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Shawn Dorman, EDITOR

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# CONTENTS

April 2011 Volume 88, No. 3



Cover and inside illustrations  
by Ben Fishman  
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**PRESIDENT'S VIEWS / 5**  
Revolutions Test Diplomacy  
By Susan R. Johnson

**SPEAKING OUT / 13**  
Out with the Old, In with the New  
By Bruce K. Byers

**REFLECTIONS / 76**  
The Lights  
By Lee-Alison Sibley

**LETTERS / 7**

**CYBERNOTES / 9**

**MARKETPLACE / 11**

**BOOKS / 59**

**IN MEMORY / 61**

**INDEX TO  
ADVERTISERS / 74**

***FOCUS ON***  
***Women in Security and Development***

**WHY WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEBUILDING MATTERS / 17**  
For the world to move forward on security issues in an effective manner,  
women will need to play a greater role in the process.  
By Kathleen Kuehnast

**CONGO'S REAL CURSE / 22**  
As in many societies, women are the core and fabric of Congolese society.  
Damage that fabric and the foundation starts to fall apart.  
By Maggie K. Fleming

**THE EMERGENCE OF ISLAMIC FEMINISM / 27**  
Just as conservatives have used Islam to hinder women's empowerment,  
Muslim feminists are using their faith to promote it.  
By Isobel Coleman

**COOK STOVES: FROM BANE TO BOON / 33**  
Today, Indian women have a real chance to improve their lives,  
thanks to the Global Cook Stove Alliance.  
By Satinder Bindra

**UNSCR 1325: SLOW PROGRESS, UNCERTAIN PROSPECTS / 36**  
Women in civil society organizations have done much more than  
governments to advance U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325's goals.  
By John Tirman

***FEATURE***

**AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR IN ARMENIA / 41**  
There's never a dull moment during a semester spent teaching  
at a university in Yerevan.  
By Rochelle Parks-Yancy

# CONTENTS

## A F S A N E W S

**AFSA RELEASES USAID MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS / 47**

**AFSA LAUNCHES ITS NEW WEB SITE! / 47**

**NEWS BRIEFS / 48**

**AFSA OFFICER ELECTION NOTICE / 48**

**VP STATE: GOOD SUPERVISION LEADS TO A GOOD EER SEASON / 49**

**VP USAID: DIVERSITY AT USAID: WHY SHOULD WE CARE? / 50**

**VP FAS: FOREIGN SERVICE BUMPER STICKERS / 51**

**AFSA ANNOUNCES SINCLAIRE LANGUAGE AWARD WINNERS / 54**

**THIS MONTH IN DIPLOMATIC HISTORY / 55**

**EVENT CALENDAR/CLASSIFIEDS / 56**

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# PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

## *Revolutions Test Diplomacy*

BY SUSAN R. JOHNSON

Shortly after the crisis in Egypt began to unfold, *Newsweek* magazine asserted that President Barack Obama had blown it, alienating President Hosni Mubarak and his supporters on one side and the Egyptian people on the other, especially the dissatisfied and restive youth. Other analysts hailed him as astute for maintaining a balanced position and not trying — or appearing — to take credit for change that belongs entirely to the Egyptians themselves. These two opposing assessments exemplify how severely revolutionary situations test American diplomacy.

There were times when popular uprisings against colonial occupation offered a clear choice — side with the colonial power or support national aspirations for freedom and self-determination. The moral position was unequivocal. As a country itself born of revolution, the United States welcomed decolonization. But when people rise against authoritarian or dictatorial systems now, the choice is often less clear, and more controversial.

Many countries, including Russia, China, India, Brazil and some European states, take the easy way out, maintaining that these are internal matters and invoking the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. But American foreign policy aspires to be proactive, and



Americans expect diplomacy, the primary tool of foreign policy, to be equally dynamic and transformational.

The overarching considerations for U.S. diplomacy must always be our values and our

interests, but these are sometimes in conflict. So it is crucial to balance the two elements properly. An increasingly important question is how intrusive to be in promoting democracy and human rights, especially in countries that are not democracies, whether friendly to us or not. Can we overstep longstanding diplomatic norms that proscribe interference in the internal affairs of other countries and emphasize respect for sovereignty? And should we encourage destabilizing forces in the name of our values? There are no simple answers to these questions.

This dilemma becomes sharper in times of crisis, when the arguments for an interventionist approach gain strength, as the debate over the Libyan situation demonstrates. We have already pushed successfully for United Nations sanctions, but what next? Even if we ultimately favor a military measure such as a no-fly zone, it will have to be preceded by diplomacy to garner international support — the approach President George H.W. Bush pursued so skillfully before launching Operation Desert Storm during the first Persian Gulf War 20 years ago.

But military interventions must remain the option of last resort.

Given the dilemma intrinsic to the divergent pulls of the values we espouse, the interests we protect and the various international constraints under which we operate, the controversy over the American approach to the Egyptian crisis, and now the Libyan one, is understandable. So is the challenge and test that our diplomacy faces. Surely, whether in “normal” circumstances or during crises, we cannot abandon balance and sensitivity to international norms in our diplomatic practice. Yet from a broader perspective, our diplomacy must not stray from our core values, which remain the essence of the American vision and our global role. This should be the lodestone for our diplomacy in a fast-changing world where the rules of international conduct are also undergoing a definite, albeit slow, change.

Take, for example, the principle of national sovereignty. There is diminishing international tolerance for massacres of civilians, and the issue of intervention in such situations is the subject of ongoing discussions in international fora. The very concept of sovereignty itself is evolving under the pressures of globalization, information flows, democratic aspirations and support for human rights.

I invite your contributions and comments at [president@afsa.org](mailto:president@afsa.org). ■

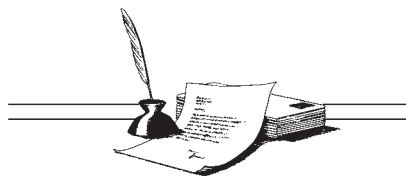


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# LETTERS

## A Pool of Talent

I read with great interest AFSA President Susan Johnson's article, "Time for the Foreign Service Reserve Corps," that appeared in the January issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*.

I have long felt that we have a gigantic waste of talent in this country because of not using the professional skills of people who are retired — often all too early. I once made a proposal to rectify this that would operate on a governmentwide basis, but I would heartily subscribe to something that dealt only with the State Department.

*George P. Shultz*  
*Former Secretary of State*  
*Hoover Institution*  
*Stanford, Calif.*

## Remembering Selden Chapin

I thoroughly enjoyed your feature about my grandfather, "Selden Chapin: Father of the 1946 Foreign Service Act," in your February issue. Sixty-five years after that legislation was enacted, it is wonderful to know that history has not relegated events to mere family legend.

Thank you also for noting the family service of my grandfather, my father, my great-uncle and his son. Among them, they held more than a dozen ambassadorial posts. They were proud public servants; proud to share family and the Foreign Service.

I would add that my grandfather and father may well be the only father-son team to be declared *persona non grata*, a distinction often referred to as the Order of the Raspberry — at least in Chapin family dinner-table conversation!

*Edith C. Chapin*  
*Washington, D.C.*

## Justly Complimentary

I just read your FS Heritage profile of my grandfather, Selden Chapin, and am thrilled by it. Jack Binns' article was complete, well-written and justly complimentary. Thank you so much for doing it.

*Roger Kirk*  
*Ambassador, retired*  
*Washington, D.C.*

## Don't Trust Anyone Over 31

Every serious analysis of the current turmoil in the Middle East points out that there are some 100 million people (to use Thomas Friedman's figure) in the Arab world between the ages of 15 and 29. All *Foreign Service Journal* readers understand how challenging it is for our embassies to work with this demographic.

The two issues are related. Twenty-nine years ago, compelled by then-Representative Claude Pepper, D-Fla., the State Department raised the maximum entry age for new Foreign Serv-

ice officers from 31 to 59. The result is embassy staffs with few or no diplomats even close to the ages of this fast-rising "successor generation" in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and much of Asia.

The Foreign Service should be a career service, as is the military, with officers entering in their 20s and gaining, by the time they are 45 to 50, the breadth of geographic and professional experience required of our senior diplomats. Officers who are already middle-aged when entering the Foreign Service will only rarely gain comparable experience.

We have long had an astute commitment to greater diversity in our diplomatic corps. But a Foreign Service with few men and women younger than 30, or even 35, is not diverse. Nor is it likely to be able to cultivate frank, productive (or enjoyable) relationships with this rising tide of youth worldwide.

It will take years to correct this problem. But a maximum entry age of 31 for career Foreign Service officers should be restored immediately.

*C. Robert Dickerman*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Swoope, Va.*

## Giving Locally Employed Staff Their Due

In both my overseas Foreign Service assignments, I have seen firsthand

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## LETTERS



the benefits of keeping Locally Employed Staff at post for years. These dedicated employees provide continuity and institutional memory and use their contacts to enable Foreign Service personnel to carry out our missions. Indeed, many visitors to post express appreciation for their contributions.

But while we publicly praise our LES colleagues, we do them a great disservice when it comes to career advancement. I recently went through the long process of creating a new Locally Employed Staff position within my office here in Nairobi. After I drafted the position description and conducted the standard Computer Aided Job Evaluation, the job came out at grade 10. We then interviewed applicants and made our selection, a current LES at the grade of 8.

Only after we completed all the paperwork to hire and promote the new employee to the designated rank of 10 did we learn that the Foreign Affairs Manual (3 FAM 7576.1, to be precise) requires him to serve at least one full

year at grade 9 before being promoted to 10. The Bureau of Human Resources tells me that I can apply for a waiver of the minimum waiting period, which we will do. But this policy makes no sense. It simply punishes local staff who are already employed at post.

After all, if we had selected an outside candidate for the position, that person would join the mission at the advertised grade of 10 right away. Or if the Locally Employed Staff member were to resign his current position before accepting our offer, he could start at the 10 level.

What possible justification could there be for penalizing exemplary employees who are trying to better themselves, and help their post, by assuming more responsibilities? Our Locally Employed Staff members deserve to be promoted and paid just like any other employee in the federal government. ■

*Steven D'Angelo  
Diplomatic Security  
Special Agent  
Embassy Nairobi*

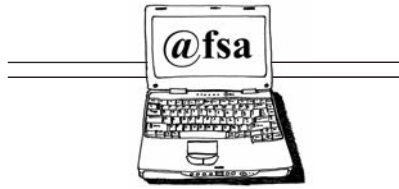
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# CYBERNOTES

A potential human rights catastrophe is unfolding in Libya as protesters brave live gunfire and death for a third day running. Libya is trying to impose an information blackout, but it can't hide a massacre.

— Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch, speaking on Feb. 20, [www.afronline.org](http://www.afronline.org).

## Social Media as a Revolutionary Force

The future of the uprisings that recently overthrew the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt, and threaten to do the same in Libya, is still uncertain as we go to press in mid-March. But one thing is already clear: they have already demonstrated the power of social media to shape revolutions.

On Feb. 22, the Carnegie Endowment's Michele Dunne spoke to the Women's Foreign Policy Group on the topic of "Egypt: How a Virtual Revolution Became Actual." In her analysis, Tunisian President Ben Ali's Jan. 14 overthrow inspired many different elements of Egyptian society to join forces against President Hosni Mubarak. This transformed "virtual" activism, which had been slowly gathering force there since 2008, into mass protests.

To counter this, state-owned Telecom Egypt, which owns most of the fiber-optic cables that transmit information, flipped the "off" switch on Jan. 28. This severely inhibited the opposition's ability to use Facebook, Twitter and other social media to organize gatherings. As James Glanz and John Markoff report in a Feb. 15 *New York Times* article, similar telecommunications monopolies exist across the Middle East and North Africa, making it relatively easy for governments to halt the flow of information, at least temporarily. Even so, the shutdown in Egypt lasted barely a week.

Meanwhile, as Tina Rosenberg explains in a Feb. 16 *Foreign Policy* commentary titled "Revolution U," the Egyptian youth movement had already learned an important lesson from the botched protests of April 6, 2008: No group can succeed without a strategy and a clear message, regardless of the number of fans it has on Facebook.

That said, the sheer popularity of the Facebook pages for the April 6 Youth Movement and We Are All Khaled Said (named for an Alexandria businessman who was dragged from an Internet café by police and beaten to death in the street last summer) helped break the barrier of fear in Egypt. That support, in turn, gave revolutionary groups the confidence to mount increasingly effective protests.

Shashank Joshi of the Royal United Services Institute, a British defense think-tank, notes that social media provided a conduit for young people who stand outside formal institutions. As the region's large youth population searches for ways to participate in society, social media are a useful, highly visible tool. Joshi also credits the role of social networks in accelerating the circulation of imagery and testimony to fuel international support and draw in the uncommitted.

On the Feb. 14 edition of "PBS NewsHour," Al-Jazeera's Abderrahim Foukara explained how the marriage of television with new media makes it possible to spread messages and gather information from citizens on the ground. Appearing on the same program, Washington State University's Lawrence Pintak hailed the Egyptian opposition's communications strategy as a "one-two punch." Social media helped the youth groups coordinate their protests, while television dealt the knockout blow by broadcasting their protests around the country.

During the second week of protests in Egypt, meanwhile, a Feb. 5 *Washington Post* editorial sharply criticized the State Department for not using the \$30 million that Congress allocated for support of global Internet freedom in the Fiscal Year 2010 budget. In fact, over the past three years, the State De-



partment has awarded \$20 million in grants to fund Internet freedom in various countries. In a Feb. 15 speech at George Washington University, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to Internet freedom and announced that State plans to spend more than \$25 million to support it this year.

We will continue to report on this lively debate, both in upcoming editions of *Cybernotes* and elsewhere in the *Journal*.

—Danielle Derbes, *Editorial Intern*

## Controlling an Army of Contractors

On Feb. 24 the Commission on Wartime Contracting ([www.wartimecontracting.gov](http://www.wartimecontracting.gov)) issued its second report to Congress detailing 32 ways to eliminate billions of dollars in waste associated with the federal government's unprecedented use of contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Titled "At What Risk? Correcting Over-Reliance on Contractors in Contingency Operations," the report estimates that Uncle Sam has spent \$177 billion since 2002 on contractors operating in the two countries. Currently, about 200,000 of them work there, a force roughly equal to the combined number of U.S. civilian and military forces currently assigned to those war zones. Yet even as the use of hired hands has become a "default option" for the Defense Department, State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development, vigorous oversight and management are too often an administrative after-thought.

The commission says that contractors have generally performed well in Afghanistan and Iraq. But bribes, kickbacks and money laundering have tarnished their image. "War by its nature

entails waste," the report says. "But the scale of the problems in Iraq and Afghanistan also reflects the toxic interplay of huge sums of money pumped into relatively small economies."

Commission Co-Chair Michael Thibault, a former deputy director of the Defense Contract Audit Agency, comments: "When it comes to oversight of contingency contracting, we've been driving beyond the reach of our headlights. Reforms are badly needed."

After explaining the budgetary and policy reasons for America's over-reliance on contractors, the study pro-

poses an array of legislative, regulatory and budgetary measures. Key recommendations include:

- Growing the federal government's organic capability to perform critical functions and developing a deployable contingency-acquisition cadre;
- Restricting reliance on contractors for security functions;
- Strengthening enforcement tools that hold contractors and government officials accountable for performance;
- Establishing high-level positions at Defense, State and USAID, and a new "dual-hatted" policy position in the executive branch with responsibili-

### Sites of the Month: [www.girleffect.org](http://www.girleffect.org) and [www.girlup.org](http://www.girlup.org)

To change the world, invest in girls: This is the simple but powerful concept being promoted and spread online in two major campaigns, *The Girl Effect* and *GirlUp*.

- When a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children.
- An extra year of primary school boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent. An extra year of secondary school: 15 to 25 percent.
- When a girl gets a chance, she will reinvest her income and knowledge back into the community and can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

These notes from [www.girleffect.org](http://www.girleffect.org) are part of a global campaign to help girls in the developing world help themselves and their communities. The idea is that when a girl reaches adolescence, she is at a crossroads.

*The Girl Effect* campaign — "the unique potential of 600 adolescent girls to end poverty for themselves and the world" — seeks to raise awareness and support for girls in the developing world. The message is spreading primarily through social media via a short, inspiring video that illustrates the way things go for many girls in the developing world after age 12, depending on the opportunities they have. The Web site offers toolkits for raising awareness, starting clubs and fundraising. These can be used to raise money for the Girl Effect Fund or for any other organization that seeks to assist girls in the developing world.

A related campaign — *GirlUp* — launched by the United Nations Foundation is designed to engage and connect American teens to efforts to improve the lives of girls in the developing world. Specifically, the aim is to mobilize 100,000 American girls to raise money and awareness to fight poverty, sexual violence and child marriage in the developing world. And in the process, they gain leadership and advocacy skills.

The *GirlUp* site, [www.girlup.org](http://www.girlup.org), is friendly, and pink, and includes material to inspire American teens to get outside their own personal worlds and get involved. *GirlUp* uses Facebook, Twitter and other social media, blogs and teen representatives to get the message out.

— Shawn Dorman, *Associate Editor*



## 50 Years Ago...

The policy formulation process is badly served if only those ideas are entertained that happen to correspond with the prevailing climate of opinion. Let there be, then, within the limits of loyal service to the United States, a free play of ideas in the Foreign Service. [This] is only possible, however, if the president and Secretary of State will actually defend those of their subordinates who may some day, with the benefit of hindsight, prove to have been wrong. In giving our best judgment we cannot always be right, particularly since politics involves constant change, and a judgment made two years ago may look foolish today even though it was quite reasonable at the time it was made.



— Editorial, "Daring and Dissent," *FSJ*, April 1961.

ties at both the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council;

- Creating a "J-10" position at the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide a focus on contingency contracting, which is currently subsumed under the Joint Chiefs' logistics organization;
- Increasing competition among contractors to promote savings; and
- Ensuring that training for military and civilian officials who manage and oversee contingency contracts is made more consistent and effective.

Commission Co-Chair and former Representative Chris Shays, R-Conn., says, "If our proposals are enacted, we can save billions of dollars, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan but in the next contingency operation."

In a Feb. 23 *Washington Post* article about the commission's findings, Associated Press reporter Richard Lardner notes an additional facet of the issue that was not part of the commission's mandate. U.S. intelligence agencies also employ contractors, an arrangement that in recent weeks has produced a serious diplomatic headache.

Raymond Allen Davis was working as a Central Intelligence Agency security contractor in Pakistan when he

shot and killed two armed men in Lahore back in January. Davis' connection to the spy agency has seriously complicated the Obama administration's efforts to free him from jail, and continues to strain relations between the U.S. and Pakistan.

Created by Congress under Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, the eight-member Wartime Contracting Commission has broad authority to examine wartime spending, including military support contracts, reconstruction projects and private security companies. The new report is the panel's fifth to date. The commission is slated to disband after issuing its final report this July.

— Steven Alan Honley, Editor

## Stake Your Claim!

The Internet address system is currently based on 21 "generic top-level" domains, of which the top two — .com. and .net — account for about half of the world's 202 million Internet addresses. (Many of the rest are named for countries; e.g., .fr for France.)

Since 2000, the list of generic domains has expanded only twice, and the new options (e.g., .biz, .jobs) have not attracted huge audiences. But that

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is about to change with the addition of a whole array of Web sites with more subject-specific, sometimes controversial suffixes. As Ian Shapira reports in a Feb. 7 *Washington Post* article, the impending expansion of the Internet's domain name system has already spurred thousands of "Web wildcaters" to stake their claims on potentially lucrative new territories.

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers ([www.icann.org](http://www.icann.org)) is the body charged with assigning the new domain names, part of its mission to keep the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. Formed in 1998, the California-based nonprofit approved the expansion of the current naming system three years ago, but is still working out the details.

As part of that effort, hundreds of investors, consultants and entrepreneurs converged in San Francisco for the first-ever ".nxt" conference, a three-day affair (Feb. 8-10) featuring seminars on ICANN's complicated application procedures. The conference's Web site features a banner reading "Join the Internet land rush!"

But unlike the 1889 race to claim land in Oklahoma, which was open to all comers, participants in the 2011 competition have to pony up \$185,000 just to submit an application — and that is on top of the \$25,000 annual dues all domain operators have to pay ICANN. (Unsuccessful applicants will have some of their application fee returned.)

ICANN says this requirement will ensure that only well-financed organizations operate the domains, and protect against cybersquatters who acquire domain names not to operate them but to be bought out. But critics complain that the process cuts out many grassroots organizations, devel-

oping countries and individuals. They also charge that the main purpose of the expansion is to make money for ICANN and the winning applicants, even if that causes aggravation for trademark holders and confusion for the average Internet user.

Many organizations and companies are competing for the same domain names, in disputes that will likely have to be settled either via an ICANN-sponsored auction or a board decision. For instance, two companies vying for the environmentally friendly .eco domain have competing endorsements: one from a nonprofit chaired by former Vice President Al Gore; the other from a group founded by former Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev.

ICANN hopes to start accepting applications this spring, but has given no timeline for instituting the new domains.

— Steven Alan Honley, Editor

### Libya's Next Leader?

Cybernotes seldom dabbles in pop culture, but an item in the March 1 edition of *The Guardian* persuaded us to make an exception. Blogger Richard Adams makes a compelling case that if rambling, narcissistic rhetoric is a prerequisite for being a successful dictator, then Libya may have found a worthy successor to Muammar al-Qadhafi in bad-boy Hollywood actor Charlie Sheen.

(For those of you overseas: Sheen's decidedly colorful remarks on a whole range of topics recently drove CBS to fire him from its hit sitcom, "Two and a Half Men.")

Skeptical? Take the quiz ([www.guardian.co.uk/world/quiz/2011/mar/01/muammar-gaddafi-charlie-sheen-quiz](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/quiz/2011/mar/01/muammar-gaddafi-charlie-sheen-quiz)) and see for yourself. ■

— Steven Alan Honley, Editor



# SPEAKING OUT

*Out with the Old, In with the New*

BY BRUCE K. BYERS

In her December 2010 President's Views column, "Thinking About the Unthinkable," Susan Johnson focused on some important implications for the future of the Foreign Service found in Joshua Cooper Ramo's 2009 book, *The Age of the Unthinkable*. Her comments were particularly timely in regard to Ramo's observation that American governmental and corporate institutions, including our diplomatic apparatus, are locked in an outdated vision of the world.

In his 2010 book, *Magic and Mayhem: The Delusions of American Foreign Policy from Korea to Afghanistan*, Derek Leebaert goes a few steps further, illustrating how a pattern he calls "magical thinking" has warped American foreign policy for many decades now. He points out that every government has its own illusions — its own magical thinking in which leaders and their advisers often suspend reality and overestimate their capabilities and resources.

Our government's traditional system of staffing senior positions with political appointees tends to lock in such illusions and can lead to a greater focus on immediate crises, at the expense of developing strategies for addressing longer-term problems.

Typical of what such disconnects can produce is our current 30-year schism with Iran, founded on and reinforced by each side's myths and mis-

*Washington policymakers continue to rely on old methods and outdated views of the role of diplomacy.*



perceptions about the other. (Ambassador John Limbert explores this phenomenon in his excellent 2009 book, *Negotiating with Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History*.)

## **The Power of the Familiar**

Ramo and Leebaert concur that people tend to revert to what is most known to them through their personal experience, rather than relying on abstract arguments. In addition, most of us follow the leader in any hierarchy. As a result, contrary thinkers tend to be branded as eccentrics and marginalized.

For many years now, Congress has formed special commissions to study the foreign policy process after major failures like the 9/11 attacks, while successive presidents and agency heads have charged blue-ribbon groups to make recommendations for improving cooperation and efficiency among competing factions. (The recently

completed Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review is just the latest example of this approach.) In addition, countless think-tanks and nongovernmental organizations regularly issue studies full of ideas for advancing our diplomatic objectives more effectively.

Occasionally, an individual — the late Richard Holbrooke comes to mind — has such charisma that he or she can singlehandedly change perceptions and attitudes for the better, at least temporarily. But the usual fate of recommendations for systemic change to an institution, however worthy, is sinking without a trace beneath the entrenched bureaucracy that Ramo and Leebaert describe so well.

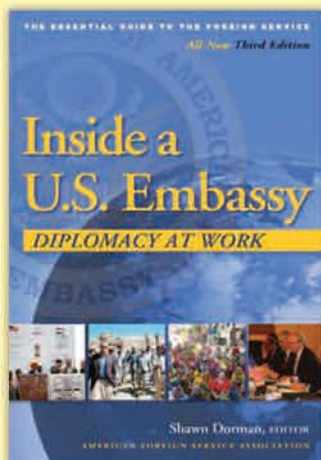
Making matters worse, the resources that our foreign affairs agencies and the Foreign Service receive are woefully inadequate for keeping abreast of fast-breaking developments around the world. So Washington policymakers continue to rely on old methods and outdated views of the role of diplomacy, rendering them ever less effective at reacting to crises — let alone foreseeing and defusing impending challenges.

Just a few months ago, a young Tunisian's self-immolation and the beating death of a young Egyptian by police triggered popular uprisings against dictatorial regimes that had long been allies of the United States.



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*In the long run,  
the leaks may prove to  
be a gift to diplomacy,  
if State Department  
leaders can figure out  
how to use it.*

What drew hundreds of thousands into the streets in Tunis, Cairo and elsewhere had nothing to do with anti-American provocations by al-Qaida, however. It came from young people demanding a greater chance to participate in the affairs of their governments and societies.

Washington policymakers and leaders missed this point completely, until it became too obvious to ignore. Such failures, in turn, make Congress even more skeptical about allocating adequate resources to diplomacy.

Before the Foreign Service can adopt new strategies in pursuit of global diplomatic initiatives, State and the other foreign affairs agencies need to do much more to educate the American public and win its “buy-in” to forge ahead in a dangerous world. This will require sustained efforts to explain to audiences throughout the country, as well as decision-makers on Capitol Hill, just how the resources they appropriate for our foreign affairs agencies help their constituents back home.

Right now most Americans react negatively to reports of international developments. The news is often bad and leaves them with a superficial un-

derstanding of diplomacy and our foreign policy goals that can lead to calls for a new isolationism. To counter this, the department should take steps to explain foreign policy initiatives to our citizens through local world affairs councils and chambers of commerce, on college campuses, and via blogs and social media.

### A Challenge and an Opportunity

WikiLeaks’ unauthorized publication of thousands of State Department documents last fall produced a media spectacle. Many of our political leaders have contented themselves with shrill calls for Julian Assange’s head, or action against the Web sites and media outlets that have published the leaked materials. Others deny the leaks have done us any real damage.

All these reactions are part of the conventional Washington way of coping with the unexpected and the embarrassing. Yet in the long run, the leaks may prove to be a gift to diplomacy, if State Department leaders can figure out how to use it. For one thing, the leaks revealed how easily self-selecting individuals and groups can unleash an element of chaos onto the international stage in the name of “transparency.”

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and other administration figures could use the disclosures to shed light on the flaws in Assange’s thinking about international relations. Specifically, his claim to be advancing “transparency” by exposing alleged criminal acts by Washington and other governments is a deliberate attempt to disrupt political elites by forcing unplanned change.

State should also use the leaks to illustrate how often the efforts of U.S.



## SPEAKING OUT



diplomatic personnel have improved conditions on the ground. Apart from the WikiLeaks revelations, there have long been individual embassy initiatives that reflect conditions in host countries and produce unexpected, positive results.

In 2009, for example, after assessing a decline in favorable views toward the U.S. among Argentine elites, the U.S. embassy held an open house at which local NGOs were invited to meet with potential American funding sources. This event proved so popular that it was repeated and expanded in 2010, shifting perceptions of American diplomacy and sending a clear message that the U.S. is genuinely concerned about the needs of Argentina's people.

Today, State's Bureau of International Information Programs produces a variety of electronic journals on specific themes, tapping the views of many experts. These are disseminated via open Web sites to our embassies and foreign audiences. Although more research needs to be conducted to determine the impact such e-publications have on foreign audiences, it seems reasonable to see real potential.

However, these publications need to tackle more controversial themes, such as public attitudes toward Islam in American communities, as well as the persistence of racism and poor educational results among U.S. minorities in rural and inner-city schools. Other topics might include the current dysfunctions in state governments dealing with budget and other crises and the record levels of prison incarcerations, and how these affect state and federal budgets. The work of NGOs and charitable organizations in helping victims of abuse, home foreclosures, natural disasters and business failures might also be subjects for online journals.

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By addressing such subjects head-on, warts and all — unconventional as that may seem — we could gain credibility and cultivate a broader understanding of social and economic tensions in America and how we are addressing them. Such efforts would also help foreign audiences appreciate the complexity and diversity of our society.

To communicate our values abroad, we must immerse ourselves in the thinking of people from other cultures and learn how they view the world. Successfully engaging our adversaries in public debates on international issues will require creative approaches to public diplomacy — not simply the application of new technologies.

It is undeniable that certain foreign audiences and opinion makers hate

U.S. policies. Yet many of them still like to be engaged by American diplomats, whether in person, via videoconferences or in Internet Web chats. Some don't trust their own media and government spokespersons, while others believe our policies support and abet the corruption of their governments. But even they rely on American reporting, because it is factual and verifiable.

Outreach efforts to such groups and individuals should be a prominent element of a new, more effective U.S. diplomacy.

### Time to Act

In her December column, Susan Johnson challenges foreign affairs professionals to move beyond traditional

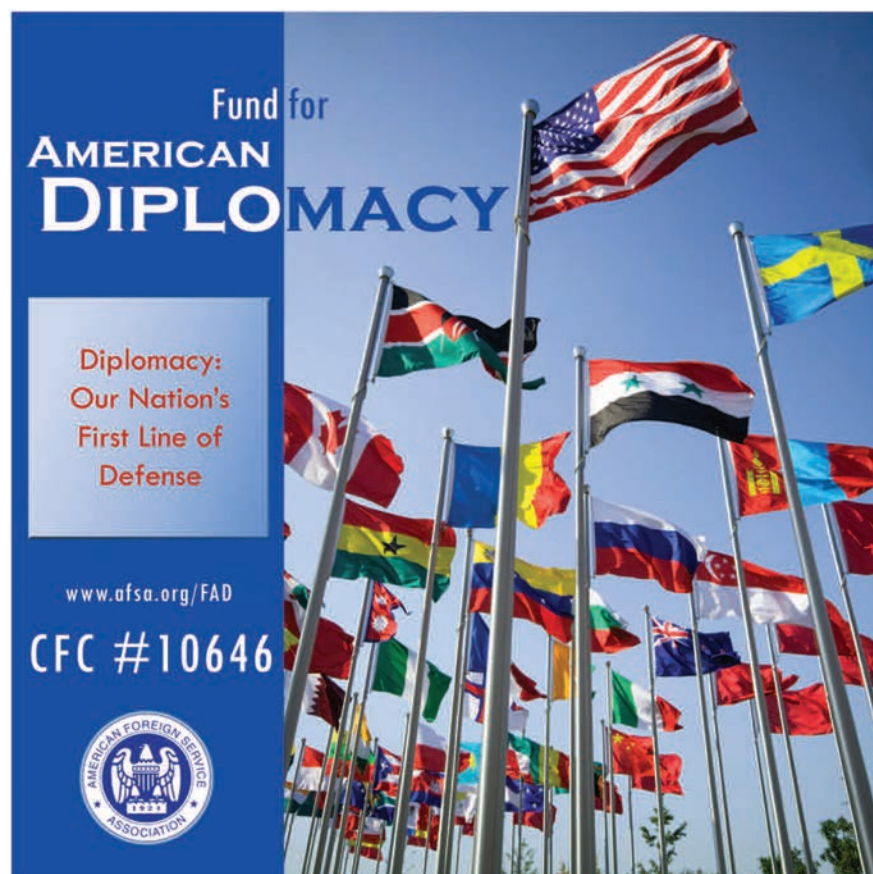
thinking. In fact, many of them already do so every day, all around the world. But much of what they are learning and experiencing goes unheeded back in Washington — particularly among the hundreds of political appointees who manage our foreign policy establishment. How can we “think the unthinkable” and adopt such approaches if conventional thinking rejects the contrarian?

We can begin by realizing that our ideological enemies, many of whom are non-state players, are busily inventing ways to use our more orthodox approaches against us. One way they do this is through dissemination of as much disinformation as possible across the galaxy of Web sites that appeal to young, poorly educated and unemployed people. Their goal is to persuade their followers that the United States is the “Great Satan.”

The more widely we counter such claims with relevant, reliable information, the harder it becomes for such regimes to deceive their citizens.

It will not be easy to develop a new language for diplomacy and dialogue with foreign audiences, to be sure. But earlier generations of U.S. diplomats succeeded in meeting similar challenges. And now it is our turn. ■


*Bruce K. Byers is a retired Foreign Service officer with more than 30 years of service in the U.S. Information Agency and the Department of State in cultural and informational affairs. He was the USIA vice president of the American Foreign Service Association from 1995 to 1996 and later served as acting president of the Coalition for American Leadership Abroad. He writes widely on foreign affairs and the role of public diplomacy in advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives.*



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# WHY WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEBUILDING MATTERS



Ben Fishman

**FOR THE WORLD TO MOVE FORWARD ON SECURITY ISSUES IN AN EFFECTIVE MANNER, WOMEN WILL NEED TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN THE PROCESS.**

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*BY KATHLEEN KUEHNAST*

**I**s carrying a gun the only way for women to get a place at the peace table? This provocative question was posed by one of the participants at the Women and War Conference held in Washington, D.C., last November. Indeed, most peace negotiations are dominated by men, many of whom were once active combatants in the conflict being settled. Isn't it time for the negotiating table to be set for those who are going to build the peace, including women?

In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325, which recognizes the critical role that women can play in creating regional and global security structures. With an eye toward translating the promise of this resolution into reality, the Women and War Conference commemorated its tenth anniversary by convening an extraordinary coalition of national and international participants from a range of sectors, including international organizations, governments, civil society, the diplomatic community and the military. By underlining women's involvement in peace-making as a security issue, the conference aimed to increase the participation of women in all aspects of international security, as well as inspire an agenda for action over the next decade and beyond.

There have been 39 active conflicts over the last 10 years, yet most of the subsequent peace negotiations have excluded female participants. And out of some 585 peace treaties drafted over the last two decades, only 16 percent contain specific references to women. Thus the question needs to be asked: If women are critical to building the peace after conflict, then why not include women among those setting the conditions at the negotiating table?

The absence of women from formal peace negotiations is all the more astonishing given the fact that women are increasingly parties to conflicts. In addition to being recruited into regular and irregular armed forces, they have also become powerful voices opposing conflict. In Sudan, for example, women and girls played active roles on the front lines of the two north-south civil wars, both as combatants and peace activists. So how can peace be sustained without women helping to craft it in the first place?

As *New York Times* journalist Nicholas Kristof has pointed out, women comprise more than half of the world population. So whether they are combatants or survivors,

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*Kathleen Kuehnast is the director of the Gender and Peacebuilding Center at the U.S. Institute of Peace. She is co-editor with Chantal de Jonge Oudraat and Helga Hernes of the book Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century (USIP Press, 2011). For more information about the Women and War Conference, go to [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org).*

*As it stands now, we are losing half of the world's creative potential by not including women in all aspects of global problem-solving.*

peacebuilders or bystanders, women must play a role in the transition from war to peaceful development.

### **What Women Bring to the Table**

This is not just a moral issue or a question of equality; it is a matter of efficiency. As things now stand, we are losing half of the world's creative potential by not including women in all aspects of global problem-solving.

When it comes to settling conflicts, we know that there are many more approaches than simply picking up a gun and threatening our enemy. There are countless examples of women who have intervened in conflicts, but most of their stories have never been recorded, and their efforts are not counted. We see the value-added that women have brought to peacebuilding processes in the ability to form coalitions across conflict lines, as in Northern Ireland in the 1990s when a group of Catholic and Protestant mothers said, "Enough!"

More recently, Christian and Muslim women united to wage sit-ins at Liberian markets and refused to work to stop the out-of-control violence of former President Charles Taylor and his armed gangs. Women have been working across the Israeli-Palestinian divide for decades, as well, but have rarely been allowed into the formal peace processes. This must now change.

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Vermeer emphasizes that we must see women as leaders, not victims. We must also view their participation not as a favor to them, but as essential to peace and security. From mediation skills to logistical knowledge, from food and water security to a deep investment in the future through their children, women are the best investment toward building a workable peacebuilding process.

Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concurs. At the Women and War Conference, Mullen examined women's role in combat and peacekeeping operations and concluded that "we simply must do a better job tapping into [women's] unique talents and understanding their unique challenges. ... Indeed, they have given us a competitive advantage."

To further this notion of inclusion, we need action at the international, national and local levels, and we need to engage the academic community.

### **Global Recognition**

At the international level, we now have consensus that women should be included in all peace talks. UNSCR 1325 acknowledges the disproportionate impact of violent conflict on women and recognizes the critical roles women can and should play in the processes of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. These include participating in peace talks, conflict mediation and all aspects of post-conflict reconstruction.

At the resolution's tenth-anniversary gathering in New York at the end of 2010, world leaders criticized the lack of progress on implementing it. They reminded the international community that ignoring the security of women in the context of war and armed conflict carries high, long-term costs. Witness the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the use of rape as a weapon of war has reached epidemic proportions.

Leaders also emphasized that when international forces are deployed, provisions for the protection of civilians, particularly women, must be made explicit. U.N. Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström has stressed that international peace and security is indivisible from women's peace and security, and that ending the spiral of sexual violence is integral to ending wars and preventing further conflict.

Protection of women is just half of the problem, however. The other half is making sure that women are both formally and informally engaged in the efforts to end wars and begin the difficult process of building peace.

Already, 25 countries — from Liberia to Norway, Nepal and the Philippines — have developed action plans to implement Resolution 1325. Such plans outline how national ministries and armed forces need to take gender into account when devising policies on defense, development or diplomacy. It is encouraging that the United States, though it has yet to ratify UNSCR 1325, has finally committed to this task, as well.

### **A U.S. National Action Plan**

Indeed, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has taken steps to develop a national action plan on Women, Peace and Security to reflect the tenets of Resolution 1325. State's Office of Global Women's Issues,

*Women have been working across the Israeli-Palestinian divide for decades, but have rarely been allowed into the formal peace processes.*

as well as USAID and the Department of Defense, are working on action plans relevant to their missions, including establishing monitoring and evaluation procedures to reach specific targets and calling for action in countries where the U.S. is actively engaged. The National Security Council is coordinating the final plan among the U.S. government agencies.

National-level action will also be greatly strengthened by passage of the International Violence Against Women Act, which was introduced by a bipartisan team of legislators and approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December 2010. Similar to Resolution 1325, this bill recognizes that the issues affecting women are international security issues, and that the protection of women from violence must be prioritized in U.S. diplomatic efforts. The bill adopts a multisector approach, addressing violence against women not only through services for survivors and health-care programs, but also through legal and judicial training, economic empowerment programs and girls' education.

At the local and community levels, we need better and more creative outreach and educational strategies. We should link women's inclusion in peacemaking to hardline security issues and present more evidence of women's contributions. Our policies must be informed by research and data, but we also need to reach out to women in conflict countries who may be inspired to make changes even though they are illiterate. Finally, let us highlight instances where women have played roles as problem-solvers, entrepreneurs and leaders.

In many war-torn countries, poverty and illiteracy make it difficult to learn about the concrete progress women around the world have made toward creating change, not only at the local level but also nationally and internationally. So we need avenues beyond newspapers, policy briefs and academic studies to illustrate the roles women have played to bring peace to their communities, states and regions.

Abigail Disney's 2008 film "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" is a good example of an alternative outreach strategy. The film depicts the pivotal role of Liberian women in helping to oust the former warlord and president, Charles Taylor, and mobilizing the people for the elec-

tion of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president. Sri Lankan civil society leader Visaka Dharmadasa contends that the film has had a major impact on women in Sri Lanka, convincing them that they could do something as powerful and game-changing as their sisters in Liberia. Though military operations have ended in Sri Lanka, women there continue to call for a more inclusive political formula that will bring lasting peace to their country.

### Not Just a “Soft” Agenda

Finally, we need to engage the academic community in helping to connect the dots between research on war and women, and to provide good evidence to policymakers in Washington. The agenda of inclusion will make a great deal more sense if political leaders are convinced that it has security at its core.

Policymakers have often marginalized issues relating to women as secondary socioeconomic concerns to be dealt with after the more “hard” issues, such as physical security, are addressed. However, researchers can help

establish the direct connection between the engagement and involvement of women and the national security aims of defense and military actors. Creating such linkages can help prioritize women’s inclusion and strengthen the effectiveness of military and peace support operations.

The academic community also has important perspectives that can be useful to practitioners and military personnel working in zones of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. World-renowned peace educator Betty Reardon of the International Institute on Peace Education notes that practitioners of conflict management must also continue to be learners throughout their careers.

This field is growing rapidly, but needs to be infused with evidence to support the premise that women’s inclusion can significantly contribute to sustainable peace. Sustained engagement with the academic community will help promote the application of a gender analysis approach toward peace negotiations that goes beyond mere lip service.

Women’s involvement in peace negotiations is not just an issue for them, but also for men. The point of the “women and war” agenda is to improve life for *all* people. Toward that end, men have to see the direct benefit of engaging women in peace talks, something male leaders are critical in helping to explain. War looks different through the lenses of men’s and women’s experiences.

Finally, we can no longer view war and the military from the perspective of 20th-century security assumptions. Instead, we need to anticipate that the new century will see conflicts that are more amorphous, more related to issues of climate change and human migration to find land, water and livelihoods. When it comes to figuring out how to navigate with few resources, women are experts at survival and have long been concerned with issues of everyday human security. To move forward globally in an effective and efficient manner, women need to play a pivotal role in security, problem-solving and peacebuilding in this new century.

Women are essential contributors to the transition from “the cult of war to the culture of peace,” as Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury has reiterated over the last decade. Known for his roles as guiding spirit of UNSCR 1325 and president of the Security Council in 2000, the Bangladeshi diplomat firmly believes that building a culture of peace will require women — not only participating at the peace table but eventually helping set the agendas for peace talks, post-conflict reconciliation and recovery, and long-term peacebuilding. ■

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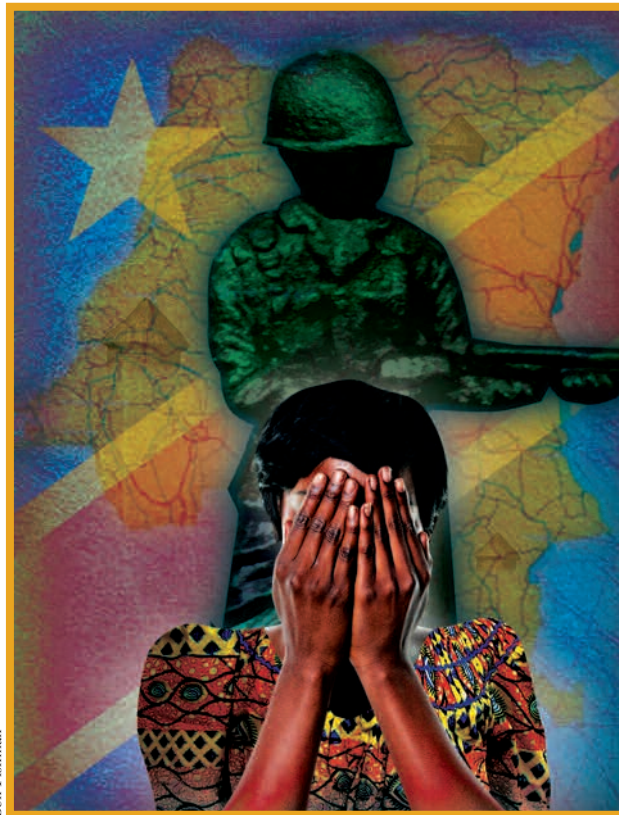


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# CONGO'S REAL CURSE



Ben Fishman

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AS IN MANY SOCIETIES, WOMEN ARE THE CORE AND FABRIC OF CONGOLESE SOCIETY. DAMAGE THAT FABRIC AND THE FOUNDATION STARTS TO FALL APART.

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*BY MAGGIE K. FLEMING*

inding along a thin, muddy road, four of us sat tightly packed in the back seat of a sports utility vehicle as we arrived at our second stop of the day, the health clinic in the small village of Burungé in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was May 2005, and I was a graduate student observing how local organizations worked with women and children who had been raped due to the war in eastern Congo and then helped reintegrate them into their communities.



I had been invited by the local organization I was observing, along with two individuals from the Ministry of Health, on a field trip from Goma to Mweso. We stopped at local health clinics along the way to discuss the issues of rape and sexual violence and how to recognize and treat cases that would need to be referred to the local hospital in Goma. Our hosts also provided these clinics with rape kits from the United Nations Population Fund.

After an hourlong presentation by two of my Congolese companions, the local nurse for the Burungé health clinic piped up (in French, so I could understand): “We see this all of the time here. It happened just over in those hills two weeks ago.”

A young girl, around 8 years old, had been raped by a local shepherd. When the girl told her parents, they took the issue to the shepherd’s employer, who happened to be the local military official. Not wanting to lose his shepherd, the military official offered compensation to the family: a goat. As the family did not have much in the way of income or assets and this livestock would feed them for a long time, they accepted the offer. From that point on, there were no charges. Nor did the girl seek treatment. The issue was to end there.

The staff from the Burungé clinic (one nurse and two assistants) said saw these symptoms quite frequently in this village health clinic. However, women rarely reported they were raped or sexually abused. According to the nurse’s assistant, the stigma was too great. “They will be rejected by their husbands and family if they say they have been raped.”

The village nurse said that when women did speak of

their rapes, 90 percent indicated the perpetrators were armed soldiers in the village. Where does a Congolese woman turn when she finds herself a survivor of gender-based violence? What does she do when her attacker is part of the local authorities and she risks grave social stigma by reporting the incident?

### **Rape As a Weapon of War**

Stories of rape in war exist throughout history and around the world: the practice is as old as war itself. More recently, rape was a frequent occurrence on both sides in the Vietnam War. In Bosnia in the mid-1990s, an estimated 60,000 Bosnian women from various ethnic groups were raped, many of them becoming pregnant. Between a quarter-million and a half-million Tutsi women were raped during the Rwandan genocide, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda reported that 24 percent of the survivors are now HIV-positive.

In Kashmir, Indian soldiers raped “to punish and humiliate the entire community,” according to numerous academics, calculating that local custom would hold the women responsible and disorient the community. Shamed women would be reluctant to give evidence in public courts. Academics report that the rapes did not occur in prisons or detention camps (as happened in Bosnia) but during house-to-house searches and reprisal attacks.

Military- and police-perpetrated rape in Central America, Haiti, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Liberia, Peru, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Uganda, the DRC and elsewhere has been documented extensively by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board and other organizations.

According to the United Nations Interagency Standing Committee’s “Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings,” the term “gender-based violence” is a blanket expression for any harmful acts carried out against a person’s will that are based on socially recognized (gender) differences between males and females.

Though the term points to the relationship between females’ subordinate status in society and their increased vulnerability to violence, men and boys may also be victims of gender-based violence, especially sexual violence. Statistically, however, such acts have a greater impact on women and girls than on men and boys. For this reason, GBV is often used interchangeably with the term “violence against women.”

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*Previously, Ms. Fleming covered human rights, humanitarian aid, global health, trafficking, and religious freedom issues on Capitol Hill in the office of Senator Sam Brownback, R-Kan. She also worked overseas with the Swiss-based nongovernmental organization Medair in Orientale Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006-2007) and with two other NGOs in Arusha, Tanzania (2003-2004). Prior to that, she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Akaba, Togo (2002-2003).*

**Continuous Conflict**

History shows that GBV becomes more systemic during conflict and can be used as a tool of war. Breakdown of the social norms that might have offered protection to women and girls increases the risk of multiple forms of abuse including sexual exploitation, domestic violence, rape and transactional sex. Often, even when the conflict ends, social, economic, physical and sexual violence continues against women in these unstable environments.

In the resource-rich Democratic Republic of the Congo, warfare has raged off and on nearly continuously since June 1960, when the country gained independence from Belgium's oppressive colonial rule.

The current instability has its origins in 1994, when the trouble in Rwanda spilled into the eastern part of the

*The current instability in the DRC has its origin in 1994, when the trouble in Rwanda spilled into the eastern part of the country.*

DRC. In the wake of the Rwandan genocide, some two million Rwandans fled across the border, setting up refugee camps in the Congolese Kivu provinces.

The ensuing turmoil, which continues to this day, is complex, multilayered and multidimensional. It involves international actors such as the U.N. peacekeeping force, major Western

governments and other powers; regional actors, such as Angola, Zambia, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda; and local actors, such as the rebel groups and indigenous populations. It is multidimensional because the conflicts concern natural resources and land tenure, and are overlaid with ethnic tensions and political rivalries.

Corruption is widespread and affects government agencies and security forces at all levels. Alliances are extremely fluid and broken weekly, depending on the opportunistic value of the agreement. As the financial benefits from some alliances dry up, the power struggle between armed groups reignites and the battle for control continues.

**Congo's True Curse**

The result of this seemingly interminable war is more straightforward. The International Rescue Committee estimates that from 1998 to 2007 alone, the war took more than 5.4 million lives, with the majority of the casualties a result of the indirect consequences of the war rather than battle itself. In 2005, as deaths and displacements soared, the U.N. described eastern Congo as "the world's worst humanitarian crisis."

There, compared with other regional conflicts, the use of violence against women as a tool of war has been more prevalent. Women and children, from three months to 81 years old, have become the voiceless victims as the number of rape and sexual assaults continues to rise, and eastern Congo has been named the "worst place in the world to be a woman."

Many point to natural resources — the DRC is Africa's largest producer of tin ore and a significant source of coltan, a mineral used in electronics, and gold — as "Congo's curse" because so much has been exploited and stolen, and the riches seem to continue to fuel the conflict. In this view, the inability of the government to provide ad-

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## F O C U S

equate basic services to the civilian population is due to continued sporadic conflict and a lack of investment in the state apparatus.

But resource exploitation must be seen as both a consequence and modus operandi of violent conflict, rather than merely its cause. When state actors use the same oppressive methods as non-state actors to enrich themselves outside the scope of accountability and public benefit, the result is a breakdown of the rule of law. And the breakdown of infrastructure within the state — weak governance, poor judicial and health-care systems, and a severe need for security sector reform, as well as the general lack of political will — is an even larger problem than the buried treasure.

In fact, the biggest crime in Congo's history is the deterioration of the community as a result of both violent and permissive acts of rape and sexual abuse, and the wide-

*The International Rescue Committee estimates that from 1998 to 2007 alone, the war took more than 5.4 million lives.*

spread abuse of human rights. This is the true “curse of the Congo.” The wealth being stolen from the country is not so much the minerals as the humanity and dignity of the survivors of gender-based violence.

### **Rebuilding the Fabric of a Society**

As in many societies, women are the core and fabric of Congolese society. Damage that fabric and the foundation starts to fall apart. The obstacles to eliminating rape and sexual violence in the DRC are daunting, but progress is being made.

Among a number of efforts, the International Rescue Committee's gender-based violence program is the longest-standing and broadest of its kind in the country. IRC seeks to promote the well-being of women and girls, while mitigating the urgent and long-term effects of GBV.

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In North and South Kivu, the IRC provides medical, psychosocial and legal services to survivors of gender-based violence. The IRC works to reduce stigma against survivors within communities and empowers women with socioeconomic support. It works with more than 45 women's groups to disseminate information on the medical and psychosocial services available to survivors of sexual assault. The IRC treats from 350 to 400 survivors per month, 25 percent of whom are under the age of 18. And 75 to 85 percent of survivors report that their assailants are members of armed groups.

More than 40,000 survivors have been assisted since the program's beginning, and the IRC has built sustainable partnerships with seven national nongovernmental organizations and numerous community-based organizations. In 2010, more than 2,500 women were involved in economic

*The wealth being stolen from the DRC is not so much the minerals as the humanity and dignity of the survivors of gender-based violence.*

empowerment activities.

However, donor fatigue toward the crisis in the DRC is a concern. Aid donors are tempted to look for new, innovative solutions without allowing long-term solutions to play out. Assisting survivors, investing in partnerships and supporting multi-year, robust GBV programs that respond to the problem are a few of those key long-term solutions.

Gender-based violence will not end until the government has the political will to rid the country of these atrocities, to restore fair and accountable institutions and to protect its population in all spheres of social life.

The 8-year-old who was raped by the shepherd, only to have her case quickly dismissed, has a right to receive health and psychosocial services. She deserves to be heard, to see justice done against the perpetrator, and to maintain her dignity, rather than see it traded for a goat. ■

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# THE EMERGENCE OF ISLAMIC FEMINISM



Ben Fishman

**M**

JUST AS CONSERVATIVES HAVE USED ISLAM TO HINDER WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, MUSLIM FEMINISTS ARE USING THEIR FAITH TO PROMOTE IT.

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By ISOBEL COLEMAN

any of the major challenges of our time, from tackling global poverty and climate change, to improving food security, global health and governance, cannot be effectively addressed without a focus on women and girls. As they become mindful of this reality, governments and nongovernmental organizations, multilateral organizations like the World Bank and, increasingly, corporations, are all making greater efforts to close gender gaps and improve the status of women. An important objective of the State Department's 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy

and Development Review, for example, is to integrate gender into development policies and diplomacy.

But while women around the world are making strides in education, income generation and public participation, significant gaps still exist, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. These regions all have deeply entrenched cultural traditions and patriarchal practices that work against changes for women. And in conservative, Muslim-majority communities, women's rights are among the most contentious political and ideological issues.

In places like Nigeria, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Islamic conservatives link women's piety to the purity and religious authenticity of their societies. They then use religious justifications to enforce that piety through a limited public role for women, gender segregation and harsh punishments for any perceived transgressions. Powerful Islamists do their best to smear women's groups as followers of an illegitimate, neo-colonialist Western agenda.

But the desire for economic growth is becoming an effective counterweight to such opposition. All over the world mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, business owners, government officials and religious leaders are coming to recognize that their countries cannot prosper without the full participation of half the population. Investments in girls' education and economic opportunities for women have already begun to yield tremendous benefits for households and communities. Such gains are powerful levers for raising per capita incomes and transmitting the advantages directly to the next generation.

Happily, Islamic conservatives are no longer the only members of these societies to cite religious justifications for their position. Reformers — whether out of a faith-based conviction or an acknowledgment of the growing

*Islamic conservatives are no longer the only members of Muslim-majority societies to cite religious justifications for their position.*

religiosity of their societies — are also using Islamic arguments to bolster their positions. And these efforts are slowly converging into a global movement sometimes called “Islamic feminism”: the promotion of women's rights through religious discourse.

### **Pushing Open the Gates**

Just as conservatives have used Islam as a barrier to women's empowerment, Muslim feminists are using their faith to promote gender equality. They argue that Islam, at its core, is progressive for women and supports equal opportunities for men and women alike. By firmly grounding their arguments in religious discourse, these advocates offer a culturally acceptable and sustainable way to expand opportunities for women. Their success holds promise for a more stable, prosperous and progressive Middle East.

Islamic feminism draws on the ideas of numerous intellectuals and activists. Some of its leading proponents are actually men — distinguished religious scholars who contend that Islam was radically egalitarian for its time and remains so in many of its texts. For their part, Islamic feminists contend that sharia (religious law) evolved in ways inimical to women not due to any inevitability, but because of selective interpretation by patriarchal leaders.

They further argue that the worst practices directed at women, like those of the Taliban, actually represent a subversion of Islamic teaching by tribal customs and traditions. Accordingly, they seek to revive the equality bestowed on women in the religion's early years by reinterpreting the Quran, putting the texts in historical context and disentangling them from tribal practices and other local traditions.

The great potential of Islamic feminism lies in its grassroots appeal. In this regard, it is quite unlike the secular feminism we are used to in the West. Secular feminism, both in the Middle East and in the West, has usually been the province of urban elites and intellectuals, which has long been its weakness. Social change takes time to make its way from city salons and urban newspapers to the countryside, especially in places with few roads and little public education. But Islamic feminism has the potential to be embraced quickly by local leaders and, perhaps most

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*Isobel Coleman is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and also the director of CFR's Women and Foreign Policy Program and the Civil Society, Markets and Democracy Initiative. This article is adapted from her book Paradise Beneath Her Feet: How Women Are Transforming the Middle East (Random House, 2010).*

## F O C U S

importantly, by religious leaders, who can lend their authority to the difficult changes at hand.

To put it another way, Islamic feminism strives to work *within* the values of Islam, not against them. It offers direct social and economic benefits to families through improved opportunities for daughters, sisters, wives and mothers.

Many Islamic feminists are strong proponents of *ijtihad*, the process of arriving at new interpretations of Islamic law through critical reasoning, rather than blindly following the views of past scholars. In the early centuries of Islam, this process was an important contributor to the shaping of Islamic law. Whenever the Quran and Sunnah (the traditions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) did not explicitly address an issue, or when conflicting statements

*Local activists recognize the risks and trade-offs of foreign support, and understand local conditions well enough to decide whether such aid helps their cause more than it hurts it.*

were attributed to Muhammad, a qualified legal scholar could use independent reasoning to come up with a solution. This legal ruling, expressed as a *fatwa*, could then be accepted or rejected by the followers of the scholar as they wished.

*Ijtihad* was a vibrant legal process until the end of the 10th century, by which point many doctrines were settled by jurists representing the various schools of law. Around this time, influential orthodox Sunni *ulama* (Muslim clergy with several years of training) began to argue against the process of independent reasoning, claiming that it could distort Islam. They instead advocated a literal reading of religious texts.

Reformers resisted, warning that a rigid interpretation of *sharia* can be profoundly unhelpful in answering con-



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temporary questions. But over the centuries, the literalists gained ground, leading to what some have referred to as a “closing of the gates of ijtihad.”

At the heart of Islamic feminism is a renewed effort to push open those gates. Across the Muslim world, Islamic feminists are combing through centuries of Islamic jurisprudence to highlight the more progressive aspects of their religion. They are seeking to reconcile a modern role for women with the Islamic values that more than a billion people in the world follow.

### **Under Attack from Both Sides**

Islamic feminism is not without its challenges. For starters, it is unpalatable to die-hard secularists, both in the West and in the Middle East. Some years ago, I gave a talk in New York about the promise of working with religious leaders in some of the most conservative regions of the world to promote girls’ education. I had recently returned from Afghanistan, where I had seen mullahs in the countryside championing girls’ education, even opening their mosques to classes for them.

But when the discussion turned to the use of the mosque itself as a classroom for girls, a woman in the audience interrupted. This was exactly the wrong approach, she insisted: “We should be working to dislodge religion, not further entrench it.”

Clearly, she has never been to the highlands of Afghanistan, I thought to myself. And she was probably also unfamiliar with the long history of failure of those who have tried to dislodge religion from places where it dominates every aspect of life.

Outright opposition to religion is simply counterproductive in many Muslim-majority countries today, as it is in many Western countries, as well. So if women’s rights in the Middle East depend on the removal of Islam, Muslim women will be waiting a long time indeed.

Some critics dismiss Islamic feminism as a fringe movement, claiming it is too weak and marginal to move mainstream opinion, let alone overturn 1,400 years of oppressive Islamic law and practices. The women involved are undeterred, however, for while they are at the beginning of a long, intergenerational process, they believe time is on their side.

Islamic feminism will also be unappealing to those who

*Islamic feminism strives to work within the values of Islam, not against them.*

insist that Islam is an inherently misogynistic religion and refuse to believe it can be a force for women’s empowerment. Skeptics contend that by emphasizing the parts of the Quran that are progressive for women, and minimiz-

ing those sections that are harder to reconcile with gender equality, Islamic feminists are simply glossing over the fundamental issues. But this is the same process of reinterpretation and contextualization that has occurred over the centuries in every major religion in the world.

Indeed, many Islamic feminists see their efforts as a critical driver of a larger reform initiative within the faith. As Muslim women engage more deeply with Islamic texts and jurisprudence, through casual study groups, as scholars and activists, or even through formal training to become religious leaders, they are forcing debate over Islamic interpretation. At the same time, many of them are uncomfortable with being labeled as “Islamic feminists,” going to great lengths to distance themselves from the Western cultural baggage that term carries.

Instead, they see themselves simply as Muslims pursuing rights for women within Islam. But when asked whether they believe that the spirit of the Quran is one of gender equality, and whether Islamic discourse can and should be used to promote women’s empowerment, their answers to both questions are a resounding yes. Such convictions are playing a small but important role in one of the great ideological struggles of the 21st century.

Some Islamic feminists are deeply devout, while others are not. Some wear a headscarf for reasons of piety; others do so only for tactical reasons, adhering to social conventions in an effort to enhance their credibility. And a few eschew such attire completely, because their understanding of Islam does not require it. But all of them are using Islamic discourse in one way or another to promote women’s access to education, to jobs and to the public sphere — access which is already beginning to transform Muslim societies.

They are also taking advantage of rising levels of female education and greater access to global media across the Middle East to shift the terms of religious debate. Networks across national borders are already helping illiterate peasant women marshal the religious justifications they need to push back on centuries of tribal customs and traditions that have been sustained in the name of Islam.



## Two Women Making a Difference

### Nilofar Sakhi: Reaching Out to Mullahs

**N**ilofar Sakhi stands in front of a gathering of mullahs and tribal leaders, the only woman among 50 men. They have gathered to debate a recent newsletter circulated to thousands of village leaders around this province of Northwest Afghanistan by her organization, the Women's Activities and Social Services Association. The newsletter has sparked quite a controversy by publishing the views of several Islamic scholars who challenge conservative interpretations of sensitive passages in the Quran. The subject of these controversial passages? Women. Nilofar introduces the discussion, and then slips to the back as the mullahs hash out their views. "We at WASSA don't give our own views on the Quran. We bring in religious scholars and sharia experts for that," she tells me.

Born in Herat, Nilofar grew up as a refugee in Pakistan. Her father believed in education for all eight of his children, and Nilofar, the smartest of the lot, went on to earn a degree in biochemistry. After the toppling of the Taliban, she returned to Afghanistan and founded WASSA. She quickly realized that to have a real impact, she would have to engage conservative attitudes. "You cannot ever be against religion in Afghanistan," she says. "You must work through it."

WASSA was soon reaching out to the mullahs, promoting a Quran-based dialogue that worked to disentangle religion from oppressive cultural practices. When WASSA first

started getting involved in sharia debates, threatening letters were slipped under her door at night. But Nilofar also heard from tribal elders and mullahs across the region praising her work and asking for WASSA's assistance to get literacy classes and other workshops going for women in their villages. "Eighty percent of Afghans live in villages," Nilofar explains. "We must engage them because if we don't, we'll be like tiny pockets of reason surrounded by fundamentalist thinking."

At the local level, WASSA has scored some successes. In one village, it persuaded a young mullah to provide a room in his mosque for literacy classes. The mullah's sister, the only educated woman in the village, taught classes for girls with WASSA's support. After seeing the positive impact of the classes and his people's tremendous demand for education, the mullah's reluctance faded away and he became a teacher himself.

When WASSA wound down its financial support for the program, the mullah and his sister kept the classes going, making a small business out of it. They collect about 50 afghanis (about 50 cents) per month per student, which more than covers their costs. "It is challenging, but not impossible to work with mullahs," concludes Nilofar. "Afghans want change, but you always have to be sensitive to religious issues." She draws her inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi's admonition: think globally, act locally. — *Isobel Coleman*

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### Haifa Jamal al-Lail: Promoting Education for Girls

**D**r. Haifa Jamal al-Lail is at the forefront of a social revolution in Saudi Arabia. She is dean of Effat University, the kingdom's first private women's college founded in 1997. (The university is named after Queen Effat who championed girls' education in the kingdom. Her husband, King Faisal, overcame pressure from conservative clerics and opened the first girls' schools in the kingdom in the 1960s.)

Today, Effat is small, with only about one thousand undergraduates, but its ambitions are large. "If we can produce students here with big ideas, then they will have a big impact on our country," Dr. Haifa insists. Early on, Effat offered a traditional curriculum, training girls as teachers and nurses, but it soon added business and technical majors. Notably, all instruction is conducted in English, even Islamic studies. Dr. Haifa, choosing her words carefully given the country's deep religiosity and powerful clerics, explains that the girls must be able to discuss their religion in English — and they also must be prepared for the global job market.

Effat has also done away with restrictions that physically separated male teachers from female students. When the college first opened, men used videocameras to teach classes, but now they teach face-to-face. Again, the justification is that the girls must be prepared for a gender-integrated workplace.

Among Effat's other innovations is the screening of foreign films without censorship. Religious conservatives in Saudi Arabia believe that movies are a corrupting influence, and consequently there are no public movie theaters in the kingdom. Behind its high walls, with the relative freedom of action enjoyed by its private status, Effat is teaching critical-thinking skills and using the latest pedagogy to encourage more open discussion and debate. The results speak for themselves: Effat confers one of the few Saudi degrees recognized internationally. — *Isobel Coleman*

Advocacy groups use e-mail and social media to bombard policymakers with pleas for justice, exposing brutality and injustice with simple video footage captured on a cell phone and uploaded to YouTube.

**Providing Appropriate Assistance**

Clearly, women's empowerment cannot be imposed on a country or culture from the outside. Rather, all members of the community must find their own reasons for allowing women a fuller role in society. Still, there are ways U.S. foreign policy can support indigenous campaigns for greater women's rights in Muslim-majority countries.

First, it is important to recognize that change is happening. In a 2010 Freedom House study of women's rights in the Middle East and North Africa, 15 out of 18 countries demonstrated gains over the past five years. The Gulf Cooperation Council countries, which scored lowest in the previous 2005 report, showed the most progress, with women expanding their political participation and becoming more visible in education, public life and business.

In fact, women are beginning to significantly outnumber men at higher levels of education across the region. Even in Saudi Arabia, women comprise more than 60 percent of university graduates. U.S. policymakers should applaud these changes and use every opportunity to celebrate the groundbreaking work of women who are pushing for greater opportunities. The State Department's Women of Courage Award, for example, is a great way to shine a spotlight on emerging female leaders around the world.

In addition to moral support, however, these activists also need financial assistance and technical expertise. While it is true that women's groups are vulnerable to the risk of backlash against their international partnerships, this concern is often exaggerated precisely because they are often already being accused by their opponents of promoting a foreign agenda.

These courageous individuals recognize the risks and trade-offs of working with international organizations, and understand local conditions well enough to decide whether the benefits of international support — technical expertise, financial support, media exposure and public

*These efforts are an important stepping stone for reconciling religion with the demands of the modern world.*

recognition — help their cause more than they hurt it. Moreover, concerns about backlash can be minimized by keeping international support demand-driven and channeling it through local groups.

In the emerging democracies of Tunisia and Egypt, women's groups will be up against well-financed and well-organized Islamist groups that will, in the name of religion, demand a rollback of the progressive laws for women that exist in both countries.

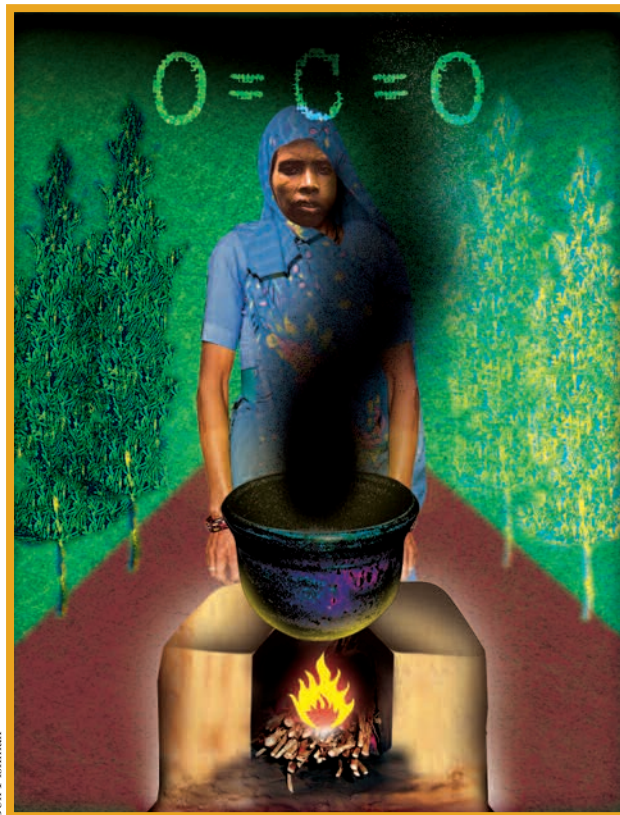
Already, conservative voices have criticized Tunisia's anti-polygamy law and Egypt's divorce law on the grounds that they contradict sharia. Islamists will also exert their influence in the writing of new constitutions for these countries, making sure that sharia has a strong influence on the laws of the land.

Women's rights will be a litmus test for how well Islam and democracy can be blended, so groups promoting them will have to be organized and ready to fight back against backsliding. They will need to use a range of tactics, including marshalling progressive interpretations of Islam to fight religion with religion. They can learn from the experience of female activists in other Muslim-majority countries, who have been waging such battles for a long time.

Wherever the international community does play a direct role in shaping the political situation in a country, as in Afghanistan and Iraq, it should support the demands of local women to freely exercise their rights. Incorporating electoral quotas for women in those countries' constitutions likely sped up their access to political power by at least a generation. Other leverage points include media access and training for women, as well as access to education, property rights and economic opportunity.

It is also important to keep in mind that cultural shifts happen slowly. The process will be uneven, and the outcomes from place to place will no doubt differ. I suspect that over the long term Islamic feminism, like other reform movements that preceded it, will end up unapologetically secular. Only then will long-running debates over religious interpretation abate. In the meantime, Islamic feminism is an important emotional and intellectual stepping stone for reconciling religion with the demands of the modern world. ■

# COOK STOVES: FROM BANE TO BOON



Ben Fishman

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TODAY, INDIAN WOMEN HAVE A REAL CHANCE TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES, THANKS TO THE GLOBAL COOK STOVE ALLIANCE.

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BY SATINDER BINDRA

One of my earliest childhood memories growing up in India was watching my grandmother in the kitchen at a smoky “chulha” — the rudimentary three-sided clay stove that still serves as the hearth in millions of rural South Asian homes. Cooking on a chulha takes much longer than using an electric or gas-fired range, and it is intensely backbreaking work. The process also produces a great deal of smoke and soot, ensuring that I spent as little time as possible in my grandmother’s kitchen.

This should be just a picture from the past, but it reflects what is still happening today across South Asia and, indeed, in large tracts of the developing world. Approximately 1.6 billion people worldwide still lack access to electricity, and some three billion people still use inefficient stoves that rely on traditional biomass fuels such as firewood, crop residues and dung for their cooking needs.

### **Multiple Inefficiencies**

Traditional stoves have many serious shortcomings. Their mud bodies are inefficient insulators and therefore devour more fuel than necessary. In addition, the volume of air cannot be controlled; too little air produces thick smoke, while too much cools the flames. Finally, inefficient combustion accounts for three-quarters of global emissions of black carbon particles, also known as soot.

The World Health Organization estimates that household exposure to these particles causes 1.6 million premature deaths per year, predominantly among women and children. Local studies in India show that women who have cooked on biomass stoves for years exhibit a higher prevalence of chronic lung disease than those with less exposure. In addition, black carbon causes or compounds pneumonia, bronchitis, cataracts, heart disease, high blood pressure and low birth weight.

Inefficient stoves also impose a social burden that mostly falls on the shoulders of women. I can still vividly recall all the time my grandmother spent fretting over her fuel supply. She depended on cow dung that had to be painstakingly gathered, then mixed with hay and dried into small, pizza-shaped patties. Still, in one sense she was lucky. In poorer parts of South Asia where families don't have their own cow, women must collect firewood from distant jungles, exposing them to being molested or injured every time they leave the safety of their homes.

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*Satinder Bindra, the director of communications for the United Nations Environment Program, is based in Nairobi. Prior to joining UNEP, he was a senior international correspondent and South Asia bureau chief for Cable News Network for nearly nine years.*

*The World Health Organization estimates that household exposure to these particles causes 1.6 million premature deaths per year, predominantly among women and children.*

Surveys conducted in the hill areas of Nepal estimate that women there spend almost 2.5 hours every day collecting fodder, grass and firewood for fuel. The spread of deforestation forces them to go ever further afield, increasing their daily time investment by another hour and leaving them less time to devote to agriculture, child care or income-producing activities.

The relentless search for fuel has put enormous pressure on the forests of South Asia. India has a rural population of 700 million people, many of whom collect their wood supply from forests. The situation in neighbouring Pakistan is even more pressing. The deforestation rate there is one of the highest in the world, and was almost certainly a critical factor in aggravating last year's devastating floods, the country's worst-ever natural disaster. The flooding killed nearly 2,000 people, displaced almost 18 million more and caused billions of dollars in damage. It will be years, perhaps decades, before the country fully recovers.

Finally, the effect of the chulhas goes beyond hearth and home. As the smoke escapes outdoors, it undergoes various chemical transformations in the presence of sunlight, leading to the formation of atmospheric brown clouds of particles and ozone gas that contribute to some 500,000 deaths annually. In addition, the ozone gas causes billions of dollars' worth of crop damage.

The soot from the chulhas also contributes to global warming. Like tiny, heat-absorbing black sweaters, soot particles warm the air and melt ice much faster when they settle on glaciers. According to the United Nations Environment Program, 10 to 40 percent of all global warming is caused by this black carbon.

### **Hope on the Horizon**

Happily, change is under way. Solutions are being pushed as never before to ensure clean combustion, reduce the consumption of wood and, ultimately, free women from the dangers of the hearth.

Simple design changes have already produced biomass stoves with three to six times the efficiency of more traditional models, greatly reducing fuel costs. A recent

World Bank study in Rwanda found that these stoves cost just a few dollars extra to purchase than chulhas, but they decrease daily consumption of charcoal from 0.51 to 0.33 kilograms per person. This means that over the course of a single year, a family could save about \$84 in fuel costs by using 394 fewer kilograms of charcoal. And that is a substantial savings, given that average incomes in East African and Central African countries are only \$300-\$370 per year.

In India, UNEP is involved in sponsoring an exciting new project called “Surya” (Sunlight). Having completed the pilot phase, Surya has now targeted a 100-square-kilometer rural area in northern India, whose population of 50,000 will receive cleaner and less polluting cook stoves.

The project plans to document the impact on air quality, climate and exposure to toxic materials over three years, using advanced technology from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Surya will also use cell-phone technology to monitor the impact of the new stoves and seek carbon credit offsets as further motivation for the rural population to use the more efficient stoves.

### **A Global Alliance**

In September 2010, UNEP, along with other international partners like the United Nations Foundation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, joined the Global Alliance for Clean Cook Stoves launched by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. The U.S. government has provided \$50 million in seed money for the project, which hopes to send 100 million clean-burning stoves to villages in Africa, Asia and South America by 2020.

One of the quick wins associated with distributing cleaner cook stoves is the fact that unlike carbon dioxide, which causes significant global warming and stays in the atmosphere for years, soot stays aloft for just a few weeks. Figures obtained in UNEP field studies show that eliminating the emission of one ton of black carbon can reduce as much global warming as would be obtained by producing 3,000 fewer tons of carbon dioxide. This in-

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sight offers a basis for slowing down climate change.

A definitive assessment of the threat soot poses will only emerge once the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change releases its fifth assessment report in 2013. But we already have conclusive evidence of the benefits of cleaner cook stoves. A study in *The Lancet*, one of the world’s most respected medical journals, indicates that a 10-year

program to introduce 150 million low-emission stoves to India could prevent about two million premature deaths.

### **Greener Chulhas**

The strides in improving cook stoves must now move to the public policy level. Millions of stoves have been distributed free of charge in India during the past 20 years, but limited information on the benefits of the technology has left many of them unused. In many cases consumer preferences were not taken into account, nor were region-specific habits considered. In addition, there has never been a sustained campaign to explain the many benefits of using the new stove, leading to poor buy-in.

This June, for the first time ever, India will host the United Nation’s highest-profile environmental outreach event: World Environment Day. Those of us at UNEP look forward to working with other Global Cook Stove Alliance partners to show that better stoves can bring tangible improvements to women’s daily lives.

Institutionalizing the switch to “green chulhas” must become a national priority for every developing country through a public awareness campaign that highlights health, safety, air quality, climate change mitigation and, ultimately, the creation of a green economy and overall economic development for rural populations, in India and around the world.

My grandmother never developed any lung disease from all the soot she inhaled at the stove, but her life around the hearth did leave her with a bad back. Regrettably, she died before she could reap any of the benefits of the greener chulhas. But today, Indian women have a real chance to improve their lives, thanks to the Global Cook Stove Alliance. ■

# UNSCR 1325: SLOW PROGRESS, UNCERTAIN PROSPECTS



Ben Fishman

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WOMEN IN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE DONE MUCH MORE THAN GOVERNMENTS TO ADVANCE UNSC RESOLUTION 1325'S GOALS.

*By JOHN TIRMAN*

When the tenth anniversary of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 rolled around last October, the United Nations community dutifully organized anniversary events that lauded the historic measure and vowed a renewed effort to fulfill its promise. To be sure, UNSCR 1325 was and is historic: it “calls on,” “urges” and “requests” member-states to protect women in conflict and to include women substantively in the peace processes of negotiations, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. But the resolution, and several that followed, have largely been neg-

lected by member-states. In fact, women in civil society organizations have done much more to advance 1325's intended norms and practices. And that suggests a cardinal lesson for the future: the vitality of the resolution will come from villages and neighborhoods, not from capitals.

States pay homage to the women-and-security resolutions, but the results after a decade suggest this is diplomatic lip service. Such an inert response is not confined to some developing countries where gender roles are "traditional" and a more prominent role for women in security might be considered disruptive. The major industrial states have also failed. Consider the multitude of special envoys and negotiators dispatched by the European governments and the United States to help resolve conflicts in the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia (Aceh) and elsewhere. There's nary a female in sight. Implementation of peace accords is equally male-dominated.

The protection aspect of UNSCR 1325 gets more action, but even here civil society groups are well ahead of officialdom. Women's groups have focused sharply on preventing and punishing sexual violence, and have been building awareness and support through information campaigns. Governments have been less stalwart.

One of the little-discussed outcomes of the war in Iraq, for example, is the prevalence of sexual crimes. Yet, as a Human Rights Watch report noted in 2009, "even in high-profile cases involving police or security forces, prosecutions are rare." In Afghanistan, says journalist Anna Badhken, a national stability and reconciliation law enacted last year conveyed amnesty for rape and other crimes as the price for warlord cooperation.

So the major states have much to answer for, both on the participation and protection agendas of 1325. But better efforts may be in the offing. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton announced last October that the United States would develop a 1325 Action Plan, a wor-

*States pay homage to the women and security resolutions, but the results after a decade suggest this is diplomatic lip service.*

thy, leading-by-example initiative. Perhaps more important, U.S. diplomats, aid workers and others can play a crucial role by supporting the efforts of the women on the ground who have undertaken important, related work — sometimes at great personal risk — but need the legitimacy and resources that only international actors can provide.

Among the questions the international community should try to answer is why some Security Council resolutions are pursued avidly and others are not. The sanctions regime on Iran, for example, is implemented with great vigor by the United States and several other member-states. Why that one and not others? If any U.N. Security Council resolution can be safely ignored, the legitimacy of the body is eroded. This dimension of the UNSCR 1325 discourse has been clouded by the widespread avowals to "do better," but the failure to implement for a decade is no less real.

### **What We Found**

The International Civil Society Action Network and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for International Studies commissioned six case studies in late 2009 to assess how well UNSCR 1325 has been implemented. The six cases — Aceh (in Indonesia), Sri Lanka, Liberia, Uganda, Colombia and Israel/Palestine — represent countries that have recently emerged from conflict or are still experiencing it. The researchers were women indigenous to, or longtime practitioners in, the countries being studied.

They asked political leaders, civil society organizations, journalists and others basic questions about UNSCR 1325 — what it meant politically in the country, what specific measures were being enacted and implemented by the state, what international actors were accomplishing, and what were the roles of private actors, particularly women's groups, in advancing the process.

Not surprisingly, the findings did not reflect well on member-states. Too many officials were unaware of even the basic provisions of the resolution. (This was also true of important international actors and some civil society organizations.) Plans for implementing it have been haphazard, too. Some countries, such as Colombia, had

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*John Tirman is executive director and principal research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for International Studies. His newest book, The Deaths of Others: The Fate of Civilians in America's Wars, will be published by Oxford University Press in June.*

legally enacted many recommendations, but were not putting those laws into practice. Others, as in Israel/Palestine where a strong women's movement was pushing for participation (particularly the Binational International Women's Commission), ignored the local activism and proceeded with the same old (male) players, with poor results. National action plans, where completed, have been indifferently managed, lack transparency or mechanisms of accountability, and could even be seen as impediments to more immediate, concrete steps.

Many major foreign aid donors have failed to insist on compliance with the resolution's goals, and the U.N. itself has fallen short in its peace missions. In international organizations, the locus of responsibility for action is not clear enough. Even U.N. Women, a new agency that appears to have a mandate for women's participation and lists UNSCR 1325 as one of its guiding documents, does not possess the unambiguous implementation authority that could prod other U.N. agencies and special representatives, much less member-states, into action.

A widely cited statistic from the United Nations Development Fund for Women, one of the predecessors of U.N. Women, demonstrates how little progress has been achieved on participation. Not a single woman was appointed as a mediator in the 13 major peace processes between 2000 and 2008; a mere 7 percent of delegation members were female, and women comprised only 2.7 percent of peace agreement signatories.

### **Important Misperceptions**

Why are women not included in peace processes? The longstanding barriers are still there, of course. But in a world where many women have become heads of government and foreign ministers, a more disturbing answer may be worth considering. My colleague Sanam Anderlini, the founding director of International Civil Society Action Network and author of *Women Building Peace*, the most informative book on the topic, put it sharply at a Washington conference last autumn: "Don't reward violence, reward peace. It's just not enough to bring armed actors, state or non-state, to the table because they have been the most violent. Why aren't more women at the table? Because they're not a security threat."

*"Why aren't more women at the table? Because they're not a security threat."*

— Sanam Anderlini

A survey of recent negotiations underscores this important point. Legitimacy — who should and should not be empowered to negotiate — is determined as a function of violence. What 1325 is saying, then, is rather radical: don't exclude the peacemakers just because they have *not* taken up the gun.

A related source of confusion in this discourse — and possibly the most consequential misperception — is how and why women's participation matters. While making a strong and constructive statement in the Security Council, Sec. Clinton did not articulate rationales beyond the platitude that half the world's population should be involved. Much of her speech was dedicated to the protection aspect of the agenda. The same, remarkably, was the case with Michelle Bachelet, the former Chilean president who is now head of U.N. Women. But the logic of greater participation by women stems mainly from their societal roles.

Women bring a different perspective to the resolution of conflict and the post-conflict tasks of rebuilding and reconciling. As caregivers, they experience the ravages of war more intimately than men do, and are the ones expected to sustain families and communities. In these roles, they are problem-solvers. They know how to get things done — find food and fuel and adequate shelter; prevent violence against children, elders and themselves; prepare their adolescents for the demands of war; and invent ways to reconstitute lives after conflicts formally end but dangers of violence (often from returned combatants) and deprivation persist.

Women "are the ones who will fetch water, determine which children go to school, and ensure that there is food on the table," wrote Ugandan activist Anne Mugisha in 2006 in assessing the failed Juba talks. "They need to have a voice in the decision-making process through which government plans construction of roads, schools, wells, and clinics . . . Using women as props rather than strategists is for me the greatest shame of the Juba process." And sometimes women are the combatants themselves, those seeking justice or simply as part of a contending group. Generally speaking, women's emphasis on human security — rather than the prerogatives of rulers and states — frame their outlook and their demands.

Too often, even with the best intentions, the partici-



## F O C U S

pation agenda of UNSCR 1325 is portrayed as a right or as a matter of empowering women. These depictions aren't wrong, but they are incomplete. The fundamental reason for including women as equal partners in negotiations and peace implementation is because they bring different knowledge, perspective, roles and relationships to the hard tasks of peacemaking and peace-building. These qualities stand a chance, at least, of improving the performance and outcomes of peace practitioners.

### **What UNSCR 1325 Has Achieved**

While the response of member-states and many international organizations has been disappointing, the work of civil society groups has been considerably more encouraging. Their experiences provide some guideposts

*The logic of greater participation by women stems mainly from their societal roles. In these roles, they are problem-solvers.*

for future action.

To be sure, women are not waiting for governments to move forward. Despite serious obstacles, including physical danger, activists and organizations — many of them new and dedicated to UNSCR 1325 issues — articulate demands, conduct research, issue recommendations on peace processes, form self-help groups for protection, and network across borders and conflict lines, among many other initiatives.

They do not have the authority or enough power to implement the resolution as it was intended, but they are fulfilling some crucial tasks and stimulating a norms cascade on women, peace and security.

Among the initiatives are simple information campaigns. What we found in our study is a rather surprising lack of coordination to inform government leaders, bu-

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reaucrats, media gatekeepers and others about UNSCR 1325. Too many stakeholders and power brokers know too little about its meaning and implied obligations.

This void is increasingly filled by women in civil society organizations. They have done so in part with increased training in communications, networking and analysis. Large gaps remain, but are gradually being filled, not least with sophisticated analyses of the conflicts, post-conflict needs and local problem-solving.

Demands for action and participation have been less successful, but it is well established by social science research that the kinds of activities women have undertaken can change the political dynamics in a country and globally over a number of years, especially in those societies with democratic cultures. So the disappointing performance of national and international actors to date might seem less so if one takes a longer view: progress is being made as a result of pressure from civil society for new norms and proposals for concrete action.

In this way, the on-the-ground activism reinforces the salience of UNSCR 1325, and the resolution legitimates such activism. There are a number of striking anecdotes about women seizing the initiative — the now-legendary 2003 protests in Monrovia and Accra that literally cornered negotiators and pressed them to conclude a peace agreement for Liberia, for example.

But what is most impressive is how pervasive such activism is, not only in the six places we studied but much more broadly. Not least of these achievements are the creation and building of sizable organizations that often are international in scope, are broadly inclusive within societies across ethnic and religious lines, and are firmly dedicated to human security principles, including — but not limited to — the objectives of UNSCR 1325.

### **Going Forward**

The U.S. government can move the agenda forward in a number of ways, not only by actions and words coming from the top, but by supporting local efforts around the world. Political pressure, particularly in countries that are recipients of U.S. assistance, should be consistently ap-

*The Foreign Service needs to make UNSCR 1325 commitments a priority, mainstreaming them through USAID and the multilateral agencies where U.S. influence is potent.*

plied. Leading by example — appointing high-level female envoys who specifically promote 1325 values in peace processes — would further the cause of integrating women into security matters as much as any single set of actions.

Aid and other forms of assistance to the local organizations that are the most capable and involved will not only materially help them, but also send a strong signal of American support. In this, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other government donors need to streamline their application procedures to make the relatively small funds that can make a difference available to these groups, for whom the bureaucratic requirements of applying for funds are often a back-breaking burden.

Perhaps most important, where the United States is involved in any phase of peace processes — negotiations, implementation of accords or post-conflict peacebuilding — it can insist on a higher representation of women, protection of women in the often-violent aftermath of formal conflict, and the inclusion of gender perspectives on the provision of security, reconstruction, demobilization, and the other phases of bringing and enforcing peace. This requires the Foreign Service to make UNSCR 1325 commitments a priority, mainstreaming them through USAID and the multilateral agencies where U.S. influence is potent.

Global leadership from the United States is essential to realizing the promise of the resolution. This is an area where U.S. diplomacy and insistence on high U.N. performance can make a real difference in achieving sustainable and just peace processes.

The failure rate of peace accords and post-conflict missions is truly alarming. The international community needs to rethink how these complex and costly endeavors are conceived, implemented, understood and maintained. Until 2000, with the passage of UNSCR 1325, the role of women and gender perspectives in achieving security was largely ignored. A decade on, the resolution's ideas and practices remain underutilized. It's high time to see the value for all of us in embracing and realizing this potential. ■

# AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR IN ARMENIA

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THERE'S NEVER A DULL MOMENT DURING A SEMESTER  
SPENT TEACHING AT A UNIVERSITY IN YEREVAN.

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BY ROCHELLE PARKS-YANCY

**W**hen I was awarded a Fulbright fellowship to Armenia for the spring 2010 academic term, many people asked me why I had selected that country. After all, it is not a well-known place, at least not in North America.

I responded that while I had traveled outside of the U.S. a fair amount, I wanted to go to a region that I had never been to before, and a country that was off the beaten path by Western standards. Given that Armenia only gained its independence in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union, I thought it would be very interesting to teach and do research in a society that is slowly transitioning from communism to capitalism.

The Fulbright program conducts a three-day orientation in Washington, D.C., for all grantees going to Eurasia/Eastern Europe. The program explains the history and social norms of the region (my specific area was the Caucasus, which includes Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) and its diplomatic relationship with the United States and neighboring countries. In addition, previous Fulbright grantees to the region share their individual experiences.

While much of the orientation was applicable to me, the presenters did not — and, to be fair, probably could not —

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*Rochelle Parks-Yancy, an assistant professor of management in the Jesse H. Jones School of Business at Texas Southern University in Houston, spent the spring of 2010 in Yerevan as a Fulbright Scholar. She is the author of Equal Work, Unequal Careers: African-Americans in the Workforce (First Forum Press, 2010).*

address the extreme differences in how I would be treated, relative to their experiences, because of my race. I'm visibly non-white, unlike the presenters, who were all white. I had expected to cause a bit of a stir in Armenia, but judging from the reaction it seemed more like a superstar celebrity tour/circus freak show/the-aliens-have-landed spectacle.

## **Becoming a Local Celebrity**

From the moment my plane landed in the capital city of Yerevan, things became interesting. The population is about 98-percent Armenian, so foreigners, especially non-white ones, are unusual. The customs agent did a double take when she saw me and, then, motioned to her colleagues to come quickly to stare at me (look! look!). Pointing is not considered to be rude in Armenia at all.

There were about a hundred or so people waiting for arriving passengers and, upon my entrance, all conversation ceased while they stared, pointed and made comments in Armenian and Russian (most Armenians speak both languages). It was like I had parted the Red Sea, judging by the expressions of amazement on people's faces.

This behavior occurred all day, every day, everywhere for the entire three-and-a-half months that I was in Armenia. Small children gazed wide-eyed at me on the street and, from what I could tell, asked their equally amazed parents what — not who — I was. At museums and tourist attractions, people took pictures of me, instead of the actual statues, artwork or monuments. Schoolchildren with their teachers paused from their tours to gawk and to discuss the educational experience that I provided.

Meeting neighbors in my apartment building involved a very long staring contest and whispered discussions. It was

like the movie “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner,” though the reaction was not antagonistic — just extreme astonishment at my presence. Often, I literally stopped traffic: walking down the street meant hearing screeches of drivers slamming on their brakes to stare at me.

Going to stores involved being followed by curious shoppers. When I entered restaurants, all conversation (even chewing) died down for at least a minute and the wait staff stopped serving customers for a few seconds. In cabs and on buses, the drivers generally spent about one-third of their time watching the road and the other two-thirds watching me in their rear-view mirrors.

I was initially quite disconcerted by the constant gapping and whispers, as it



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was far more extensive than anything I had experienced, even during previous travel abroad. It was difficult to become accustomed to the staring, but it helped that people were not at all hostile. In fact, in spite of their stern countenances (my students said this was a facial holdover from the Soviet Union), Armenians were quite friendly.

People guessed that I was British, Russian, Venezuelan, Brazilian, French, Spanish, American, Chilean or African. When they assumed that I was a certain nationality they would strike up conversations with me in that particular country’s language. Thus, I had quite a few “conversations” in French, Spanish and Russian, despite the fact that I do not actually speak any language except English.

Shortly after arriving, I attended an embassy debriefing. First, I was informed that Naomi Campbell was in town. I expressed surprise that she would be in Armenia, before it became clear that the embassy had based its information on reports from local contacts who thought I was Naomi Campbell! Though I am substantially shorter, physically bigger and a completely different complexion than she, I suppose there are worse people for whom to be mistaken.

Second, I was warned to expect to be called “negar” (pronounced like the n-word). True to their warnings, this happened fairly often. However, my embassy contacts explained that the term is not an insult at all, but simply the Russian term for a black person (as we understand it in the U.S.).

Interestingly, they also told me that Russians consider people from the Caucasus to be “black,” though the term is specifically meant to demean them. Thus, in this part of the world, Caucasian is the equivalent of “black” (which is derogatory) and blacks, as we identify the group in the U.S., are negars (which is fine).

I wondered what my reaction would be the first time I heard the term applied to me, and did not have to wait long to find out. I was shopping in the market when a beef seller saw me and shouted “Negar!” However, he clearly did not intend to insult me because he then rubbed his chest near his heart and mouthed “love you” in a clear attempt to flirt and, probably, to entice me to buy some very bloody meat that looked as though the cow had only recently been killed.

While my gut reaction upon hearing the word was shock, I actually had to laugh to myself, given the totally different meaning of the term in Armenia, relative to the U.S. And I soon became accustomed to hearing the word directed at me without taking offense.

### **On Campus**

During my fellowship I taught an organizational behavior class to political science graduate students at the American University of Armenia, located in Yerevan. I also conducted research on Armenians’ job search practices.

Teaching at AUA was an excellent experience. First, the quality of the facilities, as well as the stellar staff support, made it very easy for me to organize my office and prepare my

teaching materials. Prior to my arrival, I received frequent e-mails from designated staff whose role was to ensure that my teaching and research needs were fulfilled. I was very impressed by the level of communication, helpfulness and academic support that I received before and after my arrival.

My office was very nice, even by U.S. standards, with a great view of the campus and good furniture. Additionally, the technical support team was very helpful, immediately solving any computer problems I had.

AUA grants only graduate degrees and is run in an American style. Still, my class was initially surprised that I mandate active verbal participation from all students, because that is not the typical Armenian teaching method. They were used to the professor-talks, student-listens method. However, they were quite vocal in my class and were almost uniformly excellent

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*At times I literally stopped  
traffic in the capital, as  
drivers slammed on their  
brakes to stare at me.*

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contributors to our many class discussions.

Education is valued highly in Armenia, so the students were very concerned about maintaining a high grade point average to ensure that they would not flunk out. The school is quite prestigious and, therefore, very expensive by local standards. Thus, most of them worked extremely hard on their assignments.

I gave the class the same kind of tasks that I do back in the States. Relative to my American students, the Armenians' command of proper written English grammar was notably better, as was their preparation for my all-essay exams. They were very proud when I told them their class was the first I had ever taught in which almost the entire group passed the first exam.

Despite their focus on academics, the students had little clarity about what they would do after completing their degrees. A few were employed, but most of them had never had a job before. In fact, with an average age of about 23, the students were younger than the typical American graduate student. The majority of the class wanted to work in some kind of diplomatic capacity, but had no idea how to obtain such positions — or how to get any kind of professional job.

Unemployment is very high in Ar-

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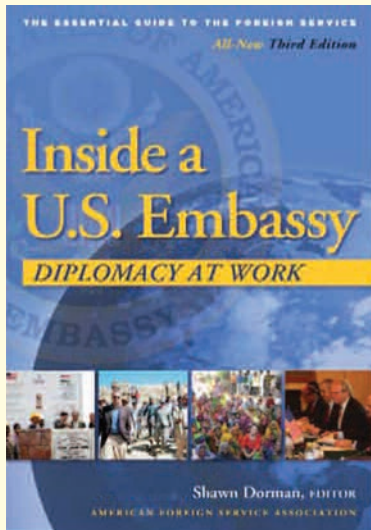
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*The Fulbright program  
truly is an excellent way  
for nations to learn  
about one another.*

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menia, and there are few formal processes to smooth the transition from school to work. The class attributed this lack of employment mechanisms to Armenia's slow shift from communism, under which people were given specific jobs by the government, to the free-market economy, where jobs are competitive. The university has a career center, but only some students seemed to utilize its services.

Given my role as a human resources professor in the United States, we spent a couple of class periods mapping out their career plans, with specific focus on the steps that they would take to achieve their short- and long-term career objectives. They seemed to appreciate this and made it clear that they had never done anything like it before.

### Getting to Know You...

While students, staff and some of the faculty stared at me, it was not quite to the degree that I experienced outside of the university. From my observations, this is probably because students and professors at AUA are somewhat more cosmopolitan than the general population. Several have traveled and even lived abroad, which is not the norm for Armenians. In fact, a few professors were Americans of Armenian descent.

Few people outside of AUA knew much English, but those who spoke any tried to converse with me — gen-

erally after a debate within their small groups as to who would make the initial conversational foray. These were usually female college students, who attended universities other than AUA, where English proficiency is mandatory for admittance.

There were two purposes to these exchanges: To find out why I was in Armenia (I was invariably asked, "What are you doing here?"), and to practice their English. Supplementing their bad English and my even-worse Armenian with hand gestures, we had nice, albeit very limited, chats. They were openly appreciative, however, of my willingness to converse with them. During these exchanges, every single person in the vicinity intently watched us, and some sidled closer to listen to our conversation.

One of the more humorous exchanges came when I mentioned to a young woman that Armenians stared at me a lot. She immediately responded, "Yes, because you are dark." This was news to me because in the States, I am generally considered to be on the moderate side of the brown spectrum. Her comment was particularly amusing given that some Armenians are very swarthy, and she was no exception. In fact, she and I were almost the same shade.

A highlight of teaching the class was our varied cultural exchanges. For example, the geographic identity of Armenia depends on the person with whom one is speaking. When I asked my class where their country was located, there was no consensus. Armenians told me that it was variously in Europe, Eurasia, Asia or even the Middle East (which greatly surprised me). Eventually, one student explained that Armenians' elementary and secondary school education tends to focus more on math and science because those are required university subjects, whereas geography is not.

Students were astonished when I told them that the average American

has probably not even heard of Armenia, and knows little if anything about Turkey's massacre of its Armenian population back in 1915. I went on to explain that the United States is comprised of many ethnic groups who experienced genocides (I specifically mentioned African-Americans, Native Americans, Jews, Rwandans, Bosnians and Sudanese), so the collective population may not know as much about Armenia's experience.

The class was appalled when I told them that my 6-year-old son had to be at school by 8 a.m. This was much too early, in their opinion, to wake up (Armenians start school late by U.S. standards, generally about 9:30 a.m.). They also felt that I was a mean mother to make him go to bed at 7:30 p.m., because Armenians also go to bed very late compared to Americans. The students thought that children should not have to go bed until about 10 p.m.

When I told my class that each presenter had to wear a suit as part of a presentation assignment, at first they had no idea what I was talking about. I then explained that a suit was a matching jacket, slacks, tie, etc. One student replied, "Oh, you mean a costume." I said no, believing that he meant Halloween-type clothing. We went back and forth for a few minutes until another student explained that in Russian, a suit, as defined in the U.S., is called a "costume." They all laughed when I explained what the term meant in America.

One day, as a female student and I were walking from campus, two men passed us. They not only gaped at me, as was customary, but one whipped out his phone and took a picture. Though she did not know them, my student scolded them in Armenian for being rude, then apologized to me for their behavior. I assured her that no apology was necessary, but I was touched by her concern for my potential discomfort.

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*A highlight of teaching  
the class was our varied  
cultural exchanges.*

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**You Really,  
Really Like Us!**

Armenians frequently asked me if I wanted to live in their country permanently. They clearly wanted me to like their culture and to tell other foreigners positive things about the country. But because Armenians are very family-oriented they always understood when I responded that, because my family lives in the United States, that was where I wanted to be, as well.

In that spirit, I can honestly report

that I had an amazing adventure in Yerevan. I would gladly visit the country again and would be happy to teach another course at AUA.

Despite being treated as a negar/alleged former supermodel/circus freak, teaching and studying in the country increased my appreciation for the Fulbright program and the educational and cultural opportunities that it provides. It is truly an excellent way for nations to learn about one another. Countries may differ in various respects, but, even so, human beings, irrespective of nationality, are quite similar.

Not only do I encourage my academic colleagues to apply to be Fulbright grantees, but I urge them to seek placement in countries that lie far outside their previous cultural knowledge and comfort zones, like Armenia. The value of the knowledge gained and the relationships formed is truly immeasurable. ■

ADVERTISEMENT

**WHY NOT THE BEST FOR AFSA?**

It's your Foreign Service, it's your career, it's your paycheck, and your benefits - stand up and defend them all with your vote. Nominate, write-in, or choose the candidates best qualified to address the problems and seize the opportunities that face the Service today.

The Labor Dept supervised nominating process has failed. 81% of the AFSA Governing Board positions are uncontested or not even spoken for. Candidates who were complicit in the failure of the 2009 elections are running again unopposed.

**YOUR WRITE-IN VOTE IS KEY.**

**TOSSING A BALLOT IS A VOTE FOR SPECIAL INTEREST  
CANDIDATES RUNNING UNOPPOSED.**

AFSA needs representatives who are cleared, competent, and convincing to defend the Service on the Hill, with the Media and with Agency managements who will be forced to rob Peter to pay Paul.

Join in taking this election out of the back room and into the chat room by nominating and discussing the candidates to best serve you at [www.afsaSTRONG.com](http://www.afsaSTRONG.com).

To learn why the 2009 AFSA elections failed go to [www.diplomacyfirst.com](http://www.diplomacyfirst.com).

Ad paid for by Tex Harris -- Candidate for AFSA President

This is a paid ADVERTISEMENT, paid for by all members of the 21st Century AFSA Slate

## VOTE FOR THE 21st CENTURY AFSA SLATE

Moving forward together!

**Vote for the 21st Century AFSA Slate if you want a Board that is experienced, diverse, innovative, representative of today's Foreign Service and committed to:**

- Strong advocacy for well resourced civilian foreign affairs agencies
- Defending OCP, diplomacy 3.0 hiring, earned benefits, and better training
- Greater engagement with our members on the issues that you care about
- Strengthening AFSA's role in personnel policy formulation and improving promotion and career mobility for both specialists and generalists
- Improving understanding of and support for diplomacy and development and the Foreign Service
- Developing synergies between AFSA's character as a professional association and as a bargaining unit
- Helping the Foreign Service and government agencies meet their expertise needs by lifting restrictions on retiree employment
- Making AFSA governance and operations more professional and transparent
- Considering term limits for AFSA board positions to encourage broader participation
- Supporting members of all agencies equally
- An AFSA that is led by an active duty President

21st Century AFSA slate members have shown, through individual action and service, that they are dedicated to improving the Foreign Service. They are willing to fight for what is right and what is in the interests of members. We are committed to building on the agenda and priorities of the current board and seeking greater member engagement. We are committed to fighting for due process, fairness and transparency and for policies that promote excellence in the Foreign Service. We believe that now is the time for all members, from all AFSA constituencies – specialist and generalist, active and retired, all agencies, all ranks – to move forward together to build support for the Foreign Service in Congress and among the public and to put in place policies to build the 21st century Foreign Service our nation needs.

We are committed to building on the work and momentum of the 2009-11 GB to build the 21st century Foreign Service our country needs. We need your vote to give the AFSA Governing Board a stronger mandate and more credible voice.

**Your vote in this election will decide the future course of your official representative to management. Please vote for the slate committed to modernizing and improving AFSA operations, making us more responsive to all members. Please vote for the following 21st Century AFSA Slate members :**

(Remember, you have to vote for each individual by name. There is no box to check to simply vote for the entire slate!)

*President:* Susan Johnson

*Secretary:* Susan Shultz

*Treasurer:* Andrew Winter

*State VP:* Daniel Hirsch

*State Representative*

Matthew Asada

*State Representative*

Les Hickman

*State Representative*

Ken Kero-Mentz

*State Representative*

Kimberly Krhounck

*Retiree Representative*

Mary Ellen T. Gilroy

*Retiree Representative*

Hugh Neighbour

This is a paid ADVERTISEMENT, paid for by Susan Johnson, Susan Shultz, Andrew Winter, Daniel Hirsch, Matthew Asada, Les Hickman, Ken Kero-Mentz, Kimberly Krhounck, Mary Ellen T. Gilroy and Hugh Neighbour.



# AFSANNEWS

American Foreign Service Association • April 2011

## AFSA Releases USAID Member Survey Results

BY USAID VP FRANCISCO ZAMORA

Every year AFSA looks forward to taking the pulse of the USAID membership. This fifth year of the survey attracted significantly more respondents than last year (581 versus 327), of whom 77 percent were located overseas. It is also noteworthy that the majority (45 percent) of respondents were entry-level personnel (FS-4 to FS-6), reflecting the effect of the accelerated hiring under the USAID Development Leadership Initiative.

Newer employees seem especially eager to share their opinions and concerns. As additional employees enter through the DLI program and older FSOs retire or leave, the proportion of newer officers overall will continue to increase. This is a signal to USAID that it must take into account evolving demographics.

The survey's goal is to get answers to important questions: What are our members' main concerns and complaints? How

high is morale? How well is the agency performing? Which areas need attention and improvement? What does the administrator need to know that he is not hearing from other sources? And, finally, are members satisfied with AFSA's services? These are all important questions; and given that the survey is anonymous and encourages straightforward honest feedback, it provides valuable information for all of us, including USAID leadership, to improve our agency and its mission.

The complete survey results can be found in the February issue of *The Vanguard* newsletter on our Web site ([www.afsa.org/usaaid.aspx](http://www.afsa.org/usaaid.aspx)).

Here we present a summary, with selected graphs illustrating the main points. We hope that this data will stimulate discussion and move us toward meaningful course corrections.

USAID FSOs believe there is still inequitable treatment between them and State Department personnel with regard to salaries and other benefits.

Continued on page 52

## AFSA Launches Its New Web Site!



AFSA is tremendously pleased to announce the launch of our brand-new Web site, [www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org). We hope you have already had the chance to visit it; if not, we encourage you to do so at your earliest opportunity.

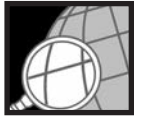
The original AFSA site was launched in 1997 and did not change over the next 14 years. Given the pace of technological advancements, it became increasingly clear that our online presence was well behind the times. The site contained some excellent information, but it was difficult to find and often hard to read due to its presentation.

"Our new site is designed to better serve our members, the Governing Board and the Foreign Service," Marketing and Outreach Manager Ásgeir Sigússon says.

The new site is thoroughly up-to-date in every sense. The content will be updated regularly and is more comprehensive than ever. Navigation and accessibility meet top standards, and multimedia applications are used throughout the site. You'll also

Continued on page 51

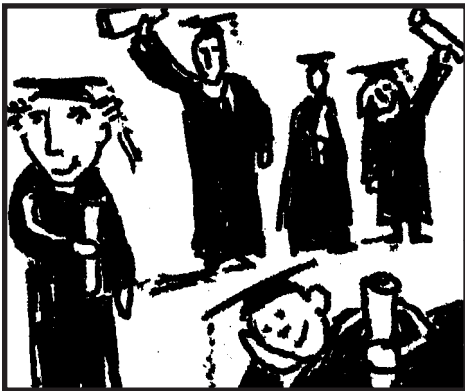
# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



## Give to the AFSA Scholarship Fund!

This month, our annual AFSA Scholarship Fund Appeal will be hitting your mailboxes. Please consider a donation to support the merit- and need-based financial aid scholarships that we provide to nearly 100 children of Foreign Service employees each year. Last year, through the generosity of our members and other donors, we provided \$180,000 in such aid.

No membership dues fund any activity of the AFSA Scholarship Program. Your tax-deductible donation shows that you understand the value of education and investing in the future of our young people. Please use the postage-paid reply envelope enclosed with the mailing to return your reply card and contribution today. For more information, please visit [www.afsa.org/scholar](http://www.afsa.org/scholar).



JOSH

## AFSA OFFICER ELECTION NOTICE

The 2011 regularly scheduled AFSA Officer and Governing Board election is underway. Details about the election including the rules can be found at: [www.afsa.org/afsa\\_elections.aspx](http://www.afsa.org/afsa_elections.aspx).

Members will receive candidates' campaign literature in a number of ways. Campaigning through an employer e-mail by any member is prohibited with the exception of the three pre-approved candidate e-mail blasts.

**Ballots:** Ballots will be mailed on or about March 28. If you do not receive a ballot by April 18, please contact the Election Supervisor (contact information below).

**Ballot Tally:** On June 2, at 9 a.m., the ballots will be picked up from the post office in Washington, D.C. Only ballots received in the post office box will be counted.

**Election Information:** Written requests for a duplicate ballot should be directed to Election Supervisor Alison Dunn at U.S. Department of Labor, OLMS, 800 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 120, Washington DC 20002-4244, fax: (202) 513-7301 or e-mail: [afsaelectionsupervisor@dol.gov](mailto:afsaelectionsupervisor@dol.gov). Please include your full name, work location, current address, telephone number and the last four digits of your Social Security number.

## 22-Percent Increase in AFSA Scholarship Applications!

AFSA Merit Awards for Foreign Service high school seniors just became even more competitive. For 2011, AFSA received 91 Academic Merit applications compared to 70 in 2010, and 16 Art Merit Applications compared to just 13 last year.

This program, run under the oversight of the AFSA Committee on Education, offers awards totaling \$43,000. This year, AFSA will award \$2,000 as top prizes, up from \$1,800 last year, but will not increase the total number of awards bestowed. Merit Award winners will be selected during the second week of April, with local winners and their families invited to attend a reception and ceremony on Fri., May 6. For more details, please visit [www.afsa.org/scholar](http://www.afsa.org/scholar).

AFSA received 106 need-based Financial Aid Scholarship applications for undergraduate study. We will have enough funds to help 60 to 65 students given the projected aid for this program of \$175,000.

## How to Contact Us:

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### On the Web

**AFSA WEB SITE:** [www.afsa.org](http://www.afsa.org)  
**FSJ:** [www.afsa.org/fsj](http://www.afsa.org/fsj) and [www.fsjournal.org](http://www.fsjournal.org)

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**Director of Policy Edward Dickens:** [dickens@afsa.org](mailto:dickens@afsa.org)

**Executive Assistant to the President:** vacant

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**Scholarship Program Assistant Jonathan Crawford:** [crawford@afsa.org](mailto:crawford@afsa.org)

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Raymond Maxwell

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Glenn Rogers

**FCS REP:** Stephen Morrison

**FAS REP:** Melinda Sallyards

**IBB REP:** Al Pessin

**RETIREE REPS:** Janice Bay

Robert (Bill) Farrand

Mary Ellen Gilroy

Molly Williamson



## Good Supervision Leads to a Good EER Season

Employee Evaluation Report season is upon us and, as usual at this time, AFSA is hearing from and assisting raters, reviewers and rated employees. AFSA is happy to advise members during any phase of the EER process, including providing an objective, third-party opinion of how a review or rated officers' statement might be interpreted by a promotion board.

My position in AFSA has deepened my surprise that many Foreign Service members — who have no trouble drafting a complex bilateral agreement or defending an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services position — freeze and fret when it comes to analyzing their subordinates or describing their own accomplishments. Indeed, AFSA recently received a serious request from a member in the field, urging the department to exempt FS members from annual reviews on the theory that writing EERs and, in general, managing subordinate employees, takes FS members away from their “real” work for the American people.

AFSA is currently helping the department develop an online EER course for all employees, which may well be released before this article is published. The course will address the basics of EER writing but, more importantly, should serve as a tool to address a very real problem. Many members find it hard to evaluate their colleagues and expend the energy necessary to develop (rather than merely coordinate) subordinates in the Service, so they struggle at evaluation time to fit an entire year's worth of supervision into a single writing session. As a result, far too many employees rise through the system without ever receiving a true appraisal of their skills and abilities, and without the guidance and training that their supervisors should provide.

Many of the workplace and morale issues brought to AFSA's attention are in some degree rooted in the deficiencies of what should be a year-round process of communication, supervision, feedback and guidance — in short, proper management. Done correctly, the supervisory cycle virtually guarantees ease in EER writing, as both supervisors and rated employees will be familiar with the issues involved.

Ideally, a good supervisor should:

- Recognize that developing subordinates and colleagues is a key requirement of every Foreign Service supervisor's duties,

and apply to that task the same effort and talent as is applied to other tasks.

- Get to know subordinates and take the time to assess, without value judgments, their strengths and weaknesses (understanding that no one is always good at everything, and weaknesses can usually be addressed by training, closer supervision or redistribution of duties within a section). The benefits of such an investment far outweigh, in the long run, any temporary inconvenience.

- Know what his or her subordinates actually do. A person who supervises an employee in a different cone or specialty should make the effort to fully understand the requirements and priorities associated with that work at the beginning

of the rating cycle rather than at the end. This also means respecting the expertise of one's subordinates, particularly when they are trained or experienced in a different discipline.

- Communicate frequently and frankly, ensuring that not only do employees know what is required of them, but also that they are welcome to convey their own concerns and opinions to the supervisor. As a corollary, listen. Good communication is a two-way street.

- Ensure that expectations and duties are accurately reflected in work requirements and kept up-to-date. These should also indicate special requirements, such as frequent travel that is a basic component of work or supervision conducted by a person at a different post.

- Offer opportunities for subordinates to demonstrate individual talents. Particularly in a section or field where everyone does pretty much the same thing, it is important to give people opportunities to head special projects, draft reports, participate in task forces or otherwise demonstrate a strength that sets them apart from their colleagues.

While refraining from value judgments, a good supervisor must have the courage to be frank, early on, when an employee is not living up to expectations. He or she must make the effort to honestly assess whether the failure is due to employee weakness, a lack of resources or training, or the supervisor's own failure to lead.

Yes, the process is time-consuming. But the payoff is greater efficiency and higher morale. And best of all, you'll be able to write EERs as easily as you write about any other matter with which you are intimately familiar. □

AFSA is currently helping the department develop an online EER course for all employees, which may well be released before this article is published.

## Diversity at USAID: Why Should We Care?

Considering that USAID has operations in close to 100 locations worldwide, our agency is probably one of the most diverse organizations globally. It encompasses more than 4,300 Foreign Service Nationals and Third-Country Nationals, comprising every imaginable ethnic, religious, race and gender category, working alongside U.S. Foreign Service officers. It is tempting, then, to believe that we have no problem in the area of diversity.

Indeed, the results of our recent worldwide FSO survey (see p. 47) confirm that most respondents believe that diversity at USAID is either excellent (30 percent) or adequate (59 percent), with only a small fraction citing it as poor (11 percent). Yet with regard to USAID's direct-hire employees overseas and in Washington, the opposite is true. In addition, most respondents made wildly inaccurate assumptions about which categories were under-represented.

Definitive data from the USAID Office of Civil Rights and Diversity show that the biggest discrepancy is for Hispanic-Americans, who account for only 3 percent of our staff even though they make up 11 percent of the U.S. national civilian labor force. Most respondents believe that Native Americans are the most under-represented group when, in fact, due to their relatively small numbers in the U.S. population as a whole, their representation at USAID is basically on target (0.3 percent). The proportion of Asian-American USAID employees, whom respondents also identified as under-represented, is actually twice the NCLF: 6.2 percent of the USAID work force compared to 3.6 percent nationally.

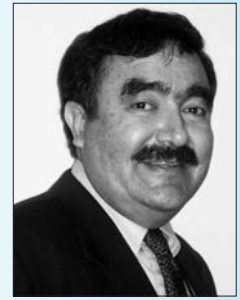
While African-Americans are well represented within

USAID (20.7 percent of the USAID work force compared to 10.5 percent of the NCLF), they, as well as Hispanic-Americans, are not so well distributed at senior leadership levels. Finally, the agency still has a way to go to better represent disabled workers and military veterans.

Which brings us back to our question: Why should we care? The answer is simple.: USAID is often the most visible face America presents to the world regarding our values. We promote democratic government, representation, participation and equality in everything we do. A diverse U.S. staff accurately representing our inclusive nature as a nation is not only justified in its own right, but it shows that we live up to our own rhetoric.

As some survey respondents pointed out, it is, of course, important to get the best qualified person for the job regardless of diversity status. However, these statistics do suggest that problems exist. No one intends these data to be used for the purpose of establishing quotas (which are illegal), but they can alert us to the fact that barriers to equal opportunity exist and should be dismantled.

In a population of more than 300 million, we have to assume that there are sufficient numbers of qualified individuals of all backgrounds and abilities to fill the relatively small number of positions at USAID. A better performance on achieving diversity will more strongly project our values to the world and make us more credible as we help other countries adopt democratic principles. □



## Foreign Affairs Day

Foreign Affairs Day, including AFSA's annual Memorial Plaque Ceremony, will take place on Fri., May 6, at 10 a.m. at the Department of State. We regret to announce that this year yet another name will be added to the plaques: Eugene F. Sullivan, a Foreign Service officer who died of malaria in Ethiopia on Jan. 21, 1972. The plaque ceremony will take place on the morning of Foreign Affairs Day in the C Street lobby. We invite all members of the Foreign Service community to join us for this solemn occasion. For more information, please contact AFSA's Coordinator for Special Awards and Outreach Perri Green at [green@afsa.org](mailto:green@afsa.org).

Following the official programs at the department, AFSA will welcome members to its headquarters at 2101 E Street NW for a reception and light refreshments. During the reception, we will also honor this year's AFSA scholarship recipients and donors.



AFSA President Susan Johnson speaks at last year's Plaque Ceremony, with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton looking on.

MICHAEL LAVACONA

notice a new emphasis on featuring pictures of our members; after all, AFSA is a membership organization and all of our work is done on behalf of our members.

Perhaps most importantly, the new site has top-of-the-line e-commerce capabilities, which allow visitors to perform the following tasks securely online:

- Join AFSA and renew membership
- Update address, e-mail and other biographical information
- Purchase *Foreign Service Journal* subscriptions
- Donate to AFSA's various causes and activities

The new site also allows visitors to easily sign up for AFSAnet e-mail bulletins, connect with us via social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, contact AFSA staff and Governing Board members, learn about upcoming AFSA events and participate in quick polls.

Perhaps most importantly,  
the new site has  
top-of-the-line  
e-commerce capabilities.

Executive Director Ian Houston and Marketing & Outreach Manager Ásgeir Sigfússon managed the Web site project with tremendous support from the AFSA Governing Board and staff, which made a new Web site one of its main priorities for the current term.

The site was developed and designed by a Washington, D.C.-based firm, Taoti Creative. We truly appreciate their hard work and dedication in making the process smooth and easy; the quality of their design speaks for itself. We also appreciate the cooperation of TMA Resources, which assisted in ensuring the security and ease of our e-commerce transactions.

We always welcome suggestions about additional content that would be helpful to our members; please send any such thoughts to sigfusson@afsa.org. Photographs from the field of AFSA members would be particularly welcome. □



## Foreign Service Bumper Stickers

Whether our daily existence consists of “multitasking” or “continuous partial attention,” it is clear that we live in an attention-deficient era. (Put down that BlackBerry, iPhone, Android, etc., and read this article!) The three-hour Lincoln-Douglas debates back in 1858 would now be limited to less than 10 minutes, with a 10-second “point-counterpoint” summary for the 6 p.m. news. Unfortunately, our lack-of-attention lifestyle is embedded in Capitol Hill. While individual members of Congress are very bright and hard-working, collectively they are reduced to repeating bumper-sticker slogans for lowest-common-denominator TV spots.

While Senator Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., among many others, have recently penned thoughtful articles outlining the national security justification for maintaining a strong Foreign Service, those articles are too long to catch the attention of our “just slogans, no facts” society. As Rep. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., noted recently, “The first rule of politics is that when you are explaining, you are losing.” So it’s time to develop our own bumper stickers and plaster the Hill.

It’s easy (and fun) to go negative:

- Reform or we’ll send you a sharply worded *démarche*.
- Money can’t buy you love; but we try.
- Purchase our agricultural commodities, or we will dump them here.
- With so much news, some of it is bound to be correct.

But let’s take a more positive approach:

**State:** We are in harm’s way before, during and after the military declares the mission over.

We talk to the bad guys, so you don’t have to.

**USAID:** Helping others helps the U.S.

This is USAID: 0.005 percent of the U.S. budget.

**FCS:** More U.S. jobs through more U.S. exports.

Trade hand-holding for only \$39.95 a day.

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I would love to hear more ideas from you! Send any good suggestions to henryschmick@yahoo.com. □

While individual members  
of Congress are very bright  
and hard-working, collectively  
they are reduced to repeating  
bumper-sticker slogans  
for lowest-common-  
denominator TV spots.

**Survey • Continued from page 47**

Generally, we see many of the same areas of concern that were expressed in the previous survey — some more urgent than others. For example, USAID FSOs believe they still receive inequitable treatment compared to State Department personnel in terms of salaries and other benefits. Sixty-three percent mentioned the need for “ensuring equal benefits with the State Department,” a topic that AFSA has repeatedly raised with USAID administrators and the human resources department.

Everything from entry-level salaries to per diems, overseas hardship differentials and even access to training and child care at the Foreign Service Institute is significantly different between the two agencies — always to the disadvantage of USAID employees. As long as agency management continues to allow these differences, it is conveying the message that it considers its employees second-class vis-à-vis State employees.

There is still a great deal of discomfort regarding USAID’s relationship with the State Department and moves to consolidate more of our administrative operations into embassy functions; 57 percent of respondents cited this as an important concern. Also, the performance of the Human Resources Office in supporting the needs of FSOs has deteriorated year after year,

**One contradictory result was that morale showed a 10 percentage point improvement, while there is an overall belief by the membership that working conditions are worsening.**

in the view of respondents, to reach a new low this year with 57 percent giving the office a “poor” rating.

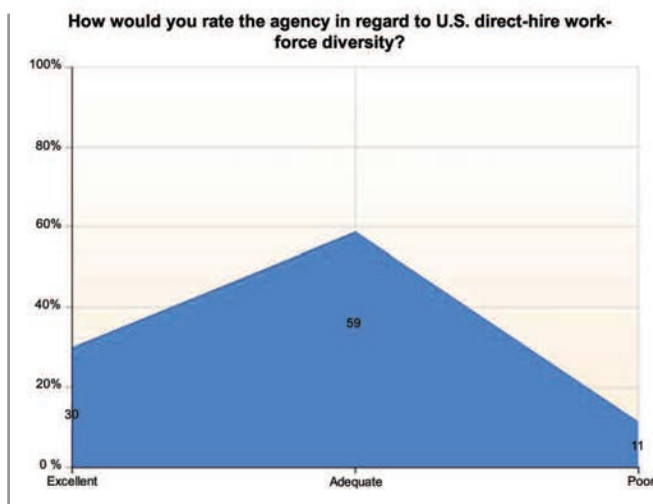
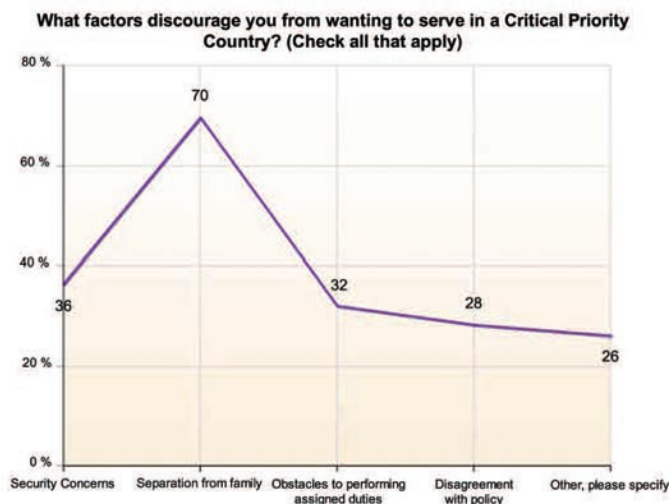
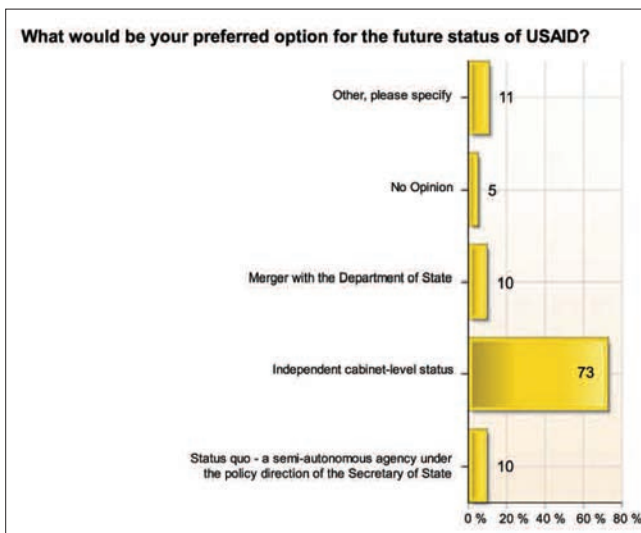
One contradictory result was that morale showed a 10 percentage point improvement, yet there is an overall belief by the membership that working conditions are worsening (in this year’s survey 55 percent said this was so, compared to 54 percent last year). One way to interpret this may be that FSOs like

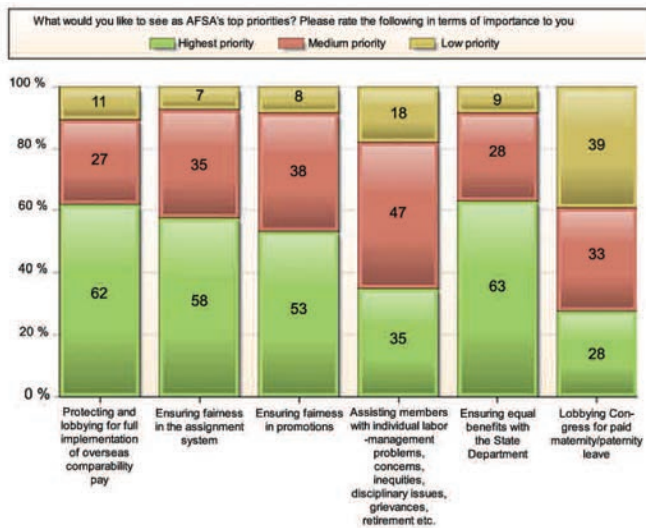
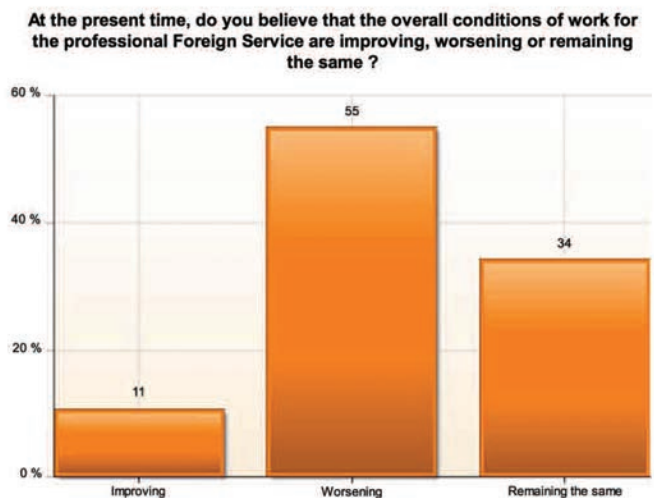
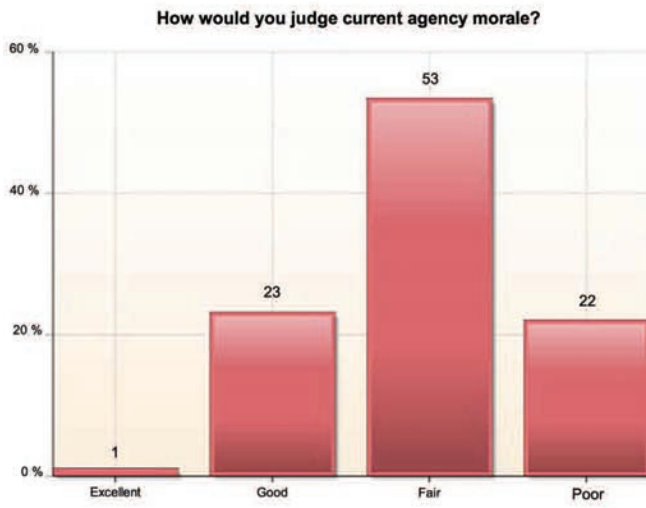
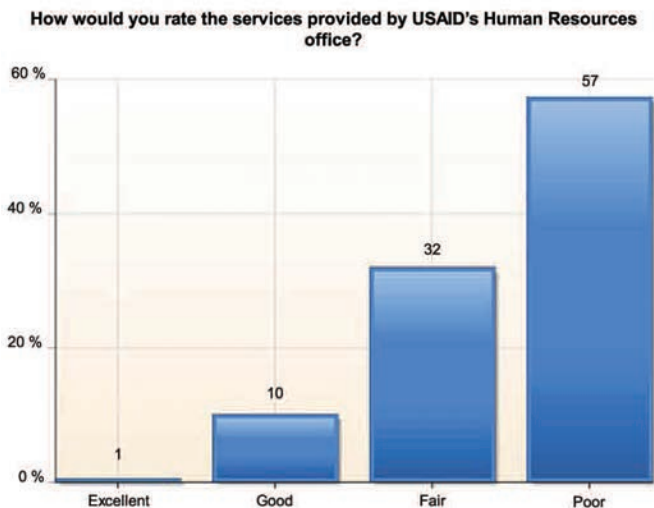
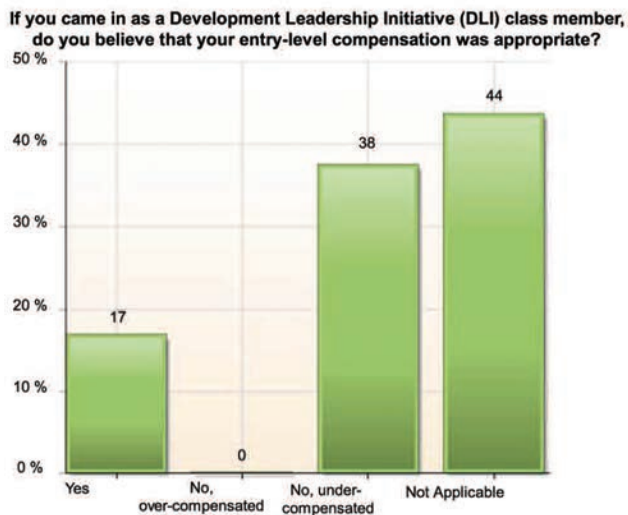
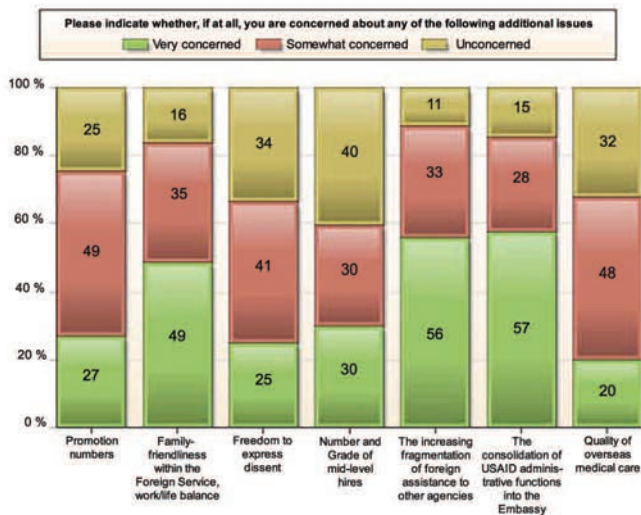
their jobs and what they do, but are concerned about the future direction of the agency.

One year into the job, Administrator Rajiv Shah garnered decent scores, although a little lower overall than the previous interim administrator, Alonzo Fulgham. Many members seem appreciative that, after a year’s gap, the agency has a permanent administrator, and they seem willing to give Dr. Shah an opportunity to improve the agency.

Diversity was a new topic for this survey. Many respondents were not aware of the enormous discrepancies in the composition of the USAID workforce and assumed that representation of all demographic groups was adequate. This indicates that more education is necessary to update everyone about the true situation.

Finally, we note your concerns that AFSA’s communication with you is deficient. Many of you (25 percent) wanted more specific and frequent updates on what we do to support you. While we publish an article addressing USAID issues in *AFSA News* every other month and release *The Vanguard* newsletter as needed, we agree we could do better. AFSAnets from USAID have not been sent with the frequency needed to keep members up-to-date, and this will be our focus in the coming months. □





# AFSA Announces Sinclair Language Award Winners

BY SPECIAL AWARDS AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR PERRI GREEN

Proficiency in foreign languages is one of the most valuable and important skills in today's Foreign Service. AFSA's Sinclair Language Awards program honors language students for outstanding accomplishment in the study of a difficult language and its associated culture.

AFSA established this language-award program based on a bequest from Matilda W. Sinclair, a former Foreign Service officer. The purpose of her bequest was to "promote and reward superior achievement by career officers of the Foreign Service of the United States while studying one of the 'hard' languages under the auspices of the Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State." The guidelines were amended and updated in October 2001 to expand eligibility for the awards to any career or career-conditional member of the Foreign Service from State, USAID, FCS, FAS or IBB.

Candidates for the award are nominated by the language-training supervisors at the FSI School of Language Studies or by language instructors at the field schools. They are selected by a committee composed of volunteer AFSA members, a member



of the AFSA Governing Board and the special awards and outreach coordinator. Each of the winners receives a check for \$1,000 and a certificate of recognition signed by the AFSA president and the chair of the Awards Committee.

AFSA congratulates the nine winners of this year's Sinclair Language Award, and commends the School of Language Studies at FSI for its dedication in preparing students of hard languages for the intense challenges of modern diplomacy.

This year's winners are:

Daniel Bailey	Latvian
Eric Frater	Vietnamese
Melanie Higgins	Indonesian
Bradley Hurst	Hungarian
Andrew Partin	Georgian
Daniel Rakove	Mongolian
Stuart Smith	Greek
Thomas Venner	Tagalog
Vaida Vidugiris	Greek □

## AFSANEWSBRIEFS

### Operations Center 50th Anniversary – Calling All Alumni

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the Department of State's Operations Center. Since April 30, 1961, the Ops Center's Watch has operated 24/7/365, serving every Secretary of State from Dean Rusk to Hillary Rodham Clinton.

As part of the celebration, we would like to contact all Ops Center alumni to ask them to share their stories and memorabilia, and to participate in events and service opportunities related to the 50th anniversary. The organizing committee kindly requests you to send an e-mail to [OperationsCenter50th@state.gov](mailto:OperationsCenter50th@state.gov) to let us know when you served in Ops, what significant events happened during your tenure and your current contact information.

Please pass this along to others with whom you served. We look forward to hearing from you!

### State Unveils New Careers Web Site

AFSA is not the only organization with a new Web site. In February, the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Evaluation launched its own newly revamped careers site, with the goal of simplifying content and improving audience engagement ([careers.state.gov](http://careers.state.gov)).

Where the earlier site had eight separate navigation topics, the new one streamlines them into three: learn, work and engage. Within these first two categories, visitors will find videos of employees detailing the realities of their careers and more information about the Diplomats-in-Residence program.

One of the most interesting changes to the Web site is the focus on employee engagement with potential candidates for the Foreign Service. A blogroll lists some of the Service's most prolific employee blogs, and forums allow current FS members to interact with, and give advice to, those who are hoping to join their

ranks. For those FS personnel who wish they'd had someone to ask for advice back when they were applying for the Service, now's your chance to do that for someone else!





## This Month in Diplomatic History: Celebrating the Birth of James Monroe

BY GREG NAARDEN

**T**his is the first installment of what will be a monthly column on U.S. diplomatic history. Authors are members of the Friends of the USDC, a support group for the U.S. Diplomacy Center.

While April has become known at State as the month to write prank cables, it also marks the birth month of the seventh Secretary of State and fifth U.S. president, James Monroe (April 28, 1758). Monroe's big contribution to U.S. foreign policy was, of course, his famous Doctrine, which ensured that FSOs could choose from a fantastic array of posts throughout the Americas for generations to come.

Monroe racked up enormous debts during his tenure as minister to France and Secretary of State. Despite not having an American Citizen Services chief in Paris, Monroe secured the release of many Americans from French prisons, including Thomas Paine.

And while serving as James Madison's Secretary of State, Monroe conducted reconnaissance on the British army and ordered the removal of the department's documents and library



James Monroe, who served as the seventh Secretary of State and fifth U.S. president, was born this month on April 28, 1758.

before the British burned Washington during the War of 1812. The library included the Declaration of Independence, George Washington's papers and other notable Revolutionary War-era documents.

Monroe also taught an important lesson: make sure you file vouchers in a timely manner. Deeply in debt after retiring from the presidency, he publicly lobbied Congress for reimbursement for expenses incurred during his several diplomatic missions overseas and as Secretary. Some considered his lobbying beneath the dignity of a former president, but Congress ultimately granted him about \$30,000.

The grant enabled Monroe to pay off his remaining debts, although only after he had already sold off most of his property. He died on July 4, 1831 — exactly 55 years after the document he ordered saved from the burning of Washington, D.C., was signed. □

Greg Naarden is an FSO who has served in Frankfurt, Dushanbe and Kabul. He is currently assigned to Washington, where he spends weekends watching World War II shows on the History Channel. If you're interested in joining Friends of the USDC, contact him at [NaardenGL2@state.gov](mailto:NaardenGL2@state.gov).

### Upcoming AFSA Book Notes Events

The AFSA Book Notes program, which spotlights books featuring international and foreign policy-related topics, will be in full swing over the next few months:

Author and historian Jane Loeffler will be at AFSA on April 14, at 11 a.m., to discuss her book *The Architecture of Diplomacy: Building America's Embassies*. In the book, Loeffler examines the history of America's embassy buildings, beginning in the 19th century. In addition to architectural and aesthetic issues, she takes a hard look at the effect that modern security and safety regulations have had on the look, feel and openness of America's embassies. She focuses on the last half-century, during which American embassies morphed from inviting modernist symbols, celebrating democracy and transparency, into forbidding military fortresses, serving security and opacity.

Retired Ambassador Edmund Hull is our May Book

Notes author. He will be here on Mon., May 16, at 11 a.m., for a discussion of his brand-new book, *High-Value Target: Countering al Qaeda in Yemen*. The former U.S. ambassador to Sanaa, Hull speaks with great knowledge and from personal experience about this Middle East hot spot where terrorism seems to be on an alarming rise.

Finally, noted author, academic and commentator Andrew J. Bacevich will discuss his book *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* on Fri., June 24 (time TBD). In the book, Bacevich offers a critique of assumptions guiding American military policy. These central tenets have dominated national security policy since the start of the Cold War and have condemned the U.S. to "insolvency and perpetual war," in Bacevich's estimation (see review in the March *FSJ*).

All of these events will take place at AFSA headquarters at 2101 E Street NW. The book under discussion will be available for purchase at each event. Please RSVP to [events@afsa.org](mailto:events@afsa.org) if you would like to attend.

## AFSANEWSBRIEFS

### Clements Expat Youth Scholarship Applications Due May 13

Clements International is now accepting applications for its second annual Expat Youth Scholarship program. Scholarships totaling \$10,000 will be awarded to six individuals. The contest is open to students age 12-18, of any nationality, who have lived outside of their home country for more than two consecutive years. Applicants must submit an essay and creative media (photos, illustrations, etc.) in which they discuss and illustrate their lives as expatriate kids. For more information on this year's essay theme, please visit [www.expatyouthscholarship.com](http://www.expatyouthscholarship.com). The deadline for entries is May 13.

## TRANSITION CENTER SCHEDULE OF COURSES for April-May 2011

Apr. 4-5	MQ911	Security Overseas Seminar
Apr. 6	MQ852	Personal Finance and Investments
Apr. 8	MQ950	High-Stress Assignment Outbrief
Apr. 9	MQ116	Protocol
Apr. 14-15	MQ917	Private-Sector Security Overseas Seminar
Apr. 18-19	MQ911	Security Overseas Seminar
Apr. 20	MQ855	Traveling with Pets
Apr. 21	MQ703	Post Options for Employment and Training
Apr. 27-28	MQ107	English-Teaching Seminar
May 2-3	MQ911	Security Overseas Seminar
May 5	MQ704	Targeting the Job Market
May 6	MQ950	High-Stress Assignment Outbrief
May 11	MQ118	Special Needs Education
May 12-13	MQ918	Study Abroad Administrators' SOS
May 14	MQ116	Protocol
May 16-17	MQ911	Security Overseas Seminar
May 18	MQ203	Singles in the Foreign Service
May 20	MQ950	High-Stress Assignment Outbrief
May 21	MQ200	Going Overseas for Singles/Couples Without Kids
May 21	MQ210	Going Overseas for Families
May 21	MQ220	Going Overseas Logistics for Adults
May 21	MQ230	Going Overseas for Kids
May 25-26	MQ107	English-Teaching Seminar

For further information, e-mail the FSI Transition Center at [FSITCTraining@state.gov](mailto:FSITCTraining@state.gov).

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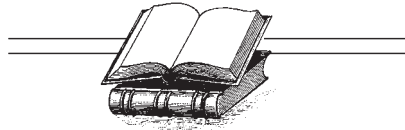
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# BOOKS

## Why Top-Down Doesn't Work

### Delivering Aid Differently: Lessons from the Field

Wolfgang Fengler and Homi Kharas,  
editors, Brookings Institution Press,  
2010, \$28.95, paperback, 286 pages.

REVIEWED BY LEON WEINTRAUB

In assembling this anthology, Wolfgang Fengler (a World Bank economist) and Homi Kharas (a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution) have achieved their stated goal of demonstrating the urgent need for serious reforms in the way U.S. foreign assistance is delivered. Regrettably, they offer few workable ideas for how to implement such an overhaul.

Consider the book's recommendations for the government of Tajikistan, which begin: "Develop and adopt an overall planning framework, a formal approach that links national development priorities, the state budget, the national investment program, and programs and projects funded by foreign aid." The long to-do list goes on to include establishing a new agency to coordinate foreign aid and amending the country's tax code.

Somehow, all these reforms are supposed to occur in a country that the State Department describes as one where "foreign revenue is precariously dependent upon exports of cotton and

*This book leaves me skeptical that procedures that apply to humanitarian operations will work for development assistance.*



aluminum, and on remittances from Tajik migrant workers abroad," and "government interference in the economy and massive corruption stifle economic growth and private investment."

Speaking as someone who has spent considerable time in developing countries as a Peace Corps Volunteer, doctoral research student and Foreign Service officer, I am bemused that aid practitioners like Fengler and Kharas continue to cling to top-down planning, modeling and strategizing. Count me instead in the camp of William Easterly, who says in his 2006 book, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*, that "The plan to end world poverty shows all the pretensions of utopian social engineering. ... That complexity [of society] dooms any attempt to achieve the end of poverty through a plan, and no rich society has ended poverty in this way."

Despite the editors' emphasis on "country ownership" and sensitivity to local needs, they still rely on the multilateral Paris Declaration of 2005 and the follow-up Accra Agenda of 2008 to provide the guidelines for effective development planning.

For a pointed example of the impossibility of meshing bilateral and multilateral programs within a single framework, whether funded by non-governmental organizations or central governments, look no further than the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. As Tamera Fillingier commented in her June 2007 *FSJ* article ("Women's Health Undercut by Administration Policies"), even this highly lauded, multibillion-dollar program could not be meshed appropriately with other efforts.

And as for promoting "country ownership," Alex Dupuy, a sociology professor at Wesleyan University and a native of Haiti, wrote in the Jan. 9 *Washington Post* that the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission "has effectively displaced the Haitian government and is in charge of setting priorities for reconstruction." Both official aid and the work being done by NGOs, he asserts, "reinforce the country's dependence on foreign aid and further sap the capacity and responsibility of the government to meet the basic needs of its citizens."

The most valuable part of *Delivering Aid Differently* is the final chapter,



titled “Learning from Humanitarian Aid.” Citing protocols and standards that the international humanitarian community has developed, Rebecca Winthrop writes of a focus on principles, people, processes, programming and perspectives that has gradually solidified into guidelines that stand up quite well to the stresses of emergency operations.

Still, I remain skeptical that procedures that apply to humanitarian operations will work for development assistance, for two reasons. First, the urgency of humanitarian operations makes donors more willing to compromise on leadership and coordination. It also makes donors less likely to insist on rigid requirements, for fear of being labeled a “spoiler” and causing needless deaths.

Instead of top-down approaches, I contend that the history of the United States and most developed countries illustrates the necessity of instituting the rule of law, along with a sanctions-backed, merit-based civil service and an economic regulatory framework. Other than providing major infrastructure (roads, ports, dams, canals, etc.), governments should take a back seat to private investment as the primary engine of truly organic and sustainable economic development.

No approach is perfect, but such a process is more likely to lead to a wealthier, more dynamic society than any of the sustainable development and poverty reduction programs outlined by the many contributors to this book.

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*Leon Weintraub, a Foreign Service officer from 1975 to 2004, is director of the University of Wisconsin’s Washington, D.C., Semester in International Affairs Program.*

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***The realities of Foreign  
Service life color  
Jehanne Dubrow’s  
poetry to good effect.***

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**Poetry for  
Home and Away**

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**Stateside**

*Jehanne Dubrow, TriQuarterly Books, 2010, \$17, paperback, 58 pages.*

REVIEWED BY DAVID T. JONES

In a profession dominated by prose (and probably doomed to become even more prosaic post-WikiLeaks), a book of poetry might seem, well, undiplomatic. But *Stateside* speaks elegantly and eloquently to a baseline problem with deep roots that has become increasingly poignant today: career-driven professional separations.

A self-described “diplobrat,” Jehanne Dubrow applies her Ph.D. in English to the structure of being spouse to a naval officer. *Stateside* thus speaks in three sections to the circumstances of a military deployment: preparation; deployment; return.

But while the poetry is couched in military parlance, it is professionally global. As the daughter of diplomats, Ms. Dubrow has “been there, done that” with the United States Foreign Service, and that reality also colors her writing.

The first section speaks to the mundane elements of pre-deployment life: a day/sleepover at the beach; buying a dog; appreciating the technical vocabulary of Navy life and the utility of the slightly coded curse “Whiskey Tango Foxtrot.” In the third section, Ms. Dubrow touches on the joys and tensions of return: “Home is the sailor; home from the sea.”

In between, the deployment/overseas assignment/hardship posting, Ms. Dubrow invokes Penelope, Odysseus’ long-suffering, and enduring, spouse. The modern incarnation contemplates her hairdo (“Penelope Considers a New Do”) and faces the results of (over)eating alone (“Penelope, on a Diet”), but she also offers practical “Instructions for Other Penelopes” in free verse.

Far from ponderous, the poetry has a mild tongue-in-cheek touch, as well as a tinge of the politely erotic. Nor does Ms. Dubrow reject the occasional rhyme (which is good news for those whose poetry appreciation ended with “The Raven”). More generally, she leaves the reader wondering why poetry — once a key element of everyday social conversation, epitomized by Keats, Shelley, Poe, Whitman, Eliot, Frost and others — has essentially disappeared from popular literature. Ms. Dubrow’s verse offers an incentive to rethink this neglect.

For more information about the book and the poet, visit [www.jehanne.thepoet.com](http://www.jehanne.thepoet.com). ■

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*David T. Jones, a retired Senior FSO, is a frequent contributor to the Journal. He is the co-author of Uneasy Neighb(u)r(s): Canada, the USA and the Dynamics of State, Industry and Culture (Wiley, 2007), a study of U.S.-Canadian relations.*



# IN MEMORY

**George Robert Andrews**, 78, a retired Foreign Service officer and former ambassador, died on April 11, 2010, at his home in Antigua, Guatemala.

Mr. Andrews was born in Havana on Feb. 26, 1932. As the son of a U.S. Foreign Service officer, he was brought up in Japan, Panama, Chile, England and France. He graduated from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School in 1953 and received a master's degree from the University of Strasbourg. He then joined the Foreign Service in 1954.

In Hamburg, where he served as a consular officer, Mr. Andrews met and married Helga von Levern Schroeder. He subsequently served in Paris, Stockholm, Dakar, Conakry, Strasbourg, Brussels and Guatemala City. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan appointed him U.S. ambassador to Mauritius.

After retiring from the Foreign Service in 1988, Amb. Andrews became director of the World Affairs Council in Boston. In this position, he arranged many foreign affairs programs that featured presidents from around the world. When he retired a second time, in 1994, he and his wife settled in Antigua.

Amb. Andrews is survived by his wife, Helga, of Antigua; their daughters Christina Andrews of Key Biscayne,

Fla., and Courtenay Slemeck of New York City; a son-in-law, Luke; and one grandson, Sebastien.



**Pamela Corey Archer**, 70, a retired Senior Foreign Service officer, died on Dec. 17 at her home in Arlington, Va.

Born May 2, 1940, in Los Angeles, Ms. Corey Archer spent her childhood in Mexico where her father opened and ran the first American Airlines office, and later at Santa Catalina School, a boarding school in Monterey, Calif.

After graduating from Scripps College in Claremont, Calif., with a degree in Hispanic-American studies, she accompanied her husband, George Warren Archer, to his first Foreign Service posting in Thailand. This was followed by Laos, where she worked as a journalist, and Panama, where she was an advertising copywriter and account executive.

Following her separation and eventual divorce, Ms. Archer worked as a film producer in Buenos Aires and, prior to entering the Foreign Service in 1981, as an international broadcaster with the Voice of America's Spanish branch and a publicist with National Public Radio.

During 25 years as a Foreign Service officer, Ms. Corey Archer served first with the U.S. Information Agency and then in the Department of State. At her first foreign postings, Tegucigalpa and Montevideo, she monitored the transition from military to civilian governments as assistant press attaché and cultural attaché, respectively.

Following a tour in Quito as press attaché, she served as counselor for public affairs in San Salvador, where, among other things, she coordinated meetings between U.S. authorities and guerillas and introduced human rights courses to the national war college at the end of the civil war. She received several meritorious honor awards and superior performance awards for her work in Latin America.

Ms. Archer's last overseas postings were in Lima, where she also served as counselor for public affairs, and Madrid, where she was minister counselor for public affairs. Her last assignment was as diplomat-in-residence at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

After retiring in 2005, she worked as an instructor in public diplomacy at the Foreign Service Institute and as a volunteer/interpreter at the Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington, Va. She travelled extensively to visit family and

## IN MEMORY



friends across the country and around the world, and actively enjoyed performing arts events in the Washington, D.C. area. She loved gardening and hosted regular social gatherings for friends and neighbors.

Ms. Corey Archer is survived by her two children, Keefer Archer of Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and Jonathan Archer of Arlington, Va.



**Linda Desmond Burke**, 64, the wife of retired USAID FSO Kevin Burke, died from multiple myeloma bone cancer on Oct. 23, 2010, at her home in Buzzards Bay, Mass., surrounded by her family.

Born and raised in Boston, Mrs. Burke graduated from Notre Dame Academy in 1964 and from Boston State College in an accelerated trimester program in 1967. At that time, newly wed and barely 21 years old, she joined her FSO husband Kevin in Bangui. There, as well as during later assignments in Haiti, Nigeria and Guinea-Bissau, Mrs. Burke proudly performed the full range of representational functions then expected of a Foreign Service spouse.

Whether in America or in developing countries, friends and family recall, Mrs. Burke always had a strong empathy for the poor and underprivileged and felt privileged to be a part of the work being done to help them. From the day the plane door opened to the stifling humidity and extreme poverty of Bangui, and on through other assignments, she was always positive and never looked back, often using humor to brighten the day of those around her. Within the Foreign Service community she was universally known as the life of the party.

Stateside, the Burkes made Falls Church, Va., their home. As a math teacher at her children's schools, St. James Elementary and O'Connell High School, she was regarded as an enormously gifted teacher especially dedicated to pushing girls to excel in math. She specifically requested to work with students who found that to be their most challenging subject. She became close friends with the other teachers with whom she worked.

In 1995, the couple settled in Buzzards Bay, Mass., where Mrs. Burke cherished the time she spent with her new friends at their weekly scrabble group, the Little Harbor Golf Club and the Buzzards Bay Bowling League. She especially loved attending the lunches, banquets and outings to Lake Morey, Vt., as well as Cape Cod Canal parties and events with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She also stayed in close contact with her many friends from Falls Church and the Foreign Service.

From the initial diagnosis that she was in an advanced stage of incurable cancer, to being notified that she had only a few weeks left to live, Mrs. Burke repeatedly said: "I'm very grateful. I have no regrets. I've had a good run. I've been blessed with many things many people would love to have had in life."

She remained positive and resolved to enjoy every last minute with family and friends, and they credit the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston for helping to keep her fully functional and with an extremely high quality of life through to her last days. The biggest thrill of her life was her children and grandchildren and, despite a disdain for computers, she even began using Skype to stay in contact with family spread around the U.S., Ireland

and Australia.

In her last weeks, as the family was preparing dinner one night, Mrs. Burke grabbed a large kitchen knife and began chopping up a squash, much to the dismay of everyone around her. When her son Jim asked what she was doing, she responded with what had by then become a trademark defiant grin: "I just want to see if I can still do it!" The next day, continuing to disregard requests to let family members help her, she spilled a cup of water and burst out laughing, sarcastically singing the song "It's Gonna Be a Great Day!" from a Bette Midler musical.

Linda Burke is survived by her husband of 43 years, Kevin of Buzzards Bay; their sons, James (and his wife, Tricia) of Portland, Conn., Walter (and his wife, Kristy) of Raleigh, N.C., and Brendan (and his wife, Karen) of Alexandria, Va.; and their grandchildren Maraline, Bettina, David, Jason; as well as beloved nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of relatives and friends.

Donations in her memory may be made to a local food pantry or to the Bourne Friends Food Pantry, 20 Commerce Park, Pocasset MA 02559.



**James W. Dawson**, 77, a retired FSO with USAID, died on April 3, 2010, of a stroke while tending to his garden at home in Tallahassee, Fla.

Mr. Dawson was born in Fort Sill, Okla., in 1932 to Grace Emma Eckler and Elmore Winslow Dawson and grew up in Oklahoma and Colorado, graduating from Greeley High School in 1950. He graduated from the University of Colorado and later completed his master of public affairs



## IN MEMORY



degree at Syracuse University.

His career in public service began with summer stints during his college years with the U.S. Forest Service as a smoke jumper, fighting fires throughout the western United States. He served in the Mountain Cold Weather Training Command of the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division from 1954 to 1956.

After seven years in the private sector, Mr. Dawson joined the Foreign Service in 1964 and was posted to Saigon as an assistant development officer. He received a Medal for Civilian Service for his efforts on behalf of USAID while serving in Vietnam. He subsequently served in Thailand, Kenya, Liberia and the Philippines, before retiring from the Foreign Service.

Mr. Dawson went on to consult in numerous other countries with USAID and several nongovernmental organizations before concluding his public service as the director of finance at the Lee County Public Health Department in Fort Myers, Fla.

An avid outdoorsman, skier, mountaineer and sailor, Mr. Dawson was also an intrepid traveler and voracious reader, who in his later years applied his consummate planning skills and financial acumen in volunteer efforts at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee.

He is survived by his wife, Nona L. Dawson, of Tallahassee; children, Robyn D. Flowers of Tallahassee, Stephen K. Dawson (and his wife, Daphne) of Campobello, S.C., and Elizabeth A. Dawson of Menlo Park, Calif.; and three grandchildren, Jonathan K. Flowers, James M. Flowers and John W. Dawson. He is also survived by his younger brother, David M. Dawson of Concord, Calif. Donations

in his memory may be made to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee at [www.uusc.org/donate](http://www.uusc.org/donate).



**Carroll Flaten**, 76, the wife of retired FSO and former Ambassador Robert A. Flaten, died on Dec. 9, 2010, in Northfield, Minn.

Born in Aberdeen, S.D., Carroll Jean Johnson also lived in Madison, Wisc., and Ortonville, Minn., before returning to Aberdeen, where she graduated from high school in 1953. She worked her way through St. Olaf College, graduating cum laude, and then joined her Air Force husband Robert Flaten in South Carolina. She completed college course work at the College of Charleston, later earning an M.A. in English from George Mason University during one of the family's assignments to Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Flaten had always dreamed of travel to beautiful and exciting places, family members recall. When her husband joined the Foreign Service in 1961, she took up the challenges of life as a diplomatic wife with enthusiasm, raising four children while serving in Strasbourg, Peshawar, Tel Aviv, Kigali and Washington, D.C.

In Kigali, she was director of the library at the American International School. She was twice evacuated from war zones with young children, leaving their father behind to do his job.

During assignments to Washington, D.C., Mrs. Flaten partnered with her husband in remodeling their early 1900s home in Arlington, Va. She learned to refinish antiques and reupholster furniture, and she became a master gardener. She was also co-designer and builder of a cabin on Massanutten Mountain in Virginia over-

looking the Shenandoah River, which remained her favorite place in the world.

Later, when the couple settled in Northfield, Mrs. Flaten was a member of the board of the Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company, twice president of the American Association of University Women, a member of the League of Women Voters, the Garden Club and St. John's Lutheran Church. She participated in the AAFSW Book Fair every year.

Mrs. Flaten's love of travel continued after retirement. She traveled to Europe with her son Arne, visited Russia and Italy with St. Olaf groups, and made several trips to India, Southeast Asia and Africa during lecture cruises with her husband. She journeyed by car across the southern United States and across Canada from Vancouver to Nova Scotia.

As family and friends recall, Mrs. Flaten found beauty in the simple, the imperfect, the flawed, the earthy and the handmade. Baskets from all over the world, inexpensive and transportable, are prominently displayed in her home along with other beautiful artifacts. Her creative interest was expressed in her hooked rugs, always designed by her and hooked with found colors and recycled wool.

Carroll Flaten is survived by her husband of 54 years, Robert, of Northfield, Minn.; children Kristin Flaten of St. Paul, Minn., Karen Flaten (and husband, Denny Jarosch) of South Haven, Minn., Sonia Mathew (and husband, Paul) of Brookline, Mass., and Arne (and his wife, Rebecca) of Conway, S.C.; four grandchildren, Erika, Natasha and Lara Flaten, and Anjoli Mathew.

Memorials may be sent to Sing for Joy at St. Olaf, the Community Action

## IN MEMORY



Center in Northfield, Minn., and the Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation.



**Richard (Dick) R. Hart**, 79, a retired FSO, died on Dec. 19, 2010, in Florence, S.C.

Born on March 25, 1931, in Elkhart, Ind., Mr. Hart was raised in New Orleans, La., and graduated from Florida Military Academy (high school) in St. Petersburg, Fla. He then returned to New Orleans, where he received a B.A. in journalism from Tulane University in 1950.

Mr. Hart was first called to serve in the Air Force, where he was posted to Korea as a personnel officer. After returning from Korea, he married his wife, Colleen, and the couple spent their first year of marriage on the Bloomington campus of Indiana University, where he earned a master's degree in political science and history, with a concentration in Chinese.

In 1956, Mr. Hart entered the Foreign Service and began a 28-year career in diplomacy. After serving in Washington, D.C., and Yokohama, Mr. Hart was transferred to Taichung, Taiwan, for language training and initiation as a China hand. He subsequently served in Taipei, Kathmandu, Hong Kong and Bangkok before ending his career as the counselor for political affairs in Beijing.

Following retirement in 1984, Mr. Hart and his wife moved to Sarasota, Fla. He continued his government service by occasionally traveling with USIA's Chinese visitors as a translator/guide.

Mr. Hart actively participated as a volunteer in the community, always concentrating on enhancing continu-

ing learning for seniors and improving living options for those less fortunate. He served as a longtime board member of the Sarasota Institute of Life Time Learning, the Jefferson Center, the Retired Foreign Service Association, and their condo association. He was also a member of the Church of the Palms.

Survivors include his wife of 55 years, Colleen, of Indiana; three children, Amy Hart Vrampas (and her husband, Cosmas) serving in Muscat, Scott Nelson Hart (and his wife, Leola) of Leicester, N.C., and Janmarie Hart Chatlosh (and her husband, Jeff) of Florence, S.C.; and six grandchildren, Jason and Justin Chatlosh, George and Alexandra Vrampas, and Brie and Zack Hart.



**William Keller Miller**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer and international civil servant, died on Jan. 1 at his home at the Jefferson Senior Independent Living Center in Arlington, Va.

Born in Lancaster, Pa., Mr. Miller moved to Springfield, Ill., as a child. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Haverford College in 1941 with honors in economics, and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1942.

He was attending the Fletcher School at the time of Pearl Harbor, and recalled that following the attack he and his classmates were brought in to talk to the dean, who told them that they could do more for the world by staying in school and finishing their degrees than by immediately enlisting. Upon graduation he served in the Army Air Corps from 1942 to 1943.

Mr. Miller joined the Department

of State in 1943, serving at posts in Calcutta and Bombay. He then returned to Washington, D.C., where he mostly worked on German affairs. He met his future wife, the former Margaret Lavin, at the State Department, then co-located with the Departments of War and Navy in what is now the Old Executive Office Building. They were married in 1947.

In 1951, Mr. Miller joined the Foreign Service. His diplomatic assignments included Helsinki (1957-1961); attendance at the NATO Defense College, then located in Paris (1961-1962); and Taipei (1962-1963).

This was followed by a lengthy stay in Washington, D.C., where he worked on international trade and economic negotiations, including the General Agreements on Tariff and Trade Balance of Payments Committee, the negotiation of changes to the Convention for Safety of Life at Sea following the *Yarmouth Castle* disaster, and negotiations for Fixed Satellites and Telecommunications Services. From 1971 to 1974, he was posted to Geneva, followed by a posting in London (1974-1978), where he served as the minister for economic and commercial affairs.

In 1978, Mr. Miller joined the International Sugar Organization in London as its executive director, serving in that capacity until 1986. Following his second retirement, he lived in Arlington, Va., where he enjoyed playing golf and watching sports on TV.

He was an avid fan of the Washington Senators and the Nationals, and attended numerous baseball games during his life at Griffith Stadium, RFK Stadium and Nationals Park. He was also a lifelong fan of the Pittsburgh Pirates, having been given a baseball signed by the entire team in the early 1930s when he was bedrid-

## IN MEMORY



den for six months with pneumonia.

Mr. Miller was predeceased by a son, William Keller Miller Jr., who died in 1995. He is survived by his wife, Margaret of Arlington, Va; three children, Michael Robert Miller of Missoula, Mont., Mary Margaret Miller (and her husband, Dennis Farley) of Washington, D.C., Elizabeth Barbara (Libby) Miller (and her husband, Jack Judd) of Missoula, Mont.; four grandchildren; and one great-grandson.



**Richard Bordeaux Parker**, 87, a retired FSO and Middle East expert who served as ambassador to Algeria, Lebanon and Morocco during the

1970s, died on Jan. 7 at the Grand Oaks retirement facility in Washington, D.C., of vascular disease.

Richard Parker was born in the Philippines of American parents (his father was an Army officer) in 1923. He was educated at public schools in various parts of the United States and became an engineering student at Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, now Kansas State University, in 1940. He enlisted in the Army at the end of his junior year, went to officer candidate school after basic training and was commissioned a second lieutenant of infantry in June 1944.

In December 1944, the division in which Mr. Parker commanded an antitank platoon was overwhelmed in

the Battle of the Bulge, and he was made a prisoner of war. Taken to a camp for American officers in western Poland, he was liberated by the Russians in 1945 and emerged via Odessa two months later. He remained in the Army until 1947, when he returned to Kansas State University, receiving a B.S. that year and an M.S. in citizenship education the following year.

He then worked for five months as executive secretary of the Kansas State Commission for UNESCO, a body established by Milton Eisenhower, who was then president of KSU and chairman of the United States National Commission for UNESCO, to promote cultural exchange and adult education in international affairs.

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## IN MEMORY



One or two other states formed such commissions, and in 1948 there was a lively grassroots exchange going on between them and various World Affairs Councils that were also springing up. In spite of an enthusiastic initial response in Kansas, however, the state commission idea did not gather momentum, and the organization folded a year or so after Mr. Parker left it in January 1949 to enter the Foreign Service.

During a 31-year Foreign Service career, Mr. Parker served in the entire gamut of consular and diplomatic jobs, from bottom to top, in assignments to Sydney, Jerusalem, Beirut, Amman, Cairo, Rabat and Algiers. He also served on various country desks in the Department of State for a total of eight years and spent one year as a mid-career fellow at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton (1964-1965).

Mr. Parker spent two years in Arabic language and area studies and was the first non-native speaker to attain a grade of 4/4 (meaning fluency in both the spoken and written language) in the test administered by the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute in 1961.

In 1975 Mr. Parker was appointed ambassador to Algeria by President Gerald Ford. He then served as ambassador to Lebanon (1977-1978) and to Morocco (1978-1979) during the Carter administration. His last government post was as faculty adviser at the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

In 1980 Ambassador Parker retired from the Foreign Service to accept the position of Diplomat-in-Residence at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where he spent two years

teaching courses in the modern diplomatic history of the Middle East. At the same time he became editor of the *Middle East Journal*, a peer-review journal dealing with the modern Middle East. In 1982 he returned to Washington and continued at the *Middle East Journal* until 1987.

In 1983 Amb. Parker served as consultant to the U.S. Businessmen's Commission on Reconstruction in Lebanon (headed by Lewis Preston of Morgan Bank). He took on added responsibility in 1986 for three years as founding president of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, an alumni organization devoted to improving the Foreign Service Institute and promoting the study of diplomatic history.

From 1989 to 1990 Amb. Parker was a fellow at the Smithsonian's Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, where he began work on a study of miscalculation in foreign affairs. The fruit of this year was his book *The Politics of Miscalculation in the Middle East* (Indiana University Press, 1993). *Choice*, the librarians' journal, picked it as an outstanding academic title of the year, saying: "This is the best book to deal with the diplomatic history of these three wars. It is written in clear, lucid and undiplomatic language. This is a great achievement."

In the fall of 1990, Amb. Parker was the John Adams Fulbright Fellow in London, speaking at 16 British universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, as well as on the BBC and in other public fora on the situation in the Middle East on the eve of the Gulf War. For the 1992-1993 academic year, he was the Stephen Scarff Distinguished Visiting Professor at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisc.,

teaching courses on the Middle East. And in the spring of 1994, he helped teach a graduate course on conflict resolution at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

In both 1992 and 1998, Amb. Parker organized and directed groundbreaking conferences on the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, grouping retired officials from all sides to discuss their versions of what led to those crises and how their governments reacted to them. The results were published by the University Press of Florida in two volumes: *The Six-Day War, a Retrospective* (1996) and *The October War, a Retrospective* (2001).

Meanwhile, Amb. Parker was organizing and raising money for a monument to Joel Barlow, his predecessor at Algiers 180 years before. That memorial was dedicated in 1998 in the graveyard at Zarnowiec, the Polish village where Barlow died in 1812 on his way back to Paris from an aborted meeting with Napoleon at Vilna. Amb. Parker also served briefly as interim president of the Middle East Institute and, again, as editor of the *Middle East Journal* in the mid-1990s.

Beginning in 1998, he concentrated on a study of U.S. relations with the states of North Africa during the period 1785 to 1830, producing a book titled *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History* (University Press of Florida, 2004). The work recounts America's first international hostage crisis, when North African pirates captured two American ships off the coast of Portugal in 1785. In 2004, the American Academy of Diplomacy awarded him the C. Douglas Dillon Prize for the year's best work on American diplomatic practice.

Amb. Parker was a prolific writer

## IN MEMORY



known for his great wit and the willingness to present his views with blunt honesty. His depth of expertise in Arab culture was reflected in numerous academic papers and articles on a wide variety of topics, including Lebanese proverbs and Arabic graffiti, as well as scores of book reviews.

An amateur photographer, Parker also took hundreds of photographs during his travels in the Middle East, and wrote two guidebooks — to Islamic monuments in Cairo (1974) and Morocco (1981) — the first of which is still in print. More than 650 prints and negatives of his work from Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon are part of the Smithsonian Institution's Asian art collection.

In 2004, Amb. Parker received the AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy. At the conclusion of a wide-ranging interview in the *Foreign Service Journal* that year, when asked if he recommended the Foreign Service to young people today, Parker stated, "I always tell them that I can't think of anything I would rather have done with my life than be in the Foreign Service. There was never a dull moment."

He was the recipient of many awards throughout his career: the Foreign Service Cup (1989), the Air Force Medal of Merit (1980), the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Cedars, Lebanon (1979) and the Department of State Superior Service

Award for his role in the rescue mission to Yemen (1967), to name a few.

Amb. Parker was a member of the Advisory Council on Near East Studies of Princeton University, the American Academy of Diplomacy, the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, the American Foreign Service Association, the Middle East Institute, the Cosmos Club and Delta Tau Delta.

Amb. Parker is survived by his wife of 66 years, Jeanne Jaccard Parker of Washington, D.C.; four children, Alison Kenway of Portland, Maine, Jeff Parker of Newton, Mass., Jill Parker of Arlington, Va., and Richard "Jack" Parker of Danvers, Mass.; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

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**Mary Kellogg Rice**, 100, wife of the late FSO Edward E. Rice, passed away in Tiburon, Calif., on Jan. 6.

Mrs. Rice was born on Dec. 1, 1910, in Milwaukee, Wisc., the daughter of Laura Nelson Kellogg and Frederick Wild Kellogg, a wholesale seed merchant. She studied art at Milwaukee State Teacher's College.

In 1935, during the depths of the Great Depression, when she was in her senior year in college, Mary Kellogg was asked to serve as art director for a handicraft project sponsored by the Works Progress Administration. The project engaged unemployed women in producing useful and well-designed goods for public institutions, such as dolls, fabrics, wall hangings and furniture. They also rebound

books for schools and libraries.

The project flourished, becoming a model for programs elsewhere. A half-century later, when modern-day politicians debated welfare reform, Mrs. Rice wrote a book about the project, *Useful Work for Unskilled Women: A Unique Milwaukee WPA Project*, which was published in 2003.

She married Edward E. Rice, also from Milwaukee and an FSO, in late 1942, when he was home on leave. The couple spent three months together in Washington, D.C., before Mr. Rice returned to China, where he had been posted since 1935. They were reunited when he returned to Washington in 1945, spending the next four years in the Bureau of Chinese Affairs at the department. Mrs.

Rice then accompanied her husband to Manila, Stuttgart and Hong Kong and Macau, with assignments in Washington, D.C., interspersed.

All during her work on the WPA project, Mrs. Rice had put aside her own art, weaving. At her first post, Manila, she thought she would finally get back to it, she recounted in an interview for the Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection. She took a demountable floor loom with her, but, as it happened, she became an independent consultant with the United Nations and the Philippine government to reconstruct the country's cottage weaving industry following World War II. As she told the interviewer, "It was a fascinating experience. I traveled around the Philip-

## Calling All Foreign Service Authors!

The October 2011 issue of the *Foreign Service Journal* will include a list of recently published books written by Foreign Service-affiliated authors.

FS authors whose books have been published in 2010 or 2011, and have not been featured in the roundup, are invited to send a copy of the book, along with a press release or backgrounder on the book and author to:

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2101 E Street, NW  
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## IN MEMORY



piners to assess what the needs were and tried to find some markets for local fabrics.”

Mr. Rice’s last posting was as diplomat-in-residence at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1969, the couple settled in Tiburon, where Mrs. Rice finally found time for her own art. She worked at weaving until back problems developed, and then experimented with a fabric-dyeing technique called shibori. She also collaborated on a book, *Shibori: The Inventive Art of Japanese Shaped Resist Dyeing*, that was published in Japan in 1983. It is considered a classic on the subject, and is still in print.

Friends recall Mrs. Rice’s intense, lifelong interest in public policy, particularly policy affecting women and children.

Her husband, Edward, predeceased her in 2006. She is survived by a niece, Catherine Siewert of San Francisco, Calif.



**R. Richard Rubottom Jr.**, 98, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on Dec. 6 in Austin, Texas.

Mr. Rubottom was born in Brownwood, Texas, in 1912. He earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from Southern Methodist University in 1932 and 1933, and went on to study Latin American relations at the University of Texas while employed as an assistant dean of students there.

In Austin he met and married Billy Ruth Young of Corsicana, Texas. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1941 and served in naval intelligence positions in Mexico and Paraguay, rising to the rank of commander during World War II before leaving the Navy.

Mr. Rubottom joined the Foreign

Service in 1946. During an 18-year career with the State Department, he concentrated on Latin American affairs. As a junior FSO he attended the first meeting of the Organization of American States in Bogota, and then served as the director of the economic mission in Madrid.

He returned to Washington, D.C., first as deputy, then as assistant secretary of State for inter-American affairs from 1956 to 1960. He served as ambassador to Argentina from 1960 to 1961, concluding his Foreign Service career as adviser to the Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

Ambassador Rubottom then embarked on a second career, returning to Southern Methodist University as

vice president for university life in 1964. He later served as administrative vice president and vice president for planning. In 1971, he moved to Mexico as president of the University of the Americas in Puebla, returning to SMU in 1973 as a professor of political science and scholar-in-residence. He was named professor emeritus in 1975.

After retirement from SMU, Ambassador Rubottom remained active in diplomacy and civic affairs. From 1985 to 1987, he served as director of the Dallas Office of International Affairs. He also served on the Texas Committee of the Campaign for SMU from 1997 to 2002. He was twice president of the Dallas Rotary Club, and served on



The screenshot shows the homepage of the U.S. Department of State Careers website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with three tabs: "LEARN", "WORK", and "ENGAGE", each preceded by a star icon. The main content area features the following text:

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The U.S. Department of State is proud to announce the official launch of its newly redesigned careers site, [careers.state.gov](http://careers.state.gov).

The intuitive site features a simple navigation, offering users three key entry points from which to choose: **Learn**, **Work** and **Engage**. Visitors to the site will discover an open environment in which to explore career options, ask career-related questions, and understand the various hiring processes. The new site features better access to our **Diplomats in Residence**, while the **Forums/Blogs** area encourages one-to-one interactions with Department employees.

In addition, [careers.state.gov](http://careers.state.gov) offers:

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At the bottom right, there is a circular seal of the U.S. Department of State and the text: "★ CAREERS REPRESENTING AMERICA ★" and "careers.state.gov".

## IN MEMORY



the national and international boards of the Boy Scouts of America. He was also a lay leader and member of the administrative board of the Highland Park United Methodist Church, serving as president in 1992, and served on the executive committee and educational foundation board of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.

Amb. Rubottom was preceded in death by his wife of 69 years, Billy Ruth. He is survived by his daughter Eleanor Odden (and her husband, Allan) of Madison, Wisc., his son Frank Ruchard Rubottom of Houston, Texas, and his son John William Rubottom (and his wife, Angie) of Austin, Texas; four grandchildren, and one greatgrandson.

**Margaret Joy Tibbetts**, 90, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on April 25, 2010, at the Governor King Community of The Highlands in Topsham, Maine.

Ms. Tibbetts was born on Aug. 26, 1919, in Bethel, Maine, to Pearl Ashby Tibbetts and Dr. Raymond R. Tibbetts. She was educated at the Gould Academy in Bethel, graduated from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill., in 1941, and earned an M.A. (1942) and a Ph.D. (1944) at Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, Pa.

She joined the Office of Strategic Services as a research analyst in 1944, moving to the State Department a year later to work in research and analysis until 1949, when she was assigned to

London as a political officer. She received her commission as a Foreign Service officer in 1951. After serving in Leopoldville as an economic officer and consul covering the Cameroons and French Equatorial Africa from 1954 to 1957, she returned to the department.

In 1958, she became the officer-in-charge for political-military affairs in the Office of European Regional Affairs, and a year later was detailed to the International Cooperation Administration, where she served until 1961. Ms. Tibbetts was then assigned to Brussels as chief of the political section. In 1963 she returned to the department to attend the Senior Seminar.

President Lyndon Johnson appoint-

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## IN MEMORY



ed Ms. Tibbetts U.S. ambassador to Norway in 1964. There she was the ranking FSO in charge of negotiations on military bases and atomic weapons agreements, serving until 1969. As ambassador, she also escorted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his family when he received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in 1964.

Amb. Tibbetts was made a career minister in 1969, and in 1971 received the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award. She retired from the Foreign Service in 1971, returning to Bethel to care for her elderly mother.

For the next 40 years of her life, Amb. Tibbetts maintained a dynamic commitment to the Bethel community, working with the Gould Academy, the

Bethel Library Association and as an officer and trustee of the Bethel Historical Society. She often wrote articles on the history of the region and was actively involved in the society's programs and exhibits.

In addition, she taught at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, and was awarded an Honoris Causa Doctor of Laws degree in 1973. Family members recall that she was an avid reader, and say she would wish to be remembered for that interest especially. She was well known for her deep interest and abilities in natural history, wildlife, bird watching, gardening and north-western Maine history.

Friends and family members also recall that Amb. Tibbetts was always

a Maine girl at heart with a keen sense of humor. She considered having been sprayed by a skunk and having burned a hole in the seat of her wool pants from sitting on her mother's wood-burning cook stove to have been honors equal to the others she had earned in her life.

Margaret Tibbetts is survived by a nephew, F. Barrie Freeman (and his wife, Lois), and a grandniece, Mary Tibbetts Freeman, all of West Bath, Maine; a nephew, James Ashby Freeman; and a grandnephew, Matthew Scott Freeman.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Bethel Library, the Bethel Historical Society or another Bethel charity. ■

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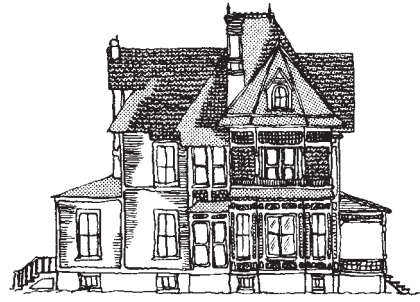
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Classified Ads / 56, 57, 58

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Federal Employee Defense Services / 12

George Mason Mortgage, LLC / 43

Hannon Law Group / 26

James E. Burgess, CPA / 43

Luxenberg, Johnson & Dickens, PC / 67

MCG Financial Planning / 65

Shaw, Bransford & Roth, P.C. / 71

State Department Federal Credit Union / 29

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AKA, Flexible Stay Hotel Residences / Inside Front Cover  
Accommodations 4 U / 26

Arlington Court Suites / 25

Attaché Property Management LLC / 71

CAS/Corporate Apartment Specialists / 20

Pied-à-Terre Properties, Ltd. / 67

Signature Properties, LLC / 39

Suite America / 39

### INSURANCE

AFSPA / 15

Clements International / 1

Hirshorn Company, The / 21

### MISCELLANEOUS

Barrie School, The / 65

Diplomatic Automobile Sales / Outside Back Cover

Extended Stay Housing Online / 75

Inside a U.S. Embassy – New Edition / 2, 14, 44

Social Media / 24

St. Mary's University / 15

TetraTech / 6

U.S. State Department Careers / 69

### REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Cabell Reid, LLC. / 75

Executive Housing Consultants, Inc. / 75

McEneaney Associates / 74

McGrath Real Estate Services / 74

Meyerson Group Inc., The / 72

ProMax Management Inc. / 72

Property Specialists, Inc. / 73

Stuart & Maury, Inc. / 72

Washington Management Services / 73

WJD Management / 73

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

AFSA Book Store and State Department Reading List / 75

AFSA Scholarship Fund / Inside Back Cover

Change of Address / 8

Foreign Affairs Day / 4

Foreign Service Authors / 68

FSJ Editorial Board / 70

Fund for American Diplomacy / 16

Marketplace / 11

### AFSA ELECTIONS

21st Century AFSA Slate / 46

F. Allen "Tex" Harris / 45

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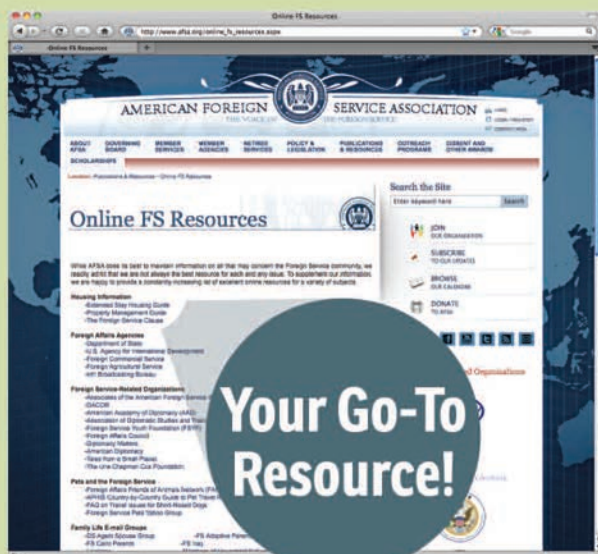
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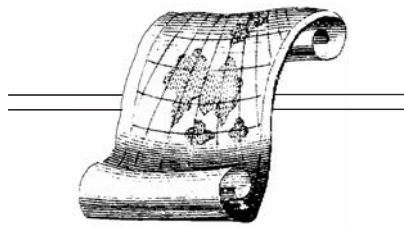
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# REFLECTIONS

## *The Lights*

BY LEE-ALISON SIBLEY

**M**y grandfather is rolling over in his grave! An Orthodox Jew, he wouldn't even pick up a coin on the Sabbath, much less use electricity. On Yom Kippur he prayed and prayed, and made sure all nine children did, as well, both in the synagogue and at home. But my situation is different, requiring creativity, forgiveness and acceptance — for my husband, George, is in Iraq and I am not.

He is in a trailer, and I'm in our home in Great Falls, Va. From those two distant points we try to come together to share and to find meaning that bridges the miles. Welcome to Skype! With it I can see his face, hear his voice, feel connected to him.

Each Yom Kippur we have had a tradition of lighting the *yahrzeit* candles to honor our dead parents. My father and mother did it this exact same way, lighting candles not on the anniversary of their parents' death, but on Yom Kippur. We've carried this forward into our generation and wherever we have been in the world, we've lit the candles and said what we needed to say about the year that passed and the year to come.

Until this year, the most memorable lighting for me took place in 1992 — the year we went to Tibet with our boys, Ben and Gabe, and a whole group from the U.S. embassy. While in Lhasa, the capital, we visited the holiest of holies for Tibetan Buddhists, the Jokhond Temple. In that sacred place, we were given permission to light our candles and place them on the altar with hun-

*In that moment,  
we were together,  
watching the lights,  
feeling love and  
the sadness of  
being apart.*



dreds of prayer scarves left by visitors and the statues and candles representing Tibetan Buddhism.

At the time, we only needed two candles, one for my father and one for my father-in-law — both gone the same year, 1989. I remember our commenting as we lit the candles how much our fathers would have gotten a kick out of this, for they were both very adventurous and accepting.

Indeed, leaving the lights for our fathers in the Jokhond meant that in the farthest reaches of the world, we remembered them, and honored them, and showed our sons the importance of the tradition. I remember feeling that my heart was so full it might burst as the tears rolled down my face.

Fast-forward to 2010 — 5777 in the Jewish calendar. My husband is gone, but we haven't lost touch. I got the *yahrzeit* candles ready — they now number four, including one for my mother and one for my American Field Service "sister," Noelle.

And then George was on Skype and I saw him, feeling his presence even though he was thousands of miles away. We talked for a while, as I sat at my desk in the office, and we waited until the sun went down and the earth turned.

I don't remember who came up with the idea to bring the computer to the great room where the candles waited. Nor do I remember who said to aim the camera so as to see the lighting. I put the computer on the coffee table and moved the lamps into George's view. I lit them, and we saw each flame come to life on the little screen!

Then it was time for sharing thoughts. George asked for my forgiveness for going to Iraq, saying that if it hurt me, he was sorry and loved me very much. I told him that I knew his leaving did not reflect how he felt about me, but rather his sense of duty.

See, sweetie, I *do* understand. It isn't a question of forgiveness; it is a question of acceptance. In that moment, we were together, watching the lights, feeling love and the sadness of being apart, but also the hopefulness that next year — not in Jerusalem, but in Great Falls — we would be together again, lighting the *yahrzeit* lamps.

God bless technology! ■

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*Lee-Alison Sibley is the author of Jordan's Jewish Drama Queen (BookSurge Publishing, 2009). Her FSO husband, George, is currently the senior adviser to Northern Iraq based out of Kirkuk.*



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