Pakistan's quest for close relations with the United States. Haqqani spares neither nation in his critique of the bilateral relationship, characterizing Pakistan since 9/11 as a "U.S. ally of convenience, not of conviction." He questions what the U.S. has gained from its military aid program: "Pakistan's military has always managed to take the aid without ever fully giving the United States what it desires." He asserts that U.S. support had had a pernicious effect on Pakistan by "bolstering its military's praetorian ambitions." Later, he adds that "Washington's quid pro quo approach in dealing with Pakistan has often helped confront the issue at hand while it creates another security problem down the road."

As U.S. interests in South Asia change, it is possible that the U.S.-Pakistan relationship can shift toward a partnership premised on addressing governance challenges. Haqqani proposes that "The United States can help contain the Islamists' influence by demanding reform of those aspects of Pakistan's governance that involve the military and security services." He also suggests that "A more modest aid package delivered steadily, aimed at key sectors of the Pakistani economy … could, over time, create a reliable pocket of influence for the U.S."

But Haqqani's most pointed suggestion recapitulates his core criticisms: "Washington should no longer condone the Pakistani military's support for Islamic militants, its use of its intelligence apparatus for controlling domestic politics, and its refusal to cede power to a constitutional democratic government."

Haqqani's meticulous historical analysis will likely have enduring relevance. The U.S. needs Pakistan's close cooperation against terrorism and radical extremism. Unfortunately, these same phenomena are described by Haqqani as the cultivated consequences of Pakistan's politics and statecraft. This raises the specter of a moral-hazard problem: Pakistan's military and intelligence services may perceive their utility to the U.S. (and resources received) as being based on the continued existence of terrorism and radical anti-Americanism there.

Inspiring as many questions as it answers, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* is compelling reading for U.S. diplomats and policy-makers. Whether or not we accept Haqqani's positions, seeking out the lessons of history will help us to advance America's future efforts in the region. ■

Kapil Gupta is an entry-level FSO currently in training at the Foreign Service Institute. Prior to joining the State Department, he served as a country director for Afghanistan with the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In Memory

Charles Wallace Adair Jr., 92, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on Jan. 22 in Falls Church, Va.

Ambassador Adair was born in Xenia, Ohio, the second of five sons, to Charles Wallace Adair and Sarah Torrance Goulard. His family owned the Adair Furniture Store, and was actively involved in the community church, local theater, county fairs, YMCA and sports. Amb. Adair was strongly influenced by his stern, fitness-oriented father, and recalled spending lots of time with his father and brothers on camping and canoeing trips in Ohio, Canada and New England. His mother gave him a love of music, theater and people. He studied piano and organ, was the organist for Xenia's Christ Episcopal Church, sang in musicals in both high school and college, and continued piano and singing until his death.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin in 1935, Amb. Adair left the Midwest, determined to join the Foreign Service and travel the world. His initial job, with New York's Chase Bank, took him to Panama, and provided his initial exposure to the international environment that was to dominate the rest of his life. In 1940 he joined the Foreign Service, and was posted to Nogales and Mexico City. He was assigned to Hangzhou in 1941, but that assignment was broken by the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was then posted in Bombay for the duration of World War II.

Amb. Adair's roommate in Bombay, a young military intelligence officer, Coulter D. Huyler, introduced him to his cousin, Caroline Lee Marshall. She became the next major influence in his life. They married in 1947, had three children and over the next 25 years were a gracious and effective diplomatic team in posts on three continents.

Following the war, Amb. Adair's economics background was put to use by the State Department's Economic Bureau building the new postwar international economic institutions. In 1948 he was assigned to Rio de Janeiro, and thereafter detailed to the National War College (1951-1954). He was posted to Brussels as economic counselor in 1954, and returned to the department as commercial policy adviser in 1957. He served as chief of the Trade Agreements and Treaties Division until 1958, when he became director of the Office of International Finance and Development Affairs. In 1959 Amb. Adair was named deputy assistant secretary of State for economic affairs.

Amb. Adair was sent to Paris in 1961 as an economic officer in the NATO mission, and served as the first deputy secretary general of the recently globalized Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In 1963, he returned to Latin America for a short tour in Buenos Aires, before being appointed ambassador to Panama in 1965. During five years there he rebuilt bilateral relations from their nadir after the 1964 riots to their highest point in memory, and initiated the negotiations that returned the canal to Panama. He finished his career in Montevideo, where as ambassador he oversaw the first successful U.S. response to an organized and sustained terrorist assault in which American officials were major targets.

After retiring from the Foreign Service in 1972, the Adairs took up residence in Stuart, Fla., where they spent 25 very happy years until Mrs. Adair's death in 1996. From that time until his own death, Amb. Adair lived at Goodwin House in Falls Church, Va.

Amb. Adair's life was characterized by faith, discipline, humor, curiosity and love for his family, his profession and his country. He is survived by a son, career FSO and former AFSA president Amb. Marshall Adair (and his wife Ginger) of Tampa, Fla.; two daughters, Carol Finn (and her husband Jeffrey) of Silver Spring, Md., and Sarah Shaps (and her husband Simon) of London, England; and six grandchildren: Charles, Anna, Eleanor, Benjamin, Caroline Lee and Daniel.

Hugh G. Appling, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of pneumonia Jan. 18 at Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington, Va.

Mr. Appling was born in Oakdale, Calif., the only child of Hugh and Mary Appling. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology at the

University of California, Berkeley, in 1941 and a master's degree in political science from Stanford University in 1947. He worked briefly for the American Trust Company in Stockton, Calif., and as a high school teacher and freshman counselor while completing his studies. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II, and was awarded the Bronze Star for valor in action with the 9th Infantry Division in Europe.

In 1947 Mr. Appling went to Washington, D.C., for the first time, and entered the Foreign Service that same year. During a nearly 30-year career, he served in Vienna, London, Paris, Bonn, Manila, the United Nations, Damascus, Canberra and Saigon, serving as deputy chief of mission in the last three posts. Upon his return from Saigon in 1974, Mr. Appling was appointed deputy director general of the Foreign Service. He retired in 1976 as deputy assistant secretary of State.

Mr. Appling received USAID's Superior Honor Award in 1969 and the Secretary of State's Award for Heroism in 1970 for his efforts to save the life of his deputy while himself injured, in a helicopter crash on Christmas Day in 1968, during his first tour in Vietnam.

In retirement, Mr. Appling was business manager for the Beauvoir School at the National Cathedral for six years. He also worked for the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ as the conference minister, as a member of the conference staff and as president of the conference. He participated in four general synods, was active in establishing the Board of Social Action and was co-author of the UCC Resolution on Peace. Mr. Appling also served for five years as an active Trustee of the Lancaster Theological Seminary, and chaired the Potomac Association for the seminary's capital fund campaign of 1987-1988.

A longtime member of Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ in Arlington, Va., Mr. Appling served three times as president of church council, and as chair of the board of deacons and of Christian education. He also chaired the 1987-1988 search committee for a new pastor, was co-chair of the Building to Serve campaign to raise capital funds, and was a Sunday school teacher for 16 years.

Mr. Appling is survived by his wife of 58 years, Mary, who accompanied him throughout his Foreign Service career; two daughters, Mary of Arlington, Va., and Jane of Seattle, Wash.; two sons, Gregory of La Veta, Colo., and Hugh of Vienna, Va.; and six grandchildren.

Charles E. Behrens, 80, a retired FSO, died of complications from advanced Parkinson's disease on Jan. 10 at Winchester Medical Center in Winchester, Va.

Born in Washington, D.C., Mr. Behrens was a graduate of the University of North Carolina. He served in the Merchant Marine during World War II and in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

In 1950, Mr. Behrens joined the Foreign Service, serving in diplomatic and consular posts in Indonesia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Sudan, Burma, Germany and Washington, D.C. Following retirement in 1986, he settled at his farm in Levels, W.Va. He enjoyed traveling the world visiting friends, skiing the Alps and snorkeling in the Caribbean. Even after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, he completed a solo 192-mile coast-to-coast walk across England.

Mr. Behrens is survived by his wife of 46 years, Sheila M. Behrens of Levels, W.Va.; two daughters, Eileen Behrens of Somerville, Mass., and Martha Behrens-Temple of Keene, N.H.; a son, Christopher Behrens of Seattle, Wash.; and seven grandchildren.

The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the American Parkinson Disease Association, Inc., Parkinson Plaza, 135 Parkinson Ave., Staten Island NY 10305 or online at www.apdaparkinson.org.

John D. Coffman, 70, a retired FSO, died on Nov. 9 in Indiana, Pa.

After some years spent teaching, Mr. Coffman joined the Foreign Service in 1962. He served as counselor and consul general in a succession of postings that included Chile, Brazil, Peru, Colombia and Washington, D.C. Mr. Coffman designed and founded the training center for Foreign Service officers in Arlington, Va., known as Consulate General Rosslyn. He retired in 1986 after serving as associate director of the State Department's counterterrorism office.

Mr. Coffman returned to his home town of Indiana, Pa., and taught social studies and coached basketball at an area high school. He was named a part-time professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1992. At the same time he was named to the Indiana Borough Planning Commission, and then elected to the borough council in 1999, serving until his death. Mr. Coffman was also a lay speaker for his church.

During his academic career Mr. Coffman received a National Science Foundation grant. During his Foreign Service career he earned a Superior Honor Award.

Mr. Coffman is survived by his wife of 42 years, Claudine Foltz Coffman,

and three children: Renee C. Riggs of LaCresenta, Calif., Tara C. Binion of Indiana, Pa., and James D. Coffman of Watertown, Mass.

Margaret A. Fagan, 90, a retired FSO, died on Nov. 16 in Washington, D.C., of pneumonia.

Ms. Fagan was born in Muscatine, Iowa, where she graduated from St. Mathias High School and Muscatine Jr. College. After working for several years in Muscatine at Huttig's Manufacturing Co., a real estate firm, and as secretary to the superintendent of public schools, Ms. Fagan came to Washington, D.C., to work for the federal government. She worked successively as a secretary at the Civil Aeronautics Board, a personnel administrator in the Board of Economic Warfare, and as a project chief at the Foreign Economic Administration.

After the war, Ms. Fagan transferred to the State Department, where she worked in the Office of Foreign Assets Liquidation. She received her commission as an FSO in 1955, and three years later was posted to Genoa as a vice consul. In 1960 she was transferred to Mexico City as consul and chief of the visa section. In 1965, she was assigned to Naples, returning to Washington in 1968. In 1971 she was posted to Tijuana as consul general, and remained there until she retired in 1974.

Of Ms. Fagan, former Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Mary A. Ryan writes: "I was especially blessed to have Margaret Fagan as my first boss in the Foreign Service. She was the chief of the consular section in Naples when I arrived there on my first tour in September 1966. It was a time when there were very few women in the Service, and even fewer successful ones like Margaret. She was not only a

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very talented manager of people and programs, but she was also a simply wonderful person. I tried to model myself on her in my own career."

Following retirement, Ms. Fagan moved to Chevy Chase, Md. She was a member of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament Church, and was active in their Sodality, Bible Study and Interfaith groups. She was also a member of Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 212. In addition, Ms. Fagan was a member of the American Foreign Service Association, Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired and the Maryland Foreign Service Officers Club.

Ms. Fagan was preceded in death by her parents, Philip and Grace Fuller Fagan, and two brothers, Thomas and Philip. She leaves a sister, Dorothy Fagan Brennan, a brother-in-law, Dr. John F. Brennan Jr., and eight nieces and nephews.

Samuel L. King, 87, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on Sept. 16 at Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md., of cardiovascular disease.

Mr. King was born in Los Angeles, Calif., and attended South Pasadena High School and Occidental College. He joined the army before graduating from college, and served as a U.S. Army infantry officer from 1940 to 1960, when he retired as a lieutenant colonel. Mr. King served in World War II, spending 39 months in the South Pacific, and the Korean War. He was awarded the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster and Valor Device, a Purple Heart, a Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Master Paratrooper Badge.

In 1960, Mr. King joined the State Department as a Foreign Service reserve officer. He served for nine years as assistant chief and then as deputy chief of the Protocol Office. During this period he traveled widely in the U.S. with foreign heads of state such as the kings and queens of Afghanistan and Thailand. He also assisted in the planning of John F. Kennedy's funeral. From 1969 until he retired in 1980, Mr. King served as a personnel officer at State.

Mr. King was an honorary member of the U.S. Army Band, the Nation's Capitol Jaguar Owners Club, the Pentagon Officers Athletic Club and the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He also did volunteer work with the Palisades Citizens Association.

Mr. King is survived by his wife of 60 years, Betty King, and several nieces and nephews.

Robert Adams Lincoln, 84, a retired FSO with the U.S. Information Agency died of cancer on Dec. 14 at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Va. He was a resident of McLean, Va.

Born in Walton, N.Y., to Floyd Hastings Lincoln and his wife, Louise (nee Adams), Mr. Lincoln was valedictorian of the Class of 1939 at the Peddie School in Hightstown, N.J., and went on to graduate magna cum laude from Yale University in 1943. He served in the Pacific theater as a commissioned officer with the U.S. Army Air Forces from 1943 to 1946. Following demobilization, Mr. Lincoln was public relations officer for the New York Institute of Public Accountants, and in 1950 joined the Madison Avenue public affairs office of Stephen E. Fitzgerald.

In 1955, Mr. Lincoln joined the U.S. Information Agency. After serving as public affairs officer in Damascus and Colombo, in 1963 he became assistant director for the Near East and South Asia under Edward R. Murrow and for Western Europe in 1964 under Carl Rowan. In 1966, he served as counselor for public affairs in Ankara, and from 1971 to 1973 as minister-counselor for public affairs and head of the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office in Saigon. He was vice-chairman of the Fulbright Commissions in both Sri Lanka and Turkey, and received USIA's Distinguished Honor Award for his work in Vietnam.

In 1973, Mr. Lincoln left USIA and moved to London, where he undertook research for the Harkness Foundation and the Economist Intelligence Unit. He moved to Richmond, Va., in 1975 to work as director of community relations for the Virginia Electric Power Co. After retiring from VEPCO in 1979, Mr. Lincoln settled in Northern Virginia. For many years he reviewed nonfiction books (mostly on foreign policy) for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch.*

Mr. Lincoln was a past president of the USIA Alumni Association, the Public Diplomacy Foundation and the Old Birds Society of Saigon; and a former board member of the Virginia Cultural Laureates Association, the Indochinese Refugees Social Services, Inc. and the Hallcrest Heights Association. In 2003, he received the Association of Yale Alumni's distinguished award for representing central Virginia in the AYA and serving six years as the Yale Class of 1943 corresponding secretary. He was a member of the Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired, a patron of the Phillips Collection, and a 25-year subscriber to the Shakespeare Theater of Washington.

Old planes and cars were among Mr. Lincoln's interests; he built an MGTD sports car replica and an award-winning 1929 Mercedes replica, and drove them in parades. He

played cricket (silly mid-on) for the *Times of Ceylon* team in Colombo. His poems were published in the *Sewanee Review*, *Kaatskill Life* and *Art Times*; his limericks and occasional verse appeared in the *Economist*, the *International Herald-Tribune* and elsewhere. His pictures, mostly still-life in colored pencil, were exhibited at the Peddie School and the McLean Arts Center.

Mr. Lincoln's first marriage to Viola "Robbie" Lincoln ended in divorce.

Survivors include his wife of 37 years, Catherine Ruth Allen Lincoln; a daughter from his first marriage, Leslie Cunningham of Austin, Texas; two sons from his second marriage, Henry Allen Lincoln and Thomas Adams Lincoln, both of Philadelphia, Pa.; two grandsons, David and Jeffrey Cunningham; a granddaughter, Cathy Hunt; and a great-granddaughter, Mackenzie Bree Cunningham.

Donations may be sent to the Cancer Research Foundation of America, 1600 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 (http://www.preventcancer.org).

Daniel P. Oleksiw, 84, a retired FSO with the U.S. Information Agency, passed away at his home in North Palm Beach, Fla., on Jan. 1. He suffered from a stroke and additional ailments.

Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., on Feb. 5, 1921, Mr. Oleksiw graduated from Pennsylvania State University and studied journalism at the University of Missouri. During World War II, he attended the Army Specialized Training Program (Middle East Studies) at Princeton University. He served as chief of the press branch for the Department of Defense and as a public relations specialist with the American military mission to

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Turkey before entering the Foreign Service in 1951.

Mr. Oleksiw joined the U.S. Information Agency in 1953, and was one of its dominant figures during the 1960s and 1970s. In the final decades of a 37-year career of government service that took him to Turkey, Egypt, Iran and India, he served as Africa area deputy director (1962-1965), director of media content (1965-1966), Far East area director (1966-1970), public affairs officer/minister-counselor in New Delhi (1970-1973) and chief inspector (1973-1978). He graduated from the National War College and was awarded the agency's highest commendation, the Distinguished Service Award.

In retirement he directed a private consulting firm, Washington Export Information, Inc., and led evaluation studies of numerous exchange programs.

Mr. Oleksiw was predeceased by his first wife, Elizabeth Hyatt Oleksiw, who accompanied him throughout his Foreign Service career. She died in 1990.

Survivors include his wife, Joan Davis Oleksiw; a son, Daniel Oleksiw of Silver Spring, Md.; a daughter, Barbara Oleksiw of San Francisco, Calif.; and two grandchildren.

Clifford E. Southard, 80, a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died of congestive heart failure on Dec. 17 at his home in Silver Spring, Md.

Mr. Southard was born in Freeport, Ill., and grew up in the small Illinois town of Genoa. He was a Navy officer in the Pacific theater during World War II. After the war, he graduated from Northern Illinois University and worked briefly in advertising in Iowa. In 1952, he received a master's degree in foreign affairs from the University of Denver, where his mentor was Joseph Korbel, the father of former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Mr. Southard joined the Foreign Service in 1952 and began his career as a publications officer at State. In 1953 he was transferred to the U.S. Information Agency. Between assignments in Washington, D.C., he was posted to Japan, Burma, Nigeria and the Philippines (twice). As PAO in

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Burma, he used artists' renderings and mock-ups of space equipment to demonstrate the 1969 U.S. moon landing to a nation that did not yet have television. After the Burma tour, Mr. Southard was appointed chief of the Foreign Service Division of USIA and deputy assistant director for East Asia. His final overseas tour was in Manila, where he was director of the Philippines branch of USIA. He retired in 1985 as director of press and publications.

In retirement, Mr. Southard wrote 13 books about his family, his childhood and genealogy. He traveled throughout the country to do genealogical research, and traced his ancestry back to the Puritans of the early 17th century. He presented a collection of artifacts from Burma to a museum at Northern Illinois University. His other interests included model railroading and jazz.

His marriage to Orra Mager Southard ended in divorce.

Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Anne Simmons Southard of Silver Spring, Md.; four daughters from his second marriage, Anne C. Southard of Charles Town, W.Va., Susan B. Mayer of The Plains, Va., Sara M. Southard of Silver Spring, Md., and Katherine W. Butts of Welcome, Md.; and one granddaughter.

James Nelson Tull, 85, a retired FSO, died on Dec. 23 at Bay Ridge at Westminster Village in Spanish Fort, Ala. He was a resident of Fairhope, Ala., from 1976, when he retired from the Foreign Service.

Mr. Tull was born in Jackson, Miss., the son of Nelson Tynes and Virginia Holland Tull. He grew up in Mississippi and Louisiana. While with the U.S. military, he worked as a radio program director in Manila and was manager of a radio station in Okinawa. He returned to the U.S. and graduated from the University of Chicago with a master's degree in social sciences in 1953.

In 1955, Mr. Tull joined the U.S. Information Agency and was assigned to Saigon. He was posted to Manila in 1957, where he served as press attaché to Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, and to Vientiane in 1960. From 1962 to 1965 he headed USIA's Vietnam

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working group in Washington, D.C. During a more than 25-year-long career in government service, he was also posted to Ghana, Zaire and Morocco. From 1972 to 1973 Mr. Tull attended the Foreign Service Institute and completed the 14th senior seminar on foreign policy.

During his service as counselor for public affairs at Embassy Rabat, Mr. Tull launched an effort to transform an historic 47-room building, the American Legation in Tangier, into a museum and academic study center. The building was a gift from the sultan of Morocco in 1821, and was the first property acquired abroad by the U.S. According to Mr. Tull's records, it is the only American historic landmark on foreign soil. Restoration began in 1976, and in addition to housing the museum and study center it has become a tourist attraction.

This project led Mr. Tull to an interest in Thomas Barclay, the 18th-century American who masterfully negotiated an agreement in Morocco that would be America's longest-standing treaty. With author Priscilla Roberts, he began the research that resulted in the publication of a monograph, *Adam Hoops, Thomas Barclay and the House in Morrisville Known as Summerseat 1764-1791* (American Philosophical Society, 2001).

Twice decorated by the government of Vietnam, Mr. Tull was also awarded the superior honor award by the Department of State in 1968, and the USIA Vietnam Service medal in 1969. He also received a psychological operations medal in Vietnam.

Mr. Tull was a member of the American Foreign Service Association and the American Academy of Political and Social Science. He also served for 29 years with the Fairhope Sail and Power Squadron, and achieved the rank of post staff commander. He was national correspondent for the United States Power Squadron's magazine *The Ensign*. He actively participated in the public boating course program, informing student and prospective members of USPS activities. He was also a contributing member of the building program for the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship in Fairhope, Ala.

Mr. Tull was preceded in death by his first wife, the former Dorothy Graham. He is survived by his present wife Margery Blaisdell Tull of Fairhope; two brothers, Howard M. Tull of Mandeville, La., and Samuel Tull of Jackson, La; a sister, Virginia Oppenheim of New Zealand; a grand-nephew, Erwin Barrett; and several nieces and nephews.

The family requests memorial donations be made to the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship, the Fairhope Public Library Furnishings Fund or the Tangier American Legation Museum (Office of the Treasurer, P.O. Box 43, Merrimac MA 01860).

Ronald Allen Witherell, 70, a retired Foreign Service officer with USAID, died on Sept. 16 at his home in Guatemala City, following a two-year battle with stomach cancer.

Born in Stamford, Conn., he graduated from the University of Miami in 1957 and entered the United States Air Force as a lieutenant in September of that year. He served in the Air Defense Command, first in Arizona and later in Japan and Taiwan, as watch officer at several early warning radar sites. On completion of active duty Mr. Witherell remained in the U.S. Air Force Reserves, rising to the rank of captain before his discharge in 1967.

Mr. Witherell joined government service in 1961 as a management intern, part of a major recruitment program to staff the then-new U.S. Agency for International Development. After a stint as a desk officer in the Office of Central American Affairs, he converted to the Foreign Service in 1967 and served in El Salvador and Paraguay. In 1974 Mr. Witherell was selected for long-term training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School, where he received his MBA in 1975. He was then assigned to Washington for several years, first in the Latin America Bureau and later in the Bureau for the Near East and Asia, and still later as officer-in-charge for Jordan and Lebanon.

During this period, Mr. Witherell became active in the American Foreign Service Association, first as USAID representative and then as an AFSA vice president. It was a critical time for the Foreign Service: the Foreign Service Act of 1980 was being written and AFSA was fighting to ensure that the best interests of all Foreign Service personnel, regardless of agency, would be properly and equitably protected. Mr. Witherell served on the AFSA drafting committee and spent many hours in the office, at home and on the Hill working to see a just bill enacted. His attention to detail, his outstanding negotiating skills and the trust of his colleagues were critical throughout this process. He took great pride in its successful outcome; the legislation was his "legacy" to a profession he loved.

Mr. Witherell returned to Central America in 1983 as chief general development officer in Honduras, and then in 1985 as associate mission director in El Salvador. After retiring, he worked as a consultant in several technical and managerial positions in El Salvador and Guatemala. In 1994, he and his wife Maria designed and built their dream home in Guatemala.

Ron Witherell was a man of excep-

tional intellectual and professional integrity, qualities that engendered deep respect among his colleagues in USAID and his counterparts in the host countries where he worked. He enjoyed their trust — the ultimate compliment a Foreign Service officer can be accorded. Mr. Witherell was also a role model to many young officers who came under his tutelage. In the last months of his life several of those who had grown at his side contacted him to express their thanks for his guidance and friendship.

Mr. Witherell is survived by his wife of 38 years, Maria, and seven nieces and nephews for whom "Uncle Tio" was a source of love and joy. They all have fond memories of his humor, sound advice and the warmth that formed their relationship. ■

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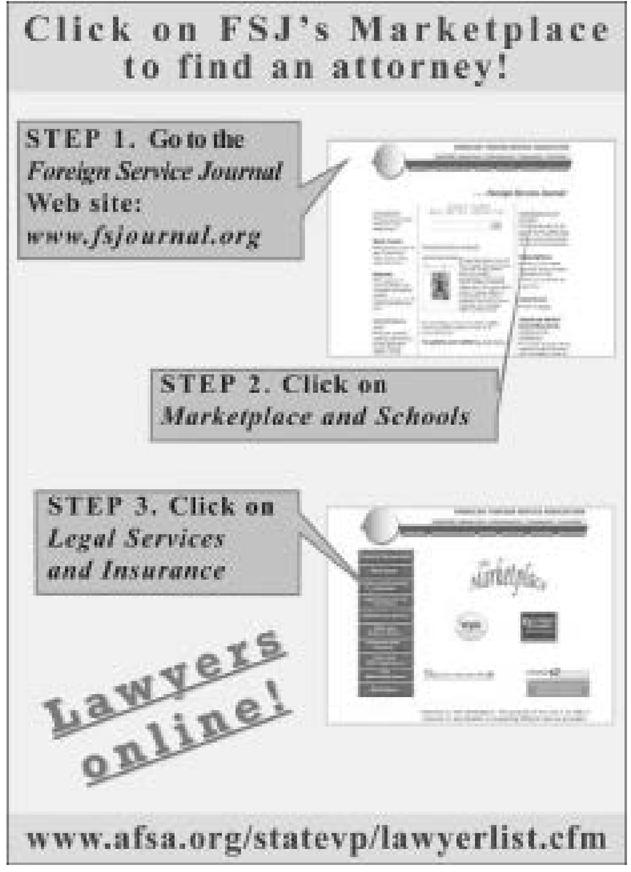

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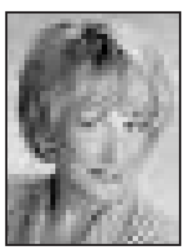

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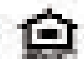

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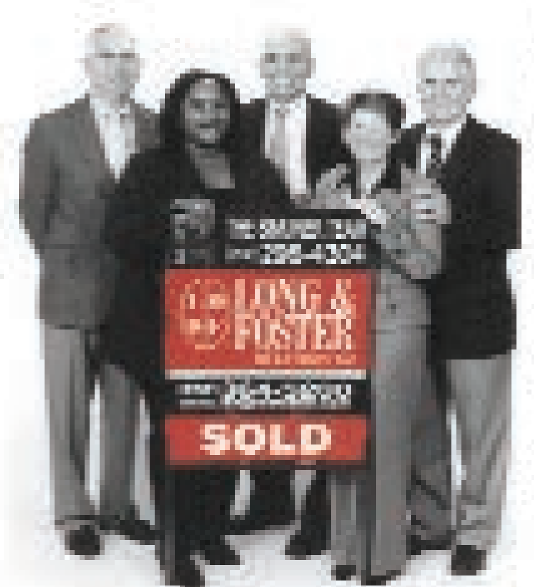

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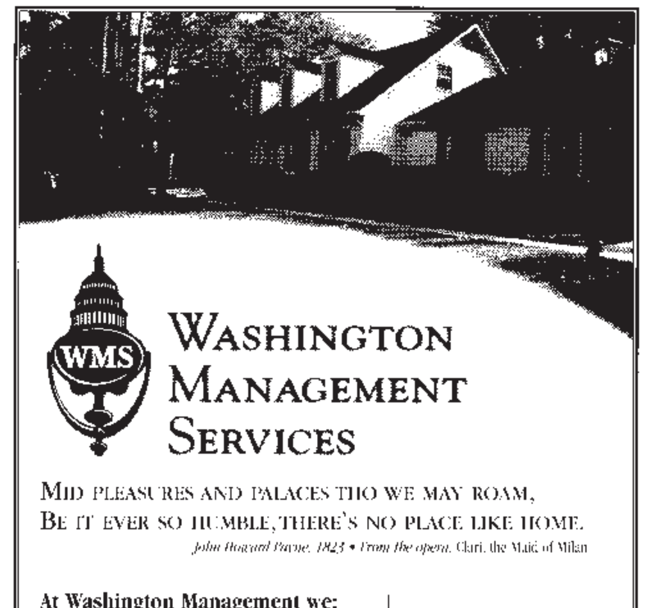

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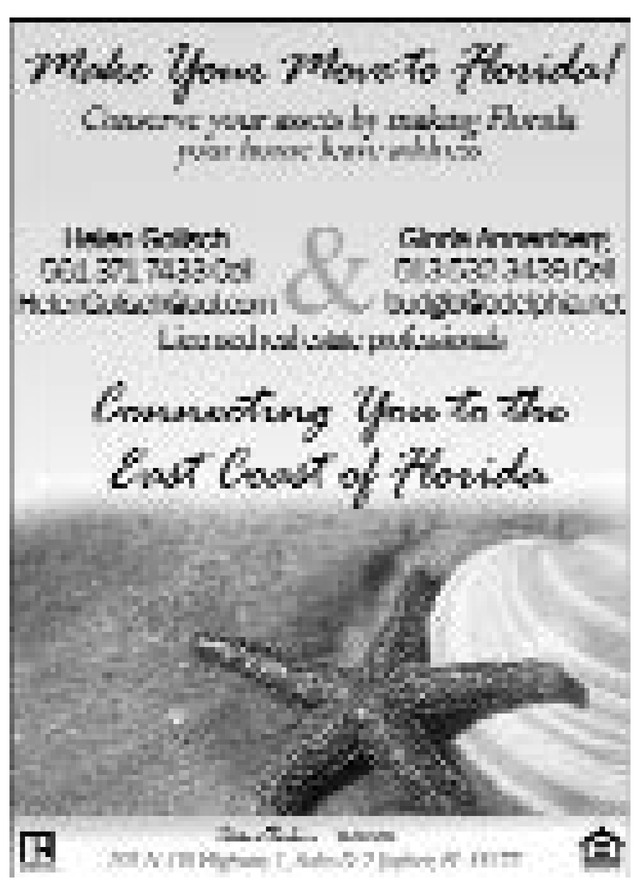

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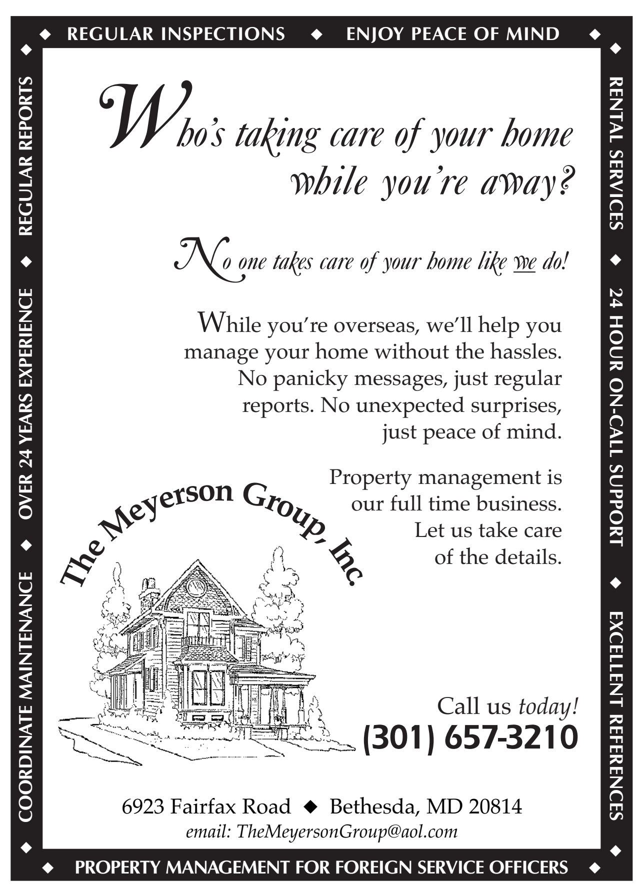

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Reflections

Letter from Turkmenistan: Life in the Twilight Zone

By Jessica P. Hayden

As the plane prepares for landing, I look up and my eyes are drawn to the two framed portraits of Turkmenbashi, as Turkmenistan's president is commonly referred to. They are hung so close together it is as if I am seeing double. His dyed black hair and caterpillar eyebrows stare back at me eerily. My thoughts drift back to a friend's return flight to Ashgabat. As the plane prepared to land, it tipped to the left and then, with a thud, hit the runway and crashed over onto its wing. The passengers conferred — everyone okay, but a little shaken up. They waited for someone to take charge. The stewardesses stayed behind the curtain, the pilots in the cockpit. No emergency crews approached the plane.

Eventually, an airport minibus arrived and the passengers were taken to a small, dark room in the airport. Bottles of vodka were passed out. An airport official addressed the crowd. "You will not tell anyone about this," he commanded. "No one." The passengers accepted their vodka in return for their vow of silence.

The next day the local newspaper ran a story about the late-night occurrence. The paper reported, "While you may have heard that a plane crashed last night on the runway at Ashgabat International Airport, it did not. There was no plane crash."

It's as apt an introduction as any to the bizarre world that is Turkmenistan. It is hard to describe the full spectrum of oddities that make the country a surreal place, but most stem from the schizophrenic rule of the president. In 2004, *Parade* magazine ranked President Saparmurat Niyazov as the eighth-worst dictator in the world, noting that the president has "developed an extreme personality cult." Like any country with a dictator with a cult of personality, you'll find pictures of "the great leader" hanging from any available wall space.

Several years ago when Niyazov dyed his hair from white to black, government workers were quickly forced to update the pictures. Employees from all sectors were seconded, black paint in hand, to head out into the streets and make sure not one gray hair was left visible. He is omnipresent, if not in reality, at least in his own mind.

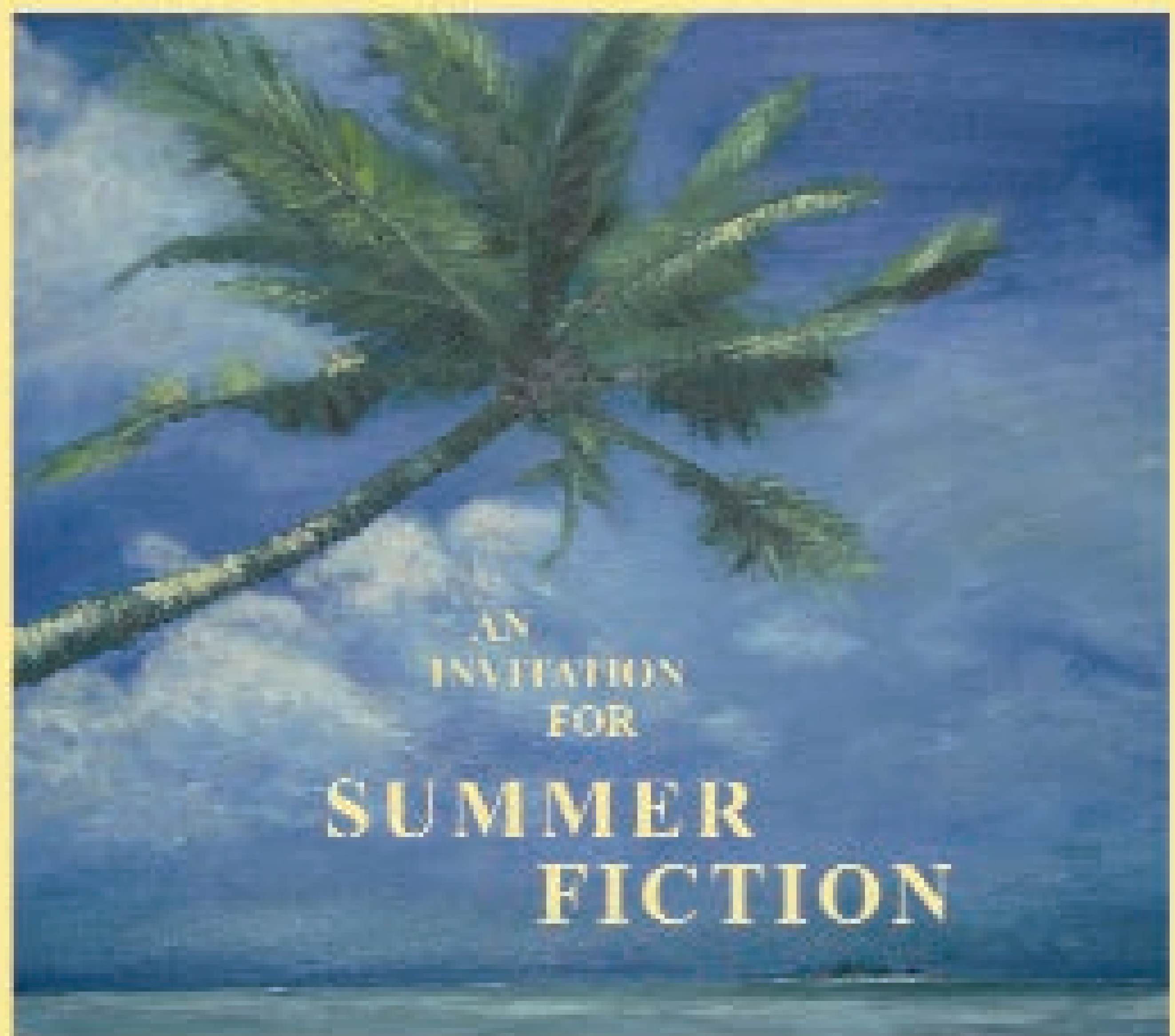
Niyazov published the *Ruknama*, his "bible," which hints at the extent of his messiah complex. The work was intended to serve as a handbook on how to be a true Turkmen. He decreed that it be taught in mosques, with passages to be read on television. He also ordered a monument be built in honor of the pink and green book. Every mosque throughout the country must display a copy next to the Quran.

One evening, flipping through the television channels, I came across three Turkmen channels, each featuring young people reading, singing and praising the *Ruknama*. There were no sitcoms, no news, no talk shows or political discourse, and no social programming. It is no wonder every apartment building has dozens of satellite dishes, growing like mushrooms from the walls and roofs.

Walking around the capital city of Ashgabat, it feels as if you've ended up on an empty movie set. Grand marble apartment buildings line the streets, but they are vacant. Landscaped parks line the roads, adorned with dozens of bubbling fountains, yet no one is out. As my husband and I walked downtown by the ministries and the parliament, we counted policemen stationed every 50 meters. Unlike other cities — there are no people. The markets are quiet, the roads empty. This isn't a living, breathing place. It is the creation of a madman.

In many ways, visiting Turkmenistan is a sad venture. Niyazov's policies, practices and personality offer little hope for economic and social development in this country. As history has demonstrated in places like Kyrgyzstan, a corrupt or inept government working at cross purposes to its populace can only survive so long. Vodka may buy silence from airline passengers, but eventually those hiding behind the curtain will have to leave the plane — hopefully before the entire craft goes up in flames. ■

Jessica P. Hayden is a freelance writer who worked for USAID in Central Asia from 2003 to 2005. Stamp courtesy of the author.



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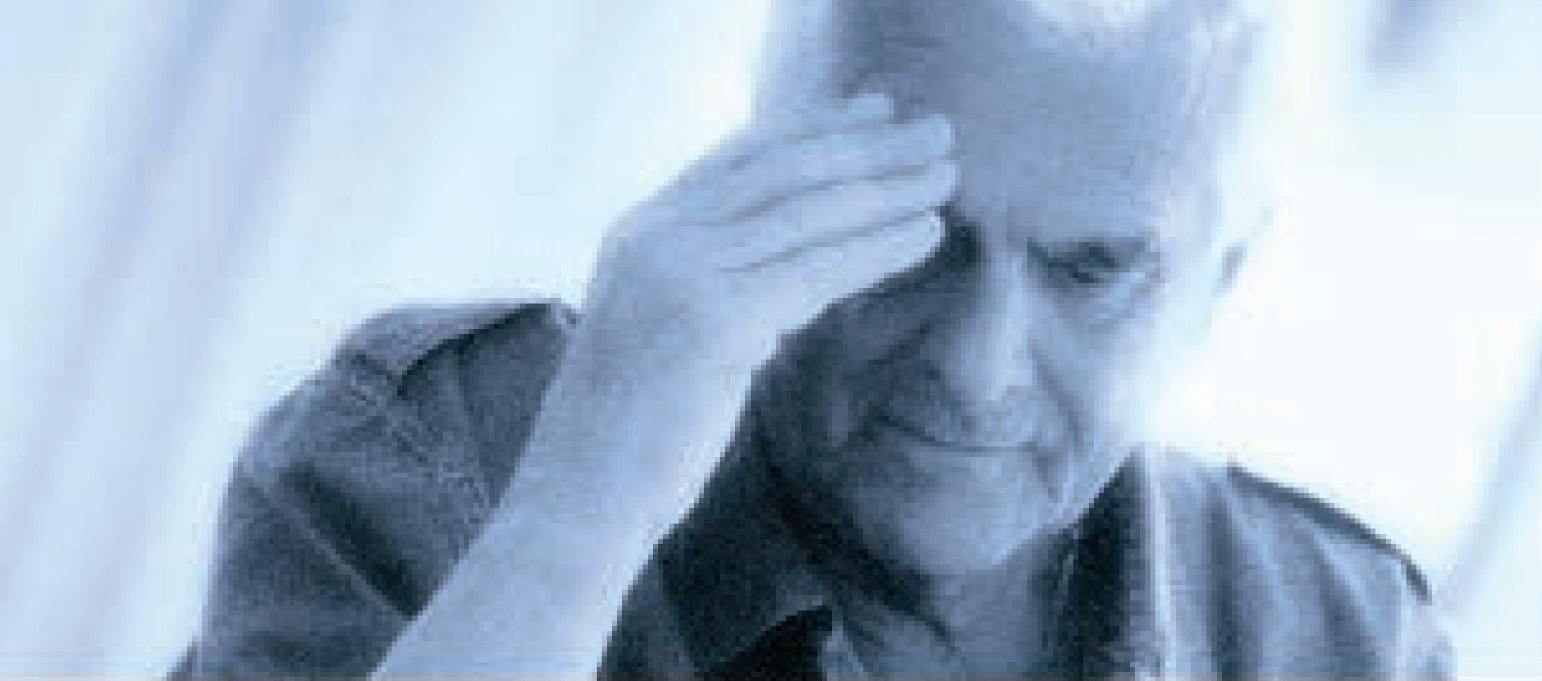

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