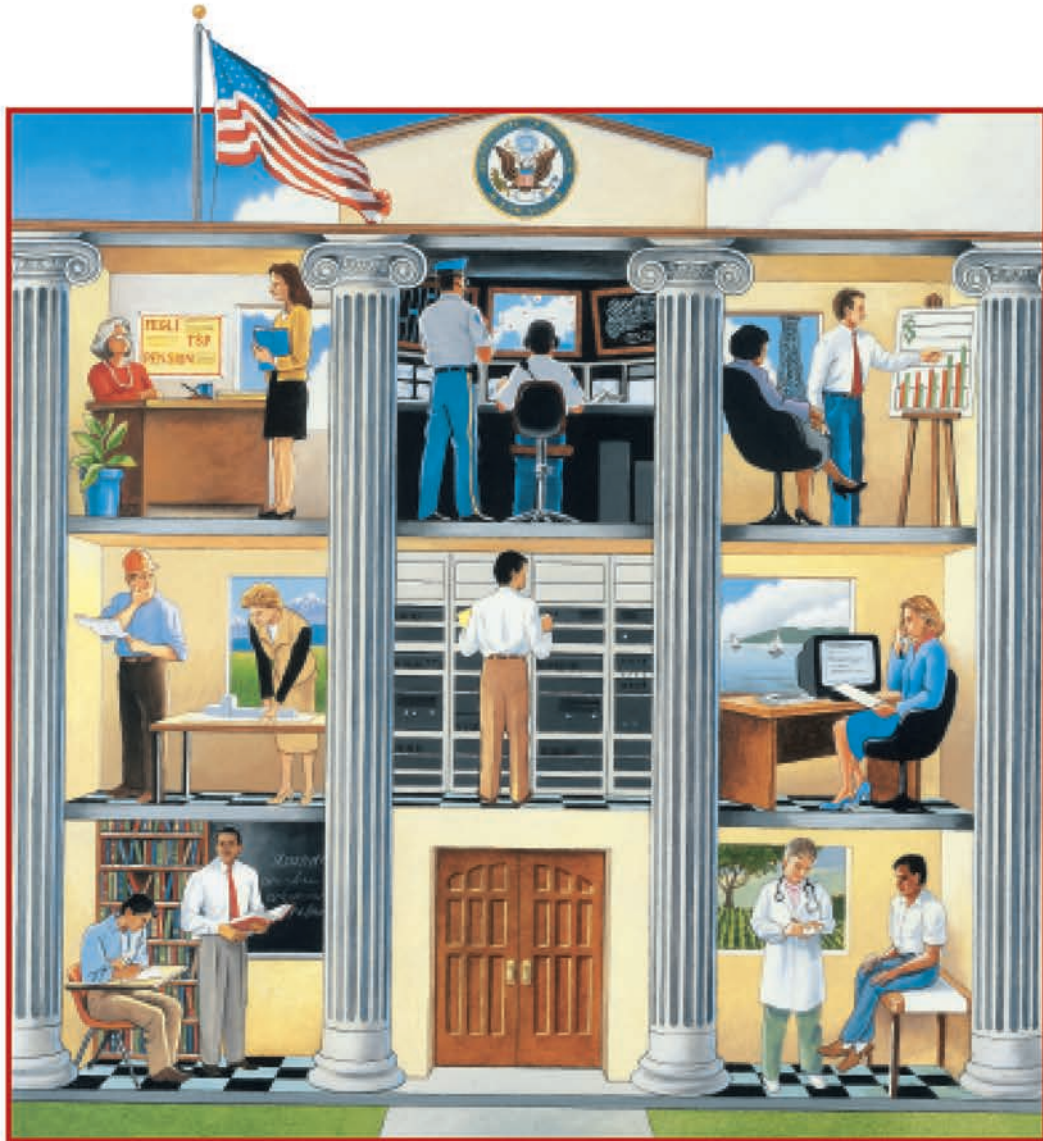


# FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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THE MAGAZINE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS



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# PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

## *She Talked the Talk and Walked the Walk*

BY LOUISE K. CRANE

Being AFSA's acting president allows me to use this space to pay homage to an extraordinary Foreign Service director general, Ambassador Ruth A. Davis. Her tenure as DG has pretty much coincided with my first term as the AFSA vice president for State. And after working together for two years, I have to say that "brave" is a word I would use to describe her, although I don't know if she sees herself this way.



Many DGs have come and gone since I took the oath on the 8th floor, but I don't believe any of them transformed a bureaucratic culture as profoundly as she has. Or to put it another way, they all could "talk the talk," even eloquently, but couldn't "walk the walk" the way DG Davis has. She has used Secretary Powell's obvious confidence in her to advance many initiatives to make the Foreign Service better.

For example, the Secretary launched the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and proved wrong all those naysayers who claimed State couldn't compete for the "best and the brightest" with the private sector. The DG knew the problem was with a ponderous, inefficient bureaucracy, not with the talent pool. She quickly identified the logjams to recruiting talent — scanty

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

*The Foreign Service owes Director General Ruth Davis a lot. In just two years she has changed a culture.*

advertising, weak follow-up, long lag times between the written and oral exams, interminable waits for security clearances, etc. — and fixed them. As a result, not only has State been hiring large numbers of new personnel, but has a much bigger pool to choose from. Veteran employees judge the new hires of much higher quality than in the recent past.

She didn't stop there. Coming from the Foreign Service Institute, where all new hires land first, she was all too familiar with the administrative headaches junior officers traditionally encounter: late notices, sloppy paperwork, erroneous salary computations and conflicting instructions, etc. Using her new power, she changed that culture.

Meanwhile, she went through all the recommendations for reform so carefully iterated in those voluminous studies of the State Department and the Foreign Service over the years, breaking them down into the immediately doable, the doable in the medium term and the ones that are probably too damn hard to do at all. Then she proceeded from there.

Acknowledging that the Human

Resources Bureau is a monopoly and that employees can't go elsewhere for its services, she announced that employees deserved better treatment and she would see to it that they got it. She told us, "Put your complaints in writing, name names and send them to me." I know service has improved because in my first year as AFSA State VP, I received numerous complaints about career development officers who ignored their clients, didn't answer their mail, didn't serve as their advocates, etc. This year, not one employee has written us claiming his CDO was wanting.

Amb. Davis also invited the employees to respond to a survey rating State on how they are treated by management. Now *that's* a worthwhile study of the department! Then she published the results. And, recognizing that a higher-quality workforce requires better leadership and management, Amb. Davis instituted mandatory leadership and management training for all employees.

The Foreign Service owes Director General Davis a lot. In just two years she has changed a culture. Her legacy lies not in yet one more study of State to throw on the fire, or in more rhetoric about Foreign Service sacrifice. Her legacy is fast service, high standards, transparency, honesty and recognition — all those old-fashioned virtues which must have been apparent to Secretary Powell when he asked her to take the job.

Thank you, Amb. Davis, and Godspeed. ■



# LETTERS

## Thanks for June

You're all putting out many a good issue of the *Journal*, but you deserve a special commendation for the June issue. It's not just informative; it's instructive, even inspiring — particularly so for those unfamiliar with the struggles of 30 years ago and for those holding the notion that a union must be an enemy of management, and management an enemy of a union.

Congratulations to all the authors who provided insights on how AFSA made history and how it has helped improve the Foreign Service. I was particularly impressed with Hank Cohen's article for his specific examples of just how a union makes a practical difference.

I plan to publicize the June issue on my own Web site ([www.senser.com](http://www.senser.com)), helping your good work get the wide distribution it deserves.

*Robert A. Senser*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Editor, Human Rights for*  
*Workers*  
*Reston, Va.*

## Why So Harsh?

I was surprised and disappointed that someone with the long Foreign Service experience and professional credentials of frequent *Journal* contributor David T. Jones would be so contemptuously dismissive of the recent resignations of three FSOs in protest against the Bush administration's Iraq policy (*Speaking Out*, June). Jones' attitude toward the three officers can be summarized in two words: good riddance. ("Don't let

the door hit you on the way out.") He deprecates their apparent lack of Middle Eastern experience or expertise. He also suggests that if they had had "total access and consummate experience" in Middle East issues and could draw on the "full panoply" of information available to the most senior officials, they probably would have agreed with administration policy — or only then would have had credible grounds for resignation. I find Jones' position both uncharitable and fallacious.

I cannot presume to speak for the three resignees. I suspect, however, that the reasons for their decisions to quit involved some or all of the following considerations:

- Contrary to what Jones seems to suggest, highest-level access to all-source intelligence information does not necessarily guarantee selection of the best policy alternative. Wider political agendas and bureaucratic infighting play an enormous role in issues of "high politics."

- You don't have to be an expert on either intelligence matters or any particular region of the world to realize that information, especially if it is incomplete or inconclusive, can be open to differing interpretations.

- From at least last summer, if not from the January 2002 State of the Union address, the administration seemed hellbent on military action against Iraq, regardless of international opinion or the findings of U.N. weapons inspectors.

- Once the U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf region began in

earnest, reasons of Realpolitik (i.e., fear of losing face in the Arab world if we backed down) made war virtually inevitable.

- Continued resistance by pockets of pro-Saddam loyalists and the growing frustration of ordinary Iraqis over the failure so far of the U.S. occupation authorities to restore even a semblance of normalcy show that the Rumsfeld Pentagon paid woefully inadequate attention to "postwar" planning — with American troops on the ground now having to pay the price for that shortsightedness.

- It is not a manifestation of overseas "clientitis" to know that the administration's avowed policy of "pre-emptive" ("preventive" would be a better word; there *is* a difference) war scares the daylights out of many peoples and governments around the world — making it that much harder for American diplomats to do their work.

- Treating close friends and long-time allies France and Germany as virtual enemies because they disagreed with U.S. policy on Iraq (although their positions reflected the overwhelming opinions of their electorates) smacks of hubris and petulance, not statesmanship or intelligent diplomacy.

- Some members of the "neoconservative" clique who beat the drums most loudly for war in Iraq actively despise the Department of State — viewing it as infested with liberal wimps who are unwilling or incapable of implementing a robust, red-meat policy of going after the world's bad guys





(as seen in the April 22 speech by Newt Gingrich, reported in the June *AFSA News*). They are no friends of ours.

There are many dedicated, hard-working officers who are uncomfortable with current trends in U.S. foreign policy but who are already past the midpoint of their careers and are unwilling to voice open dissent in the current climate or to face the economic risks of resigning before they are eligible for retirement. That is what makes the actions of the three officers who resigned recently so courageous and, to my mind, praiseworthy.

Perhaps David should have consulted more of his Foreign Service colleagues, both active-duty and retired, before launching his intemperate attack on those three brave officers.

*Nicholas A. Stigliani*  
FSO, retired  
Okinaawa, Japan

### Acts of Integrity

David T. Jones' attack on the three FSOs who resigned over Iraq policy was both offensive and fatuous. The fact that they cut short their careers on principle speaks for itself in answer to Jones' libelous implication that they were "time-serving drones."

To take the ultimate step of resigning over policy disagreement short years before retirement eligibility, as was the case with at least one of the three, is an act of highest integrity, whether or not one agrees with their reasons. Brady Kiesling worked for the government with passion and brilliance, and his departure from our ranks is a loss to mourn. Jones' attempt to besmirch the honor of those who resign over principle is contemptible.

*Mark Fitzpatrick*  
FSO  
Department of State

### Don't Blame the Palestinians

I served as deputy principal officer in Jerusalem from 1976 to 1980 and would like to comment on Claude Salhani's article in the June issue, "Resolving the Palestinian Question." Much of this article is good analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian struggle. However, there is a glaring and significant misstatement when the author puts the blame primarily on the Palestinians for the non-resolution of this struggle. He quotes that old saw of Abba Eban: "The Palestinians have never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity." This is as inaccurate as it is unhelpful. The real fact of the matter is that the Palestinians have seldom had any opportunity offered to them.

On the contrary, for decades the United States looked on the Palestinian issue as a refugee problem and denied there were any Palestinian national rights. After the PLO was formed, the U.S. and Israel refused to recognize it during the 1970s and 1980s. It was only when Israel dealt with the PLO in Oslo in 1993 that it became possible for the Palestinians to have an ongoing relationship with the United States.

One may criticize the Palestinians for many errors, but one should not single them out as the reason for the non-resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian issue. That prize must at least be shared by the U.S. and Israel. It is because of our failure to deal properly with the Palestinians since 1948 that the Arab and Muslim worlds have been so enraged at us. History would have been so much different if we had dealt with the Palestinians as generously as we have dealt with the other party, Israel.

*Donald A. Kruse*  
FSO, retired  
LaGrange Park, Ill.

### Middle East Myths

Ambassador Kampelman's article, "Toward a True Israeli-Palestinian Peace" (*FSJ*, May), contains perhaps the most partisan, pro-Israeli version of Middle East history I have ever read. The ambassador's claim that the Occupied Territories are actually not "occupied," but merely "disputed," is preposterous, especially in light of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent proclamation that the "occupation" must end. Perhaps Amb. Kampelman should visit the Occupied Territories and explain to Palestinian refugees who have suffered under Israeli curfews, closures, travel restrictions, checkpoints, arrests without trial and home demolitions that they have not been living under military occupation these last 36 years.

I also find Amb. Kampelman's claim that Arab nations should have "absorbed" Palestinian refugees racist. The insinuation here is that all Arabs are the same, so why should they have the right to live where they choose? After the 1999 Kosovo conflict, no one told the Kosovar refugees that they should be "absorbed" into Albania and Macedonia, and rightfully so. The ambassador should recognize that most refugees don't want to be "absorbed" into another country — they want to have the right to return to their homelands.

Finally, as Amb. Kampelman begins to analyze the current intifada, he dubiously perpetuates the twin myths that Ehud Barak generously offered 95 to 97 percent of what the ambassador refers to as the "Disputed" Territories during the most recent Camp David talks, and that Arafat rejected the generous offer and instead launched the "terrorist intifada."

Nearly all recent accounts written by those at the Camp David talks, including a piece in the *New York*

## LETTERS



*Times* by Barak himself, indicate that what the Palestinians were offered was approximately 85 to 90 percent of the West Bank, only limited sovereignty over water and airspace rights, no control over its borders, and only a kind of super-autonomy that would have left 80 percent of Israel's settler population firmly in place. Furthermore, the highly regarded Mitchell Commission Report found no evidence whatsoever that the intifada was a coordinated, pre-planned response to the breakdown in peace talks.

There will never be a true Israeli-Palestinian peace so long as influential people like Amb. Kampelman persist in perpetuating myths that fuel anger and misunderstanding between both sides.

*David Semnara*  
FSO  
Chicago, Ill.

### Consular Culture

While some would advise me to let sleeping dogs lie, I offer this response to Louise Crane's reply to my May letter. Louise Crane is indeed an ardent advocate for AFSA and its work on behalf of the Foreign Service, but she clearly misread my intent.

I am most concerned about the "Foreign Service culture," which relegates consular work to the realm of nonsubstantive endeavor. As long as performing statutory functions is considered to be for those less talented or less ambitious, there is little hope that consular work will attract either the people or the resources needed to do the work the right way, and to meet our critical responsibilities for our national security.

Let me be blunt. Junior officers should not be dragooned into mandatory visa line chores as a "rite of passage." Foreign Service National employees should have nothing to do

with the visa process. Administrative officers and deputy chiefs of mission should not control the resources available to consular managers. Consular systems should not be under the direct control of anyone but the consular manager. Consular personnel must be fluent in the language(s) of the applicants they are interviewing. Internal controls for processing applications for visas must be up to the standards of the U.S. Mint. Work in defense of our national security must not be considered to be "down" in the consular section.

*Thomas R. Hutson*  
FSO, retired  
Thurman, Iowa

### Now, for the rest of the story ...

In the May *Journal*, I defended AFSA against retired FSO Thomas Hutson's claims that AFSA didn't really "care" about consular affairs. I replied that AFSA is exactly the strong, independent union consular employees need.

One of Hutson's many uninformed statements was that AFSA did not defend consular employees against unfounded charges. Privacy laws prevent me from providing specifics, but AFSA is delighted to report that one senior consular employee was completely exonerated of all charges with the help of capable AFSA lawyers. So much for Hutson's doubting that AFSA had taken a "robust" stand on any individual case. I think he owes AFSA an apology.

*Louise Crane*  
AFSA State VP

### Get Checked Out

After having a recent battle with prostate cancer, I wanted to write to urge men over 50 to keep current with their physicals, particularly paying attention to and understanding the prostate results. As much as I

can't stand the tests involved, I do get annual physicals. My prostate specific antigen blood test results were still within the normal range (0-4 mgs per milliliter), although on the high side (elevations in the PSA suggest cancer, but often are caused by an enlarged prostate or infection).

On the advice of a State Department physician, I consulted a urologist, underwent a biopsy, and discovered I had cancer. Luckily, it appeared to be contained within the prostate. After much research and soul-searching, I decided to have my prostate removed via a relatively new procedure called laparoscopic radical prostatectomy and have been pleased with the results. I was able to return to work in less than three weeks after surgery with few side effects.

Mostly, I hope to impart the following: get those yearly exams, ask your doctor questions, keep tabs on your PSA numbers, and most importantly, be informed. Please contact me at mmarroquin@usaid.gov if you would like information about the LRP procedure.

*Manuel Marroquin*  
Contracting Officer  
USAID  
Washington, D.C.

### An Apology

On Feb. 6, following two months of close cooperation with Diplomatic Security and the Justice Department, I entered a guilty plea in the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Washington, D.C. to the charge of one count of visa fraud. I was separated for cause from the Foreign Service, effective Feb. 21.

I want to apologize to AFSA and to all my former colleagues. I am extremely remorseful for my actions in Prague. I am sorry from the bottom of my heart for my criminal conduct and for letting down my friends



## LETTERS



and colleagues, AFSA and the entire department.

My actions in Prague were stupid, selfish and criminal. I am still struggling to understand what made me do what I did, after a lifetime spent on a straight and narrow path. I do know that I have to learn from my mistakes and strive to become a better person to have any hope of putting this awful incident behind me.

The Foreign Service was in many ways a dream job for me, a constant source of pride and satisfaction, a good living for my family, and a chance for my children to see the world. I must now live with the daily knowledge that I not only ruined my career and my good name, but deprived my wife and two children of that security and global exposure.

I would like to thank AFSA for its counsel and assistance during this difficult time. I would also like to thank Diplomatic Security for treating me with professionalism and courtesy throughout the course of their investigation.

*Alex Meerovich*  
Former FSO

*Note: Alexander Meerovich was sentenced on June 24 to 24 months in prison and fined \$5,000. His sentence will be followed by a two-year term of supervised release. ■*

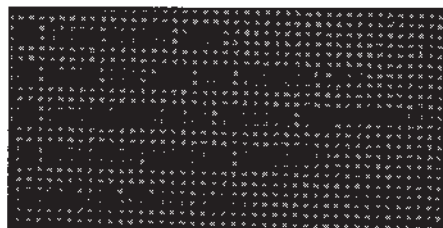
**Editor's Note:** As a follow-on to Bill Farrand's July-August letter lamenting the upcoming closure of the Army Peacekeeping Institute, we report that while the July-August issue was being printed, the decision to close the facility was changed. Pentagon Spokeswoman Alison Bettencourt was quoted in the July 8 Washington Post (p. A12) stating that the Pentagon had decided "to put on hold its earlier decision" to close the Peacekeeping Institute and was now "reviewing its charter" in view of current circumstances.

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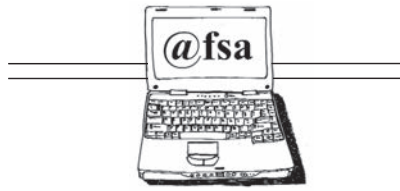
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# CYBERNOTES

## Alien Claims Tort Act: Help or Hindrance?

A recent court case highlights the controversy brewing around a 1789 law originally intended to prosecute acts of international piracy, which is now being used by Human Rights advocates. The Alien Tort Claims Act, or ACTA, gives American courts jurisdiction over violations of U.S. laws and treaties committed outside the United States against foreign nationals.

Since the U.S. is a signatory to various pieces of international human rights law, claims have been brought against American multinationals operating abroad for supporting repressive regimes, or aiding and abetting human rights violations.

**T**he existence of military strength and other forms of leverage are prime diplomatic assets; but, as always, a global diplomacy is the first line of defense, the forward presence where our national interests in international peace and justice may possibly be secured short of war.

— Former Secretary of State George Shultz, accepting AFSA's Lifetime Achievement Award, June 26, 2003.

Over the past decade 26 cases have been filed, half of which have been dismissed outright and none of which has yet been decided in favor of the plaintiffs.

In July, California's Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals heard an appeal in the latest such case, one against American energy giant Unocal in connection with its pipeline project in Myanmar. Unocal is charged with knowingly using slave labor to build the pipeline. A year ago, a three-judge panel found there was sufficient evidence for Unocal to stand trial. The California court went ahead and set a September date for trial, though it did narrow the scope of the case.

For details on the Unocal case, check out Unocal's own Web site (<http://www.unocal.com/myanmar/>), as well as the Web site of the International Labor Rights Fund (<http://www.laborrights.org>), a Washington-based NGO that has been lead counsel in this and many of the other suits under ACTA. The ILRF site has a summary of each of the human rights cases brought under ACTA and status reports on all of them, as well as legal details of each issue. Human Rights Watch also features the law on its Web site, with a background, Q&A, and history of some of the cases (<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/atca/intro.htm>).

Human rights and labor groups tend to see the ACTA as a valuable tool for bringing justice to the victims of American corporate misdeeds abroad, but business and other groups view it differently. USA-Engage

([www.usaengage.org](http://www.usaengage.org)), a pro-trade organization focusing on economic sanctions, and the National Foreign Trade Council ([www.nftc.org](http://www.nftc.org)), another free-trade group, have filed amicus briefs asserting that such suits harm American businesses and developing countries by discouraging investment.

Also opposed to a human rights interpretation of the law is Attorney General John Ashcroft, who filed a brief in the Unocal case advocating strong restrictions on the use of the law for such cases (the brief is available at <http://www.hrw.org/press/2003/05/doj050803.pdf>).

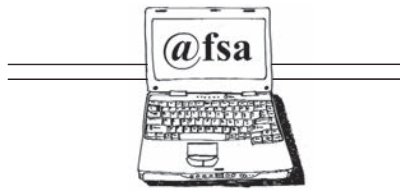
— Aster Grahn, *Editorial Intern*

## Iran In Sites

Though the drumbeat in Washington for another "regime change" has at least temporarily subsided, Iran isn't likely to remain off the front pages for long. The inevitable spin on media discussion of this pivotal Middle Eastern nation, however, often makes it difficult to find out what is actually happening in Iran. Happily, there are a number of Web sites that offer news, information and analysis on various aspects of this energy-rich, complex and culturally distinctive country.

For background, the Library of Congress has a comprehensive and detailed, yet readable, history of Iran through the Khomeini revolution (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/irtoc.html>). The *CIA World Factbook* is a good source for up-to-date basics on the country (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ir.html>), and the Department of





# CYBERNOTES

Energy has a useful country analysis brief on Iran (<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/iran.html>).

Strategic news on Iran from all sources is presented every day, categorized by issue and updated constantly, at the *Iran Expert* Web site ([www.iranexpert.com](http://www.iranexpert.com)). A more freewheeling site for news on Iran from the world press in English is *Iran News* (<http://payvand.com/news>). For the Iranian government view, the *Iran Daily*, an English-language paper in Tehran, is useful ([www.iran-daily.com](http://www.iran-daily.com)). For an independent Iranian view, there is the *Iran Press Service* ([www.iran-press-service.com](http://www.iran-press-service.com)).

For policy discussion and analysis, click on "Iran" at the home page of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy Web site ([www.washingtoninstitute.org](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org)). Or, look in "Policy Briefs" at the Web site of the Middle East Institute ([www.mideasti.org/html/briefs.html](http://www.mideasti.org/html/briefs.html)). Founded in 1946 with the view that the Middle East would become key to the U.S., the Middle East Institute is the oldest

organization of its kind. The Middle East News and Information Center at the University of Texas has a Web site containing a variety of links to Iran-related resources ([http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/Countries\\_and\\_Regions/Iran](http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/Countries_and_Regions/Iran)).

Detailed and authoritative information on Iran's weapons of mass destruction programs can be found at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies' Web site (<http://cns.miis.edu/research/wmdme/iran.htm>). The Arms Control Association also maintains updated documentary material, news and analysis of WMD issues ([www.armscontrol.org/country/Iran](http://www.armscontrol.org/country/Iran)).

When it comes to tapping into the Iranian democratic movements, both within Iran and elsewhere, sources are more chaotic and less reliable. The Iran Online "Newsroom," for example, has an impressive list of links to political parties in Iran, but many sites are outdated or links are broken (<http://www.iranonline.com>). The *Foundation for Democracy in Iran* Web site is lively, but clearly

offers only one piece of the puzzle ([www.iran.org](http://www.iran.org)). Active in Washington and California, but with an uncertain presence in Iran, monarchist Reza Pahlavi, son of the deposed shah, has his own Web site ([www.rezapahlavi.org](http://www.rezapahlavi.org)). Similarly, the militant and controversial group operating until recently out of Iraq, the People's Mojahedin of Iran, or MEK, has its own Web site (<http://www.iran.mojahedin.org>).

## More Selfless Surfing

You can give money to charity for free, just by visiting a Web site and clicking on a link. Several nonprofit organizations have found a way to harness the power of advertising to turn empty Web space into funding for good causes. When you click the link, advertisements pop up; that would normally be annoying, but these ads have a purpose. As with most Web sites, the revenue generated from the advertising is based on the number of people who see the ads. In this case, that revenue goes to the good cause of your choice.

The pioneer of the "free donation" strategy was *The Hunger Site* ([www.thehungersite.com](http://www.thehungersite.com)), launched in 1999. Today, in addition to fighting hunger, it hosts similar links supporting free mammograms for underprivileged women, pet adoption, purchase of rain-forest land for conservation, and donations to child health. *FreeDonation.com* ([www.freedonation.com](http://www.freedonation.com)) lets you donate to charities fighting cancer, hunger, homelessness, AIDS, and environmental degradation, and supporting the arts and education. A click on *The Birth*

## 50 Years Ago...

Even though the legislative body is assigned the important fields of regulating foreign commerce, declaring war and raising and supporting armies, a strong president can usually force and direct its action even in these areas.

— Graham H. Stewart, "Who Makes Our Foreign Policy?," *FSJ*, September 1953.





**Site of the Month: Thomas**  
**<http://thomas.loc.gov/>**

Every fall, as children head back to school and FS personnel settle into their new postings, Congress slips back into Washington and gets to work again. AFSA monitors congressional issues and debates from the Capitol, but now there is a tool for those who can't make it to the meetings, yet want to keep an eye on our legislative bodies.

*Thomas* (named after Thomas Jefferson, whose picture graces the site) is a searchable database offered by the Library of Congress "to make federal legislative information freely available to the Internet public." The site is dedicated to databases of legislative documents, including current proposed bills, committee reports, historical documents, and public and private laws passed since 1973, as well as a list of roll-call votes for both the House and Senate from 1990 to the present.

*Thomas* conveniently allows different levels of search, by keyword/phrase or by bill number. There is a section on legislation pertaining to terrorism or the 9/11 attacks. The site also provides basic information on the legislative process, addresses for legislators, and legislative schedules. One of the most useful features is the "Bill Status and Summary" link, which gives all the basic information about a bill, as well as links to its full text and other useful references.

— Aster Grahn

*Site* gives a donation toward medical care, parent training, or adoption counseling for at-risk pregnant women. A click on another site gives money to educate women in developing countries ([www.twowings.or.at](http://www.twowings.or.at)), and another will help protect air quality ([www.iwantcleanair.com](http://www.iwantcleanair.com)).

If you want to find sites for more or different charities, [www.thenonprofits.com](http://www.thenonprofits.com) provides links to over 90 free donation sites. Most of these Web sites also include online stores and appeals for direct donations. For those who want to be sure their clicks won't be wasted, *One-Click Charity Check* has verifications and evaluations of the various sites and organizations (<http://kimberlychapman.com/charitycheck/charitycheck.html>).

— Aster Grahn ■

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# SPEAKING OUT I

## *Why I Resigned*

BY JOHN BROWN

On March 10, 2003, I submitted my resignation from the Foreign Service to the Secretary of State. Numerous factors led to this decision, but two stood out. First, I believed that President George W. Bush had failed to present a convincing case to Americans and the world that massive force should be used against Iraq at this particular time. Second, I felt an obligation as an American to speak out against this presidential failure to justify a questionable policy.

My doubts about the president's war plans began in earnest last fall. A Sept. 7, 2002, *New York Times* article, "Bush Aides Set Strategy to Sell Policy on Iraq," drew my special attention. In it, White House chief of staff Andrew Card Jr. said the administration had waited until after Labor Day to kick off its plans to persuade the public of the necessity of war against Iraq because, "from a marketing point of view you don't introduce new products in August." The idea of war as a product to be sold appalled me.

Subsequent readings of press and government statements, which I examined extensively in preparation for the course I was giving on public diplomacy at Georgetown University (as a faculty adviser on detail from the department), failed to convince me of the administration's arguments for war. Indeed, I felt they were not coherent arguments at all,

*My resignation was essentially a political statement, for I thought it was important that the media, both at home and abroad, publicize my decision.*



but rather crudely presented propaganda: The constant repetition of words and slogans ("weapons of mass destruction," "regime change," "liberating the Iraqi people"), emphasized at some times and not others for no clear reason; the demonization of opponents of the war, from Baghdad to Paris (at least the Vatican was spared); and the appeal to atavistic emotions such as fear of outsiders and shadowy enemies. The White House's efforts to link the tragedy of 9/11 with the need to invade Iraq appeared to me especially tortuous and strained.

I was concerned but not surprised that this crude propaganda, which paid so little respect to the sensitivities of foreign audiences, had failed to persuade the world, even our traditional allies. It was apparent that our public diplomacy,

because of the faulty policy it was presenting in simplistic ways, was failing to offset a growing anti-Americanism throughout the globe.

In mid-January, I witnessed the demonstrations in Washington against the impending war, and I agreed with many of the speakers making a case against a conflict with Iraq. The demonstrators themselves, serious but not solemn, came from a wide cross-section of the U.S., and represented, in my view, the best traditions of dissent in a democracy. I welcomed their slogans — such as "stop weapons of mass distraction" — as a form of mental relief from what I increasingly considered the heavy-handed, Big Brother-like pronouncements of the Bush administration.

The eloquent Feb. 27 resignation letter of my Foreign Service colleague John Brady Kiesling (whom I'd never met) likewise made a strong impression. "The policies we are now asked to advance," he wrote, "are incompatible not only with American values but also with American interests. Our fervent pursuit of war with Iraq is driving us to squander the international legitimacy that has been America's most potent weapon of both offense and defense since the days of Woodrow Wilson." These words were among the most articulate refutations of pre-emptive unilateralism that I had seen.

*Continued on page 16*





# SPEAKING OUT II

## *Why Dissent Is Important and Resignation Honorable*

BY ANN WRIGHT

I resigned from the Foreign Service on March 31, 2003, because I felt I could no longer represent the policies of the current administration. While the decision to undertake military operations in Iraq without United Nations Security Council authority was the trigger for my resignation, I also had serious concerns about many other policies of the administration, such as its lack of effort to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; its unwillingness (or inability) to seek a dialogue with North Korea concerning its nuclear program; and, even taking into account national security concerns, the unreasonable curtailment of civil liberties in the U.S. for many of those under investigation, but not charged, for possible involvement in terrorist activities.

In regard to the war with Iraq and other Middle East-related issues, let me begin by acknowledging that — as David Jones speculated in his June “Speaking Out” column — I was never assigned to a post in that volatile region. However, like most Americans, over the last 30 years I have observed and read about the reactions of many inhabitants of the area (particularly the young) to U.S. policies concerning the area. I’ve also talked to many Foreign Service friends and colleagues who have served there. On that basis, I feared (and still fear) that America will be the target of many angry young Arab and Muslim men and women, fairly

*When one disagrees strongly with an important policy of any administration, in my view, resignation is an honorable action to take.*



or not, in the years to come because of our recent actions in Iraq and, until very recently, the administration’s lack of pressure on both sides to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Contrary to David Jones’ assumption in his commentary, however, I did set out my concerns about the administration’s going to war with Iraq without U.N. Security Council authority in a dissent cable to the State Department before resigning. I did so because, although I was not in the policy-making chain for any of the initiatives with which I disagreed, I was one of those responsible, by virtue of my position in our embassy, for explaining and defending the administration’s policies to the host government and its citizens, from whom the U.S. wanted support.

In my cable, I noted that the stated rationale for the administration’s policy on Iraq changed literally day by day, from hiding weapons of mass destruction, to support for al-Qaida and other terrorists, to Saddam’s massive human rights violations against his own people. These are all issues of great concern, but none that, in my opinion, should trigger immediate military action. I also found it very difficult to glean information from our daily press guidance that could convince me, or anyone with whom I spoke, of the imminent need for the U.S. to go to war in Iraq. So I felt it was my professional obligation to set forth my concerns to senior policy-makers.

Particularly because I was in the field, the Dissent Channel was the only on-the-record method available to make my individual observations and concerns about possible reaction to our policies in the Middle East known. Considering the Defense Department’s apparent dominance over our Iraq policy, I honestly did not expect my input to change policy, but I wanted State to know there was at least one more Foreign Service officer who disagreed with the rush to war.

The department’s response to my Dissent Channel cable was thorough but broke no new ground on the rationale for the need for imminent military action and did not

*Continued on page 18*



*Continued from page 14*

The president's press conference on March 6, in the wake of the administration's failure to win the support of the United Nations for the war, was the straw that broke the camel's back in making me decide to resign. Speaking to a docile media in a faux-imperial White House setting, red carpet and all, his scripted performance was a disastrous effort to explain why the United States should attack Iraq at this time. Tom Shales, the intelligent TV commentator for *The Washington Post*, wondered if the president "may have been ever so slightly medicated."

After that debacle, I could not see myself continuing to work for the State Department, knowing that I had done nothing against a war that I now believed was totally unjustified. So I sat in front of my computer for many hours to write a resignation letter. By March 10, I had had enough of staring at draft after draft on the monitor. I realized that if I didn't send the resignation letter I'd never be able to get down to serious work. So I submitted it and immediately felt an enormous sense of relief.

### **Personal Factors**

I write these words in June, more than three months since I resigned, and in hindsight I've identified additional circumstances that led, indirectly and perhaps subconsciously, to that decision. These have to do with my family background, where I've served in the Foreign Service, and my career as a United States Information Agency officer.

My father, John L. Brown, who died last November (he did not like the mushy term "pass away"), was a great influence on me. He served in Paris, Brussels, Rome and Mexico City as cultural attaché and counselor in the 1950s and 1960s. A poet and literary critic, he was a fiercely inde-

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***The eloquent Feb. 27  
resignation letter of my  
Foreign Service  
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impression on me.***

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pendent person who couldn't tolerate parochial attitudes or slow-moving bureaucracies. In a wonderful article for the *Foreign Service Journal* published in June 1964 (recently reprinted on the *American Diplomacy* Web site), he gave the following advice, which I think every junior officer (and not only those in the public diplomacy cone) should read:

"[N]o good cultural officer has ever had the illusion that the people he really should know will make an appointment to see him in his office. Professional 'friends of America' may — but few others. He must seek them out himself. Only then can he start operating in terms of people he knows and of places he's been, and of situations he has experienced. No amount of theoretical knowledge can replace such contact with concrete reality. Like Léon-Paul Fargue, he should opt for 'l'intelligence qui mange de la viande,' that can observe the shape of roofs and the color of skies and can seize the importance of such things in understanding people and communicating with them. *For he must understand ... before he can convince.*" (My emphasis)

My father was against the war in Vietnam long before I ever was as a college student. As I look back on my decision to leave the Foreign Service

over the planned conflict in Iraq, I believe he would have done the same thing. (I should note, since this column is something of an *apologia pro vita sua*, that I escaped the Vietnam-era draft in a way of which I am not proud, by claiming a minor medical problem. In deciding to resign from the Foreign Service, I wanted to show my opposition to another unjustified war in a more honorable way, perhaps the result of my becoming older and perhaps a little wiser.)

For most of my 22-year career I served in Eastern Europe and Russia, and I've had the privilege to meet extraordinary persons who stood up for cultural freedom and human rights at great personal risk (and with the encouragement of the embassies for which I worked). My resignation, of course, in no way can be compared to their struggle for truth and justice, but as I think about my decision to leave the State Department, I now realize that I was influenced by the example of those dissidents more than I was aware of at the time. This became apparent to me when I received an e-mail of support for my resignation from the editor of a Belgrade opposition daily, *Nasha Borba*, whom I had come to know quite well during my tour in Serbia from 1995 to 1998. I was delighted — and proud — to hear from him.

Finally, I realize now that as a former USIA employee I never really felt fully "at home" in the new setting of Foggy Bottom. It is a much bigger and more anonymous bureaucracy than my prior agency, consolidated into the State Department in 1999 with, I believe, only limited success, in part because State's slower administrative procedures are not always appropriate for public diplomacy field work. Moreover, I sensed that my profound interest in culture, a crucial element in public diplomacy, was not a priority at the State Department, although State





officers often show a great personal interest in the arts.

### Speculation About Motives

I received about 250 e-mails in response to my resignation from friends, colleagues and unknown persons throughout the world. Only a handful were negative, but those did raise, explicitly or implicitly, some reservations that I sense some of my colleagues harbor about the motivations behind my resignation. So I would like to end by responding to the following assumptions about my motives:

- *You quit because you didn't have a job (at the State Department).* After my Georgetown assignment I was slated to work for the Historian's Office as an editor of a joint U.S.-Russian publication of historical documents pertaining to the détente period. This project was an exciting one for me, as I received my Ph.D. in Russian history and (before joining the Foreign Service) worked as an editor on a U.S.-Soviet documentary volume, *The Establishment of Russian-American Relations, 1765-1815*.

- *You quit because you had a job lined up (outside the State Department).* No, I did not have anything in the works at the time, but I recently found part-time work on a project pertaining to my interest in Russia and cultural exchanges that I had heard about before I announced my resignation.

- *You quit because you were already on your way out of the Service.* True, as an FE-OC, I was near the end of my time-in-grade and thus near retirement (assuming that I would not be promoted), but in other circumstances I would have been glad to continue at the department for as long as possible, if only for financial reasons. Still, now that I have entered a new phase of life, I recall the words of Henry Adams: "No man, however strong, can serve 10 years as school-

master, priest or senator, and remain fit for anything else. All the dogmatic stations in life have the effect of fixing a certain stiffness of attitude forever."

- *You didn't resign, you retired.* I checked on this with my federal retirement benefits specialist, and he confirmed that per my letter of March 10, I had, in fact, resigned — and that I was entitled, much to my relief, to my annuity. In all honesty, when I drafted my letter of resignation, I simply thought I was quitting and at that time did not make fine distinctions between retirement and resignation. Blame my USIA background for this bureaucratic insouciance!

- *You just wanted to make a splash.* There is a strong element of truth in this. My resignation was essentially a political statement, for I thought it was important that the media, both at home and abroad, publicize my decision. In this way, I believed, my fellow Americans and the rest of the world — so critical of the United States for its war plans against Iraq — would become aware that at least one more U.S. diplomat was against a senseless military adventure that elicited the condemnation of many countries.

One final comment: I am still convinced that our invasion of Iraq was unjustified, despite premature claims that it was a "victory," but I do hope that the U.S. will make the best of a bad situation. ■

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*John Brown, a former public diplomacy Foreign Service officer, served in London, Prague, Krakow, Kiev, Belgrade, Moscow and Washington, D.C., between 1981 and 2003. Currently a non-resident associate at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, he is working (under contract with Praeger Publishers) on a book on propaganda and U.S. foreign policy.*

*An earlier version of this article appeared in The Moscow Times.*

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*Continued from page 15*

lessen my disagreement. However, the channel served its purpose in allowing me to offer my comments and suggestions and to get an acknowledgement of my concerns from the senior levels of the department. I would certainly encourage those who have serious disagreements with any specific U.S. foreign policy to let our senior policymakers know through this apparently infrequently used channel, if necessary.

Following my dissent cable, I continued to hope that the administration would not take military action against Baghdad without explicit U.N. Security Council authorization. But once President Bush gave Saddam Hussein “48 hours to get out of Iraq,” it was obvious the administration had no intention of working further within the international community — including with many of our traditional allies — to address their legitimate concerns and broaden the base of support for our actions in Iraq. Once that realization sank in, I knew I could not defend or represent the administration’s order for immediate military action.

### **An Honorable Course**

When one disagrees so strongly with an important policy of any administration, in my view, resignation is an honorable action to take. While I would not, of course, have undermined policy had I stayed in the Foreign Service and “waited out” the administration, I felt it would have been unfair to my colleagues and to the government I have served for so long, both as a soldier and a diplomat, to continue representing my country while holding such opinions.

Since my resignation, several per-

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***I would encourage those  
who have serious  
disagreements with any  
specific U.S. foreign  
policy to use the Dissent  
Channel, as I did.***

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sons who also had grave misgivings about the war in Iraq asked me if I felt they should also resign. I’ve told each of them that everyone has her or his own comfort level of accommodation to policies in each administration. There have been policies over which others in the Foreign Service wrote dissent cables and ultimately resigned — and I did not. On the issue of the timing of military action in Iraq, I felt I had to resign. My turn had come.

I have been heartened in my decision by over 400 e-mails and telephone calls from those in the Foreign Service, active-duty and retired, from employees of other U.S. and international agencies and many persons I’ve never met, from America and other countries. I believe the responses are useful in illuminating aspects of what is involved in dissenting from a particular U.S. foreign policy and making the choice to resign from the Foreign Service over it. (I have omitted specific posts and other information from these excerpts to protect the identities of those who wrote to me.)

• “Please know that you have my

respect and admiration for the values you’ve articulated and the courage you’ve displayed. As principal officer in [XX], I find that what has traditionally been a strongly pro-American community is now overwhelmingly alienated and enraged by our foreign policy. Your example is a sign of principled opposition and is in the finest tradition of the Foreign Service.”

• “Resignation in the face of policies with which we disagree is a proud tradition in the Foreign Service. Although I’m very sorry the Service will lose you, I want to thank you for carrying on that tradition.”

• “I just heard about your resignation and want to applaud you for your principles and courage to stand up for your beliefs. I share your views on the Iraq war. I have great concerns about America’s image and Americans’ future ability to work safely in development and humanitarian assistance.”

• “I, and many of my peers, share your position re: our country’s foreign policy. What is frightening to me is the utter fear of expressing a dissenting opinion, for fear of losing a much-needed job — especially in light of the state of the economy.”

• “I read your resignation letter and was much moved by all you said, but especially by what you’re doing. The Service is the poorer for losing you, but you’re showing an example of putting your money, and your career, where others only put their mouths.”

• “I’ve had numerous inquiries from retired colleagues as well, who are in admiration of your courageous and moral stance, irrespective of whether they agree with each element of your letter. The tone and substance strike a positive and constructive chord for the post-conflict debate that is both needed and



## SPEAKING OUT



inevitable and to which I believe you can make a significant contribution.”

Notwithstanding these expressions of support, I am well aware that there are some, not only outside the Foreign Service but even within its ranks, who regard any disagreement or even a call for continued discussion on policies to be insubordinate, even unpatriotic. But to me, our country is stronger precisely because it stands for free speech and dialogue and protection of the rights of all. America becomes weaker if we discourage a diversity of ideas and opinions, particularly when the policies in question call for military action that inherently results in loss of life, and could determine the des-

tiny of a nation — or perhaps two.

As I write, it's been three months since I resigned, and I do not regret my decision. However, while I have now left the Foreign Service, I want to wish good luck to my former colleagues in representing America in these challenging times! ■

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*Ann Wright was an FSO from 1987 until 2003, when she resigned from the Service while serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in Ulaanbaatar. She was also DCM in Sierra Leone, Micronesia and (for a short time) Afghanistan, and had assignments in Somalia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Grenada, Nicaragua and Washington, D.C. She also attended the Naval*

*War College and was a Pearson Fellow in the office of the governor of Hawaii. She received the State Department's Award for Heroism for her work as charge d'affaires for leading the evacuation of a large part of the international community from Sierra Leone in 1997.*

*Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Ms. Wright was in the U.S. Army/Army Reserves and participated in civil reconstruction after military operations in Grenada and Somalia. She attained the rank of colonel during 26 years of military service.*

*Ms. Wright now lives in Honolulu and plans to remain active in international affairs.*



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# FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALISTS: EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

**A**s some of you know, I was a Foreign Service officer from 1985 to 1997. A callow youth fresh out of graduate school, I was never overly concerned with status. From my first post (Mexico City) on, I tried to treat all my colleagues, whatever their rank, cone or specialization, as professionals worthy of respect and courtesy.

But I also have to admit that during my 12-year FS career, I never learned much about what Foreign Service specialists actually do, or even gave them much thought — except when I needed assistance, of course. And once my voucher had been processed, my cable had gone out, or my computer was fixed, I quickly returned to my comfortable cocoon of ignorance.

Reading the responses of specialists to our call for contributions to this issue leads me to conclude that I was far from unique in that regard. Indeed, it seems that many FSOs today could offer similar “true confessions” about their own relations with specialists (or FSNs or Civil Service employees, for that matter).

So perhaps it should not come as a surprise that, to the best of my knowledge, the *Foreign Service Journal* has never before devoted an entire issue to consideration of the wide-ranging professional and personal issues that affect Foreign Service specialists. In fact, when I went through the past decade's worth of the *Journal* looking for articles and columns by, or about, specialists as part of our research for this issue, I was dismayed by how little I found.

It is our hope, therefore, that this month's *FSJ* will shed light on the world of FS specialists and facilitate an ongoing dialogue with generalists, both within these pages and throughout the Foreign Service itself.

Bob Guldin (my predecessor as *Journal* editor) leads off our coverage with an overview of the main personal and professional issues FS specialists face, beginning on the facing page. We follow that with a set of articles highlighting some of the less well-known FS specializations. William Ancker tells us how Regional English Language

Officers are “Public Diplomacy's Secret Weapon” (p. 28), and Diplomatic Courier Barbara Jacquin gives us an insider's account of what it takes to keep those all-important pouches moving (“That's Classified!” p. 31).

Then Shawn Dorman, our *AFSA News* editor, profiles Regional Medical Officer Dr. Brooks Taylor (p. 32). Craig Cloud offers us “A Security Engineering Officer's Point of View” (p. 34), and veterinarian Karen Sliter recalls how she and her colleagues in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (the Department of Agriculture's quarantine agency) responded to an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Great Britain two years ago (p. 36).

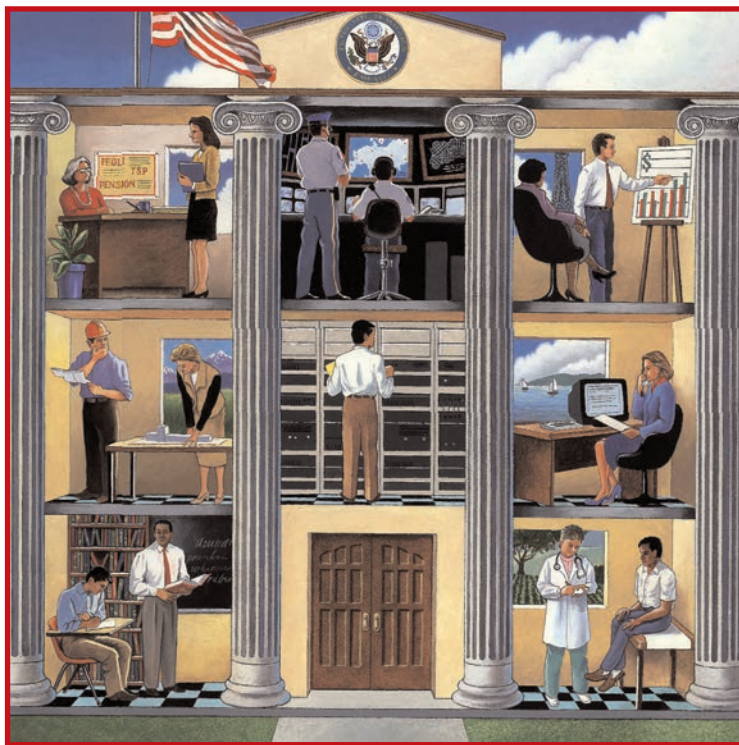
Next, we feature three articles contributed by Office Management Specialists. Linda O'Brien shows us “Office Management Specialists: On the Move” (p. 38); Llywelyn C. Graeme details “The Evolution of the OMS Function” (p. 40); and Linda Ingalls shares her enthusiasm for Foreign Service life (“Give Me Technicolor ... Any Day!” p. 42).

We then turn to a set of articles focusing on some of the many facets of Information Management work. Brian Coen leads off with thoughts on “The Life of Foreign Service Specialists” (p. 43), which Brian Chamberlain describes as “Separate and Unequal” (p. 46). Ruth Mara, Cynthia Borys and Marge Melun tell us what Information Resource Officers do (p. 47). William Potter urges his fellow Information Management Specialists overseas to “Stand Up and Be Counted” (p. 49), and Joe Cole recounts an on-the-job adventure, “Assisting Anti-Poaching Efforts in Chad” (p. 53).

Last, but certainly not least, we are pleased to present a roundup of vignettes and short commentaries (p. 55) contributed in response to our appeal for insights into the life of Foreign Service specialists. These run the gamut from positive and not-so-positive memories to lessons learned (and not) and proposals for change. In fact, we received so many responses that we will run more next month.

— Steven Alan Honley, Editor

# A TOUCH OF CLASS: THE WORLD OF FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALISTS



“W

THE STATE DEPARTMENT INSISTS FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALISTS ARE ON THE SAME TEAM AS ALL OTHER EMPLOYEES. BUT ARE THEY?  
BY BOB GULDIN

e enjoy the work, we love seeing the world, we're proud to serve our country — but we hate getting treated like second-class citizens.” That's the strong, consistent message that the *Foreign Service Journal* heard from FS specialists who responded to our call for input from specialists in the field.

But before delving into the joys and sorrows of the life of Foreign Service specialists, let's get an overview of where they work and what they do.

Foreign Service specialists work in U.S. government posts around the world. There are almost 4,500 specialists



in the employ of the Department of State, as well as much smaller numbers in the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Foreign Agricultural Service.

Wherever they work, Foreign Service specialists do a great variety of jobs — some highly professional, like doctors and psychiatrists, and others more technical and administrative (like the many who keep computers and communications equipment running). By far the largest categories of State Department specialists are Diplomatic Security, Information Management, and Office Management Specialists. (See the table on p. 26 for a full count of State's specialist categories and numbers.) USAID Foreign Service specialists include economists, contracting officers and lawyers, while those employed by the Foreign Agricultural Service are veterinarians.

As part of its Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, the State Department for the past two years has emphasized recruiting, of both Foreign Service specialists and generalists, above attrition levels to make up for severe hiring shortfalls in the 1990s. Thanks to the clout of Secretary Colin Powell with the administration and Congress, the number of new-hire FS specialists has increased by around 600 since the beginning of Fiscal Year 2001, with more continuing to be hired.

In earlier years, the department often suffered from shortfalls in key personnel categories, but that's no longer true. Director General Ruth Davis, who responded via e-mail to questions from the *Journal*, said the department "had basically completed our specialist hiring for Fiscal Year 2003 by May, five months before the year ended."

One Information Management Specialist who has been at State since 1990 says that information technology hiring has drastically improved, partially because of "very dynamic" leadership within the IT sector at State. "This is the first time the IMS group has been fully staffed," he says. In the accounting field, the downturn in corporate America has helped State hire highly qualified and experienced FMOs.

### **Foreign Service Rules**

Unlike generalists, candidates seeking to join the Foreign Service as specialists do not take a standardized

written exam. Rather, their qualifications are scored by an evaluation panel, and acceptable candidates are brought in for an oral examination geared to the particular specialization.

The Foreign Service grades of entering specialists have steadily increased over the years. One IMS recalls that in 1990, IMSs generally entered the service at FP-8 or 9; now they enter at the 05 level, "a vast difference." Susan Struble, director of the assignments division at HR, says that HR's analysis of the job content "determines the maximum grade for a given skill code."

Specialists are in most cases subject to the same practices that govern Foreign Service officers. Specialists have rank in person, are subject to worldwide availability, and are governed by "up or out" rules. Each specialization functions more or less as its own "cone." After 20 years of service, specialists age 50 or older may leave. "You can cash in and take your annuity," says Gloria Junge of State's Human Resources Bureau, the career development chief for entry-level specialists.

Time-in-class and time-in-service rules also apply, though Junge says the TIC period is longer for specialists than for FSOs. Many specialists stay with State for 25 or 30 years, or even longer. Specialists may join the Service from ages 21 to 59, and must retire at 65 (57 for DS agents). Over the past three years, the retention rates for both specialists and generalists have averaged 95 to 96 percent. The voluntary retirement rates for that period averaged 2.9 percent for specialists and 2.1 percent for generalists.

While most specialists join and stay within a given specialization throughout their careers, the service also provides several ways in which specialists can change career paths. One is the Functional Specialist Program, which permits specialists within certain areas to achieve upward mobility within the specialist ranks. In this sought-after program, Office Management Specialists, Information Management Specialists and Diplomatic Couriers train for one year and then move into a new specialization such as Human Resources or Financial Management.

In addition, specialists may do excursion tours overseas in hard-to-fill FSO skill groups, which can be a step toward specialist-to-generalist conversion. Moreover, since the early 1970s, the Mustang program has permitted specialists to compete for appointments as junior Foreign Service officer career candidates. Plus, as the

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*Bob Guldin, a former Journal editor, is now a free-lance writer and editor in the Washington, D.C. area.*

director general of the FS tells the *Journal*, many specialists have taken the Foreign Service exam “and are now serving as successful Foreign Service officers at all grade levels and in all cones.”

Promotion possibilities for specialists vary a great deal from one specialization to the next. Office Management Specialists usually enter at grade FP-6, while Financial Management Officers enter at FP-3. Twelve of the 20 specialist groups have the possibility of promotion to the Senior Foreign Service.

A number of the specialists who spoke with or wrote to the *Foreign Service Journal* for this article identified themselves as members of the Administrative and Technical (commonly known as “A&T”) staff within the Foreign Service. Similarly, an Office Management Specialist wrote the *Journal* to say that “the department refuses to delink the FS office managers from the Civil Service clerical field, which is the excuse they give us on why we cannot move up the promotion ladder.” But career development officers at State assure us that no such categories exist — an indication of how the specialists’ view from the field often differs radically from the department’s official perspective.

### **Proud to Serve**

While FS specialists have plenty of gripes, many also feel very pleased with aspects of the job. In particular, several cite the opportunity to serve their country.

Many specialists also love living in other countries. Others mentioned the extensive benefits of the Foreign Service: no housing costs when overseas; college loans repaid; generous leave (including home leave); and, of course, a good retirement system.

Lisa Harshbarger, a Regional English Language Officer in Tashkent, says, “Overall, this position is ideally suited to my background.” (She’s taught abroad for years.) “I’m having a great time, and look forward to working all over the world in this type of job.”

Other specialists write that their work can be very meaningful to them at times. David McCrane, a first-tour IMS based in Ho Chi Minh City, recently helped a team discover the remains of two U.S. airmen shot down during the Vietnam War. “It’s hard to imagine that after

## ***Specialists are in most cases subject to the same practices that govern Foreign Service officers.***

all these years, a soldier will finally make it home and a family will have closure. It was a great experience,” he tells the *Journal*.

Specialists also seem to have mostly — but not entirely — positive reactions to the changes Secretary Powell has brought to the department. Says Nanette Krieger, a 28-year veteran with DS, “He’s gotten us resources, upgraded the technology. It needed to

be done.” But some specialists noted that under Powell many military veterans have joined the service — and those are people who are used to following orders, not asking questions. One FMO, whose job includes asking pointed questions about money matters, fears that the influx of ex-military employees may lead to a more compliant service.

Whether they are specialists or generalists, Foreign Service employees share a number of burdens and worries. One specialist writes that he spends too much time away from his family, and that the insecure international environment “weighs heavy on the minds of families.”

The hours can be very long, and specialists report that their supervisors discourage them from filing for overtime pay, even when they are legally entitled to it. (This sometimes applies to generalists and FSNs as well.) “I don’t even want to waste my time figuring out how much time I’m giving away,” writes one specialist.

In addition, the bureaucratic nature of State gets some specialists down. “The State Department is bureaucratic, hierarchical and compartmentalized,” one FMO tells the *Journal*. “In the private sector, there’s a fusion between accounting and IT. But State forces a division. It needs to start thinking in 21st-century terms.”

### **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

The complaint specialists voice most prominently and emphatically is a pervasive lack of respect — both from individual FSOs and from the department as an organization. The phrase “second-class citizen” crops up time and again. While specialists were glad to acknowledge that some FSOs do relate to specialists as equals, many more felt that such treatment was the exception.

One IMS tells of joining State after serving as a major in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. There, he says, “I was proud of the title ‘communicator,’ which the mili-

***While FS specialists  
have plenty of gripes,  
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the job.***

tary considers a distinguished profession. ... It quickly became obvious during my first tour that this was not the case in the State Department, where the title is viewed as somewhere equivalent to ‘janitorial staff.’” Another IMS believes that, “Until the ambassador/DCM/MGT change their perspectives (e.g., stop referring to us as knuckle-dragging communicators), nothing will change.”

A Financial Management Officer, who is also a CPA, remarks about FSO perceptions of specialists, “They see you as clerks. It’s bizarre, like the 19th century.”

According to specialists’ accounts, these attitudes are displayed both professionally and socially. One IMS — who, by the way, says he has had great experiences in the Foreign Service — describes an incident at his first post. He was in line at the commissary, and was speaking with an FSO, who asked him what he did.

He said, “I’m an IMS.” “Oh, a specialist,” she replied. “And then she wouldn’t talk to me anymore,” the IMS says. (Like most of the specialists who spoke or wrote to the *Journal*, this person spoke on condition of anonymity.)

Another IMS tells the *Journal*, “I was never even formally introduced to our ambassador, although I have had conversations with him, obviously. No courtesy for me or my role.”

**An Unspoken Class Divide**

The more one listens to this category of complaints, the clearer it becomes that the underlying issue is class. Unfortunately, that’s a topic most Americans are still very uncomfortable discussing. We have learned how to talk about race and gender and even sexual orientation, but class remains an extraordinarily difficult topic — most likely because it appears to contradict American ideals of democracy and equality.

This contradiction is especially sharp in the world of diplomacy, which until the mid-20th century was dominated by the “upper crust,” and which still retains traces of that social milieu. At the diplomatic receptions of yore, the coachmen and couriers were not invited to attend. But how does that play out in the 21st century, when the modern-day messengers have master’s degrees and expect to be treated equally?

An example of how hard it is to talk about this topic appears in the director general’s response to an *FSJ* question. We asked what the Service could do about “perceptions of unequal treatment” by specialists, or about specialists’ sense of being second-class citizens.

Director General Davis responded by e-mail: “I cannot accept the premise of your questions. How many visas could we issue if our computer systems were down? How many démarches could we make if there were not adequate security at our embassies? Each of us, specialists no less than generalists, has a vital role to play in the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy. We are all interdependent. We are all members of the Secretary’s ‘One Team; One Mission.’”

Nanette Krieger — who’s about to retire after 28 years as a DS specialist and who therefore is quite willing to speak her mind — laughed when asked whether there was a class system in the Foreign Service. “Of course there is,” she said. “Political and econ officers are the top class, then consular and admin, then specialists, then FSNs, then your household help at the bottom.”

The difference between the two responses — Davis’ and Krieger’s — is instructive. One is forced to ask how the State Department can work on remedying a problem if it is not willing to acknowledge its existence.

One indication of how pervasive the bias is is that even feminist activists — people working to change longstanding and unfair State Department practices — forgot the specialists. Krieger recalls that when the Women’s Action Organization filed a class action suit over what were perceived to be sexist State Department practices, they eventually won their case — but the class action relief pertained only to FSOs.

Krieger asked one of the women who had initiated the suit why the complaint had not covered female specialists too. “We never thought of you,” she admitted.

At the same time, Gloria Junge of HR emphasizes that Secretary Powell feels strongly that all State Department employees are worthy of respect. She cites a recent incident in which the Secretary was scheduled to swear in a new cohort of specialists but was running late, so another official performed the ceremony. When Powell arrived, he insisted on personally swearing in the group a second



## F O C U S

time, as a way to show the value he placed on the new specialists.

### **A Bill of Particulars**

The problem of lack of respect is not felt uniformly across the specialist ranks. Two small specializations — Information Resource Officers and Regional English Language Officers — seem to feel that they are given their due. That may well be because specialists in those two fields have an unusual degree of autonomy and have their own professional credentials. IROs are generally trained librarians with master of library science degrees, and RELOs are highly skilled teachers.

In addition, long-time RSO Krieger points out that attitudes toward Diplomatic Security agents have changed substantially since Sept. 11, 2001. “Since 9/11, nobody calls me paranoid. People tend to come to us now.”

***The complaint specialists  
voice most prominently  
and emphatically is a  
pervasive lack of respect.***

At the other end of the scale, Office Management Specialists and Information Management Specialists seem to feel the problem of disrespect particularly keenly, citing the continued use of outdated terms like “secretaries” and “communicators.” As first-tour IMS David McCrane writes, “The term ‘communicators’ conjures up images of ‘bag-draggers’ and telegraph operators.” And OMSs who contacted the *Journal* described real dissatisfactions with low-graded positions and limited promotion opportunities. DG Davis, however, points out that a number of OMS positions, including those for career development officers and FSI instructors, have recently been upgraded from FP-4 to FP-3.

Nevertheless, a clear majority of the specialists (representing a variety of FS niches) who spoke with this *FSJ* reporter or wrote to the *Journal* cited numerous

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work practices that made them feel that they were perceived as second-class members of the Foreign Service:

- **Exclusion from the Diplomatic List for most specialists at most overseas posts.** The consequences of this lack of diplomatic status include: less clout in dealing with host country officials; vulnerability to police harassment and demands for bribes; and lack of immunity in case of legal problems. One specialist who had to curtail early from a post for family reasons was sued for breach of contract by his landlord for \$250,000. The embassy told him they couldn't help him with his legal problem, but "if you were an FSO we could help you." Back in Washington, State's Office of the Legal Adviser told him the same thing.

### Foreign Service Specializations

Specialist Skill Group .....	Total
Financial Management Officer .....	170
Human Resources Officer .....	84
General Services Officer .....	221
Information Management Specialist .....	791
Information Management Technical Specialist .....	170
Information Technology Manager .....	245
Diplomatic Courier .....	94
Psychiatrist .....	15
Diplomatic Security Special Agent .....	1,215
Security Engineering Officer .....	189
Security Technical Specialist .....	54
Construction Engineer .....	59
Facilities Maintenance Specialist .....	158
English Language Officer .....	22
Information Resource Officer .....	28
Medical Officer .....	37
Medical Technologist .....	9
Health Practitioner .....	64
Printing Specialist .....	7
Office Management Specialist .....	816
Miscellaneous .....	25
Total .....	4,473

*Note: The State Department employs 20 categories of specialists, listed above. It only recruits for 19, however, because Information Technology Managers are promoted from within the department. USAID and the Foreign Agricultural Service also employ a few Foreign Service specialists.*

— Bob Guldin

There are also economic ramifications. Specialists not on the Dip List have to pay host-country taxes (like value-added tax in the E.U.); are often unable to bring in a nanny from a third country; are prohibited from bringing in a second car; and face greater restrictions in importing and exporting consumer goods. This exclusion from economic benefits weighs particularly heavily on lower-paid specialists and their families. Adding insult to injury, some IMSs note that even though they are not on the Dip List, they typically are considered essential personnel and are among the last to leave a post during an emergency.

- **Lack of professional status at post.** While practice varies from post to post, few specialists (other than Regional Security Officers) are regularly invited to country team meetings. While ambassadors and other senior managers often hold meetings at post for junior officers, such meetings are rarely, if ever, held for specialists. Specialists are seldom invited to post functions and receptions (though as a couple of respondents noted, those who ask to attend usually are permitted to do so). Cash awards for outstanding performance are given less frequently to specialists than to officers and when they are conferred, the amounts are generally smaller.

Veteran IM specialists observe that they are almost never called upon to serve as acting admin officer, no matter how well-qualified they are to do so. Similarly, even a very experienced FMO may be officially under the supervision of a junior FSO, and may have a lesser title (attaché vs. second secretary). Finally, FSOs have a commission from the president which is confirmed by the Senate — specialists do not. One HR official tells the *Journal*, "It's [just] a piece of paper you can hang on your wall," but some specialists still resent not having one.

- **Specialists' physical workspace and equipment is often substandard, especially when compared with that of FSOs.** This is especially irksome to IMS personnel, who sometimes have to share desks and even computers. One IMS reports that his post is building a new consulate building, providing an individual office to each FSO, including extra rooms for expansion. Meanwhile, he reports, "there will be two desks for four full-time direct-hire Americans" in "two small offices."

- **Training opportunities vary enormously.** Some specialists are very pleased with the training they've

received at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center and elsewhere, but others tell a different story. One long-time FMO says, “I’ve never had any language training, ever,” while noting that language skills can be very useful for FMOs who need to check invoices and other host-country documents. Another FMO new to the service and going to his first post, Sanaa, had to fight fiercely to get even “the short seven-week course in survival Arabic. And you really need Arabic here.”

- **Limited promotion opportunities.** A highly competent specialist can hit the “glass ceiling” for his or her job skill, and may be stuck at FP-2 for 15 years.

- **Certain specialists may be disliked for doing their jobs.** Until 9/11, DS agents and RSOs were often resented for enforcing intrusive security measures. And FMOs, many of whom are CPAs with a strong sense of professional responsibility, are resented for carefully scrutinizing post finances — which is what they are paid to do. As one experienced FMO says, “Any FMO who leaves a mess behind is never ‘dinged’ professionally — he still gets a glowing evaluation. Conversely, cleaning up a mess will annoy post management.”

### **AFSA and Specialists**

AFSA, of course, is the designated collective bargaining agent for all Foreign Service employees, both specialists and generalists. How well does it do in representing specialists?

The association has certainly been making an effort to overcome the longstanding perception among specialists (cited by several people who commented to the *Journal* for this article) that it is mainly interested in FSOs’ issues. Nearly half of AFSA’s current active-duty FS members are specialists, and new hires join AFSA at about the same rate as generalists do.

Substantively as well, AFSA has been increasing efforts to recognize specialists’ accomplishments and act on their behalf. Every June, AFSA’s Awards Committee designates one or more specialists to receive its Tex Harris Award, given annually for constructive dissent by an FS specialist, and the Delavan Award recognizes extraordinary performance by an Office Management

***AFSA has worked hard to overcome the perception among specialists that it is mainly interested in FSOs’ issues.***

Specialist. Both awards recognize exemplary contributions to Foreign Service effectiveness, professionalism and morale.

In 2002, AFSA adopted as a goal expanding promotion opportunities for FS specialists. It also lobbied Secretary Powell successfully to use his influence so that specialists are now eligible to join the United Services Automobile Association, which provides banking, insurance and other services.

### **Equal Rights for Specialists?**

Despite the impressive list of grievances, slights and complaints, most Foreign Service specialists do enjoy their work and value their careers and the accompanying benefits.

As one OMS wrote, “Where else but the Foreign Service will computer and office management skills take you around the world?” In addition, specialists say that they have encountered many supportive and respectful DCMs and admin officers who have been a pleasure to work with. The camaraderie that develops among specialists is another important plus for the job.

Regarding the question of status and respect, a number of specialists, including several in Information Resources Management, have come to the conclusion that it’s up to the specialists to raise their voices and demand better treatment (for example, asking to come to post events they want to attend).

It may also mean education — to help FSOs and others understand better exactly what the specialists at their post do. As one IMS puts it, FSOs “adopt a standoffish approach to us because they really and truly don’t know why we’re here.” This person suggests that “from A-100 to the Senior Seminar, specialist issues and activities should be discussed in fine detail so everyone has a clear understanding of the contributions being made by all personnel at post.”

One experienced IMS says that he tells those new to the service, “Don’t let your dignity ever be disparaged. You cannot take a back seat — you have to move forward.” Or, as another IMS says, “Treat me as an equal player on the team, because what I have to offer is of value.” ■



# PUBLIC DIPLOMACY'S “SECRET WEAPON”: RELOs

BY WILLIAM ANCKER

**W**ho in the embassy travels most frequently, meets the most local citizens, and has the widest and deepest reach into local society? You might be tempted to answer “The ambassador, of course,” but in some countries it could be the Regional English Language Officer.

RELOs comprise a small specialist corps who spend most of their time outside the embassy working on a regular basis with Ministry of Education officials; university rectors, deans, and professors; school board members; administrators, teachers, and others involved in preparing future generations of citizens in the national education system.

There are very few places in the world where English is not an obligatory subject from primary through secondary school, and the language of instruction in higher education. Even in countries hesitant to embrace American policies, English language teaching is generally perceived as “policy-neutral,” and an indispensable tool for greater economic and professional success. Marshaling embassy and Washington resources for public diplomacy programming, RELOs can help build a foundation for long-term cooperation with influential figures and institutions sometimes inaccessible to other embassy officials.

Regional English Language Officers are Foreign Service specialists in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs who work in the public affairs sections of selected embassies around the world. In broad terms,

they plan and implement exchanges and other programs targeted to government officials, education administrators, professors, teachers, and students from the public and private sectors in the host country. Their Washington home is the Office of English Language Programs (ECA/AL). Currently there are 24 RELOs: 15 overseas, four in Washington, three on excursion tours as cultural affairs officers, and two in training at NFATC.

As specialists, RELOs bring specific academic credentials and professional experience to the department.

Minimum requirements include an M.A. in language teaching, linguistics, or a related discipline, plus some international teaching and administrative experience. Nine are former Fulbright scholars, seven are former Peace Corps Volunteers, and of the last eight RELOs hired, six have Ph.D.s. As a group they average eight years of international work

experience before joining the Foreign Service.

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### **The RELO's Work and Resources**

As the job title indicates, RELOs have regional responsibilities and all 15 positions overseas require frequent and extended travel. The geographic coverage may be relatively small — such as Central America for the RELO based in San Jose and Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and the Caucasus for the RELO in Kiev — or it can be enormous. The RELO in Pretoria is responsible for 11 countries in southern Africa, and the RELO in Budapest covers 16 countries in central and eastern Europe. To carry out their work, RELOs are given a modest budget from ECA for their own travel and programs. Major program costs are shared with posts and the public diplomacy offices of the geographic bureaus. By necessity, RELOs become

masterful at securing cost sharing from other sources, which is often in-kind support provided by local host institutions.

RELOs do not operate in isolation. They plan their work in close cooperation with the public affairs officers and cultural affairs officers in their countries of responsibility, using most of the same tools and resources for educational programming that public diplomacy generalists use, such as international visitors, Fulbright scholars, summer institutes, and small grants. They also have other resources offered by ECA/A/L. The English Language Specialist program sends approximately 90 American professors from U.S. universities and colleges abroad for two- to six-week visits every year to lead workshops, attend conferences, or participate in other special events co-sponsored by embassies. The English Language Fellow program places approximately 100 American teachers in local host institutions on 10-month grants to teach English, develop curricula and materials, and do teacher training.

ECA/A/L publishes a quarterly journal on foreign language teaching, *English Teaching Forum*, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2002. Embassies in 95 countries distribute 65,000 copies of each issue. The office also offers close to 100 teacher reference books and student textbooks in English teaching and American studies through the department's Regional Printing Center in Manila, as well as electronic publications on the ECA/A/L home page.

### **Supporting Mission Goals**

Perhaps the best way to reveal the scope of Regional English Language Officers work is to cite a few of their past and present accomplishments. Implicit in each of

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*William Ancker is a Regional English Language Officer currently assigned to ECA/A/L as the editor of English Teaching Forum. He has served in Central America and Central Asia. He thanks his RELO colleagues, in particular, Tom Miller (Ankara), George Scholz (Pretoria), George Wilcox (Bahrain), Kay Davis (Dakar), John Turek (Amman), Patricia Sullivan (Kiev), Robert Lindsey (Cairo), Lisa Harshbarger (Tashkent), Ruth Petzold (Moscow), and Michael Rudder (San Jose), who contributed to this article. For more information about the work of RELOs and the Office of English Language Programs, visit ECA/A/L online at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/>.*

these RELO success stories is the fundamental premise of all our ECA work: face-to-face professional and personal contact between Americans and people from other countries contributes immeasurably to improving understanding of our shared values and tolerance of our differences. Also, by targeting education from primary school to university, they can reach a broad local audience during the most formative years of life in terms of shaping attitudes and beliefs. Here are some highlights.

- Teachers from Islamic schools in Thailand and Indonesia work with American colleagues to improve their skills in language teaching. During the current academic year, English teachers from 18 private Islamic schools in southern Thailand attended a 10-week workshop organized by the RELO in Bangkok and conducted by an English Language Fellow. This training is part of a Thai Ministry of Education initiative to improve private education in the south and adopt the standardized nonreligious curriculum. During the 2003-2004 academic year in Indonesia, in a collaborative project created by the RELO in Jakarta, seven English Language Fellows will teach in state Islamic institutes, where future madrasa teachers receive their pedagogical training.

- The Summer English Teaching Institute in South Africa was one of the few opportunities for professional interaction among teachers of different races and ethnic backgrounds during the final years of apartheid. Still going strong after 17 years, SETI has grown with the changing political-cultural landscape of southern Africa and remains a major annual project for the RELO in Pretoria. During a six-week residential program at a university in the U.S., between 25 and 30 teachers and teacher trainers have focused on topics such as civic education, HIV/AIDS prevention, and entrepreneurship, while getting to know each other as professional colleagues and fellow human beings.

- Professional exchanges between Turkish and Greek participants, sponsored by the American embassies in Ankara and Athens, began some years ago with seminars that were conceived and organized by the RELO in Ankara for English teachers from these two historically antagonistic countries. Promoting conflict resolution was the underlying goal, and English language teaching provided an ideal content area because it was considered politically neutral by the participants. In the first exchange, Greek teachers were invited to a seminar in Turkey that was taught by American academics.

## F O C U S

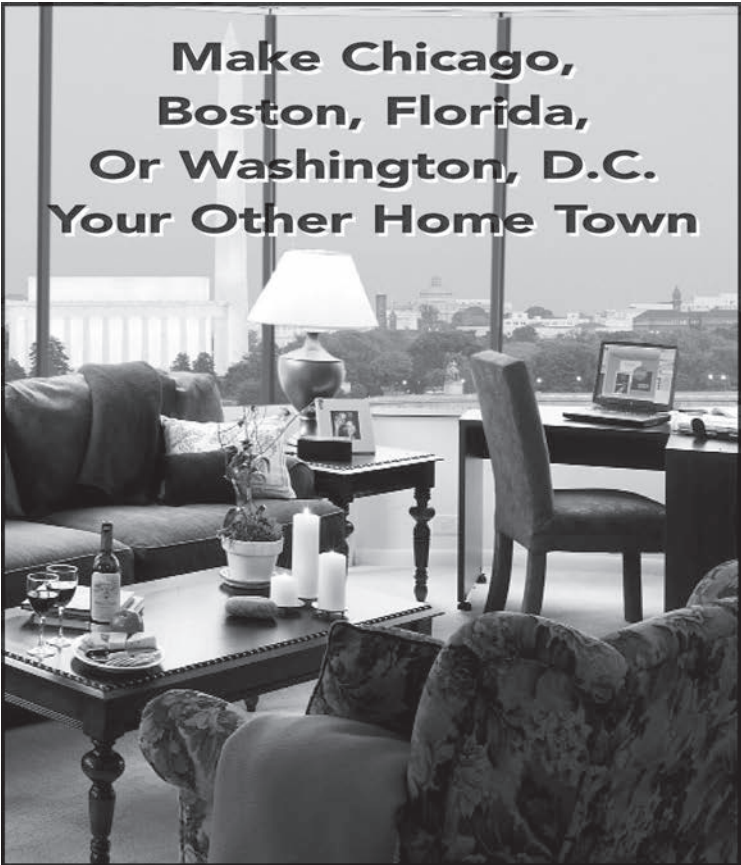
Soon after, the Greek participants reciprocated by inviting their Turkish colleagues to Greece for more professional meetings and to continue the reconciliation process. Eventually, the American embassies were able to conduct similar encounters for journalists and other professionals. "The thin edge of the wedge [of U.S. foreign policy]" is what a veteran RELO once called himself, referring to the occasions when his work opened doors for other embassy colleagues that had previously been closed.

- Training in "workplace" English for Palestinian refugees enrolled in technical schools in Amman was set up by the RELO. Although graduates of the technical schools could read manuals written in English, they were being rejected for work in the Persian Gulf countries because they lacked sufficient oral skills to communicate with Indian, Pakistani, Philippine, and American supervisors. Technical and professional schools in Israel became interested in the training, and a digital video conference was held between Israeli and Palestinian curriculum developers.

### **Post-9/11 Interest**

Interest in all of ECA's programs and exchanges has grown since the 9/11 attacks. RELOs, it was discovered, had a product that even the most misinformed and hostile of foreign publics were eager to accept. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year, the under secretary of State for public diplomacy and public affairs called English language programming a "secret weapon" of America's public diplomacy overseas.

"Weapon" may not be the kindest or most appropriate way to characterize an educational effort, but in the context of the war on terrorism it makes sense. Given the breadth and variety of RELOs' work, and their adroitness in finding ways to promote U.S. policy and support mission goals, let's hope that English language programming, and other public diplomacy strategies for education, won't remain a secret to the rest of the department. ■



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# THAT'S CLASSIFIED!

BY BARBARA JACQUIN

**A**s a State Department diplomatic courier, it's my job to make sure America's classified documents are shipped around the world safely. "Dip" couriers are some of the world's most frequent fliers, yet most people don't even know we exist, let alone hear about our adventures and challenges. Like the time I flew into Uzbekistan ...

Somewhere over the Caspian Sea, approaching Almaty, Kazakhstan. Dead of winter. It is 9:30 p.m. local time. The purser announces that snow on the runway prevents us from landing. We must land in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and spend the night in a hotel. I find the purser and inform him that my responsibility is to remain with my pouches, loaded in a giant container in the airplane's belly. There are consultations with the pilot.

In the meantime, Embassy Tashkent is informed that I'm here and may or may not need help. Imagine the embassy duty officer's enthusiasm for coming out to the airport and sitting all night in a car with me, staring at the cargo door of an Airbus 340 in sub-zero weather! Someone performs a miracle and I am allowed to sleep alone in the plane with the small concession of having a security guard in and around the plane during the night. The pilot shows me how to open and close the big door leading out to the stairs and bids me farewell ... for a time. I later agree with the guard that we don't really need the humming auxiliary power on. He stops

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*Barbara Jacquin has been posted to Belgrade, Suva, Mbabane, Ouagadougou, Port-au-Prince, and the Frankfurt Regional Courier Office. She dedicates this story to Seth Foti, a courier who perished in the line of duty in August 2000.*

*This account, along with numerous others, can be found in the 2003 edition of AFSA's Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America.*

it, and the plane begins to settle — snap, crackle, and pop! Ah, the comforting sounds of home.

A few hours later, dawn comes and brings a gaggle of uniformed guards: security, army, who knows? They stamp all our passports and begin to search the entire plane's overhead bins, seat cushions, and pockets behind seat backs. I realize they are probably looking for drugs since many pass through this region. No one bothers me, though I hear them whispering about "the diplomatic courier." Eventually the crew arrives, followed by the well-rested and well-fed passengers, all inquiring into my well-being after spending the night alone on the plane.

Finally, we are airborne for Almaty by 11 a.m. I have to admit that even though I'm hungry and need a shower, it wasn't such a bad experience after all. At least I wasn't sleeping on top of my pouches in some cold warehouse — a pleasure a few of my fellow couriers have had.

Diplomatic couriers are no longer chained by the wrist to their pouches like Tyrone Power in the classic film "Diplomatic Courier," but they are conscious every second of the location of their loads. Whether containers in the belly of an airplane, loose-loaded pieces in the baggage compartment or simply a small piece in their briefcase, couriers know precisely where the diplomatic pouches are at all times.

Have you noticed the passenger who always arrives last on the plane or the passenger who jumps out of his seat like a jack-in-the-box the second the plane arrives at the gate and the seat-belt sign goes off? If so, you've probably observed a courier in action.

Couriers have an exciting, but sometimes lonely, job. We travel all the time, spending numerous hours waiting under planes for the loading to end or the unloading to begin. In our time off, we find ourselves alone exploring new and exotic cities. We are all incurable tourists.

So, if you ever find yourself sitting next to a dip courier on a plane, you have the opportunity of a lifetime to hear some great tales from a veteran traveler. But whatever you do, don't ask what's inside the pouch — that's classified! ■

# SAY AH: REGIONAL MEDICAL OFFICERS IN ACTION

BY SHAWN DORMAN

“From a medical point of view, as a family physician in the Foreign Service, much of what you see in the patient population is the same in New Delhi as it would be in Des Moines,” says Dr. Brooks Taylor, Regional Medical Officer for Embassy New Delhi, “except that Delhi is a very unhealthy place to live.” New Delhi is one of the most polluted cities in the world, and air pollution causes respiratory problems for many resident Americans. Disabling diarrhea, also known as “Delhi belly,” is a constant threat. The Embassy New Delhi health unit staff spend a lot of time teaching people how to reduce health risks from local food and water, and how to avoid diseases common to the area, such as typhoid, dengue fever, salmonella, rabies, and malaria.

Providing primary health care overseas gives Foreign Service medical practitioners — physicians, nurse practitioners and physician’s assistants, psychiatrists, and medical technologists — unique challenges and opportunities, and affords their patients unique benefits. Brooks, 49, tells us that “the wonderful thing about practicing medicine in the Foreign Service is that I don’t have to charge patients, I can see them the day they call for an appointment or immediately for an emergency, and I can spend as much time as I need to with any patient. Those things are unheard of in the managed-care milieu of the States.”

There are about 29 Regional Medical Officers (called RMOs) and about 54 Foreign Service health practitioners and physician’s assistants posted overseas. In addition, there are 12 regional psychiatrists and nine regional medical technologists. At some large embassies, several practitioners are co-located. Embassy New Delhi has one of the largest health units in the Foreign Service, with five Foreign Service medical personnel on staff: two RMOs,

one psychiatrist, one medical technologist (who runs the health unit laboratory), and one health practitioner. In addition, the unit has three part-time nurses, a full-time Foreign Service National pharmacist (the only one in the Foreign Service), and four other FSN employees.

Embassy and consulate health units vary from post to post, depending on the size of the mission, local medical capabilities, and the needs of the community. Many embassies have Foreign Service health practitioners practicing solo. Smaller embassies have only a locally hired nurse in their health unit. A few embassies hire local physicians on contract to see patients in the health unit. The RMO supervises all the practitioners serving U.S. missions in the region and ensures the quality of care provided. The RMO manages the entire medical program in his or her region, including efforts to maintain a healthy workforce by focusing on preventive health care through community education and periodic health screening exams. The RMO also facilitates and oversees the medical care patients receive from local specialists and hospitals. When a patient faces a medical problem that cannot be handled locally, the RMO authorizes and facilitates a medical evacuation to an appropriate health-care facility. There are regional medevac centers in Singapore, London, Pretoria, and Miami.

The Delhi health unit takes care of about 500 official U.S. government employees and family members, as well as 132 “unofficial” Americans — schoolteachers and USAID contractors. Embassy Delhi is staffed by almost 1,000 Foreign Service Nationals, who also have access to the health unit when they are injured or ill at work. The health unit not only covers the embassy community in New Delhi, but also the consulate communities in Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta, and the embassy community in Colombo (although there are plans to staff Colombo with a Foreign Service medical practitioner soon).

## F O C U S

Brooks travels to each of the posts he covers every three months, and when emergencies arise. He is in almost daily contact with patients at the other posts, as well as the local health care providers there. When he is in Delhi, Brooks usually sees walk-in patients every morning, and then sees scheduled patients. While he does have regular office hours, he is never truly off duty. He and all Foreign Service medical practitioners must be available 24 hours a day for medical service or consultations, and to arrange medevacs.

Embassy New Delhi employees and family members suffered from high stress and poor morale in 2001 and 2002, due to a number of causes, including 9/11 and the

war in nearby Afghanistan; the threat of nuclear war between India and Pakistan, and the subsequent authorized departure of non-emergency personnel and dependents; and management problems at post. Brooks has taught many emergency response courses at his posts for Americans and FSNs, as well as courses on chemical and biological weapons. The 2001 anthrax scare hit his region hard, as multiple envelopes containing white powder arrived at mailrooms in Delhi and Colombo. Brooks played a key role in the response to these threats, and held town meetings to discuss the situation with the community.

Brooks grew up in India, where his parents were missionaries. He now calls South Portland, Maine, home. He has a B.A. in Asian religions from Swarthmore College and an M.D. from Harvard Medical School. He joined the Foreign Service in 1992, following four years as a family physician in Eastport and then Bangor, Maine. Since joining the Foreign Service, he has served in Bridgetown, Nairobi and Islamabad. Brooks and his wife, Betsy Dorman, an artist, have two teen-age children. ■

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*Shawn Dorman is the Journal's AFSA News editor. She was a Foreign Service officer from 1993 to 2000, serving in Bishkek, Jakarta and Washington, D.C. This account, along with numerous others, can be found in the 2003 edition of AFSA's Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America, which she edited.*

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# A SECURITY ENGINEERING OFFICER'S POINT OF VIEW

BY CRAIG L. CLOUD

I'm an electronics engineer who couldn't bear the thought of spending a lifetime tethered to a computer in a manufacturing facility, so I joined the Foreign Service in 1992 as a Security Engineering Officer. During the past 11 years I've seen the inside of more airports and airplanes than I care to remember. I've lived on four continents, battled rats in my hotel room, had an AK-47 put in my face by a drunken soldier, spent several nights in an embassy under imminent threat of a terrorist attack, and responded to countless calls from Marine security guards in the middle of the night.

My job is to ensure that the physical and technical security infrastructure at our embassies meets or exceeds department standards. I install, repair and maintain alarms, closed circuit television cameras, walk-through metal detectors, vehicle barriers, intercoms, emergency notification systems, and access controls. When a Marine security guard pushes a button to unlock a door, it works because of someone like me. I also search for clandestine listening devices, and make sure that computer systems and telephone switches are correctly configured so that they do not pose a security risk.

When the department builds a new embassy complex, or embarks on a major physical or technical security upgrade, I act as the eyes and ears for the Overseas Building Office and Diplomatic Security Bureaus, informing them of potential trouble spots and performing acceptance testing of the security systems.

THE WORK IS CHALLENGING AND REWARDING BUT THERE IS DEFINITELY ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT, IN THIS SEO'S VIEW.

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## Challenging Work, But ...

Since I started with State, I've served in four overseas posts and Washington, D.C. I've had a great time serving my country at home and overseas, but there are clear signs that the department could do a better job of retaining its employees. Of the 12 SEOs that started work together in 1992, only six of us are left. The others resigned within the first three years, perhaps because of the constant travel, difficult logistics, and temperamental people and equipment.

Then, too, there is the personal side of the coin. My life is a never-ending balancing act. I want to do

a good job for my employer, but I also want to be a good husband and father. I've missed a great many school plays, holidays and other important life events while fulfilling my work obligations. As a matter of fact, as I sit writing this article in my Lagos hotel room, I'm missing my son's

preschool acting debut.

When I evaluate all of the positive and negative aspects of Foreign Service life, I know I made the right decision when I joined, but there are several ways that the department could improve the security engineering skill code.

**Consistent Hiring.** In 1992, when I started with the department, there were approximately 143 direct-hire security engineers. By 1998, when the bombs went off in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, our numbers had dwindled to about 80. In the six years between 1992 and 1998 only five SEOs were hired against attrition, and our resources were stretched so

*When a Marine  
security guard pushes  
a button to unlock a  
door, it works because  
of someone like me.*

thin that we could not do our jobs.

The new embassy complexes being built around the world have integrated security infrastructures that far exceed those of the past. A typical complex will have five or more vehicle barriers, X-ray machines and walk-through metal detectors at all of the visitor entry points, and 40 or more cameras, just to name a few of the systems we have to maintain. All of these systems require maintenance and repair if they are to be an effective deterrent against attack.

Over the next five years, the department projects that it will build between seven and 10 NECs each year, adding tremendously to the security infrastructure and workload worldwide. If we go through another hiring freeze similar to the one in the mid-1990s, all of the security systems in these new facilities will fall into disrepair until another tragedy occurs and the cycle repeats itself.

**More senior-level promotions.** In order to be hired as an SEO, applicants must hold a bachelor of science degree in an engineering field or physics. The working level for most SEO positions is FP-2, and SEOs typically advance to this level within five to eight years — then we hit a ceiling. During the past two years, the promotion rate from FP-2 to FP-1 for SEOs has been less than 2 percent per year, and over the past eight years, it has averaged under 4 percent per year.

It becomes very difficult to retain good employees when they are faced with the statistical likelihood of having to spend the last 15 years of their career at

the FP-2 level with very little chance for promotion.

**More excursion opportunities.** The Foreign Service promotion panels have repeatedly stated that employees who have served in excursion positions have a promotional advantage as long as they do not spend too much time outside of their primary skill code. The personnel system, in theory, encourages specialist employees to take assignments outside of their area in order to develop a more versatile work force.

Yet in practice, it is very difficult to receive an out-of-cone assignment, as no manager wants to allow experienced employees to leave their area of specialization, and, without the consent and backing of the employee's home bureau, it is extremely difficult to secure an excursion assignment. The department would benefit by implementing a program that requires managers to allow employees to take excursion assignments at the mid-level grades in order to better prepare them for leadership positions later in their careers.

### **Room for Improvement**

The Foreign Service has provided me with great experiences and an amazing extended family, but I do see room for improvement. I have been impressed by the recent reforms under Secretary Powell's leadership, and am gratified that Director General Ruth Davis and AFSA seem committed to improving the working conditions of Foreign Service generalists and specialists. I hope the trend will continue when our leadership changes.

By the way, I just spoke with my wife and she said that our son is a star. He delivered his one line flawlessly, and she captured most of the show on video — I can't wait to fly back home and watch it! ■

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*Craig Cloud has been a Security Engineering Officer since 1992, serving in Moscow, Buenos Aires, Abidjan and Washington, D.C. He is currently posted in Harare.*

# RESPONDING TO A CRISIS

BY KAREN SLITER

**S**ome would consider it an opportunity, and it was. Others, just as correctly, would call it a tragedy.

It was the spring of 2001, and the United Kingdom had just diagnosed an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease — an acute, contagious disease of cattle, sheep and deer that is also transmissible to humans. Caused by a virus, FMD is characterized by fever and blisters in the mouth and around the hoofs and can be fatal.

Within days of the initial diagnosis, the situation escalated into a crisis, severely straining the country's agricultural and regulatory infrastructure. In fact, the epidemic would ultimately cost the U.K. an estimated 8 billion pounds (approximately \$12 billion).

As a veterinarian with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I normally spend most of my time resolving animal health trade issues in Central and Eastern Europe. But I also monitor outbreaks of animal disease around the world and help prevent their introduction to the United States. So 14 other American vets and I were asked to cross the Atlantic to help British officials.

The outbreak was less than a week old, and we had little idea what to expect. (For several of my colleagues, this was their first trip overseas so they had to scramble just to get passports.) FMD was eradicated from the U.S. in 1929, so most of us had never seen a case of it outside a laboratory setting. But that was about to change in a big way.

Upon arrival, we were given a short briefing and

split into three different teams. Earlier budget cuts had led to decreased numbers of U.K. government veterinarians, so the most critical need was for us to inspect animals for signs of the disease. Accordingly, four colleagues and I traveled to the Worcester field office to work alongside the English veterinarians who were battling this horrible disease. After arriving at the train station and renting a car, we drove off, gingerly, on the "wrong" side of the road to check the farms on our list.

## Helping Farmers Cope

At the very first farm we visited, we quickly diagnosed FMD. Soon, I was arranging for the slaughter and burial of 4,000 sheep and 20 cattle. I helped the family with special permits so they could drive to the store and bring their children to school despite being effectively confined to home, and I advised them on how to prevent spreading the disease.

The family was ostracized by some in their small rural community. The children were told at school that other children couldn't play with them because their family's farm had FMD. They all stayed in the house while the slaughtering was done, for there was nowhere else to go. The pubs were all closed, and the social support structure of this and many other small farming communities was unraveling under the pressure of trying to prevent FMD from spreading even farther.

The farmers told me that the worst part was the silence of isolation. What do you do with your time when you've spent the last 30 years of your life getting up and taking care of your animals, only to have every

A GROUP OF 15 FOREIGN SERVICE VETERINARIANS TRAVEL TO THE U.K. TO HELP FIGHT AN OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

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***The British media  
were particularly  
interested in obtaining  
comments from us  
“foreign vets.”***

one of them destroyed? How do you even consider starting over again?

One family told me I was like their “funeral director.” They said I helped them through the grieving process that accompanies any death, even if it is “just” the death of one’s animals. But then I had to move on, for there were many more farms to visit and more cases of FMD to diagnose. I was happy on the rare occasions when I could say the animals did not look like they had FMD — yet.

**No Options**

On the more typical farms, where the news was not so good, I sat long hours with weatherbeaten farmers over a cup of coffee or tea while they contemplated how and if their farm was going to survive and what was going to happen next. When a farmer seemed particularly distraught, I called family members to try to arrange for someone to stay with him. I gave everyone the number of the local suicide prevention hotline and my cell phone number, and told them to call me anytime.

Some did. They called me when they couldn’t take their cattle and sheep from winter to summer pasture because of the movement bans, and they pleaded with me to arrange for the slaughter of their prize breeding stock because they were calving in flooded fields and the newborn calves and lambs were drowning and there was nothing they could do about it. These animals, like many others, were not sick. But the movement restrictions so essential to stopping the spread of the disease meant that some animals could no longer be cared for in a humane fashion. So we began killing animals for welfare reasons.

At one farm, I oversaw the slaughter of an entire flock of purebred sheep, each worth thousands of dollars, to which the appraiser could only say that this was

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*Karen Sliter is a Foreign Service specialist with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the Department of Agriculture’s quarantine agency.*

an “irreparable loss” to the breed. All I could do was make sure the killing was humane, for there was no option: it was just us in the face of overwhelming death and destruction. I tried to help the farmer and his family through those long, hard days, and they helped me as well.

The days and weeks quickly became a blur. In all, over eight million animals were destroyed during the FMD outbreak. A third of these animals were killed for welfare reasons. Funeral pyres dotted the countryside.

**Looking for Scapegoats**

Naturally, everyone we met wanted to know what was going on, and whether we would be successful in eradicating the disease. Interestingly, they all assumed that someone had done something wrong, or failed to do something, and was therefore to blame for the epidemic.

The media were particularly interested in obtaining comments from the “foreign vets.” I was suddenly a minor media star, interviewed by numerous news programs. I even appeared on the CBS national news! I often had to fend off leading questions from the British press, which would typically request an interview right before a high government official was scheduled to give a press conference on FMD. “And Dr. Sliter, what would you do differently than the English have done in trying to eradicate FMD?”

Finally, it was time to leave and let the next group of American veterinarians take our places. In all, over 200 U.S. vets would travel to the U.K. during 2001 to help their British colleagues eradicate FMD, a tangible indication of the support the United States gave the U.K. during this national crisis.

We returned to our regular assignments at APHIS and elsewhere, but continued following the reports. We celebrated the U.K.’s success when FMD was officially eradicated from the United Kingdom on Sept. 30, 2001. ■

# OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS: ON THE MOVE

BY LINDA O'BRIEN

Office Management Specialists are a restless crew, always looking for ways to increase their responsibilities, always trying to make their assignments meaningful and always interested in professional development and cultural experiences. As of this writing there are 858 OMSs, thanks to the success of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative that brought in 58 new recruits in 2002 and 80 in 2003. They have been assigned to such diverse and exciting places as Islamabad, Seoul, Tel Aviv, Moscow, Riyadh, Kathmandu, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Abu Dhabi, Nairobi, Jakarta, Shenyang, Dubai, Pretoria, Warsaw and Tokyo.

In the past year, 227 of them have taken Office Management Training at FSI. Many have also attended training in the Schools of Language Studies, Leadership and Management, Professional and Area Studies and Applied Information Technology. They have served outside their skill code as staff assistants, public diplomacy officers, consular officers, GSOs, information management specialists and personnel officers.

## Experiencing the Unexpected

With training and new challenges come professional and personal experiences never expected. This has been the case with many Office Management Specialists who have made the Foreign Service not only their career, but also their life.

One OMS was assigned to Tokyo 35 years after her father had been part of the first corps of occupation soldiers at the end of World War II. He gave her an aged scrap of paper with a name and city written on it, and asked her to try and locate a family he had met there as a young GI. She couldn't believe it when she actually found them, and arranged a reunion between her father and the surviv-

ing family members. Working through sister-city organizations, she arranged for one of the sons to bring some of his award-winning photographs to the U.S. for an exhibition. This experience brought the diplomatic work we do every day down to a very personal level.

Who would have thought OMSs would be interior designers? Yet they refurbish, redecorate and remodel offices, redefining individual workspaces, selecting ergonomic office furniture, deciding on effective window treatments, choosing the color of carpets and picking out appropriate artwork. This helps to improve the quality of the work environment, and thus boosts employee productivity and morale.

Speechwriting is also something OMSs may find themselves doing. One OMS drafted the speech for her ambassador to give at the annual Marine Corps ball. Another drafted the commencement address for her ambassador to give at the graduation exercises of his alma mater, where he would be receiving an honorary degree. The university had stressed the theme of "service." She emphasized that service is not only confined to one's own country, but applies to other countries as well.

One ambassador's OMS in a small African post coordinated everything for the Fourth of July celebration to which 600 persons were invited. She discussed the menu with the ambassador's cook, worked with the Recreation Association to order all the food and drinks, arranged for a band and slide show with Public Affairs, enlisted the help of the GSO to design a podium, developed the program of events and basically ran the whole show! At another small African post, the OMS (who had a 4/4 in French) was the post biographic reporting officer, responsible for scanning all of the French-language newspapers daily, clipping pertinent information, and drafting cables.

When a severe earthquake rocked El Salvador and most of Central America in January 2001, OMSs helped set up an emergency control room at the embassy. Dog

## F O C U S

teams were sent into the cities that had the most damage. Relief supplies and personnel arrived in a couple of days. Another earthquake struck in February. They worked long hours while living with what felt like constant danger from literally hundreds of aftershocks around the clock for a couple of months.

### **Meeting Danger and Dignitaries**

In the first few hours after the August 1998 bombing of our embassy in Nairobi, OMSs maintained a log of wounded embassy personnel and the hospital to which each had been rushed. They started lists of those accounted for and those still missing. Two OMSs were the first embassy staff to head to the USAID building across town to set up 24-hour contact with the State Department Operations Center. In the ensuing weeks

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*Linda O'Brien was OMS Coordinator for the Bureau of Human Resources from 2002 to 2003. She thanks her OMS colleagues who contributed to this article.*

they begged, borrowed and commandeered everything from desks and chairs to computers, cell phones and wastebaskets to achieve a degree of normalcy in chaotic surroundings.

OMSs have shaken hands not only with many U.S. presidents, but also many foreign presidents and other dignitaries. One even has a picture of herself with Kevin Costner, taken when he visited the White House! Another OMS expressed her love for the color, history and tradition of Guatemalan culture through her painting and by participating in weekly classes with local artists. These activities culminated in a show of their work at the home of a prominent Guatemalan family.

OMSs have participated in USAID-sponsored trips to remote parts of Bolivia to bring potable water, supplies and health aids, mentored Peace Corps volunteers and visited their sites, and watched dust storms in Africa erase the road they were on in a matter of seconds.

Yes, Office Management Specialists are on the move... ■

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# THE EVOLUTION OF THE OMS FUNCTION

BY LLYWELYN C. GRAEME

**T**he position description of the Office Management Specialist (known in the private sector as an administrative assistant, and formerly known in the Foreign Service as a secretary) is on the verge of a major shift that will shape how OMS personnel are utilized — and treated — for decades to come. That prediction should not be surprising for, with the exception of the Information Management specialty, the OMS function has already changed more than any other Foreign Service track over the past 20 years.

To be sure, some things remain basically the same. Office Management Specialists still make copies, send faxes, pick up the mail, answer the phones, handle correspondence, make appointments, meet and escort visitors, run errands, and do pretty much anything else needed to keep their section running smoothly. But as with their IM colleagues, the ubiquitous desktop computer has transformed OMS work in a crucial respect.

Until well into the 1980s — and even today at some posts — most officers hand-wrote cables, memcons and airmgrams, which a secretary then typed and sent out on any of many different forms which, every few years, were modified or changed completely. (Senior-level officers sometimes dictated their letters and other documents for a secretary to type.) If the secretary was lucky, she had a self-correcting typewriter to minimize the drudgery; otherwise, she had to use correction tape or whiteout.

Given how much time Foreign Service secretaries

spent typing, until recently it wasn't unusual for a political or economic section at even a medium-size embassy to have as many as eight secretaries. By contrast, today even a section in a huge Western European embassy might have just two or three OMSs, as FSOs are now accustomed to doing most of their own drafting.

Now Office Management Specialists spend that time on other duties, such as coordinating the annual Mission Program Plan process, tracking reporting and demarche requests, and organizing the Fourth of July guest list. They also have more time to step back and look at how their office functions. Where can efficiencies be gained? Do we need to keep the same procedures in place we have used since the Truman administration? (Surprisingly, often we do.) In short, liberated from the tyranny of the typewriter, Office Management Specialists can make a real institutional difference.

## LIBERATED FROM THE TYRANNY OF THE TYPEWRITER, OMSS CAN MAKE A REAL INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCE.

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### Yet More Specialization

In the future I see the possibility of the Office Management

Specialty splitting into two distinct parts:

One, the Office Manager, will be the section expert on computer applications such as Excel, Access, Outlook, FrontPage, tags and terms, CableXpress and SIPRnet, Intranet and — perhaps most of all — the Internet. (While the IM staff may be expert on programming and network administration, other personnel still need to be expert in the use of the office software currently available.) One of the most important skills is online research — whether to compile media reports, U.N. “white papers,” congressional biographies or contact information for host country officials — and information management. More than anything else, an OMS needs to be

## F O C U S

a skillful Internet “research librarian,” someone who keeps up-to-date with search engines and Web sites that compile other sites.

The second direction I see is that of the Administrative Assistant. A high-caliber OMS would easily be able to fill any staff assistant position (and some have done so in the past with great success). Regardless of the amount of automation added to a post, the chief of mission will always need an assistant, in one form or another. So do many other officers in large sections. This is not so much to run errands as to keep tabs on how the COM’s time is parceled out. If you

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*A recent entrant to the Foreign Service, Llywelyn C. Graeme has served as an Office Management Specialist in Abuja for the past two years. His second tour starts in Beijing this fall.*

### *The ubiquitous desktop computer has transformed OMS work in a crucial respect.*

fill up his or her schedule, there is no time left for independent thought, but if you guard the COM’s time too jealously, you risk being perceived as an impediment to real office success.

He or she — incoming OMSs have not achieved gender parity, but several of the most recent training classes had 10 percent to 20 percent male membership — will also see to it that there is paper in the fax, printer, copier and bathroom. Such Adminis-

trative Assistants might supervise FSNs and even American staff, coordinate special projects and do considerably more “programmatic” tasks that are currently shared among many.

Although some may say the time is coming when the OMS function will cease to exist due to automation, I believe that, in some combination of the jobs outlined above, there will always be a place for us. ■

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# GIVE ME TECHNICOLOR ... ANY DAY!

BY LINDA INGALLS

**A**fter 14 years as a Foreign Service Office Management Specialist, I'm happy to say that I still get a thrill from living overseas and experiencing a life "different" from what I could expect in the United States. Better? Yes, in some ways. Worse? Yes, in some ways. Life in the Foreign Service is Technicolor — and sometimes even neon.

I have been lucky enough to visit Red Square and the Hermitage, see the pyramids and a number of exotic souks, explore the Holy Land, and collect enough carpets and copper to gobble up my allotted household effects weight limit. I have been privileged to ride a camel, ride a bike alongside canals, and ride a bright red double-decker bus to work.

I've eaten my way through most regional foods, enjoyed warm Belgian waffles, scraped snails from their shells with a safety pin, eaten cheeses so unique that the smell alone could drive a grown man to his knees, downed unidentifiable grilled meats off a wooden stick, and tasted desserts I could happily die for. But I still need to sample what South America has to offer, and I look forward to every single calorie.

I've seen demonstrators waving posters in front of the American embassy in a half-dozen different countries, and — whether I agreed with what the demonstrators had to say or not (assuming I could understand

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*Linda Ingalls is senior OMS in the Political Section, Embassy London.*

their language) — I have been thankful they live in countries where this is permitted. Their chants and drum-banging are the sounds of freedom, and that ain't a bad thing.

I know from listening to water-cooler talk that my love for this lifestyle is not necessarily shared by all members of the Foreign Service (or maybe it is, and what I hear is recreational complaining). There are certain hardships and risks we experience that friends and family in the States don't. And this is where we venture into the neon!

Over the years, I've felt the earth quiver from earthquakes and bombs, felt despair and helplessness over filthy living conditions in Third World countries, spent painful sessions on the toilet, distilled my drinking water, been treated for skin fungus, and endured disconcertingly thorough physical exams to ensure there weren't other embarrassing health problems to be addressed.

Yes, along with the perks, Foreign Service members also run into amoebas, bombings, cholera, dysentery, evacuations, and a whole alphabet of nasty stuff that you wouldn't find at a typical U.S. shopping mall.

But if I wanted a shopping-mall life, saturated with fast food and films, I wouldn't have joined the Foreign Service. When I consider that I could be sitting at the same dull desk, in the same building, with the same colleagues, living in the same city for years and years ... well, that feels just a little gray to me. Where else but the Foreign Service will computer and office management skills take you around the world? Give me Technicolor — and even neon — any day. ■

WHERE ELSE BUT THE  
FOREIGN SERVICE WILL  
COMPUTER AND OFFICE  
MANAGEMENT SKILLS TAKE  
YOU AROUND THE WORLD?

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# THE LIFE OF FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALISTS

BY BRIAN COEN

**W**hen I ask friends what the State Department does, some respond, “what state?” Many people know something about the current Secretary of State but not much about his agency. Even some who are reasonably well-informed tend to think that State is either like a lower-grade CIA where everything is “top secret, James Bond stuff,” or just another government bureaucracy that pushes paper but never accomplishes anything.

If I then ask them what they think the Foreign Service does, their answers usually demonstrate similar confusion. Some people give answers like “it makes foreign policy,” “it negotiates treaties,” and so forth, which is true as far as it goes, of course. But few, if any, members of the general public have any idea that Foreign Service specialists exist at all, let alone know anything about the many, varied and indispensable jobs we do.

Sadly, I suspect few Foreign Service officers are much better informed about their specialist colleagues, or have much interest in them at all. Just as Foreign Service generalists are relegated to the bowels of the foreign policy machinery in the public’s perception, specialists are equally shadowy figures in the minds of most FSOs.

After all, for those seeking prestige, and impressed by the mystique and sophistication traditionally associated with diplomacy, a position as a Foreign Service

officer is the ticket to the top. And it is true that specialists do not get to pull off major policy coups like concluding a trade agreement or helping two warring factions come to terms. But that doesn’t mean that we are any less committed to serving our country overseas.

We see the Foreign Service as a natural progression in a long and varied professional career, not just a job. Many of us have higher levels of education than our generalist colleagues; in fact, unlike FSOs, we are required to have advanced levels of education and training just to get into the Foreign Service.

Part of the problem may be the fact that even though what specialists do is central to the very functioning of any overseas mission, we are generally noticed only when there is a problem with the computers or phones. Otherwise, except for interacting with post managers to obtain financial resources, we operate fairly autonomously. That is even more true back in Washington, where we run our own pro-

grams, manage multimillion-dollar projects, engineer systems for worldwide installation, plan and design security requirements for emergency communication and interagency operability issues, teach and train at FSI, and much more.

What do I like about what I do? As with many generalists, travel is one of the things I enjoy the most about being in the Foreign Service. (Some might call me an “adventure junkie,” but I prefer to think of it as living life to the fullest.) And it’s a good thing I do enjoy it, because I spend a lot of time on the road!

In conjunction with the Frankfurt Regional

IT ISN’T ONLY OUTSIDERS  
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Informational Management Center, RIMC Cairo, where I am based, covers 125 missions throughout Europe, North and West Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East — about half of all overseas posts. Even our smallest consulates get periodic visits by someone in our office, enabling us to support them all effectively.

We usually travel alone and so rely on the local staff for support. In some areas, this can be a faith-stretching experience because hardware stores are few and far between. But it does provide us with an unusual look at the world of the Foreign Service. We get to see some of the internal politics and the quality of service a post receives (or doesn't) from its various sections. So if you ever want to know what a post is really like, ask the RIMC technicians.

Depending on where I'm going, I get to experience temperatures ranging from minus 30 to 120 degrees F in quick succession. That makes packing for a trip tough, but I do enjoy the changes of scenery. I also like the fact that every day I do different things in different places: conduct a maintenance visit, plan a new engineering project, or provide communications support for a trip by the Secretary of State or other VIPs to somewhere in our region.

When I go to a post, I not only install, repair, or do preventive maintenance on communications equipment, but sometimes I also counsel people. Even in large embassies, most of my colleagues work long hours in a small box with no windows and heavy doors. (I can relate to that because I work in a basement office.) For communicators at a small post there is

*is a problem.*

also a very real sense of isolation — even, at times, a loneliness that can creep into one's

thoughts. So they really appreciate having a colleague from the outside to talk to, whether to get advice on what assignments to bid on or how to deal with a supervisor, or just to vent their frustration. These personal relationships are very important in the work I do and they can contribute to better operations at the posts I visit. I feel honored to listen to my colleagues' concerns and either address them or suggest other people to consult.

What do I dislike about my job? Paradoxically, travel is also the hardest thing about my job, because I have to leave my family behind — sometimes for weeks at a time. I also get concerned when I go to a high-threat post and my wife reminds me to watch my back because our insurance doesn't cover terrorist actions or riots, civil unrest, etc. We do have a tough work environment at times, and with the current situation in the Middle East, that weighs heavy on the minds of families. I think back to the stories during World War II when the soldiers used to see the sign, "Kilroy was here." Perhaps Kilroy was a member of the Foreign Service?

Often I have to work well over the standard eight-hour day while traveling, and because of the Fair Labor Standards Act exemption — thank you very much — even authorized overtime is compensated at less than my base salary. Compensatory time is, of course, easier to claim, but it is often hard to use, given our tight schedules. (Besides, our family members work or are in school during that time, anyway.)

Sometimes I spend 18 to 30 hours of travel time in order to catch the one flight into (or out of) a country for the week. Even the more regular flights still sometimes require leaving on a weekend in the mid-

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*Brian Coen is an Information Management Technical Specialist–Radio. He currently works in the Regional Informational Management Center in Cairo.*

*I suspect most specialists  
and generalists would  
agree that State needs to  
do a better job of handling  
personnel issues.*

dle of the night in order to make a connection. If we had an actual time clock to punch, I am sure we would accrue a week off for every three weeks traveled.

A related issue is Sunday differential. In Cairo, we work Sunday through Thursday, while Frankfurt and the department work the standard Monday through Friday schedule. We also have posts in our region that work Saturday through Wednesday. So there are literally times when a person could work a month straight going from one post to another without a weekend off.

For all these reasons, it can be very difficult to apply the regulations to figure out whether one is entitled to overtime, differential, or per diem for all those extra hours in the air and on the job. Making matters worse, recent regulatory changes eliminating “protracted” travel compensation — analogous to the sea duty pay, family separation pay, danger pay and combat pay that members of the military receive during deployments — have also made it harder to obtain any compensation at all for extended travel.

**On the Same Team**

One thing I suspect specialists and generalists alike agree on is the fact that State needs to do a better job of handling personnel issues. There is nothing more frustrating and aggravating for employees than to see the agency that is supposed to improve their working conditions and make their careers more satisfying instead mess with their money, their travel, and their transportation. Even after problems are brought to managers’ attention, they typically take many months and even years to resolve.

But to be fair, I do see signs that State is slowly starting to address these issues. It already requires management training courses at various pay grades.

In addition, I understand that staff members are developing plans to improve the department’s internal processes, exemplifying the “islands of excellence” theory often cited as an example of a healthy organization. Already the department has initiated controls to improve tracking processes and customer satisfaction (I’ve recently been asked to fill out several questionnaires assessing the services I’ve received). Here’s hoping the department will take the feedback from those surveys seriously and use it to improve operations. Otherwise, it will become more and more difficult to recruit and retain skilled employees.

I would also recommend the creation of a Chaplain Corps to assist the regional psychiatrists in providing counseling services. If resource constraints prevent State from hiring such individuals, perhaps military chaplains could be detailed to selected posts with Marine detachments for the benefit of the entire embassy community. These chaplains could have regional responsibilities, as do Foreign Service psychiatrists.

By improving employee morale through spiritual and family counseling, the chaplains would enhance the efficiency of the missions they serve. As a bonus, they could also cultivate local religious contacts and provide the department with insights into issues related to religion. Especially since 9/11, these issues are more vital than ever to safeguarding the well-being of our people overseas.

Let me close by emphasizing how much I enjoy my work and by urging Foreign Service generalists to view specialists as skilled professional colleagues, not invisible support staff. After all, we may play different positions, but we all are on the same team, serving our country while experiencing the adventure and allure of different cultures. ■



# SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

BY HARRY CHAMBERLAIN

I enjoy working for the Department of State, and if I had it to do all over again I would still join. That said, here is a summary of the problems that specialists encounter as seen through my eyes over the past 13 years.

In my new-hire class in the hot summer of 1990 there were no punches pulled: we were being hired as specialists, not officers; and in many cases our privileges would be different. Officers, we were told, have contacts with their counterparts in the host governments, and thus need to be on the diplomatic list and have appropriate titles.

I have been in countries where this was indeed true, but it is the exceptions I have encountered that make me wonder if that is, in fact, the only reason, or if there is another, unspoken reason lurking in the background.

## The Dip List Issue

My first assignment was as a Regional Information Management Center Communications Electronics Officer based in Abidjan. The RIMC director was on the Dip List, while the rest of us were on the administrative and technical staff. I didn't give any thought to this until one night the vehicle in which I was riding was stopped by the local police. I showed the officer my A&T ID cards, whereupon he loudly commented that I wasn't a diplomat and I had better pay his "fine."

In Africa, as in many other areas of the world I am sure, the A&T staff are the ones who are called into the office in the middle of the night during civil unrest to receive NIACT Immediate (top priority) cables from the department. We are the ones who have to get through the police

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*Harry Chamberlain has been a Foreign Service specialist since 1990. He is currently the Information Programs Officer in Minsk.*

and military roadblocks, sometimes with little more than our wits. There are many times when there would be hassle and danger regardless of the type of ID one has, but isn't it proper to provide the best protection possible?

While on the Information Management VIP program, I had occasion to visit a post that had a supervisory General Services Officer and three assistant GSOs. Two of the A/GSOs were officers and one was a specialist; guess which one wasn't on the Dip List! All the officers were on the Dip List, while all the specialists, including

the Regional Security Officer — who probably had more contact with the host government than many of the officers — were excluded. So much for the criterion of host government contact.

In Ouagadougou everyone was on the Dip List, so there were no issues there. In Mexico City, only the Information Management Officer was on the Dip List, while all the other IM employees were on the A&T list. Fortunately, in Mexico the list you were on determined only which parties you were invited to.

But there can be severe financial penalties if you are not on the Dip List; often the reimbursement for the value-added tax, for instance, is wholly dependent on which list you are on.

## A Zero-Sum Proposition?

Many people perceive the officer-specialist equation as a zero-sum affair: anything given to the specialist must come from the officers. It is my understanding that composition of the Dip List is a reciprocity issue stemming from a desire by Congress to limit the number of foreign diplomats on the diplomatic list in the United States.

Nonetheless, I believe all our people deserve the maximum protection and benefits in these perilous times. We are in the trenches and in many cases face genuine peril in our day-to-day encounters overseas. ■

# IROs: INTO THE CYBER AGE

BY RUTH MARA AND CYNTHIA BORYS

**I**nformation Resource Officers work with the public affairs sections at U.S. missions to develop the best possible mix of information services for the Information Resource Centers, whose goal is to advance U.S. interests by increasing understanding of its policies among influential foreign nationals.

In some countries, information delivery via the Internet is more prevalent than in the U.S.; in others, printed materials or resources on CD-ROM may be the most appropriate mechanism for disseminating information. Regardless of the environment, IROs know the policy issues from the U.S. point of view and have the technical tools to help the IRC staff develop timely information products and services.

## A Regional Base

The typical IRO travels about 60 percent of the time, visiting the posts in his or her region. During an initial post

visit, the IRO works with the public affairs section to create an annual IRC work plan. Subsequently, the IRO reviews progress and drafts recommendations for furthering the work. Recommendations might include: developing a new outreach product for getting information to a particular segment of the host country public; acquiring a new desktop publishing application for “just-in-time” publishing of key policy documents in the host country language; or improving the post’s contact management system.

IRC staff training is a major component of every IRO visit. One facet of training involves information technology, whether in the form of new databases, new applications, or development of new Web-based products and services, such as e-mail subscription services, chat rooms, or delivery of information to handheld wireless devices. The most important assistance IROs provide to IRC personnel, however, is “contextual information.” For example, most countries have a highly codified and centralized legal system, so that finding all relevant legislation on a particu-

## A Day in the Life of an IRO...

By Marge Melun

I am the IRO based in Rome, covering 12 southern Europe posts from Lisbon to Ankara. As an information professional — a librarian in the cyber age — I bring the unique disciplines of library and information science to the support that I provide. During a post visit I might do any or all of the following:

- Introduce IRC staff to new electronic resources and databases that can be used for both outreach and research purposes. IRC staff will use these resources to keep the embassy and audience members such as journalists, academics and government officials informed on important policy issues.

- Review the embassy Web site to make sure it is current, user-friendly, and makes optimal use of International Information Programs products.

- Advise IRC staff on ways to respond to reference requests, such as those dealing with congressional legislation. Some host country legislatures request this type of material as models for their own laws.

- Promote contacts with host country librarians. This could

mean teaching them how to use U.S. government Web sites for research purposes or speaking on the role U.S. public libraries and other institutions play in supporting our civil society.

- Support and advise posts seeking to develop an “American Corner” or other information outreach efforts.

As an IRO I feel that my most important contribution is to work with the dedicated FSNs who staff our IRCs, making sure they have the training and resources necessary to support U.S. public diplomacy objectives.

I have been an IRO specialist in the Foreign Service since 1994. Moving from the traditional libraries of the past to today’s electronic information environment has presented many challenges, but I appreciate the fact that the IROs and our IIP colleagues are helping lead our embassies into the cyber information age.

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*Marge Melun’s previous postings include assignments in Washington and as regional IRO in Islamabad and Vienna.*

## F O C U S

lar issue is rather straightforward. In the United States, by contrast, an issue may involve the federal government; or it may be a state, county, or municipal matter. IROs provide training to IRC staff on this aspect of U.S. law. IROs also hold training seminars on U.S. statistical information, another difficult terrain.

### **In the Service of Public Diplomacy**

IROs are part of the Bureau of International Information Programs. IIP produces the *Washington File*, regional and thematic Web pages, electronic journals, and print publications, and also arranges speaker programs. As the most regular IIP visitors to posts, IROs are able to pro-

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*Ruth Mara served as IRO in Africa, the NIS, Canada and the Caribbean; she now collaborates with IIP in producing electronic information resources. Cynthia Borys is director of the Bureau of International Information Programs' Office of Information Resources. She has served as a regional officer in Abidjan, Bangkok, Rome, and Vienna.*

vide feedback from the posts' use of IIP products, and proffer suggestions for new materials or services. Because IRCs provide cutting-edge information services to foreign publics as well as to U.S. mission personnel, professional development is essential for IROs. IIP supports professional training through courses at FSI, individual training programs, and attendance at professional conferences.

New initiatives are bringing further evolution to the IRO position. Many are now involved with posts to develop "American Corners" in areas of host countries geographically distant from embassies and consulates. Under the American Corners project, posts can purchase and donate to local universities and other institutions small collections of books and other information resources that highlight the United States. In return, the recipient institution agrees to serve as a host venue for speakers and other post programs. Although the form may be different, the involvement of the IROs in the American Corners efforts is simply another manifestation of the furtherance of public diplomacy through information. ■



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# THE IMS OVERSEAS: STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

*By WILLIAM POTTER*

**I**t has now been nearly five years since I began my career with the Foreign Service as an Information Management Specialist. This job has certainly transformed my life in ways that I had never imagined. I have tremendously enjoyed the opportunity to live overseas and explore new cultures. However, the actual experience of working in an embassy or consulate is not always as satisfying as it could be.

Becoming proficient with all that is expected of the IMS overseas can take years of on-the-job training and experience, in addition to the many hours of classroom instruction that are required. A typical IMS will possess a broad range of technical knowledge in several vital areas — namely, communications and information management systems hardware, software, and end-user training and support.

## **What We Do**

There are 68 items on my short list of programs and systems that an IMS serving overseas may be responsible for — from toner cartridges and copier and printer repair to satellite communications, mail screening for chemical or biological contaminants, and post Web site development.

This list does not include personnel and administrative responsibilities. Even first- and second-tour IMS personnel will often supervise some of the Foreign Service National staff members. In general, more experience brings more administrative responsibility for the management of projects and personnel.

And, because the Post Communications Center where the IMS generally works is off-limits to local FSN staff, including the FSNs that would otherwise provide support services, an IMS will also be responsible for keeping these facilities clean and habitable. So, in addition to all their other technical and administrative responsibilities, IM specialists routinely empty the trash, change the light bulbs, and vacuum the floor.

This can be a shock to professional self-esteem. These days even many first-tour IMS personnel join the Foreign Service with several years of management experience in addition to advanced technical certifications and graduate degrees, never anticipating having to perform such tasks. This is perhaps one of the biggest reasons why the attrition rate is rather high for IMS personnel after only their first or second tour overseas.

The thoughtful IMS may come to accept such conditions of work on security grounds. But even the most resilient new hire will be tested by another feature of the real working conditions: the disparity between IMS personnel and Foreign Service officers serving overseas. It isn't just the fact that we are issued different diplomatic license plates and identity cards, but the feelings of lowliness and frustration that come with being treated as second-class citizens.

## **The Pecking Order at Post**

Once one has worked in a few communications centers and seen the office space, furnishings, and equipment assigned to Information Resources Management personnel overseas, one learns quickly where an IRM specialist stands in the pecking order of an embassy or consulate —

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near the bottom. On arrival at my first overseas post, I was dumbfounded to find how little office space and equipment we had to perform our duties. There were a total of three direct-hire State Department IRM employees, and all three of us shared a single desk and a single unclassified (ALMA) workstation.

One would think that Information Management personnel overseas might actually get to use the unclassified Local Area Network once or twice a day. No such luck. Even if we had had another PC to connect to the LAN, there would have been nowhere to put it, since there was no room in our office for a second desk. Yet every other American working at post and 90 percent of the FSNs had their own offices and unclassified LAN PCs. So why is it that the IRM personnel assigned with the responsibility for maintaining and supporting these resources could not use them? Strange!

I know of one post, and I am sure there are others, where a new mission office building is being constructed. I have seen the floor plans, which allocate two small offices for an IRM section with four Americans. In other words, there will be just two desks for four full-time, direct-hire American IRM personnel. By contrast, all the direct-hire FSOs will have individual offices. And many sections, such as political, consular and public affairs, have several extra offices for future personnel that have yet to be assigned to post.

At that same post, all State Department direct-hire Americans, including IM personnel, were issued cell phones. But we did not receive the same cell-phone service: the Foreign Service officers and many of their spouses got GSM cell phones, which have the widest reach internationally and are the standard in international cellular communications, while specialists like myself received a local cell phone to go with the cheapest cell-phone plan that was available. In fact, the cell-phone service I used was so poor that I could not reliably make or receive calls. As a result, when it was my week to be “duty communi-

***On arrival at my first overseas post, I was dumbfounded to find how little office space and equipment we had to perform our duties.***

tor” — on call in case an urgent telegram needs to be sent or received, another IMS responsibility — I had to stick around home every night and all weekend just in case the Marine guard needed to contact me.

My request to the GSO for an upgraded cell phone was denied because my position, I was told, did not warrant this expense. In other words, our GSO was entitled to a dependable cell phone just in case he needed to respond to an emergency

maintenance call to come unclog an officer’s bathroom toilet, but I could not get a cell-phone call from the Marine guard at Post One regarding a top-priority cable that required immediate attention!

Clearly, the disparity between IM specialists and Foreign Service officers is not going away anytime soon. Any change to this corporate culture must start from the top, back in Washington. But IRM specialists can accelerate the process by standing up and letting their voices be heard.

### **No Recognition Without Representation**

The annual or semi-annual awards ceremonies at post can be morale-killers for IRM personnel, Americans and FSNs alike. While Foreign Service officers can reasonably expect to at least be nominated for some awards during the course of their tour, IMS personnel should not expect to get anything. At first I thought this was because our supervisors were not nominating us. But that assumption was proven incorrect when I began managing IRM personnel and submitted four nominations for FSNs in our section. I was surprised that one of the nominations was turned down and two others had their cash award amounts reduced from \$250 to \$50. There was not enough money in the budget, I was told. I decided to withdraw the two nominations whose amounts had been reduced, and defer them until a more opportune time.

On the day of the awards ceremony, nearly 70 percent of the GSO staff received awards. I believe I saw the entire FSN staff from the public affairs office come forward. With loud applause, numerous personnel from other sections paraded up to be recognized. Only one member of our staff, an FSN, received an award. Needless to say, I felt embarrassed for our entire IRM

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*William Potter joined the Foreign Service in 1999 as an Information Management Specialist. He has served in Sofia, and is currently an IMS in Sao Paulo.*

section.

From that experience and others, it appears to me that IRM personnel are not fairly represented on most awards committees (or on post housing boards, for that matter). All award nominations should be given equal weight, no matter what section they come from and irrespective of who is on the awards committee. But I believe the correct approach to resolving this problem would be to require the manager of the IRM section (and every other section at post) to be a member of the awards committee.

### Let Your Voice Be Heard

One characteristic I found in many IRM supervisors overseas, is a lack of desire to attend the administrative staff and country team meetings. The usual reason given is that "meetings are just a waste of time." No wonder IMS personnel overseas are so frequently overlooked at post — the admin officer doesn't hear our needs and concerns! If you are an IMS working overseas and your

supervisor is unwilling to attend these meetings, then by all means, offer to represent your section. Be prepared to provide detailed input, reminding colleagues that, after all, having functional telephone, e-mail and cable systems, and keeping the mail moving are vital to the mission.

When it comes to EERs, I don't know which is worse: being reviewed by an admin officer who knows nothing about what you really do with your time; or by a supervisor who does not know how to write an EER. As an IMS, our promotions depend on our evaluations, so it's often best to write them yourself.

A larger post with an Information Management Officer overseeing personnel and administrative functions, I have noticed, tends to offer more to the IM specialist as far as recognition is concerned. The IMO position at larger posts is at a higher grade level because the job requires more managerial skill and talent. By contrast, many smaller posts with only two or three IRM personnel would likely only have an Information Programs Officer, who not

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only has less time available for personnel matters such as EERs and award nominations, but would likely have less managerial talent and experience.

One more observation: Many of the current FP-3-level IPOs and IMO's need to focus on improving their managerial skills. But it is also the State Department's responsibility to properly train its mid-level managers. The head of the IRM section at each post must be someone who knows how to supervise, manage and direct subordinates. Proper training

***The opportunity for training is one of the major benefits of a***

***Foreign Service specialist career.***

and mentoring will pave the way for junior personnel to acquire the skills needed to advance in their careers, benefitting the entire Foreign Service.

**The Value of Conferences and Training Sessions**

Opportunities for training are certainly made available to IMS personnel; in fact, that is one of the major benefits of a Foreign Service special-

ist career. Admittedly, it can be difficult at times to schedule training, but if you really want it, you can usually get it.

One of the most important aspects of the 10 months I spent in orientation and initial training at FSI and Warrenton was the network of comrades that I developed there. These friends, acquaintances and contacts have proven vitally important over the years, for exchanging advice on onward assignments and sharing answers to technical questions, tips on equipment upgrades, and other professional information.

A highlight of my career has been the IRM conferences and training classes that I have attended overseas. These regional gatherings have proven to be an important venue for networking with IRM personnel from other posts and from Washington. It's difficult to maintain a corporate focus and vision with all that is required of the IMS at post. These forums are valuable methods for maintaining the necessary overview and disseminating the future goals and plans of the IRM Bureau.

Unfortunately, however, they are not frequent enough for all IRM personnel to attend. Regional conferences are currently held just once every two to three years, and are only open to one individual per post. In effect, only the senior IRM manager at post gets to go, and junior IMS personnel are deprived of a valuable experience. Requiring all IMS personnel to attend a conference or training session once per tour, or every two years, would drastically improve morale for junior IMSers overseas.

In closing, I want to emphasize that I totally enjoy working in the Foreign Service. There's nothing quite like it in the world. The unique culture and the challenging opportunities that are available to me are enough to stimulate my ambitions and keep me professionally challenged for a long time to come. ■

### **Climbing the IMS Ladder: Basic Principles**

From the day I began my Foreign Service career, I have always heard that one must go back to Washington to get ahead. Is this really true? I would love to see statistics published every year on how many of those promoted work overseas and how many are working in Washington. If IRM personnel in Washington do indeed have an advantage when it comes to promotions, then I guess that means it's not how well you perform, but whom you know, that matters.

In any case, I think it is fair to say that anyone who wants to get promoted has to be aggressive in pursuing opportunities for recognition. Toward that end, I'd like to offer my colleagues the following basic principles:

- Be aggressive in pursuing changes to your work area. It's your responsibility; don't expect someone to do it for you.
- Put things in order (even though they probably haven't been in order in years).
- Learn how to work without a desk, an office or a PC!
- Pick your battles wisely.
- Support your fellow IMS personnel at post and nominate each other for awards. Don't count on other parts of the embassy to do it for you.
- Don't complain if you find yourself in a difficult situation; work with what you have and move forward!
- Participate in the community.
- Network with your comrades. Stay in touch!
- Have your own agenda and goals, and work toward them!
- Learn how to write an EER!

— William Potter



# ASSISTING ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS IN CHAD

*BY JOE COLE*

**T**he Zakouma National Park is one of Africa's great wildlife reserves. Little known and seldom visited, it covers an area of 1,200 square miles in remote, southeastern Chad. The park is well managed, due in large part to project assistance provided by the European Union since 1989, which has strengthened the park's management capacity and improved its infrastructure.

Chad's national parks director approached U.S. embassy personnel concerning assistance for the park's anti-poaching teams following an embassy visit to the park in

**SPECIALISTS CAN GET INVOLVED IN DIVERSE AND SUBSTANTIVE WORK, AS THIS IRM EMPLOYEE'S EXPERIENCE DEMONSTRATES.**

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1998. Democracy and Development Officer Les McBride contacted the U.S. Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service, and within a year the FSW signed an interagency agreement to provide financial support for the anti-poaching effort. The most pressing need was to procure a new radio system and equip it with an autonomous power source, as electricity is in short supply in Zakouma. A previous radio system had been damaged by lightning, and park guards were unable to communicate with their base and each other.

The embassy facilitated a series of consultations with the E.U.-funded technical assistance team's project logistician and representatives of Motorola to establish technical specifications for the radio system and choose the components. An order was placed for a base station and repeater, five mobile units, and 20 handheld units with 40 batteries. Solar panels and accessories were ordered separately from a local firm.

## **A New Radio System**

The radio components arrived in June 2000, and the E.U. project logistician, accompanied by embassy personnel, inspected the shipment and certified that the order was complete. By the time the solar panels arrived in November, however, the E.U.



*The morning after their first night in the desert camp en route to Zakouma Park, with soldiers who accompanied them to provide protection. Carl Paschall is at left, Defense Attaché Maj. Chris Brown at right, and Joe Cole is kneeling down in front.*

representative who had developed the system's technical specifications had departed Chad and was not available to oversee radio installation at the Zakouma Park. With no firm date of arrival for his replacement, I, as the embassy's Information Program Officer, volunteered to install the radio system and connect the solar panels.

In February 2001, another embassy officer, Carl Paschall, and I traveled through the desert for two days, sleeping under the stars. After arriving in Zakouma, we set up a solar power system to power the network. Then we installed the base station, repeater and antenna. We demonstrated to park personnel how to mount the mobile radios into vehicles and how to convert a mobile unit into a base station in the field. Once the system was operational, I gave an introductory course to a handful of park guards on the correct use of the handheld units, and a more detailed explanation on base station operations to local park personnel.

The new radio system provides two-way communication across a distance of 130 kilometers, and allows the park's 81 guards assigned to Zakouma and five other sites to communicate with each other as they move around in the reserve. Now, when the park's roving trackers, who go out on horseback for weeks at a time, sight poachers, they can call in to have an armed team sent to the spot via the park's only jeep.

Two days prior to installation of the radios, a giraffe had been killed by poachers less than 10 kilometers (six miles) from Zakouma. The incident was typical of the

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*Joe Cole is an Information Programs Officer at the Consulate General in Istanbul. He was previously posted to N'Djamena, where he was involved in the Zakouma National Park project.*



*Right: A Zakouma Guard captain talking to a village elder 70 kilometers away on the new radio system. Left: Carl Paschall and Joe Cole installing the cabling for the radio system antenna.*

sporadic poaching that occurs on the game reserve. Giraffes and antelope are killed for their meat, and elephants are poached for their ivory. Following successful activation of the radio system, however, not one incident of poaching has been reported.

### **It Made a Difference**

The Zakouma Park personnel were pleased with the performance of the radios and delighted by the dissuasive effect the system had on potential poachers. They pointed out that use of the radios became a well-known fact among the surrounding villages as soon as they were put into operation, and that the absence of poaching incidents, which followed installation of the radio system, was no coincidence.

Indeed, months later, when the radio system stopped functioning due to a technical problem, poaching resumed within days. Over the next several months seven elephants and as many giraffes were killed before the system was repaired and operating again.

Despite recurrent problems with poachers, Zakouma National Park has been able to gradually replenish previously declining wildlife populations, including that of the African elephant. The elephant population is currently estimated at between 1,500 to 2,000 individuals. ■

# FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALISTS SPEAK OUT

SPECIALISTS SHARE DETAILS OF THEIR PERSONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL LIVES IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

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**Editor's Note:** *A few months ago, we sent an e-mail via AFSANet inviting specialists to contribute articles or share vignettes describing their personal and professional experiences. We heard from dozens of specialists, active-duty and retired, who shared the good, the bad and the ugly aspects of life in the Foreign Service. Among the many topics they covered: relations with generalist colleagues and host country counterparts; the role of State and other foreign affairs agencies in facilitating the ability to hone current skills and acquire new ones; the difficulties of functioning without full diplomatic status overseas; and issues relating to recruitment and retention.*

*Our thanks to all who shared their experiences. In fact, we received so many responses that we will run more next month.*

— Steven Alan Honley, Editor



## Specialists Need Language Training, Too

My one major observation as a new specialist is the short shrift specialists get when it comes to language training. For example, my position as Financial Management Officer is designated “language-preferred,” which usually means no language training in practice. In fact, I had to fight just to get seven weeks of the 44-week basic Arabic course.

Now that I am here, it is often difficult to deal with vendors without one of my FSNs present to act as translator. For that reason, when my post recently compiled a revised list of positions requiring language capability, I asked that the Financial Management Officer position be included. My request was denied.

*Christian Charette*

*Financial Management Officer*

*Embassy Sanaa*



## Too Little Progress

The life of the specialist, across the board, has not significantly improved over my past 18 years with the possible exception of my own group: Information Resource Management Specialists.

While each individual group of specialists can advocate their own issues best, it is the generalization and use of the term “specialist,” that continue to haunt us even today. The division between the “Foreign Service officer” and the “Foreign Service specialist” is as real now as it has ever been. Possibly the simple conversion from “support communications officers” to “specialists” was a subtle move toward continued segregation — even if the thought was a good one (changing “communications” to “information management”).

At many posts, senior management holds regular meetings and social events for junior officers to maintain JO morale and keep their careers on track. There is no similar outreach for those designated as “specialists.” The only explanation that comes to mind is the fact that those in senior management now were JOs at one point in their career, as is the case with a significant portion of the senior staff in Washington. While I am not positive that the specialists would even be interested in such a meeting, as it may well be viewed as a pacification tool more than an honest effort to reach out, it is the overt delineation between those who are important and those who are not, that matters.

The disparity between the officer and specialist is so deeply ingrained as part of the Foreign Service’s makeup as to appear in its mandatory training.

Example: The Office of Civil Rights released a new video training program to explain federal law and State Department policy in regard to sexual harassment. One of the first slides is, I believe, entitled “Primary and Secondary Aspects of Diversity,” and features a circular

diagram or pie chart. Although it went by fairly quickly, one part I could not help but notice was the separation between “Foreign Service Generalists” and “Foreign Service Specialists.” The concern here is, of course, that somehow we are actually different, when in fact this could not be further from the truth. If discrimination is defined as the picking out, and treating differently, of people of different class groups, then I would label this as a perfect example of class discrimination.

Later in the video there is some reference to the person with the “XYZ certifications,” and later still a reference to “communicators.” Both of these references may have been meant to be funny but the audience, not the performer, determines “funny” and none of us were amused at the session I attended. It may be helpful for the Office of Civil Rights to know that the term “communicators” ceased to exist with the establishment of the Information Management Specialist position, or at least it should have. One of the reasons for the change in job titles was to rid ourselves of the stereotype associated with communicators, that of “bag-draggers” and “C&R clerks.” The fact that the term remains indicates that the stereotypes do as well, another example of discrimination.

Let me say that this is not intended as a dig at the Office of Civil Rights; overall, I think the presentation was a good one. It highlighted some serious issues in a manner designed to make them less uncomfortable to address. However, the fact remains that the examples I’ve cited here are typical, not isolated instances, and they reflect a mentality of “them and us” instead of a team approach.

Even among specialists there are signs of ingrained discrimination. One can often find general services, facilities maintenance, financial, and human resource specialists on the diplomatic list. But when you want to include the information management specialist, there seems to be a concerted lack of interest in changing the system or rather, adapting it to modern times and realities.

*Richard E. McCormick*  
*Information Management Officer*  
*Embassy Seoul*



### **Joining the Foreign Service Family**

As I walked to Building F of the George P. Shultz Foreign Service Training Center on Jan. 27, 2003, for the opening of the 70th Foreign Service Specialist class, the gravity of my new career truly dawned on me. Now I

knew why one of the interviewers at my oral assessment had said, “This is not just another job.”

These sobering thoughts disappeared as the orientation began, however. There was the delightful feel of the early carefree days of college, complete with genial, witty Foreign Service representatives, like pleasant, very wise college deans. Throughout our three-week orientation, the overall quality of the training and skills development was of a very high caliber.

But there was more than intellectual stimulation and skill development. I became deeply impressed with the Foreign Service’s family-friendly spirit. Not only were spouses and children welcomed at the various presentations, but we learned about the support available from State’s Family Liaison Office. And it did not take long to appreciate just why so many speakers referred to the “Foreign Service family” — albeit, a family with attitude, ready for all the challenges ahead in the post-9/11 international environment.

Soon our class of 141 specialists — the largest in the history of the Foreign Service — was bonding. A varied group of all ages with widely divergent skills, experiences and personalities, hailing from many states and even countries, we gathered on Feb. 14, in the Dean Acheson Auditorium to take our Foreign Service oath of office. Representing the United States abroad and at home, we had become united by our sense of common destiny. It was a Valentine’s Day to remember, as we proudly declared our endearments to our new Foreign Service family.

*Thomas White*  
*Human Resources Officer*  
*Embassy New Delhi*



### **Trial by Fire**

My fourth tour placed me in the position of the Information Management Officer, the head of the Information Resource Management section at post. After six months or so, I felt that the section had become very effective in its role for the mission. It helped that I had an administrative officer who backed me up and was willing to give me the resources to accomplish our objectives. Other than the usual difficult customers, everything was great. I loved my job and I loved being in Colombo.

Then, on April 29, 2003, the ambassador informed the entire mission that our admin officer was suspected of



major malfeasance, and would soon afterward be arrested (along with her husband, who had been the consular associate) for visa fraud.

For the next two weeks, I assisted the investigators in their collection of information (for example, by checking the hard drives of every computer). I also received the "third degree" myself due to my close personal and working relationship with the accused. During this period, everyone at post was under immense strain, of course: for example, while the consular section was closed and cleaned out, we had to rebuild most of the section's client workstations in time for the reopening.

On top of all that, I was asked to act as the admin officer, supervising a new General Services Officer and Financial Management Officer. As one can imagine, the GSO section was jumping through hoops to keep things going while also packing out the ex-admin officer's house. And as if all that weren't enough, we hosted visits by Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christine Rocca and various other VIPs.

I'm glad to report that things are slowly getting back to

normal. We now have a WAE admin officer filling in until the replacement admin officer arrives. I must say that, overall, the various admin sub-sections did a good job of surviving this crisis. I was extremely impressed with the teamwork the entire mission displayed while dealing with the increased workloads for all.

I just hope in the future that nothing like this occurs to anyone. It's a disaster for post performance and staff morale. No one deserves to endure the hardship that we did.

*Bruce Begnell*  
*Information Management Officer*  
*Embassy Colombo*



### **Needed: Upward Mobility**

As much as I enjoy being an Office Management Specialist in the U.S. Foreign Service, I absolutely deplore the archaic state of the OMS career path. Specifically, a newly-hired OMS today can reasonably expect only two competitive promotions in the course of an entire career.

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I can't tell you how many senior OMSs I know with the word "retirement" on their lips, and I'm convinced the state of the OMS promotion system is a big part of the reason. It got this way incrementally, and there may even be some movement to correct it in Washington to which, being so far from the source, I am not privy. One can only hope.

The history is that, in recognition of how significantly our responsibilities have changed over the past couple of decades, the department did away with the lower grades. Newly-hired OMSs are currently brought in at the FP-7 level. They are administratively promoted to FP-6 after about 18 months and then compete for promotion to FP-5, FP-4, and FP-3 (where we are capped). There are only 23 FP-3 OMSs out of the entire corps of 816, so you can see the chances of making it to the top are quite slim. Last year's promotion statistics showed 6 OMSs promoted to FP-3. Their average length of service was 24.2 years and average time-in-class was nine years. How many officers would stick around if faced with these statistics? In fact, whenever I explain the limitations on the OMS career path to officers, they are unanimously appalled — as well they should be.

We have argued that since the department has recognized the substantive changes in our work responsibilities by abolishing the lower grades, they should take the next steps to upgrade other positions (and promote into them accordingly) as well as opening to us the FP-2 level. I believe that unless this is done soon, we will see a steady loss in our most experienced OMSs that can only result in less efficient operations for the Foreign Service as a whole.

*Carol Scannell*  
*Office Manager*  
*Embassy Asuncion*



### **How to Bring the Walls Down**

I quit AFSA about five years ago when I grew weary of never seeing any references to specialists in the *Foreign Service Journal* or other periodic dispatches by the association such as the presidential update messages. It appeared to me AFSA did not realize there were specialists among their membership, or they just plain didn't care. To me this was a perfect example of the attitude that is endemic throughout the Foreign Service. Should AFSA take a more proactive approach

to specialist issues, I may consider rejoining.

I do not consider a lot of issues raised by my IRM colleagues to be very significant. There are many who want diplomatic status so they can have "CD" license plates, diplomatic titles, freer access to work-related locations within the country where they work (airport tarmacs), diplomatic immunity, tax advantages, more lenient import restrictions (or total lack thereof) and other similar "perks" that come with diplomatic status.

Perhaps the department should strive to better inform all prospective and active-duty specialists of the nature of being a member of the administrative and technical staff at posts overseas. I never realized there was actually a difference between specialists and officers (and had never even heard the term "A & T Staff") until after I had served almost six years in the Foreign Service and was assigned to Guangzhou, China.

Guangzhou was a consumables post then. My wife and I had planned to "split" our consumables shipment into two shipments a year apart to better manage how much we bought and minimize waste. It wasn't until we had bought, paid for, and were ready to ship our second shipment that we were told specialists were only authorized one consumables shipment, and only immediately after arrival at post. That was when I began to learn of the true gulf that separates "us" from "them."

It is my belief that a lot of the perceived and real down-trodding of the specialist corps can probably be primarily attributed to one issue: The overwhelming majority of FSOs do not seem to have a clear idea exactly what many specialists' responsibilities are, where they start and end, and how they all fit into the overall personnel structure at post. This is particularly true for Information Management Specialists, who are generally looked upon more as a "necessary evil" than genuine contributors to the mission's activities.

I have experienced examples of this dynamic so many times it would be impossible for me to outline them all. Even a fellow specialist at my current post seems to have no idea why IRM is a necessity here at the largest consulate in Africa, despite my repeated attempts to provide him with detailed information regarding our functions and activities. Not once has the Information Management Officer — who is the highest-graded, longest-in-service specialist at post — been asked to serve as the Acting Management Officer. No IRM representative is ever invited to attend country team meetings (a sit-

## F O C U S

uation which has been true at several other posts where I've served), nor is there an IRM representative on our Emergency Action Committee.

I believe this situation persists as a result of the vacuum of knowledge among this post's senior management team. They are simply unaware of the activities at post which require IRM attendance. I do not believe it is because the FSOs themselves have been too lazy or aloof to seek out exactly what it is their IRM staffers are supposed to be doing. The information has simply never been provided to them. This is where I believe a significant portion of resolving the issue lies.

Information regarding post personnel structure and responsibilities should be provided to all Foreign Service employees at every stage of their career in formal training activities. From A-100 to the Senior Seminar, specialist issues and activities should be discussed in fine detail so

***Once everyone becomes more familiar with where everyone else fits into the grand scheme of things, the walls will come down.***

everyone has a clear understanding of the contributions being made by all personnel at post and how they perform important functions in their capacity of being significantly valuable members of the mission's team.

If something of this nature is currently being attempted, it's obvious the approach is failing miserably. All initial training courses

should be specifically geared to insuring all students are fully prepared to perform the full range of their duties upon arrival at post. I am currently unaware of a State-specific profession where it can be said this is being accomplished. For example, junior officers should arrive at post with the ability to draft telegrams from scratch without having to use a template or macro. They should know exactly how the management team is structured, and whom to approach on a given issue — whether it's reserving a vehicle for official transportation, requesting

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assistance with a software program, or scheduling repairs for the plumbing in their house.

Because this is not the case, virtually every first-tour officer and specialist has to spend an inordinate amount of time learning how to navigate through all the support and substantive activities at a given post. Posts are similar enough in how they work that a quality "generic" Post Familiarization Course could be created by FSI to ensure everyone arrives at post ready to go directly to work instead of having to roam the halls trying to learn how to get even the smallest problem solved.

Once everyone, specialist and generalist alike, becomes more familiar with where everyone else fits into the grand scheme of things, the walls will come down. Everyone will be looked upon as respected and valued teammates striving to further U.S. interests abroad instead of as co-workers of questionable utility making dubious contributions to getting the job done.

*Mark S. Butchart*  
*Information Management Specialist*  
*Consulate General Lagos*



### Not Quite God's Chosen

By the time these submissions are reduced to print for the September issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*, I will have been retired for over three months. I am, however, writing this within three weeks of my retirement date.

I have been a GSO specialist for the past 13 years, serving in five posts as either the assistant GSO or the senior GSO. While the stigma of being "not quite God's chosen" has hung over my head and the heads of all other specialists, the lines of demarcation have become a little more blurred as time has passed.

As far as my colleagues at my five posts were concerned, there was no obvious distinction nor discrimination between the specialists and the generalists. On occasion, junior officers, not yet skilled in the art of personal diplomacy and not quite aware of the fact that they would have to depend on specialists to get their job done throughout their career, would take "holier than thou" positions in demanding immediate attention to their real or perceived needs. Most generally, this only happened

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## F O C U S

once, more often than not being “handled” by one or several members of the FSN staff who have an uncanny way of “leveling the playing field.”

I only wish that the folks in the Human Resources Bureau back in Washington could learn this same approach. Time and time again, in communications to or from HR, the distinction between the generalists and specialists is highlighted by virtue of divergent benefits and opportunities afforded the former and not the latter.

As a General Services Officer, and often the only one at post, I was granted “diplomatic status” at every post in which I served. GSOs are required to sign mountains of “legal documents” for the host government and, thus, require diplomatic titles and status. Most of my specialist colleagues, however, did not have diplomatic status. And yes, there were many instances where this created a considerable difference in the diplomatic benefits they received.

Generally, this included looser restrictions on generalists importing consumables after three to six months at post, the number of cars that could be registered with

diplomatic plates (often zero for specialists), the number of cars that could be imported, exported or sold at post, and the status of the employee and dependents in relation to the laws of the host country. While many of the differences were of little or no consequence to many of the specialists, from time to time, the differences did create barriers to the enjoyment of overseas life.

There is no question that these differences, when a generalist could do something a specialist could not, caused disharmony, jealousy and ill feeling toward the department.

For no matter what face State puts on the real and perceived differences, the specter of “God’s chosen” versus “not quite God’s chosen” cannot be hidden or ignored. It will remain a fact of life until the department makes the necessary changes in tradition, law and practice. The first two categories may prove difficult to tackle but the last, practice, is almost totally within the control of the department and its employees — starting with HR.

*Roger L. Street*

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# FOR PROF. GINGRICH, A LITTLE HISTORY LESSON

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NEWT GINGRICH CLAIMS THE FOREIGN SERVICE HAS SYSTEMATICALLY WORKED TO THWART BUSH ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND TO UNDERMINE U.S. INTERESTS. HERE'S WHY HE'S WRONG.

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BY STEPHEN R. DUJACK

**F**ormer Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich unleashed two shotgun blasts at the State Department in recent months, with a talk at the American Enterprise Institute in April and a piece in *Foreign Policy* magazine in July. The speech blamed the difficulties President Bush had with Turkey over military access, and with our allies on the U.N. Security Council leading up to the war in Iraq, not on differences over diplomacy and strategy, but on Foggy Bottom's propensity to play a "murky game in which the players were deceptive and the rules were stacked against the United States." He purported to describe the heretofore unknown behind-the-scenes role the department had played to thwart U.S. interests last fall even before the U.N. resolution authorized inspections, and to outline how State is now "back at work pursuing policies that will clearly throw away all the fruits of hard-won victory."

The article expanded on these statements and claimed that "anti-American sentiment is rising unabated around the globe because the U.S. State Department has abdicated values and principles in favor of accommodation and passivity." Mr. Gingrich outlined a reform program that would shift the department's role from traditional diplomacy to communication (mostly) of the president's views and "American values" to other countries. At root, however, he seems to think that the nation's problems in international relations are not a matter of addressing foreign societies but the social milieu at Foggy Bottom. The

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*Stephen R. Dujack was editor of the Foreign Service Journal from 1981 to 1988. He now edits a magazine on environmental policy, The Environmental Forum.*

Foreign Service, he concludes, must adopt President Bush's "vision," which means, "We can no longer accept a culture that props up dictators, coddles the corrupt, and ignores secret police forces."

Unfortunately, this attack is neither unprecedented in its message nor in its viciousness. It is just the latest version of nearly identical charges that, depressingly, have been a staple of conservative Republicans ever since America became a superpower. When our foreign policy fails, someone must be at fault, so why not the diplomatic corps, since they are supposed to be the foreign policy professionals? Curiously, Mr. Gingrich, who was an assistant professor of history at Western Georgia College from 1970 to 1978, seems to be ignorant of his subject, for he is repeating it. Almost word for word. And with an equal lack of accuracy.

The classic example, of course, is when the department was purged of its "China hands" after that country's "loss" to communism in 1949, part of the fallout from Wisconsin Republican Senator Joe McCarthy's famous claim that over 200 "active members of the Communist Party" worked in the department, undermining American security from within. That huge political and social forces involving hundreds of millions of people, in a far-off country as large as the United States, may have been beyond the ability of the department to affect, did not figure in the calculation.

## Foreign Policy System — Or Cabal?

But it was during the Reagan administration that the strongest parallel to Mr. Gingrich's curious comments can be found — that somehow or other a foreign policy articulated by the president is not really his responsibility, that it has been warped by others behind the scenes, and that

the True Right must look out for the president's interests. The most famous of these sentinels was Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., first elected to his post in 1972, when he became a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. Helms took it upon himself to form a "shadow State Department" within his staff, who became "country desk officers" for the senator to ensure that his policies were followed. He also exacted favors by holding up the appointments of ambassadors whom he claimed President Reagan could not possibly have really wanted to appoint, lacking the time to ensure their anti-communist credentials.

Helms' banner year was 1985. When he finally freed the "State Department 29," he took the opportunity to publicly lecture the Senate on the evils of a nominating system that puts forth candidates not sufficiently in tune with his conservative president, although he had appointed them. The reason, he said, is that the president relies on the Secretary of State, who in turn relies on "the foreign policy system. ... And that is where the problem is." On top of that, he said, there is the "absolute necessity of doing something about the functionaries in the State Department who are elected by no one, whose activities are not even monitored, and whose activities have so often led to distressing circumstances in various parts of the world." Of the 29 now-freed appointees, the Associated Press reported that one was held up for advocating observance of the SALT II treaty — a policy adhered to by President Reagan himself — and another for ejecting from her Eastern Bloc embassy a supposed asylum seeker who, in fact, was threatening to kill himself while wielding surgical scissors.

The same month, three former political ambassadors who had served Reagan held a symposium at the conservative Heritage Foundation, where they charged that a "network" of anti-Reaganites in the State Department was undermining the president's foreign policy objectives in several critical regions. They painted a picture of an influential cabal that was advancing an "internationalist" ideology and was avoiding confronting adversaries in areas where Reagan was trying to stop communism or Third World anti-Americanism. The three demanded Secretary George P. Shultz's resignation as the official responsible.

The Foreign Service "network works frantically to denigrate the latest information from the field regarding human rights violations and technology transfers," charged David Funderburk, ambassador to Romania from

1981 to 1985. "The State Department has not effectively implemented the president's stated foreign policy goals" of liberation for the peoples of Eastern Europe, he said. Rather, "it has undermined them at every turn." Charles Lichenstein, who had been Amb. Jeanne Kirkpatrick's deputy at the United Nations from 1981 to 1984, said that State ensures that those who favor the president's policies do not get promoted. "The system first, the system last, the system always." The third panelist, Curtin Winsor Jr, who served in Costa Rica from 1981 to 1983, where he used his diplomatic status to avoid having notice of a legal action served on him, was relatively silent.

As an example of one of their falsehoods, Lichenstein told of an officer who had done very well for four years under Kirkpatrick at the U.N. Then the new assistant secretary of the Bureau of International Organization Affairs "wanted this highly trained, highly skilled, and by this time highly experienced FSO to be his principal deputy here in Washington.

The system decided, however, that he was urgently required in Nigeria." Lichenstein declared the appointment "retribution" for the officer's having so faithfully served the conservative Kirkpatrick. However, upon investigation, it turned out that the officer in question had been assigned to Lagos *before* the incoming assistant secretary requested him.

Ironically, another conservative, a member of Congress, found it convenient to insulate Sec. Shultz from criticism the same month over a minor matter in the news — because it was all the Foreign Service's fault. "When the Secretary of State is the person in the headlines it is not his fault. He is surrounded by, guided by, and advised by a professional bureaucracy which is weak and ineffective. The State Department has been weak under Shultz as it was weak under Haig as it was weak under Muskie as it was weak under Vance. ... The State Department view of legalism, of conflict avoidance, of negotiating to get a 'yes' at virtually any cost, that view is fundamentally wrong." That member of Congress was Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.

Finally, there was the charge of Evan Galbraith, Reagan's businessman-turned-ambassador to France, who in leaving his post told the *New York Times* that "foreign policy is too important to be left up to Foreign Service officers. ... There is something about the Foreign Service that takes the guts out of people. The tendency is to avoid

***For someone who was an  
assistant professor of  
history before entering  
political life, Mr. Gingrich  
seems woefully ignorant  
of his subject.***

confronting an issue.” But a professional diplomat probably wouldn’t have been telling the French that the U.S. planned to retain its nuclear counterstrike force under a Star Wars system at the same time that President Reagan was saying just the opposite, which Galbraith did to Secretary Shultz’s and the White House’s dismay. Galbraith spent the next week trying to retract his remarks about FSOs. Some guts.

### A Failure to Communicate?

Today, the “Bush administration’s war on terrorism has led to a significant militarization of U.S. foreign policy that has become the dominant force in world affairs,” columnist Jim Hoagland wrote in the *Washington Post* in June. “A cliché that once described this capital preparing for crisis abroad — ‘the lights are burning late tonight at the State Department’ — has become an anachronism in

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***It was during the Reagan administration that the strongest parallels to Mr. Gingrich’s curious comments can be found.***

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George W. Bush’s Washington.” The Defense Department now runs foreign policy, according to Hoagland.

In Dana Priest’s book *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America’s Military*, she describes how the military’s regional commanders-in-chief have become more powerful

and influential than ambassadors, often assuming their roles.

For its part, as Mr. Gingrich knows, the Defense Department basically ran the show on diplomacy in the runup to war, when Secretary Donald Rumsfeld made insulting “Old Europe” allies Germany and France a daily sport at his televised press conferences. Yet Mr. Gingrich charged in his speech that it was State that had “a pattern of communications failures as a result of which ... a vast majority of French and German citizens favored policies that opposed the United States.” He also blames State for the vote of the Turkish parliament to deny U.S. troops transit rights — a remarkable claim, considering that Newt couldn’t get most of his “Contract with America” through the 104th Congress.

Be that as it may, in his *Foreign Policy* article, Mr. Gingrich declares

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that “we must have effective and reliable policy instruments beyond the Defense Department, and that can only occur with a serious and long overdue transformation of the State Department. Without bold and dramatic changes at the State Department, the United States will soon find itself on the defensive everywhere, except militarily.” Before getting to his solutions, however, there is the matter of his evidence. In both the speech and the article, his charges seem to have fallen like rotten apples into his hands, rather than having been cultivated by research.

For instance, he says that France’s “campaign seeking to defeat U.S. foreign policy objectives articulated by Bush” was, somehow or other, the direct result of an “accommodation worldview” that reacted to Libya’s winning the vote as chair of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights and the U.S. being voted off the commission. But the United States was voted off the commission in May 2001 and Libya became chair this spring, whereas U.S. difficulties with France didn’t begin till the fall of 2002 and by this spring we were in Baghdad. Contrary to good scholarly principles, he also fails to mention the inconvenient fact that the U.S. came back on the panel in April — whereupon it sought to block debate on the human rights situation in Iraq under American occupation.

The article reflects fundamental misunderstandings of how foreign policy is made and conducted. For instance, he is angry that a classified Bureau of Intelligence and Research report last March warning that “democracy would be difficult to achieve [in Iraq]” conflicts with the “vision” of President Bush, who said at the same time that “the Iraqi people can flourish in democracy.”

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Mr. Gingrich seems to think that intelligence should be tailored to ideology, not reality. How appropriate, then, that INR intelligence was vindicated in July when the administration declassified part of a National Intelligence Estimate which showed that the bureau was “highly dubious” about allegations that Iraq had sought uranium from African countries — a caveat that the president’s speechwriters ignored in preparing this year’s State of the Union address.

Worse, Mr. Gingrich’s solution, is not better facts, nor better diplomacy, but better communications. “As the world’s only superpower, largest economy, and most aggressive culture, the United States inevitably infringes on the attention and interests of other peoples and nations. A country this large and powerful must work every day to communicate what it is doing. The world does not have to love us, but it must be able to predict us.” In his view, that means keeping track of “global anti-American sentiment,” which means “left-wing nongovernmental organizations, elite media, and most of the elite academics around the world (including the United States).” The BBC is as suspect as Al-Jazeera, he says. He doesn’t use the word propaganda, or agitprop, but that is what he means. “The state-to-state diplomatic system of the past simply will not survive,” he concluded.

### **Culture Shock and Awe**

To adapt the Foreign Service to this new reality, Mr. Gingrich asserts, “the State Department needs to experience culture shock, a top-to-bottom transformation that will make it a more effective communicator of U.S. values around the world, place it more directly under the control of the president of the United States, and enable it to promote freedom and combat tyranny.

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***Mr. Gingrich cites his  
service as a member  
of the Hart-Rudman  
Commission,  
but he completely  
misrepresents  
that body’s  
recommendations.***

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Anything less is a disservice to this nation.” He derives his authority to prescribe this medicine from the fact that he served as a member of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, chaired by former Senators Gary Hart and Warren Rudman. This is the panel whose February 2001 report called for the formation of a Department of Homeland Security and predicted a major terrorist attack on U.S. soil. It also called for significant reforms in the State Department, he points out.

But he completely misrepresents the findings of the commission in this regard, for it calls for a *stronger* State Department, with a *greater* role in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. It views “with alarm” the consolidation of foreign policy-making in the National Security Council (noting that the national security adviser position was not created by the National Security Act of 1947) and a power shift from State to the NSC and other bodies, such as the Defense Department. As a result, State has

been starved of funds, and morale problems have worsened, further damaging the department’s ability to function.

The commission then sets out a program for reform and restructuring, designed to support State’s reestablishment as the president’s principal foreign policy-making and implementing institution. (Mr. Gingrich suggests many of these same reforms in his speech and article, but, as noted, for a different institutional mandate.) The commission does not view the era of state-to-state diplomacy as over: “U.S. ambassadors and embassies play critical roles in promoting U.S. national security goals overseas,” it says, and it wants the authority of ambassadors to be strengthened. The report concludes: “We cannot emphasize strongly enough how critical it is to change the Department of State from the demoralized and relatively ineffective body it has become into the president’s critical foreign policy-making instrument.” An instrument, not a loudspeaker.

I am reminded of a column that Art Buchwald wrote when a similar reform effort was suggested, during the Reagan administration, in which he said, “If they got control of Foggy Bottom, they could force diplomatic solutions to military problems.”

### **Patriotism and Professionalism**

Four years after Evan Galbraith left Paris to resume a comfortable business career, the Berlin Wall fell. But while the China hands 40 years earlier were blamed for the faults of Nationalist General Chiang Kai-shek and the erection of the Bamboo Curtain, those who staffed the embassies and consulates behind the Iron Curtain under incredibly trying circumstances were never credited for their role in containing communism — a policy that was the idea of



a career officer, George F. Kennan, incidentally. Democracy has spread throughout Latin America too, thanks in no small measure to Foreign Service personnel who kept the beacon burning in our missions in Pinochet's Chile, the Sandinistas' Nicaragua, El Salvador amid the death squads, and Argentina under the generals.

In time, as a peace settlement is worked out between the Palestinians and the Israelis and the democratization of Iraq and the rest of the Middle East proceeds, diplomacy's star will surely rise again. When peace is the desired outcome, it always has.

As to Galbraith's assertion that the Foreign Service lacks "guts," it is worth recalling that during the time he was in Paris, the U.S. embassy in Beirut was truck-bombed twice and U.S. diplomats were assassinated at several other posts by other means. So many Foreign Service employees died in the line of duty that AFSA had to add extra panels for the first time to its memorial plaque in the State Department lobby.

Since then, all too many other Foreign Service members have given their lives for their country, as when Osama bin Laden's followers blew up our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and attacked our personnel in Pakistan last year. Far from showing a lack of guts, State has rebuilt and reopened those posts.

How could it be, Mr. Gingrich, that these men and women are engaged in a "deliberate and systematic effort to undermine the president's policies" when they are so willing to give their lives to promote and defend those policies? Perhaps, like their fellow professionals in the military, they should be given equal recognition for their patriotism. ■

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# CHILE'S OWN SEPT. 11

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ALLEGATIONS OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE SEPT. 11, 1973, COUP IN CHILE WERE RECENTLY REVIVED BY AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE: SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN POWELL.

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BY GEORGE GEDDA

**A**s in the U.S., Sept. 11 is remembered in Chile for politically-motivated violence. For it was on that date in 1973 that Chileans saw their democracy disappear for 17 years, overturned by the country's military.

Military coups in Latin America were not uncommon 30 to 40 years ago. Indeed, there were five in 1963 alone. But Chile was a special case. For the previous 150 years, the country had prided itself in peaceful transfers of power from one elected government to another. That all ended when Gen. Augusto Pinochet, chief of the Army, deposed Chilean President Salvador Allende, an elected Marxist who had been in office just under three years.

In their book, *A Nation of Enemies*, Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, describe what happened on Chile's day of trauma: "Two Hawker Hunter fighter jets streaked across the late-winter sky over Santiago. ... The jets dipped and fired a round of rockets into La Moneda Palace. As they banked gently away in tandem and returned for six more passes, windows shattered and curtains ignited in the pristine, sand-colored colonial mansion, which had stood for 130 years as a symbol of Chilean democracy."

Tanks and infantry troops advanced toward the building, exchanging gunfire with security guards. Soon Pinochet's command post received a curt message: "Mission accomplished. Moneda taken. President found dead." He is believed to have died by his own hand.

The events of that 9/11, coupled with the grim aftermath as Pinochet's forces launched one of the most brutal waves of repression in Latin American history, led to some 3,000 deaths — about the same tally as the more recent Sept. 11, when terrorists attacked on U.S. soil. Thousands more

Chileans were exiled or imprisoned and tortured.

In Washington, the Nixon administration did not exactly mourn Allende's demise. That attitude was not surprising, given the countries' cool relations over the previous three years. Soon after Allende took office, Washington slashed bilateral assistance to a tiny fraction of what it was under the previous Chilean government, headed by President Eduardo Frei. Instead, American largesse was directed at anti-Allende labor unions and independent newspapers.

In his memoirs, Henry A. Kissinger, who was Nixon's national security adviser at the time (he did not become Secretary of State until 11 days after the Chile coup), acknowledged that he welcomed Allende's ouster. "Though we had no hand in the military coup," he said, "we thought it saved Chile from totalitarianism and the Southern Cone from collapse into radicalism." As for the many abuses committed by the Chilean Army following the coup, Kissinger said he expressed concern to Chile's foreign minister about them. He added that the United States helped bring about safe passage for thousands of individuals who had sought asylum in various embassies.

## No More Castros

The Nixon administration's concerns about Allende actually dated back to well before he took office in 1970. As Kissinger puts it, Pres. Nixon was so "passionately opposed" to the emergence of another "Castroite" regime in the hemisphere that when Allende gained only 36 percent of the popular vote in the first round of balloting, the CIA tried to persuade the Chilean Congress to order a runoff between the two leading candidates.

When that didn't work, the administration briefly pursued a second option, the so-called "Track II," but called it off in mid-October 1970. Kissinger gives few details about that scheme in his memoirs, but a 2000 report issued by the U.S. intelligence community at the request of Rep. Maurice

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



Hinchey, D-N.Y., says that plan involved the kidnapping of Gen. Rene Schneider, the Chilean Army commander. A strong supporter of the Chilean Constitution, Schneider was seen as a major stumbling block for military officers seeking to carry out a coup to prevent Allende from being inaugurated.

Kissinger notes that even though the CIA withdrew from the plot, the Chilean military proceeded anyway. But it botched the kidnapping, and Schneider was killed. The Chilean Congress ratified Allende's election days later, and he was inaugurated on Nov. 3, 1970.

A year later, events in neighboring Uruguay provided Latin American radicals additional cause for encouragement. There a leftist candidate, Liber Seregni, appeared to be posing a strong challenge in the Nov. 28, 1971, presidential elections, but finished a distant third. It was not until years later that the fairness of the election was called into question. According to documents released in May 2002 by the National Archive, Pres. Nixon credited Brazil's military government with Seregni's defeat. "The Brazilians helped rig the Uruguayan election," Nixon exulted on Dec. 23, 1971, apparently pleased that the possibility of "another Chile" in the region had been averted.

### Second Thoughts?

Perhaps inevitably, when the coup in Chile took place almost two years later, suspicions of American involvement were rampant. Those allegations were revived recently by an unexpected source. On Feb. 19, 2003, a month before the Iraq war, Secretary of State Colin Powell went to the studios of Black Entertainment Television in Washington to address a gathering of young people. He was asked whether the United States had the moral authority to attack Iraq given the U.S. role in "staging a coup" in Chile in 1971. Powell's answer was surprising. "It is not a part of American history that we're proud of," he said, seeming to lend credence to the questioner's premise. He said reforms instituted since then make it unlikely that the policies of that era will be repeated.

In a highly unusual move, the State Department quickly issued a statement that put distance between the department and its top official. The statement asserted that the U.S. government "did not instigate the coup that ended Allende's government in 1973." The bases for that conclusion, it said, were a 1975 Senate Foreign Relations Committee report overseen by Chairman Frank Church, D-Idaho, and the 2000 Hinchey Report.

The State Department statement added that the U.S. government has been "proactive in making documents available to the public so that it might judge for itself the extent of U.S. historical actions toward Chile." It noted that the declassification project has led to the release of 23,000 documents covering relations with Chile between 1968 and 1991.

William D. Rogers, who served under Kissinger as assistant secretary of State for Latin America in 1975-76 and maintains a professional relationship with him, heard the broadcast of the Feb. 19 taping and was troubled by it. He was concerned that the remark was reinforcing what he calls "the legend" that the Chile coup was a creation of a Kissinger-led cabal working in league with Chilean military officers opposed to Allende.

Even before the State Department prepared its statement contradicting Powell, Rogers said he called the department's legal office to point out that there was a pending Chile-related lawsuit against the U.S. government and that Powell's comment could help the plaintiffs. Rogers said he also talked to Kissinger. "I wouldn't say he was upset. ... I told Henry I think this is bad stuff. It doesn't help the U.S. legal position," Rogers said.

But more important to Rogers was Powell's perhaps unwitting role in keeping the Kissinger-as-coup-chieftain notion alive. "Allende's policies," Rogers contends, "were quite sufficient to explain the economic decline in the country during his reign, and his administration was not without responsibility in the deterioration of civil society which occurred in Chile in 1972 and 1973. He did not exactly promote democratic institutions and practices, nor was he much of a defender of human rights. But in any event, whatever the U.S. responsibility for the near-chaos in Chile in that fateful year, this is scarcely the same as actually inciting the Chilean military to unlimber their weapons and attack La Moneda."

### Examining the Record

One problem with the State Department's response to Powell's Feb. 19 remarks is that it does not seem to square with a Clinton-era statement, issued on Nov. 13, 2000, after the Chile documents were declassified. That statement said, "Actions approved by the U.S. government aggravated political polarization and affected Chile's long tradition of democratic elections and respect for constitutional order and the rule of law." This seems more consistent with Powell's Feb. 19 remarks than with the State Department's attempt afterward to absolve the United States of responsibility. Efforts to obtain an explanation for the differences between the two statements were unsuccessful.

Despite the release of State's records, some researchers remain convinced that the true U.S. role in the events of 30 years ago has never been fully exposed. Peter Kornbluh, a student of Latin American issues whose book, *The Pinochet File*, is being released in September, says, "The U.S. government carried out a clear effort to undermine and destabilize Allende's ability to govern, creating the climate necessary for a coup to take place."

He insists that the U.S. role did not stop there. The U.S.

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## The Nixon

*administration did not exactly mourn Allende's demise, but denied U.S. involvement in his overthrow.*

government, he says, "helped this regime consolidate its power through every mechanism, overt and covert, of support despite full knowledge of its atrocities." And he contends that emergency U.S. assistance was expedited to Chile immediately after the coup. The administration turned on "all faucets of support" that had been turned off during the early Allende presidency, he says.

But the Hinchey Report does not support these allegations, insofar as the CIA is concerned. The agency concedes only that, "Many of Pinochet's officers were involved in systematic and widespread human rights abuses following Allende's ouster," and it acknowledges that "some of these were contacts or agents of the CIA or U.S. military." But it insists that, "The intelligence community followed then-current guidance for reporting such abuses and admonished its Chilean agents against such behavior."

Nonetheless, one declassified State Department document indicates U.S. intelligence may have played a role in the death of American free-lance journalist Charles Horman at the hands of Chilean security forces in the days after the coup. (A 1982 movie, "Missing," strongly suggested American complicity in Horman's murder.) The document, made public in 1999, says Horman was appre-

hended and transported to a stadium where suspected leftists were detained by Chile's military.

"U.S. intelligence may have played an unfortunate part in Horman's death," the document said. At best, it said, the U.S. intelligence community's role "was limited to providing or confirming information that helped motivate his murder by the government of Chile. At worst, it said, U.S. intelligence was aware the government of Chile saw Horman in a rather serious light and American officials did nothing to discourage the logical outcome of the government of Chile's paranoia." A CIA spokesman maintained that the agency had no role in Horman's death.

### Going to Court

The bloodshed that followed Allende's ouster triggered a complaint last November that was filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., by 11 residents of Chile. The suit names Kissinger, the U.S. government and Michael Townley, an American-born former Chilean intelligence officer.

"This action seeks relief for the harm suffered by Chilean victims and their families following the coup that brought Pinochet to power in Chile on Sept. 11, 1973," the complaint says. "The defendants knowingly provided practical assistance and encouragement to the Chilean repressive regime with reckless disregard for the lives and well-being of the plaintiffs and their families."

It adds that the declassified U.S. government documents and congressional reports "show that with the practical assistance and encouragement of the United States and the official ... acts of Henry Kissinger, the Chilean terror apparatus conducted systematic torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, false imprisonment, arbitrary detention, wrongful death, summary execution, assault and battery, false disappearance, and

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***The death toll of Chile's  
own Sept. 11, 30 years  
ago, was about 3,000 —  
nearly identical to  
America's tally two  
years ago.***

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crimes against humanity," among other violations. The plaintiffs are seeking compensatory and punitive damages in excess of \$33 million.

William Rogers, the Kissinger aide, believes it is almost certain the complaint will be thrown out because of sovereign immunity. "It is a first principle of international and U.S. law that nations are immune from suit in their own courts," he says. He also believes that Kissinger has nothing to worry about because the United States is automatically substituted as the defendant in place of any individual official named, under the theory that the official was not acting on his own but rather as an agent of government policy.

Still, Rogers says, the consequences would be mind-boggling if the plaintiffs in the case were to succeed in overriding the principle of sovereign immunity and recover a judgment against the United States. If that happens, he says, a host of other plaintiffs will quickly come forward to challenge the international legality of Washington's foreign interventions in recent years, which are "considerably more robust and forceful than anything the United States did in Chile a third of a century ago."

As of this writing, no suits have been filed in the U.S. against President Bush and other architects of the Iraq war. But in Belgium, seven



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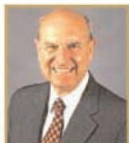


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*In a highly unusual  
move, the State  
Department quickly  
issued a statement that  
put distance between the  
department and its  
top official.*

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Iraqi victims of the 1991 Gulf War used a recent law allowing such charges to lodge a war crimes complaint in March against former President George H. W. Bush and Secretary Powell, who served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during that conflict. At this writing, the Belgian government is taking steps to narrow the law's scope. But until that is done, sources close to Powell say the suit will keep him from visiting NATO headquarters, located in Brussels.

### Returning to Normal

Pinochet remained in charge in Chile for almost 17 years following his coup. He was the last of South America's military dictators to surrender power to an elected successor, a process that had begun in Ecuador in 1979. The stage for Pinochet's departure was set when he gambled on a yes vs. no referendum on his rule in October 1988. He lost by 55 percent to 43 percent; perhaps his only consolation was that, in defeat, his share of the vote was 7 percent higher than Allende received in his victorious 1970 campaign against two opponents. In December 1989, Chileans elected veteran political leader Patricio Aylwin to succeed Pinochet.



The transfer of power took place in March 1990. Some 4,000 guests attended an evening reception in the vast courtyard at La Moneda, including some who had been dragged from the building on Sept. 11, 1973.

Nowadays, Pinochet, 87, suffers from mild dementia, arthritis and diabetes. He has had several minor strokes since 1988. In 1999, the Chilean Supreme Court ruled that he was too infirm to stand trial to fight the scores of lawsuits filed against him both in Chile and in Europe for the human rights violations committed during his rule.

Chile's economy under Pinochet had a roller-coaster quality until the mid-1980s, then performed surprisingly well during his last few years. Inflation plummeted and key export earnings nearly doubled. The robust economic performance persisted well after Pinochet stepped down.

In their book, *A Nation of Enemies*, Constable and Valenzuela say it was not clear until the two elections of the late 1980s whether Chile's democratic culture would survive the long years of often harsh and arbitrary dictatorship. "The peaceful outcome of both elections — and the triumph of civic maturity over threats, uncertainty and alarmist propaganda — suggested that two decades of fear and alienation had implanted lessons different from those that Chile's military tutors wish to impart," the authors said.

They note that, "In some respects, Chilean society had evolved enormously since 1973; it was more worldly, more skeptical of the state and more aggressive in pursuing ambitions. In other respects, though, the old democratic culture had reasserted itself. There was a new appreciation for the values of moderation and compromise that once had been bitterly discarded — and a firm rejection of the utopian visions that had scarred a generation." ■

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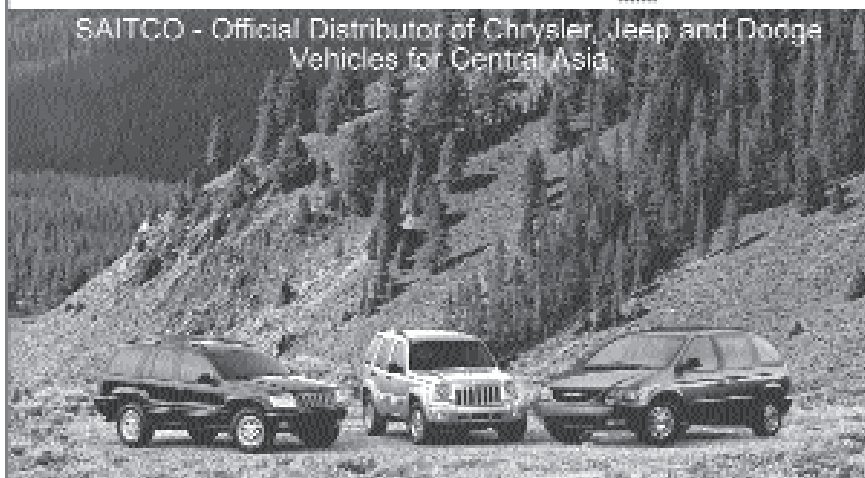
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# BOOKS

## Point-Counterpoint

### **America and The World: Debating the New Shape of International Politics**

*James E. Hoge Jr. and Gideon Rose, editors; Council on Foreign Relations, 2003, \$19.95, paperback, 389 pages.*

REVIEWED BY THOMAS MCNAMARA

*America and The World: Debating the New Shape of International Politics* is a gem of a collection for busy readers who either missed or wish to reread many of the last decade's attempts to define the central issues of post-Cold War international politics. Given that many of these essays are now available on the Internet, the book is a bit pricey. But the advantage of having a good cross-section of this ongoing debate in one volume is worth the expense.

The book rightly begins with an essay published during the first flush of Cold War victory, Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History?" — written as the Berlin Wall fell, but before the Soviet Union did. The trouble with firing the first shot, even a good one, is that everyone else gets to return fire — an activity at which academics are particularly fierce. Neither those salvos nor the events of the past decade have been kind to Fukuyama and his victory proclamation.

The debate is lively, and sometimes personal, as the 19 theoreticians presented try to intellectually order the new international disorder. Samuel P. Huntington ("The Clash of

*America and the  
World is useful for  
the student trying  
to understand  
underlying  
motivations shaping  
current events.*



Civilizations?") is rebuked by Fouad Ajami ("The Summoning"), while G. John Ikenberry ("The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos") clashes with Robert D. Kaplan ("The Coming Anarchy"). Then Fareed Zakaria and Marc F. Plattner mix it up over liberal vs. illiberal democracy, and Robert Kagan ("Power and Weakness") faces a contrary thesis by Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth ("American Primacy in Perspective"). The most striking of the book's many "point-counterpoint" pairings is the final one: President Bush's 2002 West Point commencement speech declaring his pre-emption doctrine, and G. John Ikenberry's refutation, "America's Imperial Ambition."

These efforts to highlight and define the main themes facing the international community are all well-written and well-reasoned. Yet each inevitably comes up short, for no essay can present a meaningful thesis about the complex challenges the U.S. faces, and deal with counterarguments. (Indeed, several of these

authors have since written books to flesh out their initial historical theses.) In addition, as these essayists would be the first to concede, the real world is more complex and subtle than each picture painted here. Even so, each sketch is part of an overall canvas, and gives a useful perspective that, in the collective, educates and informs the reader in ways no one author could.

Not only is *America and the World* a good book for policy wonks, but it is also helpful for the student trying to understand the main historical currents and underlying motivations shaping current events. It is undeniable, for example, that Huntington was on to something in 1992 when he described the "clash of civilizations." The heartlands of Islam and the West are engaged in a struggle to advance different philosophical, institutional, and social objectives. Yet it is more clear than ever, as Ajami writes, that civilizations are not unitary forces, and are not even actors in history. The diversity of objectives and tendencies on all sides is too great to be fitted into Huntington's small frame. So perhaps the greatest benefit of reading these essays is to understand the complexity of events and to appreciate how hard it is for historians to make sense of history's contradictory themes. ■

*During his Foreign Service career, Thomas McNamara was assistant secretary of State for political-military affairs, ambassador to Colombia, and ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism, among many other positions. He now teaches at The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs.*



## IN MEMORY

**John Robert Diggins, Jr.**, 81, retired FSO, died March 24 at his home in Austin, Texas, after a long illness of renal cell cancer and Lewy body dementia.

Mr. Diggins, an only child, was born in Boston, Mass. His father raised him; Washington, D.C. was his hometown. During World War II he was in the Navy, and served his country for two years in the Atlantic theater and two years in the Pacific. He attended George Washington University.

In 1947, Mr. Diggins began his 32-year-long career with the State Department. His first post was Puerto la Cruz, Venezuela, followed by Caracas, Reykjavik, Antwerp, Nice, Paris and Toronto. He was consul general in Windsor, Santo Domingo, London and Toronto. From 1972 to 1974 Mr. Diggins was the director of the Visa Office. He received the State Department Superior Honor Award at the end of his tour in Santo Domingo in 1972. Mr. Diggins retired in 1979.

Mr. Diggins enjoyed retirement in Austin, Texas. For many years he was a tireless and dedicated volunteer worker for the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He and his wife traveled extensively. Before his debilitating illness, Mr. Diggins wrote a detailed and extensive autobiography, recounting his adventurous and full life. This book will now be even more treasured by his family.

His first wife, Harriet Cotter Diggins, the mother of his older children: John, Andrew, Mary-Alice, Therese, Thomas and Ann, preceded Mr. Diggins in death. He leaves

Gisela Sperling Diggins, his wife of 43 years and the mother of his younger children: Paul, Christina and Elizabeth. All his children and their spouses, 15 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive him.



**Mary Nell Harris**, 78, retired FSO, died suddenly at her home in Athens, Ga., on May 9.

Born in Dothan, Ala., Ms. Harris was a graduate of Peace College in Raleigh, N.C. She worked in Japan and Germany for the American Red Cross before joining the State Department. Ms. Harris served in Brussels, Vienna, Florence, Moscow, Monrovia, and Malawi, and retired from the Foreign Service in 1988.

After retirement, she made her home in Athens, where she was a member of Emmanuel Church, and a volunteer at Our Daily Bread, the Emmanuel Thrift House and the East Georgia Chapter of the American Red Cross. Ms. Harris was a member of the American Red Cross Overseas Association and the American Foreign Service Association.

Ms. Harris is survived by one brother, Charles Julian Harris of Athens, cousins, many nieces and nephews, her devoted friend Charlotte Leedy and a host of other friends.



**John "Johnnie" W. Johnston**, 86, retired FSO, died April 28 in Port Charlotte, Fla.

Mr. Johnston spent more than 30 years in the Foreign Service. He retired in 1973 as Director of the Agency for International Development's Office of Personnel and Manpower, and received USAID's Distinguished Honor Award in recognition of a distinguished career in government service. He served as USAID mission director in several Latin American countries and deputy assistant administrator of two staff offices in Washington.

In 1943, Mr. Johnston launched his foreign aid career as an agriculture officer in Brazil. After service in the Navy in World War II, he was an agriculture officer in Guatemala, and then director of the International Cooperation Administration missions in Havana and Colombia. He returned to Washington to attend the National War College course for senior officers before going back overseas to serve as USAID director in Mexico. Later, he was appointed deputy assistant administrator for material resources. Johnston also served as special assistant to the deputy U.S. coordinator for the Alliance for Progress, advisor to Governor Nelson Rockefeller's Presidential Mission in Latin America, and associate assistant administrator for administration in USAID's Bureau for Vietnam.

Survivors include his wife of 26 years, Sandra Padilla-Johnston; two sons, John Scott Johnston of Panama and recently retired USAID FSO Gerald Reed (wife Leticia) Johnston of Arlington, Va.; four grandchildren, Scott Adam and Eric William of Miami, Fla., and Steven Christopher

## IN MEMORY



and Nicole Theresa of Arlington, Va. His first wife, Virginia Foley, preceded him in death.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 22107 Elmira Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33952, and/or the Movement Disorders Society of Southwest Florida, 126 E. Olympia Ave., Suite 200, Punta Gorda, FL 33950. Condolences to the family may be sent to Mrs. Sandra Johnston, 1301 Osprey Drive, Punta Gorda, FL 33950.



**John Keppel**, 86, a career diplomat and international public servant who in retirement challenged the government's account of a national security crisis, died in Bloomington, Ind., on June 23. The cause of death was a heart attack.

Born Aug. 21, 1917, in Quogue, N.Y., Mr. Keppel was the son of David Keppel and Dorothy Vickery of New York City. His grandfather Frederick Keppel (1844-1912) was the first dealer in fine etchings and engravings in North America, and David Keppel (1877-1956) developed the firm. Educated at Saint Bernard's School in New York, Milton Academy, and Harvard University (B.A. cum laude, fine arts, 1940), John Keppel expected to carry on the family art business. But his experience in World War II, where he was a division commander's aide in the Normandy campaign, propelled him into foreign affairs.

In 1947, Mr. Keppel entered the Foreign Service. He was a noted analyst of political developments in the Soviet Union. He served twice in Moscow (1948-50 and 1953-55). On the second occasion, under Ambassador Charles Bohlen, he helped draft analyses of political

change in the post-Stalinist U.S.S.R. — despite the pressure of Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., to insist on a monolithic and unchanging Russian enemy. He was also a political officer in Seoul during the Korean War. At the 1954 Geneva Conference, he was an adviser and translator for General Walter Bedell Smith.

As first secretary of the political section in Rome (1955-57), Mr. Keppel analyzed the Italian Communist Party. In 1958 he returned to Washington, where he was deputy director of the Office of Research and Analysis of the Sino-Soviet Bloc in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. He was a member of the escort party for Nikita Khrushchev's 1959 U.S. visit and an adviser at the 1960 Kennedy-Khrushchev Paris summit.

After a year at Harvard's Center for International Affairs (1961-62), Mr. Keppel went to Rio de Janeiro as political counselor. In that position, he was involved in an internal debate in the U.S. government over how to regard the leftist administration of Brazilian President Joao Goulart. When conservatives in the Brazilian military launched a coup in 1964, Mr. Keppel was instrumental in persuading President Lyndon Johnson to give Marshal Humberto Castello Branco early recognition.

The Brazilian experience left him questioning the Cold War framework with which he had approached the crisis. After two years at the Foreign Service Institute (1965-67), where he was chairman of political studies, he spent a year at Johns Hopkins University as a special student in population studies. Mr. Keppel then returned for a year to the Population Office of the State Department.

In 1969, Mr. Keppel took early

retirement from the government and moved to New York, where he helped Philippine statesman Rafael M. Salas found the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, now the United Nations Population Fund. He was chief of operations staff (1969-72), assistant executive director (1972-74), and an advocate of U.S. support for the organization and its holistic approach to population.

In October 1974, he retired from the United Nations and moved to Essex, Conn., where he lived until 2001.

Mr. Keppel's most independent and controversial initiative began in 1983, when he challenged the U.S. government's account of the Korean Airlines Flight 007 disaster. Remembering that in 1960 he had been part of the government working group that put out the cover story that the downed U-2 spy plane was just a weather plane, he was skeptical that the Korean airliner had flown far off course, straying over Soviet military facilities on the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island, accidentally.

As project director of the Fund for Constitutional Government's investigation of the incident, Mr. Keppel demanded a congressional investigation of contradictions in the official account. He assisted French aviation expert Michel Brun, whose book *Incident at Sakhalin* argues that U.S. military aircraft crossed Sakhalin on the same occasion and were shot down there by the Soviets. (Brun and Keppel believe the passenger-filled civilian airliner perished later than generally reported, over international airspace, of unexplained causes.)

Ever courteous, Mr. Keppel



## IN MEMORY



insisted that lying corrupts government and distorts its policies. He firmly believed in personal responsibility and never lost faith that people of whatever background or view might change their minds. He showed a lifelong preference for playing a vital role in helping others make accomplishments.

In 2001, he moved to Bloomington, Ind., where he was a resident of Meadowood Retirement Community.

Mr. Keppel is survived by his wife Grace Marjorie Wood Keppel, whom he married in 1952, and his son David, also of Bloomington. David is working to complete a book, begun jointly with his father, on “creative uncertainty” as the difference between life and machines, and its political implications.

The family asks that contributions be made to the American Friends Service Committee (1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; <http://www.afsc.org>) or Oxfam-America (P.O. Box 1745, Boston, MA 02105; <http://www.oxfamamerica.org>).



**Richard Lankford**, 55, beloved husband, father, and career Foreign Service officer died suddenly on Good Friday, April 18. At the time of his death he was the spokesperson and director of press and information for Embassy Paris. He was also the ambassador’s speechwriter.

Born in Shreveport, La., Mr. Lankford received his bachelor’s degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. After military service with the U.S Army in Korea, he received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Temple University in Philadelphia. After leaving Temple

he became assistant artistic director at the McCarter Theatre in Princeton. A lifelong public servant, he worked for eight years for the Wage Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor in Philadelphia before joining the Foreign Service. There he volunteered his time teaching English in a local prison and working with young people interested in the theater.

Richard Lankford entered the Foreign Service in 1984. Public affairs assignments with the former U.S. Information Agency took him to Kinshasa, Algiers, Maseru, Tel Aviv, Quito, Almaty and Bratislava, where he was also acting DCM. After the consolidation of USIA with the State Department, he was posted to France, the country to which he had already planned to retire.

An active Episcopalian, Mr. Lankford was a member of the American Cathedral in Paris, serving on the vestry, as lector, and as chairman of the education committee. Several friends spoke at his funeral at the cathedral, including Canon Sharon Gracen and FSO Tania Chomiak-Salvi. Canon Gracen said, “Richard’s work was revelation — he strove to communicate the ideals of America wherever he was, through his words and his presence. He was a man of deep faith and patriotism in the best sense.”

Ms. Chomiak-Salvi spoke of “Richard’s extraordinary quality . . . his deep conviction that it is more important to support, teach and encourage your staff than to advance your own interests. He genuinely loved the Foreign Service. But unlike so many of us, he was under no illusion that the job was about his own personal advancement. He knew — and he

practiced this — that his job was to encourage the most out of the people who worked for him.” His many friends and colleagues throughout the world will remember Richard Lankford that way, as a warm and caring man who loved his family, his friends, and his work.

Because the study and love of languages was such a central part of his life — he attained fluency in Russian, Slovak, French and Spanish, and enjoyed applying his language skills to make lifelong friends in his different postings — his family wanted to make a memorial that would directly relate to this aspect of his work. During their time in Kazakhstan his son James developed a love of Russian that led him to Oberlin College, where he majored in Russian and Eastern European Studies. It seemed fitting to create something in Richard Lankford’s name that would help students studying Russian.

A memorial fund is being established at Oberlin that will provide for an annual Russian prize and an annual stipend for study abroad. Contributions may be made to the Richard O. Lankford Memorial Fund at Oberlin College and forwarded to Patricia Joan Maurer, Director of Stewardship, Oberlin College, Bosworth Hall 108, 50 West Lorain Street, Oberlin, OH 44074-1089.

Mr. Lankford is survived by his wife Barbara, a Foreign Service officer posted in Paris, and their two children, Gillian and James.



**Kenneth W. Linde**, 80, retired FSO, died on March 24 in Helsinki, Finland. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Inga-Lill of Helsinki.

## IN MEMORY



**John W. Mowinckel**, 82, retired FSO, died on May 7 in West Palm Beach, Fla.

A soldier, journalist, diplomat, businessman and raconteur, Mr. Mowinckel was born in Genoa, Italy, where his father represented the Esso Petroleum Company. When his father was appointed the European representative of Esso, the family moved to Paris. Mr. Mowinckel attended St. Paul's School in Concord, N.H., and the Le Rosey School in Rolle, Switzerland, and graduated from Princeton University in 1943.

During World War II, Mr. Mowinckel served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps assigned to the Office of Strategic Services. A day before General de Gaulle and his Free French entered Paris on Aug. 25, 1944, Mowinckel and Lt. Col. Ken Downes drove to Paris, and, as Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre describe in their book *Is Paris Burning?*, the two American soldiers "liberated" the Hotel de Crillon.

The Collins-Lapierre book describes the event vividly. When the two American officers walked into the Crillon, they found 176 German officers and men who obviously had failed to connect with the general German withdrawal. Lt. Col. Downes asked Lt. Mowinckel to disarm the Germans, who preferred to surrender to Americans than to the French resistance that had taken over Paris prior to the arrival of French forces.

Though Mr. Mowinckel was the first U.S. officer to enter Paris during the liberation, and was decorated with the Silver and Bronze Stars as well as France's Croix de Guerre, he is best remembered by friends as the man who took back the Crillon from

the Nazis and drank Taittinger left behind by the Germans as his prize.

After the war, Mr. Mowinckel worked as the regional editor for *U.S. News and World Report* in Rome and Paris.

In 1950 he joined the Foreign Service, moving from the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau to the USIA in 1953. He served in Rome, Paris, Kinshasa, Rio de Janeiro and Washington, D.C., and retired in 1975 as minister and deputy chief of mission in Vienna.

Mr. Mowinckel will be remembered as a consummate diplomat who took his firm belief in U.S. foreign policy to his postings around the world. Through his experiences as a diplomat, he enjoyed great success in his later business career. This took him back to Paris and, later, Monte Carlo. He retired in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Mr. Mowinckel is survived by his wife Letizia (nee Crostarosa) of West Palm Beach; a sister Augusta; a son John, and grandchildren John and Hedy, of London, England. Mr. Mowinckel was interred in Monte Carlo. Memorial donations may be made to the Hospice of Palm Beach County Inc., 5300 East Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33407.



**Pat Kilarny Terranova**, 74, retired FSO, died in Winter Park, Fl., on April 2.

Born in Wilmington, Del., Ms. Terranova moved with her family to California after high school, and went on to business school. She loved working for the State Department, as a secretary in the Foreign Service. She served abroad in Greece, Thailand, Iran, Germany, Russia,

Belgium and Turkey, before returning to Washington, D.C. While in Russia, she was promoted, and served the rest of her Foreign Service career as a personnel officer.

In 1979, Ms. Terranova retired from the Foreign Service and moved to Winter Park. She was active in the Winter Park Women's Club and the Winter Park University Club.

Pat Terranova never met a stranger. She stood by her friends in times of trouble and in return they supported her. She thought it was her job to help people. Her generosity knew no bounds: If you asked her for something, she would do everything in her power to make it happen.

Ms. Terranova loved her family and brought everyone together: cousins know cousins and will all be connected because of her. She is survived by nieces Pam Chavez of Virginia and Angela Chavez of California; nephews Tom and Robert Chavez of California; stepdaughters Jaime Duffy of Arizona and Elisa Domzalski of California; and great-nieces Jessica and Jennifer Chavez of California. ■

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# REFLECTIONS

## *The Perfect Day*

BY MIKKELA THOMPSON

It was a perfect day. One of those rare Washington days when the humidity is low and the 70-degree weather makes everything seem possible. It was AFSA's first Day on the Hill — a major endeavor. About 80 Foreign Service retirees had come from all across the country to lobby for increased funding for diplomacy.

My father Ward, a retired FSO and AFSA staffer, and I were with our group in the Russell Senate Office Building when the briefer interrupted the orientation session to tell us that a plane had crashed into the World Trade Towers. We continued our meeting. We all thought it was a small plane — an accident, no doubt. Ten minutes later the group split up and proceeded to meet legislators, according to plan.

When the second tower was hit, we knew this was an act of war. My boss's husband, a police officer, called and told us to get out. The Pentagon had been hit! There could be more planes! In the evacuation, my father and I got separated.

My colleague, Marc, and I tried to use our cell phones as we walked. We discussed where to go. Not the Mall — it contained the most likely targets. We headed northwest. It was surreal that Armageddon should come on such a perfect day. I looked up at the azure sky and in the dis-

*I looked up at the  
azure sky and in  
the distance,  
I could see the  
black smoke from  
the Pentagon  
hanging in the  
air like a  
dragon's tail.*



tance, I could see the black smoke from the Pentagon hanging in the air like a dragon's tail.

We joined the river of people, trying to reach our families. The cell-phone circuits were jammed. We found a pay phone. There was a line. As we waited, lost to the world, in a sea of people, wondering if things would start blowing up, I scanned the crowds for my dad. In the masses of black suits, I recognized a canary-colored suit. It was my boss. I called to her. She yelled down the block. I turned. There was my dad, some distance away in his seven-league boots, determined to find me. To do as all fathers do — even those who are not former Marines or retired FSOs — to gather his flock to him and find safety.

My dad and I walked to Virginia. There were rumors and fighter jets

zipping through the air. At the prospect of a fourth plane coming down the Potomac, did we want to risk crossing the Key Bridge? We could go upriver and cross at a narrower point. I commented that it was a crystal-clear day. Wouldn't we notice a plane falling from the sky? So we crossed the bridge. As soon as we made it to the car, we got gas and drove home. We spent the rest of the day recouping and returning all the concerned messages. The phone lines to England were blocked for hours so when I finally got through, my mom's voice was audibly relieved, especially as she had been fielding calls from my relatives in Denmark.

After that day, I took stock. One of my friends had died. He was in the World Trade Center, at his dream job, trading in futures. An accountant, he had always known exactly what he wanted in life and all had gone according to plan. I remember him at dinner one January night in college. He laughed at the rest of us because he had already landed a job starting at \$50,000, even before we graduated! On schedule, he got married three years ago, moved to Connecticut, fathered one son and was expecting the next. So far, his life had been perfect. He had it all planned out.

Later I learned he had managed to make one call from his office in the tower. He called his 2-year-old son to tell him that he was now the man of the house — as daddy wasn't coming home. ■

---

*Mikkela Thompson is the Journal's Business Manager. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair "Stamp Corner."*



# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • September 2003

## 2003 AFSA AWARDS CEREMONY

# Honoring Dissenters and Top Performers

BY ASTER GRAHN, EDITORIAL INTERN

**A**FSA's annual award ceremony honoring those who have shown the courage to challenge the system and those who have exhibited exemplary performance was held on June 26 in the Ben Franklin Reception Room at the State Department. Outgoing AFSA President John Naland opened and closed the ceremony, which was co-sponsored by outgoing Director General Ruth A. Davis. Secretary of



Secretary of State Colin Powell presents the lifetime achievement award to former Secretary of State George Shultz.

JAY MALLIN

Continued on page 3



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## STANDING UP FOR THE FOREIGN SERVICE

# AFSA and Others Respond to Latest Gingrich Blasts

**T**he July/August issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine features a cover story by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, "Rogue State Department," which is a follow-on to a speech on the same topic given by Gingrich at the American Enterprise Institute in April. In his surprisingly poorly-argued assault, Gingrich blames the State Department for rising anti-American sentiment around the globe, "because the U.S. State Department has abdicated values and principles in favor of accommodation and passivity." Without presenting any clear evidence, he accuses the Foreign Service of subverting the administration's foreign policy.

Since the publication of the Gingrich article, AFSA officials and others have stood up to defend the Foreign Service.

Continued on page 4

## NEW AFSA GOVERNING BOARD

# Passing the Torch



MARC GOLDBERG

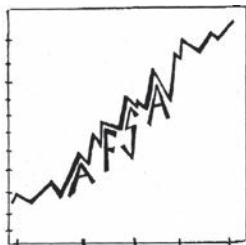
Outgoing AFSA President John Naland presents the AFSA gavel to Acting President Louise Crane.

**A**FSA held a transition lunch at headquarters on July 11 to say goodbye to the 2001-2003 AFSA Governing Board and to welcome the members of the new board. Outgoing AFSA President John Naland gave a heartfelt speech about the four years he served on the Governing Board, two as State vice president and two as AFSA president. "It has been a great honor for me to work in this organization that so vigilantly defends and promotes the interests of the Foreign Service," he said.

In a farewell message to AFSA members, Naland had this to say about AFSA: "Before I joined the AFSA Governing

Continued on page 6

# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



## AFSA Membership at Record High

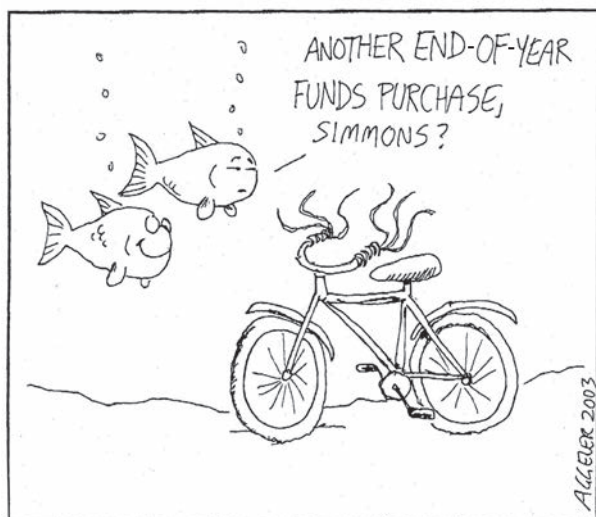
For the first time in AFSA's history, membership has risen above the 12,000-member mark. Some 577 new hires joined AFSA during the first six months of 2003, representing an 83 percent join rate. In addition, many long-time employees are joining or rejoining AFSA. Currently, 73 percent of active-duty Foreign Service employees belong to AFSA. More members means more clout on the Hill and with management officials.

## AFSA-PAC Going Strong

The second annual fund-raising drive for the AFSA-PAC has raised over \$34,000. Foreign Service retirees have again been the strongest supporters. The PAC has begun to evaluate how this year's money will be distributed to promote AFSA's legislative agenda.

## Life in the Foreign Service

■ BY BRIAN AGGELER, FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER & CARTOONIST



## In Recognition

We are proud to report that the *Foreign Service Journal* has won a 2003 Award for Publication Excellence in the four-color magazines and journals category, and *AFSA News* received a 2003 APEX award in the one to two person-produced annual report category.



## BOOKFAIR

The 43rd annual BOOKFAIR of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide will open on the afternoon of Friday, Oct. 17, and continue through Sunday, Oct. 26. It will be held in the Diplomatic Exhibit Hall on the first floor close to the cafeteria.

BRIEFS continued on page 5

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### Governing Board:

PRESIDENT: John W. Limbert

STATE VICE PRESIDENT: Louise K. Crane

USAID VICE PRESIDENT: Bill Carter

FCS VICE PRESIDENT: Charles A. Ford

FAS VICE PRESIDENT: Vacant

RETIREE VICE PRESIDENT: George F. Jones

SECRETARY: FA. "Tex" Harris

TREASURER: Danny Hall

STATE REPRESENTATIVES: Pamela Bates,

Cynthia G. Efirid, Scot L. Folensbee,

Raymond D. Maxwell, John C. Sullivan,

Jim Wagner

USAID REPRESENTATIVE: Thomas Olson

FCS REPRESENTATIVE: William Crawford

RETIREE REPRESENTATIVES: Gilbert Sheinbaum,

David E. Reuther, Theodore S. Wilkinson, III,

Stanley A. Zuckerman

IBB REPRESENTATIVE: Alex Belida

FAS REPRESENTATIVE: Vacant

## AFSA Honors More Retirees for Outstanding Service

**A**FSA is pleased to announce the second group of National Alumni Service Award winners, retirees recognized by AFSA for their achievements in helping build public support for American diplomacy and the Foreign Service. AFSA salutes these men and women who continue to serve well past the time they officially leave the Service.

### WINNERS

**ROBERTA “BOBBIE” M. S. BRUCE, AMBASSADOR GALEN L. STONE, and PAUL B. MCCARTY**, in recognition of their leadership roles in founding and sustaining the Foreign Affairs Retirees of New England organization. Following preliminary discussions with fellow New England Foreign Service retirees during Foreign Service Day in 1983, the three initiated efforts to bring the growing number of Foreign Service

retirees in New England into an organization. Later that year, FARNE was established. Stone was the first president, serving from 1983 to 1985. Bruce became the first secretary-treasurer, and later served as vice president from 2000 to 2001 and president from 2001 to 2003. McCarty served as vice president from 1999 to 2000 and as president in 2000-2001. Together, the three have given the organization its direction.



Former Retiree Liaison Ward Thompson presents the National Alumni Service Award to Roberta “Bobbie” Bruce at a May 30 FARNE meeting.

Members of the group meet regularly to share Foreign Service experiences and hear foreign affairs speakers, and members are encouraged to take active roles in their com-

munities to promote understanding of the Foreign Service and international affairs.

**CHARLES A. GENDREAU**, in recognition of his leadership role in organizing Foreign Service retirees in the Minnesota and Wisconsin area into an association. Beginning in the late 1980s, he arranged biannual luncheons during which prominent local and national politicians, educators, foreign and American diplomats and members of the news media were invited to address members of the group and guests. These events have provided close contact between opinion-makers and Foreign Service retirees. In 1995, Gendreau oversaw the transformation of this group into AFSA Upper Midwest, an independent association of former officials of U.S. foreign affairs agencies. The association’s purpose is to support the integrity and effectiveness of those agencies in the wise formulation and implementation of the nation’s foreign policy. Members, who are affiliated individually with AFSA, are drawn from several states in the area. The association, which Gendreau headed until 2000, remains actively involved in pro-

Continued on page 8

### Award Winners • Continued from page 1

State Colin Powell presented former Secretary of State George Shultz with the 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award.

James Warlick and Kim Marie Sonn accepted the Christian A. Herter Award on behalf of all four officers from Embassy Moscow’s consular section who were recognized for their courageous stance on a visa case. (June Kunsman and Natasha Franceschi were unable to attend.) The W. Averell Harriman Award was presented by Katherine Fisk Carroll, great-granddaughter of Averell Harriman. The winner, Dean Kaplan, was needed on the visa line in Kathmandu, so a friend accepted the award on his behalf. AFSA Achievement Award winner Cecile Shea was the only other awardee unable to attend the ceremony. Joy Bacik, recipient of the M. Juanita Guess Award, flew in



Secretary Powell congratulates James Warlick and other AFSA award winners.

from Jakarta in order to be there. The recipient of the Tex Harris Award, Charles O’Malley, recalled his 14 years in the Navy when describing to the appreciative audience his view on dissent: “If the boat’s not rocking, it’s not going anywhere.” Other honorees were Laura Baer for the Delavan Award, Bonnie Miller for the Avis Bohlen

Award, and Dick Thompson for the AFSA Achievement Award.

After Mette Beecroft received a special achievement award for years of advocacy on behalf of Foreign Service families, only the lifetime achievement award remained. Naland found himself in the somewhat awkward position of having to ask the several hundred people in attendance to wait 10 minutes for the scheduled arrival of Secretary Powell, who was to present the award to George Shultz. Naland explained that the presenters and awardees had been too gracious in keeping their remarks brief — they had followed his instructions too well. The pause turned out to be extremely brief as Secretary Powell arrived almost as soon as his absence was announced. “This is the Bush administration,” he said, “and we have learned to always try to be

Continued on page 10



## AFSA Advocacy Praised at Open Forum

John Naland, president of AFSA for the 2001-2003 term, was presented with the second annual Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies Award during a June 16 Secretary's Open



From left: John Naland, Former GLIFAA President Bryan Dalton and current GLIFAA President Robert Gilchrist.

Forum event in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the State Department. The award, given to Amb. James Hormel last year, is intended to recognize individuals "who through their actions have most helped the cause of equality

for gay and lesbian foreign affairs personnel and their families."

Naland was chosen for his role "as a strong and principled advocate for equal treatment," according to GLIFAA President Robert Gilchrist. On behalf of the organization, both Gilchrist and former GLIFAA President Bryan Dalton expressed their appreciation for Naland's efforts. Dalton noted that the consistent advocacy by Naland and AFSA had measurably "improved the lives of gay and lesbian employees." Naland responded that he was proud to have played a role in moving the department toward equal treatment of all employees, but added, "You're rewarding me for doing my job. It's AFSA's job to stand up for the rights of its members."

The keynote speaker at the event was Judy Shepard, executive director of the Matthew Shepard Foundation, who began speaking out against hate after her son Matthew was murdered in an anti-gay hate crime at the age of 21. Matthew had lived and studied overseas, was fluent in Arabic and German, and had long dreamed of joining the U.S. Foreign Service. □

### Gingrich • Continued from page 1

Here are some excerpts from the debate that the article has spurred:

#### Ambassador Thomas Boyatt, National Public Radio Morning Edition, June 27:

"Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich does not seem to understand the foreign policy-making process. U.S. diplomats are responsible for reporting to Washington developments in the countries to which they are assigned. They recommend policies they believe will serve the national interests of the U.S. Washington decision-makers, including the president and the Secretary of State, must synthesize that input with other information at their disposal and then determine how best to proceed. Instructions go to posts, policy is implemented, feedback is again reported and the policy process continues. Key to the entire undertaking is honest, unvarnished advice. Unfortunately, Mr. Gingrich appears to view foreign policy assessment by U.S. diplomats as disloyalty to the president when those assessments differ from Mr. Gingrich's own views."

#### Under Secretary for Management Grant Green, "Transforming the Department of State," *Washington Times*, July 6:

"I have no idea what prompts those such as former Rep. Newt Gingrich to go after the people at State; maybe the president and Secretary of State proved too difficult as targets. I know our people well, both Foreign and Civil Service. But I don't recognize the people portrayed in Mr. Gingrich's attacks on State. In fact, his remarks are an insult to the thousands of brave Americans serving their country in very dangerous places, and to the memory of the hundreds of our diplomats who have given their lives in the service of America — and those who, God forbid, will give them in the future. They're some of the finest people I've ever known."

#### Richard C. Holbrooke, "State Department Scapegoats," *Washington Post*, July 1:

"Gingrich takes an astonishing swing at the State Department, writing: 'We can

no longer accept a culture that props up dictators, coddles the corrupt, and ignores secret police forces.'

"If one accepts Gingrich's central argument, his real target should be the White House, even the president, for being unable to make State and Defense work from a single script, especially in public.

"While Gingrich refuses to offer any praise to the Foreign Service, a higher percentage of career Foreign Service officers have died in the service of their country since the end of the Vietnam War than of military personnel. Where Gingrich sees State Department insubordination, I see a dedicated group of men and women serving their nation. Gingrich's key recommendation is to make State 'a more effective communicator of U.S. values around the world, place it more directly under the control of the president, and enable it to promote freedom and combat tyranny.' The great majority of FSOs would like nothing better than to be able to do just that — but they need better training, a better personnel system and far more resources.

"When Gingrich calls for a 40 percent funding increase for the Foreign Service, he is on firm ground. But instead of blaming State, he should join forces with Powell to demand of the White House and Congress more funds for the non-military portions of our national security budget. Bringing Gingrich into this never-ending struggle would be valuable, although as speaker (and before), he regularly supported the deep cuts Congress made in the State Department's budget.

"I would say to Newt: Welcome to the right side of this long-running battle. But if you want to make a serious contribution, be prepared to take on some of your friends in the White House and Congress to help get the funding and reforms you advocate, instead of inventing enemies in the State Department."

#### Holbrooke, appearing with Gingrich on *Fox News Sunday*, July 6:

"Newt has said very clearly in his articles that the State Department is unwill-

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## AFSA Members Save on Subscriptions to *The Economist*

AFSA is proud to announce the addition of *The Economist* to our Magazine Discount Program. AFSA members may now order this popular foreign affairs journal at a 45-percent discount off the regular subscription rate, a savings of \$44.00. To subscribe, please contact AFSA's Member Services to request an order form: (202) 338-4045, ext 525 or [member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org). For more information about AFSA's Magazine Discount Program, please visit our Web site at <http://www.afsa.org/mbr/magaz.cfm>.

## AFSA Staff Changes

In July, Asgeir Sigfusson replaced Suzie Reager as the office manager and assistant to the USAID AFSA vice president. Asgeir recently received his master's degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and previously interned at AFSA headquarters.

In August, Charles Henderson joined the AFSA staff as a grievance attorney, replacing Neera Parikh, who is moving with her husband to Chicago. In September, retired USAID FSO attorney Harry Wilkinson joins the AFSA staff as a part-time grievance attorney.

Executive Assistant Marc Goldberg moved on in August to join the Peace Corps. He and his wife will be serving in Moldova.

### CORRECTION:

Due to a production error, an illustration on page 3 of the June *AFSA News* was omitted. It was designed to go with the note applauding the success of AFSA in convincing State to reverse a negative decision on reimbursement for laundry and dry cleaning expenses for FSI students.



BRIEFS continued on page 6

## Same Ole, Same Ole



I am sure that many employees may be saying “same ole, same ole” after reading a few sentences of this column.

Nevertheless, I am going to persist. Annual evaluation form issues consume considerable AFSA time, so I want to do a little preventive maintenance here with my first column as your new VP. I know, some old-timers are saying: “Can't these incoming AFSA VPs ever come up with anything new?” Please bear with me, and keep in mind that officers who entered via the New Entry Professional program now represent 20 percent of USAID's Foreign Service work force and it is clear from the last performance board debriefs that it is not “same ole, same ole” for many of them.

AFSA believes it would be useful to pass on some generic observations gleaned from this year's performance boards that we hope will be helpful to both employees and raters in the preparation of next year's evaluations.

**WORK OBJECTIVES:** Weak, non-substantive and process-oriented work objectives disadvantage employees for promotion. Boards are often turned off by the repetition of work objectives year after year, but are impressed with narratives that focus on what the results were and how they were achieved. Narratives that answer the “so what?” question can be enormously helpful.

**SKILLS MATRIX:** All of the skill areas need to be discussed in the narrative; surprisingly, raters are not always disciplined about doing this. In addition, boards are usually very scrupulous about making sure there is a match between the skill level and grade level. Unfortunately, this is an area where raters are frequently sloppy and do not write the skill narrative to be consistent with

the appropriate grade level in the matrix.

**EMPLOYEE STATEMENT:** Failure to make a comment can be perceived as disinterest and thus can be taken negatively, whether intended or not. Employees can also severely handicap their chances for promotion with excessive hubris, incomplete sentences and fuzzy-headed, slapdash thinking. This is why the Employee Statement is aptly called the “suicide box.” This year proved to be no exception. Employees need to proofread their statements carefully. In addition, it might be wise to run them by a colleague for reaction.

The timing of this topic is not only appropriate for AEF season. Summer transitions to new posts should now be completed and the rating cycle is now at its midpoint. Everyone should have work objectives in place and in most cases midcycle reviews should be occurring. If this is not the case, I hope this column will be the catalyst for some to make the system work as it was designed to work.

Many complaints are heard about the AEF system not working as it should. Yet I am always amazed at how many managers give AEFs short shrift and do nothing until almost the end of the rating period. Employees should not be complicit; they need to be proactive in seeing that work objectives are in place and mid-cycle reviews are conducted at the appropriate time. Otherwise, it will forever be: “same ole, same ole.” □

## You Win Some; You Lose Some

As I look over the letters I signed during my first term as the AFSA Vice President for State, I thought you'd like to know some of the issues on which management agreed with AFSA (those in the "win" column) and those where management didn't agree (the "lose" column).

Some of the letters we wrote were written on behalf of individuals who needed help cutting through the bureaucratic Gordian knot, while others were on behalf of whole classes of employees.

- Management agreed to pay a bigger share of professional liability insurance after AFSA pointed out that premiums had risen.

- Management agreed with AFSA to pay for the storage of DS agents' HHE for longer than 90 days. (DS agents haven't even finished their required training at the law enforcement training center when the 90 days expire.)

- Many good things have come out of the hardship working groups management set up in response to an AFSA suggestion. Management not only agreed to set them up, but has also followed through on the recommendations.

Here are some of the issues that ended up in the "lose" column.

- Declining per diem works a real hardship on employees assigned to long-term training at FSI. Two years ago, trainees received 100 percent per diem for only one month, then 50 percent per diem for two months and then only 25 percent per diem for the remaining months of training. When Ruth Davis came from FSI to become the new director general two years ago, she knew of the financial hardship firsthand and doubled the number of days at full per diem to 60. This helped, but many employees have asked if — for the purposes of household management and budgeting — they could spread that 100 percent payment over four months; i.e., getting 50 percent per diem for 120 days. Management refused. Every new class of trainees at FSI asks this question, but the answer to AFSA's letters is still no.

- Certain new hires do not receive per diem while in training, and AFSA has written many letters requesting justice for them. When new hires' first assignment is a domestic position in Washington, they do not receive any per diem whatsoever. Sometimes, these employees learn their first assignment is Washington only hours before arriving, while others find out only after the three-week orientation has begun. AFSA has heard tales of employees sleeping in their cars. Many have to double and triple up to afford their temporary lodgings and live off bologna sandwiches. AFSA has written many times suggesting that all employees receive their assignments *after* their three-week orientation course, not before, so that they would all be eligible for per diem during those first few weeks when expenses are highest.

One issue that ASFA both won and lost concerns laundry. When management decided to cease paying laundry and dry cleaning expenses for employees at FSI, AFSA wrote to protest the decision. (Management correctly noted that these expenses were not allowed under FS travel regs.) We pointed out that federal travel regulations permit these payments and suggested the department amend the FS travel regs to conform to the federal ones. Management agreed, so students resubmitted their receipts. It appears that not all of management had agreed to paying these expenses. Part of management told AFSA these costs would be reimbursed, but another part posted a sign on a door at FSI saying, "Laundry and dry cleaning have been disallowed for the time being." □



Board • Continued from page 1

Board, I did not fully appreciate just how great a force for good AFSA is. But now I do. Day in and day out, AFSA's professional staff members, elected officials, and post representatives fight for the interests of our members, both active-duty and retired. They negotiate improvements in our conditions of service, lobby for legislation to improve our quality of life, respond to those who unfairly criticize our profession, and speak up for employees

**"AFSA has been the voice of the Foreign Service since 1924 when the Service itself was created."**

who have been let down by the system. In so doing, they help to make the Foreign Service a better supported, more respected, and more satisfying place in which to spend a career and raise a family. That makes our agencies more effective and thus improves our nation's diplomatic readiness.

"One of the best things about working in AFSA has been the opportunity to work alongside our 26 fantastic professional staff members. It is they who do the bulk of the work for our 12,000 members.

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

"Give the new AFSA board the same support that you gave to the outgoing board. Send them your suggestions, your kudos, and your constructive criticism. In so doing, we will be continuing the proud tradition of mutual support dating back nearly eight decades. And the Foreign Service will be the better for it. Thank you for the opportunity to serve." □

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## AFSA/Thursday Luncheon Group Intern

The Charles Delmar Foundation provided a \$1,000 grant to assist AFSA in funding the AFSA/Thursday Luncheon Group intern. Jennifer Tuck, a rising senior majoring in political science at Spelman College, worked in the State Department's Indonesian and East Timor Office from June to August. The TLG, a State Department group promoting Foreign Service advancement for African Americans, also provided a \$1,000 stipend to Jennifer.

## Protecting Prescription Drug Benefits

In a June 25 update message, AFSA alerted members to a move on Capitol Hill to reduce prescription drug benefits for federal government retirees. The good news is that on July 8 the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation (H.R. 2631) to protect the prescription drug benefits of retired employees who participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan after Congress approves prescription drug legislation. FEHBP options include more generous drug coverage than the two Medicare bills passed by the House and Senate.

The legislation is a response to the concern that new Medicare reform legislation would be an incentive for employers to reduce employer-sponsored drug benefits of retirees. In this regard, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that as many as 37 percent of retired workers with employer-sponsored health plans, such as FEHBP, would lose drug benefits. AFSA joins the National Association of Retired Federal Employees in applauding House leaders for protecting the hard-earned retirement benefits of federal workers and their families, and for setting a standard for employers generally. AFSA also thanks our members who contacted members of Congress in response to our June 25 message on this issue. □

## Legislative Update

BY ALISSA GORDON, LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS INTERN

Over the summer, Director of Congressional Relations Ken Nakamura and AFSA officers continued to push AFSA's legislative agenda on the Hill. AFSA met with many majority and minority staffers from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee to discuss the authorization bills. The following items are in both the Senate and House authorization bills, and will become law once these bills are passed:

- Raise the cap on post differential for hardship and danger from 25 percent to 35 percent of base pay;
- Place a deadline for the Office of Personnel Management to implement last year's law allowing certain PITs to buy back retirement credit;
- Expand the Millennium Challenge Account's Corporate Board to include the administrator of USAID.

There are several items that are in either the Senate or House authorization bills, but not both. These provisions will be discussed in a conference between the House and Senate:

- Language creating an ombudsman for the State Department covering both the Civil Service and the Foreign Service (AFSA does not support this initiative);
- Amending a change in last year's authorization bill to restore prescriptive relief for Foreign Service personnel who have a grievance under consideration by the Grievance Board;
- Amending the 5-percent low-ranking rule to give selection boards the discretion to low-rank a smaller percentage of employees;
- Giving the Secretary of State more discretion to waive dual-compensation limitations on Foreign Service retirees who return to work for the department (AFSA is supporting the department's proposal).

**APPROPRIATIONS:** During July, the appropriations process went into full gear. The House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and State recommended appropriations of \$8.286 billion for State operations, which is \$233 million below the administration's request, but \$246 million above Fiscal Year 2003. The House Subcommittee on Foreign Operations recommended appropriations of \$17.1 billion for foreign assistance.

**TAX BILL:** At the end of May, the AFSA-supported bill to amend current law regarding the exclusion of the capital gains tax on the sale of the principal residence by Foreign Service and Armed Forces personnel was added as an amendment to Congress' \$350 billion tax bill (PL 108-27), but was dropped at the twelfth hour. A new avenue for the capital gains tax bill arose in June, when it was added as an amendment to the House version of the child tax credit bill, H.R. 1308. It is unclear whether the capital gains provision will remain in the final version of the bill. AFSA is committed to pushing for this until a provision is enacted into law.

**HUMAN CAPITAL:** AFSA has been monitoring legislation that would create a separate personnel system for Department of Defense civilian personnel, and would also allow for a system with pay banding and pay-for-performance for DOD civilian employees. Additionally, there is also pending legislation that would create a "Human Capital Performance Fund," which would allow for departments to submit plans to allow for pay-for-performance. AFSA is following these trends to assess the implications for the Foreign Service.

**REMINDER:** Please don't forget that AFSA's legislative affairs efforts are funded by AFSA membership. Donations are critical and appreciated. Please mail your contribution to AFSA Legislative Action Fund, PO Box 98026, Washington, DC 20090-8026 or click on [www.afsa.org/lafform.cfm](http://www.afsa.org/lafform.cfm). □



moting contact between Foreign Service retirees and the public.

**EDWARD P. DOBYNS**, in recognition of his leadership role in organizing the Foreign Service Retirees Association of Florida. In 1982, Dobyms took charge of the informal organization of Florida retirees founded 20 years before and turned it into the institution it is today. He wrote a constitution and bylaws, named the organization, nominated the first officers and board members, published the first directory and arranged programs for meetings. He served as chair until 1986 and after that as an ex-officio board member. Dobyms was instrumental in laying the groundwork for an organization that today numbers over 700 members, has an excellent working relationship with AFSA and contributes significantly to achievement of our shared goal of better public understanding of the Foreign Service.

**J. EDGAR WILLIAMS**, in recognition of his leadership role as founder and continuing head of the Association of Former Members of the Foreign Affairs Agencies of Central North Carolina. In launching the association in 1984, Williams and his colleagues opened membership to former as well as retired employees of all foreign affairs agencies in order to have a strongly supported group within a convenient geographic area. The result was a dynamic association that provided members with excellent foreign affairs speakers and also reached out to the community to increase public understanding of diplomacy.

Members of the association have served as speakers and as mentors to students interested in a Foreign Service career and have created and sustained a leading online foreign affairs magazine, *American Diplomacy*. Under Williams' leadership, the association has also supported an initial effort to start a North Carolina Elderhostel Foreign Service program as well as other AFSA outreach activities.

**AMBASSADOR T. FRANK CRIGLER** and **DR. HENRY E. MATTOX**, for their roles in founding the online journal *American Diplomacy*. They launched this journal as



Ambassador Galen Stone receives his award on May 30.

a quarterly in 1996. The journal's editor from the start, Dr. Mattox has been instrumental in soliciting contributions from government and academic writers and especially in providing an important medium for conveying the wisdom and expertise of Foreign Service colleagues.

For five years, Amb. Crigler served as publisher and as president of the nonprofit corporation American Diplomacy

**AFSA salutes these men  
and women who continue to  
serve well past the time  
they officially leave  
the Service.**

Publishers. Now a constantly updated site, [www.americandiplomacy.org](http://www.americandiplomacy.org) had 50,000 visitors in 2002 from throughout the United States and around the world. Thanks to the efforts of Mattox and Crigler, the journal is now a valuable resource for building public awareness of American diplomacy and the role of the Foreign Service, and is a major online source of authoritative articles on foreign affairs, including frequent articles on improving and building the Foreign Service.

**J. MICHAEL HOULAHAN**, in recognition of his leadership role in developing and sustaining outreach programs in Ohio. For the past five years, Houlahan has demonstrated exceptional drive, creativity, and persistence in arranging effective outreach pro-

grams that promoted understanding of the Foreign Service and international affairs. The scope of his programming involving a wide range of key institutions across his state has been truly impressive, including world affairs councils, universities and colleges, civic associations and town meetings. He has worked tirelessly to involve as many leading opinion mak-

ers as possible in his programs, including prominent local and national politicians, educators, civic leaders, and members of the news media. An exceptional speaker, Houlahan has made special efforts to mentor leading students concerning the importance of diplomacy for national interests and effectively describe the attractiveness of careers in the Foreign Service. Thanks to his efforts, public awareness of the importance of American diplomacy has been heightened among many thousands of Ohio citizens.

**PATRICIA KUSHLIS**, in recognition of her leadership role over the past four years in developing and sustaining outreach programs in New Mexico that have enhanced understanding of the Foreign Service and U.S. foreign policy. Her dynamic approach resulted in the involvement of many key opinion leaders, including prominent politicians, civic and educational leaders, and members of the news media, and has made Kushlis an invaluable asset in AFSA's own outreach efforts. She wrote frequent articles and op-eds for leading newspapers, substantially increasing public awareness of the global challenges facing American diplomacy. She became, in effect, "the voice of the Foreign Service in New Mexico." Kushlis has lectured on foreign affairs at the University of New Mexico and other academic and civic institutions across her state, and has made special efforts to mentor students on the attractiveness of careers in the Foreign Service. AFSA is proud to salute Kushlis for her work in helping to build a solid domestic constituency in New Mexico for the U.S. Foreign Service and for American diplomacy. □



## Where to Retire?

I appreciate AFSA's decision to publish occasional notes from members about where to retire and why, first proposed by Virginia Krivis in the April *AFSA News*. I am nearing retirement and have lived overseas most of my life. Since retirement is for the rest of your life, you want to do it right the first time. My (much younger) brother convinced me awhile back to start looking at different places each year. I also started reading books and magazines for different viewpoints, suggestions and recommendations.

For many, the weather is the most important factor in choosing a retirement location. The climate at my last post, Harare, spoiled me. The weather was nice all year round. When I started my search, Southern California sounded good, until I came to the next priority: money. Depending on the state, thousands of dollars can be saved by retiring in one of the states with no personal income tax: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. New Hampshire and Tennessee tax only interest and dividends, and both offer exemptions.

The last two years we have visited Reno, Nevada, a short drive from Lake Tahoe. By

chance, we met some retired Foreign Service friends who have already bought a beautiful place high in the mountains overlooking the bright city lights of Reno. California and all the other western states are just a few hours away, ready to explore. Depending on the time of the year in Reno, there are balloon races; "Hot August Nights," when vintage cars take over

**Since retirement is for the rest of your life, you want to do it right the first time.**

the town, "Street Vibrations," when the motorcycle crowd takes over the city; and the not-to-be-missed rodeo. The weather all year is relatively mild. I subscribed to the *Reno Gazette Journal* in order to get a better flavor for the community. For now, Reno seems to be calling me.

*Dennis Thatcher  
New Delhi*

**W**hen I retired from the Foreign Service in 1996, I decided to return to a previous post, Guatemala, to live in the Spanish colonial capital of Antigua. I have never regretted the decision. An unconventional choice

(there is only one other retired FS couple here, George and Helga Andrews), it is nonetheless a good one (especially if you speak Spanish or want to learn) for the following reasons:

- A magnificent springlike climate year-round;
- A cost of living that is significantly lower than in the U.S.;
- Many conveniences, including cable TV, U.S. plugs and sockets, 110-volt electricity, good Internet access;
- The fact that it's in the same time zone as Houston and only a couple hours flight time from Houston or Miami;
- A slower pace of life, with almost no traffic or parking problems;
- A fairly large and interesting international expatriate community;
- The possibility to get involved in important issues, including basic development (education, health, microloans), environment, archeology, anthropology and many others. Yes, there's lots of poverty, but on any five-minute walk you'll also see something of extraordinary beauty, humor or unexpectedness.
- Access to the Mayan culture, one of the few traditional cultures in the world which continues to thrive.

*Sue H. Patterson  
SPatters@conexion.com.gt  
Antigua, Guatemala* □

# Q&A

## Retiree Issues

QUESTIONS FOR AFSA RETIREE  
ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR  
BONNIE BROWN

**Q: You recently succeeded Ward Thompson to become the new Retiree Activities Coordinator at AFSA. What are your thoughts about your new position?**

**A:** Since assuming my duties as Retiree Activities Coordinator in June, I have had the opportunity to talk with a number of retirees about issues that are of concern to them, to see how ably the dedicated AFSA staff promotes the interests of the entire Foreign Service community, and to appreciate Ward Thompson's legacy of advocacy for the interests of retirees. I look forward to working on behalf of Foreign Service retirees, encouraging an increase in their membership in ASFA, providing assistance in resolving retirement benefit problems, tracking retirement issues in Congress and the bureaucracy, and advocating continuing participation in the foreign affairs community through

retiree associations. I welcome ideas and suggestions about retiree activities. It is a great pleasure to be working in the Foreign Service community again.

**Q: What is your background?**

**A:** I served abroad in Brazzaville, Johannesburg, Abidjan and Accra as a Foreign Service spouse, consular assistant, USIS educational adviser, human rights and self-help grant coordinator, and in development. Here in the U.S. I have worked as an attorney at the State Department and the Federal Communications Commission and as the executive director of a human services organization in North Carolina. □

ready a few minutes early.”

Powell commended Naland for doing a “splendid” job representing the Foreign Service. He thanked Naland and AFSA, noting that “we had to do a little tussling in the beginning, but we soon realized that we had the same objective.”

Powell spoke eloquently of the lifetime commitment of George Shultz to public service. “This award reflects the deep admiration and affection in which you are held by the men and women that



JAY MALLIN

From left: Former Secretary George Shultz, Amb. William Harrop, John Naland, Outgoing Director General Ruth A. Davis.

you led. It also reflects the deep appreciation of succeeding generations of all the members of the State family who have benefited from your legendary, and still very active, concern for their mission and for their well being.” Powell recalled his service alongside Shultz in the Reagan administration and recalled his prescient observations, noting him “among the first to understand the profound implications of globalization.”

In his remarks, Shultz offered advice and recommendations. He spoke of his long admiration for Foreign Service officers and all public servants, and reiterated his belief in the importance of training through all levels of a career. He recommended that the Service try to attract more young people as they graduate from college. Shultz spoke critically of the department’s “up or out” promotion practices, which he said cause people to cut short their public service careers for opportunities in the private sector. As he put it, “the Foreign Service career should start earlier, end later, and be continually punctuated by career-conscious training.” The former secretary ended his speech on a positive note, enthusiastically praising Secretary Powell’s work in the State Department and affirming the importance of diplomacy today. □



JAY MALLIN

Katherine Fisk Carroll presents the Avis Bohlen Award to Bonnie Miller.

**Gingrich • Continued from page 4**

ing, has failed, indeed is actively not implementing President Bush’s foreign policy. I find this an amazing charge. Is he talking about the career Foreign Service, which I was once a member of? If he is, he’s just dead wrong. The Foreign Service is just like the military. It carries out the instructions of presidents of both parties after giving its own advice. They are not insubordinate.”

**U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., July 18:**

In a speech on the House floor, Rep. Van Hollen called upon President George Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and Secretary of State Colin Powell to demand the resignation of Newt Gingrich from the Defense Policy Board, an influential organization that advises the Pentagon.

“Gingrich would like the professional analysts to manipulate the facts to fit the policy rather than have a policy informed by the facts. It is a sad day for our country when Mr. Gingrich could attack an accurate and truthful statement

made by career State Department officials as part of a systematic effort to undermine foreign policy. The intelligence analysts in INR have a duty to provide the Secretary of State and ultimately, the president, with their best assessment and judgment. It would be irresponsible for them to do otherwise when the lives of American men and women are at stake.

“Mr. Gingrich has openly and loudly attacked the integrity of the men and women in the State Department. Moreover, he has advocated positions that would weaken our ability to confront the challenges we face abroad. Allowing him to remain on the Defense Policy Board will send a terrible signal to the men and women who work every day to protect our security and advance our interests abroad that his statements are acceptable to this administration. He should do the right thing and resign from the board. The administration can either stand by the statements of Mr. Gingrich or make it clear that they are unacceptable. Mr. President, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Powell, where do you stand?”

**Acting AFSA President Louise Crane, in the September Foreign Policy:**

“Newt Gingrich’s article, ‘Rogue State Department,’ fits his image as a slash and burn politician, but contributes nothing useful to a debate on either U.S. foreign policy or the foreign policy establishment.

“AFSA applauds Mr. Gingrich’s arguments for a reinigorated Foreign Service, one more linguistically able, one better trained and one with greater exposure to the work of NGOs and the private sector. However, AFSA laments that this epiphany has come so late to him. Had the scales been removed from his eyes while he was still in his congressional leadership position, he might have used his influence to restore funding to a starving State Department, which at one point in the mid-1990s could not even replace retiring Foreign Service employees. There were some 700 positions overseas in critical countries that could not be filled because there simply were not enough employees. Language and other training were deferred to prevent more positions from going unfilled.” □

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## Independent Auditors' Report

To the Governing Board  
**American Foreign Service Association  
and Associated Organizations**  
Washington, DC

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statements of financial position of **American Foreign Service Association and Associated Organizations** (the Association) as of December 31, 2002 and 2001, and the related consolidated statements of activities, changes in net assets, and cash flows for the years then ended. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall consolidated financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of **American Foreign Service Association and Associated Organizations** as of December 31, 2002 and 2001, and the changes in their net assets and their cash flows for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

As described in Note 14 of the consolidated financial statements, there were adjustments made to correct errors made in prior periods.

*BDO Seidman, LLP*

April 3, 2003

# 2002 AFSA AUDIT

## American Foreign Service Association and Associated Organizations Consolidated Statement of Activities December 31, 2002 and 2001

	2002	2001 (as restated)
<b>Revenue, Gains, and Other Support</b>		
Member dues	\$ 1,741,367	\$ 1,656,074
Advertising sales	442,557	458,963
Contributions	951,544	328,032
Registration fees	201,012	226,287
Dividends and interest	141,161	150,638
Rental	37,943	32,422
Other	25,450	25,392
Subscriptions	9,100	8,399
Loss on beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	(55,367)	(12,642)
Net realized and unrealized losses on marketable securities	(780,865)	(835,098)
Net assets released from restrictions: Satisfaction of program restrictions	-	-
<b>Total revenue, gains, and other support</b>	<b>2,713,902</b>	<b>2,038,467</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Program services</b>		
Journal	668,588	720,855
Labor relations	499,855	488,954
Scholarship	336,263	338,988
Elderhostel	194,670	211,668
Congressional affairs	172,537	173,093
Membership services	110,172	80,412
Professional issues	89,741	89,724
Retirees	79,595	90,778
Public education / Outreach	66,440	32,063
Public affairs	37,891	27,543
Essay contest	23,123	24,535
Political action committee	17,860	-
International Associates	11,256	24,285
75th Presidential libraries	-	12,890
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>2,307,991</b>	<b>2,315,788</b>
<b>Supporting services</b>		
Management and general	271,749	259,440
Member support	158,912	125,475
Board and President	56,784	62,767
Fundraising	24,246	18,084
Election	2,113	21,378
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<b>513,804</b>	<b>487,144</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,821,795</b>	<b>2,802,932</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$ (107,893)</b>	<b>\$ (764,465)</b>

A complete set of the audited financial statements are available at the AFSA office 2101 E. St. NW Washington 20037



# 2002 AFSA AUDIT

## American Foreign Service Association and Associated Organizations Consolidated Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2002 and 2001

	2002	2001 (as restated)
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents, including restricted cash of \$162,885 and \$119,335 at December 31, 2002 and 2001, respectively	\$ 168,031	\$ 156,667
Short-term investments, including restricted short-term investments of \$40,901 and \$34,178 at December 31, 2002 and 2001, respectively	73,268	69,130
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$15,000 and \$30,000 at December 31, 2002 and 2001, respectively	93,593	166,456
Prepaid expenses	117,114	92,498
Accrued interest	20,776	19,265
Inventory	14,865	-
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>487,647</b>	<b>504,016</b>
<b>Noncurrent assets</b>		
Temporarily restricted marketable securities	4,136,074	4,158,473
Unrestricted marketable securities	652,689	574,905
Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts	373,951	429,318
Land, building, and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	511,813	580,117
<b>Total noncurrent assets</b>	<b>5,674,527</b>	<b>5,742,813</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 6,162,174</b>	<b>\$ 6,246,829</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 32,519	\$ 30,983
Accrued expenses	59,196	54,517
Deferred revenue	263,936	246,913
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>355,651</b>	<b>332,413</b>
<b>Commitments and contingencies</b>		
<b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted	1,583,525	1,438,533
Temporarily restricted	3,849,047	4,046,565
Permanently restricted	373,951	429,318
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>5,806,523</b>	<b>5,914,416</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 6,162,174</b>	<b>\$ 6,246,829</b>

A complete set of the audited financial statements are available at the AFSA office 2101 E. St. NW Washington 20037

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