THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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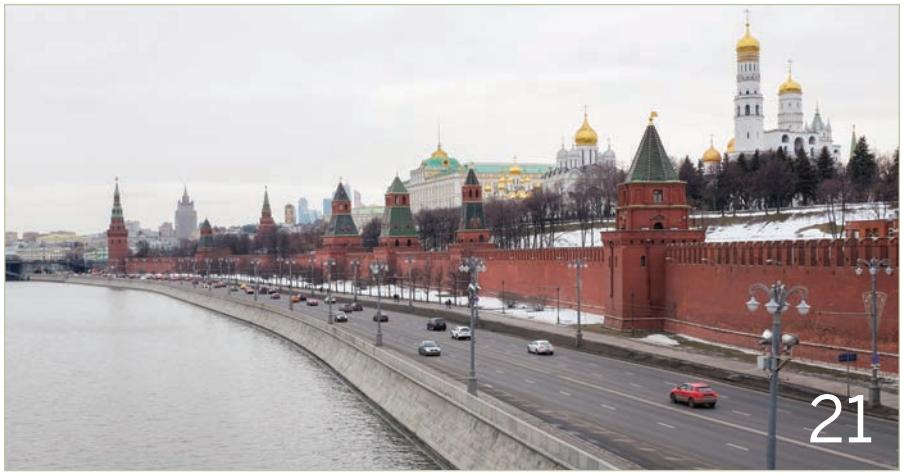
Focus On Russia



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THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE ASSOCIATION

On the Cover: A view of the Kremlin and St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow. In the foreground, a Russian national flag and flowers at the place of death of Boris Nemtsov, well-known Russian opposition leader, who was killed on this bridge on Feb. 27, 2015. Cover photo and several others inside this issue are by Arthur Bondar. Born in Ukraine, this award-winning photographer studied at New York University. The recipient of a National Geographic Grant (2011), his work has been widely exhibited worldwide and published in *The New Yorker, The New York Times*, and elsewhere.

Cultivating Strong Leadership

BY BARBARA STEPHENSON

I have written before in this column about AFSA's new effort to engage our members through "structured conversations" so that we can build our advocacy agenda based on a nuanced understanding of members' aspirations and concerns.

Those conversations are ongoing—I met over lunch last week with two small groups from USAID, and by the time you read this, I will have rounded out a series of lunches with specialist cadres.

In the meantime, AFSA's new Professional Policy Issues unit reviewed all the feedback received in the first round of structured conversations with the largest group of AFSA members, namely active-duty, mid-level State Department FSOs.

One theme that emerged clearly is the importance of leadership. We heard how much members value strong, effective leadership. We also heard how much "toxic leadership"—a phrase used more than once—costs members in terms of commitment, engagement and productivity. And we heard a strong desire from mid-level officers for opportunities to learn how to develop into good leaders and managers themselves.

This is, in my view, a big deal, a potential "tipping point" moment for the State Department. State FSOs have long valued policy prowess and the ability to write well—think of the reverence for George Kennan's "Long Telegram." But a cultural change has been taking place at State, and increasingly members of the Foreign Service place a high priority on leadership and management excellence, in themselves and in others.

Here I must tip my hat to the Foreign Service Institute for its instrumental role in bringing about this change. As Ruth Davis fans will know from her September *FSJ* interview on being named winner of AFSA's Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy award this year, one of her proudest achievements was helping stand up the Leadership and Management School at FSI in 2001.

It's not simply that, as a former dean of LMS, I'm a cheerleader for leadership training—which, of course, I am. The point is this: On the basis of the structured conversations we've held, I can faithfully report that, far from resenting or resisting leadership training (which may be how members of my generation and before recall prevailing attitudes), many of today's mid-level FSOs place great value on FSI's leadership and management training—and they want more of it.

Some members note that, with mid-ranks fully staffed for the first time in decades, the Foreign Service is now in a position to expand training opportunities.

One sign of the cultural change taking place at State is the first-ever Leadership Day, scheduled for Dec. 13 in the Dean Acheson Auditorium. At the request of AFSA's new—and admittedly nascent—working group on leadership excellence, chaired by a Governing Board member active in the Culture of Leadership Initiative (iLead), I promised to give the event a plug in my column and urge members to participate.

For more information about Leadership Day and the work of iLead, a voluntary group of employees dedicated to improving leadership throughout the State Department, go to www.afsa.org/leadership.

AFSA recognizes the priority members place on fostering strong leadership and management in the Foreign Service. While bearing in mind the need to respect lanes and the important work others are doing, AFSA would like to do our part to champion leadership excellence.

We are weighing options for doing just that, such as bringing in speakers to feed the conversation and perhaps spark related submissions to the *FSJ*. Another proposal is to use an online video conferencing service to host a conversation in early 2017 with members currently stationed abroad to bring them into the discussion and point them to resources they can use to launch leadership groups at their posts.

As we develop an action plan at AFSA for doing our part to cultivate leadership excellence, I encourage you to develop your own action plan. Participate in Leadership Day, answer iLead's call to share stories of your success improving leadership where you work, and let us know your ideas. ■

Ambassador Barbara Stephenson is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

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Understanding Today's Russia

BY SHAWN DORMAN

Russia in Syria, Russia "hacking" the U.S. election, Russia in Ukraine. Vladimir Putin looms large.

Twenty-five years after the fall of the USSR, with an incoming U.S. administration considering new directions in U.S.-Russian relations, it's time to talk to the diplomats and experts who have worked this relationship and can offer perspective for today's policymakers.

Five years ago the *Journal* looked back at how diplomats on the ground understood the Soviet Union during the run-up to its dissolution (December 2011 *FSJ*). Here we take a close at Russia today and examine the impact of the past quarter-century on the U.S.-Russia relationship.

The focus begins with retired FSO Ray Smith, author of the July 1990 Embassy Moscow cable, "Looking into the Abyss: The Possible Collapse of the Soviet Union and What We Should Be Doing About It," that foretold the developments that would take the world and most of Washington by surprise more than a year later.

In "Understanding Russian Foreign Policy Today," Smith argues that the way forward is for Washington and Moscow to consider and accept as valid the other's national interests. While Putin's Russia will continue to be assertive, he says, it is not inherently predatory and not all our interests collide. A "normal" relationship with Russia is possible and worth pursuing.

Retired FSO Louis Sell, in "The Rise of the New Russia," argues that we need to understand how Russians view the collapse of the USSR and its aftermath. High expectations followed by missed opportunities and humiliation help explain why Putin and his brand of nationalist politics is popular with Russians.

With a pitch for prioritizing economic and commercial diplomacy with Russia and the other former Soviet states, Foreign Commercial Service Officer Michael Lally surveys the economic scene in "Something Happened on the Way to the Market."

And in "Four Centuries and Three Decades of Russian Thinking," former contractor for Embassy Moscow and the INF treaty inspection facility in Votkinsk Justin Lifflander presents themes in Russian thinking today, and their origins, gleaned from living in Russia during the past 30 years.

No conversation about Russia today is complete without mention of Ukraine. In "There's No Going Back," William Gleason lays out the challenges for Ukraine: a corrupt economy, uncertainty about Western support and finally, Vladimir Putin, who does not appear to accept the existence of an independent Ukrainian state.

In "Communications Behind the Iron Curtain," retired Senior FSO Tim Lawson takes us back to 1991 for the dramatic story of the work of the Diplomatic Telecommunications Service during the last days of the USSR.

Finally, in a piece for the history books, we bring you "Groundbreaking Diplomacy: An Interview with George Shultz." In an unpublished October 2015 conversation with Ambassador (ret.) Jim Goodby, the former Secretary of State offers valuable diplomacy lessons.

Remembered as one of our best Secretaries of State—one who trusted and utilized the career Foreign Service—George Shultz shares how he was able to advance and support President Ronald Reagan's vision and manage difficult but successful arms control negotiations with the Soviets.

We have a fantastic book review section this month featuring Ambassador (ret.) Jack Matlock on the new book by Mikhail Gorbachev, *After the Kremlin* (the Russian title). This extended review offers a clear-eyed look at why Gorbachev felt betrayed not only by his successor Boris Yeltsin but by Western leaders, as well.

FSO Eric Green, director of State's Russia Office, reviews *The Invention of Russia: From Gorbachev's Freedom to Putin's War* by Arkady Ostrovsky and Charles Clover's *Black Wind, White Snow: The Rise of Russia's New Nationalism*, two of the many recent works that plumb the last 25 years in Russia. And in "Reading Russia" we share a guide to some recent Russia book roundups and recommendations.

Looking ahead to next month's double issue, we will offer "Notes to the New Administration" including input and suggestions from dozens of Foreign Service members on the critical role of diplomacy today. ■

Shawn Dorman is the editor of The Foreign Service Journal.

The Air We Breathe

Both articles on air pollution in the October issue of *The Foreign Service Journal* really hit home. I am a retired FSO and served with my family in two posts where we were exposed to high levels of environmental pollutants (Ankara and Sofia). I also served in Helsinki, where many of us lived in homes with documented high levels of radon.

I was diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) two years ago, and a recent scan indicates that the disease is progressing. IPF is an ultimately fatal disease; "idiopathic" means there is no way of knowing exactly what caused it.

In my case, environmental pollutants would be a good guess, because X-rays and scans show particulate matter scattered throughout my lungs. Coincidentally, I live close to another FSO who also served in Ankara and has also been diagnosed with IPF. Clearly, we both wish these articles had been written 30 years ago.

In "Living with Air Pollution," Nicole Schaefer-McDaniel made a number of good suggestions on how to reduce the dangers of air pollution and provided some great air pollution resources.

Unfortunately, the State Department's Air Pollution Working Group seems to have overlooked gathering health data from Foreign Service retirees. That's surprising, because many medical conditions (like IPF) take years to develop.

AFSA members and their families deserve to know the medical conditions, if any, our retirees and their families are facing at a significantly higher rate than the rest of the U.S. population. If State is unwilling to conduct a retiree medical survey, maybe AFSA should consider doing it.

Outside of my immediate family, I have not talked about my IPF diagnosis publicly. But the threat of air pollution to the health of Foreign Service families is just too great for me to remain silent. My apologies to Foreign Service friends who are hearing about this for the first time here.

Bill Burke
FSO, retired
Williamsburg, Virginia

Involuntary Separation Revisited

I write in reference to the letter in the October *Journal* by Mr. Nicholas Stigliani, "Life After the FS: No Regrets," that mentioned me ad hominem.

I've never met Mr. Stigliani, and he did not contact me before sending his letter. There is no indication that he knows or has ever researched anything about the facts of my and others' involuntary-retirement cases.

That Mr. Stigliani is content with having been involuntarily separated from the Service is great, and I wish him well. But for him to go beyond to lecture me and others involuntarily retired to "get over it" is excessive.

As I and many others recognize, the policy of up-or-out is problematical because it is susceptible to too many other factors unrelated to performance. These include such things as budget strictures limiting promotion numbers; legal pressures and policy choices related to gender, minority and diversity preferences; and arbitrary conal-designations and other decisions.

The upshot is that by forcing out numbers of otherwise fully qualified people, up-or-out can and does collide with merit principles that are supposed to govern the Foreign Service.

I do agree emphatically with Mr. Stigliani's statement, "My Foreign Service experience was overwhelmingly interesting, positive and beneficial. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

I make that same point strongly in talks I give about the Service as a member of AFSA's Speakers Bureau. But I also point out some of the challenges and perils of a Foreign Service career, including but not limited to up-or-out.

D. Thomas Longo Jr.
FS-1, retired
Lawrenceburg, Indiana

The Wende Museum

I would like to acquaint Foreign Service colleagues with the Wende Museum in Los Angeles, which has become the foremost repository in the United States, and perhaps the world, for art and artifacts from the countries of the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War.

The founder of the museum, Justinian Jampol, was originally focused on the German Democratic Republic (hence the name). But the museum has since expanded to cover the Soviet Union and all the countries of the Warsaw Pact in the post–World War II period.

In 2014, the German Taschen Verlag published a 10-pound coffee-table book with 2,500 images of GDR art and artifacts from the Wende collection (*Beyond the Wall: Jenseits der Mauer* by Justinian Jampol). A similar volume is in preparation on their Hungarian collection.

The museum also has amazing collections of Soviet, Czech, Polish, Romanian and other socialist realist art and

artifacts from the Cold War period.

I would encourage colleagues who served in Warsaw Pact countries to consider donating any interesting items they may have. Besides socialist realist art, the museum is interested in everyday objects that typified life under the socialist regimes of the period.

Many of us who served in these countries may have items in our basements that will be lost to history unless properly bequeathed. The Wende Museum offers permanent credit and recognition for all donations, plus possible tax deduction benefits for more valuable items.

I encourage colleagues to visit www.wendemuseum.org for more information. At present, most of the collections can only be viewed on a rotating basis, but in the fall of 2017 the museum is scheduled to move into the former armory of Culver City, California, where it will function as a full-fledged museum open to the public on a daily basis.

This is a serious, world-class museum dealing with a time and place that many of us experienced firsthand in our careers and that should for many reasons be remembered by future generations.

Rudolf Perina
Ambassador, retired
Vienna, Virginia

Thanks, AFSA!

Thank you, AFSA, for the welcoming happy hour you hosted on Oct. 20, where I had the pleasure of meeting colleagues from different cones and agencies.

I want to let you know that *The Foreign Service Journal* was a very valuable tool for me as a young officer in understanding and internalizing the Foreign Service as a career. The magazine not

only highlights our legacy as diplomats, but also highlights the issues relevant to the lives we live and the work we do.

An added plus is seeing an A-100 colleague in a photo, or when your ambassador writes about the highlight of your first tour, as was the case with the article, "Over the Finish Line: Winning Strategies for a Successful Visit," by Ambassador to Vietnam Ted Osius.

I look forward to receiving each issue, tearing into it during my downtime and spreading back issues on my coffee table to be glanced at by curious guests. With each article, I sense the esprit de corps and know I've made the best decision in choosing a profession.

Thank you for all that you do.

Cameron Thomas-Shah
FSO
Arlington, Virginia

Support for FS Kids with Special Needs

More than 20 years ago I became a lifetime member of AFSA because of its policy of giving voice to issues affecting all aspects of Foreign Service, looking out both for the U.S. government and also its employees.

With "MED's Child and Family Program, Explained" (September), the *FSJ* has once again revealed the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of the challenges we face in coming to terms with a more diverse workforce, one which includes parents with special needs children.

Having worked closely with MED for well over a decade now on my own child's special needs, I have experienced a large range of the services the bureau offers. At one point, MED was a—if not *the*—primary source of support to my family as we addressed overseas schooling and medical needs for our child. It was a truly collaborative

process in which we all felt a responsibility both to my child and to the U.S. government.

Unfortunately, this is no longer the case, and the change dates from the creation of the Child and Family Program. The *Journal* article notes that several factors contributed to establishment of the new program. Notably, providing improved support to special needs children and their families was not listed as a reason for the change. This is consistent with what we now experience.

The need for a more "uniform code of practice" has led to a "lowest common denominator" approach, where services approved in the past are no longer being approved in spite of extensive medical documentation and their inclusion in the Individual Education Plan—the two requirements for approval.

The article notes that "a number of endeavors" are underway, aimed at "improving oversight, consistency and accountability of the educational allowance." Regrettably, once again, improving the education of our children—fulfilling the original purpose of the education allowance—is not mentioned.

The article's statement that the education allowances are designed to "assist in defraying those costs necessary to obtain educational services that are ordinarily provided free of charge by public schools in the United States" is a subtle, but significant, alteration of the original wording, which states that the education allowances are meant to assist employees in meeting those costs. It is clearly costs, and not the educational needs of our children, that are driving this process.

As the article notes, the Department of State Standardized Regulations requires an IEP that "delineates which educational services are required." However, having a service listed in a child's IEP no longer means that CFP will actually authorize that service.

Without consulting the school or medical provider who developed the IEP, the CFP is now making unilateral decisions on which services listed in the IEP they deem "necessary" and, thus, covered. CFP professionals, sitting in Washington, are overriding recommendations made by the educational experts who work with the special needs child on a daily basis.

Someday we will realize how shortsighted and harmful these policies have been. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is the U.S. law that provides funding for "specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of the child with a disability." This is the standard the Special Needs Education Allowance was intended to meet.

Under CFP, instead of a case manager who actually knew my child as an individual and helped the overseas school and our family meet his educational needs, I have had several staff members repeat exhaustive reviews of my child's eligibility criteria. Each time it has been an onerous and laborious process to turn around summary judgments intended to deny necessary services he has received for years that are clearly justified in his IEP.

These are not just growing pains. These are direct consequences of a policy where cost control and standardization are no longer important factors alongside individual needs—they have become the overwhelming factors in SNEA decision-making.

CFP needs to swing the pendulum more toward the center and once again make this a truly consultative process with parents and overseas educational providers, treating each child as an individual who has a purpose and future in this life. For this, they need an education of their own. ■

Name withheld upon request.

TALKING POINTS

Time for a New "Long Telegram" on Russia

Management of the strained relationship with Russia will be at the top of the new administration's foreign policy to-do list.

Prominent Russia experts Thomas E. Graham—a former FSO and former National Security Council senior director for Russia, now with Kissinger Associates and Yale University—and Matthew Rojansky—director of the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute and former deputy director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—have put forth cogent suggestions on how to proceed.

Graham's "The Sources of Russian Conduct," published in August by *The National Interest*, is a call for a new way to approach dealing with Russia. He presents a detailed analysis of Moscow's predicament today and the changed global context for U.S.-Russian relations.

Graham urges policymakers to abandon the "failed tropes of the past"—namely, the tendency to view Russia through the lens of Vladimir Putin, who is variously painted as a cartoonish villain or an ally-in-waiting.

Washington must let go of the post-Cold War assumption that Russia would be integrated into the West, Graham says. But he also reminds us that Russia is not the Soviet Union: It plays a lesser role, and U.S.-Russia relations will no longer define the multipolar international system.

Graham argues for creating a "sustainable balance of power that advances American interests by promoting peace and security, and fostering collaboration among geopolitical rivals in addressing global transnational threats."

In a second article, "America's Russia Policy Has Failed," co-authored by Graham and Rojansky and published in *Foreign Policy* on Oct. 13, the authors note that attempting to isolate Moscow diplomatically and economically through sanctions has not worked: "Moscow has succeeded in challenging a wide range of American interests, most notably in Ukraine, Syria and cyberspace."

Graham and Rojansky offer the new U.S. administration seven recommendations for dealing with Russia "as it really is," while aiming to construct a "web of interactions, both cooperative and competitive, that yields the most beneficial balance for our national interests."

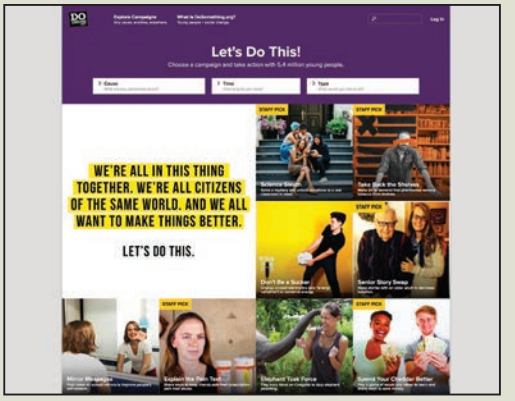
Here are their recommendations:

Understand That It's Not Just About Putin. Problems with Russia are geopolitical, and the tendency of recent U.S. administrations to treat them instead as tied to the personal political leadership of Vladimir Putin ignores history and is not productive.

Stop Ukraine from Becoming a Frozen Conflict. The United States should encourage adherence to the Minsk II peace deal signed by Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany in 2015. While flawed, the deal provides a legal and political commit-

SITE OF THE MONTH: www.dosomething.org/us

DoSomething.org is a nonprofit organization with the goal of motivating young people to encourage social change through national campaigns and grants for projects that have an impact.



The organization has members signed up in every area code in the United States, as well as in 131 countries around the world. The website allows young people looking to make a difference to select from a number of causes from, for example, animal welfare to homelessness and health care.

Visitors can also select the type of help they feel able to give, from face-to-face interactions with those in need of assistance to starting a group or activity in the local area, or simply donating money to organizations that already exist.

In addition to providing a platform for young people to get together and effect social change, DoSomething.org also offers a number of scholarships for completing community service or engaging in one or more of their campaigns.

To apply for the scholarships, applicants must sign up on the website, select one of the campaigns listed on the "Easy Scholarships" page, complete it and upload a photo to prove their participation.

Information about the scholarships available and eligibility to apply can be found at www.dosomething.org/us/about/easy-scholarships.

—Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor

ment to ending the conflict along with a military de-escalation on the ground.

Have an Honest Talk About Europe. U.S. policy should aim to insulate European allies against Russian action in the short term, while laying the groundwork for a stronger European security framework.

Push for More Arms Control.

Work with Russia in Asia. Pursue flexible coalitions with major powers in the region, including Russia, to balance China's growing influence for the benefit of Washington.

Recognize That Syria Is About More Than Syria. The Syrian crisis is urgent. The United States must try to work with Russia, and must be willing to discuss the broader relationship with Russia, especially as it relates to Europe.

Show America's Promise. The U.S. administration needs to tackle domestic and global challenges in a way that shows that the United States can lead by example.

—Shawn Dorman, Editor

Landmark Climate Change Deal Reached in Kigali

On Oct. 15, more than 170 countries —including the United States— agreed to a landmark deal in Kigali, Rwanda, to counter climate change.

An amendment to the Montreal Protocol, the new agreement will limit hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions, commonly from air conditioners and refrigerators.

Thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide and, according to the United Nations Environment Program, the fastest growing greenhouse gas, HFCs are especially threatening to the environment.

Under the terms of the agreement, developed countries vowed to stop production of HFCs by 2019; and more than 100 developing countries (including Brazil and China, the world's largest producer of carbon dioxide) agreed to peak HFC levels by 2024, which could prevent up to .9 degrees Fahrenheit of global warming by the end of this century.

The Kigali agreement was reached only days after ratification of the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit the temperature increase and improve countries' capabilities to deal with climate change.

Despite the small physical amount of HFCs in the atmosphere, the deal is expected to reduce greenhouse gases by the equivalent of 70 billion tons of carbon dioxide.

There was some pushback from countries that would benefit substantially from increased access to air conditioning, including India, Pakistan and some Gulf states.

Claire Perry of the Environmental Investigation Agency acknowledged that some compromises had to be made. "But 85 percent of developing countries have committed to the early schedule starting in 2024," she continued, "which is a very significant achievement."

—Katherine Perroots, Editorial Intern

U.S. Abstains from Cuba Embargo Vote

For the first time ever, the United States abstained from voting on a United Nations resolution calling for an end to its economic embargo of Cuba on Oct. 26.

The resolution, titled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba," has been put forward annually since 1992. And Washington has opposed it every time.

President Barack Obama announced the restoration of diplomatic relations

Contemporary Quote

"Germany's ties with the United States of America are deeper than with any country outside of the European Union. Germany and America are bound by common values—democracy, freedom, as well as respect for the rule of law and the dignity of each and every person, regardless of their origin, skin color, creed, gender, sexual orientation or political views. It is based on these values that I wish to offer close cooperation, both with me personally and between our countries' governments."

—German Chancellor Angela Merkel, speaking to reporters about the U.S. election results at a press conference in Berlin, Nov. 9.

in December 2014. Earlier this year, the United States reopened its embassy in Havana.

Republicans in Congress have opposed Pres. Obama's calls for lifting the Cuban embargo, arguing that the United States has made too many concessions to Cuba in exchange for too little in return, especially on human rights matters.

Although it is only a symbolic move, Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez described the abstention as a "positive step for the future of improving relations between the United States and Cuba."

—Katherine Perroots, Editorial Intern

Pay Parity in Federal Jobs

According to a *Washington Post* analysis of federal workers, since 2004, the percentage of women in clerical jobs has dropped by 9.9 percent, while the number of women in "professional" jobs has risen by 7.2 percent.

Women also account for a growing portion of federal workers with advanced degrees (a 20.5-percent increase from 2004).

For jobs in engineering, technology and science, women enjoy near pay parity with their male counterparts. However, women hold one third (or fewer) of the jobs in those fields.

Across all jobs, the longer a woman has worked for the federal government, the less likely she is to see pay parity with male colleagues in the same job. Women who have worked for more than 30 years see a very significant pay gap with men with the same education and job type.

A woman's overall likelihood of earning more than a man also depends on which agency she works in. If men and women were evenly distributed among federal jobs and pay ranges, it would be expected that women would make more than men about half the time (i.e., they would have a 50-percent chance of earning more than a man in the same job with the same qualifications).

However, for the Department of State, there is only a 40.2-percent chance that a woman will be earning more than a man in the same job with the same level of education.

The Department of Homeland Security is the closest to achieving parity, as women working for DHS have a 47.5-percent chance of being paid more than a man with the same qualifications.

At the bottom of the list, a woman working for the Department of the Air Force is only 34 percent more likely to be earning more than her male counterparts.

—Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor

President Obama Guest Edits *Wired* Magazine

Wired, a monthly magazine which focuses on emerging technologies and their effects on culture, politics and the economy, invited President Barack Obama to guest edit their November 2016 edition.

Centering this issue on "Frontiers," Pres. Obama discussed the changes in the world since he graduated from college in 1983 and how those, mostly positive changes have been achieved.

Obama notes: "This kind of progress hasn't happened on its own. It happened because people organized and voted for better prospects; because leaders enacted smart, forward-looking policies; because people's perspectives opened up, and with them, societies did too."

The U.S. president also noted that there are still many challenges to be met, from terrorism to climate change; and the only way to combat this "new threat set" is to work together to solve problems that transcend national boundaries.

"That's how we will overcome the challenges we face," Obama said, "by unleashing the power of all of us for all of us."

—Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor

Wonder Woman Named Honorary U.N. Ambassador

In October, the DC Comics character Wonder Woman was named honorary United Nations ambassador for the empowerment of women and girls. But, coming on the heels of a failed attempt to elect the first female secretary-general of the United Nations, many feminists

are angry that a cartoon figure has been selected to represent women's issues.

Anne Marie Goetz, a professor of global affairs at New York University and a former adviser on peace and security issues to the agency U.N. Women, said that election of the character as a representative for women is "frivolous, it's fatuous and it reduces an extremely serious human rights problem experienced by half of the world to a cartoon."

Maher Nasser, the U.N. official who brokered the appointment, says the U.N. was aware of concerns about the appropriateness of Wonder Woman as a representative for women and girls, particularly with regard to her iconic but skimpy costume.

But Mr. Nasser defended the decision, saying, "The focus [of the U.N.] was on her feminist background, being the first female superhero in a world of male superheroes, and that basically she always fought for fairness, justice and peace."

The U.N. is not the first to use a cartoon character as an ambassador. In 2008, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura commissioned an anime cat named Doraemon as an "anime ambassador" with a mission to deepen people's understanding of Japan. The character had films screened at Japanese diplomatic missions in China, Singapore, France and Spain. ■

—Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor

50 Years Ago

Questions for the Foreign Service

We [the association] have a very genuine role to fill in seeking to promote our professional competence as individuals and as a Service, and our welfare. The *Journal*, I think, carries a very important role, particularly in promoting our professional competence.

The *Journal* has moved from being a house organ ... in the direction of an organ of opinion in which exchanges of views can be aired. I think there is a real role for the *Journal* to fulfill—a role not only of exhortation but a role of debate. ... I would look to the *Journal* moving more and more toward a professional organ of debate as between professionals. ...

Going back to our role as an association, there is a real role for active members of the association to fill in encouraging and developing our professional competence so that we can better serve the future and meet the challenges that face us.

Those challenges are going to be very, very great indeed, and all of you who have the opportunity be associated with meeting them are going to have a very satisfying time.

—Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson speaking to AFSA Oct. 27, 1966, on passing on the AFSA presidency, excerpted from the December 1966 FSJ.

Why USAID's New Approach to Development Assistance Is Stalled

BY THOMAS DICHTER

A black Chrysler pulls out of the gate of the U.S. embassy compound in Rabat followed by a security detail in an SUV. My Moroccan colleague and I are walking down a public sidewalk when a city policeman holds up his hand and signals us to stop while the two cars pass. After they do, we start walking again, but the policeman waves us away.

"I'm sorry, but you cannot go this way," he says.

"Why not?" we ask. He replies that the U.S. embassy does not allow walking on the part of the street that faces the embassy gate.

"Bledna! *(This is our country!),"* my Moroccan colleague shouts. *But the policeman has his orders. He smiles apologetically and waves us to another street.*

During the course of an independent study financed indirectly by the U.S. Agency for International Development that took me and my colleagues to 14 USAID offices on three continents—with all but three offices now located inside the U.S. embassy grounds—it became clear how insulated agency staff have become from the countries in which they work. And this is the case at a time when USAID is ostensibly committed to working more directly with local organizations (and so beginning the long-delayed process of "working ourselves out of a job").

Under former Administrator Rajiv Shah's USAID "Forward" reform program, the agency set a goal of 30 percent of its resources going to local organizations by 2015, including local governments, civil society and firms in the private sector. That goal was not met, and USAID now refers to it as merely "aspirational."

Besides the intention to redirect the flow of money, the core of the Forward agenda was a commitment to what was called "local solutions" (now called localworks) aimed at the establishment of "close, personal working relationships" with local governments, civil society and the private sector. That commitment has gained very little traction, despite the good intentions.

USAID's growing isolation from the countries it seeks to help leads to frustration on the part of many of its best people, as well as engendering some disdain for the "locals" who are less and less understood. USAID needs to examine in depth the various causes of this counterproductive trend. In the following discussion of highlights from our findings, I outline the problems and present some possible solutions.

Isolation and Frustration

In the overseas missions we visited, with rare exception, USAID's American personnel formed very few meaningful local relationships and tended to be uninformed or misinformed about local organizations and trends. Outside key government ministries and well known capital city–based organizations, they had limited knowledge of who was who, or what was going on in the rural areas—not to mention an understanding of the nuances of culture and social structure, and the ways in which these affect the country's political economy.

Moving from post to post every three or four years, USAID's American personnel tend to make assumptions based on past reports, talking with colleagues in other aid agencies or interacting with a few "usual suspects" in the capital cities. Enthusiastic and bright new staff often talked to us about their frustration.

Typical was this lament from a young

Tom Dichter's career in international development spans 50 years of life and work in more than 60 developing countries. A Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco in the early 1960s and, much later, a Peace Corps country director in Yemen, he was vice president of TechnoServe, a program officer at the Aga Khan Foundation in Geneva, a researcher on development issues for the Hudson Institute and a consultant for many international agencies, including the United Nations Development Program, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, USAID, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, as well as for the Austrian and Philippine governments. He is the author of Despite Good Intentions: Why Development Assistance to the Third World Has Failed *(University of Massachusetts Press, 2003) and co-editor of* What's Wrong with Microfinance? *(Practical Action Press, 2007).*

staffer on her first overseas posting: "I got out more in the beginning, but it's very hard to do. I'm being asked to support an approach with partners, but don't know really what's going on out there and who they are. You're always led by other imperatives."

Also typical is the complaint by a young USAID officer who had spent four years in Zambia and was then posted to a French-speaking country, without any knowledge of the language. Though he is taking weekly courses at USAID's expense, he said: "By the time I'll be able to communicate with someone in this country, I'll be ready to leave."

The isolation of USAID personnel has an effect on those with whom the agency would like to establish close working relationships. "Why bother?" they ask themselves. As an Asian government health official who works with USAID projects told us: "I'm getting tired of having to educate anew each new USAID health officer who comes in every two or three years. We don't get anywhere because we always need to start from scratch."

In our conversations with more than 70 USAID staff in overseas missions, we detected an underlying patronizing attitude. Use of the term "the locals" is common; and after a year at post, some staff begin to cast their hosts in terms of two-dimensional stereotypes that tend toward a dismissive throwing up of one's hands, if not contempt. There is frustration at the difficulty in convincing "them" to do things our way, and exasperation at certain native habits. Rather than trying to penetrate a foreign culture, many surrender to a "that's just how they are" mantra.

Perhaps the most constant refrain was that we are being "ripped off"—"they" just cannot be trusted with our money. A civil society leader in East Africa who has had experience working with the agency told us: "They [USAID] are all about the 'gotcha.' That's how they are recruited and, more important, that's how they are trained. They need to listen—the starting point [with local partners] has to be 'we both want the same thing.' But instead, they go in [to an agreement or a contract] with the belief that 'you're trying to screw us.' They are simply not going to be able to get into a relationship of understanding with local organizations with that mentality."

Back in Washington, a recently retired officer with 30 years at USAID asked reflectively: "Are we good listeners? Is our decision-making based on evidence? Or do we appear arbitrary or ideological? Do we appreciate and respect a given country's political and economic accomplishments? Or do we appear dismissive, disrespectful, untrusting and arrogant? Are we distinguished by our presence—are we out and around, easy to find, see, speak to and understand? Are our agendas and processes clear? Or are we invisible, distant, impossible to reach and understand, opaque?"

Security Constraints

There are a number of reasons for both the isolation and the related hints of contempt that we found. Most lie in the physical, bureaucratic and human resource realms, and so there is some hope for change, at least in the latter two. As for physical isolation, this key constraint has to do with 9/11 and the perceived need to reduce the risks to U.S. official personnel overseas—and it is unlikely to change.

The architecture of embassy compounds, into which more and more USAID offices have been required to move, has become fortress-like (if not prison-like); many have slit windows and 300-pound steel doors and on the outer perimeters, razor wire and concrete barricades. Significantly, the FY 2016 budget request for the Department of State included $4.8 billion in "Support to Embassy Security"—that's the equivalent of one-third of USAID's entire budget.

It is hard, even for visiting Americans, to get into the compounds. People from local civil society, municipal government units and private firms who have gone through the experience tend not to want to do it again. Visitors must be accompanied everywhere (even to the door of the rest room, though thankfully not inside, or at least not yet). Passports and cell phones are surrendered. Muscles are strained opening the heavy doors.

Leaving the compound, essential for USAID staff to be able to develop those close relationships, is almost equally daunting. The joke we heard a few times from USAID personnel is that it is as hard to get out of the embassy compound as it is to get in.

Surely something could be done about the bureaucratic constraints against more spontaneous outside visits. At the least, the current process could be streamlined. Traveling to a rural area for four or five days, for example, requires (in most cases) submitting an application, justifying it, waiting for both budget and senior management approval, and then applying to the transport office for the allocation of vehicle and driver, and sometimes a security detail—all of which takes a lot of time and paperwork.

Moreover, the nature of the routine workflow makes superiors reluctant to allow any extended interruptions. According to the Tanzania mission director, interviewed in late 2014, as much as 60 percent of staff time goes to reporting and routine paperwork.

In a few places, the logistics of travel are made still more cumbersome. When we visited Angola, it was policy that any official going on a field trip needed two

vehicles—one for him or her and their colleagues and one for guards.

The easiest way for a USAID mid-level officer to visit a project or talk to local officials or leaders is to accompany a delegation of "visiting firemen" from the United States. But these photo-opportunity visits are not likely to generate added value in terms of insights into local developments.

When a delegation of five to 10 guests in a convoy of vehicles visits a rural water project where 60 villagers are arrayed in a circle under a big tree, and a sign has been put up thanking USAID, you are not going to learn much about what is really going on in the country.

Of course, in the end, easing bureaucratic constraints is a matter of political will and priorities. If USAID were to embrace more forcefully the need to know more deeply what is going on in a country and the need to build more solid relationships with local players, ways would be found to get out and about much more.

Recruitment and Deployment Policy

Similarly, on the human resource side of things, changes could be made—for instance, in recruitment and deployment policies. The origin of the two-to-four-year posting rule is obscure, but it has (or had) something to do with the fear of "going native," being co-opted or losing objectivity.

Yet some form of going native is exactly what is needed, knowing the language being the obvious first step. Moving from Moldova to Sri Lanka to Rwanda, and then to Nicaragua, in the course of 15 years is not a recipe for deep understanding or strengthening of language skills. There is no good reason why this policy could not be seriously revised to allow (and even incentivize) people to stay much longer at a post.

And why not recruit more people who already have relevant language skills in the first place? In the 1960s and 1970s, USAID (which was founded in 1961) hired public health specialists, engineers, soil scientists and agricultural economists—people with professional knowledge in their respective field. There were very few degree programs in "development" as a profession.

Today there are more than 40 degree programs in the United States that annually produce several thousand technocrats trained in the business of development aid (with specialized degrees in development project management, monitoring and evaluation, or project design).

The USAID recruitment process, itself technocratic, is far more geared to looking at these kinds of degrees and, thus, evaluating the candidates' ability to manage the rules of compliance, set up a monitoring matrix or conduct strategic planning than considering their personality or character, much less their understanding of the complexities of poverty.

Ultimately, changing recruitment policy is a matter of corporate culture. Moving from a paint-by-the-numbers approach to a more holistic approach that takes the whole person into account would signal a firmer commitment to the view that USAID's human resources are central to the agency's future.

Last year USAID had about 9,500 staff in 92 overseas missions and seven regional offices. About 40 percent of these are local staff (who still prefer to be referred to as FSNs, or Foreign Service Nationals, rather than their new, official designation as Locally Employed or LE staff).

These people are the backbone of the in-country mission, the agency argues. It is they who have the corporate memory, understand the language and the culture, and know who is who and what is what.

This may be so, but the problem is the degree to which they are encouraged and willing to use what they know. In poorer countries, especially, a job with USAID is a coveted one, and not to be put at risk by telling supervising Americans that this or that project won't work, or that this or that "partner" is a charlatan.

Moreover, like mid-level employees in a large bureaucracy anywhere, they know from experience that these superiors will leave in a couple of years, and new initiatives will come and go. So keeping quiet and doing what one is told is a sensible choice.

The Stakes Are High

USAID's "localworks" is a critically important agenda, a much-needed new way of doing its work. But the gap between the rhetoric and the reality is wide, and much of it has to do with the mundane matters discussed here. The political will to change is lacking, and bureaucracies in any case tend to layer new good habits on top of old bad ones rather than shedding the latter.

But the stakes are high because the world in which the agency works is changing more rapidly than ever. The "locals" are beginning to push back, demanding that the aid establishment get behind the idea of "country ownership" and start reducing the billions of dollars that go to U.S. firms. (Last year more than $5 billion in USAID subcontracts went to just 30 U.S. firms.)

These global changes demand a force of thoughtful and reflective people who are both outgoing and empathetic, and who are freed-up and encouraged to get to know the countries in which they work and listen to those who do know. Above all, they need to be humble and honest about the degree to which "our" solutions to "their" problems are really appropriate. ■

UNDERSTANDING RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY TODAY

BY RAYMOND SMITH

U.S.-Russia relations are in disarray, with talk of a new Cold War pervasive. Fortunately, framing the conflict in terms of national interests points to a way forward.

I assume we would all agree that each country has its own national interests, which sometimes conflict with the national interests of other countries. Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. Satisfactorily resolved conflicts can improve relations, create expectations about how future conflicts will be resolved and decrease the likelihood that countries will consider resorting to violence. A diplomat's primary responsibility is to advance his or her own country's interests. In doing that, they are in a unique position to contribute to the satisfactory resolution of conflicts by helping their leaders understand how the other country sees its interests.

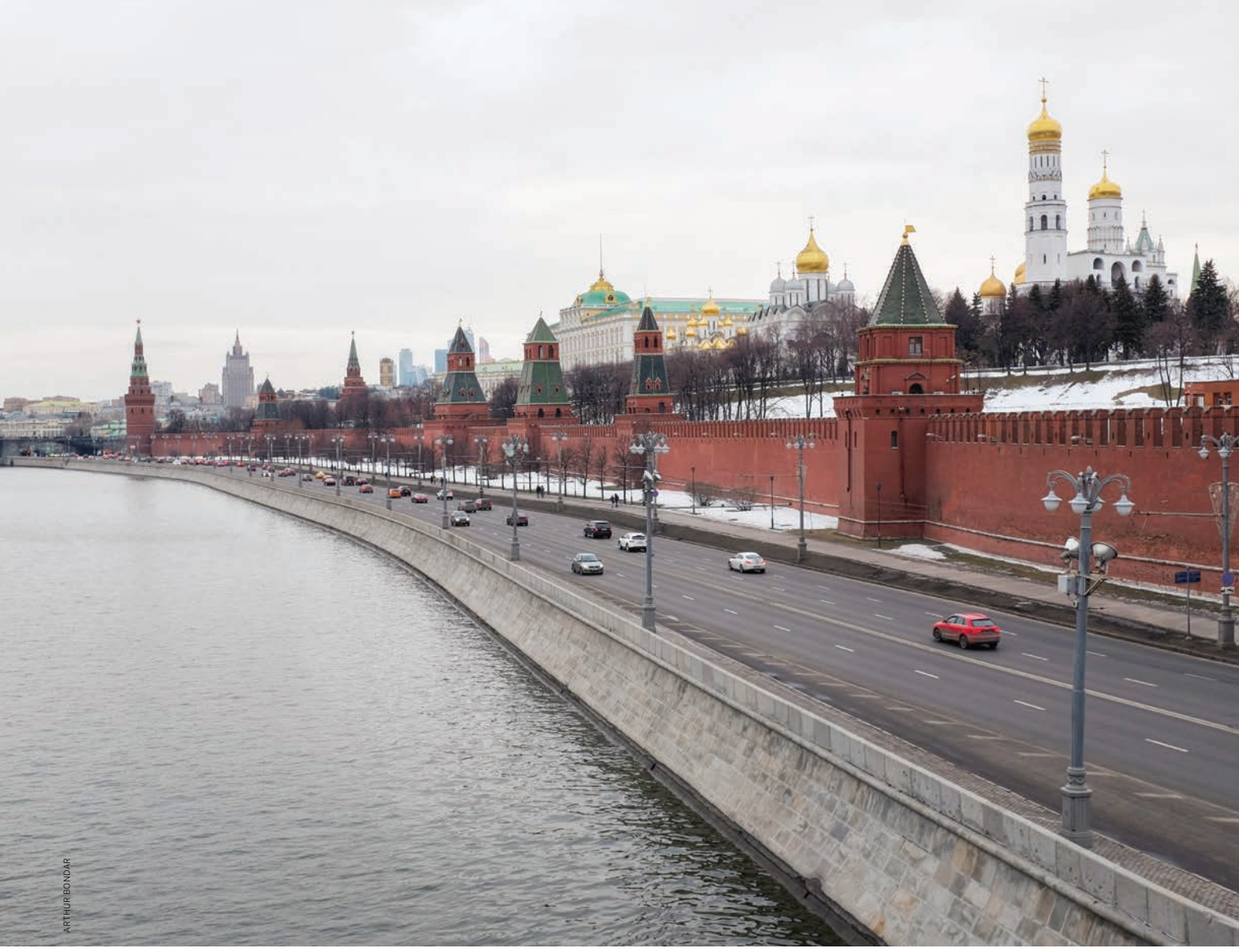
Raymond Smith was an FSO from 1969 to 1993. He served in Moscow twice and while he was political counselor in Moscow drafted the 1990 cable "Looking into the Abyss: The Possible Collapse of the Soviet Union and What We Should Be Doing About It." He also served as director of the Office of the Former Soviet Union and Eastern European Affairs in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. A longtime international negotiations consultant, he is the author of Negotiating with the Soviets *(1989) and* The Craft of Political Analysis for Diplomats *(2011).*

Russia's view of its interests has changed in fundamental ways in the quarter-century since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Much of that change would, in my view, have been likely whether Vladimir Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin or not. The Russia that emerged from the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union was intent on becoming part of the Western world and wildly optimistic about what that would mean.

Boris Yeltsin, its president, had staked his political future on destroying both the Communist Party and the Soviet system in which it was embedded. His foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, was as intellectually pro-West as anyone in his position had been throughout Russian history. They inherited from Mikhail Gorbachev a foreign policy outlook—the Common European Home—that they intended to implement and extend.

The Russian people, giddy from the collapse of the corrupt, oppressive regime under which they had labored for generations, hungered for a normal relationship with the rest of the world and believed that the result would be quick and dramatic improvement in their lives.

In 1992 I wrote that these expectations could not be met, and that a period of disillusionment would inevitably follow.



ARTHUR BONDAR

View of the Moscow Kremlin from the Moscow River, February 2016.

The policy challenge for both the West and Russia was to manage that period of disillusionment so that it would lead to a more mature and well-grounded relationship, and limit the likelihood of a Russian turn toward autarky and hostility. A quarter-century later it is clear that the relationship has not been managed well. The West—and particularly the United States—bears at least as much responsibility for that as does Russia.

> Trying to tell other countries what their fundamental interests are is generally a futile exercise.

Time of Troubles

The 1990s were a chaotic decade in Russia's economic and social history, a new "Time of Troubles." Where the West saw an emerging democratic, market-oriented society in the Yeltsin years, Russians saw criminality, disorder, poverty and the emergence of a new, corrupt and astronomically wealthy class of oligarchs. If this is what was meant by capitalism and democracy, they did not like it. Internationally, the Russian leadership saw the expansion of NATO eastward as a betrayal and a potential threat. Well before 1998, Yeltsin was discredited and Kozyrev was gone, replaced by a foreign minister with far more traditional views of Russian interests.

By 1998, when Putin replaced Yeltsin, the U.S.-Russian relationship had already deteriorated, driven by the NATO expansion, as well as by differences over the civil wars that stemmed from the breakup of Yugoslavia. The Russians saw in these and other developments an attempt to establish a U.S.-dominated international system in which Russia would

have no meaningful role. The Common European Home would be common to every European state *except* Russia. Any state might seek membership in NATO, unless that state was Russia. The United States kept telling Russia that none of this harmed Russian interests; Russia kept replying that, yes, it *does* harm our interests.

At the turn of the century, what were those interests? Russia's international behavior and the statements of its leadership suggest to me the following: first, not to have a potentially hostile military alliance on its borders; second, not to be isolated politically and economically from the most important European institutions; and, third, to have a meaningful say on developments in the region, and particularly on the orientation of the newly independent countries that had been part of its empire.

> The policy challenge for both the West and Russia was to manage that period of disillusionment so that it would lead to a more mature and well-grounded relationship.

If the United States, Britain or France espoused such interests, it is not likely that they would be viewed as inherently predatory. Are we to conclude, then, that in Russian hands such interests are predatory because Russia itself is inherently predatory? A claim like that cannot withstand scrutiny. It is phobic. It is also not very smart. Historically, treating *regimes* as inherently predatory (e.g., the regimes of Napoleon, Hitler and Mussolini) has been more likely to produce stability than treating *countries* as inherently predatory (e.g., Germany after World War I).

Interpreting Interests

So, is it appropriate, then, to consider the Putin regime inherently predatory? A number of foreign policy analysts who are not Russophobes, or do not want to be seen as such, do trace the problem not to the country but to the regime governing it. Proponents of the predatory Putin regime thesis point to the Russian invasions of Georgia and Crimea, its support of separatists in eastern Ukraine and its support of the Assad regime in Syria as evidence of an intent to recreate, insofar as possible, the geography and international influence of the Soviet Union. Their policy prescription for the United States is to contain this expansionism by replacing the Russian influence or presence with a U.S. influence or presence.

In my view, there are serious problems with this interpretation of Russian intentions and the policy approach that flows from it. First, it does not stand up well to critical examination. Second, its zero-sum view of the U.S.-Russian relationship assumes that a mutually beneficial resolution of conflicting interests is all but impossible.

The Putin regime has been more assertive, particularly during the past several years, in advancing Russia's interests than was the Yeltsin regime throughout the 1990s, but it inherited a relationship with the West that its predecessors also considered deeply flawed. Despite continuing differences over issues such as NATO expansion, the new regime's relationship with the United States reached a high point after 9/11, when Putin appeared to believe that a Russian-American alliance against international terrorism could be forged. The two countries shared an interest. They were then and remain today the two developed, non-Islamic states that have suffered the greatest losses from terrorism.

This embryonic alliance was useful to Washington when it invaded Afghanistan and overthrew the Taliban regime. It began to fray when the United States invaded Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. When the United States moved to place anti-ballistic missile systems in Eastern Europe and NATO, and the European Union moved to develop closer relationships with Georgia and Ukraine, the Russian regime fundamentally reassessed the prospects for relationships with the West that would respect its concerns and interests.

Hardball International Politics

With regard to Georgia and Ukraine, the Putin regime has made no secret of its view that it is a fundamental Russian interest that these countries not become NATO members under any conditions, and that they become European Union members only under conditions acceptable to Russia. To assert that Russia has no right to such interests is beside the point. Trying to tell other countries what their fundamental interests are is generally a futile exercise. To argue that the assertion of such interests is prima facie evidence of predatory

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intent is historically dubious.

For a couple of centuries one of Britain's two fundamental interests was preventing the emergence of a single dominant power on the European mainland. Britain used diplomacy, trade and military power on the mainland to pursue that objective. Its intentions were not predatory; it sought to maintain a balance of power. Was the Monroe Doctrine inherently predatory? Most Americans would presumably say no, although there are probably several Latin American states that would say, at a minimum, that the United States has used the doctrine at times to justify predatory behavior.

In Georgia and Ukraine, Russia used means that were appropriate to the achievement of limited objectives in support of its national interests. Since there are many who will find every element of that statement objectionable, some clarification is in order. First of all, to say that means are appropriate to an objective is not a moral judgment, but rather a statement that the means were right-sized to achieve the objective; they were necessary and sufficient, neither too large nor too small. In neither case was the objective to occupy the country or overthrow the regime in power.

> The Putin regime will continue to be assertive in pursuit of its international interests, believing that the alternative is that its interests will be ignored.

Rather, the objective was to force a re-evaluation, both in the country concerned and among the Western powers, of the costs involved in pursuing NATO and E.U. membership. By recognizing Abkhaz and Ossetian independence and by annexing Crimea, Russia imposed an immediate cost on the countries concerned and also sent a message that there could be further costs if its interests were not taken into account.

This is hardball international politics, and we do not have to like it; but it falls well short of evidence that the Putin regime's ambitions extend to the re-creation of the Soviet Union. In fact, our differences with Russia on Georgia and Ukraine are not fundamental. The Russian interest in not having those two countries in NATO should be shared by the United States.

It is not in the U.S. interest to provide Georgia and Ukraine the kind of security guarantees entailed in NATO membership, and it is difficult to understand why the idea even received consideration. Clearly disabusing them of the idea will provide an incentive for them to work out a mutually acceptable relationship with their much larger neighbor. The economic relationship among the E.U., Russia and the countries Russia calls the "near abroad" is not inherently zero-sum.

There is no fundamental reason why an arrangement beneficial to all sides cannot be found—which is not to say that finding it will be easy.

The Case of Syria

At the time of writing, the September ceasefire in the Syrian civil war has broken down, resulting in cruel attacks on aid convoys, civilians and medical facilities in Aleppo. These attacks occurred with, at a minimum, Russia's acquiescence and assistance, and possibly with its direct participation. Is there any basis left for finding common ground on this civil war?

It appears to me that Russia's Syrian intervention has served a number of its foreign policy objectives: 1) attacking Islamic terrorist groups where they live, rather than waiting for them to attack Russia; 2) avoiding the takeover of Syria by a terrorist group, which it believes would be the most likely outcome of the violent overthrow of the Assad regime; 3) supporting a regime that has allowed it a military presence; 4) supporting the principle that regimes in power should not be overthrown by outside forces; 5) expanding its role in the Middle East; and 6) challenging U.S. unilateralism in the international system.

We have common interests with Russia on the first two of those objectives; on the remainder our attitude may range from indifferent to opposed. Turning those shared interests into joint action has been extraordinarily difficult because we do not always agree on which groups are terrorists, and because terrorist and non-terrorist groups are often intermingled on the ground. Moreover, Russia's client—the Assad regime—sees them all as threats to its rule and, thus, equally subject to attack. For our part, we have not been able to persuade the moderates (our clients, in Russia's eyes) to separate themselves physically from the terrorists because the moderates, the weakest militarily of the combatants, fear that such a move would leave them more vulnerable to attack from both the Assad regime and Russia.

There is only one outcome of the Syrian civil war that would threaten vital U.S. national interests: the victory of a Taliban-style regime (or worse). On that, at least, the United States and Russia can agree. We are in error if we see the war there as a zero-sum U.S.-Russia contest. Russia is not the Soviet Union. We will not always be in agreement on what should be done in Syria, or more broadly in the Middle East. But Russia's support for the nuclear negotiations with Iran and its help in persuading the Assad regime to rid itself of chemical weapons demonstrate that we can cooperate there, and elsewhere, on some difficult issues.

We are in error if we see the war in Syria as a zero-sum U.S.-Russia contest.

Prospects

Militarily, Russia is a significant regional power with a superpower nuclear capability. Economically, it is rich in raw materials and has vastly improved its agricultural sector, but continues to struggle to be competitive internationally in the industrial and information sectors. Politically, it is ruled by a semi-authoritarian regime that falls well within Russian historical traditions, is far milder than the Soviet-era norm and has a substantial level of popular support.

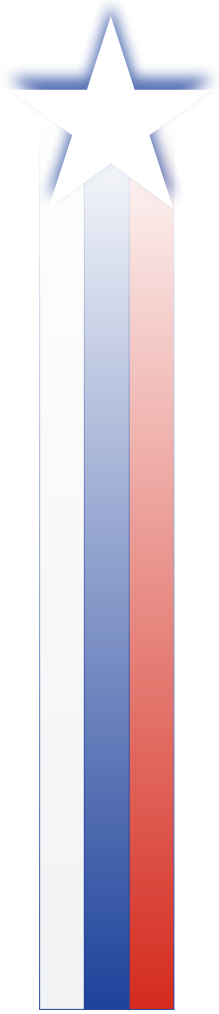
The Putin regime will continue to be assertive in pursuit of its international interests, believing that the alternative is that its interests will be ignored. Yet a normal relationship with Russia under the Putin regime is possible.

Unlike during the Soviet era, the two countries are not ideological opponents. There will be areas where our interests conflict. Resolving those conflicts constructively will require both countries to understand the limits of their interests.

THE RISE OF THE NEW RUSSIA

BY LOUIS D. SELL

This tour d'horizon from the fall of the Soviet Union to today—including hopes, disappointments and missed opportunities—puts U.S.-Russia relations into perspective.



Vladimir Putin famously described the collapse of the USSR as "the biggest geopolitical tragedy of the [20th] century"—quite a claim when one considers the competition: two world wars and the Holocaust, for starters. But the Russian president's remark illustrates why it is impossible to understand Putin and the country he leads without also understanding how Russians view the collapse of the USSR and its aftermath.

During a 27-year career with the State Department, retired FSO Louis Sell served for many years in the former Soviet Union, Russia and Yugoslavia. He was also U.S. representative to the Joint Consultative Group in Vienna, director of the Office of Russian and Eurasian Analysis, and executive secretary of the U.S. delegation to the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks. From 1995 to 1996, he served as political adviser to Carl Bildt, the first High Representative for Bosnian Peace Implementation. In 2000 he served as Kosovo Director of the International Crisis Group. As executive director of the American University in Kosovo Foundation from 2003 to 2008, he helped found the American University in Kosovo. He is the author of From Washington to Moscow: U.S.-Soviet Relations and the Collapse of the USSR *(Duke University Press, 2016) and* Slobodan Milosevic and the Destruction of Yugoslavia *(Duke University Press, 2002). Mr. Sell is now an adjunct professor at the University of Maine at Farmington and lives on a farm in Whitefield, Maine.*

Looking back, this brief window of pro-American enthusiasm was probably unsustainable, and even at the time there were signs of strain.

The Soviet Union fell in 1991 without any of the events that have generally accompanied imperial collapse in the past—military defeat, foreign invasion, internal revolution and the like. It came, moreover, only a short time after the country appeared to be at the pinnacle of international power and prestige. Recall nuclear arms agreements that many interpreted as signaling Moscow's achievement of strategic parity with its American rival and the expansion of Soviet power during the 1970s into areas far beyond traditional areas of influence. Moscow's confidence led Foreign Minister Gromyko to say in 1972 that "no international problem of significance anywhere can be resolved without Soviet participation."

In reality, the USSR was a superpower only in the military sense. Its armed might rested on a sclerotic political system and an inefficient economy, barely half the size of its American rival. When Mikhail Gorbachev took office in 1985 after the deaths of three aging leaders over the previous three years, he had had the wisdom to understand the need for reform and the courage to begin it. But Gorbachev had no plan, and he dithered when the reforms he unleashed threatened to go beyond the "socialist alternative" to which he remained committed until the end.

A Twilight of Pro-American Enthusiasm

The August 1991 coup marked the end of Gorbachev and the USSR, even though both managed to hang on for a few more twilight months. Those fortunate enough to be present remember the climate of euphoria that engulfed Moscow after the coup. People persuaded themselves that life would soon change for the better. The country had been through tough times but had emerged with hope from the crisis of the coup and the long nightmare of communism.

Russia would remain a superpower, but it would join the other members of the world community as a "normal" country. Democracy was on everybody's lips. People believed that with the Communist Party swept away it would be easy to graft the institutions of democratic governance onto the Russian body politic. Russians, after all, were a well-educated and talented people. Soon Moscow would take its proper place with New York, London and other world centers.

An outpouring of positive feelings toward the United States accompanied the post-coup euphoria. It was assumed that Russia and the United States would remain the world's two leading nations but now as friends and partners, not rivals. To walk into a Russian office and be introduced as an American diplomat was to be greeted by smiles, enthusiastic handshakes and often a warm embrace.

Looking back, this brief window of pro-American enthusiasm was probably unsustainable, and even at the time there were signs of strain. Over the winter of 1991-1992, as basic supplies dwindled in Moscow, the U.S. airlifted emergency humanitarian aid. On one occasion, my son and I helped unload a massive C-5A cargo aircraft and accompanied a convoy of food and medicines to a Moscow hospital. As the material was unloaded and a number of empty boxes turned up, the hospital director flew into a rage, accusing us of stealing some of the supplies and staging a show.

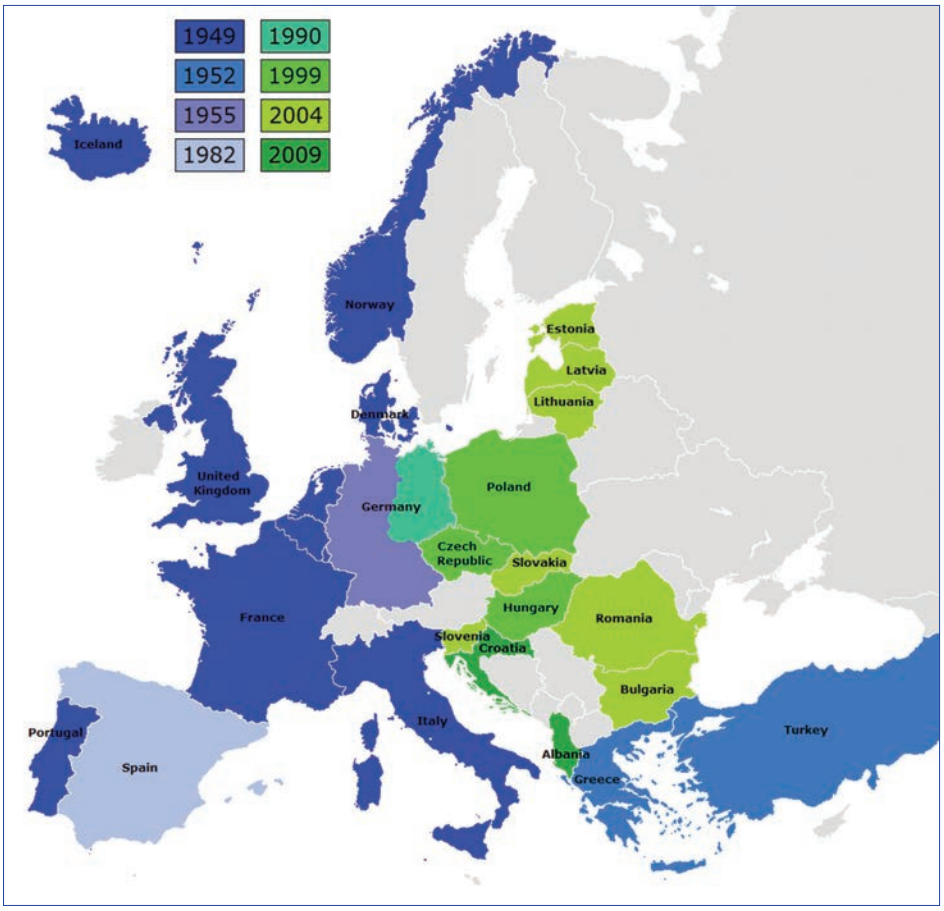
Back at the embassy the air attaché told me that empty boxes were used to distribute the load in a balanced fashion throughout the aircraft. The next day when I called the director to explain the situation he expressed gratitude for the U.S. assistance, but added that he also hoped we understood just how difficult it was for a Russian to be in the position of accepting aid from the United States, however well-intentioned.

Twenty-five years later Putin has constructed a narrative of Western perfidy that is the foundation of his appeal to the Russian people. In reality, plenty of mistakes were made in Moscow and abroad.

Almost everyone involved in Russia after the Soviet collapse—Russians, as well as foreigners—underestimated the extent of the political, economic and social difficulties that needed to be overcome. To some extent, this was a consequence of the structure of the Soviet system itself, where basic information was either lacking or falsified. No one really understood, for example, how large and intractable the massive Soviet military industrial complex was—or how difficult, and in many cases impossible, it would be to find ways to restructure it into more productive uses.

Similarly, everyone underestimated the difficulty in establishing a viable democracy in a society where it had never existed before. Institutions were created and elections were held, but a genuine democratic culture—founded on toleration, compromise and rule of law—could not be created overnight.

Both Russian reformers and their Western supporters overpromised and underperformed. Largely for domestic political reasons, U.S. administrations exaggerated the size and significance of American assistance. Russians received a lot of advice—almost all of it well-meaning, and some of it good—but too much of it amounted to applying outside models to stubborn Russian reality.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/IMAGE BY KPALION

NATO expansion by year.

Missed Opportunities

In retrospect, it also seems clear that the United States missed opportunities to engage with the new Russian authorities in areas of potential trouble. Washington had little choice but to back embattled Russian President Boris Yeltsin in 1993, when he was compelled to suppress an armed uprising by hard-line parliamentary opponents. But Yeltsin never recovered, emotionally or politically, from the trauma of having to send tanks into the street to shell fellow Russians, and in subsequent years his actions became increasingly erratic.

In 1993 Washington turned a blind eye when Yeltsin introduced a much-needed new constitution through a questionable vote count. It did the same in 1996, when dubious deals that effectively turned over large portions of the Russian economy to the new class of rich Russian "oligarchs" provided funds to help Yeltsin eke out a victory in that year's presidential election. The result associated U.S. policy with a government that many Russians saw as responsible for the poverty and turmoil of Russia in the 1990s.

In the field of national security, the United States could never decide whether its primary objective was to help create a democratic and confident Russia as a full partner in the post-Cold War world or to build up the former Soviet states as independent counters to a possibly resurgent Moscow. The United States ended up trying to do both and accomplishing neither well.

The two key security challenges the West faced in the decade after the Soviet collapse were dealing with the nuclear legacy and devising security architecture to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War environment. The United States and Russia engaged effectively in the nuclear arena, where they had a clear common interest. Numbers of nuclear weapons were dramatically reduced, and the two countries cooperated for many years to enhance security for Russian nuclear weapons—at least until 2013, when Putin canceled the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, also known as the Nunn-Lugar Program, which was the foundation of this effort.

On security architecture, the Western response was to extend the existing Cold War system of military and economic alliances eastward, rejecting—probably with good reason—the alternative model of creating a new system. It has become an article of faith in Putin's Russia that the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe and some former Soviet republics violated commitments made during the negotiations on German unification. The historical record provides no support for these beliefs, but the question remains whether NATO expansion was wise.

JAMES TALALAY

From an exercise involving Lithuanian and NATO forces held in Lithuania in 2016.

In 1997, I visited Moscow for a seminar devoted to NATO expansion. In tones that ranged from pleading to anger, Russian diplomats, politicians and journalists warned that the expansion of NATO into countries that only a few years earlier had been part of the Soviet security zone would strengthen the strong resentment against the West that was already boosting the rise of xenophobia and authoritarianism across the Russian political spectrum.

Opposition in Moscow does not, of course, necessarily mean that NATO expansion was wrong. Membership in NATO and the European Union was critical in integrating former Eastern European communist regions into a united and democratic Europe. But the failure to work out some mutually acceptable form of cooperation between NATO and Russia was a major setback. Russia, itself, bears much of the blame for this failure. Its threatening posture to its neighbors, aggressive intelligence activities and the questionable caliber of some Russian officials sent to NATO headquarters in Brussels left the impression that Moscow had little interest in ending East-West confrontation.

Nevertheless, anyone seeking to understand why Putin has enjoyed such success in Russia should start with the sense of humiliation many Russians feel at the image of NATO forces perched astride borders that once formed part of the internal boundaries of the Soviet Union.

In the early post-Cold War years the new Russian government, aware of its own weakness, stayed close to the United States on international issues. But, with its long-time Soviet rival vanished, Washington found it all too easy to dismiss Moscow's concerns when these conflicted with its own priorities. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II, signed in January 1993, is an example. It mandated the most sweeping reductions in nuclear arms achieved up to that time. Russian experts calculated that START II would save Moscow the equivalent of approximately $7 billion, but the optics of the deal looked bad to many Russians. In particular, it forced Moscow to give up a substantial part of its intercontinental ballistic missile force, whose elimination had been a U.S. objective since the inception of arms control negotiations.

Talk of a new Cold War is unrealistic, if only because Russia remains incapable by itself of mounting the sustained global challenge to Western interests that the USSR did.

START II was a good deal for both sides, but it also reflected the realities of the time. The United States made clear that if Moscow did not go along, Washington would maintain its nuclear forces at a level greater than the impoverished Russia of that era could afford. That perception of imbalance is one reason why START II never entered into force. After the treaty was concluded, U.S. Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss told his good friend U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III: "Baker, you didn't leave those folks enough on the table." It was a shrewd remark that might serve as a good summation of U.S. policy toward Russia in the years immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Meeting Moscow's Challenge

So what do we do now? Talk of a new Cold War is unrealistic, if only because Russia remains incapable by itself of mounting the sustained global challenge to Western interests that the USSR did. Putin has impressively restored aspects of Russian military power, but his modernization program came

after two decades of post-Cold War neglect. Russia remains far behind the United States in almost every category of military capability—and in most other measures of global power. Its declining population is less than half that of the United States, while its economy is roughly one-quarter the size of the American.

On the other hand, it is equally important not to underestimate the seriousness of the Russian challenge. Aided by the dearth of leadership in Washington and disarray in Europe, Putin has launched something of a quasi-war against the West and the United States, in particular. The Russian offensive unfolds militarily in Ukraine and in Syria, through disinformation and aggressive cyber subversion, and through efforts to create what amounts to a global coalition of authoritarian, anti-Western regimes. It is hard to say how far Putin intends to go with this campaign. There is no master plan for global conquest in Putin's Kremlin any more than under the Communists. Nevertheless, we have to assume that Moscow will take advantage of targets of opportunity it sees as worth the risk to damage the United States.

Even at the height of Cold War confrontation, the United States and the USSR managed to cooperate in areas of vital mutual interest such as nuclear arms control, and this needs to continue. But it is an illusion to believe there can be real cooperation in crisis areas such as Syria, where one of Moscow's underlying objectives in aiding Assad is to humiliate the United States.

Washington needs to determine what its vital interests are vis-à-vis Moscow and take effective steps to protect them. If Ukraine is truly where we want to draw the line, we should provide Kyiv the aid it needs to rebuild its economy and the real military assistance it needs to defeat pro-Russian rebels in the east. The outline of a deal involving autonomy for eastern Ukraine has been present since the beginning of the crisis, but will not be achievable until Moscow is convinced it cannot secure its broader aims through the use of force. At the same time, we need to make it clear that if Ukraine proves unable or unwilling to generate the necessary internal reforms, we are prepared to walk away. In the murky world of cyber conflict, we need to be prepared to inflict equivalent damage on Moscow, hopefully as a first step toward ending or at least regulating actions in this area.

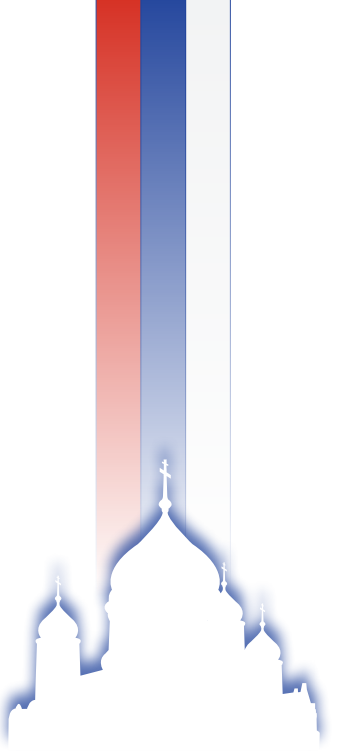
Responding to Russia's challenge does not necessarily mean a renewal of endless confrontation. Once Moscow is convinced that it cannot continue its anti-U.S. offensive cost-free, negotiated solutions may become possible. These will require some attempt at understanding the vital interests of the other side. NATO helped integrate former communist countries of Eastern Europe into the Western world, but it is time to acknowledge that expanding NATO membership into former Soviet republics was a bridge too far—both in terms of Moscow's reaction and the alliance's ability to exercise its defensive functions.

Washington needs to determine what its vital interests are vis-à-vis Moscow and take effective steps to protect them.

NATO cannot honorably step away from the commitment it made to the Baltic states, although the alliance needs to give some serious thought to whether variants of the "trip-wire" strategy that worked with West Berlin will also be enough in the Baltics. But NATO should acknowledge the obvious truth that neither Ukraine nor any other former Soviet republic will ever become a NATO member, even as we make clear that we will hold Moscow to its obligations to respect their independence.

Finally, although it is beyond the scope of this article, the United States needs to get its domestic house in order. The dysfunctional U.S. political system is blocking any effort to discuss seriously, let alone resolve, problems that afflict us at almost every turn—looming fiscal crisis in several long-term budgetary areas; decaying physical infrastructure; neglected human infrastructure in medical care, education and minority communities; the tragedy of gun violence; and more.

The West won the Cold War because its political, economic and social system proved superior to that of its communist rival. Twenty-five years later, the chief reason that obscure KGB Lt. Col. Vladimir Putin and his cronies are able to challenge the United States is that the American system seems incapable of generating effective leadership at home and is no longer attractive to countries abroad. Changing this dynamic is a precondition for Washington to regain its proper role of leadership in a revitalized democratic world, with the will and the resources to meet Moscow's challenge. ■



SOMETHING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE MARKET

THE ECONOMIC STATE OF THE FORMER U.S.S.R.

BY MICHAEL A. LALLY

When it comes to the Soviet successor nations, economic and commercial diplomacy is a particularly important part of the U.S. foreign policy playbook.

After a decade-plus focus on counterterrorism and the Middle East, U.S. and European policymakers have begun to pivot attention back to Russia and Eurasia, where the rise of Russian autocratic nationalism and Moscow's aggression in Ukraine have caused jitters from the Baltics to Central Asia. As the Kremlin looks to project power and influence, political and military considerations will continue to dominate policymaker bandwidth on Russia and Eurasia. However, the United States should make increasing use of one of the sharpest instruments in its policy toolbox: the strength of our economic system.

While Soviet successor states have achieved varying levels of economic independence in the past quarter-century, many have, more or less, repudiated the central planning of the past, and look instead to a free market model. For example, Ukraine's 2014 Maidan demonstrations were triggered by former President Viktor Yanukovych's decision to walk away from an Association Agreement with the European Union that would have deepened trade and investment ties.

In their protest, Ukrainians stood not for a free trade area per se, but for a European future with political pluralism, jobs and opportunity. The Baltic countries, with a strong national memory of independence, seized on economic reform and E.U. and NATO memberships to build competitive economies. Almost all

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other post-Soviet nations seek stronger economic ties with the United States, Europe and, increasingly, China.

This presents both opportunities and challenges for U.S. policymakers, who should further integrate economic and commercial diplomacy into the policy playbook.

Russia: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

At independence in 1991, Russia was well positioned given its geography spanning two continents, its natural resources and its well-educated workforce. However, a bungled economic reform effort in the 1990s, combined with catastrophic drops in GDP, largely discredited free market principles. As one observer noted about the economic "shock therapy" of the 1990s, "It's all shock and no therapy." Market economics, freedom of the press and freedom of speech became code words for Western depravity, against which Mother Russia would protect its citizens. This lack of political and economic development spawned the rise of Putinism, permeating all levels of society.

During his tenure as president from 2008 to 2012, Dmitry Medvedev understood the challenge: the urgent need to modernize, with a focus on the economy. The United States supported Moscow's efforts at global economic integration, using significant political capital to help secure Russia's accession to the WTO, cancel the outdated Jackson-Vanik Amendment and encourage bilateral economic cooperation, in a strategic effort to give Russia a stake in the global economy and inoculate it against its historical xenophobic tendencies. But every transaction needs a buyer and a seller; and as Russia turned increasingly inward, Moscow was not buying.

The Khodorkovsky Affair of 2003 was later recognized as the defining case study of Putinist Russia, which can be summarized as "oligarchs, you can make and keep your money, but don't even think about getting into politics."

The Russian economy of today bears striking similarities to the 1980s: low oil prices reduce hard currency inflows; large state investments in industry bring little real return; Western sanctions followed by counter-sanctions on U.S. and E.U. agricultural products produce more domestic inflation; sanctioned Russian banks are unable to roll over significant dollar and euro debt—the list goes on.

Even more troubling is the increasing emigration of Russia's best minds, drawn to economic opportunity in the West. Russia's darkening political landscape and lack of innovation do not bode well for its economic outlook. Still, its considerable resources—human, natural and scientific—will help if, someday, Russia decides to seriously refocus on the economy.

Ukraine: A Test Case for Large-Scale Economic Reform in Eurasia

At the dawn of independence in 1991, many observers believed **Ukraine** had the best chance of success among all non-Russian former republics. Its proximity to European markets, developed rail system and ports, agricultural bounty, and educated workforce made Ukraine a smart bet. However, a combination of weak state institutions and a corrupt political elite led to a semi-functioning state at best. Case in point: in 1991, Polish and Ukrainian GDP were roughly equal. Today, the Ukrainian economy is about one-third the size of its western neighbor, now an E.U. member.

After more than two decades of kleptocracy on a massive scale, in November 2013 the Ukrainian people said "enough." While fighting Russian aggression in the East and economic losses due to Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea, in 2014-2015 Kyiv launched a battle against corruption and cronyism, leading to a courageous decision to implement painful but necessary economic reforms. With significant U.S. and European support, Ukraine has made major strides, achieving improved corporate governance, reduced dependence on Russian gas, accession to the World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement, a public declaration of assets of government officials and the establishment of a new police force. The country has arguably made more progress on economic reform in the past two years than during the previous 25, but remains a critical test case for reforming a dysfunctional economy and developing strong, transparent institutions in a more or less free market economy.

The Caucasus, Moldova and Belarus: A Mixed Picture

In the 1990s, **Azerbaijan's** significant hydrocarbon resources and smart energy transportation policy development gave the country an economic boost. U.S. support for the East-West energy corridor provided political space and real dollar returns, tripling Azeri per capita GDP by 2011. Boxed in by a frozen conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and powerful neighbors in Iran and Russia, the late President Heydar Aliyev masterfully played a weak hand, leveraging the country's oil and gas resources to secure independence. But predictably, "Dutch disease" set in, with petrodollars and corruption crowding out real economic development. Faced with a devalued Azeri *manat*, a rising cost of living and domestic unrest, the Baku elite took initial steps at economic reform. Increased use of e-government and tax reform measures have sought to reduce corruption, but much remains to be done. Continued low oil prices can provide an impetus to pursue broader economic reform, but the deep-rooted interests of powerful elites

Commonwealth of Independent States, 1994.

must be overcome to truly open up the Azeri economy.

Georgia has remained resilient despite endemic corruption dating to the Soviet period, a civil war in the 1990s and a brief but costly conflict with Russia in 2008. Despite a small economy and domestic market, Georgia pursued economic reforms for a simple reason: it had no choice. Georgia seeks stronger ties with Europe, as seen in its 2014 Association Agreement with the European Union. And it has improved its World Bank Ease of Doing Business ranking to 24—ahead of the Netherlands and Switzerland. Georgia's recent elections received generally good reviews, a positive point for potential foreign investors. The country has proven to be a stable and reliable partner in the East-West energy corridor in exchange for needed revenue and a strong political anchor through direct investment by international oil companies.

Armenia and **Moldova** remain trapped in a geopolitical corner that has limited their economic development. In Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and strong Russian influence in the economy have closed off most options for diversification. In Moldova, the recalcitrant, so-called Trans-Dniester Republic and ongoing domestic political turmoil have limited reform in what is one of the poorest countries in Europe. These countries have small domestic markets and need to capitalize on their strengths in information and communication technologies, food processing and spirits.

Recognizing the challenge presented by its eastern neighbor, **Belarus** recently reactivated its long-dormant economic diplomacy to reconnect with international financial institutions. But the state remains the primary economic actor. Without dedicated economic reform, Belarus is unlikely to make significant progress.

Central Asia: Kazakhstan in the Lead, But...

Twenty-five years after independence, economic policy varies widely across the five countries of Central Asia. Their intraregional trade is among the lowest in the world, primarily because of poor infrastructure, a large grey economy and a lack of customs cooperation. Despite these challenges, Beijing has elaborated a comprehensive and well-funded "One Belt, One Road" concept that aims to use Central Asia as a land bridge into European and Middle East markets. The region's longer-term challenge: to add value to the supply chain and not simply become a "drive through" for Asian exports to the West.

Kazakhstan has emerged as the undisputed regional leader in economic reform, building on significant petroleum wealth, smart energy transportation decisions and an imperfect, but more or less favorable, approach to private enterprise. Through constant rotation of senior government officials, President Nazarbayev has developed a bureaucratic elite with the knowledge, skills and

experience to run the country. The country has suffered from low oil, gas and commodity prices that put downward pressure on the *tenge*, increased the cost of living and provoked sporadic protests. Astana has pursued longer-term economic competitiveness by joining the World Trade Organization and engaging in dialogue with the international business community.

Uzbekistan can potentially punch well above its weight in the region, given its significant territory, population, energy and mineral reserves, and developed heavy and light industry. However, Tashkent's state-run economic planning model has spurred a large underground economy and multiple foreign exchange rates. Uzbekistan denies any problem with the availability of foreign exchange, but that is the number-one concern for Uzbek and foreign companies.

Rather than deregulating its market to attract broad-based domestic and foreign investment, Tashkent has pursued an industrial policy based on high-tech industries. This has produced some limited success in export-oriented manufacturing. Still, with a loosening of economic decision-making and a reduction of the state's role in the economy, Uzbekistan's low costs and abundant labor could drive development. Late 2016 elections present an opportunity for both political and economic reforms that can unlock Uzbekistan's potential.

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have limited near-term opportunities for broad-based economic development. **Kyrgyzstan's** small market, lack of export-oriented production and limited, large-scale agricultural potential constrain its growth. Its mining sector, originally thought to present major opportunities for foreign investment, remains moribund. **Tajikistan** remains largely dependent on remittances from Russia. Given radical Islamist activity in the region, this presents near- and long-term challenges to U.S., Russian and European security. **Turkmenistan** remains largely closed to the outside world, striving for economic self-sufficiency. This undermines development of its huge gas reserves, which will remain largely unexplored absent an increase in global gas prices and a more competitive exploration and production environment.

Secretary of State John Kerry's February 2016 marathon tour and August U.S.-Central Asia (C5 Plus One) engagement with the region's foreign ministers are precisely the right kind of steps to engage the political, economic and human dimensions of our bilateral relationships in Central Asia. Given our cross-cutting political, economic, security, intelligence and human rights interests in this region, the United States should simultaneously build all these pillars without waiting for resolution of one or another dimension.

The Baltics: The West's Eastern Edge

At independence, the Baltic states emerged with relatively strong institutions, a constructive nationalist ethos and smaller, more reformable economies. In 2011, **Estonia** became the first post-Soviet state to adopt the euro and has the E.U.'s lowest debt-to-GDP ratio. **Latvia** faced a severe economic shock following the 2008 global economic crisis, but began reforms to bolster the judiciary, reduce corruption and return to growth by 2010. **Lithuania** is investing in its own energy independence with the construction of the region's largest liquefied natural gas terminal, which will reduce Russian gas supply leverage.

But the real picture in the Baltics is not in the country-by-country comparison, but in the aggregate: as a bloc, they represent the eastern edge of E.U., NATO and the rule of law. Given their large Russian populations and, in some places, a land border with Russia marked with sticks and poles, the Baltics look for continued support from Brussels and Washington. The recent Brexit decision did not go over well in Baltic capitals, which desperately need a united Europe and look nervously east. Fortunately, their E.U. and NATO memberships provide a solid economic and security foundation that international investors appreciate.

The Ties That Blind: A Eurasian Economic (Dis)Union?

Many Eurasian capitals were wary when Russia began advocating a Eurasian Economic Union in 2014. The proposal was viewed as a potential bridge for greater Moscow dominance in the region, with some arguing that the EAEU could be a back-door method of reconstituting the former Soviet Union. A closer look, however, quickly disproves this notion.

First, with few exceptions, Eurasian leaders do not see Moscow as the "shining city on the hill" for future political and economic development. Second, Eurasian elites are unlikely to want to cede authority to a Russian-dominated institution. Finally, "policy creep" is a major concern: a customs union with synchronized standards can lead to eventual calls for monetary union and a resultant loss of economic sovereignty.

Those Eurasian nations with sufficient political and economic wherewithal will play the long game on the EAEU; others, such as Uzbekistan and Ukraine, have rejected it out of hand. From a U.S. policy perspective, we should recognize that absent viable alternatives, some Eurasian nations will feel the need to cooperate at a minimal level with the EAEU. For example, Moscow holds the cards on work permits for millions of Central Asian migrants doing menial labor in Russia who send survival remittances back home. While Russia, and increasingly China, will

The Central Asian countries' longer-term challenge: to add value to the supply chain and not simply become a "drive through" for Asian exports to the West.

play a key role in Eurasian economies well into the next decade, a more vigorous and strategic U.S. economic engagement in selected non-Russian states can provide some basic alternatives to policymakers in these capitals.

Looking Ahead to 2017: U.S. Policy Options

The 115th Congress and the next administration will have piles of briefing books on their desks during their first days in office. ISIS, Syria, China, India, global pandemics and climate change will all compete for the limited time and attention of senior policymakers. However, Russia's continued recalcitrance, Ukraine's stability, the Baltics as a NATO outpost and succession concerns in Central Asia should all focus policymaker attention on Eurasia, which is vital to U.S. interests. Moreover, policymakers should look at the region as a whole, not broken into artificial bureaucratic boundaries.

Make friends and influence people. Leadership succession decisions loom throughout the region, and U.S. policymakers should be prepared. This will require deep knowledge of competing political parties and clans, their business interests, and the views of weak and fractured civil societies. Repeat FSO assignments, investment in true area expertise and language competency in the Eurasia region should be encouraged to form lasting networks as mid-level decision-makers mature into the countries' elites.

Silos don't work. Full integration of U.S. hard and soft power, including political, economic, security, law enforcement, intelligence, assistance and public diplomacy components, is essential. Too often, disagreement on one dimension of our relationship with a Eurasian state produces a lockdown in other areas. U.S. policymakers should engage across platforms simultaneously to produce results in areas not directly related to a specific engagement.

It's the economy, stupid. It's a stock phrase in Eurasian capitals: "We want more American trade and investment." While the live-fire business environments of Eurasia make that an ambitious goal, more can be done to project American economic power. A revitalized Trade and Development Agency focus in Eurasia, further Overseas Private Investment Corporation investment and a fully functioning Export-Import Bank of the United States authorized to work in Ukraine could go a long way toward stitching together broken infrastructure, reducing energy losses and supporting American exports and business partnerships. USAID's Development Credit Authority has been used to spawn economic activity at the grassroots level and should be expanded. This will require a strategic, integrated look by the next administration to ensure full deployment of our commercial diplomatic assets.

Mind the gap. Since the 1990s, graduate study in Eurasian affairs at U.S. universities has dropped significantly due to a focus on China and the Middle East and a decline in federal government and academic support for a new generation of Eurasia specialists. This is a luxury we cannot afford. Increased funding for scholarships, in-country language training, fast-track intake programs into the federal government and student loan forgiveness incentives should be simplified and revitalized.

Past as Prologue?

For the past 25 years, Eurasian governments have taken a cautious approach to political-economic development: private enterprise will be tolerated as long as it strengthens the state and does not threaten elite interests. That might have worked in the pre-internet, non-globalized world into which the Soviet successor states were born, but it gets more difficult with every passing technological innovation.

How a government treats private enterprise is almost always a reflection of its attitude toward its own citizens. A state that can foster an innovative, entrepreneurial society, where citizens can safely turn an idea into a business, shows a government at peace with itself and the presence of a respected social contract. Governments that restrict the private sector out of fear of creating competitive institutions treat their own people with wariness and contempt.

While Ukraine is struggling to become a more democratic, free market-oriented country, Russia, Belarus, Turkmenistan and other Eurasian states still long for the glory days of a strong central government. During my years in Eurasia, many of my counterparts and friends voiced the desire to become a "normal country." Some Eurasian states have embarked on this path, trying to create an economy and society that can grow in the 21st century. Others have not. As the Eurasian states enter full adulthood, it is in our national security interest to ensure their success. ■

FOUR CENTURIES AND THREE DECADES OF RUSSIAN THINKING

BY JUSTIN LIFFLANDER

Conversations in Moscow with Russians of different social strata paint a vivid picture of a country grappling with the meaning of the past quarter-century's upheavals.

At first it seemed to me as if he was wearing X-ray glasses. Having purchased a fur hat from Sasha, the teenage *fartsovchik* (black marketeer) working the Oktyabrskaya subway station in Moscow that day in 1986, I earned the right to chat with him in my broken Russian.

As he scanned the passers-by in search of potential clientele, I couldn't figure out how he was able to spot the foreigners. "Look carefully," he explained. "The facial features, the shoes, the wrist watches, the eye glasses. …" I began to understand how he chose who should be offered his *znachki* (pins) or money changing services.

Justin Lifflander has lived in Russia for nearly 30 years. After stints as a contractor at the U.S. embassy in Moscow and the INF treaty inspection facility in Votkinsk, he spent 20 years as a salesman for Hewlett-Packard in Russia and four years as an editor at The Moscow Times *daily newspaper. He is married to a Russian and received Russian citizenship in 2000. He is the author of* How Not to Become a Spy: A Memoir of Love at the End of the Cold War *(2014).*

Thirty years later my *fartsovchik* is probably a successful oligarch. He and his countrymen no longer think they are "covered in chocolate"—a phrase going back to the Soviet era meaning "fortunate, lucky, living well"—as they build the socialist paradise while the West rots on the garbage heap of history.

Living and working in Russia for the past three decades, I've become acquainted with people from a broad range of social strata—from government ministers to migrant workers. I turned to them to collect and distill their insights on how Russian thinking has changed since the end of the USSR.

The Evolution of *Homo Rusicus*

My friend Mikhailovich is a middle-aged entrepreneur who moved to Moscow from Kyiv as a young man. He believes that the factors contributing to an individual's mentality are both experiential and hereditary.

"Look at the past 400 years. The Romanov dynasty started in 1613 and lasted 300 years," Mikhailovich says. "The communists were in power for 74 years, and we've been free of them for 25 years. It is not a coincidence that 75 percent of the population are content to live under authoritarian rule; 24 percent think like communists—either thieves or despis-

SHAWN DORMAN

People line up to purchase milk at a store in Syktyvkar, Russia, in 1989. At right, an August 1989 ration voucher for tea.

ers of private property and individual success; and only about 1 percent we can call 'neo-Russian'—those with a balanced view of the external world and a desire to live and function in a progressive society."

Yurevich, another friend, has lived and worked in Moscow since completing his studies at the end of the 1980s. He puts the same idea another way, pointing out how long it takes for any society to free itself of the slave mentality: "About 150 years ago, Russia formally ended serfdom—the same time as the abolition of slavery in the United States. See how long the echo of distrust and low self-esteem lasts in both countries? And the slave belief that a man is unable to influence his fate has remained an element of the Russian soul since then. It helped the czars and the communists maintain power after emancipation…and is a big factor in the government's popularity now.

"Periods of oppression followed one after the other," continues Yurevich. "In 1917, the Communists destroyed the thin layer of society whose members had begun to raise their heads after the emancipation of 1861—the *kulaki* (wealthy farmers), the new intelligentsia and leading engineers. They were killed or compelled to emigrate, so the West got Sikorsky, Bunin and many others."

"It's in the *Homo rusicus* genes to count not on himself, but on someone from above," Yurevich says. "He has had few opportunities to express his intellect and talents. As the poet Nikolay Nekrasov wrote, 'The master will come and the master will solve the problem.'"

An engineer by training, Yurevich sees the lack of personal accountability as an explanation for the fact that Russian innovation rarely makes it to market thanks to a Russian. It takes determination born of a sense of ownership and responsibility to turn an idea into a product.

Perestroika, the effort to restructure the political and economic life of the country initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s, gave people a chance to open their eyes and start thinking for themselves. "But the only way to incubate a mentality of accountability and free-thinking is via the education system; and it's not visible yet," Yurevich adds. "Still, many people have learned to overcome the infantilism of the USSR and become responsible for their own fate."

The More Things Change

The wave of capitalism rolled eastward in the 1990s, and the landscape changed forever. Fanatic consumerism is now unabated, as are the traffic jams—which often reach maximum density around shopping centers.

But many average Russians were washed overboard in the torrent. Even those who find success and happiness in post-Soviet Russia are nostalgic. Beyond getting used to the new perceived reality of poor-quality, high-priced "public" education and health care, there are changes in the very fabric of society. Gaping sinkholes in the mental landscape have appeared. Beloved traditions have disappeared out of reach forever. Friendships are harder to form—there is less interdependence and less time. Discourse at the kitchen table has been replaced by a mind-numbing flat-screen TV and "googling" for answers.

Druzhba narodov (the friendship of peoples), which described respectful interaction between Russia's ethnic groups in the Soviet era, took a nosedive as migrants began to compete with locals for jobs and social services. Tensions, real and imag-

SHAWN DORMAN

Street musician draws a crowd on Arbat Street, Moscow, 1988.

ined, flare on the borders and between nationalities. Families are divided across former republics by political maneuvering and military conflicts. At home, the *dvor* (apartment yard), with its herd of children banding together after school to explore territory and relationships, is now blocked off by a semaphore gate and occupied by parked cars and trash containers.

Filipovich, a retiree who emigrated to California a few years ago, fondly recalls the sense of wonder the average post-Soviet citizen experienced in the 1990s when foreigners shared elements of their high standard of living. A Snickers bar cut into a dozen slices could easily bring joy to an entire group of friends.

The bucolic but tipsy countryside, where doors went unlocked and a stranger could appear and count on room and board with no remuneration expected, is no more. Yevgenevich, a 45-year-old native Muscovite executive, says poverty and a sense of desertion have fostered cynicism and greed in rural Russia. Those who are able flee, migrating to the big cities in search of education, goods and jobs unavailable at home. Residents of regional cities fare better. But by and large, they are focused inward. They use their limited disposable income not for travel, but for apartment remodeling and buying consumer goods—often on credit.

The culture of leadership has changed, too. Petrovich, a retired government official in his seventies, laments a loss of accountability among the political elite. When Mathias Rust landed in Red Square in 1987, the defense minister and a dozen generals were fired, and no one was surprised. This year Russia's reputation as a sporting power was decimated by a doping scandal, and the sports minister, a longtime friend of the president, got promoted. Today, power is based on a St. Petersburg pedi-

ARTHUR BONDAR

New creative art space with book shops, studios, galleries and educational centers at the Red October factory (former chocolate factory) in the center of Moscow, February 2016.

gree and your historical ties to the inner circle. Though it was never much of a meritocracy, the political and industrial leaders of the USSR were from a far broader geographic base and had a far more restrictive code of conduct.

Meanwhile, the average Russian now believes that Mikhail Gorbachev was an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency. How else to explain the events that led to the end of a country as powerful as the USSR?

Relative Political Freedom Has Its Benefits

But there are also developments feeding an authentic sense of pride. With the cult of the individual taking hold, Ayn Rand's objectivist philosophy is no longer seen as an anti-lesson but rather as a model with a growing fan base. In typical Russian fashion, this cuts both ways. While some pursue goals, many are returning to the involuntary mindfulness of the USSR—living one day at a time, with no grand ambitions. This time it's not the result of blissful state-sponsored ignorance, but reignited uncertainty about the future.

Despite the pendulum's swing toward conservatism, including current draconian laws and official morality, many Russians are comparatively more liberal in their thinking about gender today than in the Soviet period. Several major cities have at least one underground gay club, which survives thanks to a national "don't ask, don't tell" mentality. And while in the USSR the only steering wheel behind which you could find a woman was that of a tractor or trolley bus, female automobile drivers are now a common sight on the road.

Political freedom is also a relative concept. One friend illustrates how people here perceive democracy using the joke about a couple celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

"How did you do it?" a guest at the celebration asks the husband.

"Simple," he says. "When we got married she told me she never wants to have a disagreement, and proposed we divide our authority. I make all the big decisions; she makes all the small ones."

"And how did that work out?" the guest asks.

"Great," he says. "It turns out there has never been the need to make a big decision."

Indeed, with the electorate cajoled into showing up at the polls, voting irregularities and a barely nascent concept of conflict of interest, the democratic landscape resembles that of the late 19th-century United States—which is significant progress over the Soviet period.

"Now, activists are running for office," says long-serving State Department Kremlinologist Igor Belousovitch. "They are visible in the press, they are grudgingly recognized by the authorities. … Who would have thought in the days [of the USSR] that opponents of the regime would be running for office and even joining legislative bodies?"

Freedom of worship, at least for mainstream religions, is another new concept that *Homo rusicus* has in his quiver to help compensate for his losses. The millennium anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1988, under the tolerant watch of the *glasnost* (openness) campaign, gave a kickstart to the rebirth of that religion. Now more than 70 percent of the population openly associates itself with orthodoxy, and the genuinely faithful can be found at all levels of society.

Looking Outwards

In the late 1980s, when not patrolling the subway station in search of the almighty dollar, Sasha the *fartsovchik* would collect and play games with *fantiki*—the colorful wrappers of imported chewing gum. During the era of *glasnost* and U.S.-Soviet peacemaking between President Ronald Reagan and General Secre-

tary Mikhail Gorbachev, some began to think that "help from above"—formerly the exclusive role of the party and its leadership—might now be coming from the West.

Teens and young adults of the late 1980s and early 1990s began to get more access to Western goods and culture. The forbidden fruit tasted sweet. With the disintegration of the USSR, it wasn't hard to conclude that communism had been a mistake. Many of that generation believed their government would learn from the West. Democracy was just around the bend.

This kind of *zapadnichestvo* (reverence of all things Western) traces its roots to Peter the Great, illustrated in the 1928 satirical novel by Ilya Ilf and Evgeny Petrov, *The Twelve Chairs*. As the New Economic Policy–era collective discusses a way out of its dire economic straits, con man Ostap Bender chimes in with a typical Russian combination of sarcasm and faith, "Don't worry. The West will save us!" This faith has not, however, been constant: the economic crises of 1991, 1998, 2008 and 2016 jolted some into doubting the sanctity of the world economic order and its worthiness as a role model. Yet my friend Yurevich remains optimistic: "In any case, we have become more broad-minded, thanks to the flow of information."

At the same time, this expansion of intellectual horizons has not been fully embraced by the government, since a free-thinking citizenry is not an element of a monarchy or any of its authoritarian permutations. Yurevich offered an example: I had been taught that Stalin locked up many returning Russian prisoners of war because they were considered traitors for allowing themselves to be captured. But Stalin's real fear, according to Yurevich, was that the soldiers might share their impressions of the Germans' high standard of living.

The Door Is Ajar

Mikhailovich concurs that the door to the West is still only ajar. The volume of exchange is paltry. The neo-Russian minority—1 percent of the population—has begun to travel the world as tourists, students and businessmen. The West has penetrated their souls, at least superficially. But only a sliver of the total populace has experienced this, or had the opportunity to interact with intrepid foreigners studying and working in Russia.

Thanks to subsistence-level salaries, labor market dynamics and registration rules, Russia remains a highly immobile society—especially for residents of the regions. The vast majority of the Russian population read about foreigners in books and watch foreign movies, but they have only a vague idea of how foreigners really live. The most mundane things can easily shock them. Lenochka, a young woman from central Russia, tells of the teacher

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Above left: Daily life on Tretyakovskiy Proezd Street, Moscow, February 2016. Above right: A young woman texts on the embankment in Sochi, Russia, February 2014.

from her provincial town who recently shared with the local paper her deep insight from a trip to Europe: how the aborigines (a Russian term for natives of other countries) are disciplined and throw their garbage into rubbish bins. The effort to separate items for recycling impressed her even more.

It was only natural that an element of resentment would emerge. Vladimir Kartsev, in his 1995 biography of populist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky, tries to explain the phenomenon by asking the American reader to step into the shoes of his Russian counterpart living in post-Soviet chaos: "Imagine General Motors and General Electric have been bought and taken over by local sheriffs. Lockheed is producing pots and pans. … Texas is engaged in a bloody war with Arkansas. Hawaii, New Mexico and Alaska have declared independence and called for a jihad against the U.S. government. … All you can see on television are old Russian films and ads for Stolichnaya vodka."

> The barrage of "feel good" TV programming—where, as one pundit put it, "prosperity is a state of mind"—is having an effect. Economic and other statistics indicate a real decline in the standard of living.

Now there is funding for domestically produced TV and film content. Anti-Western rhetoric has skyrocketed since the start of the current geopolitical rift. Meanwhile, more than half the population considers television the most trustworthy news source, according to a poll last year by the Levada Center, an independent research organization. And because people have little firsthand knowledge about foreigners, it is easy for TV producers to hop on the pendulum as it swings back against the West. In this way they impose their state-sponsored views: the West must be feared, Western people have crumbling morals, etc.

Though it serves as a weather vane for the ever-present Russian duality, the pendulum casts its shadow only on the surface. Foreign is, was and always will be cool…at least in terms of gadgets, food and films. Still, the anti-West swing has a dangerous effect on the mindset. A 2015 Levada poll found that 31 percent of Russians believe the United States might attack their country.

The vast majority of Russians remain convinced of their country's greatness: 25 percent believe that Russia is already a "great power," and another 49 percent believe it will become one in the near future, according to 2016 Levada figures. Interestingly, in 2014 the "leading indicators" of this greatness in the minds of the respondents were the country's "developed economy" and "strong military"—52 percent and 42 percent respectively. Those factors have now dropped to 37 percent and 26 percent respectively. As of this year, 38 percent of respondents believe the country's greatness is evidenced first and foremost by the "well-being of its citizens." The

barrage of "feel good" TV programming—where, as one pundit put it, "prosperity is a state of mind"—is having an effect. Economic and other statistics indicate a real decline in the standard of living.

The neo-Russians, for their part, don't trust their televisions. They are uneasy. Another Levada poll in July revealed that 42 percent of 500 senior managers of domestic and foreign companies working in Russia want to emigrate. Meanwhile, the number of foreign specialists coming into Russia has declined dramatically, with information agency Ros Business Consulting reporting a 57-percent drop in work permits issued for "highly qualified" European executives in 2015 compared to 2013.

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People enjoying Mayakovskaya Square in Moscow in February, after its renovation.

What's to Be Done?

Dissecting the deception is the best hope for reaching the Russian mind, Yurevich says: "Our government wants the people to equate love for the motherland with love for the state. But the motherland is not the state: it is the people, the soil, the culture. The West should understand this and leverage it in each communication; differentiate every time there is a comment or criticism of the state. Don't say 'The Russians annexed Crimea.' Say 'The Russian government…'"

Mikhailovich remains calm, pours another cup of tea and points out that Russia's relationship with the West must be looked at as an interaction between different civilizations. "We are just at the initial stage of getting acquainted. There are pain points in the process: high expectations on both sides. Those who have faith and a long-term strategy—in diplomatic, business and personal relations—are the ones who will succeed. Besides, don't forget: it's a pendulum. It swings back and forth."

Mikhailovich's thesis that 75 percent of the people need authoritarian rule explains President Vladimir Putin's huge popularity. It is noteworthy that despite the herd mentality fostered by television and exemplified by gangs of rowdy soccer fans, Mikhailovich has such faith. He is convinced that if a brawling Russian were to break away from the mob and face his foreign counterpart as an individual, his façade of nationalism and bravado would quickly fall and the humility of his Russian soul would emerge…probably. Keeping in mind the more subtle elements of history and culture will help to facilitate understanding.

Tatyana, a 38-year-old professional, was born in the Urals, lived for many years in Moscow, but has since moved to Italy to escape the superficial materialistic *suyta* (fuss) that she says has possessed the capital city. She chose family as a metaphor for understanding mindsets. "Putin's Russia is only 16 years old: a teenager—a boy, I think, with all the associated testosterone, insecurity and potential for development. The United States is the baffled, self-absorbed middle-aged parent, occasionally trying to find a common language. Then we have Grandma Europe: overindulgent, a bit clueless, but applying wisdom to her relationships."

Counting on Kolya

And finally, there is Cousin Kolya. In his mid-60s, Kolya lives in a village 150 miles north of Moscow. A professional fireman in the Soviet era, in the early 1990s he made his first trip to Poland to buy cheap Western housewares for resale back home. He built a business, bought a log cabin on a small plot of land and put his son through college. Now he and his wife focus on their vegetable garden, chickens and honey bees.

As stoic as the farmer with the pitchfork in Grant Wood's "American Gothic," Kolya survives and thrives on self-reliance, faith in a higher power and a quasi-Tolstoyan philosophy of distrusting the state. Unlike Lev Nikolayevich, he enjoys meat and moonshine…in moderation. Like most Russians, a healthy respect for fate permeates his ideology.

"Do most Russians think differently now?" I ask him.

Kolya doesn't hesitate. "No."

"But what about you?"

"I had my own personal *perestroika*. Many people haven't." ■

UKRAINE IN 2016: THERE'S NO GOING BACK

BY WILLIAM GLEASON

Young Ukrainian leaders battle Russian pressure, endemic corruption and a moribund economy in pursuit of a new, independent identity.

For most of its history, Ukraine has been treated as a stateless borderland of scattered peoples wedged between competing civilizations—principally Poland and Russia. But over the past quarter-century, that perception has been replaced by a new orientation, a new identity that is Western in design and democratic in substance.

The students at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, where I taught in the 1990s and returned in 2015 to conduct a seminar on modern Europe, certainly believe that a historic change is underway in their country, one that will not be reversed. And they have been instrumental in making it a reality. Both students and faculty at Mohyla, the best university in Ukraine, played a key organizing role in the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Euromaidan movement of 2013-2014.

Now they are united in their determination to Europeanize their education and Ukraine's future. None of these students lived under Soviet power. Twenty-five years have passed since Moscow ruled Ukraine. Almost two generations of students and young people, in general, have reached maturity since 1991, when the USSR imploded. Many now hold leadership positions in business and government. As one student put it when the seminar began: "We are not hesitant. Our parents often hesitated and sometimes, even, our older brothers and sisters. We know that freedom must be earned and can disappear. It has to be fought for, sometimes. It is always fragile."

The co-manager of the Sherborne Guest House, a boutique hotel where I lodge during my annual trips to Kyiv, would agree. As she mused one afternoon while I was checking in: "Until 2014, 90 percent of our guests came from Russia—90 percent! But since the summer of 2014, zero guests from Russia. Not one Russian guest over the past 18 months. Not a single person. But our rooms are still full—full of Ukrainians and visitors from elsewhere."

She continued: "To me, that says it all. It tells me that Ukrainians and Russians are no longer members of an extended family. It also tells me that Ukraine may finally become a real country, a country more sure of itself, a country with its own identity."

William Gleason spent five years teaching in Ukraine (1995-2000), including three as a Senior Fulbright Lecturer at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, and two as the founding director of the Fulbright Program for Ukraine. As coordinator for Eurasian studies at the Foreign Service Institute until recently, he returned to the capital every year since 2000, and last year led a weeklong seminar there on the nature of modern history at the invitation of The Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. He is now an independent scholar/writer on Ukraine.

Three Challenges

At the same time, Ukraine faces three major challenges that, if unresolved, could trump the passion of millions who stood on the Euromaidan in downtown Kyiv in 2013 and 2014. The first challenge is the crushing burden of a corrupt economy. Endemic corruption has threatened Ukraine's stability ever since the Soviet era, when bribes and kickbacks of all kinds were universal. Today the country's economy is run by roughly a dozen oligarchs, who are unanswerable to consumers and even the Parliament (Verkovna Rada). State enterprises—more than 1,800 of them at last count and all overstaffed—lose money but continue to operate.

SASHA MAKSYMENKO/ WIKIMEDIA

Euromaidan protests in Kyiv, 2013.

> Today the country's economy is run by roughly a dozen oligarchs, who are unanswerable to consumers and even the Parliament.

This problem is widely recognized. Vice President Joe Biden has traveled to Kyiv regularly to urge the Ukrainian leadership to press on with the battle against corruption. It should be noted that President Petro Poroshenko, himself an oligarch, came to power in 2014 on a wave of popular resentment toward the previous president, the criminally corrupt Viktor Yanukovych. Now, however, Poroshenko pleads for patience from the general population, even as key pro-reform ministers like Aivaras Abromavicius, who was in charge of the economy and trade, continue to resign.

As one student at The Kyiv-Mohyla Academy told me last fall: "When it comes to corruption, the clock is ticking. After all, both the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan were driven by demands for justice. We may need a third Maidan."

The Western Lifeline

European and American assistance to Kyiv has made a real difference over the years. But the second challenge to political stability is closely bound up with the first: uncertainty that Western aid will continue to sustain the beleaguered Ukrainian economy.

One example is academic and student exchanges, such as the Fulbright Program. I had the good fortune to direct this from its inception in 1998, and over the first two years the number of Ukrainian grants doubled. That movement upward has continued to the present, and now offers Ukrainian high school students the opportunity to attend schools across America. The same priceless opportunity has come to younger faculty (instructors and assistant professors) to spend up to an academic year in the United States upgrading their teaching skills.

Our economic assistance is also impressive, encompassing energy subsidies and U.S. exports of iron and steel, farm products and aircraft. Two years ago, we also facilitated a four-year, $40 billion International Monetary Fund bailout; but persis-

ALEXANDER NOSKIN/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kyiv.

tent corruption, including allegations of presidential aides scheming undercover to manipulate state enterprises, provoked the IMF to freeze payments to Ukraine in 2015. Vice President Biden and IMF officials have both warned Pres. Poroshenko that resumption of payments hinges on meaningful economic reform—in particular, ending bribes to oligarchs who continue to siphon off badly needed funds for economic development.

Few in Kyiv, however, believe that an all-out assault on the oligarchs is about to happen. The gravity of this came home recently when the ultra-competent finance minister, the Ukrainian-American Natalia Jaresko, refused to remain in the government.

Finally, generous economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine stands in stark contrast to military aid for the war in the Donbass, Ukraine's industrial southeast. To date, more than 9,000 people have died there, many of them civilians. And nearly 1.5 million refugees from the Donbass have fled into other parts of Ukraine, with another half-million moving to Russia. Efforts by Poroshenko to secure heavy arms from Europe or America have not borne fruit, except for a military training program led by some 300 American advisers, stationed near Lviv in western Ukraine.

The Russian Bear

All of this brings us to Ukraine's biggest challenge, which can be summed up in two words: Vladimir Putin. Over and over, the Russian president has refused to accept Ukraine's very existence, as when he told former President George W. Bush in 2008 that Ukraine was "not even a legitimate nation."

No one held the Euromaidan or the Orange Revolution in greater contempt than Putin, perhaps for good reason. After all, a successful Ukraine, free and prosperous, would cast a long shadow over his increasingly authoritarian regime. The 2014 ouster of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, a Putin loyalist who had attempted to bring Kyiv into the Russian-led Customs Union, only increased Putin's ire.

Putin took revenge by seizing the strategically vital Crimean Peninsula on the Black Sea and sponsoring a pro-Russia insurrection in southeastern Ukraine, the Donbass. Though he insists to this day that no Russian soldiers have ever been there, skirmishes between rebels and the central government continue with no end in sight.

The reformist government is pro-European, though recent ministerial resignations over alleged backroom deals raise troubling questions.

After Ukrainian rebels used a Russian rocket to down a Malaysia Airlines airliner flying over the region, killing almost 300 people, the European Union and America jointly imposed severe economic sanctions on Moscow in July 2014. These measures, which remain in effect, have plunged the Russian economy—already reeling from a sharp drop in energy prices on which the Kremlin relies to balance its budget—into a recession that is now well into its third year.

Nonetheless, no one believes that Crimea is coming back to Ukraine anytime soon, if ever. Putin prizes the peninsula's strategic significance far too much, as shown by the fact that the Russian fleet has long been anchored at Sebastopol. Moreover, the Russian leader views Crimea as the cradle of Russian civilization because it was there, in 988, that Grand Prince Volodymyr, leader of Kyivan Rus, accepted the Christian faith and was baptized.

Signs of Hope

In the midst of all the gloom, Ukraine has seen some positive developments, however. Many new parliamentarians, elected in 2014, are youthful activists, tested on the Maidan. The reformist government is pro-European, though recent ministerial resignations over alleged backroom deals raise

troubling questions.

Parliament is moving to clean up the judiciary, a long overdue reform to a system where judges often act as political pawns. And one detested group, the street police, underwent major change in 2015. When I visited Kyiv last year, I witnessed friendly relations between police and pedestrians, something I had never seen before.

Finally, resentment of Putin remains high, and that has translated into a feeling of unity among Ukrainians. A student at Kyiv-Mohyla put it this way to me in 2015: "Putin has done more to bring us together than any single individual I can recall. 1991 brought us independence, but not a new identity. The Maidan, and Putin's behavior following the Maidan, gave us what we needed: a sense of being Ukrainian."

Resentment of Russian President Vladimir Putin remains high, and that has translated into a feeling of unity among Ukrainians.

Anna Reid, acclaimed author of *Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine* (2015, second edition), shares that assessment. She writes: "The biggest change since I lived in Ukraine in the 1990s is that now it feels like a real country. Ukraine is no longer a borderland. It is its own place, and is here to stay."

One can only hope that Reid, the students across Ukraine and the millions who have put—and continue to put—their lives on the line, are right: Their country has finally arrived on the world stage. It faces many obstacles, but if it survives, there is no going back. ■

COMMUNICATIONS BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

BY TIMOTHY C. LAWSON

This firsthand account of a fire in the secure area of Embassy Moscow on March 28, 1991, conveys the importance and drama of Diplomatic Telecommunications Service work during the last days of the USSR.

March 28, 1991. Moscow's gray Stalinist-style buildings—adorned with red, hammer–and-sickle-emblazoned flags waving in the wind—loomed against a metallic sky. The sidewalk from the new embassy compound up to the old embassy, where I worked, was slippery with dirty, melting snow. A small church, nicknamed "Our Lady of Eternal Surveillance" or, later, "Our Lady of Perpetual Observation" because it doubled as a KGB listening post, sat directly across the street. The morning was normal but for one thing: tension hung in the air like icicles, a tension felt not only by our embassy reporting officers, but by millions of Soviet citizens.

Supporters of Boris Yeltsin, then president of the Russian Federation, planned to stage a demonstration that day. Even after the fall of the Berlin Wall, demonstrations inside the USSR were rare. This one, if held, would directly defy Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The yoke of control was still tight, with the Kremlin remaining our number-one national security threat, but fissures in the heart of communism were forming. You could see it on Arbat Street, teeming with subversive artists and

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cafes and where, after dusk, Order of Lenin medals could be had for a handful of rubles. Change was coming.

Just after 10 in the morning, a fire alarm in the embassy blared. With ongoing construction in the chancery it frequently activated for no reason. Such were working conditions inside our dilapidated embassy, one the United States had occupied since 1953. Unconcerned, I went to reset the alarm (our normal response) and to get another cup of coffee; unbeknownst to me, a thick plume of white and yellow smoke was rising from below. Like a great billowing ghost racing up the stairwell, it approached my office, gateway to the most secure area of any U.S. embassy: the Communications Programs Unit (known as the CPU).

Even without a Top Secret security clearance, safe combinations or "Cryptographic For Use" access, the approaching fire would prove unstoppable.

Back to the Future

Only a year earlier, another staffer had called out to me from across our secure communications vault, "Tim, come look at this!" It was a secret, captioned cable approved by Ambassador Jack Matlock for immediate transmission to Washington (e.g., the White House, State Department, CIA and Joint Chiefs of Staff). 90 Moscow 23603's ominous subject line: "LOOKING INTO THE ABYSS: THE POSSIBLE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING ABOUT IT."

The cable was clearly the most sensitive I'd ever seen. Because of that sensitivity, Ambassador Jack Matlock and drafting officer Ray Smith (see his article, p. 21) requested that special handling and encoding safeguards be applied. Known as "double encryption" (a process unique to the Foreign Service and the DTS), this involved one-time encoding augmented by "bulk encryption," achieving a level of protection good enough to stop even today's hackers dead in their tracks. The predictions laid out in the cable would, barely a year later, prove prophetic.

Looking back, there is no question that 90 Moscow 23603 (declassified in 2007) and other cogent reporting cables proved the predictive powers of the Foreign Service. These cables showcased the substantive intellectual skills, understanding and influence that quietly drew political insights about the realities both inside and outside the Soviet politburo. The "last three feet" of one-on-one diplomacy led to astute on-the-ground analysis that even today serves as a benchmark for successful reporting.

As Ambassador Matlock later wrote: "Embassy Moscow and its associated posts covered political and economic developments in the Soviet Union during the years leading up to and through the breakup without the assistance of a single clandestine source. By 1987, every 'human intelligence' source in the Soviet Union had been exposed to the KGB, not through lack of security at the Embassy Moscow, as many in Washington once suspected, but—as we learned years later—by moles in the CIA (Aldrich Ames) and the FBI (Robert Hanssen). The most serious security lapses by far occurred in Washington, not in Moscow" (see "Embassy Moscow: On the Front Lines of History" in the December 2011 *FSJ*).

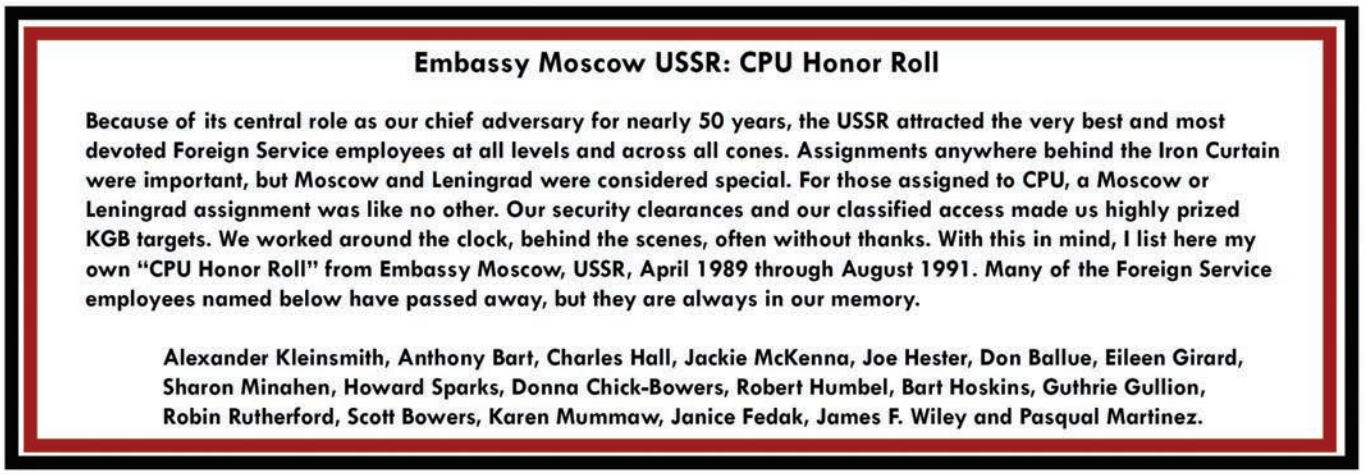
Equally important was the support provided by our management section and in particular, by the team I led: the CPU. Moscow's CPU was responsible for secret communications involving history-making strategy. Seven days a week, 24 hours a day, we managed the department's largest TEMPEST personal computer program for classified processing and provided emergency radio, telephone and pouch services. Unlike other CPU operations, we served as the embassy's official liaison to the Soviet Foreign Ministry for Direct Communication Link (i.e., "hotline") issues and for a separate, fledgling Nuclear Risk Reduction Center initiative.

A Moscow assignment meant earning your pay and then some. As a 32-year-old FS-4 encumbering an FS-1 information management officer position in charge of it all, I would, indeed, earn my pay.

Preventing Nuclear War

In support of President George H.W. Bush's "confidence-building measures," CPU coordinated logistical arrangements for DCL and NRRC negotiations. The negotiations produced important agreements, some still in force today. While the hotline could be used for any global crisis, the NRRC was specifically designed to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war between the United States and the USSR.

Article 2 of the NRRC protocol tasked my staff with a special duty: It called upon each party, through its embassy, to provide



cryptographic keying material to operate the NRRC securely. This would lead to one of the most bizarre experiences of my career. Hand-delivering a top secret cryptographic key to Soviet personnel was something I had seen in James Bond and other spy thrillers, but never imagined doing myself. Yet those were our instructions.

Still—remembering my former U.S. military training and the "Evil Empire" mantra from my first Moscow assignment (1983-1985), as well as the "Year of the Spy" only five years prior—the communist bogey-man haunted us. Microwave beams aimed at CPU and my living quarters, "spy dust" on my car's steering wheel and KGB-bugged embassy typewriters made the NRRC crypto protocol feel traitorous, until we were assured by the highest levels that it was to prevent nuclear war.

And so in late 1989 I found myself accompanying a senior NRRC delegate from the White House on a special mission. Down iron stairways, through echoing corridors of reinforced concrete and manned by armed Soviet soldiers, we made our way deep inside an underground Soviet nuclear command bunker. In my hand was an NRRC protocol document from the U.S. president. As a Soviet general and two staff aides approached, I knew this was more than routine diplomacy. It was a once-in-a-lifetime national security task, with implications for the entire planet.

> Moscow's CPU was responsible for secret communications involving history-making strategy—seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

VIP Visits and "Oval Office-Style" Tutoring

From 1989 to 1991, the embassy hosted high-level visits from virtually every Cabinet agency of the U.S. government, with Secretary of State James Baker visiting Moscow almost monthly. One of the most unusual and demanding visits was that of Pres. Bush's chief of staff, John Sununu.

Following the Soviet Parliament's election of Gorbachev to the newly created position of President of the Soviet Union (in addition to General Secretary of the Communist Party), Gorbachev expressed interest in creating an American-style "Oval Office." Pres. Bush dispatched Sununu to assist. Although reports varied on the effectiveness of Sununu's Kremlin tutoring, the five-day visit required close coordination with the White House.

I can recall the expression of shock by our resident secure telephone officer (communications electronic officer–telephone, CEO/T) when Washington advised that Sununu would need private and continuous telephone connectivity to the White House—directly from Red Square. Saying no was not an option. While the arcane technical solution employed to

achieve this feat cannot be explained here, our CEO/T heroically made the impossible possible.

As U.S. media later reported: "Sununu was in touch with the White House at all times, and could have gotten through to the president on his cigarette boat off the Maine coast from anywhere inside the Kremlin." Not reported was the magic of CEO/T Charlie Hall, who made it possible.

Tension, Smoke and Fear

It was now approximately 10:25 on that March morning in 1991. As the fire raged below, everyone had evacuated the building except for me and one other communicator, Donna Chick-Bowers. Donna and I needed to ensure that the CPU was secure, that Washington was notified, and that combinations and emergency crypto keys were gathered before we could evacuate. Once finished, we opened the electronic doors to my outside office and were immediately engulfed in billowing smoke, unable to see, barely able to breathe.

What had been tension now changed to outright fear. I thought back to the recent death of a communications colleague, on temporary duty (TDY) from Embassy Helsinki to Leningrad, who perished because of heavy smoke caused by fire. In that tragedy, smoke overcame Support Communications Officer Pasqual Martinez in his hotel room. Pasqual's remains were only identified via dental records. He had volunteered for the TDY to Leningrad at my request.

Donna and I struggled to find the exit. In the hallway we were blinded by smoke. Clinging to the metal railing along the stairwell, coughing, trying to take in only tiny gasps of smoky air, we descended several flights to what was supposed to be an emergency exit. But when I pushed the exit open, a towering burst of flames roared at us from the source of the fire itself. We had no choice but to climb back up two flights of stairs to the front entrance of the embassy, now our only escape route. We were the last two employees to evacuate, but we had survived.

Final Communications, Silent Glory

The USSR's deadline with history was fast approaching, but my staff was about to experience what would be perhaps our finest hour in Moscow. Even as three suspected KGB "firemen" were spotted by our security personnel leaving the building, evading an RSO checkpoint and departing via a strategically positioned taxi around the corner, the CPU and our systems team were already hard at work, restoring vital command-and-control circuitry to an alternate embassy site and installing unclassified workstations in the cafeteria.

Members of my team reentered the burning embassy, more than once, to retrieve essential components without which Embassy Moscow would have lost contact with the outside world (this was before internet, email and social media).

Courageously, members of my team reentered the burning embassy, more than once, to retrieve essential components without which Embassy Moscow would have lost contact with the outside world (this was before internet, email and social media). CEOs Bart and Hall combined cryptographic and telephony skills to restore secure-voice capability, enabling the ambassador to contact Washington. In what was arguably the most important post in the world, only hours after a major fire, America's eyes and ears were once again functioning. It was a proud moment to be in the Foreign Service and a member of the DTS. This was, after all, America's first line of defense: U.S. Embassy Moscow.

Despite the challenges we faced inside a rapidly crumbling USSR, Washington expected a world-class performance. Our achievements inside a Soviet Union that no longer exists won us a Superior Honor Award nomination, but not the prize itself. Diplomatic Security would not authorize the award, citing "security reasons."

The words of George F. Kennan, former ambassador to the USSR, were relevant to my Moscow staff on that day in 1991: "It takes a special love of country to pursue, with love, faith and cheerfulness, work for which no parades will ever march, no crowds will ever cheer and no bands will ever play." I dedicate this article to all former, present and future Embassy Moscow employees, with a special salute to all information resource management specialists. ■

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At a working session at Hofdi House during the Reykjavík Summit, October 1986. From left: General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev, an interpreter, USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, U.S. President Ronald Reagan, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

GROUNDBREAKING DIPLOMACY

AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE SHULTZ

BY JAMES E. GOODBY

George Shultz reflects on his tenure as Secretary of State in the Reagan administration and the process of making foreign policy and conducting diplomacy during the decade leading up to the fall of the Soviet Union.

Editor's Note: George P. Shultz is an economist and Republican presidential adviser best known for serving as Secretary of State under Ronald Reagan. He joined the Nixon administration in 1969 and served as secretary of Labor, director of the Office of Management and Budget, and secretary of the Treasury. Shultz was president of Bechtel and an economic adviser to President Ronald Reagan when he was tapped to replace Alexander Haig as Secretary of State in 1982. He served for the remainder of Reagan's time in office, and was awarded the Medal of Freedom by Ronald Reagan in 1989.

The Foreign Service Journal *is pleased to publish this transcript of James E. Goodby's interview with the former Secretary of State. The interview was conducted in October 2015 in connection with a study at Stanford University's Hoover Institution on governance in America, but it was never published. The general theme of their conversation is how Secretary Shultz perceived his service to President Ronald Reagan, whom he served for six years, and the Secretary's reflections on President Reagan's approach to strategic thinking.*

James E. Goodby: *Mr. Secretary, we have talked before about your role as Secretary of State in the Reagan administration. What I would like to do is sound you out about Ronald Reagan, about presidents, and about your relations with the White House. I would like to begin by quoting something from your 1993 memoir,* Turmoil and Triumph. *In it, you said something that struck me very forcefully: that Reagan, like any president, had his flaws and strengths, and the job of an adviser was to build on his strengths and try to help him overcome whatever flaws he might have. What struck me about that observation was that it was rather similar to something that Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote about his relationship with President Harry Truman.*

George Shultz: I think the Secretary of State needs to have the same attitude any other Cabinet officer does. People would ask me what my foreign policy was, and I always said, "I do not have one; the president has one. My job is to help him formulate it and carry it out, but it is the president's foreign policy." So I think you need to be clear about who is the guy who got elected.

However, I had something special that President Reagan suggested himself. We had twice-weekly private meetings, just the two of us. Of course, we would talk about whatever he wanted to talk about, and I always had an agenda of my own. We tried to look over the horizon and not make any decisions, but in the process, I got to know him very well. I think that in all of my early associations with him, which went back quite a bit before I became his Secretary of State, we had managed to build between us (and also between Nancy and me) a relationship of trust. He knew that I would tell him what I thought, and he also knew that I knew it was his foreign policy, not mine. So we had good conversations, but underneath it all was trust.

One of the outstanding things about President Reagan was his consistency and the way he handled himself. People trusted him. Here is an example. One time [German Chancellor] Helmut Kohl came to Washington about four months before the president was to go to Germany. Kohl said, "When [French President François] Mitterrand and I went to a cemetery where French and German soldiers were buried, we had a handshake. It was publicized and was very good for both of us. You are coming to Germany, Mr. President; would you come to a cemetery and do the same thing?"

President Reagan agreed. Then the Germans sent word they had picked the cemetery, a place called Bitburg, and some

James E. Goodby, currently an Annenberg Distinguished Visiting Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, retired from the Foreign Service in 1989 with the rank of Career Minister. His diplomatic career included assignments as a deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (1974-1977) and Bureau of European Affairs (1977-1980), ambassador to Finland (1980-1981), vice chair of the U.S. delegation to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty talks (1981-1983) and head of the U.S. delegation to the Conference on Confidence-Building Measures in Europe (1983-1985).

In 1993 Ambassador Goodby was recalled to serve as chief negotiator for the Nunn-Lugar nuclear threat reduction agreements (1993-1994), special representative of the president for the security and dismantlement of nuclear weapons (1995-1996), and deputy to the special adviser to the president and Secretary of State for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (2000-2001). He is the author of At the Borderline of Armageddon: How American Presidents Managed the Atomic Bomb (Rowman & Littlefield, 2006) *and* Europe Undivided *(U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1998), His article, "The Putin Doctrine and Preventive Diplomacy," appeared in the November 2014 issue of the* Journal.

DoD did not like the idea of negotiating, but President Reagan did. … And in the fall of 1985 we had the big meeting in Geneva between President Reagan and then-Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev.

White House person did a little checking and said OK. But once they shoveled the snow off the gravestones and discovered SS troops were buried there, all hell broke loose.

I remember Elie Wiesel came to the White House and said, "Mr. President, your place is not with the SS; your place is with the victims of the SS." It was lots of pressure. We tried to get the Germans to change the site. We made a lot of suggestions for alternatives, and they would not change. So, in the end, he went.

After that, he went home and I went to Israel to be the speaker at the unveiling of the outdoor Yad Vashem [Israel's official Holocaust memorial]. When I came back to Washington, I stopped in London for a talk with [British Prime Minister] Margaret Thatcher. She said to me, "You know, there is not another leader in the free world that would have taken the political beating at home your president took to deliver on a promise that he made. But one thing you can be sure of with Ronald Reagan: If he gives you his word, that is it."

And that is a very important thing to establish: that you are good for your word.

JEG: *Another thing you said in your memoir is that it is not just having strength that gives an advantage to a nation, but knowing what to do with it. President Reagan was ready to negotiate [with the Soviets], but some of his advisers were not so ready. You backed him up, and that contributed to his strength. I presume you thought that he would be as successful as he was with your support. Could you tell us a little about that part of it?*

GS: I have always felt that strength and diplomacy go together. If you go to a negotiation and you do not have any strength, you are going to get your head handed to you. On the other hand, the willingness to negotiate builds strength because you are using it for a constructive purpose. If it is strength with no objective to be gained, it loses its meaning. So I think they go together. These are not alternative ways of going about things.

JEG: *You have also said that there is a tendency in Washington to go to one extreme or the other, either to all military strength or to all diplomacy, and that the task of blending the two together is very difficult. Can you give us some real-life examples of that from the Reagan administration?*

GS: Actually, I don't think it *is* difficult. I think it is like breathing. Of course, they go together. There is no other way. When I went into the job of Secretary of State, our relations with the Soviet Union were almost non-existent, very strained. President Jimmy Carter had cut off nearly all ties after they invaded Afghanistan, and it was still tense.

I'd had quite a lot of experience in dealing with the Soviets when I was Secretary of the Treasury. I had worked out quite a few deals and spent time there. So I managed to negotiate. I worked a deal to meet with Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet ambassador to the United States, once a week. The object was to resolve little irritants so they did not grow into big problems.

In early 1983, I returned to Andrews Air Force Base from a visit to China on a Friday morning, and it was snowing so hard I was lucky to land. It snowed all day Friday, Friday night and into Saturday morning. So the Reagans are stuck in the White House. They cannot go to Camp David. Our phone rings, and Nancy says, "How about you and your wife come over for supper?" The four of us sit around, we are having a good time, and they start asking me about the Chinese leaders. What kind of people are they? Do they have a bottom line? Can you find a bottom line? Do they have a sense of humor? And so on.

Then they knew I had dealt with the Soviets when I was at Treasury, so they started asking me about them. A lot of them were still in office. All of a sudden, it dawns on me: This man has never had a real conversation with a big-time communist leader, and he is dying to have one.

So I said to him, "Next Tuesday at 5, Ambassador Dobrynin is coming in for one of my regular sessions. What if I bring him over here and you talk to him?" He said that would be great, and it will not take long, just 10 minutes. All I want to tell him is that if their new leader, Yuri Andropov (who had just succeeded Leonid Brezhnev), is interested in a constructive conversation, then I am ready."

That attitude was totally different from the atmosphere that people thought existed. The White House staff tried to kill the meeting, but the president had decided he wanted to have it, so we did. We were in there for at least an hour and a half, and Reagan talked about everything under the sun. About a third of the time, he talked about Soviet Jewry and how they were being mistreated.

Then he brought up the Pentecostals. Do you remember during the Carter administration, a group of them had rushed our embassy in Moscow? They had not been allowed to emigrate or worship the way they wanted, and we could not expel them from the building because they would probably be killed, but it was a very uncomfortable thing. President Reagan kept saying, "It is like a big neon sign in Moscow saying, 'We do not treat people right. We do not let them worship the way they want.' You ought to do something about it."

Dobrynin and I were riding back to the State Department afterward, and we agreed, "Hey, let us make this our special project." So we exchanged memos back and forth. Finally, I got one that was pretty good, and I brought it over to the White House. I said, "Mr. President, any lawyer would say that you could drive a truck through the holes in this memo, but I have to believe after all this background, that if we get them to leave the embassy, they will be allowed to go home and eventually emigrate." We talked about it and decided to roll the dice. All the time the president talked about Soviet Jewry, and he just said, "I want something to happen. I will not say a word about credit. I just want something to happen."

So we got the Pentecostals to leave the embassy. They were allowed to go home. A couple of months later, they were all allowed to emigrate along with their families, around 60 people. I said to the president, "The deal is: 'we'll let them go if you don't crow.'" And he never said a word.

I've always thought this little incident, which was unknown, had some important implications. What Reagan learned was you can make a deal with these people, and even if it is kind of fuzzy, they will carry it out. And they learned the same thing. They knew how tempting it is for American politicians to say: Look what my predecessor did, and now look what I did. But President Reagan did not do that, so you could trust him. You could deal with him. You can deal with somebody you trust. You cannot deal with somebody you do not trust. It is very hard.

On the other hand, then there was a huge buildup of Soviet strength because—as you remember, Jim; you were involved in it—the Soviets deployed their SS-20 missiles, intermediate range, aimed at Europe. The diplomatic idea was if they attacked Europe with intermediate-range missiles, we would use our intercontinental missiles to retaliate, thereby bringing a retaliatory strike on us. That is how they were hoping to divide Europe from the United States.

> President Reagan and I both thought that foreign policy starts in your own neighborhood. If you have a strong, cohesive neighborhood, you have a much better base then, if something goes wrong.

We had a deal with NATO that we would negotiate with the Soviets, and if we could not reach a satisfactory conclusion, we would deploy our own intermediate-range missiles. We had a hard negotiation. At one point, the Soviets shot down a Korean airliner and we led the charge in condemning them.

We had a transcript of the Soviet pilot in contact with his ground control and some time elapsed. It showed that they consulted and they gave the pilot the go-ahead to shoot down the airliner. We read all this out. At the same time, stunning the hardline people, we sent our negotiators back to Geneva, and I went on with a meeting I had scheduled with [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Gromyko. All this was, in part, to convince the European public that we were negotiating energetically.

After the meeting, the interpreter, who had interpreted for a lot of meetings between Secretaries of State and Soviet foreign ministers, said it was the most bitter, contentious meeting he had ever seen. But it registered on Gromyko what we thought. The point is, we did deploy the cruise missiles in Britain and Italy, and then ballistic missiles in Germany, and it was a huge thing. The Soviets walked out of negotiations, and fanned war talk, but we stood up to it.

Early in 1984, we had a coordinated approach. President Reagan gave kind of a high-level, reasonably friendly speech, and I

I tell myself not to look at my inbox; instead, I go sit in a comfortable chair with a pad and a pencil, take a deep breath, and ask myself: "What am I doing here? What are our strategic objectives and how are we doing?"

had a more operational one in a meeting which Gromyko and I attended in Stockholm that January. We were not yelling at each other. It was sort of constructive, and it was a huge moment.

Then, as time went on, things gradually cooled off a little. I was out here at Stanford for summer vacation, and the president was in Los Angeles. I went down there for a meeting and asked him for a little private time. I said, "Mr. President, at three or four of our embassies in Europe, a Soviet diplomat has come up to one of ours and he said virtually the same thing, which we think boils down to this: If Gromyko is invited to Washington when he comes to the United Nations in September, he will accept. Mr. President, you may want to think it over because President Carter canceled those meetings when they went into Afghanistan, and they are still there." Reagan replied, "I do not have to think it over. Let's get him here."

In other words, the Soviets blinked. So Gromyko came, and it was a good meeting, with an interesting little sideline. I had a good relationship with Nancy Reagan and said to her, "Nancy, the routine here is he comes to the West Wing, we have a meeting in the Oval Office, and we walk down the colonnade to the mansion for some stand-around time. Then there is a working lunch. How about you being there during the stand-around time, since this is your home and you are the hostess?" She agreed.

We walked down there, Gromyko sees Nancy, and he goes right after her. At one point—and you know Nancy can bristle—Gromyko said, "Does your husband want peace?" Nancy bristled, "Of course, my husband wants peace." Then Gromyko says, "Please whisper it in his ear every night before he goes to sleep: 'peace.'"

He was a little taller than she was, so she put her hand on his shoulder and pulled him down so he had to bend his knee, and she said: "I will whisper it in your ear: peace."

Anyway, after the 1984 election, which President Reagan won by a landslide, we resumed our meetings in Geneva from a position of strength. Our economy was really moving by that time, and we had built up our military strength. And the showdown over the INF missiles put us in a good position to negotiate.

Then along comes [Mikhail] Gorbachev. All of the preceding is pre-Gorbachev. I remember going over there with the U.S. delegation for the Andropov funeral. The president had given me a few things to say, but Vice President [George H.W.] Bush was there as the delegation head.

We were one of the last delegations to meet with Gorbachev. We met for over an hour. He had all these notes in front of him, but he shuffled them around and never looked at them. I had just a few things to say, which I said, and then I had the luxury of watching. Afterward, I said to our people, this is a different kind of man than any Soviet leader we have ever dealt with: more nimble. He is smarter, better informed. Still a hard-edge communist, but you can talk to him. He listens and then he answers, and he expects you to listen and answer back, and have a conversation. Usually, you say something, it goes by my ear, and I say something, it goes by your ear—and that is not a conversation. With Gorbachev, you can engage.

And that was how our negotiations started: from a position of strength. We knew what we wanted, we were strong, and we negotiated.

JEG: *You and President Reagan had a very clear view of what you wanted to accomplish. You had trust between you and yet, as you mentioned earlier, there were people in the White House who did not agree with what you both wanted to do. So that makes me wonder how Secretaries of State, in general, manage to get and keep a president's ear in spite of all of these other pressures to do something else. What is the secret of your success in this? To quote another striking line from your memoir: "I learned to exercise responsibility in a sea of uncertain authority." How did you manage that?*

GS: I think I would rewrite that line now, because there was no uncertain authority. The *president* was the authority, I had my meetings with him, and I had my insight from that long evening about where his instincts were. So that gave me the basis for proceeding, but there was a huge analytical

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U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz (right) greeting new Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze at the White House, Sept. 27, 1985. From left: Eduard Shevardnadze, interpreter Pavel Palazhchenko, President Ronald Reagan, George Shultz.

difference of opinion in Washington. There were people who thought basically the Soviet Union was there and they would never really change.

Reagan had a different idea. If you read his Westminster speech in 1982, it is very striking because he thought they were basically weak, and they would in the end change if we were strong enough in deterrence. I think George F. Kennan in his Long Telegram said something similar: If we can contain the Soviets long enough, they will look inward; they will not like what they see, and they will change.

And for my part, I had a lot of experience with the Soviets when I was Treasury Secretary and saw the deficiencies in their system. So, for all those reasons, I thought they would change.

The CIA people were really focused on military hardware and did not think change was possible. DoD did not like the idea of negotiating, but President Reagan did. So we had some back and forth, and in the fall of 1985 we had the big meeting in Geneva between President Reagan and then-Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev. I remember [Defense Secretary Caspar] "Cap" Weinberger opposed the meeting and tried to sabotage it, but he did not succeed. Out of that meeting came this phrase that President Reagan had already used in his State of the Union message: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." That was a big statement from those two leaders, and it was the start of bringing the numbers of nuclear weapons down.

> President Reagan knew that I would tell him what I thought, and he also knew that I knew it was his foreign policy, not mine. So we had good conversations, but underneath it all was trust.

COURTESY OF FREE TO CHOOSE NETWORK

George Shultz and Mikhail Gorbachev meeting in New York City on March 24, 2009, to look back on the U.S.-Soviet exchanges of the late 1980s. The conversation was recorded for use in a three-part television series on the life of George Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*.

JEG: *In your memoir, you talk about how each president has many more advisers than his predecessors, and they often quarrel with one another and get into fights that the principals often are not even aware of. Would you like to elaborate on that?*

GS: Well, it seems to me when you try to make policy and carry out policy entirely in the White House, you do not have access to the career people and you do not really use your Cabinet to full advantage. You wind up not having the right players, and policy is not as good, and is not carried out as well.

I remember when General Colin Powell became national security adviser. I knew him pretty well, and he came over to my office and he said, "George, I am here to tell you I am a member of your staff." I told him that was an interesting statement. He explained: "The National Security Council consists of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense; and that National Security Council has a staff; and I am the Chief of that Staff. Obviously, the President is my most important client, but I am working for the whole National Security Council."

Colin had the right idea. When the Reagan administration was leaving office, he came to a ceremony in my honor and he said, "The chief of staff of the National Security Council and the Secretary of State have not gotten along so well since Henry Kissinger held both jobs simultaneously."

JEG: *How would you describe the general approach to foreign policy you and President Reagan followed?*

GS: President Reagan and I both thought that foreign policy starts in your own neighborhood. If you have a strong, cohesive neighborhood, you have a much better base then, if something goes wrong. I remember my first trip out of the country as Secretary of State was to Canada and the traveling press was saying, what in the world are you doing going there?

I replied, "Who do you think our biggest trading partner is?" They all said Germany or Britain or something. One said Japan. I said they were out of their mind: Add all those up together and it does not come to as much as Canada.

My second trip out of the country was to Mexico, and we tried to lay the foundation for what eventually came together as the North American Free Trade Agreement. We first had to get an agreement with Canada; then Mexico came in. But, anyway, it was not just the Soviet Union; we had a strategy for North America. We paid a lot of attention to South America, Central America and the Asia-Pacific region, as well. And we had strate-

If you plant a garden and go away for six months, what have you got when you come back? Weeds. Diplomacy is kind of like that. You go around and talk to people, you develop a relationship of trust and confidence, and then if something comes up, you have that base to work from.

gies for each of those regions.

A second principle we followed was this: You have to think you are a global power. That is one of the reasons why the Foreign Service is so important: so you have people of professional quality who cover the globe. That's why, when I hear the idea that we are going to pivot to Asia or something like that, I say it does not sound right to me. We need a global diplomacy. We have to be there, everywhere. Of course, you shift your focus a little bit depending on where the action is.

JEG: *You have written that you very consciously set about finding time in your schedule to think about where you were going and what you needed to do. That seems to be one of the shortcomings that we have had in Washington throughout the years. People usually do not do that. They let the urgent drive out the important. Is there any way you can encourage people to think a bit more instead of frenetically traveling around the world?*

GS: In the State Department you have a group of people whose job is to think: the Policy Planning staff. I always felt—and this goes way back to my time in other Cabinet positions, and for that matter in business—that you tend to be inundated with tactical problems. Stuff is happening all the time and you are dealing with it. So I developed the idea that at least twice a week—in prime time, not the end of the day when you are tired—I take, say, three-quarters of an hour or so and tell my secretary: If my wife calls or the president calls, put them through; otherwise, no calls.

I tell myself not to look at my inbox; instead, I go sit in a comfortable chair with a pad and a pencil, take a deep breath, and ask myself: "What am I doing here? What are our strategic objectives and how are we doing?" Reflecting on that has helped me quite a lot, I think.

A lot of this goes back to the process of governance, which has gotten way out of kilter because there is too much White House and National Security Council staff, and not enough consultation with Cabinet people. But there are other problems, too. These days, if you take the job of assistant secretary of State for something or other, you get presented with a stack of paper an inch thick that you need an accountant and a lawyer to help you fill out. Then the Senate takes its time before holding a hearing. And after all that, they may never vote on your nomination. At the end of the 113th Congress, there were 133 nominees who had been reported out favorably but not voted on, so they had to flop over to the next Congress.

That is not the way you recruit A-players.

JEG: *I'd like to wind up with a couple of questions about how Secretaries of State relate to Congress. How do you see the relationship? What is the responsibility of the Secretary in terms of selling the president's policies to Congress? And does that process work, or can it be improved?*

GS: Different people do it different ways, but you have to spend a lot of time with members of Congress. For one thing, they have good ideas. So if you listen to them, you might just learn something. As you remember, Jim, we had congressional observers come over to Geneva for our negotiations with the Soviet Union. We got the INF Treaty ratified as a result, something many people thought was impossible. But we did it.

We did not take Congress for granted. We had brought all the negotiating records back and stored them in a secure room. We had one of the negotiators there all the time to answer questions, and we not only gave formal testimony, but held a lot of informal meetings. There was a lot of opposition, but in the end the treaty was ratified 93 to 5. So our efforts to cultivate Capitol Hill paid off, and we learned from it.

If you develop trust, you develop the ability to have frank conversations, and that helps.

JEG: *This reminds me that you have compared diplomacy to gardening: keeping down the weeds and cultivating relationships.*

GS: Yes, the analogy is if you plant a garden and go away for six months, what have you got when you come back? Weeds. And any good gardener knows you have to clear the weeds out right away.

Diplomacy is kind of like that. You go around and talk to people, you develop a relationship of trust and confidence, and then if something comes up, you have that base to work from. If you have never seen somebody before and you are trying to work a delicate, difficult problem, it is hard.

For example, I got to know Wu Xueqian, who was the Chinese foreign minister, and we had a good relationship. I remember him saying to me once: "OK, George, you wanted to get to this point and you are trying to go about it in a certain way. That way is very hard for us, but if you can come at it in a little different way, we can get where you want to go." I said, fine, and we did. But that kind of progress does not happen unless you have gardened.

JEG: *Let me end by asking you about one more quote from your memoir: "Public service is something special, more an opportunity and a privilege than an obligation." Do you feel the same way today in light of everything that has happened since you wrote that 20 years ago?*

GS: Oh, yes! I have had an academic career and a business career, both very exciting and worthwhile. But if I look back on my government career, that is the highlight, because I can think back to things I was involved in that made a difference. Really, that's what your life is about: You are trying to make a difference. And you can do that in public life in a way that is hard to do otherwise.

JEG: *Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate this very much.*
GS: Well, I am a Marine, so I say, "Semper Fi."

JEG*: Semper Fi! Thank you.* ■

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

2017 Constructive Dissent Awards

AFSA/JOAQUIN SOSA

From left: The Hon. Robert Rivkin, 2016 William R. Rivkin Award winner Jefferson Smith and AFSA President Barbara Stephenson at the 2016 AFSA Awards ceremony.

AFSA is pleased to issue this call for nominations for our 2017 awards for constructive dissent. Following our June 2016 ceremony, during which only one of the four dissent awards was given out, AFSA pledged to produce a more robust definition of what constitutes dissent in the Foreign Service.

At its Nov. 2 meeting, the AFSA Governing Board approved that new guidance, which we invite you to read in full at www.afsa.org/dissent.

Why Is Dissent Important?

In 1968, Foreign Service Officers John Bushnell and Stacy Lloyd became the very first recipients of an AFSA award for constructive dissent. In the intervening 48 years, AFSA has had the privilege of honoring more than 150 members of the Foreign Service with awards that are unique in the federal government: Recognition of those who dare to go against the accepted wisdom and offer constructive dissent within the system on a foreign policy or management issue.

Members of the Foreign Service typically understand the local context better than anyone else in the U.S. government and are often the first to see that a long-shot goal might just be achievable if arguments are framed in a certain way.

We know how to avoid that third rail and garner support from this key group while not alerting another too early. Delivering on those long-shot goals may show admirable initiative and innovation. It may be outstanding performance, *but it's not dissent.*

The Foreign Service adds tremendous value every time its members advise with precision about what will work and what won't work in the local context at our posts. This is a core role of the Foreign Service, and it is often the basis for well-founded constructive dissent.

Dissent as a duty flows from the Foreign Service oath of office, which swears "to support and defend the Constitution of the United States." Our loyalty must be first and foremost to the national interest, and that means giving political leadership our best analysis and advice, whether it is welcome or not.

It is our obligation to offer our best judgment and, when possible, alternatives. This is the basis for constructive dissent as we have traditionally defined it.

With this in mind, we welcome nominations for our four constructive dissent awards:

• The F. Allen 'Tex' Harris Award for Foreign Service specialists.

• The W. Averell Harriman Award for entry-level Foreign Service officers.

• The William R. Rivkin Award for mid-level Foreign Service officers.

• The Christian A. Herter for Senior Foreign Service officers.

The deadline for nominations is Feb. 28, 2017. Neither nominators nor nominees need to be members of AFSA. For additional information and nomination forms, please visit www.afsa.org/dissent or contact AFSA Awards Coordinator Perri Green at green@afsa.org or (202) 719-9700.

CALENDAR

December 2
12-1:30 p.m.
AFSA Book Notes: "From Washington to Moscow"

December 5
12-1:30 p.m.
AFSA/Public Diplomacy Council: "Media, Conflict and Security"

December 7
12-1:30 p.m.
AFSA Governing Board Meeting

December 26
Christmas: AFSA Offices Closed

January 2
New Years Day: AFSA Offices Closed

January 4
12-1:30 p.m.
AFSA Governing Board Meeting

January 15
Deadline: Sinclaire Language Award Nominations

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA State VP.
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A Primer on Labor-Management Relations

One of my favorite things about preparing for a new assignment is learning the language. When I became the AFSA State Vice President, I had no idea that I would also need to learn a new language—the language of labor law.

While I had more than 20 years of experience in the Foreign Service, including a tour as a labor reporting officer, I had very little experience with labor-management relations. I needed to get up to speed quickly on issues like negotiability, impact and implementation, pre-decisional involvement, union bypasses and more.

This column is intended as a primer for people who wish to learn more about labor management relations.

Negotiability

Not everything is negotiable—in fact, thanks to Chapter 10 of the Foreign Service Act, quite a few subjects are technically non-negotiable. Examples include management's right to assign work (e.g., reporting portfolios, onward assignments) and issues related to national security. It was quite disheartening for me to realize how much of what matters to our membership is, in reality, "off the table."

Impact and Implementation

Even when a subject is technically non-negotiable, however, the union often has the right to negotiate procedures and appropriate arrangements, also known as *impact and implementation.*

We may not be able to stop Diplomatic Security's Office of Special Investigations from making the unilateral decision to record interviews of subjects of investigations, but we absolutely have the right to negotiate the impact and implementation of that policy change. In other words, how will the new policy be carried out and how can we minimize any potential adverse impact on our members?

Pre-decisional Involvement

We can express our opinion and ask the State Department to do things differently. Ideally, we'd like the department to engage in *pre-decisional involvement,* allowing AFSA a seat at the table when they are considering changing or implementing certain policies. We strongly believe (and studies of other labor-management relationships support this view) that involving AFSA from the beginning would help prevent later problems; but, as of the due date for this column, we have made little progress on that score.

We continue to ask the department to come to us at the beginning of the process rather than once something is practically a fait accompli. But the department remains reticent to do so, and many offices deal with the union only when required to do so.

Union Bypass

Union bypass is another delicate area. According to labor law, management is not allowed to bypass the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit and negotiate conditions of employment directly with other parties.

In other words, if a group of employees in a particular bureau or as part of an affinity group raises matters related to conditions of employment, the department is not allowed to engage on such issues without including the union.

This law doesn't exist to be petty or to prevent management from gaining a better understanding of a specific group's issues—it exists because only the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit focuses on the big picture, that of all employees in the unit, not just a subset. For example, a group of tandem employees propose a new policy that sounds reasonable to them, but which would disadvantage non-tandems.

The union looks out for such conflicts when proposing policy changes and helps prevent the department from inadvertently committing to something that hasn't been thoroughly vetted.

A Final Surprise

A final surprise for me was that, according to the original strategic framework between the State Department and AFSA, either side can submit formal proposals, which the other side must then negotiate in good faith. If the department submits a proposal that we have no interest in negotiating because we want to keep things as is, we generally cannot simply refuse to discuss the matter.

If the two parties cannot agree, the matter goes to the Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel, which imposes an agreement based on which side presents the better argument.

So when we spend months in formal negotiations on something, it's not necessarily because we've decided that that issue is a priority—we are legally required to negotiate the matter in an effort to achieve the best possible results for our members.

Luckily, AFSA has a terrific team of lawyers and legal advisors who help me navigate the system. That same team works tirelessly to help protect our members' rights in individual cases—contact them at afsa@state.gov at the first sign of a problem. ■

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA USAID VP.
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Workplace Bullying: Setting the Agency Standard

AFSA has seen an alarming increase in situations that fall into the category of workplace bullying. Workplace bullying is defined as repeated, unreasonable actions directed toward an employee or employees, which are intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate, undermine, or create a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s).

These situations not only have horrific, personal effects on the target or targets, but also foster and contribute to an unhealthy work environment for the whole team. Productivity, efficiency, retention and particularly morale can be seriously affected.

Without intervention the effects of bullying on the target(s) can end with potentially devastating consequences. This topic is closely related to the subject of my October column regarding duty-of-care and the overriding USAID obligation to protect the health, safety and dignity of its workforce.

Within the work unit, supervisors and employees must familiarize themselves with the procedures in USAID's Automated Directives System 485 on Disciplinary Action. The Employee and Labor Relations office is the primary resource for employees regarding misconduct issues.

USAID leadership must set the standard for handling bullying in the workplace until the U.S. legal system catches up.

On witnessing or hearing about bullying behavior, supervisors are responsible for initiating prompt, impartial and constructive corrective action. ADS 485 also clearly states that employees have a right to know and respond to any allegations against them.

Per those regulations, supervisors should weigh the circumstances (after hearing from both sides), and fully consider the employee's previous record, character and potential before initiating disciplinary action, if warranted.

The U.S. legal system trails many European countries in acknowledging the devastation caused by workplace bullying. Under U.S. law, there is a legal remedy for workplace bullying only to the extent that it ventures into the physical realm, or threatens to do so.

Because Foreign Service regulations covering workplace bullying mirror U.S. laws, USAID leadership must set the standard for handling bullying in the workplace until the legal system catches up.

It is important to note that if bullying or abuse is based on certain demographic categories—e.g., gender, sexuality, age or race—it may be found to violate EEO principles. Similarly, if the behavior is based on the victim's political persuasion, veteran status or union activity or if it is in retaliation for prior disclosures of waste, fraud or abuse of public resources, anti-retaliation provisions of law could provide a basis for relief.

It may happen that cases "fall through the cracks" between different USAID offices and bureaus, meaning that the victim has no resolution and the aggressor's behavior is not addressed.

A tracking system (perhaps housed with an independent ombudsman or neutral third party) would help to ensure resolution, strengthen responses, identify repeat offenders and help to prevent such damaging behavior from continuing. Bullies who are not challenged on their behavior—or worse, who get promoted—will continue to bully.

To combat harassment in the workplace, USAID, as the employer, must put in place firm anti-bullying policies, and managers must identify and eliminate unacceptable behavior. USAID leadership must stand behind the message that our culture does not tolerate the abuse, domination or humiliation of employees.

Ongoing personnel management training for supervisors that includes the identification and prevention of bullying makes good sense. AFSA continues to advocate for appropriate training and professional development for managers at all levels.

Using resources that are already available online, USAID could require core classes and continuing education for managers as a prerequisite for promotion or position eligibility—and authorize time to complete the training. These steps would ensure that the training requirements are institutionalized.

Additionally, USAID could revise the diversity checklist, a required input to all supervisor and Senior Foreign Service evaluations, to better capture bullying and other damaging behaviors. ■

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA FAS VP.
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Crash Course on Promotions

The 2016 promotion season came and went without any positive movement toward resolving the Foreign Agricultural Service's demographic crisis.

The number of FAS officers in the FO-1 and FO-2 classes is approximately 30 percent below the optimal levels, a concern which was not addressed in the last promotion season. We can expect the number of FO-1s and FO-2s to decrease further throughout the year in keeping with the average attrition rates for those classes.

On the bright side, thanks to recruitment efforts, we now have the right number of officers at the entry level (FO-3 and 4). So, how can we fill in the middle? I suggest that the answer is a combination of promotions and the limited use of civil servants in Agricultural Trade Office positions.

While the obvious answer for the Foreign Service is to promote qualified candidates to higher-level positions, someone can't be promoted from FO-3 to FO-1 overnight. For me, the fundamental question is, "Can FAS speed up the promotion of officers without sacrificing the quality of those promoted?" I believe that the answer is yes.

Although it would be a huge challenge, this could also be an opportunity for FAS to implement standardized and consistent training in management, leadership and other essential skills, which has been lacking for FAS FSOs.

Two areas, in particular, need to be addressed to give officers the consistent levels of training and expectations they need to do their jobs well.

First, FAS needs to institute mandatory management and leadership training as the State Department does for FSOs and FAS now does for Civil Service managers. Advanced programs for mentoring and other ways to directly impart experience to rising officers also need strengthening.

Second, FSOs have called for and deserve the opportunity to revise the performance management aspects of our contract to deliver clearer expectations at all levels. I strongly believe that these changes can speed the promotion of those already working at the next level and provide training and guidance for others on how to get to that next level faster than they do under present circumstances.

When judging experience and readiness for promotion, there needs to be more than a simple "check-the-box" exercise for officers. We deserve more structure for gaining practical and educational experiences needed to show that we have the skills to be promotable and to understand what is expected at the next level.

These changes should simultaneously increase the preparation of officers and the speed of promotions, leaving FAS better positioned to remedy our current problems and meet those of the future. ■

NEWS BRIEF

REMINDER – 2017 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

The American Foreign Service Association's National High School Essay Contest has begun!

The contest winner will receive $2,500, a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet the Secretary of State and full tuition for a Semester at Sea educational voyage. The runner-up receives $1,250 and full tuition for the National Student Leadership Conference's International Diplomacy summer program.

AFSA welcomes the continuing support of our fantastic contest partners: The United States Institute of Peace, Semester at Sea and the National Student Leadership Conference.

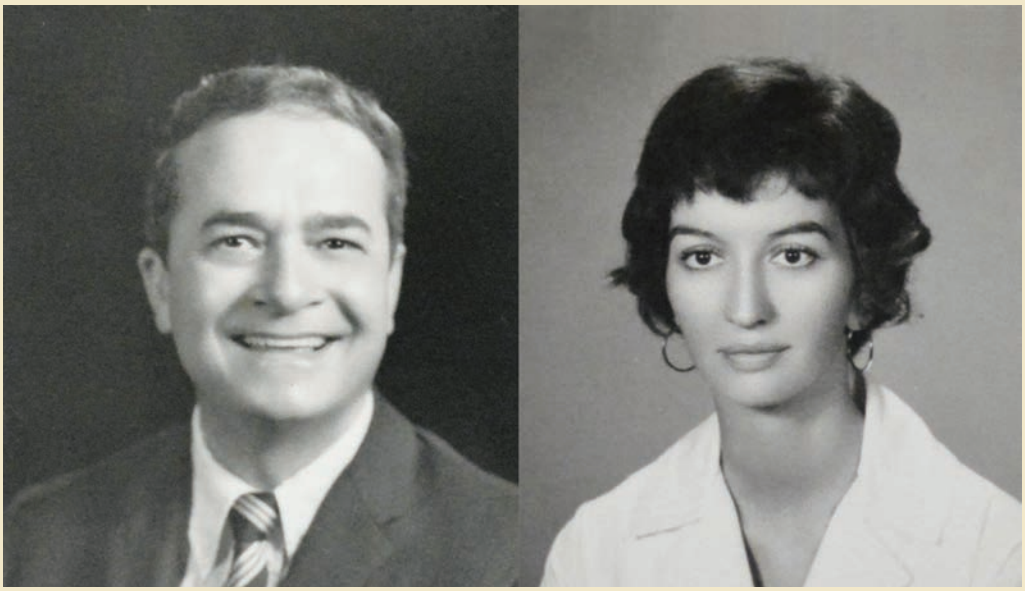
Eligibility for AFSA's 2016 National High School Essay Contest is limited to high school students of U.S. citizenship, in grades 9-12, whose parents are not members of the Foreign Service.

The deadline for entries is March 15, 2017. Full details of the contest, including this year's essay topic, are available from the AFSA website: www.afsa.org/essay. ■

AFSA Receives Six-Figure Planned Gift

The late Louis C. Hebert served his country throughout his life. A Foreign Service officer for 35 years, he also served in the U.S. military. When Mr. Hebert passed away at age 89 in November 2014, he designated the AFSA Scholarship Fund as a residual beneficiary in his will.

The final disbursement of his $879,900 gift was received in October. The funds will be used for merit awards and financial aid scholarships for Foreign Service children of AFSA members, in memory of Louis and his wife, Valeria.



COURTESY OF THE HEBERT ESTATE

Louis and Valeria Hebert.

Born in 1925 in Abbeville, Louisiana, Mr. Hebert joined the Army infantry in 1943 as a private. Only 18 years old at the time, he served until 1946. He was a proud recipient of the Purple Heart Award for his service during World War II.

In 1947, he enlisted in the Naval Reserves, while also attending Louisiana State University, where he majored in English and minored in French. He earned a bachelor's degree in 1952, and in July of that year re-enlisted in the Army and served as a lieutenant during the Korean War.

Following military service, Mr. Hebert concluded that serving his country was his calling, and he joined the Foreign Service in 1955. Because he already spoke French, the State Department assigned him to Paris. He met his wife, Valeria (née Kovach), at a State Department reception and they married in 1968. They began their life together traveling for Mr. Hebert's assignments.

Mr. Hebert, known for his humor, was the chef in the family, and the couple loved to entertain. During his career, they served in Russia, China, United Arab Emirates, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Egypt and Washington D.C.

Valeria Hebert was also hired by the Department of State, where she worked for 20 years before retiring. The couple never had children. Mrs. Hebert's brother and a close friend serve as the AFSA Scholarship Program's contacts.

In September 1990, Mr. Hebert retired. When Mrs. Hebert died in 2004, he decided to return to his home state of Louisiana. There he took up gardening and filled in as a substitute professor at Louisiana State University, sharing stories with students and giving firsthand background on foreign affairs issues from his own experiences.

He also continued to correspond with colleagues and friends he met at his posts around the world. Louis Hebert is buried in Arlington Cemetery.

AFSA appreciates all scholarship donations, whether large or small. This generosity has made the AFSA Scholarship Program what it is today, and we thank our individual and organizational donors.

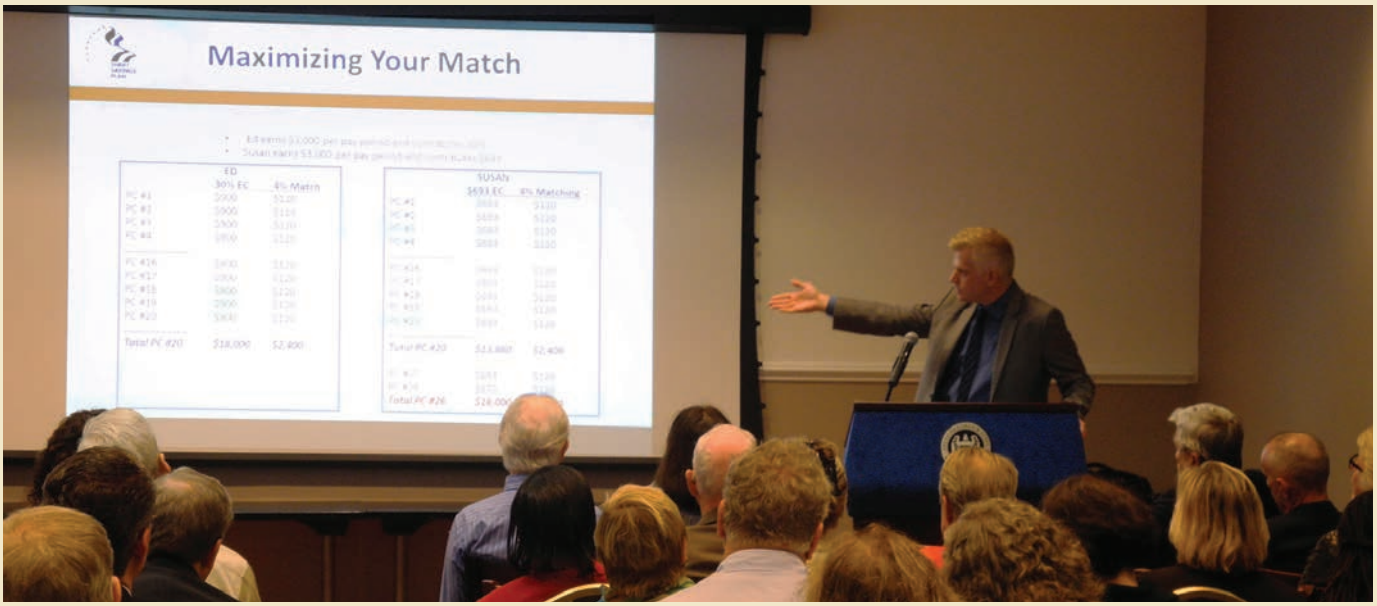
In the last 25 years alone, AFSA has been able to assist nearly 2,300 FS students with college aid totaling $4.5 million. Since the program's establishment in 1926, more than 3,500 children have received in excess of $5 million in awards.

As of November 2016, the AFSA Scholarship Fund's endowment stood at $8 million. With careful management of these funds, AFSA will be able to continue to offer competitive merit awards and financial aid scholarships in perpetuity. This membership benefit is one that we look forward to providing for many future generations of Foreign Service children.

For more information on applying for a 2017 AFSA scholarship, visit www.afsa.org/scholar.

Retiree Corner articles are written by Retiree Counselor Todd Thurwachter.

Managing Your TSP in Retirement



AFSA/GEMMA DVORAK

Randy Urban, training and liaison specialist for the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, speaks to about 100 AFSA members at a workshop on Oct. 6. In an in-depth review, Mr. Urban discussed Thrift Savings Plans, spouse and beneficiaries' rights and retirement income options and goals.

For years, Thrift Savings Plan participants have been urged to maximize their contributions to their TSPs, but what should they do after building up their nest eggs?

On Oct. 6, AFSA hosted its 11th Federal Benefits Speaker Series Program, "Retirement and Beyond." Randy Urban, training and liaison specialist for the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, gave a useful and engaging presentation to the AFSA community on managing your TSP after retirement.

Speaking to almost 100 attendees, Mr. Urban confirmed that a TSP account can be maintained into retirement, although holders can no longer contribute directly once they leave active-duty status.

He also noted that a traditional IRA or 401(k) can be rolled over to a TSP, which could save a significant amount in management fees (management fees for a TSP are about 6 percent of the average fee for a 401(k) plan). Mr. Urban stressed that this transfer must be done correctly to comply with tax laws and avoid any penalties.

If you are considering a donation to a charity or 501(c)(3) organization (e.g., AFSA's Fund for American Diplomacy), note that you cannot transfer directly from a TSP to a charity without paying tax on the distribution. To make a tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution, you must first "direct rollover" to an IRA and then make the QCD from there.

Mr. Urban discussed a number of choices for withdrawing your TSP funds after retirement: for example, choosing a partial or full withdrawal or a custom mix. Among "full-withdrawal" options, you can opt for a lump sum, monthly payments, purchasing an annuity or a "mixed withdrawal" combining all three.

Alternatively, TSP holders may decide to let their TSP account grow until they reach the age of 70 and six months, at which time they must begin taking a Required Minimum Distribution. Failure to begin taking the RMD as required can lead to penalties of up to 50 percent of the RMD for that year.

The RMD is calculated based on the account holder's life expectancy using the IRS Uniform Lifetime Table. For accounts with a Roth TSP balance, withdrawals are prorated and tax withheld on the taxable portion.

AFSA encourages all retirees to consult a financial planner before making any decisions about managing their finances in retirement. The TSP website, www.tsp.gov, has a range of resources available to help you make your decisions, as well as the forms and procedures to execute those decisions.

Find the summary recap, video and PowerPoint of the presentation at www.afsa.org/retiree. You can contact AFSA's retiree counselor via email at retiree@afsa.org or by phone at (202) 944-5509.

Governing Board Meeting, Oct. 5, 2016

Consent Agenda: The Governing Board approved the consent agenda items, which were: (1) Sept. 7 Governing Board meeting minutes; (2) acceptance of Corey Pickelsimer's resignation as FAS representative and (3) a thank you to Ambassador (ret.) Bill Farrand for his years of service to AFSA, most recently as chair of the AFSA Elections Committee.

Proposed AFSA Bylaw Amendments: On a motion from Secretary Bill Haugh, two amendments to the AFSA bylaws were submitted to the Elections Committee. The proposed changes will appear in the Jan-Feb AFSA News.

AFSA Building Loan: Treasurer Charles Ford, on behalf of the Finance, Audit and Management Committee, moved that the remaining balance of the AFSA building loan be paid off from AFSA's operating reserve fund. The recommendation was approved unanimously.

U.S. Diplomacy Center: Treasurer Charles Ford, on behalf of the FAM Committee, moved that AFSA provide an in-kind contribution of $100,000 to the AFSA Fund for American Diplomacy for activities which would support the U.S. Diplomacy Center and AFSA outreach priorities. The motion was approved unanimously.

Labor Management SOP: On behalf of the Executive Committee, Secretary Bill Haugh moved to approve proposed changes in "AFSA Policy Regarding Provision of Labor Management Services" and the "Explanation of Services and Scope of Representation" client signature form. The board approved the motion unanimously. The amended policy can be found on the AFSA website.

Appointment of State Representative: With no objection from the board, Donald E. Jacobson was appointed as a State Representative.

Legal Defense Fund: AFSA Secretary Bill Haugh proposed the creation of an AFSA Legal Defense Fund Committee and the appointment of State Rep. Tricia Wingerter as chair and State Reps Jason Donovan and Alison Storsve and Retiree Representatives Patricia Butenis and Dean Haas to the committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Scholarship Committee: With no objection from the board, Cynthia Guven and State Reps Alison Storsve and Kara McDonald were appointed to fill three vacancies on the AFSA Scholarship Committee.

AFSA Hosts Autumn Happy Hour

AFSA/GEMMA DVORAK

Attendees at the AFSA Autumn Happy Hour responding to a question from AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson.

On Oct. 20, AFSA hosted an Autumn Happy Hour at its headquarters. The festive event brought together new AFSA members and old-timers, active-duty and retired, as well as Foreign Service colleagues considering joining the association.

In welcoming attendees, AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson encouraged long-serving members of the Foreign Service to share their experiences and advice with new members.

She also talked about AFSA's 50-state outreach initiative, which aims to "tell the story of the Foreign Service," encouraging members to join in this effort. When you speak to schools, colleges or social and business groups, Amb. Stephenson said, help Americans understand how to answer the question: "Why does the Foreign Service matter to me?"

Amb. Stephenson and several board members joined AFSA staff and approximately 80 members and potential members for drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

Members of the Foreign Service who have not yet joined AFSA were invited to ask questions about the association and its work. Locally Employed staff, members of the larger foreign affairs community and those considering a career in the Foreign Service are most welcome and encouraged to join AFSA as associate members. Write to member@afsa.org for details.

Amb. Stephenson asked for a show of hands from attendees about whether people would attend more regular happy hour events at AFSA. The response was a resounding "Yes!"

Another happy hour took place on Nov. 17. Watch AFSAnet for details of future events.

—Katherine Perroots
Editorial Intern

AFSA/GEMMA DVORAK

From left: *FSJ* Editor in Chief Shawn Dorman, FSO Cameron Thomas-Shah, Natasha Pinol and Member Services Director Janet Hedrick at the AFSA Autumn Happy Hour.

AFSA Staff Engage with UT Austin Students

UT AUSTIN/ ROCHE GEORGE

Caption: On Nov. 9, AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson (center) and AFSA Director of Professional Policy Issues Maria Livingston (fourth from left) participated in a collaborative session with graduate student researchers and their faculty advisors at the University of Texas at Austin. The group is working with AFSA to conduct a diplomatic service benchmarking exercise. The team presented their preliminary findings and discussed goals for their upcoming trip to Washington, D.C. Their time in D.C. will be spent meeting with and interviewing various stakeholders, the input from which will feed into their overall analysis. The visit will mark the mid-point of the yearlong exercise. Coverage of their visit will feature in a future issue of AFSA News.

NEWS BRIEF

DOES YOUR POST HAVE AN AFSA REP?

The role of the Post Rep is crucial due to the wide variety of issues now confronting the Foreign Service. All posts without an AFSA Rep, or one moving on, should hold elections as soon as possible to ensure continuity. A list of Post Reps is available from the AFSA website: www.afsa.org/postreps, so check to see if there is a vacancy at your post or a Rep that will be leaving soon.

There are four important areas of responsibility involved:

• Representing collective and individual interests of Foreign Service Personnel at post;

• Transmitting to colleagues AFSA's advisories on all developments affecting their career opportunities and conditions of employment;

• Forwarding to AFSA any proposals, complaints or criticisms originating with the AFSA members at post.

• Expanding AFSA's membership and encouraging others at post to seek the AFSA Post Rep position when you move on.

The only employees excluded from serving as official AFSA Reps are management officials and/or confidential employees including chiefs of mission, deputy chiefs of mission, management officers, human resources officers, regional security officers, and office management specialists for COM/DCM.

Posts preparing to hold elections may visit the AFSA website to review the guidelines for holding elections. Be sure to advise AFSA when a Post Rep is elected so that they can be properly certified. For further information contact the Member Services Department at member@afsa.org ■

ANNOUNCEMENT

SINCLAIRE LANGUAGE AWARDS

AFSA is accepting nominations for the 2016 Matilda W. Sinclaire Language Awards, which recognize outstanding accomplishment in the study of a Category III or IV language and their associated cultures. The nomination deadline is **Jan. 15, 2017**.

Candidates may be nominated by their language training supervisors at the Foreign Service Institute, by instructors in field schools or by post language officers.

Awardees will receive a monetary prize and certificate of recognition. For further information, please contact AFSA Awards Coordinator Perri Green at green@afsa.org or (202) 719-9700. Read more about the Sinclaire Awards at www.afsa.org/sinclaire. ■

360-Degree Feedback in the Foreign Service

AFSA/GEMMA DVORAK

From left: State Representative Jason Donovan, State Vice President Angie Bryan, Dr. Beth Fisher-Yoshida, AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson and FCS Vice President Steve Morrison at the 360 Feedback event at AFSA headquarters.

On Oct. 12, AFSA invited Dr. Beth Fisher-Yoshida to lead a discussion about 360-degree feedback in the Foreign Service context as part of the association's effort to identify examples of industry best practices and bring them into Foreign Service processes.

Dr. Fisher-Yoshida is a faculty member and director of the Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Program at Columbia University.

"There is nothing like the 360 process for professional development," AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson said in welcoming participants to the event. But she questioned whether 360-degree feedback is as useful when it is part of the bidding process.

Amb. Stephenson also noted that during a series of "structured conversations" she has been conducting with AFSA members, bidding has consistently been among the top concerns for all levels of FSOs.

Beginning the session, Dr. Fisher-Yoshida reviewed the uses of 360-degree feedback in the Foreign Service (e.g., professional development, bidding and promotions) noting that 360 degree feedback is appropriately used for professional develpment and leadership training.

She also discussed how 360-degree feedback data is collected, how it is used for different processes within the Foreign Service, who can see the data and, more importantly, who owns it.

Following the presentation, attendees formed discussion groups to consider the challenges of the current system and what could be done to improve the experience with 360-degree feedback. Each group consisted of entry- and mid-level members of the Foreign Service, as well as AFSA staff members.

State Vice President Angie Bryan and FCS Vice President Steve Morrison also attended the session, and USAID Vice President Sharon Wayne joined one of the discussion groups to provide the USAID viewpoint.

Most participants agreed that, while 360-degree feedback can be a very useful tool for professional development, there should be a better system for the bidding and assignments process.

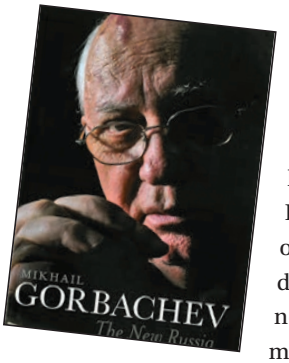
When considering 360-degree feedback in terms of bidding and assignments, a number of issues were raised, including a lack of transparency within the system; potential bias of raters for or against the candidate; appropriate training for the person reviewing the feedback and excessive subjectivity of the questions asked.

The discussion was lively and benefited greatly from the differing perspectives of all participants. For a recording of the event, visit www.afsa.org/video. ■

—Gemma Dvorak, Associate Editor

Gorbachev's Lament

The New Russia
Mikhail Gorbachev, translated by Arch Tait, Polity Press, 2016, $35/hardcover, 400 pages.
Reviewed By Jack F. Matlock Jr.



When the Soviet Union came apart at the end of 1991, the nuclear arms race between the United States and the USSR had ended, a negotiated peace that benefited all parties had replaced the Cold War, and the Iron Curtain that divided Europe had vanished. We seemed to be on the threshold of a new Europe.

President George Herbert Walker Bush called it "a Europe whole and free." President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev called it "our common European home." Bush went further as he assembled a coalition to oppose Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, proposing nothing less than "a new world order."

Now, a quarter-century later, rhetoric emanating from Moscow and Washington resembles that of the Cold War. Government officials and armchair strategists in both capitals speak of geopolitical competition in terms that were once reserved for the struggle between "communist slavery" and the "free world." They seem to ignore the fact that Russia is no longer communist and is, in most respects, a totally different state than was the Soviet Union.

Anyone puzzled by the way the unity and hope of the early 1990s has morphed to the division and fear we are experiencing today will benefit from reading and pondering Mikhail Gorbachev's latest book, *The New Russia*. Its contents cover more than its English title suggests: while it does give the reader a running account of events in Russia after it shed the other 14 republics of the Soviet Union, it contains much more. The Russian title, *Posle Kremlya (After the Kremlin)*, is more apt because the book presents important thoughts regarding history, democracy, international relations and the external events that influenced Russia's revival of authoritarianism.

These themes are worked into an account of Gorbachev's own activity from 1992. Being the object of vilification by Stalinist forces who accuse him of destroying the Soviet Union to please the "West," he makes a vigorous effort to defend his record. His account, it must be said, rings true, while his accusers' charges are vicious invention. After all, it was his nemesis, Boris Yeltsin, who conspired to destroy the Soviet Union while Gorbachev was trying, with the moral and political support of the United States, to turn it into a democratic federation. And it was Boris Yeltsin who first appointed the current president, Vladimir Putin, to the post.

Gorbachev is unsparing in his criticism of President Putin's actions that undermine democratic institutions and inhibit the political habits that make democracy work, but he does not make the mistake of calling it a retreat from democracy. Gorbachev knows well that Russia has never had democracy; what he achieved with the reforms he championed was the possibility of developing democratic institutions.

What Russia had in the 1990s was more akin to crime-infested anarchy than true democracy. The myth in the "West" that Russia was "democratizing" under Yeltsin survived even his military attack on an elected legislature in 1993 and the patently fraudulent presidential election of 1996. For most Russians, if conditions of the 1990s could be attributed to democracy, then democracy was not what they wanted. The potty-mouthed pronounce the Russian word *demokratiya* as *dermokratia* (shitocracy).

For diplomats, particularly American diplomats, Gorbachev's description of the impact U.S. policy had on internal Russian developments and Russian external behavior is instructive. Gorbachev feels betrayed not only by Boris Yeltsin and those who broke up a democratizing Soviet Union, but also by the successors of those Western leaders with whom he cooperated to end the Cold War.

The Western leaders of his political generation gave him broad assurances in the transformative years 1989 and 1990 that they would not "take advantage" of a liberated Eastern Europe; that, in the words of Secretary of State James Baker III, "NATO jurisdiction would not move to the East, not one inch," if a united Germany was allowed to stay in the NATO alliance. This was not a legally binding obligation, and the subsequent expansion of NATO was not a bad idea because it was a broken promise. It was a bad idea, period, if the goal was a Europe whole and free. Europe would inevitably stay divided unless Russia were embedded in a system that united the continent rather than perpetuating division.

The progressive expansion of NATO to the east was only part of the problem. The Bush-Cheney administration withdrew from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty that had served as the foundation for U.S.-Soviet negotiations to reduce nuclear weaponry. That, along

with other willful and sometimes illegal acts, such as the invasion of Iraq without United Nations sanction, convinced most attentive Russians that the United States was determined to treat their country as a defeated enemy.

"We won the Cold War!" triumphalism particularly rankles Gorbachev. The fact is that every agreement he made with the United States and its NATO allies was in the interest of the USSR, which needed nothing so much as an end to the arms race. Even more distorted is the widespread conviction that the Cold War ended with the demise of the Soviet Union. It was over ideologically by the end of 1988, and in most other respects by the end of 1989, the annus mirabilis of East European liberation.

The Soviet Union disintegrated despite the end of the Cold War, not because of it. It was not a "Western" victory, though it did demonstrate that the communist rule of the USSR was not viable in a world without external enemies.

Eight years ago, after war broke out between Russia and Georgia, Gorbachev commented, "The reality is that, in recent years, Russia has been confronted with one fait accompli after another: this is what we are doing about Kosovo; now we are withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and deploying anti-missile systems in your neighboring countries; now we are continuing to endlessly expand NATO. Live with it! … There are calls now for a review of relations with Russia. I think the first thing in need of review is this way of talking down to Russia, ignoring her views and interests."

Well, after a brief respite when the new Barack Obama administration initiated a "reset"—mistranslated by the Secretary of State's advisers with the Russian word (in Latin characters yet!) for "overload," the mistranslation proved to be a Freudian slip. The policy combined incompatible elements: efforts to cooperate when it was in the U.S. interest and policies designed to influence domestic politics in Russia itself.

Equally threatening from the Russian standpoint was what seemed to Russians a calculated effort to alienate their most important neighbor, Ukraine, which had been part of the same country for more than two centuries. While the reset had important positive results, the New START treaty in particular, President Obama's policy was doomed in other respects even before civil war broke out in Ukraine.

As Gorbachev points out, Russians have been reacting to what they perceive as a persistent American effort to put them down, isolate them and dominate the world by exercising a global hegemony. That reaction has been damaging to Russia's own interests and future; but, Russian patriots will argue, what proud nation, when pressed, will not push back?

Gorbachev's comment highlights a crucial psychological point. A diplomat should understand that nothing is to be gained by publicly humiliating another country or its leaders, even if their policies are problematic. Deal with the policy with at least public respect for the politician. President Ronald Reagan condemned communism, but never made slighting personal remarks about the specific Soviet leaders he dealt with. When he met a Soviet leader, his first words were usually, "We hold the peace of the world in our hands."

They did, and he and Gorbachev achieved a world-transforming feat in reversing the upward spiral of the arms race. Their joint declaration that "a nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought, which means there can be no war between us" is as valid today as it was in November 1985, when Reagan and Gorbachev met for the first time. Unfortunately, that important truism seems to be ignored now by the leaders and "policy elite" in both our countries.

As we await the inauguration of a new president, our diplomats would be well advised to read Mikhail Gorbachev's testimony. They may not agree with everything he writes, but his account will give them insight into the sort of advice they should *not* be giving our next president.

In all of the global challenges we face, Russia is going to be either part of the solution or part of the problem. Mikhail Gorbachev has called attention to those actions and policies by the United States and its allies that have encouraged Russia to be a problem. Gorbachev has also written nostalgically about his relationship with Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

A study of the interaction of those two American presidents with the president of the Soviet Union would provide important lessons for a diplomacy designed to transcend differences and concentrate on those issues that are vital to the future of both countries.

Jack Matlock Jr., FSO-CM, retired, was ambassador to the USSR from 1987 to 1991, and is now Rubenstein Fellow and Visiting Scholar at Duke University. He first served in Moscow from 1961 to 1963, again from 1974 to 1978, and once more in 1981 as chargé d'affaires before his appointment as ambassador to Czechoslovakia (1981-1983). During his 35-year career in the Foreign Service, he also served in Vienna,

Munich, Accra, Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam and Washington, D.C.

He is the author of Autopsy on an Empire: The American Ambassador's Account of the Collapse of the Soviet Union *(Random House, 1995),* Reagan and Gorbachev: How the Cold War Ended *(Random House, 2005) and* Superpower Illusions: How Myths and False Ideologies Led America Astray—and How to Return to Reality *(Yale University Press, 2010). Comments on his books and an occasional blog post can be found at www.jackmatlock.com.*

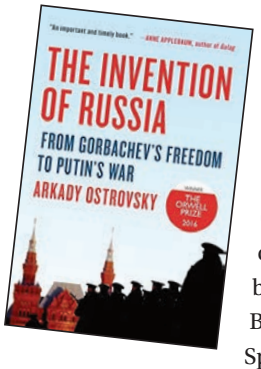
How Dreamers and Schemers Made Today's Russia

The Invention of Russia: From Gorbachev's Freedom to Putin's War
Arkady Ostrovsky, Viking Press, 2015, $30/hardcover, $14.99/Kindle, 384 pages.

Black Wind, White Snow: The Rise of Russia's New Nationalism
Charles Clover, Yale University Press, 2016, $35/hardcover, $16.99/Kindle, 376 pages.
Reviewed By Eric Green

For decades—perhaps centuries—into the future, historians will debate the significance of the 1990s in Russia. Was it a brief, freakish deviation from Russia's pattern of having a suffocating state dominate individual initiative, or was it a turning point when Russians decisively embraced Western values of individual freedom and accountable government?

While the answers to these questions are still unknowable, it is indisputable that the 1990s were a colossal setback, both economically and spiritually, to the vast majority of Russians. Liberal



reformers were disappointed by their failure to leap-frog their country to Western levels of prosperity, civility and stability (Sweden wasn't built in a day), while the masses of bureaucrats, military and intelligence officers and academics were in a state of shock at the loss of the Soviet Union's social hierarchies at home and great-power status abroad.

Both books under review recognize how pivotal the dramas of the 1990s are to understanding contemporary Russia. The events are well known: Mikhail Gorbachev's decision to allow the Warsaw Pact to disintegrate as Germans peacefully destroyed the Berlin Wall; the failed 1991 putsch in Moscow that backfired so spectacularly that the USSR's 15 republics became independent countries with less advance notice than a wedding, while allowing Boris Yeltsin to punctuate his own coup over Gorbachev; and then Yeltsin's Shakespearean presidency, which saw bloody rebellion in Chechnya and in his own parliament, intrigue among his courtiers and family members, and epic theft of state property.

Against this background, Russia's foreign policy tried to perpetuate Moscow's image as a superpower, but failed to either block the eastern enlargement of the European Union and NATO or to reconcile Russia's strategic interests with this process.

Though Ostrovsky and Clover are describing the same events, they choose opposite points of entry. Clover follows the defenders of aggressive Russian nationalism, who rebounded from the collapse of the USSR to achieve unprecedented influence under Putin. Ostrovsky tells the story from the perspective of the *shestdesiatki* (1960s) generation who emerged during the Khrushchev era and, after being forced underground following Brezhnev's crushing of the Prague Spring, were brought to center stage by Gorbachev in the late 1980s.

Ostrovsky masterfully describes the people within this movement, concentrating on journalists who employed the media to propel reformers into power in large part by using Gorbachev's *glasnost* (openness) to discredit the Soviet regime. It's difficult to imagine how dizzying a time this was. In the space of 10 years, an odd assortment of men from the society's margins (where they sold jeans, wrote for underground papers or marked time in academic institutes) assumed leading roles in Russia. From underdogs, they were now seen as instruments of an inevitable wave of change that would end Europe's ideological fissures, the "end of history" in Fukayama's phrase. What could possibly go wrong?

The early days of *Kommersant*, the country's first private, pro-market newspaper, was an indication, and Ostrovsky's description encapsulates the complexities of a changing Russia. *Kommersant*'s reformist owners were all too willing to con investors and manipulate their shares, even as their paper advocated for free markets and private property. These million-dollar swindles were a prelude to the massive manipulations a few years later, when Yeltsin pawned Russia's most valuable companies to seven oligarchs in exchange for positive media coverage and financial backing for his 1996 re-election bid.

Ostrovksy points out that this transaction was unnecessary and short-

sighted: by 1996, the private sector and the major media companies were sufficiently mature to understand what was at stake in the choice between Yeltsin and his communist rival. The backroom bribe was a tawdry own goal that helped discredit democratization, the media and big business all in one go. Having secured Yeltsin another term, this new elite then tore itself apart in the "bankers' war" and associated battles.

As a chronicle of the creative class of journalists, businessmen, campaign impressarios and reformers, Ostrovsky's title is deceptive: the book is less about the invention of Russia and more about the failure of this new elite to invent a new Russia that embodied and safeguarded the values they espoused. In Ostrovsky's words, they lacked "the most important attribute of an elite —a sense of responsibility for, and historic consciousness of, their own country."

The failure to articulate, define and defend the new Russia left a huge void for a different cast of political and intellectual entrepreneurs to fill. These included nationalists, officers nostalgic for their fallen superpower and reborn communists who coalesced around the

READING RUSSIA

In the run-up to the 25th anniversary of the new Russia this year, a great many books have been written to chronicle, analyze and attempt to understand the momentous events and leading personalities involved in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and subsequent emergence of a changed Russia and 14 independent nations.

Several publications and think tanks have presented thoughtful reviews and useful lists of some of those titles. Among them, "Putin's Russia" in the *New York Review of Books*, "Return to Cold War: Russia and the Former Soviet Union" in *Foreign Affairs* and the Center on Global Interests' "Russia: A Reading Guide" stand out.

Benjamin Nathans' essay, "The Real Power of Putin," in the Sept. 29 *New York Review of Books*, explores Putin, the individual, and his role in the evolution of Russia since the end of the USSR. Recognized as a "conservative patriot," as Nathans puts it, Putin appeared to be soberly pursuing Russia's national interest at the turn of the 21st century.

"What happened? Why did Putin's Russia jump the rails? Why is the talk (not to mention the book titles) in the West no longer of transition but regression, with a 'new tsar,' a 'new Russian empire,' and a 'new cold war'?" Nathans asks.

He draws on the insights offered in nine recent titles on Russia to frame the answers. In the process, we are reminded of Russia's long history of authoritarianism, empire and the importance of ideas in its rich culture.

With a focus on "Putin's Russia," the May-June issue of *Foreign Affairs* includes Columbia University Professor Emeritus Robert Legvold's brief review of six recent titles ranging from *The Red Web: The Struggle Between Russia's Digital Dictators and the New Online Revolutionaries* and *Velvet Revolutions: An Oral History of Czech Society* to *On Stalin's Team: The Years of Living Dangerously in Soviet Politics.*

In the same "Recent Books" feature, Angela Stent, director of the Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies at Georgetown University, reviews Legvold's own new volume, *Return to Cold War.*

In August, to usher in the new academic year, the Center on Global Interests posted "Russia: A Reading Guide." In this unique resource, a variety of experts share the books that shaped their own understanding of Russia and titles that policymakers should read to better understand Russian society, politics, culture and foreign policy.

Twelve Russia experts—from former CNN Moscow correspondent Jill Dougherty and former *New York Times* Moscow correspondent Steven Lee Myers to former Senior Director for Russia on the U.S. National Security Council Thomas Graham (a former FSO) and former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul—offer, as CGI puts it, an eclectic blend of fiction and non-fiction, new and old works, classic and more obscure.

Anyone in search of just the right reading list to become informed about Russia and Vladimir Putin will certainly find these choices to be an excellent start.

–The Editors

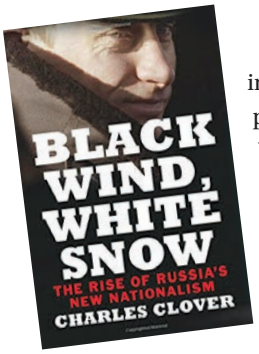
concept of Eurasianism, the subject of Clover's book.

Eurasianism's starting point is Halford Mackinder's 1904 geopolitical theorem: "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island [the Eurasian continent]; Who rules the World Island commands the World." Mixing it with a healthy dose of conservative Russian nationalism produces an ideology that celebrates Russian imperialism and implacable opposition to Western political and social values.

Clover traces the development and evolution of Eurasian ideology, while simultaneously pointing out that its central tenets have been discredited intellectually since their establishment in the 1920s and that its proponents often weave dark conspiracy theories into their geopolitics. Clover's occasionally too-detailed narrative painstakingly relates the life stories and intellectual struggles of largely forgotten thinkers such as Prince Nikolay Trubetskoy and Lev Gumilev, a tragic figure who suffered two stints in the gulag, lived long enough to see the USSR's demise and ended his life pining for its restoration.

Alexander Dugin, who embodies many of the Putin regime's most salient characteristics, is Clover's chief protagonist. A former dissident poet/essayist, Dugin latched onto the ideas of European fascists as the USSR disintegrated, blended them with Russia's Eurasianist thinking and worked for years—with little success—to harness the growing popularity of Russian nationalism to achieve political influence.

Paradoxically, while preaching an arch-conservative philosophy, Dugin is thoroughly post-modern. He gleefully deconstructs his own arguments and Russia's simulation of politics, as well as the ideas advanced by Western opponents, leaving Clover unsure whether Dugin is a sincere chauvinist or just a spin doctor with an unusually elaborate and colorful backstory.



As for Dugin's direct influence on Putin and his government, Clover is skeptical, though he dutifully sifts through the gossip and uncovers instances when Putin appears to have incorporated Dugin's utterances into his speeches.

Dugin's most significant impact on Russia was probably in the 1990s, when he took advantage of the ideologically shell-shocked Russian military establishment and was named a regular lecturer at the officers' academy, where his book, *Foundations of Geopolitics*, was to become required reading. Like others who wanted to preserve the USSR, Dugin recognized that one of the many failures of the 1991 putsch was its absence of a communications strategy or ideology. Eurasianism, he reasoned, was the post-communist justification for the continued existence of the Soviet Union.

Following his 2012 return to the presidency, Vladimir Putin stepped up his vilification of the West and made reasserting Russia's "zone of privileged interests" in neighboring countries a top priority. Dugin appeared regularly on television and was an outspoken advocate of Russia taking even more Ukrainian territory by force. But when these more radical positions fell out of favor in the Kremlin, Dugin's media profile diminished, suggesting the Kremlin trots him and his ideas out when useful but is not following his strategic playbook on a daily basis.

Clover has spotlighted the interplay between Eurasianist philosophy and Putin's Russia; but, as he would acknowledge, more research is required to explain how the ideologies of Russian nationalism and imperial nostalgia influence today's Russian government.

Both books remind us that "Russia is an idea-centric country" (Ostrovsky's phrase), in which journalists, "political technologists" and public intellectuals play an outsized role in determining the country's fate. Ostrovsky's work will be a mainstay for describing and explaining the last several decades of Russian history and is gracefully written to appeal to all interested readers. Because Clover's book is denser and dissects ideas (and some conspiracy theories) in greater detail, its audience may not extend beyond the communities of Russia geeks and specialists in European nationalism.

The lessons of the 1990s in Russia remain salient: Clover's central point is that even the brain-waves of cranks often change history. And Ostrovsky reminds us that core Enlightenment values cannot flourish without an elite that is willing to set aside its immediate interests to build institutions and habits that will safeguard them.

FSO Eric Green is director of the Russia Office in State's Bureau of European Affairs and previously served as political counselor in Moscow. He joined the Foreign Service in 1990 and has also served in the Philippines, Ukraine, Northern Ireland, Turkey and Iceland. He is a member of the Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board. The views expressed here are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of State.

Finding Money for College

A Guide to Scholarships

Scholarships can lighten the financial burden of a college education. Here are some tips on finding them.

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

Paying for college in the United States can be a herculean task. But some of the burden can be reduced with scholarships. Unlike loans, scholarships and grants are gifts—and a gift is always better than a loan.

The best source of funding—"inside" funding—comes in the form of merit scholarships and need-based grants from the colleges themselves. These are often renewed each year, as long as you keep your grades up and have no disciplinary problems while in college.

Merit-based scholarships are awarded based on grades, test scores and other achievements. If a college really wants you to attend, you will often get a letter announcing a merit-based scholarship long before the usual April 1 acceptance notification, as those are not based on financial need.

It pays to research colleges with large endowments that can afford to give out more money, as well as the many excellent private colleges that are less selective than the "top tier." They often generously award students who rank in the top 25 percent of their high school class.

Need-Based Aid

Need-based financial aid is a different story. But it's worth reviewing the basics of this, because there is increasing overlap in the forms required for both need-based and merit assistance.

To be considered for federal aid, the student must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA determines eligibility for need-based aid, which is generally awarded in a combination of grants and loans, often administered by the federal government, such as Pell Grants or Stafford Loans.

Previously, this form was not available until Jan. 1, creating challenges for students and schools trying to connect admissions decisions and financial aid decisions. Starting this year, the FAFSA became available on Oct. 1 and requires the previous year's tax information (2015), which should alleviate delays in processing federal aid decisions.

Once you submit the FAFSA, you almost immediately receive a number for "Estimated Family Contribution" (the EFC), which serves as a guide for what you can expect to receive in need-based financial aid.

Actual financial aid packages vary from school to school and will be sent to you with your acceptance letter or shortly thereafter.

Other Sources of Funds

There are many additional, private ("outside") sources for scholarship

Francesca Kelly, a former FSJ *AFSA News editor, is currently the university counselor at QSI International School in Tbilisi, Georgia, as well as a private essay tutor. She writes frequently on college admissions for the* Journal.

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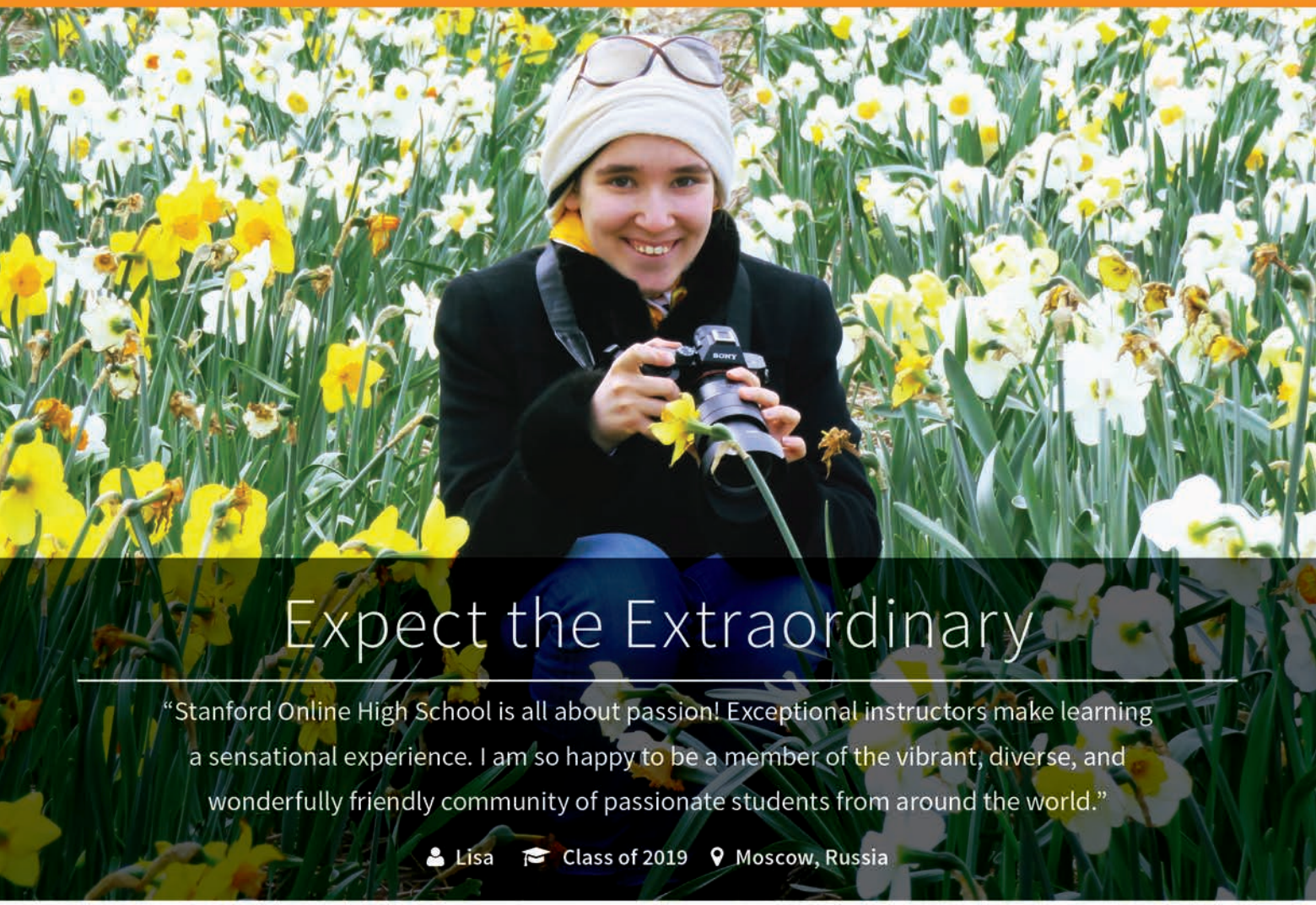

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If you decide to apply for outside scholarships, treat the process as a part-time job, starting well before senior year.

money, including a few that are geared specifically to dependents of Foreign Service employees. However, there are some things to keep in mind about outside scholarships.

Once you have received a need-based financial aid package from your college, you are required to report any outside scholarships to the financial aid office. Expect your financial aid package to be consequently reduced.

When this happens, many colleges try to reduce your loans before they reduce grant money, but make sure you are aware of each of your chosen colleges' financial aid policies if you plan to apply for outside scholarships. If you submit multiple private scholarship applications, it's possible to win enough money to eliminate your loans and even cover most, if not all, of your college expenses.

If you are not filing the FAFSA (i.e., not applying for need-based aid), then any scholarship funds you win from outside sources are yours to apply toward tuition costs as you see fit. There are some exceptions to this; but generally, if you are not a financial aid recipient, you do not have to report scholarships to your college.

Speaking of exceptions—many colleges ask you to submit the FAFSA to be eligible for their merit-based scholarships. It's not logical, but it's also not a bad idea: even if you are comfortable now, your financial circumstances could change, and some colleges make it difficult to request financial aid later if you enrolled initially without it. This is why experts often encourage everyone to file the FAFSA, whether they believe they need aid or not.

An increasing number of schools also want to see your CSS Profile, or College Scholarship Service Profile, when considering school-based financial aid. So make sure to check whether or not you need to

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submit this financial aid form, developed by the College Board, as well.

Bottom line: check with each of your colleges to be sure of the details of all of their financial aid policies.

To Get Started

The following list contains just a few of the many resources available to you for finding scholarships. There are scholarships and tuition credits available based on GPA, SAT and ACT test scores; state residency; IB diploma; career and major choices; being a military or Foreign Service family member; doing volunteer, charitable and church work; knowing a foreign language; through a parent's private employer; and more.

There are also very specific, often downright odd scholarships: for very tall people or very short people, for example. Or for golf caddies (http://www.wgaesf.org/). There's even an "AFSA" scholarship that has nothing to do with the Foreign Service—that AFSA scholarship comes from the American Fire Sprinkler Association (www.afsascholarship.org).

If you decide to apply for outside scholarships, treat the process as a part-time job, starting well before senior year with your research, and taking careful note of deadlines. Do your homework, find the scholarships that you're most likely to win, and apply early and often!

Here are some resources to get you started.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Common wisdom is to submit the FAFSA even if you think you don't qualify for aid. You may be pleasantly surprised to find you qualify.

www.fafsa.gov

College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile

This financial aid application, run by the College Board, is required by almost 300 private colleges in order to consider you for any assistance.

www.css-profile.com/

AFSA

At the American Foreign Service Association's scholarship Web page, you can find detailed information on how to apply for an AFSA scholarship, as well as a wealth of resources on financial aid, college admissions and other educational advice.

www.afsa.org/afsa-scholarships

U.S. Department of State

The State Department's Family Liaison Office maintains a page on scholarships and financial aid for Foreign Service dependents, including scholarships from AFSA, the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW), the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, Clements Insurance, and links to Defense Intelligence Agency and other foreign affairs agency-sponsored scholarships. You'll also find helpful information on financial aid, educational travel and other processes unique to the Foreign Service.

www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21963.htm

FastWeb

One of the first scholarship websites and still one of the best, offering lists

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of targeted scholarships based on your talents, a system of scholarship deadline alerts and a cautionary section on scholarship scams.
www.fastweb.com

Unigo

This website was started by Jordan Goldman, a Wesleyan University graduate and one of the students profiled in *New York Times* writer Jacques Steinberg's 2002 book about the college admissions process, *The Gatekeepers*. Unigo has grown from a review site of about 100 colleges to a huge resource for scholarships, and also offers its own scholarships as well as featuring others.
www.unigo.com

Scholarships

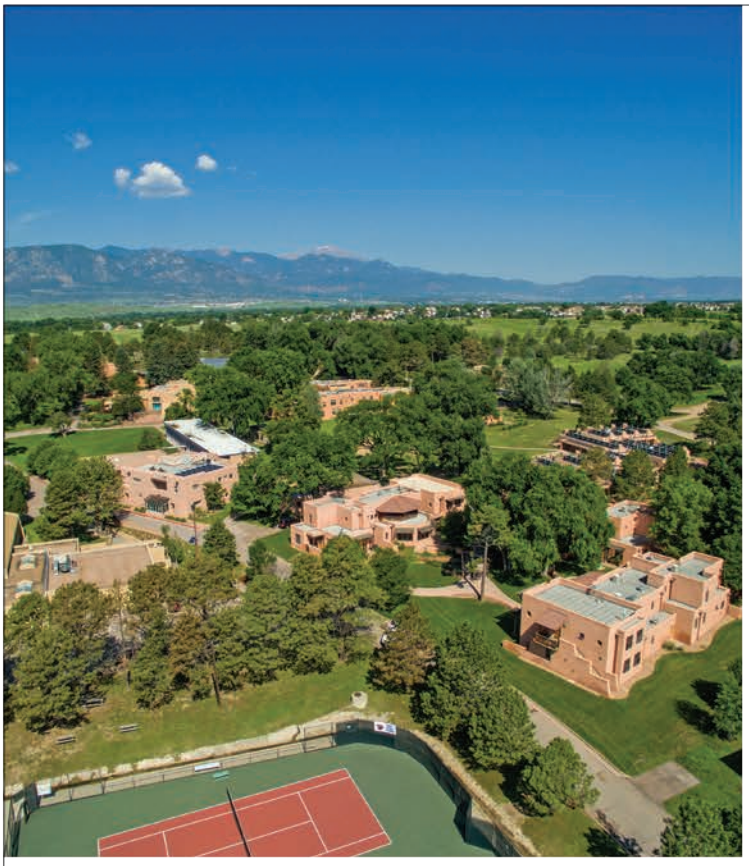
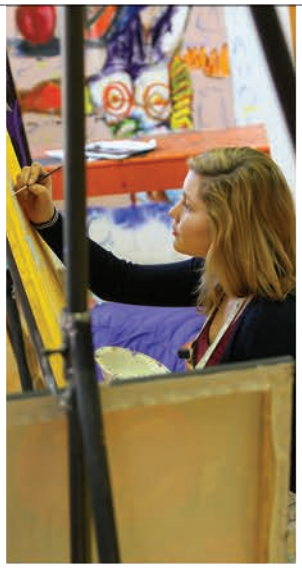
A comprehensive site that cross-references scholarships by categories such as Minority Scholarships, Veteran Scholarships and Scholarships by Major. They also offer college search functions. Be sure to check out their scholarships listed by state.
www.scholarships.com

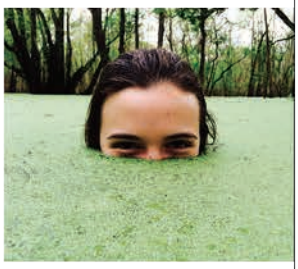
Cappex

Cappex provides a free scholarship match service and helps you find scholarships from everywhere: private foundations, corporations, charities and hundreds of colleges.
www.cappex.com

Finaid

This site explains financial aid very well. Be sure to look at their clear explanation about reporting outside scholarships to your college if you are a need-based financial aid recipient.
www.finaid.org



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Do It Yourself College Rankings

College admissions expert Michelle Kretzschmar has an unusual approach to college admissions, including ways to calculate the most affordable colleges, as well as those that admit more than 50 percent of their applicants. Her site, filled with charts and data, and her blog, is worth a look.
www.diycollegerankings.com/

Books

Although there are books that claim to give you an edge in finding scholarships, the most up-to-date information on scholarships is available free on the internet through websites like the ones above. However, for those who like to get their information in book form, here are a few recommendations to supplement (not replace) your internet research.

The Financial Aid Handbook: Getting the Education You Want for the Price You Can Afford, Carol Stack and Ruth Vedvik (The Career Press, Inc., 2011).

This is an excellent overview of the entire financial aid process, of which scholarships are just one part. For clear explanations of the FAFSA and the CSS Profile, and a knowledgeable discussion of some strategies for getting an affordable education, this book can't be beat.

Confessions of a Scholarship Winner, Kristina Ellis (Worthy Publishing, 2013).

While the author offers mostly common-sense advice about earning scholarships through plain old hard work, her story is inspirational and might be just the thing to get you motivated. When her widowed mother told her there would be no money for college, Ms. Ellis grew determined to earn all the money she would need to completely pay for four years of college—and she accomplished that goal. ■

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ELEMENTARY													
Grace Episcopal School	103	110	48/52	NA	NA	PS-5	NA	NA	NA	3	NA	Y	19,230
ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR HIGH													
Hampshire Country School	101	25	All boys	100	5	3-9	N/N	N	Y	65	N	N	57,500
ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH													
Hockaday School, The	96	1,098	All girls	7	55	PK-12	Y/N	Y	Y	20	Y	Y	50,026-51,333
Rochambeau the French International School	89	1,080	48/52	NA	48	PS-12	N/N	N	Limited	25	N	N	21,265
Saint Andrew's School	93	1,285	50/50	18	.	PK-12	Y/Y	Y	Y/Y	30	Y	N	53,230
JUNIOR HIGH/SENIOR HIGH													
Cortona Academy of Science, Technology & the Arts	82	100	50/50	5	25	7-12, GAP	Y/Y	N	Y/Y	4	Y	Y	20,000[ae]
Grier School	101	315	All girls	85	45	7-12	Y/N	Y	Y	120	Y	N	51,700
Hargrave Military Academy	102	225	All boys	90	12	7-12, PG	Y/N	N	Limited	76	Y	N	33,800
Southwestern Academy	97	160	60/40	75	75	6-12, PG	Y	Y	Limited	27	Y	Y	39,900
Oak Hill Academy	105	105	60/40	98	23	8-12	N/N[f]	N	Y	100	N	Y	29,860[ab]
SENIOR HIGH													
Asheville School	81	285	50/50	80	19	9-12	Y/N	Y	N	42	Y	Y	51,735
Besant Hill School of Happy Valley	98	100	50/50	85	40	9-12, PG	Y/ N	Y	Y	80	Y	N	52,500
Church Farm School	107	192	All boys	90	14	9-12	Y/N	Y	Limited	37	Y	N	38,000
Culver Academies	87	815	57/43	21	21	9-12	Y/N	N	Limited	100	Y	N	46,500
Fountain Valley School of Colorado	83	226	50/50	65	23	9-12	Y/N	N	N	75	Y	N	57,625
Kent School	85	570	53/47	90	30	9-12, PG	Y/N	Y	Limited	90	Y	Limited	56,500

◆Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate ◆◆Dec. 25-Jan 1. NA, not applicable
[a]Sibling discount [b]Financial aid available [c]Dollar value subject to exchange rate [d]Aid for federal employees [e]Gap year [f]Dual college credit

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School	Page Number	Enrollment	Gender Distribution M/F	Percent Boarding	Percent Int'l.	Levels Offered	AP/IB◆	TABS common application	Accept ADD/LD	Miles to Int'l. Airport	International Students Orientation	Holiday Break Coverage◆◆	Annual Tuition, Room & Board
SENIOR HIGH (CONTINUED)													
Lake Forest Academy	99	435	50/50	50	25	9-12	Y/N	Y	Limited	18	Y	Y	55,500
Leelanau School, The	107	44	57/43	57	3	9-12	N/N	Y	Y	156	Y	Limited	61,350
Mercersburg Academy	99	430	53/47	85	23	9-12, PG	Y/N	N	Limited	93	Y	Y	56,350
Miss Hall's School	103	210	All girls	72	40	9-12, PG	Y/N	Y	Y	50	Y	N	55,105
Phillips Academy	89	1,150	50/50	74	10	9-12, PG	Y/N	N	Limited	26	Y	N	52,100[b]
St. Mark's School	100	360	53/47	75	21	9-12	N/N	Y	N	30	N	N	57,500
Tilton School	106	257	61/39	75	30	9-12, PG	Y/N	Y	Y	85	Y	Y	58,925
POST SECONDARY													
Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar	109	241	30/70	NA	0.9	B.S.F.S.	NA	NA	Y	19	Y	Y	60,112
St. John's College New Mexico	110	Residential summer program engages students, ages 15 to 18, in St. John's collaborative, discussion-based classes taught by the college's renowned faculty. www.sjc.edu/summeracademy											
St. Mary's University	110	3,567	48/52	37	9.5	B.A.,B.S., M.A.,M.S, Ph.D.	NA	NA	Y	12	Y	N	37,500
Stanford High School Summer College	3	Attend Stanford University during the summer. Students 16-19 choose from 145 different courses in more than 30 departments. Take courses taught by Stanford faculty and scholars. Earn Stanford University credit. summercollege.stanford.edu											
University of New Hampshire-Main	108	The University of New Hampshire is a top-100 public research university with business and law schools among the best in the nation.											
CANADA													
Bishop's College School	101	260	60/40	75	40	7-12	Y/Y	Y	Y	108	Y	Y	57,000[c]
Ridley College	105	660	52/48	54	32	K-12, PG	N/Y	Y	Y	41	Y	Y	43,500[c]
OVERSEAS													
Berlin Brandenburg International School	78	700	50/50	20	65	K-12	N/Y	N	Y	15	Y	N	42,000[c]
Carlucci American International School of Lisbon	104	675	50/50	NA	60	PK-12	N/Y	N	Limited	22	Y	NA	9,344-21,790

◆Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate ◆◆Dec. 25-Jan 1. NA, not applicable
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OVERSEAS (CONTINUED)													
Frankfurt International School	97	1,800	50/50	NA	80	K-12	N/Y	N	Limited	19	Y	N	22,100
International School Frankfurt Rhein-Main	103	600	50/50	NA	72	PK-12	Y/Y	N	N	6	Y	N	13,000-20,600
Jakarta Intercultural School	82	2,500	50/50	NA	85	PK-12	Y/Y	N	Limited	24	Y	N	19,500-32,100
John F. Kennedy School Berlin	94	1,680	50/50	NA	50	K-12	Y/N	N	Limited	15	Y	N	None
Leysin American School in Switzerland	95	340	50/50	100	80	7-12, PG	N/Y	Y	Limited	75	Y	N	88,000[d]
St. Stephen's School	95	295	47/53	15	62	9-12, PG	Y/Y	N	N	12	Y	N	37,950[c]
TASIS The American School in England	91	720	48/52	27	37	PK-12	Y/Y	N	Limited	8	Y	N	48,350[cd]
TASIS The American School in Switzerland	91	720	50/50	36	75	PK-12, PG	Y/Y	Limited	Limited	40	Y	N	82,000[d]
SPECIAL NEEDS													
Gow School, The	84	150	87/13	87	33	6-12, PG	NA	N	Y	20	Y	Y	65,800
DISTANCE LEARNING													
Stanford Online High School	77	Enrollment is 704, with a boy/girl distribution of 50/50. WASC Accredited, diploma-granting independent school for grade 7-12. Global and academically motivated student body. American college-preparatory education. Advanced academic program (AP and university-level courses). Student services and vibrant student life. State Department covers tuition. ohs.stanford.edu											
Summit Tutoring & Test Prep	103	Summit Tutoring & Test Prep offers top-notch, personalized one-on-one or small group online tutoring for the SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP classes. Learn from the best to score your best. www.summittestprep.com											
Texas Tech University	79	Texas Tech University Independent School District.and Worldwide eLearning. Kindergarten-12th grade and accredited HS diploma; online bachelor's through graduate programs.											
OTHER													
AAFSW		Publisher of *Raising Kids in the Foreign Service*. A volunteer organization that supports Foreign Service employees, spouses, partners and members of household. www.aafsw.org											
DACOR	116	DACOR Bacon House Foundation offers Dreyfus scholarships to children and grandchildren of FSOs attending Yale or Hotchkiss. www.dacorbacon.org											
FLO	80	Family Liaison Office. Information and resources for Foreign Service families. Contact FLOAskEducation@state.gov											
FSYF	106	Foreign Service Youth Foundation. A support network for U.S. Foreign Service youth worldwide. www.fsyf.org											

◆Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate ◆◆Dec. 25-Jan 1. NA, not applicable
[a]Sibling discount [b]Financial aid available [c]Dollar value subject to exchange rate [d]Aid for federal employees [e]Gap year [f]Dual college credit

What Is the Coalition App?

There's a new college application platform on the block. Most schools aren't using it exclusively yet, but underclassmen may want to set up an account and test its unique new Locker feature.

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

As if life weren't already confusing enough between universities' own applications for admission and the Common App, we now have—ta-da—the Coalition Application, a free online college application platform developed by the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success, a membership group of colleges and universities.

The Coalition App has been variously described as an application designed for low-income and first-generation college applicants; as a way to round out the application so it tells colleges more about their applicants; and as an alternative to the Common Application, which has admittedly held somewhat of a monopoly on the application business.

Launched just a few months ago, the Coalition App is only required by one school for the 2016-2017 academic year—the University of Florida. Other schools, all members of the Coalition, offer it; but they do so alongside their own or the Common Application so that applicants have a choice. About half of the Coalition membership schools are taking a wait-and-see approach.

Although it's too early to tell how well the Coalition App works, high school students should investigate this new player in the college applications game; and students applying to the University of Florida have no choice but to get to know it.

Access, Affordability and Success

The Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success sprang out of discussions among elite institutions about accessibility to higher education for all, leading to the development of the Application by administrators from Emory, Smith and the University of Maryland. The Coalition now has 95 members, including all of the Ivy League universities, as well as other prestigious institutions.

College admissions officers have long observed the difference between students who receive help with their applications—typically wealthier students at better-equipped high schools—and those who are disadvantaged in some way vis-à-vis the college application process, either by being first-generation applicants or coming from schools with few resources to assist them.

The Coalition sought to create a college admissions atmosphere that was friendlier to minority and low-income students. The technical problems that wreaked havoc after the 2013 Common App revisions added momentum to the desire to create an alternative platform. And so CAAS was born.

To be a Coalition member, schools must graduate at least 70 percent of

---

Francesca Kelly writes frequently for the Journal *on education issues relevant to the Foreign Service community.*

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The Coalition sought to create a college admissions atmosphere that was friendlier to minority and low-income students.

their students within six years. Public universities must demonstrate affordable in-state tuition rates, and both private and public institutions must offer a high level of need-based financial aid. In other words, members pledge to do everything possible to make college affordable and accessible for low-income, minority or otherwise disadvantaged applicants.

The Coalition App, in the words of more than one college counselor, ostensibly "levels the playing field." (Note: as of Nov. 1, the Coalition has stated that standards for joining may be relaxed in order to allow more institutions to join. Reactions have been mixed. Stay tuned.)

Whether it actually delivers on its creators' aims remains to be seen. The Coalition members themselves admit this is a work in progress. Right now, according to the Coalition website, about 50 of the member schools already offer the Coalition App. The other 45 schools are easing into it more slowly, anticipating first-year glitches.

The overwhelming majority of the participating schools will continue to also offer their own applications (or the Common App) for the time being until the Coalition App gets on its feet.

That sense of caution certainly applies to the University of Maryland and the University of Washington. Both universities, along with the University of Florida, had announced earlier this year that they would exclusively be offering the Coalition App and no other application. But Maryland and Washington both quietly backtracked, delaying their use of the Coalition App until August 2017.

That leaves the University of Florida as the lone guinea pig offering the Coalition Application only, with no other application platform as backup. High school

Continued on page 98

The ABCs of Education Allowances

Employees of government agencies assigned overseas are granted allowances to help defray the cost of an education for their children in kindergarten through 12th grade, one equivalent to that provided by public school systems in the United States.

In most cases, posts abroad are served by one or more English-language, American curriculum schools.

The allowances for a specific post are determined by the fees charged by a school identified as providing a basic U.S.-type education. Parents may use this allowance to send their children to a different school of their choice—say, a parochial or foreign-language institution. If the alternative school is more expensive than the "base" school, the difference would be an out-of-pocket expense for the parents.

An allowance covers only expenses for those services usually available without cost in American public schools, including tuition, transportation and textbooks.

Parents may also elect to homeschool their children while at post, using a home study program or a virtual online educational program. They will receive an allowance to purchase materials and services while posted abroad.

If a foreign country does not have a secular, English-language school with an American curriculum, or has such a school that goes only through certain grades, an away-from-post or "boarding school" allowance is provided.

The U.S. government does not provide an allowance for college or other post-secondary education.

There are several offices in the Department of State prepared to help you understand how the educational allowances work, and what choices you have for your children. These include the Office of Overseas Schools (www.state.gov/m/a/os), the Office of Allowances (www.state.gov/m/a/als) and the Family Liaison Office (www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c1958.htm).

For information or assistance contact FLOAskEducation@state.gov or call (202) 647-1076.

Excerpts from an article by Pamela Ward, a former regional education officer in the State Department's Office of Overseas Schools, in the December 2014 FSJ.

Note: The regulations governing allowances are always changing. For the most up-to-date information, please contact FLO, the Office of Allowances or the Office of Overseas Schools.

The advantage of the Locker is that you can take your time over the course of four years, uploading when you need to.

Continued from page 94

counselors who have students applying to the University of Florida have reported some technical difficulties that both the Coalition and UF are working on. Other Coalition members are paying close attention.

So What Makes It Different?

The loudest buzz is about Coalition App's "Locker" feature. This is an online storage bunker of sorts, a place to store materials that will support your application. You can start doing this as early as 9th grade, uploading photos, videos, documents and more. No one can see any of this until you "unlock" it for the colleges you apply to in 12th grade, or share certain files with mentors.

The advantage of the Locker is that you can take your time over the course of four years, uploading when you need to. Even if you have no idea what colleges you will be applying to in your senior year, you can use the Locker as an organizing tool starting in middle school. You can also ask a mentor such as a teacher or counselor to look at the items in your Locker and comment on them at any time.

Essay prompts are a little different, too. The topics are broader, and the recommended essay length is shorter—300-500 words, rather than the Common Application's 650-word limit. The Coalition App also features the prompt, "Submit an essay on a topic of your choice," which the Common App abandoned a few years ago. (See sidebar for comparison of Coalition App and Common App essay prompts.)

Once you are registered and signed in, you have access to video tutorials about how to use the Locker and articles about all aspects of the college application process, from extracurricular activities and

High school counselors have had to scramble to get up to speed on the differences between the Coalition App and the Common App.

how to choose a college to how to apply for athletic scholarships. This is somewhat similar to what's offered on college prep software such as Naviance, a perk generally found only in financially secure school districts.

Let's Go Through the Sections

As with the Common App, the Coalition App features a Profile section, where you input personal and contact information, as well as demographic, citizenship, school and family information. The Profile also asks you to self-report standardized test scores such as the SAT, ACT, English-language proficiency tests such as TOEFL or IELTS, and AP scores.

There's one section to list your coursework from grades 9-11, and another to start listing grade 12 courses. As with the Common App, there are slots in which to list your extracurricular activities and hobbies.

Next comes the Locker. Here's where you can upload creative writing, artwork, class projects, awards, audio files such as concerts and video files such as stage productions—all under a section called "Media."

Another section of the Locker allows you or your counselor to upload official documents—transcript and school profile, counselor recommendations (up to four), teacher recommendations (up to four) and other recommenders (up to eight), many more recommendations than the Common App permits. (The Coalition App wording reminds students that "not all institutions will accept these additional letters.")

The means of uploading official documents such as transcripts is enabled once you start choosing your list of colleges to apply to. You may have to finish the entire first part of the application before

The Coalition App's creators say thinking about college in 9th grade, and slowly uploading items as needed, is actually a more relaxed way of completing the college application.

using a search function to add colleges. Only after you add a list of colleges will you be able to complete each college's unique part of the application.

Different colleges will design their small part of the larger application differently, as well. Some colleges are cutting the word limit on essays to 2,500 characters, which is between 400 and 500 words, and you may have to cut and paste your essays rather than upload them.

Pluses and Minuses

Not everyone is happy with the Coalition App. Critics have claimed that not all of the Coalition members are truly need-blind when it comes to financial aid, and that some institutions' financial aid is offered as loans rather than grants—two factors that belie the Coalition's central tenet of making college more affordable.

Others have pointed out that the "affordability" angle to the Coalition App was not the real reason it got started, claiming that the Coalition was formed by a handful of college admissions officers who were not happy with the strict rules imposed on them by the Common App and the technical difficulties their applicants experienced on its new revision in 2013.

Still others have questioned whether creating another college application platform just creates more stress for all concerned. Students who are wrestling with both the Common App and individual colleges' own version of an application now have to contend with yet another application.

High school counselors have had to scramble to get up to speed on the differ-

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Essay Prompts: Comparing the Common and Coalition Apps

Coalition App 2016-2017 Prompts:

1. Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.

2. Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.

3. Has there been a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs?

4. What is the hardest part of being a teenager now? What's the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?

5. Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.

Common Application 2016-2017 Prompts:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

2. The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community or family.

—Francesca Kelly

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Proponents stress that the Coalition App gives colleges a chance to learn much more about their applicants if they choose to.

Continued from page 102

ences between the Coalition App and the Common App, and many college admissions officials are not thrilled with the prospect of a Locker full of much more information about each student than can reasonably be perused during a high-volume application season.

In fact, rumors are already circulating about the Coalition App being tweaked in anticipation of increased usage during the 2017-2018 application season.

Finally, some experts fear that starting the college application process in 9th grade pressures already anxious high school students at an earlier age. But others argue that disadvantaged children can only gain from preparing earlier.

The App's creators maintain that thinking about college in 9th grade, and slowly uploading items as needed, is actually a more relaxed way of completing the college application. Even if you don't end up applying to any colleges that use the Coalition Application, you can still use the Coalition App's Locker and other features as a private organizational tool for the college application process.

Proponents of the Coalition App also stress that it gives colleges a chance to learn much more about their applicants if they choose to, and that its tutorials and advice are helpful to students who may not have access to counseling or mentoring.

The jury is still out on this very new application platform. If you're an underclassman, create an account and at least give the Locker feature a try. If you're a senior and aren't required to use the Coalition App for any of your applications, then simply choose the application platform with which you're most comfortable—and good luck! ■

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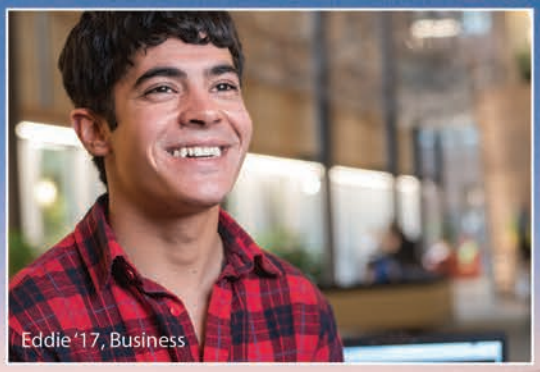
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What's Up with All Those Rankings?

There are more ways than ever to compare schools.

THE EDITORS

For years, *U.S. News & World Report*'s annual college rankings monopolized the attention of college applicants and students, and their parents. Over the past decade or so, a number of competitors have cropped up, offering a variety of rankings and different ways to compare schools. Now *Forbes, Kiplinger, Money,* Niche (formerly College Prowler) and Princeton Review are all in the rankings business, too.

This year, the *Wall Street Journal* joined the fray, linking up with Times Higher Education, a unit of the London company TES Global Ltd., to issue the inaugural WSJ/THE ranking of U.S. colleges in September.

WSJ/THE advertises its departure from the traditional emphasis on "inputs"—average SAT scores or how many applicants are rejected—in favor of a greater focus on students' postgraduate success and their own opinions about the quality of their education.

The WSJ/THE rankings are based on 15 factors across four categories: student outcomes (40 percent), as defined primarily by salaries; the school's resources (30 percent); how well the school engages students (20 percent); and diversity (10 percent).

Among other things, the WSJ/THE rankings incorporate results from a survey of 100,000 college students about their college experience.

The top spot went to Stanford University. *Forbes* also ranked Stanford No. 1, with Williams College ranked No. 2.

Addressing Adult Learners

In another new development this year, *Washington Monthly*, the most prominent "alternative" ranking group, introduced what it describes as the nation's first-ever ranking of the best colleges for adult learners—based on ease of transfer, flexibility of programs and services for adult students.

Though nearly half of all college students today are adults, no national publication has ranked schools for them. The new ranking of best two-year and four-year colleges for adult learners joins *Washington Monthly*'s "Best Bang for the Buck" rankings (added in 2012).

Since it debuted "College Rankings: What Can Colleges Do for the Country?" in 2005, *Washington Monthly* has been driving the push to collect, explore and raise the weight of "outcomes" data in college rankings.

WM's annual rankings, as well as the in-depth journalism on education in the United States that accompanies each College Guide, are based not on what colleges do for themselves but on what they do for the country in terms of promoting social mobility, research and service.

This year, *WM*'s College Guide benefits from the Obama administration's release of new outcomes information for all colleges and universities in the country—such practical data as how much students earn 10 years after enrolling at a given college, and how likely they are to be paying down the principal on educational loans.

The Spread of Rankings

In the meantime, the rankings world has spread out horizontally, not just to global rankings (produced by both *U.S. News & World Report* and THE), but to rankings for just about everything.

Maybe you are into hiking. You have only to consult "The 20 Best Colleges for

Hikers," by college students Jackie Bannon and Carolyn Webber, published at the *Backpacker* magazine website in October.

Bannon and Webber reviewed hundreds of schools and rated them on a five-point scale based on three main criteria: proximity to mountains, trails, rivers and other outdoor recreational opportunities; culture, evaluated by number of outdoor clubs and participation; and quality and diversity of academics for outdoor-related careers. The No. 1 spot went to University of Alaska Fairbanks.

If you have the urge to travel, Princeton Review's 2016 college rankings include "The 20 Most Popular Study Abroad Programs." These rankings are generally student-input based, and this one is the result of asking 143,000

If you have the urge to travel, Princeton Review's 2016 college rankings include "The 20 Most Popular Study Abroad Programs."

students at 381 school "How popular is studying abroad at your school?"

Elon University got first place, with Goucher College (which requires all students to study abroad) at No. 2.

Best Campus Food?

Best campus food? Try No. 1-ranked University of Massachusetts-Amherst, according to Princeton Review, followed by Bowdoin College and Cornell University. Princeton Review ranks University of Wisconsin-Madison the "Best Party School" and "Best Health Services."

Most haunted colleges in the world? According to Top Universities website, that honor goes to University of St. Andrews in Scotland, followed by Gettysburg College.

Forbes ranks the best U.S. colleges for international students, giving the top rank to Babson College, followed by Bryn Mawr and then Claremont McKenna Colleges.

Though Best College Reviews focuses on online education rankings, it also offers such interesting brick-and-mortar rankings as "The 45 Most Exotic Universities," "The 30 Most Amazing Higher Ed Natural History Museums," "The 25 Most Amazing College Theaters," "The 20 Best College Farms," "The 25 Colleges with the Best Weather," "The 25 Best Great Books Programs" and many more.

For more on the college rankings landscape, see "American College Rankings: How They Work and What They Mean" by Francesca Kelly in the December 2014 *FSJ* Education Supplement. ■

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In Praise of the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund

BY ROBERT GRIBBIN

The Ambassador's Self-Help Fund has proven to be one of our most effective diplomatic tools in Africa. Historically, each ambassador was allocated a pot of between $50,000 and $100,000 that, within reasonable guidelines, could be allocated as the embassy decided.

Self-Help Funds exist—and, indeed, were specifically created—for countries that did not have a bilateral USAID program. The SHF gave the country team an oar in the developmental waters that advanced U.S. interests in terms of basic development and solid public relations.

Usually, the SHF committee at post — often headed by a junior officer—selects brick-and-mortar projects like building school classrooms, health clinics and libraries or supporting women's or youth groups. Often there is a cumulative impact.

In Rwanda, for example, successive SHF allocations during the 1970s focused on rural health clinics. Over the years, the several dozen clinics built by the embassy constituted an important part of the national health infrastructure.

And success was recognized. I remember the 1980 dedication of a clinic performed by President Juvénal Habyarimana in the presence of a crowd of more than 20,000 people. It was a testament to shared U.S. and Rwandan values on the importance of basic health care.

In the early 1990s we conceived of a project in the Central African Republic to forward new aspirations for democracy and human rights. With our support, the Ministry of Education's curriculum committee wrote a textbook, *L'Éleve et les Droits de l'Homme (The Student and Human Rights)*.

The text featured excerpts from international human rights documents, plus local accounts about abusive situations such as forced labor, early marriage and corporal punishment. It also included vocabulary words, illustrations and discussion questions.

Initially we printed several thousand copies at the U.S. Information Service facility in Manila. Then we tapped year-end fallout funds sufficient for a press run of 20,000, enough to put a book in the hands of every other seventh- and eighth-grader. No other textbook for those children had such reach in the country.

After the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the nation was grappling with issues of reconciliation, reconstruction and justice. More than 100,000 persons accused of involvement in the massacres were incarcerated in miserably overcrowded and unsanitary jails. Although the international community, including the United States, stepped forward to help rebuild the nation, there was little attention given to the plight of the imprisoned except from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Part of the problem was that few citizens, including the jailed, their families and their jailers, understood the applicable regulations. In conjunction with the Ministry of Justice, we devised a cartoon-format pamphlet in Kinyarwanda that carefully spelled out what prisoners could expect, what treatment and health services they were entitled to and what support (e.g., food and clothing) families could provide and when. The effect was to reduce tensions in and around the prisons and help establish a more responsive monitoring regime.

As part of reconciliation efforts in Rwanda, we also supported various women's groups. The first objective was to empower women in new ways; the second was to foster mixed Tutsi/Hutu ethnic groupings; and the third was to launch a viable, sustainable project.

My favorite was a mushroom growing cooperative. Who knew there was an unmet demand for mushrooms? We financed a damp, dark building especially designed to grow them. It was quite successful on all three counts.

In sum, SHF projects are key pieces of the American presence in many countries. Look around—there are USAID plaques hammered onto many walls. Since most grants provide support directly to local communities for undertakings that they have proposed, helped finance and will manage, losses to overhead are minimal.

In addition, such projects offer wonderful opportunities for embassy personnel to get out and about, and to interact positively with host-country citizens. ■

An Africa hand, Ambassador Gribbin served two tours each in Bangui and Kigali among a dozen African postings. He is the author of two novels, a memoir about Rwanda and a chapter, "After Genocide," in the newly released The Crisis of the African State *(Marine Corps University Press, 2016).*

LOCAL LENS

BY KEVIN KEEN ■ BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

First I heard the hoofs, clacking on the pavement. I looked outside our Buenos Aires apartment. Down on the street were uniformed service people on horseback. They were headed to a military parade and ceremony commemorating Argentina's Independence Day, July 9. ■

Kevin Keen is an FS family member in Buenos Aires, where his FSO spouse is on his first tour. Kevin works remotely for the Switzerland-based Global Fund and has lived in Ecuador, Argentina and Switzerland. Previously a television news reporter, he is familiar with the video medium, but is now venturing into photography with his Canon Rebel T3i, used to take this photo. South America, he says, has limitless opportunities to practice picture taking.

Please submit your favorite, recent photograph to be considered for Local Lens. Images must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi at 8" x 10", or 1 MB or larger) and must not be in print elsewhere. Please include a short description of the scene/event, as well as your name, brief biodata and the type of camera used, to **locallens@afsa.org.**

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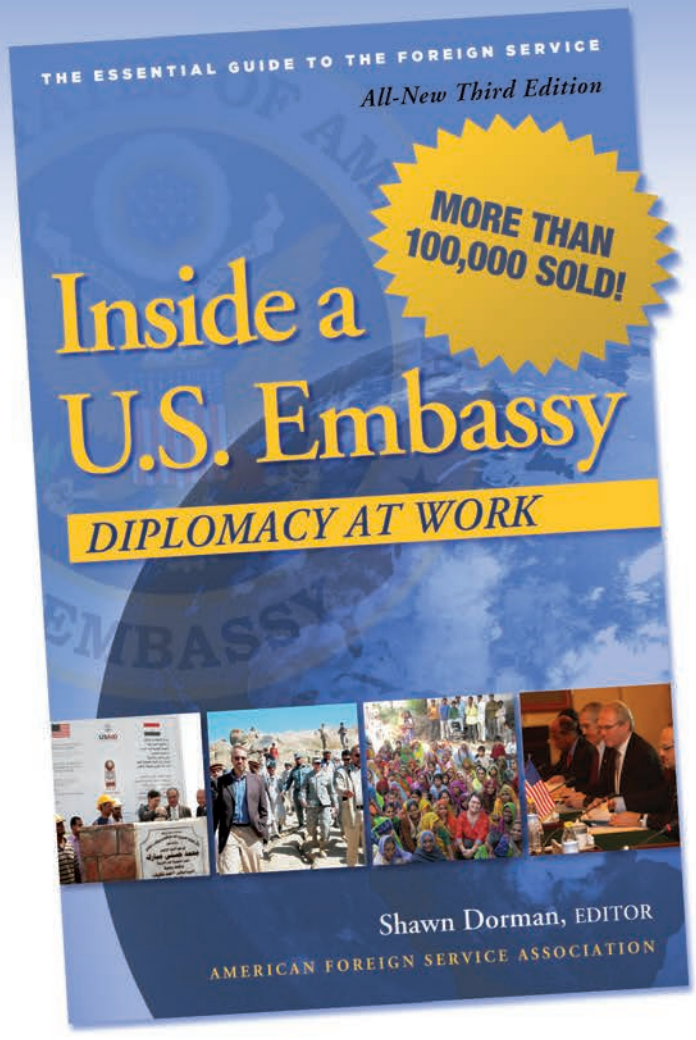

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