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Foreign Service Journal (ISSN 0146-3543), 2101 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-2990 is published monthly with a combined July/August issue by the American Foreign Service Association, a private, non-profit organization. Material appearing herein represents the opinions of the writers and does not necessarily represent the views of the *Journal*, the Editorial Board or AFSA. Writer queries and submissions are invited, preferably by e-mail. *Journal* subscription: AFSA Members - \$13 included in annual dues; others - \$40. For foreign surface mail, add \$18 per year; foreign airmail, \$36 per year. Periodical postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Foreign Service Journal*, 2101 E Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-2990. Indexed by Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS). The *Journal* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photos or illustrations. Advertising inquiries are invited. The appearance of advertisements herein does not imply the endorsement of the services or goods offered. FAX: (202) 338-8244 or (202) 338-6820. E-MAIL: journal@afsa.org. WEB: www.afsa.org. TELEPHONE: (202) 338-4045. © American Foreign Service Association, 2007. Printed in the U.S.A. Send address changes to AFSA Membership, 2101 E Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-2990. Printed on 50-percent recycled paper, of which 10 percent is post-consumer waste.

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

Defending Retirees' Interests, Both Inside and Outside the FS

By J. ANTHONY HOLMES

Protecting Foreign Service retirement benefits and advancing the interests of our retirees are fundamental and abiding AFSA priorities, things we work on constantly. Our engagement is not just an outgrowth of our regular member services, but reflects the fact that the FS retirement system is unique in two ways. It is "owned and operated" by the State Department, though lightly guided and overseen by the U.S. Treasury and the Office of Personnel Management. Your retirement contributions go or went (depending on whether you are active-duty or already retired) into the State Department controlled Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund, and all checks are drawn from it.

The other unique feature of the FS retirement system is that it is run by the State Department; specifically the Human Resource Bureau's Office of Retirement. HR/RET's staff controls the process completely from the initial notification of intent to retire until you die, and beyond if you have a surviving spouse. They calculate your annuity, handle all other aspects of your service-related life such as your medical plan and all deductions, and administer all changes in the future that affect your benefits. This is true for FS employees from all agencies, not just State.

AFSA is uniquely positioned to watch over the FS retirement system, and over HR/RET, because of our



organic involvement with and knowledge of the Service. We regularly intervene and assist, both in terms of helping individuals who encounter problems (over 400 in 2006) and in agitating to fix larger systemic problems.

We have been very pleased with some significant advances in HR/RET's operations the past couple of years, particularly those related to the application of information technology and the introduction of RNET, the office's online information system. While most older retirees are not ready for a paperless retirement system and mailed statements will be required for many years to come, the department's investment in this area is much appreciated.

Although only a tiny percentage of those already retired encounter serious problems and need AFSA's help in getting out of a morass, those who do usually find our assistance indispensable. However, the number of employees headed out the door to retirement who encounter problems, or think they're running into problems, is much higher. We have received many complaints about the process of retiring, frustrations that focus on two areas: the inability to get a definitive advance determination of what their annuity will be, and dissatisfaction with the level of "customer service" offered by the clearly overburdened counselors in HR/RET.

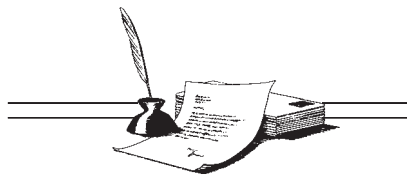
A spate of recent consultations with senior officials in that office and its superiors at State revealed that they

were well aware of the problems and are moving quickly to overcome them. Several additional counselors are being hired and training is anticipated to improve the service orientation of the staff. Getting firm advance annuity calculations is a tougher challenge, as many employees have had other federal government jobs, military time, etc., that HR/RET isn't aware of. We applaud the department's efforts to date and urge it to continue addressing these concerns to make retirement out-processing considerably more smooth and speedy than is presently the case, as well as to improve its coordination with the payroll office's Retirement Accounts Division.

It is worth noting that the costs of operating the FS retirement system, about \$6 million annually, come from a direct appropriation to the State Department. This is not the case for the Civil Service pension fund, which covers its operating expenses from the investment returns of the fund itself. There has been some discussion at State in the recent past about asking Congress to change the FS system to mirror the CS system in this regard. While we understand that this idea is dormant for now, AFSA is watching this closely and will intervene aggressively to ensure that nothing jeopardizes the FSRDF.

I urge all employees to maintain their AFSA membership after retiring. We're just as relevant to you then as when you were active-duty. Also, most of our retiree members find that AFSA is the best, if not the only, way to stay in touch with the Service. ■

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



LETTERS

Languages & Service Needs

A little-noted recommendation from the Iraq Study Group, Number 78, deals with language and cross-cultural training. The report notes that of the 1,000 officers at Embassy Baghdad, only six are fluent in Arabic. This is probably also true of other Middle Eastern languages: Turkish, Hebrew, Farsi, Dari, Urdu, etc.

When I was ambassador in Turkey, we had to rely primarily on local staff for translation and interpretation. The same was true in Pakistan, where we had no fluent Urdu-speakers. We chose not to prepare for this situation, even when it became clear in the early 1980s that the need for Arabic and other Middle Eastern languages would increase and that the normal State Department training procedures were inadequate.

I recall my own experience during World War II when, as a newly minted ensign in the U.S. Navy, barely 20 years old, I was asked to “volunteer” for Japanese language training. I was sent to the Navy’s School of Oriental Languages, at the campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder, for an 18-month, total-immersion language training program. Students were to live, eat, socialize and work intensively with native language-speakers (mostly recruited from internment camps in the Midwest) to learn how to read, write and speak the language.

The news was broadcast in Japanese, dinner-table conversation was in Japanese, and Japanese history and culture were learned in the language. Students were segregated from con-

tact with the English-speaking environment as much as possible. New classes of five or six Marine or naval officers, almost all young and unmarried, were periodically launched to go through the course as a group. We all learned to read and write and speak the language in a sink-or-swim setting.

Years later, as under secretary for management, I floated the idea of starting a similar program in Middle East languages away from Washington, in collaboration with the Department of Defense and the CIA.

But it quickly became clear that the idea was unwelcome for a variety of reasons. It would have required increasing our intake of younger officers with language aptitude at the beginning of their careers, as well as additional funding. As it was, our Arabic-language program in North Africa was always under threat, as were even the ordinary FSI language-training programs that we did not feel effectively met our needs in hard languages and non-Western cultures. Moreover, it could have prejudiced funding for the FSI facility at Arlington, then one of our highest management priorities.

Today, the current leadership in the Department of State should grab the opening the ISG Report offers and run with it.

*Ron Spiers
Career ambassador, retired
S. Londonderry, Vt.*

A Long-Term Project

Robert McMahon’s “Seeking a Patient Path to Nationbuilding” (Nov-

ember *FSJ*) is a perceptive and timely piece that usefully underscores the point that to be effective, the commitment of the U.S. and the international community to nationbuilding must be long term. McMahon correctly characterizes the irresponsible haste with which the United Nations, under U.S. and other Security Council members’ pressure, abandoned critical tasks in East Timor. He also correctly identifies the failure of the international community to fully underwrite the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. In both instances, renewed violence has been the consequence of the decision to short-shrift these critical ventures.

In neither instance was there sufficient international commitment to address the cry for justice in those societies. In East Timor, the U.N. and the U.S. agreed to allow the Indonesian courts to address the culpability of those Indonesian military and police officials responsible for unleashing the massive post-referendum violence in 1999 that led to the death of over 1,400 East Timorese (and some U.N. staff), destruction of 75 percent of the tiny nation’s infrastructure and displacement of nearly one third of the population. That tragedy, and the 24 preceding years of brutal Indonesian rule, traumatized the Timorese people.

The U.S. and U.N. gave Indonesian courts the responsibility to address what was in fact a crime against the international community. Those courts, notorious for their practice of affording impunity to the Indonesian security forces, have failed to convict a



single Indonesian security official. The understandable unwillingness of East Timor's weak new government to confront its powerful neighbor with demands for justice has undermined its credibility with its own people. And the failure of the international community to act in the face of the very predictable failure of the Indonesian courts to render justice was emblematic of its abandonment of East Timor.

In Afghanistan, as early as March 2002, Afghans told me (during a private visit there) that it was essential that the U.S. and the U.N. set in motion a process that would bring war criminals to justice. There was parallel concern that corrupt warlords not be allowed to force their way into government. Nearly five years later, the justice system in Afghanistan remains dysfunctional. Moreover, senior individuals identified by reputable Afghan and international human rights organizations as war criminals now occupy key positions in President Hamid Karzai's government. The weak and falling credibility of the Karzai administration among Afghans is a consequence of its inability to ensure security, provide services and afford justice.

Respect for human rights requires more than lip service from the U.S. and U.N., particularly in vulnerable new states where the credibility and effectiveness of new governments depend in significant measure on their capacity to create societies that their people perceive as just.

Edmund McWilliams
FSO, retired
White Oaks, N.M.

Somaliland Deserves Independence

The article "Somaliland: A Democracy Under Threat" (*FSJ*, November 2006) brought back fond memories of my trips to that emerging democracy when I served as U.S. refugee coordinator for the Horn of Africa from 2001

to 2003. Based in Addis Ababa, I traveled to Somaliland several times, visiting Hargeisa and other cities and towns to monitor our refugee programs.

On each visit, I was struck by the heartfelt hope the Somalilanders expressed in a future as an independent and stable state. I was struck by a people proud of their de facto independence and fiercely opposed to reversing that status quo. Somalilanders on numerous occasions told me that to reunite with southern Somalia would be, in effect, the equivalent of "going back to live in a burning house."

In Hargeisa, the capital, I stayed at a hotel that supplied, for a fee, electricity to the surrounding neighborhood — the free-market economy in action. Although still in its infancy, the rule of law was reflected in Hargeisa's gold market, where Somali women hawked thousands of dollars worth of gold as bridal dowry, without an armed guard in sight.

The Somalilanders I met invariably were friendly toward the United States. They ached for U.S. recognition of their achievements in securing peace and stability in their small corner of the Horn of Africa.

I also met with human rights activists during my visits, and found that major human rights concerns in Somaliland included poor prison conditions and inequities in the judicial system. Other than those concerns, however, I did not hear complaints about torture, police abuses or other human rights violations.

I recall meeting some International Republican Institute staffers who were helping the Somalilanders prepare for the 2003 elections. The subsequent success of those elections could have set a standard for many independent states in Africa.

Today, I wonder why we do not take the lead in rewarding Somaliland's success, especially in a region where so many recognized states have

failed as democracies. Why would we *not* bolster a friendly regime in a region besieged by religious fanatics and terrorist influence?

Why would we not give the Somalilanders the status they enjoyed for five days in 1960, when Somaliland's independence was recognized by 35 countries, including the United States? What could be more "transformational" about our diplomacy than U.S. recognition for a small state that has dared to defy the odds and has, by all accounts, succeeded in building democracy in the Horn of Africa? Somaliland deserves independence.

Steve Hubler
FSO
Embassy Skopje

Public Diplomacy: Bullhorn or Bulwark?

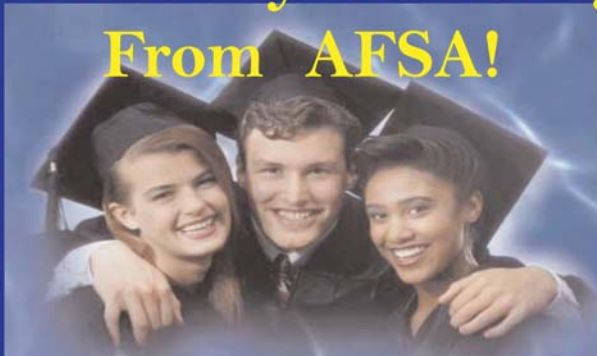
Thanks for the great issue on public diplomacy, and kudos to Patricia Kushlis and Patricia Sharpe ("Public Diplomacy Matters More Than Ever," October 2006 *FSJ*). Their article raised an important and still-debated decision — USIA's subsumation by State. Years later, many still believe the agency should have been strengthened and diversified by adding new communications specialists instead of taking on cautious, 'experience-challenged' officers who didn't quite understand the art of cultural diplomacy.

I fear we are steadily 'taming down' our cultural diplomacy at a time when we ought to be trumpeting our diversity. We gain no purchase from walking the unassailable middle ground. American culture needs to be fully represented and explained overseas. We need more public diplomacy and more qualified civilian diplomats to help our FSOs spread the word about the real America. State cannot do it alone.

I would also suggest that other countries are not as naive as we sometimes believe. Anyone who thinks that

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a story put out by the U.S. government will go unchallenged is still driving a Kaiser and using Burma Shave. All nations have national interests and all will do their best to accentuate the positive in every yarn they spin. That's why God gave us adjectives. Thankfully, he also gave us a free will and a skeptical mind.

One of public diplomacy's most important programs is the International Visitors Program, probably the best way to acquaint emerging leaders with the U.S. While abroad, I recommended many contacts to the program. Now, as president of a U.S.-based IV council, I have seen the enormous good will this program generates. It is a true success story that deserves to be told more often. Other government programs should work as well.

So how do we design a better system for promoting the U.S. that takes advantage of her citizens at home and the FSOs overseas? We start by exploring the possibilities, together. Good things are bound to happen when good people come together. It's never too late to admit you can do better; it's just hard, that's all.

Stephan Helgesen

FSO, retired

President, Albuquerque

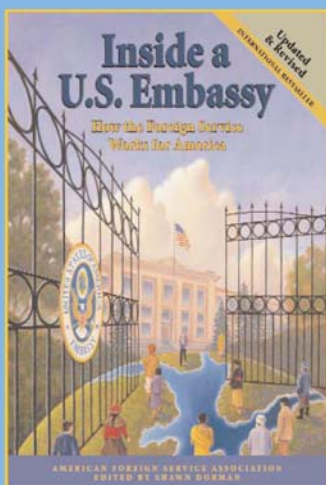
*Council for International
Visitors*

Tijeras, N.M.

A Call for Due Process

I am a Civil Service employee, but my concern is common to all State Department employees. I served two tours overseas on hard-to-fill assignments, so I have seen both sides. I would like to raise a serious issue and ask for the opinion of *Journal* readers.

I am concerned that 12 FAM 550 is ignored. That has been my experience, and I would like to know if it is a common one, or if it is an exception. In my case, during three years over-



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seas, my second regional security officer wrote me up for one security violation following the 12 FAM 550 process. I was impressed by the way the system worked. I received the notice of a security violation in writing and had a chance to respond. My reply was an effective defense, and I did not receive any points on my record. I assumed this to mean, therefore, that I did not have any security infractions or violations; i.e., no points per 12 FAM 550.

Later I was shocked to learn about inflammatory, exaggerated reports written by my first RSO, with whom I did not get along. I would never have learned about his reports except for surprising questions during my extremely harsh recertification interview conducted by my third RSO. These reports clearly influenced subsequent RSOs and set a negative tone for my entire career. If that first RSO had followed the procedure set forth in 12 FAM 550, I would have had the chance to answer his charges, which I could have easily done. I believe any lawyer would describe our options under 12 FAM 550 as due process.

I want to believe that our Diplomatic Security peers are honest people who feel they are doing the right thing. But, if they ignore 12 FAM 550 and collect secret reports sometimes swayed by their own prejudices and jealousies, then we are all in danger. That part of the FAM exists for a reason and, after my experience, I am sure it is for our protection.

According to 12 FAM 553.1(a), "All security incidents will be reported to DS/ISP/APB." 12 FAM 553.1(b) says: "Upon discovery of improperly secured classified information or of other security incidents, the responsible security officer must complete Form OF-117, Notice of Security Incident." The words "all" and "must" seem clear to me. DS officials are not doing

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Limit one entry per author.

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LETTERS



us a favor when they write a negative report but fail to follow proper procedures. We are all safer when the regulations are adhered to, so that RSOs cannot write reports that will be kept secret from us and from our chain-of-command to be used against us later.

I am curious to know what my fellow FSO, FSS, LNA and CS employees have to say about this. Please e-mail me at JohnXKane@yahoo.com.

John Kane
Civil Service
Washington, D.C.

Clarification

Since my October "President's Views" column went to print, I've learned more about USAID's handling of its Senior Foreign Service pay-for-performance system. The facts are:

- USAID ultimately did provide performance-based salary increases for all SFS members for 2005 in late September 2005. Though the increases were delayed because of perceived budget shortfalls, the agency did make them retroactive to the originally scheduled effective dates.

- All USAID SFS employees recommended for 2004 pay-for-performance awards received them. No one was moved to a lower pay adjustment category. However, the USAID administrator did decide to give extra pay increases to a handful of SFS members in 2004, identifying additional funding to do so. He did not give anyone these extra pay increases in 2005.

- Despite USAID's belief that the extra pay raises for a selected few officers were legal and appropriate, AFSA strongly disagrees. We believe that a policy that allows the USAID administrator to exercise any pay discretion after the selection boards have completed their work is not only illegal, but also opens the door to questions over the bases for selective pay adjustments and undermines the role of the boards.

Amb. J. Anthony Holmes
AFSA President

LETTERS



Adopting “Butterfly”

I recently had the privilege of seeing and hearing Puccini’s opera “Madame Butterfly” at the Kennedy Center. I enjoyed it greatly and learned much from it, and would suggest to your worldwide *FSJ* audience that they take any opportunity to attend this opera. It lays bare the virtues of beauty, truth and emotion, but it also contains a lesson for our beloved Foreign Service.

Most of us in the FS family have been imbued with the conventional wisdom that political and economic officers do “substantive” work, while consular and management officers perform “non-substantive” work that is only valued for its contribution to the support and success of the substantive functions. Butterfly offers us a different view.

Butterfly makes enormous sacrifices. She gives up everything for her love, for her beloved husband, a U.S. naval officer (read: substantive person). For him she abandons her home, faith and family. She even gives up her child, and finally her life.

The husband, Lt. Pinkerton, admits to the American consul, Sharpless, that he does not regard his upcoming marriage contract to Butterfly as permanent — he is enchanted with Butterfly, but knows not whether it is love or merely a whim. Sharpless is appalled, and tries to warn Pinkerton of the possible tragic consequences of his selfishness. After Pinkerton leaves (for several years) Consul Sharpless maintains supportive contact with Butterfly, who is certain Pinkerton will return as he promised. When he

finally comes (with his American wife!) to take Butterfly’s baby back home with him, it is the consular officer who reproaches him for his vile, heartless behavior.

Notice who is shocked, enraged and disgusted at the naval officer’s behavior. It is the (non-substantive) consular officer — not the political counselor or economic counselor, or even the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary (what impressive titles our substantive people bear!). I guess they were too busy doing their substantive work.

Butterfly deserves to be adopted as the Foreign Service’s own, for its demonstration of the courage and virtue of consular officers everywhere.

Francis Xavier Cunningham
FSO, retired
Arlington, Va. ■

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CYBERNOTES

Pentagon's Expanded Reach Puts Strain on Embassies

The significantly augmented presence of U.S. military personnel outside of war zones since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, is creating frictions that could undermine U.S. counterterrorism policy implementation, a staff report for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee released on Dec. 15 states. The report, "Embassies as Command Posts in the Anti-terror Campaign," also states that some host countries are questioning the growing military component of America's profile overseas.

The report is based on interviews conducted in some 20 embassies around the world by six Republican staffers dispatched by then-SFRC Chairman Richard Lugar, R-Ind., to examine the relationship between the State Department and Defense Department at American embassies.

In some countries, such as Yemen and Thailand, strong working relationships between the ambassador and military officials were reported. Many other ambassadors felt they had an adequate grasp of military activities in their country, but at least three appeared overwhelmed, according to the report. The latter said they were not adequately informed of the operations the Pentagon was conducting in their countries. In some cases, embassy staff reported, the military had pre-empted decisionmaking.

Blurred chains of command and overlapping missions were also found, particularly in the area of information operations. The Pentagon's three- to four-person "Military Information

Support Teams" are now deployed in 18 countries, with plans to expand to 30. The report cites a case of the type of friction that sometimes results: In Mali, military officials wanted to feature a moderate Muslim cleric in a video produced by the embassy, while the embassy's civilian staff argued that showcasing the cleric's support for the U.S. would only taint him among the local population.

The report's recommendations include a strengthening of ambassadors' hands over military-related activities, consolidation of authority for both civilian and military assistance under the Secretary of State, righting the imbalance of investments in civilian and military approaches, and regularizing and expanding the State Department's Regional Strategic Initiative. The RSI is a program of the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism to develop flexible regional networks of interconnected country teams to assess threats and develop collaborative strategies and initiatives.

The report adds to growing concern over the role of the Pentagon in foreign relations. Andrew J. Bacevich, a retired Army colonel who is a professor of international relations at Boston University, told the *New York Times* that the report's warning that the Secretary of State could lose primacy over American foreign policy decisions had, in some ways, already come to pass. "That horse has already escaped from the barn," he warns in reporter Mark Mazzetti's Dec. 20 article. "The Secretary of State enjoys no such primacy. The Pentagon has the money and calls the shots."

In his letter of transmittal, Sen. Lugar states that the report is "only the first chapter" in a continuing examination of ways to strengthen the U.S. posture overseas. "There is no country in the world where our nation can afford to send diplomats ill-prepared to understand and make the tough choices," he states. "Nor can we as a Congress continue to undervalue the role of the civilian agencies if we want to ensure that our response to violent extremism is calibrated, supported by an appropriate mix of civilian and military tools."

To see the full text of the report, go to www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate/senate11cp109.html, where links to committee prints are listed by title.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

Diplopedia: State's Pilot Project in Information Sharing

Last month we reported on the "Wikipedia" of secrets, "Intellipedia." But the intelligence agencies aren't alone in adopting the popular, online, user-generated encyclopedia software to promote collaboration across bureaucratic and geographic divides.

At State, the Office of eDiplomacy is testing the use of a wiki as an institutional knowledge repository and information-sharing tool. "Diplopedia" was launched on the department's secure intranet last year as a one-year pilot project.

"Diplopedia" is aimed at capturing the tremendous amount of unique experience and knowledge department employees carry with them as they rotate through overseas and



CYBERNOTES

Well, I'm not sure — it's a success that hasn't occurred yet. I don't know that I view that as a failure.

— White House homeland security adviser Frances Fragos Townsend, when pressed on the administration's failure to capture Osama bin Laden, on CNN's "The Situation Room," Dec. 28, 2006, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0612/28/sitroom.03.html>

domestic assignments, FSO Chris Bronk, then posted to the Office of eDiplomacy, explained to the Wikimania 2006 conference in August (<http://wikimania2006.wikimedia.org/wiki/Proceedings:CB1>). "In an agency that can ill afford reinvention, the wiki model, one of widely available, electronically searchable textual information, may serve as a valuable tool in translating corridor knowledge generated slowly over time, to institutional knowledge available via computer," Bronk, who was an information technology professional prior to joining the Foreign Service, added.

As Molly Moran, one of the developers of "Diplopedia," told a conference at Georgetown University in October, the department hopes the wiki will become an arena in which

employees share their unofficial (and unclassified) insights on everything from the functions of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor to recommendations on quality family restaurants near the U.S. consulate in Dubai (<http://cct-10.com/event/>).

Moran notes that the department's adoption of the wiki is remarkable because State is a large bureaucracy that relies heavily on carefully defined and often immutable hierarchies of power and scope. In contrast, the wiki ignores traditional notions of authority and assumes all authors are equal in experience and expertise.

We'll be looking forward to the summer 2007 evaluation of this groundbreaking experiment.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

The Open Budget Initiative

On Oct. 18, 2006, civil society organizations from 59 countries unveiled the Open Budget Index for 2006 (www.openbudgetindex.org/OpenBudgetIndex2006.pdf), the first index to rate countries on how open their budget books are to their citizens.

Of the 59 countries that participated in the survey, more than half do not make public the seven key budget reports they produce each year and just less than half hold no public hearings on the budget. France, New Zealand, Slovenia, South Africa, the U.K. and U.S. rank highest in budget transparency, providing "extensive" information to their citizens. Egypt, Nigeria and Bolivia are among the countries that provide "scant or no" budget information. Overall, nine in

10 countries rated fail to provide budgetary information needed for accountability.

The index is the brainchild of the International Budget Project's "Open Budget Initiative," designed to promote government transparency and accountability (<http://www.openbudgetindex.org/>).

It provides citizens, legislators and civil-society advocates with comprehensive and practical information about their government's budgetary process. Armed with this kind of information — all available online — lenders, development advocates and aid organizations can identify meaningful budget reforms needed in specific countries.

In addition to the annual index and a detailed summary of key findings, The *Open Budget Initiative* Web site offers both a summary and filled-in questionnaire for each country listed. The questionnaire contains the detailed resources used in the summary and the identity of the person or institution who filled it out.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

Be In the Know Before You Go ...

The Foreign Service Institute's Overseas Briefing Center offers online access — both via the Internet and State Department intranet — to extensive resources on overseas posts that are useful both at the bidding stage and in preparing for a new assignment (www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c6954.htm). Besides a special set of resources for assignments to Iraq, the site offers such items as "Bidding Re-

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Site of the Month: www.usdiplomacy.org

U.S. Diplomacy: An Online Exploration of Diplomatic History and Foreign Affairs, launched at the end of the year, is a project of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. While primarily designed to assist entry-level practitioners of diplomacy, it is also aimed at providing more general audiences with reliable information on U.S. diplomatic history, specific dimensions of contemporary diplomacy and the domestic and foreign activities of the State Department.

The site brings together a wealth of interesting and informative material relating to the early and more recent history of the State Department. The material is organized into four areas: Historical Setting, Dimensions of Diplomacy, State Department and International Setting. A Resources page offers links to the Oral History Project, a list of acronyms and abbreviations, a bibliography and relevant Web sites.

In "Professional Service," one focus in the Historical Setting section, one finds examples of outstanding personnel who have faced mortal challenges in carrying out their mission and an interesting discussion of the China hands and Arabists, as well as a review of the long struggle of women and minorities for equitable entry and advancement opportunities within the State Department. The International Setting section offers a very useful set of links to the Web sites of foreign ministries around the world.

Tastefully designed, if somewhat static, this site is a valuable addition to the resource base on foreign affairs and an important contribution to raising the profile of American diplomacy.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

sources," "Pets and International Travel," "Cross-Cultural Adjustment" and "Top Ten Topics" — which includes allowances, family member employment, housing in Washington, D.C., insurance and widgets & gizmos.

Among the most interesting offerings, however, is "Personal Insights," a growing database of more than 1,200 anonymous opinions on overseas posts (www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c18823.htm). The commentary covers housing, schools, spouse employment, considerations for singles, transportation, special advantages of each post and more.

The "insights" database is the product of a questionnaire, which can be accessed at the Web site. Anyone can fill it out and email it to OBC at FSIOBCUInfoCenter@state.gov, or complete the form on the intranet at <http://tinyurl.com/y4b2uk>.

Results are available in hard copy from the OBC at FSI's Arlington, Va., Shultz Center campus, on the intranet or — for those without access to the State Department intranet — by e-mail per instructions on the "Personal Insights" Web page.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

New Focus on the Horn of Africa

Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia to reinstall the failing, Western-backed Transitional Federal Government in the capital, Mogadishu, brought the Horn of Africa into the spotlight again at year-end.

The TFG's rival, the radical Islamist Union of Islamic Courts (known as the ICU), had seized the capital last June and consolidated its hold over much of the southern part of the country, bringing what many Somalis



view as a welcome respite of relative peace and order to the wartorn country. The new fighting set off a stream of refugees toward Kenya, which has now closed its borders.

In January, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said his U.S.-trained troops would be withdrawn in two weeks, but Somali officials now say they may be needed much longer in the fractured country (<http://all africa.com/>). Members of the Somalia Contact Group met in Brussels on Jan. 3, with the full group meeting in Nairobi on Jan. 5, to press for an all-African peacekeeping force and a new round of negotiations between the TFG and moderate leaders of the fundamentalist forces. A plan to send peacekeepers was approved in December by the African Union and the U.N. Security Council, but has remained stalled for lack of volunteers and resources to support them. Uganda has offered troops, but declines to take the lead.

The U.S., concerned over the ICU's suspected harboring of key terrorists involved in the 1998 bombing of American embassies in Africa, dispatched U.S. Navy ships from the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa based in neighboring Djibouti. The ships were ordered to patrol the East African coastline and prevent the al-Qaida suspects' escape as Ethiopian troops drove the fundamentalists southward. On Jan. 8,

U.S. forces launched air strikes on an alleged al-Qaida training camp in southern Somalia near the Kenyan border. The deployment and air strikes were part of the first U.S. offensive in Somalia since 18 American soldiers were killed there by Somali clansmen in 1993 in the events recounted in the book and movie, "Blackhawk Down."

In 1991, the toppling of dictator Mohammad Said Barre precipitated relentless clan warfare in Somalia that left tens of thousands starving and prompted a huge U.N. relief effort in which the U.S. participated. U.S. involvement in a mission to crush a particular warlord in Mogadishu led to the 1993 military fiasco. The U.S. promptly withdrew; the U.N. mission was scaled back and then, in 1995, abandoned; and years of lawlessness ensued as a dozen attempts to set up a government ended in failure (www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercury news/news/world/16420357.htm).

Following the events of Sept. 11, 2001, U.S. officials began a close watch on Somalia, as the failed state appeared to be a likely place for al-Qaida operatives to seek shelter, and were soon working with various warlords to track down terrorists.

In 2004, as a result of negotiations in Kenya, the U.N. set up a transitional government, but the warlords ensconced in Mogadishu, and backed by the CIA, refused to accept it, so the

new government had to set itself up in Baidoa, 150 miles from the capital. In January 2006, Islamic militants of the ICU began fighting the warlords, and by August had extended their control over much of southern Somalia. The Islamic militia's decision in late fall to advance on Baidoa, directly challenging the transitional government, triggered the U.S.-Ethiopian intervention.

Settlement of the crisis will not be easy. It involves untangling and resolving a series of local and regional enmities that have been roiled by a succession of what the International Crisis Group, in a detailed August 2006 assessment, terms "ill-conceived" foreign interventions (www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4333&l=1). The ICG recommends that Somali President Yusuf of the TFG dismiss the current government and invite a senior Hawiye leader to form a government of national unity through negotiations with the Islamic Courts.

In a December report for the Council on Foreign Relations, "Avoiding Conflict in the Horn of Africa," analyst Terrence Lyons presents the urgency of addressing the region's "multiple challenges to stability" (www.cfr.org/publication/12192/). Lyons urges the U.S. to attempt to resolve the long-running border demarcation dispute between Ethiopia and Eritea, which, he argues, is contributing to the instability in Somalia (Eritea is backing the Islamic rebels).

The BBC's "Somalia in Crisis" page is a useful resource for following developments in this strategic region (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_dept h/africa/2004/somalia/default.stm). In addition, the International Crisis Group issues periodic updates on the region and offers detailed background reports (www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=1166). ■

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

50 Years Ago...

One has only to serve as a member of a selection board to realize the exactness and the sincerity of the statement in President Eisenhower's greeting to the United States Foreign Service at Christmas. He said:

'On your judgment and patient efforts a great measure of the welfare, not only of our nation but of the world, depends.'

— Marvin L. Frederick, from "A Public Member Looks at Selection Board Procedures," *FSJ*, February 1957.





SPEAKING OUT

The Lost Art of Experimentation

BY MICHAEL BRICKER

Thomas Alva Edison famously observed that “Success is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.” So it should not be surprising to learn that he conducted almost 3,000 experiments between 1878 and 1880, testing and discarding hundreds of theories, before he finally succeeded in inventing the light bulb. The same is true of many other inventions we take for granted today.

Mindful of that history, the American private sector generally recognizes that experimental failure is the only sure path to success. For instance, IBM actually rewards engineers who “fail,” because achieving such a result reflects initiative — which is invariably more risky — as well as creativity. And in a recent *Business Week* article, Thomas D. Kuczarski even went so far as to propose that companies hold “failure parties” as a way of recognizing that failure is part of the creative process.

Regrettably, the public sector generally does not share this benign view of experimentation. But earlier this year, the State Department showed that it *can* learn from its mistakes. The State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset, a centralized searchable archive encompassing cables, e-mails and memos, was intended to replace the department’s World War II-era telegram system. However, despite years of planning and testing and a large investment of resources, the SMART project did not meet the necessary requirements put forth by IRM.

The “safe” thing to do under those

*Even with new
technology,
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essentially running
the same way they
did a century ago.*

circumstances would be to install patches to make the product appear to fulfill the design configurations, hand out awards and promotions to the participants, and expect users to just learn to live with a ‘not-ready-for-prime-time’ application. Instead, the Bureau of Information Resource Management did something rare and refreshing in government: It publicly acknowledged failure and stopped the project. And now, after IRM re-evaluated the entire program and basically started from scratch, the SMART application is back on track and the goal is in reach.

Embracing New Thinking

I salute that gutsy move, as should everyone in State who will eventually use the application. However, one leap into the scientific method of experimentation does not change a department’s culture. Even with the implementation of new technology, embassies throughout the world are still essentially running the same way they did a hundred years ago. They

have the same old stovepipe command structure and the same bottleneck reporting system that all too often leads to duplication of reporting among sections and agencies at posts.

Far from freeing Foreign Service personnel from the mindlessness of mediocrity and repetition, technology has actually reinforced old, inefficient ways of conducting diplomatic relations. It serves as a mere add-on to an existing infrastructure that no one dares touch.

Today, contrary to the expectations of many analysts, more and more systems and applications are better suited and more economically maintained in one central location. Thomas Friedman’s book *The World Is Flat* attributes this trend to a trillion dollars’ worth of over-investment in fiber-optic cables during the “dot.com” boom and bust of the last decade. What was once an expensive endeavor is now an inexpensive option. Having a database located a thousand miles away is no longer technologically awe-inspiring but routine.

But hardware and software are not the only items that can benefit from centralization. Staff positions can also be centralized with significant cost savings and increased safety.

Bringing Embassies into the 21st Century

We can use experimentation and technology to build a better embassy from the ground up by asking the following questions. What are the purposes, the objectives, and the accom-



plishments required to benchmark success? Is each position presently in place at an embassy a necessity, considering the available technology of both audio and video communications? Is it more prudent, from a security standpoint, to maintain a much lower profile in a country — for example, by assigning just 30 American employees, as opposed to 300, to produce the same product? Can most of their work be performed at their residences (telecommuting), which would lessen security concerns? Are all the other agencies really needed to attain the goals of the U.S. government as a whole, or would regional presences be sufficient?

Admittedly, the answers are not necessarily obvious, but I believe these questions constitute a fresh approach to the evaluation of embassy functions. Keep in mind that diplomatic missions were around long before the invention of the telephone, in an era when representatives were necessary to convey and interpret the wishes of their respective governments. There were no instant communications. One has to wonder whether the modern concept of an embassy would have even been invented, much less implemented, if kings and emperors could have picked up a phone and talked to each other.

Having said that, it is not enough to have new technology. One must apply it in the most propitious manner. And to be able to do that, an atmosphere in which employees feel free to suggest innovations is essential.

A couple of examples from my experience at Embassy Seoul demonstrate the point. A family member employee, Jae Hoon Lee, pointed out that when consular officers conduct visa interviews at the window, they have to move their hand between six and 10 times from the mouse to the keyboard's 'enter' key each time they

The purpose of experimentation is not necessarily to change the way we do business, but to learn first and then, if it is advantageous, change.

type data about the applicant. Considering that each officer conducts an average of more than 300 interviews a day, that represents a lot of extraneous movement! So he suggested that we add a pedal-operated 'enter' key to the computer.

I first asked the IRM local employee in charge of consular systems, Young Soon Kim, to help me build one. But she came up with a better solution: purchase a mechanism that is already available for the disabled. That is exactly what we did.

To provide an environment where employees feel free to approach their leadership with suggestions for innovation without fear of ridicule requires trust. It allows the employee not only to be part of the process but to feel like a shareholder in it. If this kind of atmosphere had not existed in Seoul, Mr. Lee would never have approached me, and a good idea would never have come to light.

Or consider another initiative with even wider application. The technology known as the Voice-Over-Internet Protocol uses the existing Internet infrastructure as a telephonic application. Last year, when Seoul was looking at possible uses of VoIP, Infor-

mation Program Officer James Harrison came up with a novel idea. By investing capital in markedly expanding the bandwidth of the existing Opnet lines that run over the Internet, posts located in high-technology countries such as Korea may be able to obviate the need for a full-blown Private Branch Exchange system in the mission. (PBX provides multiple users with advanced features such as caller ID, call transfer and call forwarding, and enables various telephone systems to function as a single network that can serve offices in Seoul, Washington and London.)

Is this approach feasible? Maybe not. But think of what would be gained if it were! By utilizing VoIP technology, expensive hardware could be located at a central point, perhaps back in Washington, saving money and possibly enhancing communications security in the process. So I am pleased to report that a recent cable from IRM announced that the bureau is looking into this and other VoIP technology possibilities.

Staffing Considerations

Some overseas positions could be replaced by a real-time, online video connection. Current technology already permits an employee to deal with a human resources officer based back in Washington by simply walking up to a 52-inch screen with the image of the HRO. That person could be the HRO for half a dozen embassies across the world, without ever having to leave his or her office at Main State. With high-level videoconferencing, HROs could attend the weekly management meetings of the embassies for which they are responsible. There are other positions within an embassy where technology could reduce the need for an onsite presence, as well as the need for the support and security services they entail.

It is also worth taking a fresh look

SPEAKING OUT



at what sections should comprise the new embassy. With the proliferation of globalization, do absolute and separate concepts such as politics and economics still exist? And even if they do, does there need to be a formal organizational division between them?

Combining such sections into one would also be a financially prudent measure by permitting the bulk of the analysis to be performed back in the U.S.

Perhaps there can even be embassies based on regions in lieu of countries. The Department of Defense has been very successful in using this type of format for its combatant commanders, whose views are not limited to national boundaries, but apply to entire regions. As a bonus, this approach appears to give those commanders a more global view of the

ramifications of their representations and correspondences.

In relation to this concept, the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* states that: "Moving toward a more demand-driven approach should reduce unnecessary program redundancy, improve joint interoperability, and streamline acquisition and budgeting processes. *The department is continuing to shift from stovepiped vertical structures to more transparent and horizontally-integrated structures.* Just as the U.S. forces operate jointly, so, too, must horizontal integration become an organizing principle for [DOD's] investment and enterprise-wide functions" (italics added — Ed.).

The purpose of experimentation is not necessarily to change the way we do business, but to learn first and

then, if it is advantageous, change. The Department of State is ahead of many others in its movement toward technology. We now need to move our management style in that same direction. It may very well turn out that our present embassy configuration works the best; but only after we ask new questions, and investigate other methodologies and approaches, can we be sure of that.

And we need to be sure, for there is just too much at stake not to be. ■

Michael Bricker, an FS-2 information management officer in Seoul, joined the Foreign Service in 1990. He has served in Warsaw, Monrovia and the U.S. mission to the United Nations, and is currently in the class of 2007 of the Army War College's master of strategic strategy program.

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NEW PLAYERS, NEW DIRECTIONS? EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION



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WILL THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION CHOOSE TO
“STAY THE COURSE” ON FOREIGN POLICY UNTIL
2009 OR MAKE SOME CHANGES?

By STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

he last time an American president had to work with a Congress controlled by the other political party was 12 years ago, when Bill Clinton suddenly found himself confronting a Republican leadership energized by its sweep of the 1994 midterm elections. There are obvious differences between the two situations, to be sure. The “Contract with America” primarily addressed domestic policy, not foreign affairs, whereas broad public disapproval of the Iraq War was one of the main factors behind GOP losses this past November. In addition, unlike the

Republicans' firm control in 1995, the Democrats' majority in the Senate is razor-thin; even their control of the House of Representatives is not necessarily strong enough to pass legislation, let alone to override a presidential veto.

Still, it seems reasonable to expect some changes in U.S. foreign policy, if only on the margins, during the remaining two years of the Bush administration. What remains to be seen is how extensive they will be, and whether they will mainly be the product of congressional pressure or tactical decisions by the White House. (It already appears clear that the Iraq Study Group's report, released with great fanfare just days after the midterm elections, will not have any lasting effect on the administration's thinking about the war.)

With all that in mind, this issue of the *Journal* offers three articles examining different facets of what might lie ahead. In "Foreign Policy in the 110th Congress" (p. 22), George Cahlink, a reporter for *Congressional Quarterly*, gives us a detailed overview of what the two main Democratic foreign policymakers — Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif., and Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del. — might do with their respective committees. As he notes, the two chairmen bring substantially different perspectives, temperaments and agendas to their jobs, but both will have to contend with fractious colleagues and a minority party that may not want to play ball.

A View from the Left ...

Following Shakespeare's dictum that "What is past is prologue," retired Ambassador Dennis Jett forecasts "A Bleak Outlook" (p. 28) as he analyzes how historians will evaluate President Bush's record. He bases that prediction on how catastrophically the very decision Jett asserts did the most to win the president a second term — invading Iraq four years ago — has unfolded.

Whether or not one concurs that the war was mainly intended to bolster the administration's domestic fortunes, there is little doubt that it did so — at least through the 2004 elections. Many critics might view the way the policy's short-term success has melted away since then as

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of its tradition
of publishing authors
who display a wide
range of opinions,
even those we find
difficult to sanction.***

poetic justice, while others would see it as a noble sacrifice for the greater good (perhaps along the lines of the late President Ford's pardon of his predecessor).

Still, even if Jett's conclusion is correct, it is not necessarily a certainty that the Bush administration will be completely stymied on the world stage during its remaining time in office. Two decades ago, Ronald Reagan scored several significant diplomatic achievements during his final two years in office, particularly in the arms control arena, even while

grappling with the fallout of the Iran-Contra scandal and confronting an opposition-controlled Congress.

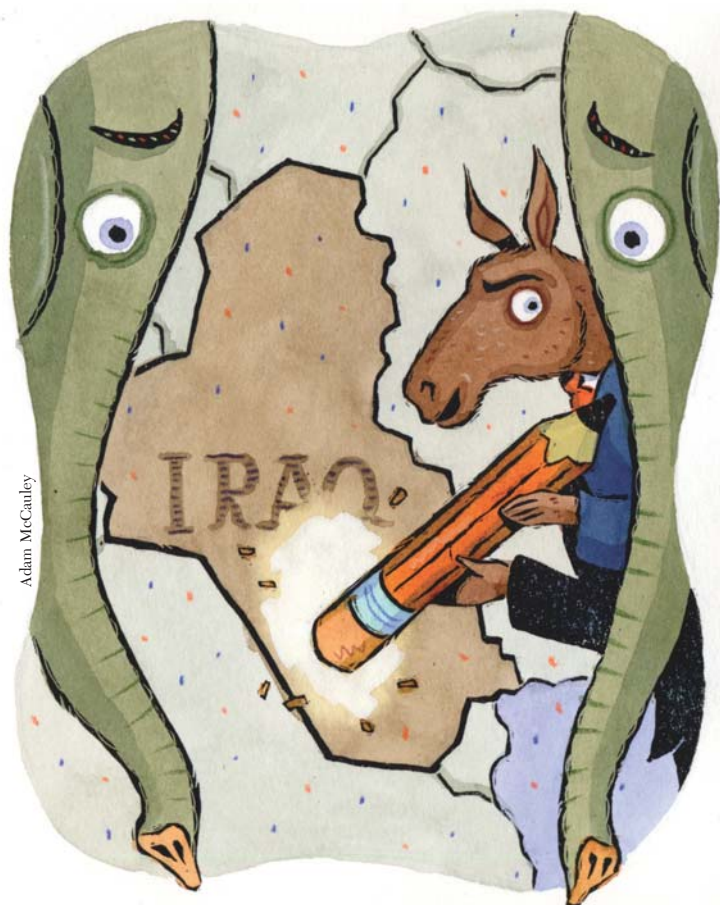
... And from the Right

Then there is the neoconservative view that despite some errors in execution, President Bush is pursuing "A Sound Strategy" (p. 29) in regard to waging the "war on terrorism" and the related goal of democratizing the Middle East. Joshua Muravchik, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, proudly identifies himself with that project, though he acknowledges that "Bush has gotten himself and our nation into trouble in Iraq. For that, he and those of us who extolled his actions deserve to take our lumps."

I suspect that few readers will disagree with that assessment. However, many will part company with Muravchik's call for the U.S. to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities, to deny Tehran "a decisive boost in its quest for regional dominance." For the record, that prescription is emphatically not the view of the *Journal*, the FSJ Editorial Board or, as far as we know, a majority of the policy professionals of the Foreign Service. However, the *Journal* is proud of its tradition of publishing authors who display a wide range of opinions, even those we find difficult to sanction.

No matter how one assesses the Bush administration's record thus far, we hope that our coverage will shed some light on prospects for the next two years. In any case, we feel confident in declaring that whatever happens, Foreign Service professionals will continue to implement U.S. foreign policy faithfully and skillfully. ■

FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 110TH CONGRESS



Adam McCanley

THE NEW DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY WILL AIM FOR WHOLESALE CHANGES ON IRAQ, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND OTHER ISSUES, BUT WILL HAVE LIMITED ROOM FOR MANEUVER.

By GEORGE CAHLINK

The day after the midterm elections gave Democrats control of both houses of Congress for the first time in a dozen years, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif. She congratulated him and promised to work with him as he ascends to the chairmanship of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (formerly the House International Relations Committee).

Rice was wise to call Lantos, whom she has known since her days as a Stanford University academic, because she'll

probably be seeing a lot of the veteran legislator during the opening months of the 110th Congress. Lantos has already declared that “You can expect to see the foreign policy aspect of the legislative branch take a new direction. There will be substantially more oversight of the executive branch, with greater emphasis on holding this administration accountable.”

His counterpart, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., the new head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, predicts a similar change in foreign policy on the Senate side. Biden says the elections show that “the American people rejected the Bush administration’s failed policy in Iraq.”

With Democrats in power, lawmakers will hold hearings and write legislation that aims for wholesale changes in the Bush administration’s foreign policy and how it doles out aid overseas. More specifically, Democrats will push for a major strategic shift in the conduct of the Iraq War, urge direct U.S. talks with Iran and North Korea, increase foreign aid spending and link assistance to human rights.

Both Lantos and Biden are familiar and respected voices in foreign policy circles. However, the legislators come from vastly different backgrounds and could ultimately back different solutions for Iraq. They’ll also face varied challenges in working with Republicans and members of their own party to develop a consensus on their committees on foreign policy issues.

A Flexible Hard-Liner

Lantos, 78, has perhaps the most compelling personal story of any member of Congress as its only Holocaust survivor. A Hungarian-born Jew, Lantos escaped from a Nazi labor camp as a 16-year-old and spent the war in a safe house in Budapest. He was liberated by the Soviets in 1945, only to find that his mother and other family members had died.

He came to America from Switzerland on an academic scholarship in 1947, and eventually became a college

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Condoleezza Rice has known Rep. Tom Lantos since her days as a Stanford University academic.

professor. Sent to Congress in 1979 with almost no previous elective experience — though he had worked as a consultant to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and also served as a school board president — he’s now in his 14th term. He has been the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee since 2001, but has never before served as its chairman.

His unique journey has shaped his congressional career as a top champion of human rights and a founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. However, his backing of a robust foreign policy aligns more closely with neoconservative views than traditionally liberal ones. Along with then-House International Relations Committee Chairman Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., he helped write the 2002 resolution authorizing the Iraq War. Lantos also backs the Bush administration’s belief that the United States should aggressively spread democracy in the Middle East, staunchly supports Israel and has criticized Saudi Arabia for financing terrorist operations.

At the same time, he has shown flexibility on some issues. For example, after writing the law imposing sanctions against Libya in the 1980s, Lantos was the first member of Congress to call for lifting them in 2004 after he traveled to Tripoli to meet with the nation’s leader, Muammar al-Qaddafi.

The Foreign Policy Expert

Biden, 64, grew up in Scranton, Pa., the son of a car dealer. He stunned political observers in 1970 when, as a 29-year-old county councilman, he beat an incumbent GOP senator, in part by criticizing the Vietnam War. Hailed immediately as a political wonder kid, Biden almost opted not to take office after his wife and infant daughter were killed and two sons seriously injured in a car accident five weeks after his election.

Now beginning his sixth Senate term, Biden is acknowledged as an expert on foreign policy — the day before the 9/11 attacks, he presciently warned that the U.S. was vulnerable to terrorists. His polished speaking style has made him a staple of Sunday morning political talk shows, but his outspokenness has occasionally irked colleagues. A member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for over three decades, he was chairman

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from 2001 through 2002 when Democrats briefly held the Senate.

Whether he has been the chair or ranking minority member, however, Biden has generally worked closely with his counterpart, Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., on most issues. This cooperation reflects the Foreign Relations Committee's traditionally bipartisan approach.

Like Lantos, Biden backed the 2002 resolution authorizing the war in Iraq, but has since been a leading Democratic war critic, skewering the administration for poor planning, faulty intelligence and sending too few troops.

Biden has long harbored presidential aspirations, mounting a short-lived run for the White House in 1988 that was derailed over charges he plagiarized a speech by British Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock. He has said he will run for president in 2008. Political analysts view Biden as a long shot in an already-crowded field, but some believe he could become Secretary of State in a Democratic administration.

Asking Questions and Seeking Changes in Iraq

The Iraq War was the defining issue of the 2006 midterm elections, and most analysts believe voter discontent over it pushed Democrats into power. As a result, Iraq will be the dominant issue in the 110th Congress and the heads of each chamber's foreign policy committees are likely to be crucial in shaping it.

Lantos has vowed to use his gavel to call the Secretaries of State and Defense and the administrator of the Agency for International Development before his committee to explain postwar reconstruction failures. "The administration's three-year program of postwar Iraq reconstruction has been riddled with waste, fraud and abuse. The Republican Congress has failed miserably in conducting oversight over this reconstruction," says Lantos, who may write legislation to increase oversight.

Lantos seems more likely to push for diplomatic solutions in Iraq than to call for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces. However, he has said he supports, and

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expects Democrats to ultimately unite around the need for, a phased withdrawal from Iraq. House and Senate Democratic leaders endorsed that position shortly before the midterm elections.

Lantos' staunch support for the war early on and his push for diplomacy now have both drawn the ire of more liberal Democrats, who distrust his close relationship with the conservative Hyde. The committee's number-two Democrat, Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif., even briefly considered running against Lantos for the chairmanship. Other Democrats, including Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., have promised extensive hearings into the Iraq War, with a goal of bringing U.S. forces home immediately.

Lantos will also argue that U.S. involvement in Iraq has "undermined" fighting al-Qaida and terrorism around the globe, particularly in Afghanistan. "While the administration's attention has been diverted by its failure in Iraq, the United States is on the verge of losing Afghanistan once again. The Taliban is resurgent, the Afghan government remains severely weakened, and international reconstruction projects have been difficult to complete because of the unstable security environment," says Lantos.

To address that situation, Lantos will push for renewal of the 2002 Afghan Freedom and Support Act, which Congress has declined to do since 2004. The act sets guidelines for spending billions of dollars in foreign and U.S. aid in Afghanistan. Without those rules in place, Lantos believes, tax dollars are being wasted and Afghani women are suffering the denial of basic human rights.

Meanwhile, Biden will head a Senate foreign policy panel that has included some of the most vocal critics of Bush foreign policy, particularly the Iraq War. Biden, who enjoys a warm working relationship with past chairman Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., has said Lugar shares his concerns about the war but has been loath to criticize a GOP administration. The panel also blocked the confirmation of hard-liner John Bolton as United Nations ambassador, leading to a recess appointment that has now expired.

Biden has said he will focus on finding ways to solve problems in Iraq rather than retracing the Bush administration's failures in conducting the war. At the same time,

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he will hold hearings into waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq, and expects to call Rice before the panel more frequently.

"Our current policy in Iraq is a failure. We are past the point of an open-ended commitment. We are past the point of adding more troops. We are past the point of vague policy prescriptions. It is not an answer just to stay. Nor is it an answer — though it may become a necessity — just to go, with no concern for what follows," Biden declared in a December speech to the Israel Policy Forum.

He is likely to push a plan he developed with the help of Leslie Gelb, president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, that seeks to divide Iraq into three autonomous regions — one for each of its ethnic groups (Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds). Under the plan, the central government would oversee shared concerns, such as defending Iraq and ensuring the nation's oil revenues are distributed equitably; but otherwise, the regions would govern themselves according to their own ethnic rules with their own leaders.

Biden's plan, loosely modeled after the use of ethnic regions in the Balkans, has drawn only lukewarm support from other lawmakers. Many analysts doubt different ethnic groups would agree to share oil revenues. Biden counters, "Oil can become the glue that holds Iraq together."

Still, he is open to other ideas. "We will hold intensive and extensive hearings, over many weeks. We won't be wedded to any one plan or proposal. Instead, our mission will be as straightforward as it is vital: to shine a light on what options remain for America to start bringing our troops home from Iraq without trading a dictator for chaos," Biden said at the Israel Policy Forum.

The Senate Armed Services Committee will also play a crucial role in fashioning any change in Iraq strategy. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., its chairman, calls Iraq his top priority. He has said repeatedly that a military solution is no longer possible in Iraq and believes only a political settlement among various sectarian groups will bring stability. "We should put the responsibility for Iraq's future squarely where it belongs — on the Iraqis. We cannot save the Iraqis from themselves," Levin said in November.

FOCUS

Levin has stopped short of calling for immediate troop withdrawals, but has said redeployment of troops should begin within the next several months. He is likely to offer legislation that would require the United States to start withdrawing from Iraq. A similar Levin proposal failed in the Senate in 2006, but could now pass under a Democratic majority.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., the top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, is likely to run for president in 2008 and could emerge as the GOP's most credible critic of pulling troops out of Iraq. The former prisoner of war has blasted the Bush administration for not sending enough troops to stabilize Iraq, and wants at least 20,000 more soldiers and marines sent to quell sectarian violence and challenge powerful militia leaders.

While the Iraq War will dominate the agenda, Lantos and Biden are also likely to press the White House for other changes in its diplomacy.

Beyond Iraq

While the Iraq War will dominate the agenda of both chambers' foreign policy committees, Lantos and Biden are also likely to press the White House for other changes in its diplomacy. Both lawmakers want the U.S. to engage in direct talks with Iran and North Korea — and have not ruled out legislation requiring it.

“The nuclear threat posed by North Korea has grown dramatically over the past six years, in part because of the administration's unwillingness to engage seriously with the North Korean government. North Korea's recent missile and nuclear tests have further destabilized the Asia-Pacific region, and heightened the risk of war on the Korean peninsula,” Lantos explains.

For his part, Biden believes the United States' failure

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to engage in talks with Tehran has strengthened the position of Iranian hard-liners. "For five years, the administration's policy was paralyzed by a stand-off between those promoting regime change and those arguing for engagement. During that time, Iran crushed the reform movement and moved much closer to the bomb," Biden said.

While backing talks, Lantos will hold hearings into Iran and its support for Hezbollah, Hamas and Shiite militia groups in Iraq. He'll likely find support for the hearings from the committee's new top Republican, Rep. Illena Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., a Cuban-born lawmaker who has repeatedly criticized Arab nations for backing terrorism against the U.S. and Israel.

In addition, Lantos says he will introduce a "new subject" to his panel: the United States' growing dependence on foreign oil. "Our actions with respect to other countries can be distorted by our dependence upon oil from overseas," he said. That issue could create friction between the panel and White House, which has been criticized for close ties to oil companies.

Bringing attention to Darfur will likely be another priority for Democrats. Last year Lantos was arrested and handcuffed outside Sudan's embassy in Washington for protesting atrocities in Darfur. And the Congressional Black Caucus, comprised entirely of Democratic lawmakers, will likely use its newfound clout to bring attention to what it considers genocide there.

Foreign Assistance Funding

In addition, Democrats will likely seek to link foreign aid allocations to human rights performance, though they are inclined to favor more overseas spending than have recent Republican Congresses, which have often scaled back assistance programs significantly.

Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, has shown interest in tying foreign aid to a nation's human rights record. In 2006, Obey, along with Lantos and Hyde, backed failed legislation that would have cut \$100 million in aid to Egypt and reallocated the money to global AIDS treatment and pre-

Lantos' staunch initial support for the war and close relationship with Henry Hyde, his GOP counterpart, have drawn the ire of more liberal Democrats.

vention efforts and greater humanitarian assistance for Darfur. Obey cited anti-democratic actions by the Egyptian government in calling for the cut.

The top Democrats on the House and Senate foreign aid spending subcommittees have activist records in backing human rights and are likely to push foreign aid programs for global health and reward nations that promote democracy.

Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., a longtime aide to former New York

Governor Mario Cuomo, will head the House Appropriations foreign affairs, export financing and related programs subcommittee. Her Web site prominently features a picture of the 10-term lawmaker meeting with rock star Bono, the globetrotting crusader for ending Third World poverty.

Lowey calls funding in the Fiscal Year 2007 foreign operations bill "shamefully low," and has been especially critical of cuts in migration and refugee assistance. Last year the House cut the Bush administration's foreign aid budget for 2007 by 10 percent, to \$21.3 billion. More than \$1 billion of the reduction came from the Millennium Challenge Account, a top administration priority that rewards developing counties for making economic and political progress.

Her Senate counterpart, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., who will head the Senate Appropriations subcommittee for State, foreign aid and related programs, has been a champion of human rights legislation, including creating funds to assist civilian victims of war. He is also likely to back global health and environmental spending initiatives.

Leahy, a six-term senator who has been sharply critical of Bush administration antiterrorism legislation as the top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, sees foreign spending in moral terms. "As the wealthiest nation we have a moral responsibility to help them improve their lives, yet we spend only 1 percent of our federal budget on foreign aid — less than most other industrialized nations on a per capita basis," he said.

Fasten Your Seatbelts

The Democrats' ambitions and idealism may run into

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a political buzzsaw, however, particularly in the Senate, where they have just a one-seat margin. The recent health concerns of Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., have shown just how tenuous a grip on power they have there. Even in the House, where Democrats will have a 233-202 edge, their majority may be vulnerable on some issues.

Lantos, the House veteran, concedes Democrats will have plenty of work ahead just to reach agreement among themselves. "Our goal is to be as united as possible. It's quite obvious it will not be 100 percent; it never will be with [233 Democratic] members," he adds.

It's also far from certain that the Bush administration, including Rice, will heed the advice of lawmakers, particularly because Congress seems unlikely to force the exec-

***Sen. Joseph Biden
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utive's hand by withholding spending. (This is particularly true when it comes to the Iraq War.) Indeed, the White House has already proven its readiness to lock horns with Democrats. After a group of lawmakers traveled to the Middle East to encourage diplomatic talks with Syria in December, the Bush administration criticized several senators for conducting "freelance diplomacy" and reiterated that it has no plans to resume talks with Damascus.

Still, it seems indisputable that the newly ascendant Democrats plan to make full use of their authority to conduct oversight, hold hearings and examine the views of Bush administration nominees. So at a minimum, the White House will have to take congressional views more seriously than hitherto. ■

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A BLEAK OUTLOOK



G ANY ATTEMPT BY PRESIDENT BUSH TO REACH SOME MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY MILESTONES IN HIS REMAINING TWO YEARS WILL FAIL.

BY DENNIS JETT

George W. Bush has a problem. Even his most ardent fans would have a hard time making a list of significant achievements during his six years in office. And now he has less than two years left to work on establishing his place in history. He will construct one, but it won't be the one he wants.

In a president's first term in office, he focuses on re-election. Once that is attained, the second term is devoted to

Please turn to page 30

A SOUND STRATEGY



THE ADMINISTRATION IS ENGAGED IN A COURSE CORRECTION ON IRAQ, BUT THIS WILL AFFECT ONLY TACTICS, NOT THE STRATEGY OF PROMOTING DEMOCRATIZATION.

By JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

he attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, imbued President George W. Bush with a sense of the purpose of his presidency: to lead the nation in a war against terrorism. Despite consternation in Iraq and the “thumping” that his party, and by inference his policies, took in the November 2006 congressional elections, Bush has no choice but to prosecute the war on terror to the best of his ability for the remainder of his term. A course correction is in process,

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Continued from page 28

ensuring he has accomplishments that historians will cite when defining his time in office. In the past, presidents have often tried to turn foreign policy initiatives into a legacy that will endure and reflect well on them. Jimmy Carter's successful Middle East peace accord was his most significant achievement. Bill Clinton's attempt to reach another Middle East peace deal fell short in his final days, when Yasser Arafat refused to go along. Because of that, Clinton's involvement with Monica (no last name required) may be the part of his presidency that lingers the longest.

Bush won't be remembered for his domestic affairs, however. His domestic record — tax cuts for the rich, “a heck of a job” responding to Hurricane Katrina and a failed attempt to turn Social Security over to the financial services industry to be looted — will not add any heft when history's scales weigh his greatness. So the question is whether foreign affairs can still enable Bush to improve his standing among the leaders of our country.

Unfortunately, any attempt by Bush to reach some major foreign policy milestones in his remaining two years will fail. It is already clear that foreign policy will be cited most frequently as the debate about his presidency increasingly centers on whether he was the most inept president ever or merely one of the worst.

It won't be just because his negotiating partners are as incapable of cutting a deal as Arafat proved to be. Ironically, the decision that ensured he would have a second term will also prevent history from reaching a favorable verdict on his eight years in office.

Bush cemented his re-election by invading Iraq. He didn't attack a country without any weapons of mass

***Ironically, the decision
that gained Bush a
second term — invading
Iraq — will also deny
him a favorable verdict
on his presidency.***

destruction, links to 9/11 or ties to al-Qaida simply because he got it all wrong. Access to oil and the chance to show up his father were just going to be bonus points.

The Iraq Quagmire

When the venture began to falter, democracy became the default rationale for the invasion even though this administration places no more emphasis on democracy than its predecessors did. Despite the noble sentiments expressed in his speeches, democracy matters only when no other interest in a country is important. It was the need for a new sound bite that prompted the new language, and the media breathlessly reported the news with its usual lack of historical perspective as if it were somehow a significant change. But democracy is not going to take root in Iraq any time soon, and instability, not freedom, is being exported to the rest of the region.

Despite the chaos created and the unending costs, the invasion did meet its primary purpose. It gave Bush's top political adviser, Karl Rove, a theme for the re-election campaign. But in the process of convincing the American people that military action against Saddam Hussein was essential, the administration drank its own Kool-Aid. It sold itself on the idea that few troops would be needed and that they would be greeted as liberators. The only plan necessary was one for turning the country over to the Pentagon's favorite Iraqi exiles. The failure of that plan and the breathtaking incompetence and corruption of the American occupation has left Iraq where it is today.

Reality eventually intruded, however, even for those for whom faith counts more than fact. But before it did, Bush wrapped himself in the flag of a wartime leader and thousands of patriotic Americans voted for his re-election without ever asking why. Mission accomplished.

If getting out of Iraq had been as quick and easy as getting in, few would have cared that the case for war, made so eloquently by Colin Powell, was a fraud. Most Americans, Rove calculated, subscribe to the Vince Lombardi theory of international relations: victory means far more than how the game is played. Victory has proven elusive, and now the argument is that defeat would be a “calamity” that would haunt us for decades to come. Our troops can't leave any time soon, supposedly

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because it would dishearten our friends and embolden our enemies.

The real reason they can't leave is because Bush has to first find something, anything, that he can label a success. Victory is essential, not because accepting that we can't impose our will anywhere we want would be a blow to our self-image as a superpower. It is indispensable because it would affect historians' assessments.

Without "victory" those assessments will focus on how America got stuck in the quagmire that Iraq has become. Defeat can't be blamed on the media or liberals, as Henry Kissinger now tries to do with Vietnam. For after nearly four years of effort, there is no way forward. Bush was unintentionally on the mark when he stood next to Iraqi Prime Minister Malaki in Amman last November and said, "This business about graceful exit just simply has no realism to it at all."

Democracy became the default rationale for the war even though this administration places no more emphasis on it than its predecessors did.

There will be no graceful exit from Iraq because the sectarian divide has become too deep, the corrupting influence of oil revenue too strong, and the intervention of neighboring states too persistent and destructive. Bush can't heal the divide or end the corruption. And he has precluded direct contact with Syria and Iran despite the recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton Commission and others.

Using surrogate interlocutors won't work because Syria and Iran won't stop interfering in Iraq until they are convinced that Washington has lost its interest in regime change in Damascus and Tehran.

A Black-and-White World

That can't happen without a huge shift in the way the administration describes U.S. goals. But having constructed a black-and-white world to satisfy his most faith-

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ful supporters, there is no way to justify talking to, or even tolerating, the evil ones. That would be far too much realism for his base to accept; and without them, there would be no one left to try to write a version of history that is favorable to Bush.

The same dilemma is true for Bush's prospects in the rest of the Middle East. Christian conservatives see giving Israel a blank check as responding to a biblical injunction and as an essential part of bringing about the second coming of Christ. The fact that their vision of the future is a scenario that includes all the Jews winding up dead or converted should be cold comfort for those who care about the Jewish state.

All previous presidents since 1948 took the steps necessary to help guard Israel's security and, at the same time, attempted to be an honest broker and advance the peace process. Bush instead declared Yasser Arafat evil, and refused to have anything to do with him. At least Arafat had the good grace to move on to his place in history. But what was left behind was the rise of Hamas and the strong impression throughout the Arab world that Washington had no interest in the plight of the Palestinian people.

If the Middle East is a mess, what about the prospects for foreign policy success in other parts of the world? Harvard historian Niall Ferguson summed up the panorama well in a recent commentary in the *Washington Post* when he wrote: "Irrelevant in Latin America, impotent in the Middle East, ignored in Africa and isolated in Europe, Washington may be facing its biggest foreign policy crisis since the late 1970s." Ferguson sees a world increasingly dominated by dangerous demagogues who often are able to finance their anti-Americanism through oil exports. Because of Iraq, we face this situation with our military badly overextended, lacking the trust of our allies and despised by a growing number of people around the globe.

No part of the world looks ripe for a foreign policy breakthrough by Bush. Our interest in Latin America under him has been largely defined as signing trade agreements because that pleased the Republican business constituency. The Democrats, who are now the majority in both houses of Congress, look to the labor

Bush was unintentionally on the mark when he said, "This business about graceful exit just simply has no realism to it at all."

unions for votes and money. So they are not going to approve the pending agreements without greater protection for workers' rights. Nor is it at all clear that such renegotiation is even possible, especially because when the Republicans were in control they went out of their way to ignore the views of Democrats. But even in the unlikely event that the Democrats turn out to be less partisan than the Republicans were, a few trade

agreements won't provide the basis for a claim that Bush's presidency was one of accomplishment.

Our low standing in Latin America and elsewhere is due in no small part to the administration's approaching foreign relations with the attitude that the opinion of foreigners doesn't matter. John Bolton was the perfect ambassador to the United Nations for the way he personified administration policies. Both the envoy and his message were ignorant, arrogant and aggressive, and both help explain why an increasing number of Latin American politicians are running for office on a platform of anti-Americanism.

For instance, when Washington justifies anything it does by saying it is necessary for homeland security, Latin Americans have a hard time taking seriously its expressions of concern for human rights in Cuba. The purpose of our Cuba policy, however, is not just to make fruitless gestures against Castro. Those actions take place shortly before our elections because their purpose is to keep the exiles in Miami faithfully voting Republican. The policy has accomplished nothing else except limiting our understanding of what is happening on the island. That leaves Washington clueless about what might occur, and unprepared to influence the outcome, when biology finally brings the Castro era to an end.

Breakthroughs Unlikely

As for Africa, the continent was never on Bush's radar screen because African-Americans vote overwhelmingly Democratic. About the only time any of Bush's core constituencies paid attention to the region was when the Christian right correctly saw the civil war in Sudan as an attack on Christians in the south by Muslims in the north. To give the appearance of responding to that concern, a

special envoy was appointed and a fragile peace brokered in 2006.

When it came to Sudanese Muslims killing Sudanese Muslims, the administration could not be bothered to actually do anything about it. Colin Powell, perhaps trying to improve his place in history, did label the actions of the Khartoum government in Darfur “genocide” in September 2004. But since that time, there has been nothing but handwringing by Washington and calls for others to act to end the bloodshed.

Early in his presidency Bush is said to have written “Not on my watch” in the margin of a report on the failure of the Clinton administration to act to stop the killing in Rwanda. That was a couple of hundred thousand dead Sudanese ago. And the conflict and the killing continue, spreading to Chad and the Central African Republic, leaving at least six million people with

Having constructed a black-and-white world to satisfy his supporters, there is no way for Bush to justify talking to the evil ones.

neither food nor protection.

In Asia, Bush has an enormous trade deficit with China and a nuclear weapons test by North Korea to his credit. In late 2003, Vice President Cheney joined a meeting discussing the next moves in the negotiations with North Korea. According to two officials present, Cheney foreclosed any gestures that might have kept the process alive by asserting: “We don’t negotiate with evil; we defeat it.”

In late December 2006, the U.S. did attempt to return to the negotiating table with this charter member of “the axis of evil,” but only after Pyongyang had thrown out the IAEA inspectors and extracted enough plutonium to build the bomb it detonated. Perhaps the regime will fall and democracy will triumph, making Cheney’s version of the black-and-white world look prescient. If not, Washington will have to piece together a

Andrew Kidd



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package of concessions that are big enough to elicit agreement from North Korea and at the same time small enough to allow the administration to avoid admitting it has conceded anything.

Things don't look much better in Europe. Tony Blair will step down at some point this year. He, too, must worry about his legacy, which consists of so slavishly supporting Washington's policies that he is often referred to as Bush's poodle.

That, of course, is incorrect. Poodles are a French breed; Blair is clearly a terrier. Regardless of his papers, his dogged desire to be a wartime leader will serve him no better than it has served Bush.

Further east in Europe, Bush seemed initially to get off to a good start. When he met Vladimir Putin for the first time, he said he looked into his eyes and saw into his soul. He declared the Russian president was straightforward and trustworthy. But these days Putin seems too busy poisoning his critics to cooperate on any new initiatives.

Focus on Damage Control

Because of the uniformly bleak prospects around the world, the next two years will not consist of bold new strokes or innovative ideas in foreign affairs. Yes, Nixon went to China. But where could Bush go and have similar impact, especially when he has labeled most of those potential partners as evildoers?

The administration, with the Secretary of State in her usual role as head cheerleader, will instead concentrate on damage control and spin for its final two years. The main focus will be on constructing any end to the Iraqi adventure that can be portrayed as something other than a disaster.

That work is already under way. In his classified memo of Nov. 6, 2006, which was quickly leaked to the press, Secretary Rumsfeld included the following two suggestions among his recommendations for the president regarding Iraq:

- Recast the U.S. military mission and the U.S. goals (how we talk about them) to go minimalist.
- Announce that whatever new approach the U.S. decides on is being pursued strictly on a trial basis. This

***Our low global standing
is due in no small part to
the administration's
attitude that the opinion
of foreigners doesn't
matter.***

will give us the ability to readjust and move to another course, if necessary, and thereby avoiding "losing."

The cynicism inherent in those bullets and the interest in putting the manipulation of public opinion above all else will come as no surprise to anyone who has followed the administration's consistent abuse of language and facts. If George Orwell were alive today, he would be too embarrassed to be a

White House speech writer or press secretary.

While Colin Powell had no problem being employed for such purposes during the first term, now that he is out of government he has become openly critical of the kind of policies he used to defend. Several months ago he wrote that "the world is beginning to doubt the moral basis of our fight against terrorism." The legislation he was objecting to was promptly passed and signed by the president, even though Powell also pointed out that the bill would put our troops at greater risk.

Powell was wrong about the world's opinion, however. Doubt is not "beginning," but already widespread. There can be few people abroad who compare our deeds with our rhetoric and don't think we are as dishonest as we are sanctimonious.

Bush will be remembered for beginning to deploy a missile defense system. Perhaps the historians will overlook the fact that it is a system that doesn't work to counter a threat that doesn't exist. The source of an intercontinental ballistic missile is unambiguous, and a dictator who launched one at the United States would know that he would shortly be toast. But the real purpose of the system is not to enhance homeland security. It is to allow its supporters to say they are stronger on national defense than anyone who isn't willing to waste \$10 billion a year on such a useless project.

If the Soviet Union had hung on for five more years, Ronald Reagan's presidency would have been known only for his senility, tripling the national debt and the Iran-Contra scandal. But because communism's inherent contradictions caught up with it when they did, Reagan's hagiographers will continue to attribute its fall to his one-liners. The Berlin Wall did begin to crack while he occupied the Oval Office, but the historical

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hubris that portrays anything that happens in the world as being a direct result of American action is the main argument for his having all that much to do with it at all.

Those trying to construct Bush's list of accomplishments will have to deal with a different set of facts and events. Bush can accept reality, but only occasionally, and always grudgingly. Still, firing John Bolton and Donald Rumsfeld demonstrates he can recognize failure and at least blame his aides for it.

But his insistence that "victory" in Iraq is attainable shows he is still willing to sacrifice others, rather than admit that he is at fault. Our men and women in uniform were the cannon fodder of the re-election campaign during the first term. Their sacrifice will be the

Even in the unlikely event that the Democrats are less partisan than the Republicans were, a few trade agreements won't allow Bush to claim real accomplishments.

foundation for the futile attempt to build Bush's historical record in the remainder of his second. The number of troops may be "surged" to try and calm things enough to declare success. But this will only postpone the failure and mean even more American lives lost.

Invading Iraq was justified as making us safer. It didn't; but even if it had in the short run, dramatic actions always come with unintended consequences. Ronald Reagan's support for the mujahedeen got the Soviets out of

Afghanistan, but it also provided on-the-job training for the people who went on to become the Taliban and al-Qaida. Iraq is creating a new generation of terrorists that will threaten us for decades to come. That is destined to go down in history as Bush's most enduring legacy. ■

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Continued from page 29
beginning with the resignation of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, but this will affect only tactics, not the strategy of promoting democratization in the Middle East — much less the goal of stamping out terrorism or at least diminishing it radically.

Before going further in assessing where Bush's policies stand now and where they are likely to go — or where I would like them to go — let me reveal my biases. I am an original neoconservative, a member of that small band of liberal intellectuals who migrated rightward in the early 1970s because of our distress that most of our fellow liberals were losing their ardor for anti-communism. I did not vote for Bush in 2000 because I took him to have little interest in foreign policy, which is of paramount importance to me. But I came to be a strong supporter because of his response to 9/11, which was both necessary and brave, and I remain one even though he has made errors.

Bush has gotten himself and our nation into trouble in Iraq. For that, he and those of us who extolled his actions deserve to take our lumps. Perhaps if we had sent many more troops at the outset and done other things differently, the mission would have been crowned with success. Or perhaps conquering and remaking Iraq was inherently a flawed idea. But even if the latter is true, that does not prove that Bush's overall strategy of promoting democracy or his decision to treat terrorism as a matter of war rather than law enforcement were wrong.

Responding to 9/11

What was new about 9/11 was not the nature of the act but its magnitude. Middle Eastern terrorists had been murdering Americans for three decades, by the ones, tens and hundreds. Now they had killed nearly three thousand of us in a swoop, and would surely try to top that if we let them. The harm and the threat of further harm could be tolerated no longer. Indictments, subpoenas and extradition requests were of little avail. Only a warlike response would do.

Yet military acts, while necessary, were not sufficient. The underlying problem was that so many young Middle Easterners were prepared to throw away their lives for

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the simple joy of killing Americans and to believe they were thereby doing something noble. We could capture or kill many of them, but the supply seemed inexhaustible. Hence the need not only to fight terrorism but to address its “root causes.”

But what were they? Some say that the key was poverty. But this is empirically false: studies have shown that terrorists tend to be above average in socioeconomic status. The 19 killers who carried out the 9/11 attacks all fit that pattern, while their leader, Osama bin Laden, is a pampered multimillionaire. It was also an analysis that led nowhere, for all the governments in the world already aimed to foster economic growth: there was nothing that the threat of terrorism could teach them to do differently in their economic policies.

Push Democratization

The alternative explanation that Bush embraced traces terrorism to the political culture of the Middle East. It was a region where not a single government, outside of Israel, rested on the consent of the governed, where violence, or the threat of it, remained the principal currency of politics. Borrowing from the well-verified theory that democracy discourages war, Bush's idea postulated that it would likewise discourage terrorism. Although this inference had not been empirically demonstrated, it was entirely reasonable. If people internalized the habits of democracy — resolving political issues by debating and voting — then terrorism would come to seem as absurd and abhorrent to them as it does to us.

For all the lack of success that Bush has had in Iraq, his efforts to catalyze a democratic transformation in the Middle East have borne fruit — or at least the first buds. In its annual survey of freedom published in 2006, Freedom House reported that the most notable advances of freedom over the previous year had been registered in the Muslim world in general, and the Middle East in particular. This broke a 30-year pattern in which that region (and that religion) had been stagnant in terms of freedom while the rest of the world advanced.

The fact that Islamist groups have exploited the opportunities that freer elections have given them, and that

Iraqis have voted largely along ethnic lines, should not come as a surprise. Nor does it imply that democracy will fail. It often takes a few go-rounds for electorates to mature in their choices. The critical question is not whether Islamist parties win, but whether free and fair campaigns and balloting will continue to take place. If an election ushers in a new authoritarianism, then it is a hollow exercise; but repeated contests are likely to serve as an impetus for moderation in the Muslim world, as they do everywhere else.

It is true that the Iraq War and other Bush policies have engendered intense anger in the Middle East. But even through clenched teeth, Middle Easterners are echoing the question that Bush has put: When all of the rest of the world's regions are growing more democratic, why should the Middle East be different?

Explore Different Approaches

For the remainder of his term, Bush should not flag in the oratory of freedom that has been his hallmark. Although the man has no gift for language, he has chosen great speech writers and has delivered powerfully inspiring words on this subject. He must continue to offer those words of encouragement, making sure that the message is echoed in public and private throughout the U.S. government.

At the same time, we don't want to butt heads with friendly autocrats in places like Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia so severely that we help them to be overthrown, as we did with the shah of Iran. Revolution is rarely the friend of democracy. But we should be bringing steady pressure to bear in support of continuous political liberalization.

We should also continue to increase our aid to proponents of democracy and good governance around the world. As a general rule, helping indigenous reformers is even more important than squeezing the rulers. However, the people we want to assist are often understandably leery of leaving themselves open to the charge of being American stooges. The best way we have to contend with this dilemma is by channeling U.S. assistance indirectly through the National Endowment for Democracy, which itself is a step removed from the U.S. government and often relies on nongovernmental organizations as conduits. Another approach would be to internationalize democracy assistance by pooling resources from various democracies in a common fund.

Send More Troops to Iraq

The hope that Iraq could be made into a democratic model for the region has gone by the wayside. Even in a best-case scenario, under which violence eventually subsides and a tolerable government takes hold, there is no hope that others in the region will look to Iraq as something to emulate. Nonetheless, we must try to assure such an outcome.

The alternative, an American retreat from Iraq in defeat, however camouflaged, would be catastrophic. It would lead not only to greater mayhem there (perhaps spilling across the borders), but also to dire consequences for Americans at home. A U.S. defeat in Iraq would be like a course of steroids for jihadists everywhere. They would feel vindicated in the conviction that they are following the will of Allah, their struggle having been blessed with victory, first over one infidel superpower in Afghanistan, and now over the other in Iraq. Millions would flock to their ranks. Every Western-friendly government in the region would be shaken, and terrorist attacks in America and Europe would multiply. The governments of Iraq's neighbors, who argued against our invasion, now argue against our retreat. Blame Bush (or his supporters, like me) all you want for having gotten us into Iraq, but that does not diminish the terrible consequences of an American surrender now.

That our options in Iraq are not good was brought home by the indigestible goulash known as the Iraq Study Group report. It proposes a gradual retreat, apparently regardless of consequence. This, as military leaders have hastened to point out, is a formula not only for abandoning Iraq to its bloody fate but also for increasing American casualties, because it would leave a force that is insufficient to protect itself.

The hopelessness of this course of action is inadvertently admitted in the commission's proposal to facilitate our retreat by securing the cooperation of Iran and Syria in stabilizing Iraq. Why would Syria, and especially Iran, whose national slogan is "death to America," want to help us? Because, say James Baker and Lee Hamilton, the co-chairs of the ISG, "they share an interest in avoiding the horrific consequences that would flow from a chaotic Iraq." Well, if Tehran and Damascus fear such an outcome, they sure have found funny ways of showing it for the past four years.

More realistically, the report's authors may hope that we could strike a deal. And perhaps we can. But what is

the coin in which we would have to pay? We know what Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad wants: a quashing of the investigation into the murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, a free hand in Lebanon and possession of the Golan without conditions. And we know what Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wants: acquiescence in Tehran's nuclear bomb development program. Which of these prices are Baker and Hamilton prepared to pay?

The unhappy reality is that there is only one way out of Iraq that is not catastrophic: We must fight our way out. By that I mean we must secure the conditions under which the Iraqi government can function and will be the most powerful domestic force, stronger than either the Sunni insurgents or the Shiite militias. To accomplish this, we should implement the administration's plan, long advocated by Senator John McCain, R-Ariz., to increase significantly the number of troops in Iraq, at least until the situation stabilizes.

If this will strain our military capabilities, that is proof certain that our armed forces are just too small. True, our military expenditures already roughly equal the rest of the world's combined. But aside from the fact that our forces are more costly, in salaries and technology, than anyone else's, we also shoulder unique responsibilities. In light of the failure of the U.N. to fulfill the function that its founders intended, American power is the fulcrum of world peace. Even with Bush's defense hikes and the high cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, military spending is running at about 4 percent of our GDP.

In the first decade of the Cold War, we spent roughly 10 percent of our GDP on the military, and for the rest of the Cold War, we averaged above 5 percent. If the war against terrorism is indeed a war in much the same sense as the Cold War — as I believe it is, and as the president says it is — then we need to spend whatever it takes to make sure our military forces are adequate to meet any test that this war may entail.

Bomb Iran

Dicey as our situation in Iraq is, we cannot escape dealing with the threat of Iran becoming a nuclear weapons state. Even were we to achieve in Iraq the best imaginable outcome from where we stand today, that accomplishment would be negated by Tehran's gaining an atomic bomb. Never mind the threat of a direct (or indirect) nuclear attack by Iran against Israel, or the possibility that

Iranian fissile material could find its way into the hands of anti-American terrorists; such weapons would give Tehran a decisive boost in its quest for regional dominance. That would thrust us, willy-nilly, into a new global power struggle akin to those we fought against communism and fascism.

Some Americans may find the prospect of Iran as a rival far-fetched. Despite its oil wealth, the country has only about one-quarter the population of the U.S. But that is not how the Iranian regime sees it. Rather, it notes that there are only one-quarter as many Americans as there are Muslims worldwide. More to the point, the regime sees itself, much as Lenin did, as the spearhead of global transformation. As President Ahmadinejad puts it: "Thanks to the blood of the martyrs, a new Islamic revolution has arisen. ... The era of oppression, hegemonic regimes and tyranny and injustice has reached its end. ... The wave of the Islamic revolution will soon reach the entire world."

By intimidating rivals and stirring the admiration of the Western-resenting masses across the Muslim world, a nuclear bomb could enable Tehran to achieve the role it sees for itself as the leader of that world-spanning revolution. Thus would jihadism, with its capacity to inspire loyalty and self-sacrifice, be yoked to the power of a rising state, just as communism was in 1917. The Soviets and the Nazis each demonstrated how a relatively poor and weak state can soar on the wings of a totalitarian ideology. In the end, Iranian-led jihadism would not be powerful enough to defeat the United States, just as Nazi Germany and Communist Russia were not, but might cause untold death and destruction before finally being subdued.

Doesn't the chasm between Iranians and Arabs and between Shiites and Sunnis offer an insurmountable impediment to Iranian leadership in the Muslim world? It does not. We saw in the passionate support for Hezbollah that this past summer's war in Lebanon evoked across the Middle East that Islam can readily unify against a common infidel foe.

There is no reasonable hope that negotiations or economic sanctions can turn Tehran's rulers away from the dream of great-power status; away from their revolution which its founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said was not merely an Iranian but a pan-Islamic revolution. The only way to forestall an Iranian nuke — unless a change of regime that appears nowhere on the horizon solves this

F O C U S

problem for us — is by military strikes to cripple the regime's nuclear program.

Let me emphasize that I speak not of an invasion, as we carried out in Iraq, but merely air strikes. Even so, it is fair to ask whether we can possibly summon the political and military energy for another use of force of any kind amidst our travails in Iraq. My answer is as follows.

At the end of World War I, Winston Churchill, then a member of the British War Cabinet, urged an invasion of Russia substantial enough to strangle the nascent Bolshevik regime. However, Britain felt too drained from the war to embark on such a risky venture. Fifteen years later, when Hitler began to shred the disarmament provisions of the treaty of Versailles, Britain and France still could not find the will to mobilize their forces. It would have been relatively easy to crush the Bolsheviks or to stop Hitler at those early stages. The failure to do so, in each

For the remainder of his term, Bush should not flag in the oratory of freedom that has been his hallmark.

case, cost tens of millions of lives.

An Act of Self-Defense

Would air strikes against Iran's weapon facilities constitute an act of aggression on our part, impermissible under international law? No, it would be an act of self-defense. President Bush spelled out his legal reasoning in his National Security Strategy Doctrine of 2002, summarized in the phrase: "We will not allow the world's most terrible regimes to threaten us with the world's most terrible weapons." The right of self-defense is among the most fundamental principles of international law, held to be inherent by the U.N. Charter. All the way back to its founder, Hugo Grotius, international law has recognized that this right includes the right, as he put it, to "kill him who is preparing to kill."

Critics, however, have argued that Bush was overstepping the long-acknowledged right of pre-emptive self-

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defense against an imminent attack to assert a right of preventive self-defense against a hypothetical danger. But surely the meaning of the law must be understood in light of advances in technology. The attacks we have already suffered in recent times, and are likely to suffer again, will come with suddenness and stealth, not from an enemy army massed on our borders.

George W. Bush was not the first to notice this change and to insist that the law must be understood accordingly. Forty-five years ago, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, President John F. Kennedy asserted: "We no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute maximum peril. Nuclear weapons are so destructive and ballistic missiles are so swift that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to peace."

The official slogan of the government of Iran is "death to America," and its president proclaims his desire to see "a world without America." Surely we are within our rights to say that possession of nuclear weapons by a regime that proclaims such goals, and that, moreover, is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, constitutes an intolerable threat, against which we may take radical measures to defend ourselves.

In a 2004 report, the United Nations High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change recognized the right of pre-emptive self-defense, and further acknowledged that technology had transformed this right in the way suggested by Presidents Bush and Kennedy. It insisted, however, that any state feeling itself threatened in such an implicit way must bring the matter to the Security Council. This is exactly what we have done in regard to Iran's nuclear project, but so far the council has only given Tehran a gentle slap on the wrist.

Article 51 of the U.N. Charter reaffirms each state's right of self-defense "until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security." Manifestly, our security would be undermined by nuclear weapons in the hands of the Iranian regime, and we have the right to act in our own defense unless and

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until the Security Council takes measures that restore our security.

Recreate USIA

But isn't the world at large, and the Middle East in particular, already enraged at America because of the Iraq War? To a great extent, yes. Wouldn't bombing Iran redouble this anger? Yes, again; in all likelihood, it would. Nonetheless, for the reasons I have outlined, I think it is a path that we must take, however painful.

To mitigate the damage, we must do everything in our power to explain our actions and to diminish the anger against us. This will require recreating an arm of the government dedicated to the task of public diplomacy: the U.S. Information Agency, abolished in 1999 thanks to the determined folly of Senator Jesse Helms, R-N.C. Though USIA was merged with the State Department, State is too unwieldy to be the ideal home for such work; given the department's other priorities, public diplomacy will always take a back seat. In addition, the resources devoted to it were diminished as a result of the merger.

I do not mean to suggest that the anger and disapproval aimed at us from abroad result merely from a problem in communication. I appreciate that other people in large numbers disagree with or even condemn our policies, and that this antipathy will be exacerbated by the actions I recommend above. Yet the anger and disagreement can be lessened if we have much larger programs for reaching opinion shapers abroad and helping them to understand why we do the things we do. Our true motives — even when we err — are usually more benign than they imagine.

From the time the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 until Sept. 11, 2001, God granted America a 12-year hiatus from urgent security threats. It fell to President George W. Bush to lead us in facing the new threat that presented itself so horrifically on the latter date. I judge his performance more highly than do many others. There have, of course, been errors. How could there not have been? But his task now is to learn from them, make some adjustments and then devote all of his energy for the remainder of his term to winning the war that has been imposed upon us. ■

THE NEW FOREIGN SERVICE

THE REPORT CARD IS STILL OUT ON WHERE SECRETARY RICE'S
"EXPEDITIONARY" FOREIGN SERVICE IS HEADED.

By JOHN K. NALAND

The Foreign Service personnel system at the U.S. Department of State has undergone more far-reaching changes since Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice took office than it did during the quarter-century since the passage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. But do these historic changes represent a sustainable, long-term vision that will transform U.S. diplomacy for the better? Or are they primarily short-term improvisations designed to meet temporary staffing needs in Iraq and other dangerous posts?

Upon taking office on Jan. 26, 2005, Secretary Rice inherited a Foreign Service personnel system that was under stress. Her predecessor, Colin Powell, had succeeded in hiring over 1,700 new Foreign Service employees above attrition through the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative (designed to fill vacant positions and create a training reserve) and through separate security-related funding to beef up consular, diplomatic security and information man-

John Naland, a Foreign Service officer since 1986, is currently on detail as a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council. Before that, he was principal officer in Matamoros and previously spent seven years at hardship posts, including a danger-pay post. He is a 2006 graduate of the U.S. Army War College and was an Army cavalry officer in the early 1980s. He is also a past president and vice president of AFSA. The views in this article are his alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Department of State or the U.S. government.

agement staffing. However, even that robust expansion in staffing fell behind the pace of the creation of new positions in such places as Iraq and Afghanistan and in the new Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

In response, State initiated an "Iraq tax" that, by 2006, had taken 280 mid-level Foreign Service positions from other posts and Washington, D.C., in order to staff posts in that high-priority country. That created staffing gaps worldwide and blocked the creation of the planned training reserve to permit expanded language and functional training.

Furthermore, there was a sharp increase in the number of posts that are too dangerous to permit employees to bring their families along. Between 2001 and 2005, the number of unaccompanied and limited-accompanied Foreign Service positions doubled, and then doubled again. The number has surged to nearly 800 at two dozen posts including those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. This represents a dramatic change for Foreign Service members, who previously had fewer than 200 unaccompanied slots to fill. Many of the new unaccompanied positions are at extreme danger posts that previously would not have been staffed at all under traditional State Department security policies.

The Career Development Program

Given these staffing needs, State's Bureau of Human Resources concluded in 2004 that the longstanding "fair share" bidding requirements would not be sufficient to attract volunteers to fill the increased number of dangerous

and hardship positions. That concern was a key factor leading to the development of the Career Development Program for generalist officers that was implemented in January 2005, just as Secretary Rice took office. (Similar programs for 18 Foreign Service Specialist groups were implemented in January 2006.) Under that reform, Foreign Service members — for the first time — are explicitly required to check off specific assignment “boxes” before they can be considered for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service.

Specifically, FSOs now face four mandatory requirements: 1) serve at one greater hardship (15-percent or higher) post after tenure; 2) attain a diversity of regional and/or functional expertise (for example, serve multiple tours in two regions); 3) meet the pre-existing requirements for proficiency in one foreign language; and 4) meet the pre-existing requirements for taking leadership and management training at each grade.

In addition, FSOs are required to satisfy five of seven “elective” benchmarks before they can be considered for the Senior Foreign Service: 1) service at an unaccompanied post; 2) service in a “critical needs” position (typically at a hardship post); 3) six months of crisis-response experience (such as is gained working in the Operations Center); 4) cross-functional experience (such as a consular officer running a narcotics assistance program); 5) service in a position with substantial supervisory responsibility (such as management counselor or deputy chief of mission); 6) a professional development tour (such as the pursuit of academic study); and 7) the attainment of additional language proficiency (such as working proficiency in a second language).

The program has many caveats and qualifications, including “grandfathering” provisions that phase in the requirements according to the

*The “Iraq tax” created
staffing gaps worldwide
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training reserve.*

employee’s grade at program implementation. Consult the Bureau of Human Resource’s Intranet site for full details.

This “ticket-punching” program represents an historic hardening of the conditions of service for America’s career diplomats. It is a dramatic departure from the previous assignments system that, for example, allowed employees to rise to the Senior Foreign Service without ever serving at a hardship post after tenure. Henceforth, with limited exceptions, service at hardship posts will be mandatory. Service at an unaccompanied post and in a “critical needs” position will be unavoidable unless the employee completes all five of the other “electives.” For better or worse, this is not your father’s (or mother’s) Foreign Service.

On the positive side for employees, the Career Development Program presupposes that additional language, functional and academic training will be offered in the coming decades. The program should also ensure that employees gain a wider breadth of functional and regional experience than has often been the case.

Transformational Diplomacy

The next shoe to drop was Secretary Rice’s “transformational diplomacy” initiative announced on Jan.

18, 2006. In order to “begin to lay new diplomatic foundations to secure a future of freedom for all people,” the Secretary announced a series of steps designed to get diplomats to “move out from behind their desks into the field” and move “from reporting on outcomes to shaping them.” (Of course, most Foreign Service members would argue that they were already doing that.)

The initiative included the “global repositioning” of hundreds of Foreign Service positions largely from Western Europe and Washington, D.C., to the front lines of diplomacy in “critical emerging areas in Africa, South Asia, East Asia, the Middle East and elsewhere.” To move the first 100 positions, the Bureau of Human Resources stopped the pending assignments of around 25 Foreign Service members, including some who had already begun foreign language training for their now-canceled assignment. In October 2006, State announced the repositioning of an additional 100 positions. Many, but not all, of the new positions are at hardship posts. The repositioning of up to 100 additional positions is expected in 2007.

It is important to note that Sec. Rice moved existing positions instead of obtaining funding to create additional positions. That was reminiscent of Secretary of State James A. Baker’s decision to take positions from Western Europe to staff the new embassies formed following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Many observers view that as the beginning of the “do more with less” hollowing out of Foreign Service staffing that reached its disastrous peak in the mid-1990s under Secretary of State Warren Christopher, when hiring fell far below attrition. Only time will tell if the additional “transformational diplomacy” positions will be created by cannibalizing existing positions.

Another unanswered question concerns the future of Sec. Rice’s plan to

create single-officer American Presence Posts in numerous cities around the globe. In view of the uncertain security environment in some target cities, it is unclear how such facilities will function safely given their limited physical security support.

Staffing Iraq and Afghanistan

From the day she took office, Sec. Rice has made her top management priority the staffing of Iraq and Afghanistan. To fill those positions, State implemented a number of incentives such as substantial extra pay and special leave arrangements. But as the number of war-zone positions continued to increase and the most eager initial volunteers finished their tours, the task of staffing those positions became increasingly difficult.

By the spring of 2006, the Bureau of Human Resources was preparing to rotate another year's worth of vol-

State concluded in 2004 that the "fair share" system would not attract enough volunteers to fill the increased number of dangerous and hardship positions.

unteers into Iraq and Afghanistan even as it geared up to find another set of volunteers for the follow-on rotation for summer 2007. In so doing, it became clear that, while the

Career Development Program would likely be a long-term aide to staffing unaccompanied and hardship posts, it would not solve the short-term need to staff Iraq and Afghanistan. Therefore, the Bureau of Human Resources proposed to AFSA (which has legal negotiating rights on assignment and promotion procedures) a series of new personnel policies intended to get employees to volunteer for war-zone duty.

The first proposal, to which AFSA agreed in May 2006, gives employees who complete Iraq tours on Provincial Reconstruction Teams or at Regional Embassy Offices outside of Baghdad a guarantee that their next assignment will be to one of their top five choices. Such specific guarantees of preferential treatment in onward assignments have never before been made in the Foreign Service assignments rules. Only time will tell if State will be able to make good on

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those guarantees (as of this writing in late 2006 things were looking good) and, if so, what the impact will be on other bidders and the receiving posts.

The next proposal was to give what amounted to an automatic promotion to everyone serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. While AFSA ultimately agreed to revised promotion precepts that instructed selection boards to “weigh positively creditable and exemplary performance” in Iraq and Afghanistan, it did not agree to make promotions automatic for those employees. The association’s position was that promotions must continue to be based on one’s potential for service at the next higher grade as demonstrated by performance over a multi-year period. Thus, the simple willingness to be in a war zone for 365 days should not automatically push every one of those employees to the front of the promotion line, ahead of colleagues who performed superbly elsewhere (including at other hardship posts) over a period of years.

Hot on the heels of the controversy over promotion rules, the Bureau of Human Resources came to AFSA in mid-2006 with proposals to dramatically re-engineer the Open Assignments System to address State’s chronic inability to fully staff hardship posts. Key changes, to which AFSA agreed, included: 1) prohibit tour extensions except at greater hardship posts (to force those employees into the available pool to staff hardship posts), 2) require “fair share” bidders without recent service at a hardship post to bid on three greater hardship (15-percent or higher) posts and to accept one of them if selected, and 3) establish a new assignment “pre-season” during which all open unaccompanied positions will be filled before any other assignments are made.

These changes, coupled with the long-term provisions of the Career Development Program, represent a concerted push to steer employees

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toward hardship assignments. Only time will tell if the new rules succeed in meeting the staffing needs in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hardship posts over the next few years. If they do not, State has said that the director general is prepared to use his statutory authority to direct the assignment of Foreign Service members to Iraq or other hardship assignments.

Views from the Front Lines

According to polling done by AFSA, many Foreign Service members feel uneasy about the hasty revision of so many long-standing policies. For example, many question State’s move to fill all unaccompanied positions before making assignments elsewhere (employees ask, for example, if an unaccompanied post like Bangui is really more important to U.S. interests than Beijing, Mexico City or U.S.’s NATO mission in Brussels). Some employees with extensive, but not recent, service at hardship posts feel that their past sacrifices are not being recognized. Others serving outside the Middle East fear that their work is no longer valued or rewarded.

Like their colleagues in the armed forces, many Foreign Service members are concerned about the quickened overseas “operational tempo.”

For example, because most unaccompanied positions are filled by assignments lasting one year, most need to be completely restaffed every 12 months. By 2006, that meant that upward of 20 percent of Foreign Service members had served in an unaccompanied position within the past five years. Adding in the accompanied hardship positions, by 2006 some 64 percent of overseas Foreign Service positions were in hardship posts (half of which are at or above the 15-percent differential level). As a result, perhaps half of the Foreign Service corps has served at a hardship post within the past five years.

Many employees also express concerns that recent developments are making the Foreign Service less “family-friendly.” On this point, unaccompanied tours are Exhibit A, especially for employees with difficult personal situations. Elsewhere, the decision to fund higher differentials at extreme hardship posts by summarily zeroing out the 5-percent differentials at 14 other posts certainly disappointed the employees there.

Finally, some employees who have been around for a while are skeptical that all these new rules will be applied equitably. For example, will “high-flying” 7th floor staffers who lack recent overseas experience really be assigned to extreme hardship posts?

Domestic Service Limits

Given recent changes, some employees worry that today’s “expeditionary” Foreign Service risks becoming an expatriate Foreign Service. For decades, the average Foreign Service member has spent two-thirds of his or her career overseas. According to an October 2006 State Department telegram, the current director general of the Foreign Service, Ambassador George Staples, wants to see that proportion rise.

Toward that end, the DG pressed

AFSA in mid-2006 to agree to a rule that effectively limited Foreign Service members to two consecutive domestic tours (i.e., reducing the current 6/8 year domestic service rule to 5/6). While AFSA agreed to his other proposed changes to the assignment system (as detailed above), it refused to acquiesce on this point.

AFSA's reasoning was twofold. First, the Foreign Service cannot maintain its key role in policy formulation if many existing FS slots in Washington are converted to Civil Service or political appointee slots to compensate for the fact that Foreign Service members will spend 80 percent of their careers abroad. Second, employees who have "paid their dues" by many years spent abroad should have the flexibility to do three consecutive Washington tours in order to, for example, attend to chronically ill family members, fulfill

Like their colleagues in the Armed Forces, many Foreign Service members are concerned about the quickened overseas "operational tempo."

elder-care responsibilities, meet child custody restrictions, or give two children the stability of four years at an American high school.

Such reasoning did not sway the director general. In fact, State transmitted a telegram in October 2006

mentioning the DG's "plan to change domestic service limits next year." In fact, State has no authority to make such a change without AFSA's concurrence or the rare intervention of an outside federal arbitration panel. Time will tell how this issue plays out.

Eliminating the Overseas Pay Disparity

Given State's push to make the Foreign Service more "expeditionary," it is curious that the Bush administration did not quickly move to fix what the Government Accountability Office has called the "ever-increasing financial disincentive for [Foreign Service] employees to bid on hardship tours." The issue is domestic locality pay, which currently causes the base pay of overseas Foreign Service members to be 18.59 percent below that of employees in

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Washington, D.C. (This problem does not affect Senior Foreign Service members, who are already in a pay-for-performance system.) Thus, employees at a 20-percent hardship post earn little more than their state-side colleagues. And colleagues at lesser hardship and non-hardship posts actually take a pay cut when serving abroad.

State and AFSA have been working to fix this problem since 2001, but the key stumbling block has been the Office of Management and Budget at the White House. To their great credit, Secretary Rice's management team (led by Under Secretary for Management Henrietta Fore) accomplished what Secretary Powell was never able to do: secure White House support for funding the closing of this pay gap. Unfortunately, the initial White House-supported legislative fix contained several "poison pills" which seriously delayed its consideration on Capitol Hill.

First, the White House, after five years of opposition, only agreed to support overseas comparability pay in the context of a plan to convert the entire Foreign Service to a pay-for-performance system that would abolish the long-standing annual "step" increases in pay to all employees. The new system would start by establishing a worldwide base salary schedule equal to what employees serving in Washington, D.C., currently earn (thus bringing overseas base pay up to domestic levels) and would add yearly performance-pay adjustments for some, but not all, employees.

However, the initial White House draft legislation contained no guarantee that annual "performance pay" adjustments would actually be paid (unlike traditional step increases, which are funded automatically). The danger of this oversight is clear. In 2005, USAID and IBB Senior Foreign Service members already working under a pay-for-performance sys-

***Sec. Rice's "global
repositioning initiative"
was reminiscent of the
decision to take positions
from Western Europe to
staff the new embassies
after the Soviet Union
collapsed.***

tem did not get their raise due to "lack of funding." Ultimately, the increases were provided (and made retroactive) — but not until late in the year.

AFSA and the Bureau of Human Resources, working with key members in the Senate and House, were able to secure agreement on a revised proposal that would guarantee the funding of annual performance-pay salary adjustments.

Second, the White House initially insisted that the Secretary of State be given unlimited "sole and exclusive discretion" over who received salary adjustments under the new system. Thus, instead of basing annual pay adjustments on rank-order merit lists produced by Foreign Service selection boards, management could "cherry-pick" by awarding pay increases on the basis of political or personal favoritism. Here, too, AFSA and the Bureau of Human Resources, working with Congress, were able to secure agreement on a revised proposal that would guarantee a strictly merit-based process that also preserved the statutory rights of Foreign Service members — through their bargaining agent, AFSA — to

have a say over the procedures for administering the new system.

Unfortunately, it took many months of discussions to get these "poison pills" removed. Time ran out on the pre-election legislative calendar, and the 109th Congress adjourned in December 2006 without passing the bill. As of this writing, it is not clear when the new, Democratic-controlled 110th Congress will take up this vital issue. Until it does, Foreign Service members will continue to take a nearly 19-percent cut in base pay when serving abroad — amounting to one year's lost pay for every five years spent overseas.

Overhauling FSO Hiring

On Dec. 12, 2006, a front-page *Washington Post* article reported that State was changing the 70-year-old Foreign Service written exam for selecting FSO generalists. In a telegram explaining the decision, Director General Staples said that the traditional paper-and-pencil written exam will be replaced by a shorter, computer-based test that will be administered five times a year.

Unlike the current exam, the new test will not be the sole criterion for advancing to the oral assessment stage. Instead, applicants will also submit a "structured resumé." If the applicant passes the written exam, a screening panel would then review both the test score and the resumé for evidence of "special qualities or experience that are particularly important to Foreign Service work." Those applicants deemed to qualify would advance to the oral assessment.

The DG maintains that this "Total Candidate" approach will be faster, will permit a more thorough assessment of candidate qualifications, and will allow State to "continue to look for the best and brightest, and preserve our demanding standards."

Initial reaction was mixed. AFSA

expressed support, but said that it would oppose any changes that might allow partisan political considerations to creep into the hiring process. Several *Washington Post* bloggers opined that the change to a more subjective process could allow race, ethnicity or gender to become deciding factors.

The Future

This article began by asking whether the recent dramatic changes in the Foreign Service personnel system at State represent a sustainable, long-term vision or short-term improvisations. The answer is not yet clear. Much will depend on Iraq. What happens there will do much to determine whether the current 800 unaccompanied overseas postings represent a temporary, aberrational situation or if they foreshadow the shape of things to come.

Many of the new unaccompanied positions are at extreme danger posts that previously would not have been staffed under traditional security policies.

If service at diplomatic “firebases” in war zones and multiple unaccompanied tours in other dangerous locations remain commonplace,

then the Foreign Service career will have changed dramatically. Even more personnel system reforms may be needed in the future in order to attract and retain people amenable to such a career. If, however, there is less call for war-zone service in the next few years, then there should be a scaling back in the current focus on staffing for “extreme” diplomacy.

Either way, Sec. Rice has two more years to continue to “lay new diplomatic foundations” as she pledged in her January 2006 “transformational diplomacy” speech. Hopefully, those new foundations will include filling worldwide staffing gaps, creating a training float to permit expanded language and functional training, and ending the overseas pay disparity. The Foreign Service will be watching with its fingers crossed. ■

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A QUEST FOR PEACE IN UGANDA

BETTY BIGOMBE HAS BEEN PERSONALLY INVOLVED FOR MUCH OF THE PAST 18 YEARS IN TRYING TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS IN NORTHERN UGANDA. SOON HER GOAL MAY BE REALIZED.

BY GEORGE GEDDA

For Betty Bigombe, the choice was grim: tend to her children or to her suffering people. She could not do both.

Bigombe is an Acholi from northern Uganda, for 20 years the scene of one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. It is the result of an insurgency that has made the bulk of the population victims of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army's religious fanaticism. Many live in squalid camps set up by the government for their protection.

Africa experts often draw parallels between the suffering in northern Uganda and in the Darfur region of western Sudan. A major difference is that while the U.N. Security Council started addressing the Darfur crisis seriously in 2004, just a year after it erupted, there was no Council acknowledgment of the Acholi plight for 18 years. The future for the Acholi seemed to brighten in 2006 when peace talks began after the Ugandan government imposed a unilateral cease-fire.

For much of the conflict, Bigombe has tried to be a peacemaker. Now affiliated with the U.S. Institute of Peace, where she met with this reporter on Nov. 17, she is writing a book on the Acholi nightmare. An attractive, gregarious woman, she evinces no regrets about her life choices and the sacrifices they have entailed.

Today, for the first time since 1994, when the last promising peace attempt collapsed, her efforts and those of others have a real chance of bearing fruit.

Appointment as Peace Mediator

In 1986, the year the LRA rebels started their war, Bigombe was selected for membership in the Ugandan

Parliament. Two years later, President Yoweri Museveni asked her to seek a resolution of the conflict, granting her the rank of minister. She was 34, married to a Ugandan diplomat and the mother of two young children.

Although Bigombe knew it meant separation from her children for long periods, she accepted the president's offer and moved from Kampala to the country's embattled northern region. She traveled home whenever she could, but the risks were high because a rebel attack could come at any time. On one journey, she hitched a ride in a police car, one of only two vehicles in the town of Gulu, her headquarters. The car broke down, forcing her to walk a terrifying 36 miles.

Bigombe describes her early visits to the camps: "Each time I went, it gave them so much hope. They smiled. It gave them life." They also felt safer when she was there because, Bigombe says, LRA attacks on the camps seemed to occur only in her absence. Thus, she had good reason to persist despite the personal hardship — "There were no telephones, no light, absolutely nothing, not even water" — especially at the beginning.

Not long after her appointment as a peace mediator, her husband was posted to Germany, and took the children with him. Bigombe supported the move, though it was a painful tradeoff: she got to be a full-time peace mediator at the price of not seeing her children grow up.

But she was relieved that they had the basics for a decent life. She says she used to tell herself, "At least they are getting food. At least they have shelter. At least they go to school. And they have a father who is with them all the time." (He has since died.)

In the Maelstrom

In contrast, her Acholi brethren had nothing, she says. "If they get one meal a day they are very happy. I became

George Gedda, a frequent contributor to the Journal, covers the State Department for The Associated Press.

their voice, to the international community, to the government, first and foremost, to be able to inform them of what was going on. And so I chose to remain there as much as possible.”

Gaining acceptance from all sides as a woman in the northern Uganda maelstrom was a problem for Bigombe, especially at the beginning, she recalls. “There were so many things that went against me.” The first reaction from the rebels was, “We are very insulted. We told you Museveni does not want peace! How dare he send a girl?”

“They didn’t even call me ‘woman.’ They said ‘a girl ... he (Museveni) is not serious. This is a big joke.’ So a woman had to prove that a woman can go do what men do,” she says. Eventually she won acceptance, but early on nobody — not even aid workers — would go with her on missions, Bigombe says. “They were scared to death.”

She says her visits to the camps were intense. “I was able to reach all these people. I was able to sit with them, talk, spend the nights, sometimes without food.” She says she debunked the widespread notion that no outsider would spend the night at a camp and endure the same hardships as those living there. “It was a terrible situation. You have all these bugs. I had lice all over me. You’re living in a very deplorable situation. Then they realized a woman can do this. A man probably would not stay here and get lice and bugs all over his body.”

John Prendergast, an Africa expert at the Brussels-based International Crisis Group, has accompanied Bigombe on visits to the camps. “She gets mobbed,” he says. “Some day there will be peace in Uganda. She’s the flame that people have looked to in the hope that their situation is not permanent.” He characterizes her role as “pure sacrifice. There is no other way to describe it. She has sacrificed her entire career to this endeavor.”

A Fateful Day

Various strategies were used over the years to achieve a settlement, including Ugandan military pressure on the LRA, peace talks and offers of amnesty. But peace proved to be elusive. One promising negotiation fell short in 1994. And, having failed to win re-election to parliament, Bigombe gave up her quest in 1996.

At that point, she took an entirely new path, leaving the Uganda bush for the pillared precincts of Harvard University, where she received a master’s degree in 1997.

She then took a position at the World Bank specializing in post-conflict issues, and kept tabs on the situation in northern Uganda from a distance.

But on a fateful day in February 2004, Bigombe suddenly abandoned her comfortable life to return to her homeland. She was prompted by a television account of an LRA massacre that claimed some 200 lives. When her picture flashed on the screen, and the TV reporter noted her near-success in bringing the two sides to the negotiating table in 1994, she decided it was time to give it another try. The timing was propitious because the LRA seemed to be willing to bargain. Its resources were dwindling, and top commanders were deserting.

Last August, Bigombe convinced the Ugandan government to impose a unilateral cease-fire, a major breakthrough. Prendergast says Bigombe “almost single-handedly laid the groundwork” for the cease-fire. Jimmy Kolker, who served as U.S. ambassador to Uganda from 2002 to 2005, says it’s hard to imagine anyone doing a better job than Bigombe, even the most skilled U.N. peacemaker. “There is no special envoy who could have done what she did.”

Shortly after the truce took effect, Bigombe again left the bush and is back in the Washington area, living in leafy Bethesda. She keeps busy with her work at the institute and writing her book on her off-and-on, 18-year peacemaking effort. She also dispenses advice via e-mail and telephone to peace negotiators back home.

Meanwhile, the truce has given the government and LRA negotiators breathing space to hammer out what they hope will be a definitive settlement of the conflict. These discussions are being held in the southern Sudanese city of Juba.

Unprecedented Suffering

The estimates of the number of Acholi living in camps today vary widely, from a low of 800,000 to 1.8 million. (Bigombe embraces the latter figure.) Many were forcibly removed by the Ugandan government from their homes to the camps to protect them from rebel attacks. The number of dead is well into the thousands, victims of either violence, disease or malnutrition.

It is hard to exaggerate the brutality the LRA has committed against the Acholi in northern Uganda. Its forces have killed and mutilated innocent civilians, abducted children and adults, looted homes and public buildings and villages and burned fields. According to estimates, the LRA has kidnapped around 20,000 children since 1987 for use as

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Uganda.***

soldiers and sex slaves. Ex-LRA abductees speak of being forced to kill and maim friends and neighbors as well as participating in grotesque rites such as drinking their victims' blood. The U.S. Agency for International Development maintains recorded testimonies of children who have escaped their LRA kidnapers.

The Bush administration has generally taken a low-key approach to the situation. President Bush made a four-hour visit to Uganda in July 2003. There was no reference in his public remarks in Entebbe to the mass suffering in the region, even though it was taking place not far from where he was speaking. Like most presidential visits abroad, Bush's focus was on good news. The visit was aimed primarily at congratulating Museveni for his effective policy in combating HIV/AIDS, a program that has received substantial U.S. funding.

In March 2006, Bush included northern Uganda in a report on global trouble spots, blaming the violence there on a "barbaric rebel cult." U.S. relief aid totals \$95 million annually, with another \$13 million for rehabilitating children who manage to escape their LRA captors. In Darfur, by contrast, the United States provided \$507 million in humanitarian relief in 2005 and \$765 million the year before that.

The LRA is led by the fearsome Joseph Kony, who claims to be waging war on God's direct orders. Kony, who has little formal education, shuns dealing with outsiders; Bigombe has been an exception. During the 1990s, she met with the LRA leader four times. They have been in frequent telephone contact. "I describe him as someone with multiple personality disorder," Bigombe says, adding that he can be "perfectly normal" in one-on-one conversation. She declines to give details about her conversations with him, considering them to be private.

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she recalls.*

Kony, who is said to have 48 children and scores of wives, cites Old Testament teachings in defending LRA atrocities. A left arm that sins must be cut off, and the lips of people who have said bad things must suffer the same fate, he believes. Eyes that have seen what they shouldn't must be plucked out. His followers "are convinced that he's got supernatural powers," Bigombe says. "When the spirits move him, his eyes pop and he starts foaming at the mouth. You can't end this war without understanding his spirit."

Juba: Opportunity for Peace

In early November 2006, the LRA agreed to extend the August truce. The language of the extension called for fighters to assemble at two points in southern Sudan while they await the conclusions of negotiations for a final settlement. Government negotiators in Juba said that Kony's lieutenants have been muting their demands for religious piety and stressing instead the need for Kampala to end its historic neglect of the country's northern region.

Bigombe is optimistic. "The Juba talks are the best opportunity for peace," she told an Institute of Peace gathering a week after the addendum was signed. For years, the LRA had

been able to rely on arms and equipment from neighboring Sudan, but that pipeline was cut off several years ago as part of a deal between the Ugandan and Sudanese governments. In return, Kampala ceased support for southern Sudanese who had been fighting the Khartoum government since 1983. That war ended with a peace agreement in 2005, and Bigombe believes northern Uganda is ripe for peace as well.

She says International Criminal Court arrest warrants in 2005 against Kony and four other LRA chieftains (one has since died) have put added pressure on the LRA to seek a deal. The ICC has charged Kony with 12 counts of crimes against humanity and 21 counts of war crimes. "The LRA realizes that if they don't do something now, the whole world will be against them," she says.

As of the end of 2006, all sides were in agreement that the warrants should be set aside in the interest of getting a peace settlement. To facilitate LRA participation in peace talks, Museveni said in October that no effort was being made to track down Kony at his hideout in the Garamba Forest in eastern Congo, across the border from northern Uganda. Museveni spoke following a historic 20-minute meeting with LRA delegates in Juba.

Bigombe believes in the peace first, accountability later approach, as does the United States. "We believe that the priority has to be peace," Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer told reporters during a visit to Gulu in northern Uganda last June. But she added that following through on the indictments is "extremely important." Frazer suggested that the situation in northern Uganda is comparable to the one in Liberia in 2003, when the war crimes prosecution of former President Charles Taylor was deferred in the interest of securing his removal from

Museveni's interest in a settlement has seemed to rise in response to growing international awareness of the gravity of the situation in northern Uganda.

office after years of blood-stained rule. (Three years later Taylor was taken to The Hague for trial, not for acts committed in Liberia but for his support for a ruthless rebel movement in neighboring Sierra Leone. That trial is expected this spring.)

In addition, Bigombe believes that Museveni is showing greater interest in peace negotiations than he has before. He has, for instance, agreed to provide new levels of manpower and financial resources to the negotiation. "The northern Uganda situation has tainted Museveni's image," she says. The one time before now when peace appeared to be at hand, in 1994, the process collapsed, with the rebels claiming that Museveni had acted in bad faith.

The Real Test

Museveni's interest in a settlement has seemed to rise in response to growing international awareness of the gravity of the situation in northern Uganda. Jan Egeland, who served as U.N. undersecretary for humanitarian affairs until December 2006, has said the conflict is the world's most neglected humanitarian crisis. Egeland contends that the war has forced northern Ugandans "to live in massive

displaced persons camps that are not found anywhere in the world."

Difficult as conditions may be in northern Uganda, they are better than they were, Bigombe says. LRA abductions of children stopped in 2005, except when the rebels need extra hands for brief periods to do hauling or other tasks. When abductions were common, children from rural areas would routinely trek long distances — up to 12 kilometers, Bigombe says — each evening to the nearest town to avoid capture by LRA bandits. Each morning, they made the return trip.

People at the camps, Bigombe says, are now free to come and go to tend crops they plant outside camp limits. Overcrowding in makeshift housing has been eased. Curfews have been eliminated. "Nobody's being restricted anymore," Bigombe says. Some people have returned to their homes, but most don't dare do so because Kony, although weakened, could regroup, "and come back with renewed brutality," she says. Wariness about his intentions should be understandable given his track record, she adds.

Bigombe says she is worried that, despite progress, some parties to the conflict who ostensibly want peace may actually be interested in prolonging the war. As an example, she says LRA negotiators may feel threatened by peace because a settlement could leave them unemployed. This could explain what she describes as the "unrealistic demands" by LRA delegates; for instance, the dismantling of the Ugandan Army. "How do you deal with the spoilers?" she asks. "How do you make them promoters of peace?"

The real test for the Juba negotiation will not hinge on whether an agreement is signed, she says, noting that failed peace agreements are the norm in Africa. "The sticking point is whether it will be implemented," she says. ■

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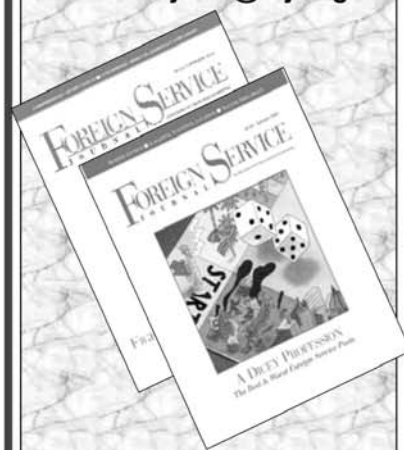
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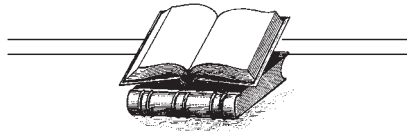
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BOOKS

A True Exchange of Views

America's Dialogue with the World

William P. Kiehl, ed., *Public Diplomacy Council 2006*, \$19.95, paperback, 208 pages.

REVIEWED BY KAY MAYFIELD

America's Dialogue with the World compiles papers presented at an October 2005 forum at The George Washington University. Essays by 12 current and former practitioners of public diplomacy are divided into "The Substance of the Dialogue" and "The Nature of the Dialogue" — essentially, addressing both strategic and tactical considerations.

The authors, including editor William P. Kiehl, executive director of The Public Diplomacy Council at GWU, revisit issues of longstanding debate within PD circles: what tools are and should be in the public diplomacy toolkit; how to evaluate program results; and how to reach audiences in an information-saturated environment that lacks many of the traditional filters separating rumor from fact.

As ever in public diplomacy, the contributors have differing approaches to defining which tools are most effective. Public diplomacy's equivalent of "men to match my mountains" must be "people to match my policy" — whether those people are professional diplomats targeting a specific audience with a specific message, or everyday American citizens living out

This book makes the case that public diplomacy's equivalent of "men to match my mountains" must be "people to match my policy."

their values before the eyes of exchange visitors whose notions of the United States had previously been informed by car-crash movies with bad subtitles.

Throughout the book runs the valuable but possibly provocative theme — provocative, at least, to those who believe that public diplomacy means choosing a message and sticking to it — that a dialogue has two sides, and the United States doesn't get to define both of them. A true exchange of views allows both parties to establish their bedrock positions, listen to the other side, ask clarifying questions and seek points of mutual agreement (or at least intersecting interests). With this in mind, several contributors make compelling cases for the "ability to listen to other visions of freedom" that "may come in different forms in different countries."

Contributor Dan Sreebny, now the public affairs officer in Ankara, makes an important point that should be

required reading for those who feel that cultural and educational activities are luxuries rather than an essential part of a dynamic relationship:

"Every successful public diplomacy program also includes some activities that are not designed for short-term engagement and advocacy of policy. Instead, they are created to build a close and positive relationship between the United States and other nations. These activities are not simply nice things to do; they demonstrate that the United States wishes to have a full-fledged relationship with the citizens of other nations. [They] create the potential for positive connections, which help establish a more congenial environment for those times when we must discuss specific policies, explain immediate actions or counter accusations. For this reason, programs for building long-term relationships are in the direct strategic interest of our nation."

Another theme running through many of the essays is the challenge of addressing the impact of American popular culture around the world. At issue is an ongoing tension between culture and Culture; but simply believing that reaching small audiences of elites will somehow speak louder than the messages millions get on their MP3 players is a narrow kind of thinking we can no longer afford to indulge. Fortunately, several contributors give thoughtful attention to technology and how to apply it in a meaningful way in a changing marketplace of ideas.

The heart of the debate over how to define and deploy public diplomacy



emerges in two of the book's appendices. On one side is the Public Diplomacy Council's "A Call for Action on Public Diplomacy: Public Diplomacy in Crisis." The council would create a "U.S. Agency for Public Diplomacy" — clearly a reconstituted U.S. Information Agency — and a Cabinet-level Interagency Committee on Public Diplomacy; increase public diplomacy overseas staffing by 300 percent and program budgets fourfold; ramp up international broadcasting; and create a public-private "Foundation for the Global Future" to fund exchanges.

Five members of the Public Diplomacy Council dissent, arguing that returning public diplomacy to a separate agency "would weaken public diplomacy by separating it from policy formulation and implementation." They caution that clear strategic priorities, and metrics for evaluating results, would have to go hand in hand with increasing staff and budget or beefing up broadcasting. And they are skeptical that public-private funding would work, as the flow of private sector monies could be difficult to anticipate or sustain.

Both sides of the argument have merit. But questions of structure or chain of command must not overshadow the more important dialogue between the United States and the world that this book so usefully analyzes.

Kay Webb Mayfield is a member of the FSJ Editorial Board. A Foreign Service officer in the public diplomacy cone, she is a career development officer for mid-level PD officers. She has served in Nigeria, Taiwan and Guatemala. The views expressed in this article are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of State or the U.S. government.

How the War Was Lost

Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq
Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, Pantheon, 2006, hardcover, \$27.95, 603 pages.

REVIEWED BY DAVID T. JONES

The title of this book pays tribute to General Patton's World War II breakout from Normandy, Operation Cobra. Co-authors Michael Gordon (a military correspondent for the *New York Times* for 20 years) and Bernard Trainor (a retired Marine Corps lieutenant-general) are awesomely qualified to examine the current conflict in Iraq from every perspective. They literally "wrote the book" on the first Persian Gulf War (*The Generals' War*) and presumably will be first in line to do sequels, such as *The Syria Excursion* and *On to Tehran*.

Cobra II is extensively documented, reflecting the authors' direct access to most of the Iraq War's political and military principals and their operational planning materials.

Drawing on those resources, they usefully remind us that the invasion was one of the most successful combat campaigns in U.S. military history. Between March 19 and April 15, 2003 (cease-fire), a period of just 27 days, the U.S. and "willing" coalition members completely destroyed Iraqi military forces. Even more remarkably, they did so while losing just 138 troops out of over 173,000. To provide a sense of proportion, one may recall that in 36 days of fighting on Iwo Jima, 6,821 U.S. personnel were killed out of some 70,000 troops.

Unfortunately, at 507 pages of text and 17 pages of (mostly) helpful maps, *Cobra II* frequently resembles a slog

more than a "read." Unless you are an aficionado of military books or a political-military affairs FSO, the extended insider commentary is excessive. At times it appears as if every interservice planning squabble is examined, before, during and after the war. To cite just one example, Gordon and Trainor make it clear that the theater commander, General Tommy Franks, is mainly a hero in his own mind, not anyone else's — including the authors'.

Gordon and Trainor contend that the coalition forces needed more troops at the outset, asserting that the various irregulars fighting them foreshadowed the subsequent ongoing resistance. They even imply that the forces in-country during the operation were barely a third of the levels envisioned in the original plan. Yet even with the benefit of hindsight, the suggestion that the coalition should have encompassed nearly half a million soldiers is really an argument that the war should not have been fought at all, because assembling such a force would have been all but impossible. Furthermore, the troops' very success makes clear that such large numbers were not necessary to "win." After all, coalition forces consistently swatted aside their opponents, both Iraqis and foreign volunteers.

Where additional troops were badly needed was during the occupation phase. And it is here that the authors hit their stride as they detail, albeit sketchily, the disconnects and policy reversals between the initial U.S. administration team under Jay Garner and the group replacing him, under career FSO Ambassador L. Paul "Jerry" Bremer. For instance, they believe that by officially disbanding the Iraqi army (ghost force that it was), Bremer deprived the coalition of potential security units that would have obviated the need to recreate an

2007 Summer Fiction Contest

The *Foreign Service Journal* is seeking works of fiction, up to 3,000 words. Story lines or characters involving the Foreign Service are preferred, but not required.

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BOOKS

Whatever one's viewpoint on Iraq's future, Cobra II provides a solid basis for any "how-did-we-get-here" discussion.

Iraqi army from scratch. Likewise, by largely scrapping Garner's efforts, Bremer lost political momentum early in the postwar period, never to regain it.

Their suggestion that the coalition should have learned lessons on nationbuilding from former Yugoslavia raises eyebrows, however. Such lessons should be regarded skeptically when, more than a decade after its disintegration, the countries emerging from the rubble of the Balkans are either ethnically cleansed or self-ghettoized polities.

There are now many paradigms for viewing Iraq. Some predict a Vietnam-style morass; others foresee a former-Yugoslavia disintegration into ethnically clean statelets; still others revisit 1930s Spain, where international forces from left and right (the "foreign fighters" of their day) conducted a clash of civilizations, 20th-century style. Whatever one's viewpoint on Iraq's future, *Cobra II* provides a solid basis for any "how-did-we-get-here" discussion. ■

David T. Jones, a retired senior Foreign Service officer, is a frequent contributor to the Journal.

AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • February 2007

AFSA REGRETS FAILURE TO PASS FOREIGN SERVICE MODERNIZATION ACT

Back to the Drawing Board on Overseas Locality Pay

Despite a sustained all-out effort, AFSA did not succeed in convincing Congress to pass a bill in 2006 amending the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to permit the introduction of Overseas Comparability Pay. The final decision made by the House leadership was to drop from the mini-foreign affairs authorization bill the central element that was the carefully negotiated solution

to the overseas pay disparity and introduction of an acceptable pay-for-performance system to the entire FS.

The decision came down to congressional objections to the overall cost of bringing overseas pay up to Washington levels — despite arguments from AFSA and the State Department's assurances that

Continued on page 56

KEY VICTORY WILL PROMOTE ASSIGNMENT SYSTEM TRANSPARENCY

AFSA Drops Grievance Following Successful Resolution

AFSA has withdrawn the Oct. 18, 2006, grievance it filed against the State Department to protest the assignment of a non-Foreign Service officer to the newly-created regional public diplomacy hub director position in Brussels. AFSA filed the grievance only after attempts to ensure that the position would be adequately advertised, to give qualified Foreign Service bidders a chance to apply, failed. Recent negotiations with the department in connection with this case have led to significant progress in ensuring transparency in the assignment system.

On Dec. 15, 2006, Director General of the Foreign Service George Staples and AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes jointly announced the negotiated settlement of AFSA's grievance. The settlement breaks the assignment in question and places the position on the summer 2007 open assignment list. It also institutionalizes a number of changes to the Foreign Affairs Manual and other State Department regulations and procedures to enhance transparency and predictability in this area and minimize the prospects for

such disagreements in the future.

AFSA thanks its members for the manifest support to the organization shown when the grievance filing was announced. The successful resolution of this grievance demonstrates the value and impact of a firm, collective voice for the Foreign Service in protecting the interests and integrity of our institution.

Following is the text of the Dec. 15, 2006, message, State 199798, titled, "AFSA and the Department Settle the Institutional Grievance."

"This is a joint message from Director General George M. Staples and AFSA President J. Anthony Holmes.

"Together we are pleased to announce a resolution of the institutional grievance that AFSA filed against the department on Oct. 18, 2006, regarding the assignment of a career Civil Service employee to the senior position of director of a newly established Regional Public Diplomacy hub in Brussels. With this agreement, AFSA has withdrawn the grievance.

"Since the grievance was filed, our mutual efforts have focused on the procedures that were followed surrounding

this assignment from the beginning to the end. The procedures were not clear and, together, we have focused on what we can — and must — do to bring them up to that standard. The agreement we have reached details how the assignment of our Civil Service colleagues to Foreign Service positions will be handled in the future, to the benefit of all. As a result, we will be adjusting the FAM, the Foreign Affairs Handbook and HR/CDA's Standard Operating Procedures. We believe that these steps will ensure that any future assignments of this nature will be guided by negotiated, established procedures that are fair and transparent to both Civil Service and Foreign Service employees.

"The assignment of the career Civil Service employee to the position in question is being curtailed. The decision to curtail the employee was not taken lightly. We understand that she is doing an excellent job and is to be commended for the hard work and accomplishment in establishing the regional operation. The position will now be listed on FS Bid and the Open Assignments process as a summer 2007 opening." □

OCP • Continued from page 55

funds to begin phasing in OCP were built into the administration's Fiscal Year 2007 budget request and that no new deficit-increasing appropriation was necessary. Eliminating the pay disparity is of such high importance to both State Department management and to the Foreign Service, AFSA argued, that a funding channel would be found and made available.

AFSA believes that Congress missed an exceptional, perhaps unique, opportunity to resolve this pay equity issue. The one clear advantage that we finally attained in 2006 — the administration's support for the first time (and in a period when the same party controlled the White House and both houses of Congress) — is now lost. Although bitterly disappointed, AFSA has already begun to coordinate with supporters on the Hill to take up this number-one priority issue in the 110th Congress. Prospects for passage in the next two years are difficult to assess given the changes of both the House and Senate leadership.

An excerpt from the official statement on the House floor of one key ally, Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), the floor manager of the bill, follows:

"I sincerely regret, Mr. Speaker, that this bill (H.R. 6060) does not contain important provisions for the reform of the Foreign Service compensation system that were in the version reported by the House International Relations Committee. ...

"The current Foreign Service compensation system provides mid- and entry-level officers stationed in the U.S. with the regular OPM locality pay increase that is not given to similarly-ranked

officers stationed abroad. Over the years, this domestic locality pay (a byproduct of U.S. metropolitan statistical areas) has had the unintended consequence of compensating officers at a much higher salary when they are stationed in the U.S. than when they are stationed

overseas. For example, those currently stationed in Washington, D.C., receive 17.5 percent more due to this locality pay than their counterparts abroad. The compensation reform would have removed this disincentive for Foreign Service officers to work overseas by eliminating the domestic U.S. locality pay. The bill would have leveled the pay disparity for over 7,000 mid- and entry-level officers who are serving abroad.

"I want to commend, in particular, the American Foreign Service Association, the exclusive bargaining unit for the Foreign Service, for the incredible amount of time and dedication that they exhibited in negotiating the text of the compensation package and in contacting and informing members of Congress. [Ambassador] J. Anthony Holmes, the President of AFSA, has informed me that a 2005 survey of active-duty Foreign Service members worldwide identified the pay inequity between Washington, D.C., and overseas as profoundly unfair, and indicated that the members wanted overseas comparability pay to be AFSA's top priority. AFSA took this directive seriously, and went above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to see it accomplished.

"Again, I share AFSA's — as well as the State Department's — extreme disappointment that the compensation package will not be passed by this Congress. It is my sincere hope that it will be reintroduced and passed early next year." □

Although bitterly disappointed,
AFSA has already begun to
coordinate with supporters
on the Hill to take up this
number-one priority issue
in the 110th Congress.

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AFSA 2006 TAX GUIDE

Federal and State Tax Provisions for the Foreign Service

The annual AFSA Tax Guide is designed as an informational and reference tool. Although we try to be accurate, many of the new provisions of the tax code and IRS implementing regulations have not been fully tested. Therefore, use caution and consult with a tax adviser as soon as possible if you have specific questions or an unusual or complex situation.

Federal Tax Provisions

The Military Families Tax Relief Act of 2003 continues to provide a significant benefit for Foreign Service families who sell their homes at a profit, but would have been unable to avail themselves of the capital gains exclusion (up to \$250,000 for an individual/\$500,000 for a couple) from the sale of a principal residence because they did not meet the IRS "two-year occupancy within the five years preceding the date of sale" requirement due to postings outside the U.S. In relation to the sale of a principal residence after May 6, 1997, the 2003 law notes that the calculation of the five-year period for measuring ownership is suspended during any period that the eligible individual or his/her spouse is serving on qualified official extended duty as a member of the uniformed services or the Foreign Service.

The five-year period cannot be extended by more than 10 years. In other words, Foreign Service employees who are overseas on assignment can extend the five-year period to 15 years, depending on the number of years they are posted away from their home. Note that the provision is retroactive, so that anyone who has already paid the tax on the sale of a residence that would have qualified under the new law may file

an amended return to get the benefit of the new rule. There is, however, a three-year statute of limitations, after which one cannot obtain a refund.

Foreign Service employees most frequently ask AFSA about home ownership, tax liability upon sale of a residence and state of domicile. We have devoted special sections to these issues.

For 2006, the five basic tax rates for individuals remain at 10, 15, 25, 28 and 33 percent, with a top rate of 35 percent. The 10-percent rate is for taxable income up to \$15,101 for married couples, \$9,551 for singles. The 15-percent rate is for income up to \$61,301 for married couples, \$30,651 for singles. The 25-percent rate is for income up to \$123,701 for married couples, \$74,201 for singles. The 28-percent rate is for income up to \$188,451 for married couples and income up to \$154,801 for singles. The 33-percent rate is for income up to \$336,551 for married couples and singles.

Long-term capital gains are taxed at a maximum rate of 15 percent and are reported on Schedule D. This rate is effective for all sales in 2005, except for those people who fall within the 10- or 15-percent tax bracket: their rate is 5 percent. Long-term capital gain is defined as gain from the sale of property held for 12 months or more.

Personal Exemption

For each taxpayer, spouse and dependent the personal exemption has been increased to \$3,300. There is, however, a personal exemption phase-out of 2 percent for each \$2,500 of Adjusted Gross Income over \$150,500 (singles), \$188,150 (head of household), \$225,750 (joint) and \$112,875

(married, filing separately). For those taxpayers in the last category, the phase-out is 2 percent for each \$1,250 of Adjusted Gross Income over \$109,475.

Foreign Earned Income Exclusion

Many Foreign Service spouses and dependents work in the private sector overseas and thus are eligible for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion. American citizens and residents living and working overseas are eligible for the income exclusion, unless they are employees of the United States government. The first \$82,400 earned overseas as an employee or as self-employed may be exempt from income taxes.

To receive the exemption, the taxpayer must meet one of two tests: 1) the Physical Presence Test requires that the taxpayer be present in a foreign country for at least 330 days during any 12-month period. (The period may be different from the tax year); or 2) the Bona Fide Residence Test requires that the taxpayer have been a bona fide resident of a foreign country for an uninterrupted period which includes an entire tax year. Most Foreign Service spouses and dependents qualify under this test, but they must wait until they have been overseas for a full calendar year before claiming it. It should be kept in mind that self-employed taxpayers must still pay self-employment (Social Security and Medicare) tax on their income. Only the income tax is excluded.

Extension for Taxpayers Abroad

Taxpayers whose tax home is outside the U.S. on April 15 get an automatic extension until June 15 to file their returns. When filing the return, these taxpayers should write "Taxpayer Abroad" at the top of the first page and attach a statement of expla-



nation. There are no late filing or late payment penalties for returns filed by June 15, but the IRS will charge interest on any amount owed from April 15 until the date it receives payment.

Standard Deduction

The standard deduction is given to non-itemizers. For couples, the deduction is now \$10,300 and for singles, \$5,150. Married couples filing separately get a standard deduction of \$5,150 and head-of-household filers receive a \$7,550 deduction. An additional amount is allowed for taxpayers over age 65 or blind.

Most unreimbursed employee business expenses must be reported as miscellaneous itemized deductions, which are subject to a threshold of 2 percent of Adjusted Gross Income. This includes professional dues and publications, employment and educational expenses, home office, legal, accounting, custodial and tax preparation fees, home leave, representational and other employee business expenses, and contributions to AFSA's Legislative Action Fund. Unreimbursed moving expenses are an adjustment to income, which means that you get to deduct them even if you are taking the standard deduction. However, the deduction includes only the unreimbursed costs of moving your possessions and yourself and your family to the new location.

Medical expenses (including health and long-term care insurance, but not health insurance premiums deducted from government salaries) are subject to a threshold of 7.5 percent of Adjusted Gross Income. This means that to be deductible, the medical cost would have to exceed \$2,250 for a taxpayer with a \$30,000 AGI. There is also an additional 3-percent reduction of itemized deductions (excluding Schedule A deductions for medical expenses, losses from casualties and theft, and investment-interest losses) if the AGI exceeds \$150,500. Note that this 3 percent is applied to the AGI over \$150,500 and not to the total of itemized deductions on Schedule A. The maximum loss for deductions is capped at 80 percent.

State and local income taxes and real

estate and personal property taxes remain fully deductible for itemizers, as are charitable contributions to U.S.-based charities for most taxpayers. Donations to the AFSA Scholarship Fund are fully deductible as charitable contributions. Donations to AFSA via the Combined Federal Campaign are also fully deductible. Individuals may also dispose of any profit from the sale of personal property abroad in this manner.

For 2006 tax returns, any interest paid on auto or personal loans, credit cards, department stores and other personal interest will not be allowed as itemized deductions. Interest on educational loans will be allowed as an adjustment to gross income. If the above debts are consolidated, however, and paid with a home equity loan, interest on the home equity loan is allowable. Mortgage interest is still, for the most part, fully deductible. Interest on loans intended to finance investments is deductible up to the amount of net income from investments. Interest on loans intended to finance a business is 100-percent deductible. Passive-investment interest on loans in which the taxpayer is an inactive participant (i.e., a limited partnership) can be deducted only from the income produced by other "passive income." Interest on loans that do not fall into the above categories, such as borrowing money to buy tax-exempt securities, is not deductible.

Home Leave Expenses

Employee business expenses, such as home leave and representation, may be listed as miscellaneous itemized deductions and claimed on Form 2106. In addition to the 2-percent floor, only 50 percent for meals and entertainment may be claimed (100 percent for unreimbursed travel and lodging). Only the employee's (not family members') home leave expenses are deductible. AFSA recommends maintaining a travel log and retaining a copy of home leave orders, which will help if the IRS ever questions claimed expenses. It is important to save receipts: without receipts for food, a taxpayer may

deduct only \$39 to \$64-a-day (depending upon the federal meals-and-incidentals per diem rate at the home leave address), no matter how large the grocery or restaurant bill. Lodging is deductible, as long as it is not with friends or relatives, or in one's own home. The IRS will disallow use of per diem rates and any expenses claimed for family members. If a hotel bill indicates double rates, the single-room rate should be claimed; and, if possible, the hotel's rate sheet should be saved for IRS scrutiny. Car rental, mileage and other unreimbursed travel expenses, including parking fees and tolls, may be deducted. The rate for business miles driven is 44.5 cents per mile. Those who use this optional mileage method need not keep detailed records of actual vehicle expenses. However, they must keep a detailed odometer log to justify the business use of the vehicle and track the percentage of business use. This optional mileage method applies to leased vehicles as well.

Official Residence Expenses

Since Oct. 1, 1990, employees who receive official residence expenses have not been allowed to reduce their reportable income by 3.5 percent. The IRS ruling regarding ORE states that "usual expenses," defined as 3.5 percent of salary, are not deductible. Therefore the only expenses that are deductible are those above the 3.5 percent paid out of pocket. Employees should save receipts for any out-of-pocket expenses associated with their representational duties. These expenses can be deducted as miscellaneous business expenses.

Home Ownership

Individuals may deduct interest on up to \$1 million of acquisition debt for loans secured by a first and/or second home. This also includes loans taken out for major home improvements. On home equity loans, interest is deductible on up to \$100,000, no matter how much the home



cost, unless the loan is used for home improvements. The \$100,000 ceiling applies to the total of all home equity loans you may have. The same generally applies to refinancing a mortgage. Points paid to obtain a refinanced loan cannot be fully deducted the same year, but must be deducted over the life of the loan. It is advisable to save the settlement sheet (HUD-1 Form) for documentation in the event your tax return is selected by the IRS for audit.

Qualified residences are defined as the taxpayer's principal residence and one other residence. The second home can be a house, condo, co-op, mobile home or boat, as long as the structure includes basic living accommodations, including sleeping, bathroom and cooking facilities. If the second home is a vacation property that you rent out for fewer than 15 days during the year, the income need not be reported. Rental expenses cannot be claimed either, but all property taxes and mortgage interest may be deducted.

Rental of Home

Taxpayers who are overseas and rented their homes in 2006 can continue to deduct mortgage interest as a rental expense. Also deductible are property management fees, condo fees, depreciation costs, taxes and all other rental expenses. Losses up to \$25,000 may be offset against other income, as long as the AGI does not exceed \$100,000 and the taxpayer is actively managing the property. A taxpayer who retains a property manager does not lose this benefit.

Sale of a Principal Residence

The current capital-gains exclusion on the sale of a principal residence on or after May 7, 1997, applies to all homeowners regardless of their age. Previously, qualified individuals who were age 55 or older were allowed a one-time capital-gains exclusion of \$125,000. Also, under previous law, if you had a gain when you sold your home, you could defer all or part of the gain if you purchased or built another home (of equal or higher value) within two years before or after the sale.

The current tax laws allow an exclusion

of up to \$500,000 for couples filing jointly and up to \$250,000 for single taxpayers on the long-term gain from the sale of their principal residence. One need not purchase another residence to claim this exclusion. All depreciation taken after May 7, 1997, will, however, be recaptured (added to income) at the time of sale, and taxed at 25 percent.

The only qualification for the capital-gains exclusion is that the house sold must have been the taxpayer's principal residence and owned by the taxpayer for at least two of the last five years prior to the date of the sale. As stated above, the five-year period may be extended based on any period during which the taxpayer has been away from the area on a Foreign Service assignment, to a maximum of 15 years (including the five years). There are some exceptions to the two-year requirement, including a sale due to a "change in place of employment" (this would include foreign transfers). This exclusion is not limited to a once-in-a-lifetime sale, but may be taken once every two years.

When a principal residence is sold, capital gains realized above the exclusion amounts are subject to taxation. This exclusion replaces the earlier tax-law provision that allowed both the deferral of gain and a one-time exclusion of a principal residence sale.

Temporary rental of the home does not disqualify one from claiming the exclusion. The new tax law requires only that you have occupied the house as your principal residence for the required period (two years out of five, extended).

Under Internal Revenue Code Section 1031, taxpayers whose U.S. home may no longer qualify for the principal residence exclusion may be eligible to replace the property through a "tax-free exchange" (the so-called Starker Exchange). In essence, one property being rented out may be exchanged for another, as long as that one is also rented. In exchanging the properties, capital gains tax may be deferred. Technically, a simultaneous trade of investments occurs. Actually, owners first sign a contract with an intermediary to sell their property, hold the cash proceeds in escrow,

identify in writing within 45 days the property they intend to acquire, and settle on the new property within 180 days, using the money held in escrow as part of the payment.

It is important to emphasize that the exchange is from one investment property to another investment property — the key factor in the IRS evaluation of an exchange transaction is the intent of the investor at the time the exchange was consummated. The IRS rules for the exchanges are complex and specific, with a number of pitfalls that can nullify the transaction. An exchange should never be attempted without assistance from a tax lawyer specializing in this field.

Calculating Your Adjusted Basis

Many Foreign Service employees ask what items can be added to the cost basis of their homes when they are ready to sell. Money spent on "fixing up" the home for sale may be deducted from the sales price. To qualify as legitimate "fixing-up costs," the following conditions must be met: 1) the expenses must be for work performed during the 90-day period ending on the day on which the contract to sell the old residence was signed; 2) the expenses must be paid on or before the 30th day after sale of the house, and; 3) the expenses must not be capital expenditures for permanent improvements or replacements (these can be added to the basis of the property, the original purchase price, thereby reducing the amount of profit). A new roof and kitchen counters are not "fix-up" items. But painting the house, cleaning up the garden, and making minor repairs qualify as "fix-up costs."

State Tax Provisions

Every active-duty Foreign Service employee serving abroad must maintain a state of domicile in the United States, and the tax liability that the employee faces varies greatly from state to state. In addition, there are numerous regulations concerning the taxability of Foreign Service pensions and annuities that vary by state.

This state guide briefly reviews the laws regarding income tax and tax on annuities

and pensions as they affect Foreign Service personnel. Please note that while AFSA makes every attempt to provide the most up-to-date information, readers with specific questions should consult a tax expert in the state in question at the addresses given. Information is also available on the states' Web sites listed below.

Most Foreign Service employees have questions about their liability to pay state income taxes during periods when they are posted overseas or assigned to Washington. It is a fundamental rule of law that all U.S. citizens must have a domicile somewhere. There are many criteria used in determining which state is a citizen's domicile. One of the strongest determinants is prolonged physical presence, a standard that Foreign Service personnel frequently cannot meet, due to overseas service.

In such cases, the states will make a determination of the individual's income-tax status based on other factors, including where the individual has family ties, where he or she has been filing resident tax returns, where he or she is registered to vote or has a driver's license, where he or she owns property, or where the person has bank accounts or other financial holdings. In the case of Foreign Service employees, the domicile might be the state from which the person joined the Service, where his or her home leave address is, or where he or she intends to return upon separation. For purposes of this article, the term domicile refers to legal residence; some states also define it as permanent residence. Residence refers to physical presence in the state.

Foreign Service personnel must continue to pay taxes to the state of domicile (or to the District of Columbia) while residing outside of the state, including during assignments abroad, unless the state of residence does not require it.

A non-resident, according to most states' definitions, is an individual who earns income sourced within the specific state but does not live there or is living there for only part of the year (usually, less than six months). Individuals are generally considered residents, and are thus fully liable for taxes, if they are domiciled in the state or if they are living in the state (usually at least

six months of the year) but are not domiciled there.

Foreign Service employees residing in the metropolitan Washington area are required to pay income tax to the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia, in addition to paying tax to the state of their domicile. However, most states allow a credit, so that the taxpayer pays the higher tax rate of the two states, with each state receiving a share.

There are currently seven states with no state income tax: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. In addition, New Hampshire and Tennessee have no tax on personal income but do tax profits from the sale of bonds and property.

There are 10 states that, under certain conditions, do not tax income earned while the taxpayer is outside of the state: California, Connecticut, Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The requirements for all except California, Idaho, Minnesota and Oregon are that the individual not have a permanent "place of abode" in the state, have a permanent "place of abode" outside the state, and not be physically present for more than 30 days during the tax year. California allows up to 45 days in the state during a tax year. These 10 states require the filing of non-resident returns for all income earned from in-state sources.

Pennsylvania holds that "quarters provided by the government at no cost to petitioner cannot be considered as maintaining a permanent place of abode." Thus members of the Foreign Service domiciled in Pennsylvania who occupy government housing overseas must pay income tax to the state. If they rent their own home overseas, however, they will be exempt from these taxes. AFSA has not heard of a similar ruling in any of the other nine states, but Foreign Service employees should be aware that states could challenge the status of government housing in the future.

The following list gives a state-by-state overview of the latest information available on tax liability, with addresses provided to write for further information or tax forms.

Tax rates are provided where possible. For further information, please contact AFSA's Labor Management Office or the individual state tax authorities. As always, members are advised to double-check with their state's tax authorities. To assist you in connecting with your state tax office, we provide the Web site addresses for each in the state-by-state guide, and e-mail addresses or links where available. Some states do not offer e-mail customer service. The Federation of Tax Administrators Web site, at www.taxadmin.org, also provides much useful information on individual state income taxes.

James Yorke (yorkej@state.gov), who compiled the tax guide, would like to thank M. Bruce Hirshom, Foreign Service tax counsel, for his help in preparing this article.

State Overviews

ALABAMA: Individuals domiciled in Alabama are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Alabama's tax ranges from 2 to 5 percent in three brackets, depending on income and filing status. Write: Alabama Department of Revenue, 50 N. Ripley, Montgomery, AL 36132. Phone: (334) 242-1170. E-mail: Link through the Web site, "About Us" then "Contacts." Web site: www.ador.state.al.us

ALASKA: Alaska does not tax individual income, or intangible or personal property. It has no sales and use, franchise or fiduciary tax. Some, but not all, municipalities levy sales and property taxes. Write: State Office Building, 333 Willoughby Ave, 11th Floor, P.O. Box 110420, Juneau, AK 99811-0420. Phone: (907) 465-2320. Web site: www.tax.state.ak.us

ARIZONA: Individuals domiciled in Arizona are considered residents and are taxed on any income that is included in the federal adjusted gross income, regardless of their physical presence in the state. Arizona's tax rate ranges from 2.87 to 5.04 percent

in five brackets, depending on income and filing status. Write: Arizona Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Information & Assistance, 1600 W. Monroe, Phoenix, AZ 85007-2650. Phone: (602) 255-3381. E-mail: taxpayerassistance@azdor.gov Web site: www.azdor.gov

ARKANSAS: Individuals domiciled in Arkansas are considered residents and are taxed on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The Arkansas tax rate ranges from a minimum of 1 percent of net taxable income to a maximum of 4.3 percent plus 7 percent of net taxable income over \$29,200. Write: Department of Finance and Administration, Individual Income Tax, 1816 West Seventh Street, Room 2300, Ledbetter Building, Little Rock, AR 72201. Phone: (501) 682-1100. E-mail: Individual.Income@rev.state.ar.us Web site: www.state.ar.us/dfa/

CALIFORNIA: Foreign Service employ-

ees domiciled in California must establish non-residency to avoid being liable for California taxes (see FTB Publication 1031). However, a "safe harbor" provision was introduced in 1994, which provides that anyone who is domiciled in state but is out of the state on an employment-related contract for at least 546 consecutive days will be considered a non-resident. This applies to most FS employees and their spouses, but California residents are advised to study FTB Publication 1031 for exceptions and exemptions. The California tax rate ranges from 1 percent to a maximum of 9.3 percent, in six brackets, depending on income and filing status. Non-residents use Form 540NR. Address: Franchise Tax Board, P.O. Box 942840, Sacramento, CA 94240-0040. For account information, phone: toll-free 1 (800) 852-5711. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: www.ftb.ca.gov

COLORADO: Individuals domiciled in Colorado are considered residents and are

subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Colorado's tax rate is a flat 4.63 percent of federal taxable income attributable to Colorado sources, plus or minus allowable modifications. Write: Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Service Division, State Capitol Annex, 1375 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80261-0005. Phone: (303) 238-7378. E-mail: Link through "Contact Us" tab on "Taxation" page, then click on any of the categories in "Online Knowledge and Customer Support" for e-mail option. Web site: www.revenue.state.co.us

CONNECTICUT: Connecticut domiciliaries may qualify for non-resident tax treatment under either of two exceptions as follows: Group A: The domiciliary 1) did not maintain a permanent place of abode inside Connecticut for the entire tax year; and 2) maintains a permanent place of abode outside the state for the entire tax year; and 3) spends not more than 30 days in the aggregate in the state during the tax year. Group B: The domiciliary 1) In any

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period of 548 consecutive days, is present in a foreign country for at least 450 days; and 2) During the 548-day period, is not present in Connecticut for more than 90 days and 3) does not maintain a permanent place of abode in the state at which the domiciliary's spouse or minor children are present for more than 90 days. Connecticut's tax rate ranges from 3 to 5 percent in two brackets depending on income and filing status. Write: Department of Revenue Services, 25 Sigourney St., Hartford, CT 06106-5032. Phone: (860) 297-5962 Fax: (860) 297-4929.

E-mail: drs@po.state.ct.us
Web site: www.ct.gov/drs

DELAWARE: Individuals domiciled in Delaware are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Delaware's tax rate rises on a sliding scale to 4.9 percent on a taxable income of \$60,000. Over \$60,000, it is 4.9 percent of \$60,000 plus 5.95 percent of any taxable income over \$60,000. Write: Division of Revenue, Taxpayers Assistance Section, State Office Building, 820 N. French St., Wilmington, DE 19801. Phone (302) 577-8200. E-mail: personaltax@state.de.us Web site: www.state.de.us/revenue/

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Individuals domiciled in the District of Columbia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence there. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the District for 183 days or more. The District's tax rate is 4.5 percent if income is less than \$10,000; \$450 plus 7 percent of excess over \$10,000 if between \$10,000 and \$40,000; and \$2,550 plus 8.7 percent of excess over \$40,000 if over \$40,000. Write: Office of Tax and Revenue, 941 N. Capitol St., NE, Washington, DC 20002. Phone (202) 727-4TAX (4829).

E-mail: ocfo@dc.gov
Web site: www.cfo.dc.gov/cfo

FLORIDA: Florida does not impose personal income, inheritance or gift taxes. For tax year 2006, Florida taxes "intangible assets" (which include stocks, bonds, mutual funds, etc.) and real property. There are personal exemptions of \$250,000 for single filers and \$500,000 for joint filers. See Form DR-300601 for details. For tax year 2007, Florida will no longer levy the intangible asset tax. Florida does impose a sales tax and a use tax of between 6 and 7.5 percent, depending on county of residence. Write: Tax Information Services, Florida Department of Revenue, 1379 Blountstown Highway, Tallahassee, FL 32304-2716. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 352-3671 or (850) 488-6800.

E-mail: Link through Web site.
Go to "Taxes," then "Tax Information," then "Questions?"
Web site: www.myflorida.com/dor

GEORGIA: Individuals domiciled in Georgia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Georgia has a graduated tax rate rising to a maximum of 6 percent of taxable income of \$100,000 and above. Write: Georgia Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, 1800 Century Blvd., NE, Atlanta, GA 30345. Phone: (404) 417-2400.

E-mail for questions: taxpayer.services@dor.ga.gov
E-mail for forms: taxforms@dor.ga.gov
Web site: www.etax.dor.ga.gov/

HAWAII: Individuals domiciled in Hawaii are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Hawaii's tax rate ranges from 1.4 percent to a maximum of 8.25 percent for taxable income over \$40,000 for single filers and \$80,000 for married filing jointly. Write: Oahu District Office, Taxpayer Services Branch, P.O. Box 259, Honolulu, HI 96809-0259. Phone: (808) 587-4242, or toll-free 1 (800) 222-3229.

E-mail: Taxpayer.Services@hawaii.gov
Web site: www.state.hi.us/tax

IDAHO: Individuals domiciled in

Idaho for an entire tax year are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. Idaho's tax rate is from 1.6 percent, rising to a maximum of 7.8 percent on Idaho taxable income of \$100,000 or more. However, you are considered a nonresident if: you are an Idaho resident who lived outside of Idaho for at least 445 days in a 15-month period; and after satisfying the 15-month period, you spent less than 60 days in Idaho during the year; and you did not have a personal residence in Idaho for yourself or your family during any part of the calendar year; and you did not claim Idaho as your federal tax home for deducting away-from-home expenses on your federal return; and you were not employed on the staff of a U.S. senator, and you did not hold an elective or appointive office of the U.S. government other than the armed forces or a career appointment in the U.S. Foreign Service. (See Idaho Code Sections 63-3013 and 63-3030). A nonresident must file an Idaho income tax return if his or her gross income from Idaho sources is \$2,500 or more. Write: Idaho State Tax Commission, P.O. Box 36, Boise, ID 83722-0410. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 972-7660. E-mail: taxrep@tax.idaho.gov Web site: www.tax.idaho.gov

ILLINOIS: Individuals domiciled in Illinois are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. However, it appears that under some circumstances domiciliaries absent from the state throughout the year may not be subject to tax, so they should check with the Illinois Department of Revenue in advance. The Illinois tax rate is a 3-percent flat rate. For information, write: Illinois Department of Revenue, PO Box 19001, Springfield, IL 62794-9001. Phone: (217) 782-3336 or toll-free 1 (800) 732-8866. E-mail: Link through "Contact Us," then "Taxpayer Answer Center."
Web site: www.revenue.state.il.us

INDIANA: Individuals domiciled in Indiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regard-

less of their physical presence in the state. Indiana's tax rate remains a flat 3.4 percent. Write: Department of Revenue, 100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204. Phone: (317) 232-2240.

E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.

Web site: www.in.gov/dor

IOWA: Individuals domiciled in Iowa are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income to the extent that income is taxable on the person's federal income tax returns. Iowa's tax rate ranges from 0.36 to a maximum of 8.98 percent of taxable income over \$60,435, depending on income and filing status. Write: Taxpayer Services, Iowa Department of Revenue, PO Box 10457, Des Moines, IA 50306-0457. Phone: (515) 281-3114.

E-mail: idr@iowa.gov

Web site: www.state.ia.us/tax

KANSAS: Individuals domiciled in Kansas are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regard-

less of their physical presence in the state. The Kansas tax rate rises from a minimum of 3.5 percent to a maximum of \$2,925 plus 6.45 percent of excess over \$60,000 for joint filers, or \$1,462.50 plus 6.45 percent of excess over \$30,000 for single filers. Write: Kansas Taxpayer Assistance Center, Room 150, 915 SW Harrison, Topeka, KS 66612. Phone: (785) 368-8222.

E-mail: tac@kdor.state.ks.us

Web site: www.ksrevenue.org

KENTUCKY: Individuals domiciled in Kentucky are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Kentucky's tax rate ranges from 2 percent on the first \$3,000 of taxable income to \$4,166 plus 6 percent on all taxable income over \$75,000. Write: Kentucky Department of Revenue, 200 Fair Oaks Lane, Frankfort, KY 40620. Phone: (502) 564-4581.

E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.

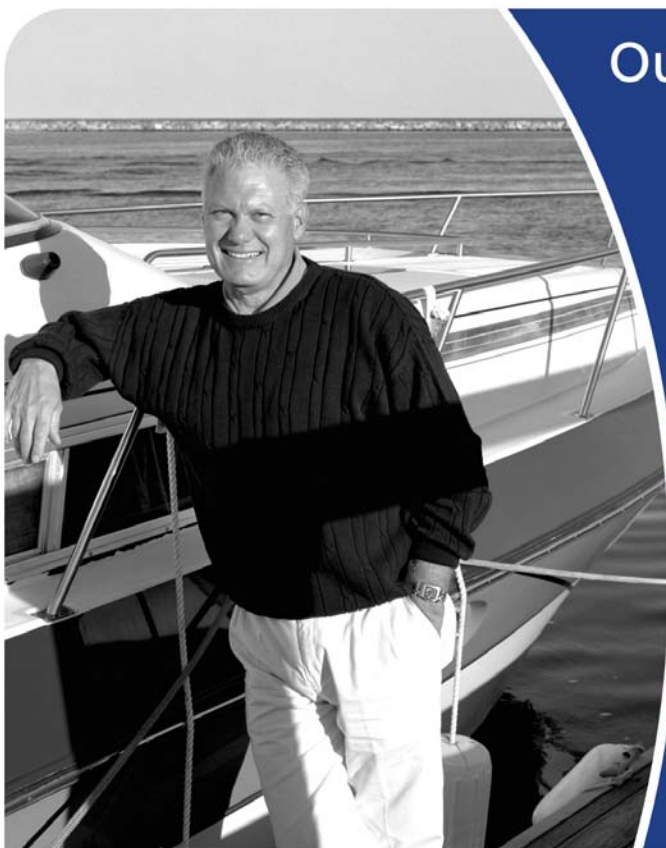
Web site: revenue.ky.gov

LOUISIANA: Individuals domiciled in Louisiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Louisiana's tax rate ranges from 2 percent for the first \$12,500 for single filers or \$25,000 for joint filers, rising to 6 percent for over \$25,000 for single filers or \$50,000 for joint filers. Address: Taxpayer Services Division, Personal Income Tax Section, Louisiana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 201, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0201. Phone: (225) 219-0102.

E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.

Web site: www.revenue.louisiana.gov

MAINE: Individuals domiciled in Maine are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. However, for the tax year starting Jan. 1, 2007, there will be a "safe harbor" provision. Individuals who are domiciled in Maine will be treated as non-residents if they satisfy all three of the following: 1) they did not maintain a permanent place of abode in Maine



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for the entire taxable year; 2) they maintained a permanent place of abode outside Maine for the entire taxable year; and 3) they spent no more than 30 days in the aggregate in Maine during the taxable year. Maine's tax rate rises from a minimum of 2 percent in three steps to a maximum of 8.5 percent of the taxable income excess over \$35,450. Write: Maine Revenue Services, Income Tax Assistance, 24 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0024. Phone: (207) 626-8475. E-mail: income.tax@maine.gov Web site: www.maine.gov/revenue

MARYLAND: Individuals domiciled in Maryland are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for an aggregated total of 183 days or more. For Tax Years 2007, 2008 and 2009 only, U.S. government employees will be able to deduct up to \$3,500 of any income earned overseas, including federal pay. Maryland's tax rate is 4.75 percent. In addition, Baltimore City and the 23 Maryland counties impose a local income tax, which is a percentage of the Maryland taxable income, using line 31 of Form 502 or line 9 of Form 503. The local factor varies from 1.25 percent in Worcester County to 3.2 percent in Montgomery, Howard and Prince George's counties (see Web site for details for all counties). Write: Comptroller of Maryland, Revenue Administration Center, Taxpayer Service Section, Annapolis, MD 21411. Phone: (410) 260-7980 or toll-free 1 (800) MD-TAXES. E-mail: taxhelp@comp.state.md.us Web site: www.marylandtaxes.com

MASSACHUSETTS: Individuals domiciled in Massachusetts are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Salaries and most interest and dividend income are taxed at a flat rate of 5.3 percent. Write: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Divi-

sion, P.O. Box 7010, Boston, MA 02204. Phone: (617) 887-MDOR. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: www.dor.state.ma.us

MICHIGAN: Individuals domiciled in Michigan are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Michigan's tax rate for 2006 is a flat 3.9 percent. Some Michigan cities impose an additional 1-percent income tax. Detroit imposes an additional 2.5-percent tax. Address: Michigan Department of Treasury, Lansing, MI 48922. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 827-4000. E-mail: treasIndTax@michigan.gov Web site: www.michigan.gov/treasury

MINNESOTA: Individuals domiciled in Minnesota are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Minnesota exempts domiciliaries who meet the foreign earned income exclusion, even though they may be federal employees. Minnesota's tax rate is either 5.35 percent, 7.05 percent, or a maximum of 7.85 percent on taxable income over \$65,330 for single filers or \$115,510 for married filing jointly. Write: Department of Revenue, Mail Station 5510, Saint Paul, MN 55146-5510. Phone: (651) 296-3781. E-mail: indirecttax@state.mn.us Web site: www.taxes.state.mn.us

MISSISSIPPI: Individuals domiciled in Mississippi are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Mississippi's tax rate is 3 percent on the first \$5,000 of taxable income, 4 percent on the next \$5,000, and 5 percent on taxable income over \$10,000. Contact MSTC, P.O. Box 1033, Jackson, MS 39215-1033. Phone: (601) 923-7089. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: www.mstc.state.ms.us

MISSOURI: The state imposes no tax liability for out-of-state income if the indi-

vidual has no permanent residence in Missouri, has a permanent residence elsewhere, and is not physically present in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Missouri calculates tax on a graduated scale up to \$9,000 of taxable income. Any taxable income over \$9,000 is taxed at a rate of 6 percent. File a return yearly with Form MO-NRI. For more information write: Individual Income Tax, P.O. Box 2200, Jefferson City, MO 65105-2200. Phone: (573) 751-3505. E-mail: income@dor.mo.gov Web site: www.dor.mo.gov

MONTANA: Individuals domiciled in Montana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Montana's tax rate rises in six steps from 1 percent of taxable income under \$2,300 to a maximum of 6.9 percent of taxable income over \$13,900, depending on income and filing status. See the Web site for various deductions and exemptions, or write: Montana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 5805, Helena, MT 59604. Phone: (406) 444-6900. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: mt.gov/revenue

NEBRASKA: Individuals domiciled in Nebraska are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2006 individual income tax rates range from 2.56 percent to a maximum of \$2,039.20 plus 6.84 percent of the excess over \$50,000 for joint filers. Write: Department of Revenue, 301 Centennial Mall South, P.O. Box 94818, Lincoln, NE 68509-4818. Phone: (402) 471-5729. E-mail: Link through the Web site "Contact Us" page. Web site: www.revenue.state.ne.us

NEVADA: Nevada does not tax personal income. There is a sales-and-use tax of between 6.5 and 7.75 percent, depending on the county, and an ad-valorem personal and real property tax. Write: Nevada Department of Taxation, 1550 College

Pkwy, Suite 115, Carson City, NV 89706.
Phone: (775) 684-2000.
Web site: www.tax.state.nv.us

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The state imposes no personal income tax on earned income, and no general sales tax. The state does levy a 5-percent tax on interest and dividend income, 8.5 percent on business profits including sale of rental property. The inheritance tax was repealed in 2003. Applicable taxes apply to part-year residents. Write: Taxpayer Assistance Office, 45 Chenell Drive, P.O. Box 2072, Concord, NH 03302-2072. Phone: (603) 271-2191. Web site: www.nh.gov/revenue

NEW JERSEY: A New Jersey domiciliary is considered a non-resident for New Jersey tax purposes if the individual has no permanent residence in New Jersey, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not physically in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Filing a return is not required (unless the non-resident has New Jersey source income) but is recom-

mended in order to preserve domicile status. Filing is required on Form 1040-NR for revenue derived from in-state sources. Tax liability is calculated as a variable lump sum plus a percentage from a low of 1.4 percent of taxable gross income up to \$20,000, to a high of 8.97 percent on taxable gross income over \$500,000. Write: State of New Jersey, New Jersey Division of Taxation, Office of Information and Publications, P.O. Box 281, Trenton, NJ 08695-0281. Phone: (609) 292-6400.

E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" page.
Web site: www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation.

NEW MEXICO: Individuals domiciled in New Mexico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The basis for New Mexico's calculations is the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure. For the 2006 tax year, the state has a graduated rate table with four brackets ranging from 1.7 percent to a max-

imum of 5.3 percent on New Mexico taxable income over \$96,000. Write: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, Tax Information and Policy Office, 1100 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 630, Santa Fe, NM 87504-0630. Phone: (505) 827-0700. E-mail: Link through "E-mail Us" tab at bottom of home page. Web site: www.state.nm.us/tax

NEW YORK: There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in New York, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not present in the state more than 30 days during the tax year. Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. Tax rates rise from a minimum of 4 percent in six steps to a maximum of 7.7 percent on taxable income over \$500,000. In New York City the maximum rate is 4.45 percent. Filing is required on Form IT-203 for revenue derived from New York sources. Write: New York State Department of Taxation and Finance,

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Personal Income Tax Information, W.A. Harriman Campus, Albany, NY 12227. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 225-5829. E-Mail: Link through Web site's "Answer Center" tab. Web site: www.nystax.gov

NORTH CAROLINA: Individuals domiciled in North Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The tax rate ranges from 6 percent for taxable income up to \$12,750 for single or \$21,250 for joint filers rising in three steps to 8.25 percent of taxable income over \$120,000 for single filers and over \$200,000 for joint filers. Residents must also report and pay a "use tax" on purchases made outside the state for use in North Carolina. Write: Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 25000, Raleigh, NC 27640-0640. Phone: toll-free 1 (877) 252-3052. Web site: www.dor.state.nc.us

NORTH DAKOTA: Individuals domiciled in North Dakota and serving outside the state are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. The tax rate ranges from 2.1 percent to a maximum of 5.54 percent on taxable income over \$336,550. Write: Office of State Tax Commissioner, State Capitol, 600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept 127, Bismarck, ND 58505-0599. Phone: (701) 328-2770. E-mail: taxinfo@nd.gov Web site: www.nd.gov/tax

OHIO: Individuals domiciled in Ohio are considered residents and their income is subject to tax, using the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure as a starting base. For 2005, Ohio's tax rate ranged from 0.712 percent to a maximum of 7.5 percent on taxable income over \$200,000. For Tax Years 2006 to 2009, Ohio is phasing in a 4.2 percent reduction in total tax revenues each year, so 2006 rates will show small reductions across the full range. Write: Ohio Department of Taxation, Taxpayer Services Center, 4485 Northland Ridge Blvd, Columbus, OH 43229. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 282-1780 or (614) 387- 0224.

E-mail: Link through Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: www.tax.ohio.gov

OKLAHOMA: Individuals domiciled in Oklahoma are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2006 tax rate rises in eight stages to a maximum of 6.25 percent on taxable income over \$10,500 for single filers and \$21,000 for married filing jointly. Write: Oklahoma Tax Commission, Taxpayer Services Division, 2501 Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73194-0009. Phone: (405) 521-3160. E-mail: otcmaster@tax.ok.gov Web site: www.oktax.state.ok.us

OREGON: Individuals domiciled in Oregon are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. However, under a 1999 law, Oregon exempts domiciliaries who meet the foreign residence requirement for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion, even though they may be federal employees. 2006 tax rates range from 5 percent to 9 percent on taxable income over \$6,850 for single filers and over \$13,700 for married filing jointly. Write: Oregon Department of Revenue, 955 Center Street N.E., Salem, OR 97301-2555. Phone: (503) 378-4988. E-mail: questions.dor@state.or.us Web site: <http://egov.oregon.gov/DOR>

PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania tax authorities have ruled that a Pennsylvania resident in the U.S. Foreign Service is not on federal active duty for state tax purposes and his or her income is taxable compensation. For non-Foreign Service members, there is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in the state, has a permanent residence elsewhere, and spends no more than 30 days in the state during the tax year. Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. File Form PA-40 for all income derived from Pennsylvania sources. Pennsylvania's tax rate is a flat 3.07 percent. Write: Common-

wealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Department, Harrisburg, PA 17128-1061. Phone: (717) 787-8201. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab. Web site: www.revenue.state.pa.us

PUERTO RICO: Individuals who are domiciled in Puerto Rico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the commonwealth. Normally, they may claim a credit with certain limitations, for income taxes paid to the United States on income from sources outside Puerto Rico, and for any federal taxes paid. For rates see "Preguntas comunes" on the Web site. Write: Departamento de Hacienda, P.O. Box 9024140, San Juan, PR 00902-4140. Phone: (787) 721-2020, ext. 3611, or toll-free 1 (800) 981-9236. E-mail: infoserv@hacienda.gobierno.pr Web site: www.hacienda.gobierno.pr

RHODE ISLAND: Individuals domiciled in Rhode Island are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Rhode Island tax is calculated based on the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure, and will generally be about 25 percent of the federal tax liability. Refer to the tax division's Web site not only for current information and handy filing hints, but also for forms and regulations to download. Write: Rhode Island Division of Taxation, Taxpayer Assistance Section, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908-5801. Phone (401) 222-1040 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. EST. E-mail: txassist@tax.state.ri.us Web site: www.tax.state.ri.us

SOUTH CAROLINA: Individuals domiciled in South Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. South Carolina imposes a graduated tax ranging from 2.5 percent on the first \$2,500, then rising in six steps to a maximum of 7 percent for taxable income over \$100,000. Write: South Carolina Tax Com-

mission, 301 Gervais Street, P.O. Box 125, Columbia, SC 29214.
Phone: (803) 898-5709.
E-mail: iitax@sctax.org
Web site: www.sctax.org

SOUTH DAKOTA: There is no state income tax and no state inheritance tax. Property and sales taxes vary depending on city and/or county. Sales tax is generally between 5 and 6 percent. Write: South Dakota Dept of Revenue, 445 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501-3185.
Phone: (605) 773-3311.
E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.
Web site: www.state.sd.us/drr2/revenue.html

TENNESSEE: Salaries and wages are not subject to state income tax, but Tennessee imposes a 6-percent tax on dividends and certain types of interest income received by Tennessee residents. Total sales tax is between 8.5 and 9.75 percent, depending on the city and/or county. For

information write: Tennessee Department of Revenue, (attention: Taxpayer Services), 500 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37242.
Phone: (615) 253-0600.
E-mail: TN.Revenue@state.tn.us
Web site: www.state.tn.us/revenue

TEXAS: There is no state income tax. Sales tax ranges from 6.5 to 8.25 percent depending on jurisdiction. Write: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, P.O. Box 13528, Capitol Station, Austin, TX 78711-3528.
Phone: toll-free 1 (877) 622-8375.
E-mail: tax.help@cpa.state.tx.us
Web site: www.window.state.tx.us

UTAH: Individuals domiciled in Utah are considered residents and are subject to Utah state tax. Utah requires that all Federal Adjusted Gross Income reported on the federal return be reported on the state return regardless of the taxpayer's physical presence in the state. For 2005, Utah's tax ranged in five steps from a minimum of 2.3 percent to a maximum 7 percent of taxable income over \$8,626 for joint filers. The

lower 2006 rates were not available at press time. In tax year 2007, a flat tax option of 5.35 percent will be available. Write: Utah State Tax Commission, Taxpayer Services Division, 210 North 1950 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84134.
Phone: (801) 297-2200 or toll-free 1 (800) 662-4335.
E-mail: taxmaster@utah.gov
Web site: www.tax.utah.gov

VERMONT: Individuals domiciled in Vermont are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Tax rates range from 3.6 to a maximum of 9.5 percent on taxable income over \$326,450 for married filing jointly. Write: Vermont Department of Taxes, Taxpayer Services Division, 133 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-1401.
Phone: (802) 828-2865.
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Virginia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for 183 days or more. These individuals file using Form 760. In addition, Virginia requires part-year residents to file Form 763 if their Virginia Adjusted Gross Income (which includes any federal salary paid during time they are residing in Virginia) exceeds \$7,000 for single filers, \$14,000 for married filing jointly or \$7,000 for married filing separately.

Individual tax rates are: 2 percent if taxable income is less than \$3,000; \$60 plus 3 percent of excess over \$3,000 if taxable income is between \$3,000 and \$5,000; \$120 plus 5 percent of excess over \$5,000 if taxable income is between \$5,000 and \$17,000; and \$720 plus 5.75 percent of taxable income is over \$17,000. Write: Virginia Department of Taxation, Office of Customer Services, P.O. Box 1115, Richmond, VA 23218-1115. Phone: (804) 367-8031. E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.

Web site: www.tax.virginia.gov

WASHINGTON: There is no state income tax, and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks and bonds. Sales tax ranges from 7 to 8.9 percent, depending on jurisdiction. Address: Washington State Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services, P.O. Box 47478, Olympia, WA 98504-7478. Phone: (360) 786-6100 or toll-free 1 (800) 647-7706.

E-mail: Link through the Web site's "Contact Us" tab.

Web site: www.dor.wa.gov

WEST VIRGINIA: There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in West Virginia, has a permanent residence elsewhere and spends no more than 30 days of the tax year in West Virginia. Filing a return is not required, but is recommended to preserve domicile status. Filing is required on Form IT-140-NR for all

income derived from West Virginia sources. Tax rates range from \$150 plus 4 percent of income over \$5,000 for single filers, rising in four steps to \$2,775 plus 6.5 percent of income over \$60,000 for joint filers. Write: Department of Tax and Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, P.O. Box 3784, Charleston, WV 25337-3784. Phone: (304) 558-3333, or toll-free 1 (800) 982-8297. E-mail: wvtaxaid@tax.state.wv.us Web site: www.state.wv.us/taxdiv

WISCONSIN: Individuals domiciled in Wisconsin are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of where the income is earned. Wisconsin's current tax rate ranges from 4.6 percent on income up to \$8,840 for single filers, to a maximum of \$11,224.97 plus 6.75 percent of income over \$176,770 for joint filers. Write: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Individual Income Tax Assistance, P.O. Box 59, Madison, WI 53785-0001.

Phone: (608) 266-2772.

E-mail: Use Web site "contact us" page.

Web site: www.dor.state.wi.us

WYOMING: There is no state income tax, and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks or bonds. Sales tax ranges between 4 and 6 percent, depending on jurisdiction. Write: Wyoming Department of Revenue, Herschler Building, 122 West 25th St., Cheyenne, WY 82002-0110. Phone: (307) 777-7961.

E-mail: dor@state.wy.us

Web site: revenue.state.wy.us

State Pension & Annuity Tax

The laws regarding the taxation of Foreign Service annuities vary greatly from state to state. In addition to those states that have no income tax or no tax on personal income, there are several states that do not tax income derived from pensions and annuities. Idaho taxes Foreign Service annuities while exempting certain categories of Civil Service employees. The National Active and Retired Federal Employees

Association Web site also provides detailed information on other state taxes for federal annuitants. Go to: www.narfe.org/departments/hq/guest/articles.cfm?ID=732

ALABAMA: Social Security and federal pensions are not taxable.

ALASKA: No personal income tax.

ARIZONA: Up to \$2,500 of U.S. government pension income may be excluded for each taxpayer. There is also a \$2,100 exemption for each taxpayer aged 65 or over.

ARKANSAS: Up to \$6,000 of income from any retirement plan is exempt.

CALIFORNIA: Fully taxable.

COLORADO: Up to \$24,000 exempt if age 65 or over. Up to \$20,000 exempt if age 55 to 64.

CONNECTICUT: Fully taxable for residents.

DELAWARE: Two exclusions: 1) If 60 or over, or totally disabled: Up to \$2,000 exempt if earned income is less than \$2,500 and Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$10,000; figures doubled if married and filing jointly. 2) If under age 60, the exclusion is \$2,000 or the amount of the pension (whichever is less); for age 60 or older, the exclusion is \$12,500 or the amount of the pension and eligible retirement income, whichever is less. The combined total of pension and ERI may not exceed \$12,500 per person age 60 or older. Social Security income is exempt.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Pension or annuity exclusion of \$3,000 if 62 years or older. Additional \$1,370 exemption for all residents. Social Security excluded from taxable income.

FLORIDA: No personal income, inheritance, or gift tax, but for Tax Year 2006 Florida will still have an "intangibles tax."

GEORGIA: \$25,000 retirement income excluded for those 62 years or older, or totally disabled. This will increase to \$30,000 for Tax Year 2007 and \$35,000 for 2008.

HAWAII: Pension and annuity distributions from a government pension plan are not taxed in Hawaii.

IDAHO: If the individual is age 65 or older, or age 62 and disabled, U.S. government pensions qualify for a deduction in 2006 of up to \$24,646 for a single return and up to \$36,954 for a joint return. Up to \$24,646 may be deducted by the unmarried survivor of the annuitant. The deduction is not available if married filing separately. Amount is reduced dollar for dollar by Social Security benefits.

ILLINOIS: U.S. government pensions are not taxed.

INDIANA: If the individual is over age 62, the AGI may be reduced by the first \$2,000 of any pension, reduced dollar for

dollar by Social Security benefits. Also, \$1,000 exemption if over 65, or \$1,500 if federal AGI less than \$40,000. No pension exclusion for survivor annuitants of federal annuities.

IOWA: Fully taxable. Over age 55 there is a pension/retirement income exclusion of up to \$6,000 for single, head of household or qualifying widower filers and up to \$12,000 for married filing jointly. The same income tax rates apply to annuities as other incomes.

KANSAS: U.S. government pensions are not taxed.

KENTUCKY: Government pensions attributable to service before Jan. 1, 1998, are not taxed. The portion of annuity income attributable to service after Dec. 31, 1997, is subject to tax at the appropriate rate; the pension exclusion of up to \$41,110 is unchanged for 2006.

LOUISIANA: Federal retirement ben-

efits are exempt from Louisiana state income tax. There is an exemption of \$6,000 of other annual retirement income received by any person aged 65 or over.

MAINE: Recipients of a government-sponsored pension or annuity may deduct up to \$6,000 on income that is included in their federal AGI, reduced by all Social Security and railroad benefits. For those age 65 and over, there is an additional standard deduction of \$1,250 (single), \$1,000 (married filing singly), and \$2,000 (married filing jointly).

MARYLAND: Those over 65 or permanently disabled, or who have a spouse who is permanently disabled, may under certain conditions be eligible for Maryland's maximum pension exclusion of \$22,600 for 2006. Also, all individuals 65 years or older are entitled to an extra \$1,000 personal exemption in addition to the regular \$2,400 personal exemption available to all taxpayers. Social Security is not taxed. See the worksheet and instructions for

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Maryland Form 502.

MASSACHUSETTS: U.S. government contributory pensions are not taxed.

MICHIGAN: Federal government pensions are exempt from taxation in Michigan. Retirement benefits from private sources included in the AGI were deductible to a maximum of \$39,570 for a single filer or \$79,140 for joint filers in the 2005 tax year. Figures for 2006 are not yet available but will be slightly higher. This maximum is reduced by the deduction taken for the government pension. Those age 65 or over may be able to deduct part of their interest, dividends or capital gains included in the AGI up to \$8,828 for single filers and \$17,655 for single filers for 2005.

MINNESOTA: Generally all pensions are taxable, but single taxpayers over 65 or disabled may exclude some income if federal AGI is under \$33,700 and non-taxable Social Security is under \$9,600. For a couple the limits are \$42,000 AGI and \$12,000 non-taxable Social Security.

MISSISSIPPI: Social Security and qualified retirement income from federal, state and private retirement systems are exempt from Mississippi tax.

MISSOURI: Up to \$6,000 is exempt if the pension income is less than \$32,000 when married filing jointly, \$16,000 if married filing separately, or \$25,000 for a single or head-of-household filer. This \$6,000 is reduced dollar for dollar by the amount the income exceeds these income limitations.

MONTANA: There is a \$3,600 pension-income exclusion if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$30,000. This exclusion is reduced \$2 for every \$1 over \$30,000. Those over 65 get an additional personal exemption (\$1,900 in 2005).

NEBRASKA: U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable.

NEVADA: No personal income tax.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: No personal income tax. There is a 5-percent tax on interest/dividend income over \$4,800 (married filing jointly).

NEW JERSEY: Pensions and annuities from civilian government service are subject to state income tax with exemptions for those who are age 62 or older, or totally and permanently disabled. Singles and heads of households can exclude up to \$15,000; married filing jointly up to \$20,000; married filing separately up to \$10,000 each. These exclusions are eliminated for New Jersey gross incomes over \$100,000. All residents over 65 receive an additional \$1,000 personal exemption.

NEW MEXICO: All pensions and annuities are taxed as part of Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Those 65 and older may be eligible to claim a deduction of up to \$8,000 on AGI less than \$18,000. Exemption is reduced as income increases, disappearing altogether at \$51,000.

NEW YORK: U.S. government pensions and annuities are not taxed. For those over age 59.5, up to \$20,000 of other annuity income may be excluded. See N.Y. Tax Publication 39 for details.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pursuant to the "Bailey" decision, government retirement benefits received by federal retirees who had five years of creditable service in a federal retirement system on Aug. 12, 1989, are exempt from North Carolina income tax. Those who do not have five years of creditable service on Aug. 12, 1989, must pay North Carolina tax on their federal annuities. In this case, up to \$4,000 (\$8,000 if filing jointly) of any federal annuity income is exempt. For those over 65, an extra \$750 (single) or \$1,200 (couple) may be deducted.

NORTH DAKOTA: All pensions and annuities are fully taxed, except for the first \$5,000, which is exempt, minus any Social Security payments, but only if the individ-

ual chooses to use Form ND-2 (optional method). Individuals are cautioned to compare Form ND-1 and Form ND-2 to ascertain which one yields the lower tax for the year. Qualifying for the exclusion does not mean that Form ND-2 is the better form to choose.

OHIO: Taxpayers 65 and over may take a \$50 credit per return. In addition, Ohio gives a tax credit based on the amount of the retirement income included in Ohio Adjusted Gross Income, reaching a maximum of \$200 for any retirement income over \$8,000.

OKLAHOMA: Taxable, but up to \$7,500 exempt on all federal pensions.

OREGON: Generally, all retirement income is subject to Oregon tax when received by an Oregon resident. This includes non-Oregon source retirement income. However, federal retirees who retired on or before Oct. 1, 1991, may exempt their entire federal pension; those who worked both before and after Oct. 1, 1991, must prorate their exemption using the instructions in the tax booklet. Oregon-source retirement income received by non-residents who are not domiciled in Oregon is not subject to taxation by Oregon.

PENNSYLVANIA: Government pensions and Social Security are not subject to personal income tax.

PUERTO RICO: The first \$8,000 of income received from a federal pension can be excluded for individuals under 60. Over 60 the exclusion is \$12,000. If the individual receives more than one federal pension, the exclusion applies to each pension or annuity separately.

RHODE ISLAND: U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Individuals under age 65 can claim a \$3,000 deduction on qualified retirement income; those 65 years of age or over can claim a \$10,000 deduction on qualified retirement income.

A resident of South Carolina who is 65 years or older may claim a \$15,000 deduction against any type of income (\$30,000 if both spouses are over 65), but must reduce this figure by any retirement deduction claimed. Social Security is not taxed.

SOUTH DAKOTA: No personal income tax.

TENNESSEE: Social Security, annuities and TSP are subject to personal income tax. Certain interest/dividend income is taxed at 6 percent if over \$2,500 (married filing jointly). However, those over 65 have \$16,200 exempted for a single filer and \$27,000 for joint filers.

TEXAS: No personal income tax.

UTAH: Individuals under age 65 may take a \$4,800 deduction. However, the deduction is reduced by \$.50 for every \$1 that Federal Adjusted Gross Income exceeds \$44,600 (married filing jointly) or \$34,600 (single). Those over age 65

may exempt up to \$7,500 for each individual. However, the exemption is reduced \$.50 for every \$1 that the total income exceeds \$62,000 (married filing jointly and both over 65) or \$40,000 (single).

VERMONT: U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable.

VIRGINIA: Individuals who were over age 65 on Jan. 1, 2004, can take a \$12,000 deduction; those age 62 or 63 on Jan. 1, 2004, can take a \$6,000 deduction. Those who reached 62 after Jan. 1, 2004, cannot claim any deduction until they reach 65. For those who reached 65 after Jan. 1, 2004, the \$12,000 deduction is reduced by one dollar for each dollar their AGI exceeds \$50,000 for single, and \$75,000 for married, taxpayers. All taxpayers over 65 receive an additional personal exemption of \$800.

WASHINGTON: No personal income tax.

WEST VIRGINIA: Up to \$8,000 of income received from any source is exempt if 65 years or older. Under 65, there is a \$2,000 pension exclusion.

WISCONSIN: Pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Those age 65 or over may take two personal deductions totaling \$1,000. However, benefits received from a federal retirement system account established before Dec. 31, 1963, are not taxable. No more than 50 percent of Social Security is taxed; after Jan 1, 2008, Social Security will not be taxed.

WYOMING: No personal income tax. ♦

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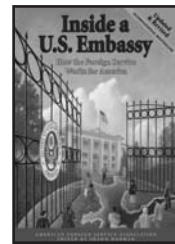
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IN MEMORY

William J. Barnsdale, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of pancreatic cancer on Sept. 24 in Berkeley, Calif., where he had lived in retirement since 1985.

Born in Hayward, Calif., Mr. Barnsdale graduated from the University of California at Berkeley and served as a radar officer and submariner in World War II, before joining the Foreign Service in 1947.

Mr. Barnsdale's Foreign Service career was spent mostly in Italy: he served in Rome twice, the second time as counselor for political affairs; in Naples twice; as consul in Bari; and as consul general in Florence. He also served in Stockholm, Bombay, Belgrade, Blantyre (as deputy chief of mission) and in the Office of Eastern European Affairs in Washington. His language and area specialty was Serbo-Croatian.

Following retirement from the Foreign Service in 1975, Mr. Barnsdale joined the U.N. World Food Program, and was posted to Islamabad as country director for five years. At that time the developing crisis in Afghanistan, with large numbers of refugees needing emergency assistance in the Northwest Frontier and Peshawar area, saw the WFP's focus shift from country development using donated food as payment for projects like reforestation, road building and dams, etc., to emergency food aid. From 1980 to 1985, he served in

Rome as assistant to the executive director of the program.

Mr. Barnsdale's role in helping to reform the World Food Program, making it what it is today, is recalled by James Ingram, a former Australian diplomat and WFP executive director from 1982 to 1992, in his soon-to-be published account, *Bread and Stones: Leadership and the Struggle to Reform the U.N. World Food Program*. Mr. Barnsdale's "commitment to the WFP and his personal integrity were valued by us all," Ingram wrote recently, in a private condolence message. "For my part, his wise counsel and moral support were simply indispensable," he adds. "Thus I (and WFP) owe Bill a debt of gratitude," Ingram states. "The international community and the member nations of the United Nations are indebted far more than they appreciate to the competence and commitment of people like Bill [Barnsdale]."

In retirement, Mr. Barnsdale maintained his interest in things Italian, belonging to a number of Italian cultural and culinary organizations. He was also an active member of the Foreign Service Association of Northern California, the Naval Order and World Affairs Council, and was a Knight Commander of the Sovereign Order of St. John and past commander of the San Francisco Commandery of the Order. He frequently

spoke before Bay Area groups about world affairs.

Mr. Barnsdale is survived by his wife of 62 years, Florence McKeown Barnsdale of Berkeley, Calif.; sons William Jr. of Sacramento, Calif., John of Auburn, Calif., and Andrew of Kensington, Calif.; daughter Mary of Albany, Calif.; eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



Dolores F. ("Dolly") Harrod, 61, a former senior official with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the spouse of retired FSO John P. Harrod, died on Nov. 15 in New London, N.H., of complications from a five-and-a-half-year struggle with ovarian cancer.

Born on May 2, 1945, in Manchester, N.H., Mrs. Harrod was the daughter of Clarence W. and Vera (Pstragowski) Foley. She attended parochial and public schools in Manchester, and earned a B.A. from Mt. Holyoke College and an M.A. in Slavic linguistics from the University of Chicago. She was fluent in both Polish and Russian. After completing graduate school, she worked as a guide/linguist on U.S. cultural exchange exhibitions in the former Soviet Union and Poland.

In 1971, she married John P. ("Jack") Harrod, a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information

IN MEMORY



Agency. Accompanying him, she lived and worked in Afghanistan, Poland and the former Soviet Union before returning to Washington, where she joined the Commerce Department in 1981.

Mrs. Harrod headed Foreign Commercial Service offices at Embassy Warsaw and at the U.S. mission to the European Community office in Brussels. In 1996 she was appointed deputy assistant secretary in charge of the Foreign Commercial Service's overseas operations, serving until 1999. Her final government assignment was as minister-counselor for commercial affairs in Ottawa. She retired in 2003.

Mrs. Harrod was predeceased by her parents and her only sibling, a sister, Helen D. Rosenberg. She is survived by her husband, of New London, N.H.; a son, William, currently a senior aerospace engineering major at Syracuse University; two nieces, Nancy Rosenberg of Sutton, Mass., and Jane Rosenberg of Brooklyn, N.Y.; three grandnieces and one grandnephew.

Donations in Mrs. Harrod's memory may be made to the Tracy Memorial Library, New London NH 03257.



Frances S. Hutton, 95, widow of the late FSO Churchill Hutton, died on Nov. 2 in McLean, Va., of congestive heart failure.

Born Frances Peabody Stearns on Oct. 21, 1911, in Canon City, Colo., Mrs. Hutton was raised in a cavalry family. Her father, a World War II general, founded the U.S. Army School of Military Government, later known as U.S. Army Civil Affairs.

Mrs. Hutton's ancestors comprise an extraordinary Virginia family. One,

Valentine Peyton, captained a ship in the 1609 Jamestown expedition. Others served in the House of Burgesses. Richard Henry Lee, another direct ancestor, offered the crucial resolution to declare independence, signing the Declaration and the Constitution. Another, Levin Powell, was a leading staff officer under George Washington. And John Stearns, a medical pioneer, founded the New York Medical Society in 1805.

Mrs. Hutton married her husband, a Foreign Service officer, in May 1934, and proved ideally suited to diplomatic life. Hosting dinners and cocktail parties in their home, she exchanged ideas with leading international figures of her time at posts in Dublin, Mexico City, Guatemala City, Istanbul, London, Guayaquil, Winnipeg and Washington. Family members recall that she often joked that she could, and once did, smile through a migraine headache, talk geopolitics and flick a locust off her shoulder at the same time.

Wherever she lived, she made friends and enthusiastically involved herself in the life of the local international community as a volunteer, mentor and ambassador for her country. In 1953, she was presented to Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. As a friend said, Frances Hutton had lived among people of all nationalities and all stations, but when she entered a room all the women in it became ladies and all the men, gentlemen.

Beneath vivacious humor and a radiant smile, she was a far-sighted observer of world affairs. As the end of World War II neared, she saw that most of the Third Reich's scientific talent lay in parts of Germany the Soviets would soon occupy, and that such talent would then be turned against the U.S. She urged her husband to draft a plan for the U.S. to

apprehend leading German engineers before the Soviets did. He did, and America thereby gathered most of the leading German experts in rocketry, nuclear science, electronics and advanced physics — men who helped found the American space program.

Besides her husband, who had a distinguished career, and her son Paul C. Hutton III, who served on State's Policy Planning Staff in the 1980s, Mrs. Hutton was closely associated with the Foreign Service through her uncles, James Grafton Rogers, a former assistant secretary of State, and James B. Stewart, DCM in Vienna and later ambassador to Nicaragua.

After 30 years abroad, the Huttons settled in the Washington, D.C., area. Following the death of her husband in 1983, Mrs. Hutton devoted herself to her family. Living in McLean, she was an active Episcopalian, a member of AFSA and a supporter of the environment. She was a Colonial Dame, a member of Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired and the Army-Navy Club. She is survived by three sons, Paul C. Hutton III of Annandale, Va., C. Powell Hutton of North Arlington, Va., and C. Peabody Hutton of Hong Kong; nine grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter.



George A. Naifeh, 82, a retired FSO, died at University Hospital in Augusta, Ga., on Nov. 9 after an extended illness.

Mr. Naifeh was born in Kiefer, Okla., in 1924, the youngest of six children of Shahada and Saida Naifeh. On graduating from high school, he joined the Army Air Forces and served as a staff sergeant during

IN MEMORY



World War II. He was a ball-turret gunner and radio operator with the 490th Bomb Group, a B-17 Flying Fortress unit of the Eighth Air Force, based in England. Awarded the Purple Heart as a result of enemy action in Strasbourg, France, he also earned an Oak Leaf cluster, an Air Medal and four battle stars.

A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, Mr. Naifeh attended the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University before joining the Foreign Service in 1951. He served for nearly three decades in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Jordan.

Upon retiring from the Foreign Service, Mr. Naifeh founded the American-Arab Affairs Council, serving as president and chairman from 1981 to 1990. The council, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to acquainting Americans with the Arab world, the Islamic religion and the culture of the Middle East. The council offers a program of publications, lectures, seminars, exhibitions and films, all carried out with the assistance of four distinguished advisory committees in the fields of diplomacy, economics, education and the media.

Throughout his career, both in the Foreign Service and at the American-Arab Affairs Council, Mr. Naifeh worked tirelessly to educate Arabs about Americans and Americans about Arabs, believing that information leads to respect, tolerance and peace.

In 1999, Mr. Naifeh retired to Aiken, S.C. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Marion Carolyn Naifeh, a son, Steven Naifeh, and a daughter, Carolyn Naifeh. The family requests that donations in his honor be made to the Hala Maksoud

Scholarship Fund, 815 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20006.



William T. Pryce, 73, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died of pancreatic cancer on July 11 at his home in Alexandria, Va.

The son of a career naval officer, Ambassador Pryce was born in San Diego, Calif., and lived in China and Hawaii as a boy. When Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, he and his mother and sister were on a ship bound for California, and from there to their family home in Ebensburg, Pa. After receiving an undergraduate degree from Wesleyan University and a graduate degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Amb. Pryce served for three years as an officer in the U.S. Navy. He met his wife, Joan, while stationed in San Francisco.

Amb. Pryce joined the Foreign Service in 1958. As a junior officer, he came to the attention of Amb. Thomas Mann, for whom he worked when the latter was under secretary for economic affairs (and later ambassador to Mexico and assistant secretary for Latin America). In 1966, Amb. Pryce was assigned to Moscow as a political officer. He traveled widely throughout the Soviet Union, invariably accompanied by the KGB, and gained a reputation (that grew throughout his career) for not being easily intimidated. He later served in Panama City and Guatemala City, and was executive assistant to Amb. Ellsworth Bunker in connection with the ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties. In 1981, he was assigned as chargé d'affaires in La Paz, and later as DCM in Panama.

In the late 1980s, Amb. Pryce was

the alternate U.S. representative at the Organization of American States, and then became senior director for Latin America at the National Security Council. There he played an important role in the transition to democracy in Panama following the 1989 removal of Manuel Noriega in Operation Just Cause; in the negotiated end to the civil war in El Salvador; and in the peaceful transition from Sandinista rule to a democratically elected government in Nicaragua. He served as ambassador to Honduras from 1993 until his retirement from the Service in 1996.

Following retirement, Amb. Pryce remained active in foreign affairs, serving as vice president of the Council of the Americas, which advocates free trade and rule-of-law initiatives in the Western Hemisphere and carries on a vibrant hemispheric exchange program. He was active in the Council on Foreign Relations and served on the boards of the World Affairs Council of Washington, D.C., and the Washington Institute of Foreign Affairs. Throughout his life, he was a dedicated Wesleyan alumnus.

Survivors include his wife of 48 years, Joan M. Pryce, of Alexandria, Va.; a daughter, Kathy E. Pryce of Arlington, Va.; two sons, Jeffrey F. Pryce of Washington, D.C., and Scott F. Pryce of Paris and Barcelona; a sister, Katharine M. Collins; and six grandchildren (Bobbie, Keith, Jack and Kate Witherell; William F. Pryce; and Pierce A.M. Pryce).



Reynold L. Riemer, 68, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of cancer in Paris on Dec. 11.

Mr. Riemer was born in New

IN MEMORY



York. He received his bachelor's degree from Hamilton College in 1959. Having studied at its Washington and Bologna campuses, he earned his M.A. from the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University in 1962.

Mr. Riemer entered the Foreign Service in 1962, and was assigned to Ouagadougou. He was detailed to the Agency for International Development and posted to Saigon in 1964. He returned to State in 1967 to work as a research specialist and then as a financial economist.

After being detailed to the École Nationale d'Administration in Paris in 1972, he became an economic-commercial officer at Embassy Paris

in 1973. He was later assigned to Bogotá and to the U.S. mission to the U.N. in New York. His last assignment before retiring in the early 1980s was back in the Department of State.

After settling in Paris, Mr. Riemer worked as a banker, established a specialized translation service firm, and taught political science at the Paris branches of several American universities.

At the time of his death, Mr. Riemer was executive vice chairman of Democrats Abroad France. Described as "the brains and soul behind much of Democrats Abroad France" in the group's eulogy, Mr. Riemer had managed the World-

wide Democrats Abroad convention in Paris in 2000, and organized and chaired the Paris Caucus in 2004, the first step in electing Democrats Abroad's delegations to the national convention that year.

Survivors include his wife, Blanca Riemer, and two children, Nicholas and Alix. Funeral services were held in the American Cathedral in Paris.



Margaret Anne Scanlan, 77, the wife of career diplomat and former ambassador John D. Scanlan, passed away on Sept. 2 in Naples, Fla., after a long battle with chronic leukemia.

Mrs. Scanlan, known as Peggy by

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IN MEMORY



family and friends, was born in Iron Mountain, Mich., and was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin. She met her husband in Washington, D.C., while they were working in the Department of State awaiting overseas assignments. In June 1958, they were married in Winnetka, Ill. The couple enjoyed a brief honeymoon in Western Europe en route to their first assignment, in Moscow.

As family and friends recall, Mrs. Scanlan frequently referred to their arrival at this first post as having made every subsequent arrival at post dull by comparison. They had been ordered to stop in Warsaw to pick up a five-ton shipment of beef packed in dry ice, which they were to take as their personal baggage to the com-

missary at the embassy in Moscow. They arrived in Moscow by train, and were left stranded on the platform with the shipment of beef for more than two hours because of a demonstration at the American embassy protesting the landing of U.S. troops in Lebanon. An officer from the embassy eventually came to meet them with a truck for the beef and a sedan for the Scanlans. Meanwhile, the number of demonstrators had swelled to over 100,000, and the Russian driver told them to roll up the windows and lock the doors. The driver was able to nudge the sedan through the mob, which beat upon and rocked the car. The Russian police controlling the demonstration reluctantly opened up a path to the embassy gate, which the U.S. Marines opened briefly to allow the car to enter.

After their Moscow assignment, the Scanlans were posted to Poland (three times), Yugoslavia (twice) and Uruguay. In each and every embassy and throughout the diplomatic corps, Mrs. Scanlan was held in high regard. She was a warm, engaging and outgoing member of the community. She was active in the American and international schools, having raised her four children at various post overseas.

The Scanlans lived in the Washington, D.C., area between overseas assignments for over 10 years. Mrs. Scanlan was a leader in civic affairs in Falls Church, Va., where her husband served on the Falls Church City Council. Following his retirement from the Service in 1991, they divided their time between homes in the Washington, D.C., area and Naples, Fla.

Mrs. Scanlan is survived by her husband, John D. Scanlan of Naples, Fla., two daughters, Kathleen Scanlan of Vienna, Va., and Malia Scanlan

of Washington, D.C.; and two sons, Michael, an FSO currently serving in Kiev, and John of Atlanta, Ga.

The family requests that any memorial gifts be made out to CLL Global Research Foundation, c/o Dr. Michael Keating, P.O. Box 301402, Unit 428, Houston TX 77230.



Charles T. Vetter, 84, a Foreign Service Reserve officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died Nov. 10 at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., from complications of esophageal cancer.

Mr. Vetter was born in Columbus, Ohio. He was a graduate of Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., and served as a naval aviator in World War II. Following the war, he taught at Bell Multicultural Senior High School in Washington, D.C., and worked for the Republican National Committee. He graduated from the National University Law School in Washington, D.C., in 1953, and received a master's degree in law from The George Washington University in 1959.

Mr. Vetter joined the State Department in 1950, moving to USIA in 1955. There, he provided training for USIA officers and other U.S. personnel around the world. One training site was the exhibition of American housewares in Moscow in 1959, which became the impromptu setting of the so-called kitchen debate between Vice President Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

From 1962 to 1964, Mr. Vetter worked throughout Latin America. He also participated in training programs for Peace Corps recruits, and trained American guides and Marines for the 1967 World's Fair in Montreal. Other assignments during



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IN MEMORY



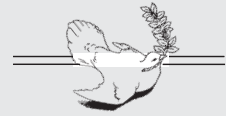
the late 1960s took him to more than 15 countries. In 1972, Mr. Vetter conducted a five-week lecture tour of India, discussing international relations and U.S. culture. He went on a similar tour of Africa in 1974. From 1970 until retiring from USIA in 1976, Mr. Vetter was a faculty adviser at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute.

After leaving USIA, Mr. Vetter was an independent consultant on international affairs and management with the State Department, CIA, Defense Department, Commerce Department and other federal agencies and private companies. He delivered and led an average of 200 lectures, seminars and workshops a year. He was

the author of *Citizen Ambassadors: Guidelines for Responding to Questions Asked about America* (Brigham Young University, 1983).

Mr. Vetter was elected to an Advisory Neighborhood Commission and was on the board of directors of International Student House in Washington, D.C. He belonged to many honorary societies and professional organizations, and was a member of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., where he was a vestryman and junior warden.

Survivors include his wife of 49 years, Alice Vetter of Washington, D.C.; two children, David Vetter of Rockville, Md., and Hope Vetter of Brussels; and a grandson. ■



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Pictured from left to right: Dara Laughlin,
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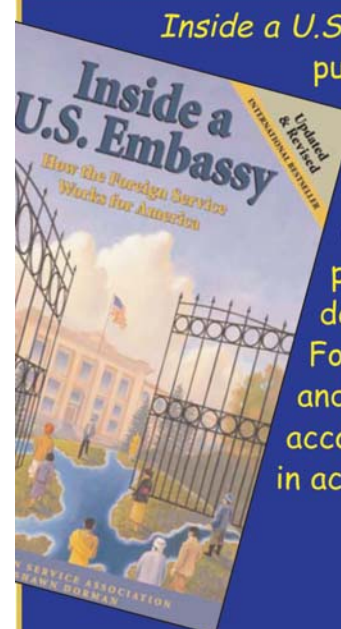
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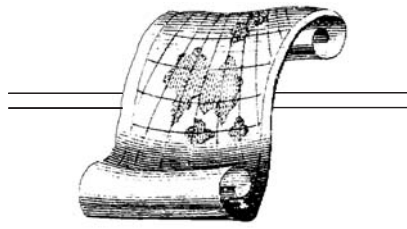
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REFLECTIONS

The Whole World Was Watching — Except Me

BY MARY GRACE MCGEEHAN

Having grown up in the Washington, D.C., area and spent 20 years in the Foreign Service, I've had a number of opportunities to witness history up close. Unfortunately, I have blown every single one.

I started young, in 1977. My family had managed to get a prime viewing location at President Carter's inaugural parade. In a break from tradition, the new president got out of his limousine and strolled down Pennsylvania Avenue hand-in-hand with his wife Rosalynn, who was wearing an ice-blue coat. "There they are!" my mother said. "Where?" I asked.

"Right in front of us!" she answered. All I could see were security vehicles, Secret Service men and, eventually, the back of an ice-blue coat receding into the distance.

Mexico City, June 1986. I had just arrived for my first Foreign Service assignment, and Mexico was hosting the World Cup. Friends of a colleague had managed to get tickets to the quarterfinal match between

Mary Grace McGeehan joined the Foreign Service in 1986, and has been posted in Mexico, Cambodia, Haiti, and South Africa (twice). In Washington, she has worked on the South Africa and Vietnam desks and in the Office of the Inspector General. She received a mid-career master's degree from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University in 1999. She is currently deputy chief of mission in Vientiane.

A few yards in front of me, superstar Diego Maradona had scored a goal for Argentina. Or so the referees said.



England and Argentina, and invited me along. We had seats near one of the goals. I followed the game fairly closely, but took a break from time to time to watch the fans' antics. I was looking across the field at some singing British spectators when pandemonium erupted. A few yards in front of me, superstar Diego Maradona had scored a goal for Argentina. Or so the referees said.

The English side contended that he had knocked the ball in with his hand. After the game, Maradona further fueled the debate by saying that the goal had come "un poco con la cabeza de Maradona y otro poco con la mano de Dios" (a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God). Decades later, fans still discuss the "Hand of God" play, perhaps the most famous in soccer history. I only wish I could give you my eyewitness perspective.

Cape Town, February 1990. A heady week and a half had passed since F.W. de Klerk's announcement that Nelson Mandela would be released. A friend of mine was going to the prison in the small town of Paarl, so I tagged along. We took a

spot with the international press corps and waited for hours in the blazing sun until, finally, my friend said, "There he is!" I can vividly picture that moment: Nelson and Winnie Mandela side by side, their hands raised triumphantly in liberation salutes. Except — and you can probably guess this by now — my image is based on press pictures. All I saw was the backs of a bunch of journalists' heads.

I console myself that at least I was there for these historic events, a witness to the atmosphere and spectacle if not to the famous moment. But I can't even say that for the Orioles-Yankees game on Sept. 20, 1998. I had tickets, the last of the year on my season plan. But I was in Princeton, two hours from Baltimore, and it was a night game. I opted instead for a good night's sleep.

The next day, well-rested, I had to satisfy myself with reading the news accounts. After the first out, a picture of Cal Ripken had appeared on the scoreboard. A roar went up from the bleachers. The "Iron Man" was ending his record-breaking streak of 2,632 consecutive games played. Ripken came out of the dugout to take a bow, the Yankees tipped their hats in tribute and, as the cheering crowd refused to quiet, the legendary shortstop came out and waved to the fans again. It sounds like quite a moment.

Oh, well. If I'd gone to the game, I probably would have been in the bathroom. ■



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