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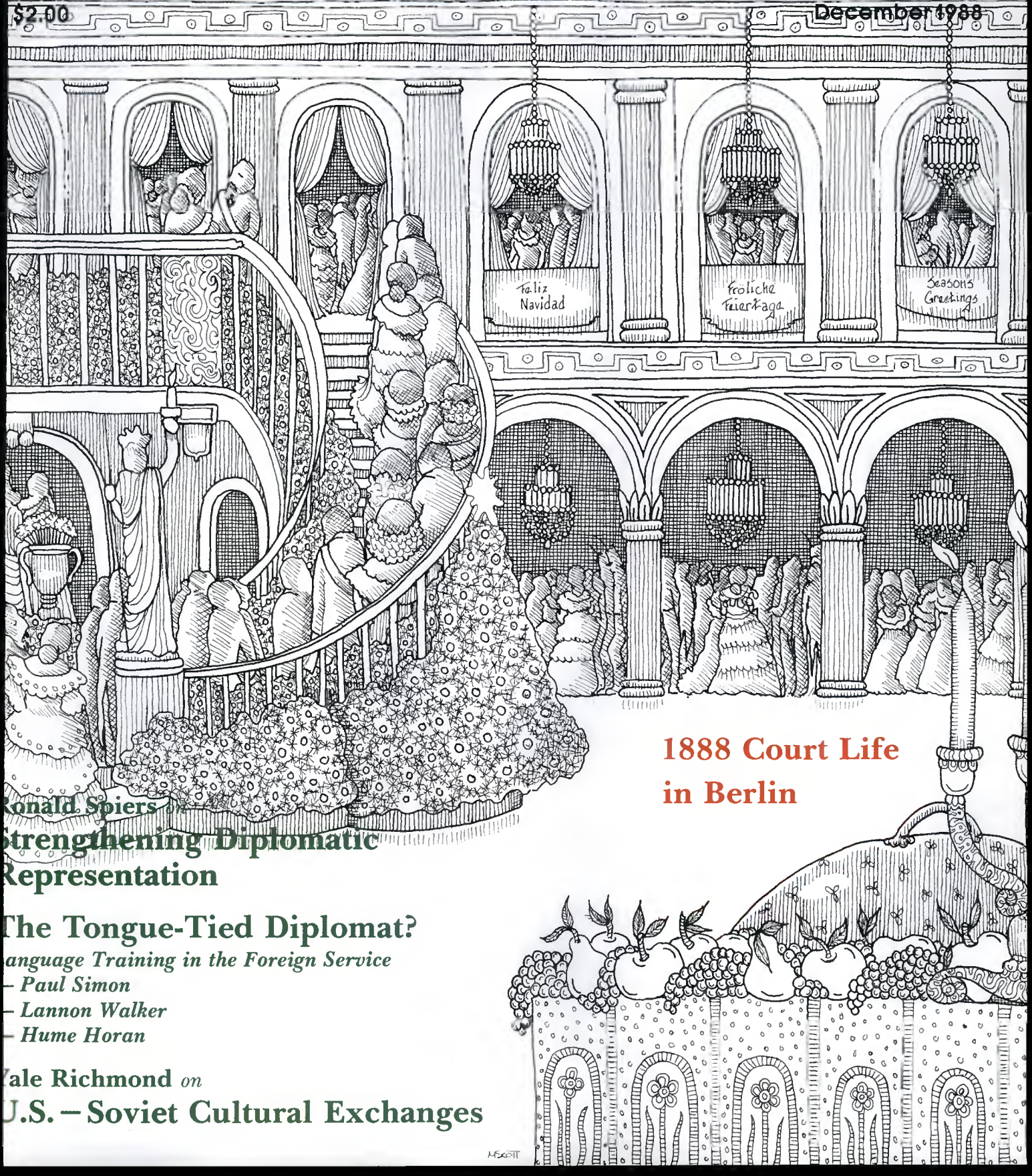

1888 Court Life in Berlin

Ronald Spiers on Strengthening Diplomatic Representation

The Tongue-Tied Diplomat?

Language Training in the Foreign Service

– Paul Simon

– Lannon Walker

– Hume Horan

Yale Richmond *on* U.S.–Soviet Cultural Exchanges

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V I E W S

Politics and the Foreign Service

Recently in this space we raised the thorny and longstanding problem of relations between Congress and the Foreign Service, noting the unfortunate fact that many in Congress do not share our good opinion of ourselves. Now there is another, very serious dimension to the congressional relations problem that reared its head in the last days of the 100th Congress that also requires our attention.

Before adjourning this fall the Senate removed the names of two Foreign Service officers from the Senior Foreign Service promotion list. The two affected are career officers, one an ambassador and the other a deputy chief of mission in different embassies in Central America. The Senate's action against them exemplifies the problem we must address: the role of career officers in foreign policy situations that are highly charged emotionally and politically. What to do about Central America has divided Americans for a long time. The issue long predates the Reagan administration. And the problems that flow from this have taken a toll in the careers of other professionals before these two FSOs.

Political partisanship in foreign affairs and the search for the elusive ideal of a bipartisan foreign policy is a problem for the partisans. While bipartisanship is clearly preferable and makes our job easier, as we saw for example in the Phillipines, achieving bipartisanship is a political process that we probably can and should influence only slightly, if at all. We must serve our elected and appointed leaders loyally and enthusiastically within the limits of our personal standards. If we cannot, for whatever reason, we should leave the Service or at least seek reassignment to a more acceptable post. We need to do our job without crossing the line of partisanship and we have every right to expect members of Congress to respect us for that and to pursue their foreign policy objectives on the political level.

We all recall President Truman's maxim about staying out of the kitchen if you can't stand the heat. Most Foreign Service professionals enjoy some heat and expect to get singed now and then. But our promotion list?

AFSA recently began an effort to shed some light on this problem. We sponsored a luncheon seminar at which Department of State officials heard from and exchanged views with one of our career officer ambassadors who recently returned from a critical Central American embassy. We plan to pursue it further within the Service and on the Hill when the new Congress convenes.

—Perry Shankle

"The Independent Voice of the Foreign Service"

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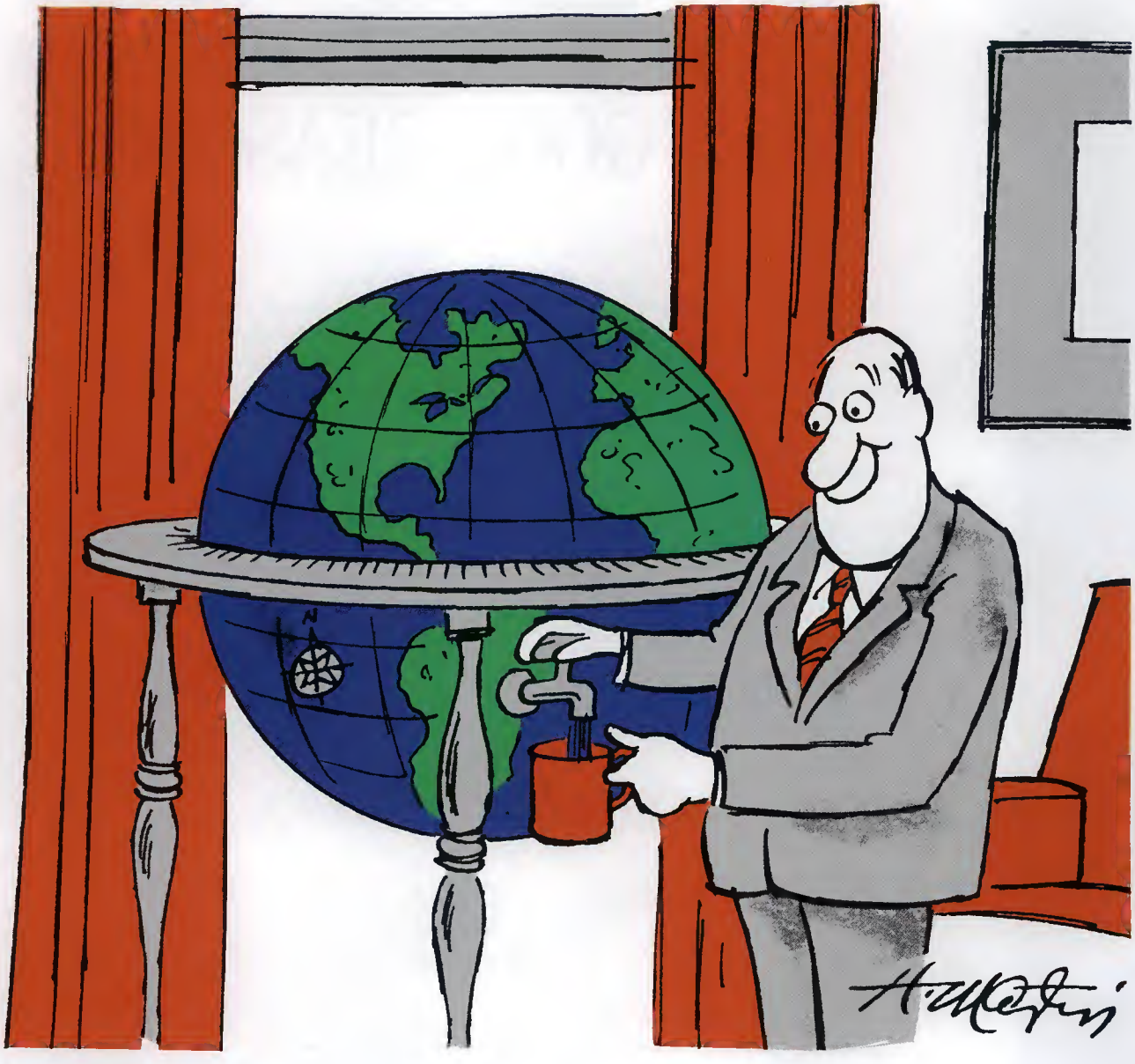

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Clippings

Diplomatic Misunderstanding

from The Washington Post, October 2:
The work of the Foreign Service at home and abroad—protecting U.S. international political, economic, consular, and security interests—is little understood or prized. Most Americans are wary of diplomatic entanglements, believing—like Will Rogers—that "the United States has never lost a war or won a peace." In a country where only a small minority of students study foreign languages or can locate Brazil on a map, there is little respect for the skills and experience of this nation's foreign affairs professionals.

There is no massive cadre of diplomatic veterans—despite the increasing danger of their calling—who can lobby and curry congressional favor. Just the opposite. There is a deliberate and malicious effort by certain congressmen—led by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC)—to make life as difficult as possible for America's overseas emissaries. As a result, Congress has passed one onerous piece of legislation after another—undercutting basic allowances for housing, children's schooling, and health care, and mandating unprecedented involuntary retirement of an estimated one third of the Service's top thousand officers. Helms recently saw to it that Foreign Service officers' exclusion from District of Columbia income taxes was eliminated even though all other presidential appointees receive it.

by Julia A. Moore

Help for Wausau

from Ann Landers, October 14:
Dear Ann Landers:

I need your definition of "diplomacy" for a speech. Help!—Wausau, Wis.

Dear Wausau: Will Roger's definition of diplomacy is better than anything I can come up with. He said, "The art of diplomacy is saying, 'nice doggie, nice doggie,' until you can find a stick."

Investment Advice

from The Washington Post, September 27:
He had to leave the federal government to learn it. But Paul A. Volcker, one of the world's most powerful economic policymakers, has recently received a bottom-line lesson in the cost of public service.

"The going rate . . . for a 35-year-old accountant in the investment banking business, not dealing with customers, doing the internal accounting in the firm, is about twice what I made as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board," Volcker told the American Association of Newspaper Publishers government affairs committee yesterday.

"Somebody said to me, we ought to get all the government we pay for. And, of course, part of the problem when we're talking about the civil service is we're not paying very much at the top levels," said Volcker.

Volcker, who recently joined the 50-person investment banking firm of James D. Wolfesohn Inc., said many people believe that the principal purpose of the National Commission on the Public Service, which he heads, is to talk a lot about problems of the civil service and force salaries up.

"I don't look at it that way at all," he said. "As I get into this, you realize how many problems there are" in recruiting, training, education, morale, incentives and in the mix of political appointees and career jobs in the government.

by Judith Havemann

The Chain of Command

from The Washington Post, October 11:
At a hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (D-MD) raised the Iran-contra issue with [Ambassador to Pakistan-designate Robert B.] Oakley. Here are excerpts from the Sept. 16 hearing:

Sarbanes: Now, you are serving as ambassador in Pakistan. You receive a phone call from a staff member of the National Security Council. I am putting a hypothetical to you now. This person asks you to take an action, which you can do there, on some matter under your jurisdiction in Pakistan. And you say well, boy, I think this is a bad idea. Furthermore, this runs counter to what I understand our government's policy is to do.

Would you go ahead and do that action on the basis of that call?

Oakley: Senator Sarbanes, several things have happened since the fall of 1985. Among others, the secretary of state, quite correctly, has issued instructions to ambassadors not to take telephone calls, such as some of those which the National Security Council staff made to other ambassadors abroad during the period 1985-1986, correctly to insist upon things in writing, and to insist upon things through and approved by the secretary of state.

No Holy Rite

from The New York Times, August 25:
The argument about the indispensability of foreign policy experience implies two propositions: that foreign policy is so arcane that only long involvement in its making and execution can equip a person to handle the sacred mysteries, and, further, that past involvement provides a guarantee of superior wisdom in analysis and decision.

Neither proposition stands up under scrutiny. Is foreign policy really all that esoteric and unfathomable? Of course, a professional priesthood has long claimed this to be the case, but its claim is designed to protect the present monopoly against intervention by members of Congress, journalists, professors, voters and other lesser breeds.

Foreign policy does indeed require knowledge of other lands, concern for the national interest and steadiness of nerve. But anyone with political judgment, intellectual curiosity, a retentive memory, a disciplined temperament, and a sense of the way history runs can grasp the dynamics of foreign policy quickly enough.

by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in defense of Michael Dukakis's foreign policy experience.

AFSA's Answer

from The New York Times,
Letters to the Editor, September 22:
From the moment the new administration begins, the new President must make critical judgments on U.S. foreign policy issues that require his immediate attention. Certainly, he can rely on his advisers. No doubt he can learn the dynamics of foreign policy quickly enough. However, he must also be prepared to listen to and respect the views of those in the government who are entrusted with the continuity of U.S. foreign policies from administration to administration.

Professor Schlesinger derogated "a professional priesthood," which he says is protecting a foreign policy monopoly. We hope

this hyperbole will not be interpreted as describing the Foreign Service. Clearly, no one group, in or out of government, has a monopoly on making foreign policy. But policy decisions are best made with as much understanding of the politics and culture of the societies with which we deal as an experienced diplomatic service can provide.

It could be argued that decisions made without adequate knowledge of the international setting have led to errors of judgment resulting in loss of American lives and international prestige. The Foreign Service lives in and reports on more than 125 countries. It would be foolhardy for a high official entrusted with policymaking responsibility to ignore that source of information. Diplomacy and political analysis are simply what Foreign Service officers do for a living. . . . To scoff at the role of those who do have past involvement and long experience does nothing to further the discussion about what qualifies a President to make foreign policy.

by Evangeline Monroe

Promotions Held Up

from The Washington Post, October 20:
In an apparent effort to pressure the Senate Foreign Relations Committee into last-minute approval of some Reagan administration ambassadorial nominees, Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) is blocking a committee vote on promoting roughly 100 career diplomats in the Senior Foreign Service.

Committee Chairman Claiborne Pell (D-RI) argues that no new ambassadors should be approved until the next president takes office. Since he apparently will not budge from that view, the practical effect of the move by Helms, senior minority member of the committee, is likely to see Congress end its session in the next few days without acting on the Foreign Service promotions.

That means the diplomats involved—officers being promoted into the senior service and senior service members recommended for higher rank—will have to wait until the next Congress convenes in January before their promotions are acted upon.

"The Democrats took the position a month ago that there should be no further action on the pending ambassadorial nominations until after the elections," [a staff aide] said. "So Helms has taken the position that this principle should be applied across the board and that action on all diplomatic appointments and promotions should be closed down and left to the next Congress."

by John M. Goshko

Promotions Blocked

from The Washington Post, October 25:
Two career diplomats who headed the U.S. embassies in Honduras and El Salvador have been denied promotion to higher rank in the Senior Foreign Service because Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT) charges that they impeded congressional attempts to exercise oversight of President Reagan's controversial Central America policy.

The move by Dodd, chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, against Everett E. Briggs, ambassador in Honduras, and David B. Dlouhy, until recently acting head of the embassy in El Salvador, underscored the continuing animosity that exists between congressional liberals and the administration as the result of Reagan's emphasis on military action in Central America.

Several senior State Department officials expressed concern about the possible effects of Dodd's action on the impartiality and integrity of the Foreign Service. Partisan politics has sometimes in the past led to reprisals against professional diplomats for carrying out policies of the president in power, whether Republican or Democrat.

Dlouhy, in a telephone interview with *The Washington Post* from San Salvador, charged that Dodd was engaging in "a capricious act" and "McCarthyite tactics that would send a chilling message to the Foreign Service."

He described himself as "a small fish working in the trenches" and likened his situation to that of the so-called "China Hands"—a group of professional U.S. diplomats who served in China during and after World War II and whose careers subsequently were ruined by right-wing charges that they had been responsible for the communist takeover of China.

Dodd's aides denied that he would ever act against a career diplomat because he disagrees with his or her policy views. They added that Dodd believes Briggs and Dlouhy overstepped the bounds of their policy mandates in a way that raised questions about whether they were doing their jobs properly.

"The senator believes their lack of cooperation with the committee and their systematic obstruction of the committee's efforts to inquire into U.S. activities in Honduras shows a lack of understanding for Congress' constitutional role in the foreign policy process," said a Dodd aide, who asked not to be identified. "The senator believes his action was not a policy reprisal but a personnel action against officers whose performance did not merit promotion."

The situation arose Saturday when the Senate, rushing toward adjournment, approved promotions for about 100 career diplomats in the Senior Foreign Service.

The Senate's action was unexpected because Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), the doyen of Republican conservatives in the Senate, earlier had blocked a vote on the entire list in an apparent effort to pressure Democrats into last-minute approval of some Reagan ambassadorial nominees. Helms has used that tactic frequently over the years to impede approval of nominees he regards as overly liberal to foreign policy posts.

However, Helms relented and allowed a vote at the last minute. At the insistence of Dodd, though, the recommendations to promote Dlouhy into the senior service as a minister counselor, and Briggs to career minister, the second-highest rank in the Foreign Service, were stricken from the list.

Briggs could not be reached for comment. He has clashed with Dodd and other liberal members of Congress over their efforts to obtain information about secret bases in Honduras of the U.S.-supported contra rebels fighting Nicaragua's Marxist-led government and U.S. military and intelligence activities operating from Honduras.

Some State Department officials said yesterday that Briggs had been following orders from Washington. The Dodd aides, while saying they could not discuss publicly the senator's complaints against Briggs because they involve classified security matters, contended that his refusal to cooperate had gone beyond the bounds of a reasonable separation of powers between Congress and the executive. They added that Dodd had similar complaints against Dlouhy, who headed the embassy in San Salvador until the recent arrival there of Ambassador William G. Walker.

by John M. Goshko

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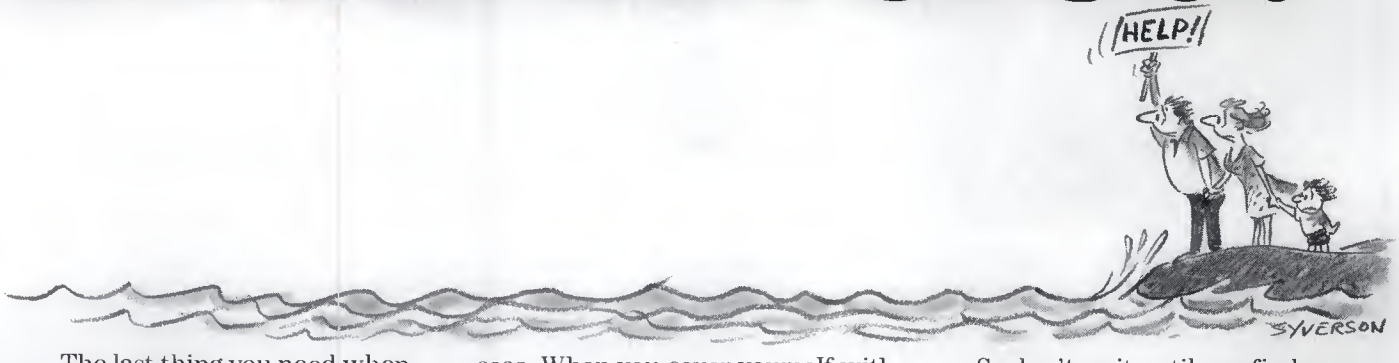

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Books

Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy: Congress Reconsidered. *By David P. Forsythe. University of Florida Press, 1988.*

The impact of Congress on the human rights dimension of U.S. foreign policy is the focus of this study. Reviewing congressional actions between 1973 and the end of the first Reagan administration (with updates to 1987), the author analyzes the legislation passed, the voting patterns on liberal and conservative human rights proposals, and the comparative role of Congress in human rights foreign policy.

Forsythe finds that congressional attempts to deny U.S. security and economic assistance through international financial institutions to foreign countries that demonstrate "a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights" have not been effective. The Reagan administration, in his view, simply ignored or circumvented the legislation.

Looking at country-specific legislation, the author describes the political battles between Capitol Hill and the White House. On assistance to El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, Congress was able to significantly influence policy. In other areas (Chile, Argentina, Haiti), Congress used the device of demanding presidential reports or certifications on the degree of compliance with human rights with very limited success. The Jackson-Vanik amendment denying most-favored-nation treatment unless the President waived the provision proved useful in achieving a higher rate of emigration from Romania, but ineffectual in the case of the Soviet Union.

Forsythe also reviews function-specific legislation such as the creation of the Human Rights Bureau in the State Department and the requirement of annual reports on human rights practices around the world. Although he considers the reports deficient because they do not adequately treat social, economic, and cultural rights, he recognizes that they are "important and useful tools" for analyzing the human rights situation.

Forsythe concludes this thorough study (which tilts to the liberal outlook) by questioning the wisdom of legislation on human rights. Although criticizing congressional enactment of soft law that is rarely adjudicated in the courts, and the disposition of both the White House and Congress to define human rights in terms of U.S. constitutional rights, Forsythe credits Congress with "putting human rights back on the foreign policy agenda."

—Nicholas G. Andrews

Politics in the United Nations System. *Lawrence S. Finkelstein, Editor, Duke University Press, 1988.*

The UN's Secretary General Perez de Cuellar has said that the crisis of the United Nations, 42 years after its founding, is a crisis of confidence. In his foreword, the secretary general writes that the organization "must be sensitive to the wisest ideas and counsel that the intellectual community of the world has to offer."

Twelve American and two Swedish schol-

ars provide such ideas and counsel with in-depth analyses of the vast complex of the world organization, its historic developments, successes, failures, and unsolved problems, and basic trends varying from one body to the other.

A very important function of the system was aptly formulated by Secretary George Shultz, who said that "the United Nations has a unique influence on global perceptions. The United Nations defines, for much of the world, what issues are and are not important and of global concern." The authors provide supporting evidence for this judgment.

The analyses prove that the struggles between North and South over the "new international economic order" and related issues moved the developed countries from their original positions, resulting in the general system of preferences, the integrated program of commodities, and debt relief for LDCs (lesser developed countries). The growing importance of the World Bank has developed the political role of its presidents into more important international political figures, "global diplomats and influential development strategists."

The chapter on the crisis in UNESCO makes us understand the emerging political role of its director general. In some bodies consensus was reached on policy and organization, while in others there is tension between the diplomatic and political approaches.

This volume is an important reference book for all Foreign Service personnel and particularly for junior officers who in their careers will have to deal with the politics and policies of the United Nations system.

—Robert A. Bauer

Enter the Dragon. *By Russell Spurr. Newmarket Press, New York, 1988.*

De mortius nil nisi bonum, as my Jewish grandmother used to say, but since Mr. Spurr is alive and well in Australia, and this is his second book of military history, and if not restrained he may yet commit a third, let me come straight to the point and say this is the worst book I've read since I stopped being a masochist. What started out as a beautiful idea, a treatment of the Korean War using Chinese sources and viewpoints, turned into a bated-breath docudrama for Saturday afternoon TV. The author in his foreword says he interviewed "hundreds" of Chinese in preparation for this work. Who they were, where, when, and in what languages they were interviewed, we are not told. There is, of course, no index, and people speak in direct quotes. What is deplorable is not only the usual waste of energy but the misuse of a golden opportunity that would have produced a valuable work.

A number of good books have already been written about the Korean War, not the least of which is Matthew Ridgeway's autobiography. Others will continue to appear; none, however, will reach oblivion as quickly as this one.

—Sol Schindler

Beyond the Iran-Contra Crisis. *Edited by Neil C. Livingstone and Terrel E. Arnold. Lexington Books, 1988.*

Periodically, our country finds itself in the grip of a serious dilemma stemming from the failure of either a foreign policy or its implementation. One of the most recent examples of this is the Iran-contra controversy. In this case, our dilemma stems from the failure to have an effective policy on terrorism and from the improper implementation of the policy we enunciated publicly. The ramifications of such a convergence have been made painfully obvious.

This book seeks to look beyond the crisis itself. It has a heavy Foreign Service content and provides an inside perspective. Several of the contributors were deeply involved in the determination and implementation of U.S. counterterrorist policy; their chapters reflect that involvement.

Another area in which this book differs from others on this subject is in its focus on the human dimension of Iran-contra, that is, on the hostages in Lebanon and their families. Universally acknowledged as one of the significant dynamics of U.S. response to terrorism, the human dimension is often overlooked in analyses. The anguish of hostage families and government officials alike is vividly portrayed by Nancy Asencio, writing from first-hand experience.

The balance of this well-written book is comprised of the expected sections on the media, special operations, legal considerations, etc. Throughout, the authors remain true to their objective of not merely pointing out why things happened as they did. This forward-looking approach provides the reader with important insights into the dilemmas confronting the U.S. in constructing a viable, consistent, and effective policy regarding terrorism. Knowing where we have been, why we were there, and what lies ahead are valuable points of reference that can guide policymakers and operational bureaucrats alike in their future encounters with this elusive opponent.

—Mayer Nudell

By Our Readers

An American Island in Hitler's Reich. *By Charles Burdick. Markgraf Publications, Menlo Park, CA, 1987.* Dean of Social Sciences at San Jose University, Burdick traces the almost six months of difficult internment experienced by American newspeople and diplomats trapped in Germany at the outset of World War II. He provides a revealing look at what happens when the press and diplomats are suddenly trapped between two nations at war—and the steps leading up to their hostage-like exchange in 1942.

Honey from the Lion. *By Wendy Laura Belcher. E.P. Dutton, New York, 1988.* In this autobiographical account of her return visit to Africa, Wendy Belcher, who was a Foreign Service child in Ghana and Ethiopia, faces the complex issues of culture, race, and religion. From her newfound Ghanaian friends, she learns that differences between black and white, between Western culture and African tradition, can be transcended by simple acts of faith and humanity.

Letters

Did you serve in Peru?

I am writing a novel based on the government of General Juan Velasco Alvarado, president of Peru from 1968-75. I am interested in interviewing individuals who served in the U.S. Army military mission to Peru between 1960 and 1979, individuals who served as military attachés to Peru between 1960 and 1979, or individuals who had contact with Velasco's government in a diplomatic capacity.

I am particularly interested in speaking to individuals who are now in California. Please contact me at: 3535A 24th St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

GABRIEL J. ESCOBAR, M.D.

More on Spouses

The September JOURNAL carried a letter from Gunther K. Rosinus entitled "Compensation for Spouses" about which I would like to comment.

First, I believe Mr. Rosinus dates himself with his attitude toward spouses (read: wives) and the female half of tandem couples whom he apparently believes are exactly alike. He could not be more mistaken.

A spouse who accompanies his/her Foreign Service partner does not spend a "lifetime working for the Foreign Service." Spouses who decide to invest time in volunteer activities, whether entertaining at home, helping at an orphanage, or accompanying the partner to a representational event, do so with the knowledge that this is unpaid and that they have a choice not to do it. They are under no obligation, except one imposed by their partner, to participate. The opportunity to make a decision based upon personal choice is the essence of volunteerism and cannot be equated with "working for the Foreign Service." Also, the number of hours (generally small) that spouses devote to activities outside their home is controlled by their own interests, life style, and decision.

On the other hand, working for the Foreign Service as a Foreign Service officer often includes uncompensated overtime and routinely involves 10-hour days, which each partner in a tandem couple experiences. Mr. Rosinus' claim that the current situation is "inequitable" because each employee receives a full pension, which each has earned, while his wife does not, denigrates the role of the female member of a tandem couple. Yes, she is a woman and a spouse, but she is also employed full time and not just when it is convenient for her to participate. If she decides to have children, she gets no maternity leave and if she has a child while assigned abroad, she is often expected to work until the last minute and to return to work immediately after the birth. The female employee copes with every personal or familial problem that occurs, while still spending long hours at the office and handling her job with the same dedication and expertise as her male colleagues.

Someone should tell Mr. Rosinus about the Foreign Service directive issued in the 1970s which clearly stated that spouses are not employees of the Department of State, cannot be included in the employee's efficiency rating, cannot be required to handle

representational responsibilities, and cannot be used as "two for one."

PATSY G. STEPHENS, FSO
Toronto, Canada

A Senior Time-In-Class?

In the September JOURNAL, Joseph Winder wrote about a very serious flaw in the personnel system—the five-year limit at the Minister Counselor (MC) level. This means that most of our best senior officers are retired after five years as MC because 1) there are so few positions at the minister level and 2) because the numbers of LCEs [limited career extensions] are shrinking.

Why shouldn't senior officers have a time-in-class (TIC) similar to mid-grade officers? A combined OC-MC TIC of 12-15 years would have many advantages. It would:

- Provide security to our fastest-rising officers who make OC in their late 30s or early 40s.
- Provide security for the better-than-average officer who makes it to OC in his/her mid-to-late 40s so that he/she has, if desired, a secure job at least until age 60.
- Allow the service to eliminate LCEs (which seem to be doled out in an arbitrary and capricious manner) as no longer necessary except in rare circumstances.

This proposal seemed so eminently fair and reasonable when it was first suggested in early 1987 that I could not understand why it was not immediately adopted by the department. Unfortunately, as part of a larger package submitted by a divided AFSA leadership, it was dismissed after what appeared to be cursory examination by the bureau of personnel. Perhaps a new State management team, under whichever administration, could be encouraged by AFSA to give this proposal a second look.

WARD BARMON
Economic Counselor
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

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Foreign Service Journal, December 1978: The State Department has recently announced the appointment of a career consular officer as an ambassador. The bureau of consular affairs has noted that the appointee "is the only consular officer in recent years who has been appointed as ambassador."

The natural question this raises is "why?" Are consular officers less qualified or less prepared to be ambassador than other career diplomats?

Certainly a career consular officer with 22-28 years experience in the Foreign Service is as qualified to serve as ambassador as an art dealer from California, an oil man or an insurance executive from Texas, a labor leader from Michigan, or a cement salesman from Pennsylvania.

"State and the Consular Challenge"
by John St. Denis

Foreign Service Journal, December 1963: The department's policy of recommending that FSOs visit their congressmen following a tour abroad is recognition of the great value to be gained from informal contacts between our officers and their elected representatives. Only in an atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence, an atmosphere that has been sadly lacking at times, can the department and Congress effectively work together to formulate and implement foreign policy.

We believe that informal contacts can contribute immeasurably to the further establishment of such an atmosphere. These visits should not be limited to congressmen from the officer's districts but should also include members of the legislative branch met through congressional travel abroad.

Editorial

Foreign Service Journal, December 1938: Because an American diplomat a century ago loved growing things, America today has a Christmas flower: the poinsettia.

Because Joel Roberts Poinsett, first American minister to Mexico and later secretary of war under President Van Buren, took some cuttings of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* home with him from his foreign post to Charleston, and lavished care upon them, a considerable industry has sprung up, an industry which deals in such delightful commodities as beauty and Christmas cheer.

Many a statesman and diplomat has had his name perpetuated on a marble shaft or statue.

But few indeed are the men of affairs whose memory is preserved by a living plant.

Reprint from
the Christian Science Monitor

EER Survival

David T. Jones and Teresa C. Jones

As long as there are supervisors and employees there will be efficiency reports, known by various acronyms in different agencies, but referred to here as EERs (employee evaluation reports). We all hate them. Employees would prefer that their (obvious) excellence be recognized by commendation and promotion without the grinding EER process. Supervisors lament the amount of time devoted to EER preparation and the difficulty of being candid without generating hard feelings and inflicting career damage disproportionate to any criticism.

The upshot is that both supervisors and employees tend to avoid dealing with EERs until the last minute. This is hardly the course we would recommend for a pending policy crisis, but too frequently it is the course we follow in our personal careers. The result of neglect, policy or personal, is the same—an unnecessary disaster, or, at least, a hurried mop-up of an emerging mess.

The Foreign Service is long past the "old boy" network period when reasonable performance meant an indefinitely extended career. Always competitive, the Service over the past 20 years has reshaped itself along the U.S. military "up or out" pattern with

"This officer never makes the same mistake. He appears, however, to have made them all once."

a normal career anticipation of 20-25 years. Thus for those seeking success in the Foreign Service, i.e., promotions leading to a longer career, this projection has meant renewed attention to efficiency reports.

For employees who still doubt their full acceptance in the Foreign Service (women, minority groups) the efficiency report is often viewed as a special obstacle. Likewise, untenured officers who fear the Foreign Service is becoming as selective with tenure as major universities have special concern that they not be damaged because they are ignorant of how the system really works.

Despite the recognition of the EERs' import, we usually avoid discussing our performance or our evaluation with our colleagues or even with our supervisors. With the exception of those who have served on review panels or promotion boards, many officers may never have seen EERs that they have not either written or received. This is perhaps a function of embarrassment (has the EER replaced sex as the last great taboo subject?) or a residue of an earlier age when "gentlemen do not read other gentlemen's mail" (or their EERs). Nevertheless, it leads to circumstances in which what you do not know can hurt you. It would be nice if we could afford to let "the system" take care of us. But if there is concern that benign neglect might not be the best career approach, the following are some calculations to take into account.

Judge yourself. We all know we can walk

on water, but some of us should begin at the shallow end. Take a clear-eyed view of your strengths and weaknesses. Then look at what is needed to do the job. The first month on the job is the time to negotiate new responsibilities or revise old ones.

Ignorance is no excuse. Know the performance requirements for the assignment. Know the precepts for promotion. Know the ground rules for grievance and EEO action. This is not a recommendation for a chip-on-the-shoulder approach, but a suggestion to give the procedural parameters of each assignment at least the attention you would give an auto-financing contract.

Expectations. Official job requirements are usually based on a "canned" statement that has served generations of predecessors, but it may not serve you. Remember, it's the first part of your contract and the opening element of your EER. It pays to read it carefully and negotiate changes at the beginning. Make sure it reflects the level of independent responsibility you will have. If you are still in the same position a second or third year, give the contract a hard-eyed review. If you are opening a new position, give the writing of the contract the attention you would give to a career resume. Then do the unthinkable: ask someone outside the system to read it and to tell you what they think you do for a living. If they can't figure it out, you're in trouble. Also ask someone in the system, preferably in the same bureau/embassy to read it to see how it stacks up against other job statements. Also be aware that in most jobs, if you want training, you will have to get it yourself. The Foreign Service emphasizes on-the-job training, in fact if not in name.

"This officer turns water into wine by walking on it."

Special Circumstances. Do you have babysitting, scheduling, timing problems? Do you want flex time to work a late shift or an early shift? Is the job you are headed into so demanding that leaving at 6 p.m. is the equivalent of desertion? You are far better off if you get these points on the record—at least orally—as early as possible, at best during the job interview process. Supervisors are more tolerant if they know what to expect and why. If the supervisor can't deal with personal limitations, you need to know immediately even if you may have to break an assignment.

Don't expect telepathy to work. You can't read minds, neither can your supervisor. In such circumstances the Kissingerian maxim that "the absence of criticism is high praise" does not always work. Obviously you don't want to find out your supervisor hates your writing style by reading it on the EER. ("Can express a sentence in two paragraphs at any time.") You need to find out what your supervisor likes or dislikes. If your memos and cables are rewritten beyond the Foreign Service norm (or beyond your previous experience), find out why.

Remember that you and your supervisor are required to discuss your performance at regular intervals. It can be dangerous to ignore this item (it is for your protection) and accept a backdated listing when EER time comes. Even if you have been getting regular positive commentary informally from your supervisor, a sit-down discussion can be useful. Write up what was said each time, noting particularly whether your supervisor thinks you've improved if shortcomings were mentioned. If you believe the supervisor may prove particularly difficult, draft a memo for the record with his/her signature. It may be your only defense when EER time comes.

A biased boss. If you have the bad luck to have a supervisor who you believe is biased against you, meet with your bureau EEO representative and your career development officer immediately. Go on record. Look for a recourse. Document any illustration of bias; get witnesses. It is far easier to deal with the problem immediately than through ex post facto grievance filing. There remains the rumor that minority employees who "make waves" are consigned to a sort of "EEO purgatory" and not chosen for assignment. Each employee has to decide whether to buck the system on a given point, but remember it does no good to suffer in silence; you only suffer.

"If she is not continually given work, she will lapse into the study of German."

The ethnic/sexist twist. If the world were ideal and the system perfectly impartial, Foreign Service personnel would not have to consider their ethnic or sexual background. But so long as you are immediately identifiable as a member of a minority group and so long as supervisors may be burdened by stereotypes that "filter" their perception of your capabilities, you cannot afford to ignore this area. We assume at this point that no one is looking for "slights" but everyone needs to determine if performance is judged differently because of background. And, of course, one must remember that "even paranoids have real enemies." Some quick tests include:

- Do they expect less from you? Are you getting a fair share of challenging tasks?
- Have they unconsciously assigned you to a lower level of responsibility?
- Do you constantly have to prove yourself?
- To err is normal but how are your mistakes judged? Is a flash of temper considered a sign of strength for some and loss of control for you?

Writing the EER. Over the years, there have been regular laments from performance evaluation boards that efficiency reports are inflated. Doubtlessly, the judgment is correct and the Foreign Service sounds like Garrison Keillor's mythical town "where all the children are above average." But this has been true for at least 20 years and is not going to change in the next rating cycle. Don't let yourself be the test case

for your supervisor's efforts to return to "honesty." Honesty may be the best policy, but in EER terms "warts and all" honesty is a one-way ticket to oblivion.

"Open to suggestions but never follows them."

The EER is not a one-way street. The individual who simply waits for the supervisor to deliver an EER is missing a vital opportunity to influence its outcome. Most supervisors will invite suggestions on material to be included and revisions to be made. Take full advantage of this opportunity. You may wish to propose detailed, specific material. You need not be unduly modest; the supervisor may think even more highly of you than you think of yourself.

In any event, in the preparation of any efficiency report the rated employee should be aware of the following:

Keep an action log. It is easy to forget the compelling project of nine months ago. We all know that it is quite possible to spend weeks completing a one-page memo. Were there special problems during the rating period? Did you do someone else's job as well as your own? Mark it on your calendar—so you have a record of the six weeks you were acting chief. Attach copies of your major pieces to any material provided to your supervisor. What did you actually produce? Which were the best items?

Evaluate your accomplishments. Rate yourself. Review your accomplishments and note how they show your "substantive knowledge" and "leadership," as indicated in the promotion precepts. If you organize your list of accomplishments, perhaps suggesting specific language, your supervisor will find it easier to write the report. Don't be bashful, you are not telling your supervisor what to write, you're only offering your views.

Act on awards and kudos. None of us likes the idea of soliciting letters of appreciation. It may seem unduly self-serving, but if they are offered, follow-up. Bring those kudo letters to your supervisor's attention. Although such letters cannot be incorporated directly into your personnel file, they can be cited/quoted in the EER. If your supervisor tells you that you deserve an award, act on it. You can make life easier for both of you by getting a copy of the award precepts and, if not providing your supervisor a draft, at least write clearly how your accomplishments fit the precepts.

If your supervisor intends to propose you for an award, insure that this point is mentioned in your EER. Don't assume that you will get it before the evaluation cycle, as the awards often come after the review boards have met.

In the past there were relatively few awards. During the past decade, however, there has been greater emphasis on non-material incentives and thus more official awards. Your supervisor is probably well aware of revised award policy but may be part of the old school and believe that awards should be reserved for "once in a career" accomplishments. You may have to bring accomplishments and award precepts to his attention.

Don't just focus on the box score. The text is supposed to justify the specific rating and a report looks particularly bad when there is a noticeable discrepancy between the two. If your report is replete with stellar adjectives, that is only the first step. Don't stop and relax. Does the report also tell why you're so great? You may need a trusted friend or relative to provide an outside opinion.

Watch out for code words. There are words that imply more serious difficulties. Your supervisor may not mean to say that you are impossible to get along with, but the report will imply that when, for example, it says "has difficulty dealing with his peers." He may not want to label you as uptight and nervous by speaking of "intense" devotion to your job. Unfortunately, the code words change all the time so if you are not totally confident what is meant, check with your supervisor. Likewise, it could be useful to let a friend or adviser review your report for questionable points.

Criticism. The EER requires the supervisor to identify areas for improvement. Some supervisors will ask for suggestions. You

need to evaluate the criticism. Is it justified? Is the criticism tempered by a positive statement? In other words, how serious is your wound? Are you criticized for a minor failing, i.e., poor proofreading, spelling errors, lack of word processing skills? Or is the criticism for inability to write, inability to get along with others, failing in your responsibilities. ("His leadership is outstanding except for his lack of ability to get along with his subordinates.") In any event, criticism should never come as a surprise. A specific criticism should have been discussed several times before the EER is written. If the same person writes a series of reports on you, it is important that you show improvement (if this is the case) or you may be regarded as hopeless in an area because of repeated reports that criticize you for the same fault.

Clearly, the "area for improvement" is the most difficult part of the EER. If you don't agree with the criticism or the way the criticism is phrased, first discuss it with your supervisor as he or she may be open to negotiation. Consider letting a trusted and more experienced Foreign Service friend review the point. There may be room for artful drafting. Remember you're not the only one who's had problems.

Wonderful report, lousy writing. Your supervisor loved your work but lacks the drafting talent to say so. It can happen to all of us. Suggest what you can to improve the EER; provide alternative language if you desire. At the least, assure that the EER is sufficiently specific so that a panel can understand what you did, why it was important for the government or the Foreign Service, and what doing well showed about you.

Don't forget the reviewing officer. Many think that the reviewing officer will be a straight line endorsement of the supervisor's report. The reviewing officer can pick up points that the supervisor did not have space to include (you might save him good examples of commendable work if you are not dealing closely with him). Obviously, if you have clashed with your supervisor but gotten along well with your reviewer, you have an opportunity to reverse the impression that the supervisor has conveyed.

Kamikazi box. Your own statement really does count. Some officers believe that a good EER speaks for itself and that the lily need not be gilded, but if you choose to write a personal statement, you should give it the time and effort you would give an important substantive paper. How do you want to come across? Were you happy with the work? Were there special circumstances or difficulties? What were you particularly proud of in your performance? This is *you* and the only time you can speak directly to the promotion panel. Give some thought to consistency from one year to the next. You may be writing them years apart, but the panel is reading them minutes apart. Remember, if you have not brought up any objection to the contents of the EER in your own statement, your signature at the end attests to your concurrence in the report. If you must subsequently file a grievance, you are in a much

"I find it hard to distinguish his easy-going manner from lethargy."

stronger position if there is not a string of reports accepting the judgments you now contest. You can, of course, be your own worst enemy. We recall the instance of an officer who wrote a three-page defense against the charge that he was verbose.

There are many useful things that can be done, such as more careful attention to the annual precepts for promotion. Find out where you stand in the review for promotion and what this means in realistic terms. Review your personnel file. The horror stories of what is incorrectly included or excluded are sufficiently true to require you to give your files personal attention. Regular discussion with career development officers ensures professional insights and information that you need. Briefings or reports from the promotion panels would give insights on how the EERs are written and viewed by those who have just gone through the process. Similar briefings from a selection of individuals who have filed grievances would also be instructive.

Ed. Note: A report on an AFSA-sponsored discussion on performance evaluation boards is given in AFSA News.

David Jones is currently a Cox Fellow. He joined the Foreign Service in 1968. Teresa Jones, a Foreign Service officer since 1974, is a science officer asigned to OES.

Strengthening Diplomatic Representation

The American political process needs to confront the resource squeeze and weigh priorities rationally

RONALD I. SPIERS

WHEN MOST Americans think of national security, they think of the military and intelligence services as the institutions which are its paramount safeguards.

Nevertheless, as power has become more diffused and the great post World War monopolies have dissolved, resort to force as a solution to international disagreements has become a less realistic or effective option. Reliance on means other than force has become relatively more important. One observer has suggested that brains, not brawn, is now the more important factor in international relations. Indeed, the principal function of diplomacy is the resolution of political differences that fuel conflict—and where resolution is impossible, diplomacy's function is to contain conflict and violence. Diplomacy is politics on a global scale. We call on the military only when diplomacy fails.

But compare the relative resources the United States devotes to what I see as the triad of national security. The defense budget of the United States is just under the $300 billion mark. The intelligence budget is not publicly identified, but an educated guess would put it in the $15-$20 billion range.

In the fiscal year which began in October 1988, a budget of slightly more than $2 billion will go to operate the diplomatic arm. What this $2 billion covers is paying, transporting, training, and equipping the Foreign Service, building and leasing the buildings that house its members and the communications that connect them, security for its personnel and missions abroad and official visitors at home, and other miscellaneous activities. It does not include related items such as payments to international organizations, refugee

Ronald I. Spiers is under secretary for management in the Department of State. *An earlier version of this essay was delivered at a meeting of the American Academy of Diplomacy on September 28.*

and narcotics programs, military and economic assistance, and information activities, which, when added together, provide a total spending level in the entire international affairs budget, the so-called "Function 150" account, of approximately $18 billion.

The bottom line is that our country devotes to the effort of diplomacy substantially less than one percent of what is budgeted to our military and intelligence programs.

Consider the current data on the diplomatic arm. The Department of State employs a force of about 13,000 Americans worldwide, as well as 9,000 foreign nationals who perform important support. A mid-sized American corporation with overseas operations will have a work force many times this number. The core of the U.S. diplomacy work force—our diplomatic officer, or "generalist"—numbers about 4,200, not an outlandish figure for a nation with our far-flung interests, staffing 258 diplomatic, consular, and special missions worldwide.

The purpose in presenting these facts and figures is not to deny the importance of military readiness or of intelligence to national security—no professional diplomat would ever doubt this—but to illuminate the relative priority that the political process attaches to diplomacy. As a result, in recent years Department of State resources have been vigorously squeezed. At the same time, reliance on diplomacy has increased. Currently, the department's needs are great in a number of areas:

- Communications systems on which the United States depends for the rapid transmission of information and analysis are in drastic need of modernization. Our information handling systems are grossly inferior to those of our fellow agencies, yet the rapid and accurate communication of information is the lifeblood of diplomacy and national security.
- Security has become a major—and very expensive—preoccupation.
- Many of the more than 2,000 buildings the United States owns abroad are seriously inadequate to current needs. For long-term savings, we should be buying rather than leasing many of the facilities we occupy, while properly maintaining those we do own. Consideration of a capital budgeting system is overdue.
- Professional development and training programs have been badly short-changed, particularly those to develop Foreign Service language capabilities. No self-respecting branch of the military service would put up with the training situation which prevails in the Department of State.

One particularly unhappy consequence of the resource squeeze has been the need to accept "gaps" in our assignment process. Sometimes we have vacancies of months between an outgoing officer and his or her replacement. The loss of opportunity for contact replacement and the consequent inability to transfer experience and personal networks to a successor are costly. To keep this loss to a minimum we often are forced to sacrifice needed area and language training.

What, then, will strengthen U.S. diplomatic representation? Above all, a more hospitable public outlook towards diplomatic resource needs, which, in the larger scale of government operations, are modest.

In September, my colleagues and I put together the State Department's 1990 budget request—a request that will certainly have to be reviewed by whoever has won the election. To meet the high priority program needs, we would have to have about $1 billion more than the "mark" the OMB designated for 1990. This level of funding would permit the United States to pay all of its international organization dues, provide for all of the most pressing security requirements, modernize communications and automated data-processing systems, reinstitute or initiate needed training programs, keep open the foreign posts we would otherwise be pressed to shut down and open a few more in areas of increasing importance, fund healthy refugee and narcotics programs, and improve weak areas in diplomatic reporting and representation.

One billion dollars is less than the cost of five B-1 bombers. It is about six times what is spent on military bands. It compares to a fraction of the cost of agriculture subsidy programs.

THE PRINCIPAL NEED in the quest to strengthen American diplomacy is to confront the resource squeeze rationally. For example, I have told Secretary Shultz many times that we can run some kind of a diplomatic establishment on any level of resources if we are permitted to prioritize coherently. We need a national decision-making structure that can weigh priorities more rationally across the board. We do not have it. Instead, we have a pattern of congressional activity that increasingly does not make rational resource trade-offs, a result of micromanagement and earmarking.

The following are the reforms that I would urge on the next secretary of state:

Of first importance, ensure that the State

What, then, will strengthen U.S. diplomatic representation? Above all, a more hospitable public outlook towards diplomatic resource needs

The budget should be carefully designed to serve overarching foreign policy objectives as defined by the secretary

Department is considered—at least in the executive branch, if not in the Congress—as a national security function and that resource trade-offs are determined in a larger context that encompasses defense and intelligence. A new secretary of state's first priority with the new President should be to arrive at an understanding that this will be done.

Ideally, this would be reflected in a revised congressional structure with the same objective. Practically, this is probably quixotic. The State Department budget competes with Commerce, Justice and the judiciary, and it has much less constituent support than its competitors. Jurisdictional jealousies on the Hill may prevent reform, but it is worth a try.

SECOND, the secretary of state should assume direct supervision of the preparation of the entire "150 Function" budget. Under current circumstances the secretary of state—who is, after all, the principal adviser to the President on foreign affairs—has an authority limited to a relatively small fraction of this budget.

The budget should be carefully designed to serve overarching foreign policy objectives as defined by the secretary, and not be just a composite of what various independent centers manage to achieve in protecting their turfs. The secretary would need a small analytical staff comparable to that of the intelligence community, probably including personnel seconded from the other agencies, such as USIA, AID, and ACDA, whose budgets are involved and who report directly to him. He will then be able to determine whether a new VOA transmitter or an increase in a development assistance program is more or less important than language training, or more armored cars, or keeping open or closing a specific post, and reflect these priorities in a coherent spending proposal.

A third recommendation for a new secretary of state is to take personal command of the presidential appointments process in his department at the outset. The secretary should take recommendations to the President directly and personally and not delegate this function to a White House staff committee or to his own assistants. He is ultimately responsible for the quality of U.S. leadership in the foreign affairs field and the caliber of the people under his command is crucial. The current situation, in which it too often takes upwards of a year to settle on and process an ambassadorial appointment and where patronage often is more important than ability, needs reform. A laborious confirmation process, often hostage to unrelevant political considerations, has led to real problems in staffing embassies and is detrimental to U.S. foreign policy interests.

A new secretary of state needs from the very beginning of his tenure to pay close and careful attention to the quality of key personnel. We think deeply about our comparative position in the military realm vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. We do not yet think this way about our diplomatic capabilities. I recently read a study of the dramatically improving quality of Soviet representation overseas, particularly in Western Europe. I can testify at first-hand to the ability of the new generation of Soviet diplomats. They have knowledge, experience, languages, and perspective that distinguish them markedly from yesteryear's Soviet diplomat with his saturnine visage and ill-fitting clothes. We are in a new era and we cannot afford to rely on less than the best our country can produce, selecting both from the career and non-career sectors. Diplomacy, however, is a profession, not a playing field for amateurs. Years ago we appointed higher ranking military officers on political grounds or accorded commissions to those who could "buy" them; no one thinks of doing that today.

FOURTH, the next secretary of state must think in institutional terms and recognize that the institution he leads will outlast him. He needs to give appropriate stress to the training function. I hope that he will give the same vigorous support to the concept of a new foreign affairs training institute that Secretary Shultz has done. We have let our capabilities, particularly in the "hard" world languages—Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic—lapse, largely because of resource constraints. We need to set aside at the very beginning the resources that are necessary to provide an adequate pattern of career training; we cannot continue to treat training as an afterthought that we will get to when everything else is taken care of. I would prefer to have our embassies reduced in size and many of our posts closed than to keep them open at the expense of training, as we have been doing.

The next secretary should continue the effort made by Secretary Shultz to change the Foreign Service culture and to develop understanding and appreciation for the importance of leadership and management. Since State provides only 28 percent of the personnel who staff our missions abroad (the Defense De-

partment provides 30 percent), it is clear that it is not enough for an ambassador to be just a reporter—he or she must "manage" what is often a complex and diverse institution.

The next secretary of state should take a judicious approach to the filling of vacancies in his staff. Both the department and our missions overseas are in need of streamlining. We have too many under secretaries, assistant secretaries, and ambassadors-at-large. We have too many "seventh floor" staffs. A number of our bureaus can be consolidated. Authority and responsibility have been driven steadily upwards and initiative and innovation at the working level have been weakened. Unfortunately, once an unneeded position has been filled by a new administration, it becomes politically impossible to abolish. Vested interests are created that are turbulent to deal with.

Also, I would urge the reintegration of USIA (perhaps minus the VOA) and ACDA into the State Department; among other things we would save the overhead entailed in maintaining separate institutions.

A LAST bit of advice that I would give relates to public affairs and to congressional relations. I believe that two positions, the assistant secretary for public affairs and the assistant secretary for legislative affairs, should be filled with the greatest care and attention. Perhaps neither job should be held by a career diplomat.

The assistant secretary for public affairs should be someone skilled and experienced in the area of creative public relations. It may not be possible to develop an expanded public constituency for the foreign affairs function, but we have never tried hard enough. The "spokesman" and public affairs functions should not be performed by a single individual. The former always overwhelms the latter.

The assistant secretary for legislative affairs should be someone of political heft and, a number of members of Congress have told me, should not be a former congressional staffer. The secretary and his principal deputies should meet at least monthly in informal settings, in which candid exchanges can be held off the record and as policies are being formulated, with key members of Congress responsible in the foreign affairs, intelligence, and appropriations areas. This is not a function which can be delegated. Public affairs and congressional relations, given the fact that public and congressional consent is the oxygen of our foreign policy, should be as normal a component of a diplomat's work as representation and reporting. I have long advocated that the Department of State should follow the practice of the military and open a small office on Capitol Hill. That would improve our dialogue with and services to individual congressmen. We need to stress congressional relations for many reasons, but principal among them is to help compensate for the lack of a natural constituency in the American public. It should also help to preempt the kind of micro-management that has been a besetting problem for the department for so many years.

THERE ARE MANY other suggestions which could and will be made in the name of "strengthening U.S. diplomatic representation." Nevertheless, adoption of the points I have mentioned would appear to me, on the basis of 34 years experience in the Foreign Service of the United States and almost five years in the position of under secretary for management, to add up to significant contributions to this objective.

If the next administation, after study, concludes that the level of resources we devote to the Department of State is right or all we can afford, American citizens must be ready to accept the consequences. I believe we will then have to close a number of our posts overseas, perhaps move towards multiple accreditation of embassies, reduce the size of our workforce, slash the number of bureaus and high-level positions we maintain in Washington, and look for new ways to finance our building programs. We cannot and should not continue to muddle through, putting off equipment purchases, cutting training, constraining representation and travel, understaffing our posts, and the like.

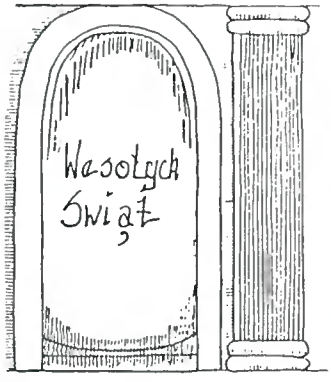
For many years an argument raged in strategic circles about whether we should maintain our force structure at the expense of the training, mobility, and ammunition necessary to meet its responsibilities. I always considered that it was illusory to maintain a large force structure and sacrifice its fighting ability. I believe the Department of State faces the same kind of strategic choice. Dealing with it cannot be put off indefinitely if we wish to preserve a strong diplomatic arm. □

I would prefer to have our embassies reduced in size and many of our posts closed than to keep them open at the expense of training, as we have been doing

The Tongue-Tied

Witnesses at the Simon Hearings on "Foreign Language Competence in the Foreign Service" were (below left, left to right) Foreign Service officer Ross Quan; Perry Shankle, president of AFSA; and Ambassador Lannon Walker, diplomat in residence at the Carnegie Endowment; (below center) Professor Eleanor Harz Jorden, of Johns Hopkins' National Foreign Language Center; (below opposite, left to rignt) Raymond Ewing, director, Office of Foreign Service Career Development and Assignments; Brandon Grove, Jr., director of the Foreign Service Institute; Under Secretary for Management Ronald I. Spiers; and George Vest, director general of the Foreign Service.

Diplomat?



The Foreign Service's ability to comprehend and speak foreign languages should be nurtured and expanded

By Paul Simon

THE SUBJECT OF FOREIGN language competence at the Department of State is of critical importance to the conduct of our foreign policy. It is of such importance that I asked my distinguished colleague and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Claiborne Pell, to arrange for hearings on "Foreign Language Competence in the Foreign Service." These hearings were held on September 21, 1988. I found our witnesses to be forthright, informative, and creative in their suggestions for improvement. All agreed that we still had some way to go in making our Foreign Service officers better linguists.

There is unfortunately a host of examples of foreign policy failures because of language deficiencies.

Eight years ago I published a book called *The Tongue-Tied American*. I was concerned with our dangerous lack of foreign language skills, and the implications this held for an America increasingly global in its day-to-day affairs. I hope we don't ever get to the point where the majority of our diplomats are tongue-tied as well. But the reality is that too many Foreign Service officers are either barely proficient in or unable to speak the language of their host country.

The Foreign Service's principal task is the representation of American interests and values to the community of nations. No other executive branch agency has such a mandate, although many agencies now play a role in formulating and implementing U.S. foreign policy. The State Department sells American foreign policy. In order to sell you must speak the language of the customer. It's as true in diplomacy as it is in business.

A number of my colleagues in Congress

Paul Simon is the senior Senator from Illinois.

Photos by Patty J. Meier

In order to sell you must speak the language of the customer

have been concerned over the state of foreign language training in the United States generally and in the diplomatic corps in particular. We have the only Foreign Service in the world where you can enter without knowledge of a foreign language. The emphasis given to foreign language skills in promotion to the Senior Foreign Service has not been satisfactory. And despite high marks for the Foreign Service Institute and its language programs, we are not moving quickly enough to demonstrate management's commitment to foreign language excellence.

This situation did not always prevail. Up until 1955, the State Department required a foreign language test as part of the entrance requirements. In that year, the department made its language test optional upon entry, and in 1963, deleted the test altogether. While small salary bonuses were offered instead, a signal was sent to those interested in the Foreign Service: foreign language skills are not an essential component of what makes a good diplomat. The predictable consequence of this policy is reflected in the recent entry-level officers accepted into the Service, less than half of whom were rated as having "acceptable" proficiency in at least one foreign language.

TWO THINGS HAPPENED in the 1980s that encourage me. At my instigation, Section 2207 was added to the Foreign Service Act of 1980. This section of the bill established a program of "Model Foreign Language Competence Posts" on a pilot basis. In Montevideo, Uruguay, and in Dakar, Senegal, the State Department conducted a unique experiment: every member of the embassy staff, from clerks and secretaries to Marine Guards and the ambassador, had to speak the language of the country. In March 1986, the department reported to Congress that in the words of the report, the posts were "much happier, more cohesive and more effective."

The second event was the so-called Stearns Report, issued a few months after the model embassy survey results. In November 1985, the State Department asked Ambassador Monteagle Stearns to assess the status of hard language proficiency in the Foreign Service. The report, issued in May 1986, offered a sober assessment of our hard language skills and a number of solid recommendations.

Ambassador Stearns began his report: "If there is one skill that epitomizes the Foreign Service as a profession, it is the ability to understand and negotiate in a foreign culture. Fundamentally this means the ability to comprehend and speak foreign languages. It is this skill that not only distinguishes the Foreign Service from other professions, but without which there would be no need for a Foreign Service at all."

Ambassador Stearns made 20 suggestions for correcting our deficiencies in the hard languages. While some steps have been taken, many others have yet to be implemented. Money is part of the problem, especially for such items as incentive pay and new facilities for the Foreign Service Institute, but the bulk of the recommendations (particularly in the area of language testing and promotions) can be achieved through administrative fiat. We need to move quickly on these problems.

WE NEED TO BEGIN with the premise that foreign language ability is a necessary, but by no means sole, condition in the making of a good diplomat. *Other skills are important, but the ability to master at least one foreign language should be a prerequisite for membership in the Foreign Service.*

I advocate the following steps to make this essential requirement a reality:

Require a foreign language competence examination as part of the entrance requirement. We ought to require candidates to demonstrate competence in at least one foreign language for acceptance into the Foreign Service. If that requirement results in numbers of minorities or of women that are too small, then special tuition for promising applicants should be provided so that they can pass the tests prior to entrance into the Foreign Service. After acceptance, a language aptitude test ought to be administered to see which officers should concentrate on the hard languages.

Implement the Stearns Report recommendations. In particular, language incentive pay should be increased, not cut, especially for those learning or maintaining a hard language; in-country language training must be expanded; and above all, promotions into the Senior Foreign Service ought not to go forward if the diplomat in question has no foreign language capability.

One of Ambassador Stearns's more innovative suggestions that we ought to consider is a

"Diplomatic ROTC Program." The idea would be to recruit those college and graduate students who have concentrated in a special program of foreign languages and area studies. Entry into the Foreign Service would not be automatic—each candidate would still be required to pass the requisite tests—but we would create a much larger pool of students in a focused, organized program of study. It is something for the 101st Congress and the next administration to think about.

Raise the proficiency standards One of our witnesses, Professor Eleanor Harz Jorden, suggested that the rating and testing system is not adequate. A 3/3 score does not always translate into working proficiency. The standard ought to be raised, making a 3/3 tougher or requiring either a 3+/3+ or a 4/4 in a world language. All students undergoing training in a hard language should routinely be brought to the 4/4 level. The extra time and money spent would be well worth the premium if a sound foundation is laid for language competence over the course of a 20- to 30-year career. Another problem is that all too often the same person who taught you at FSI also gives you the competence test; an outside examiner will give a better picture of a given student's language skills.

Fully fund the Foreign Service Institute. FSI needs new facilities, and ought to get the funds it needs from Congress. In exchange, FSI must make it clear how it will use these new facilities to turn out a much better corps of diplomat-linguists.

Expand language exchanges for all officers. We now have some cooperative exchanges with other countries' universities, and this ought to be expanded. We have a program with the People's Republic of China, for example. In addition to China, we should have these kinds of exchanges with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Japan, Egypt, Korea, and perhaps the ASEAN group. And we ought to place some emphasis on training Soviet specialists in some of the non-Russian languages, an area of increasingly important concern.

Expand the model foreign language competence post program. All agree the program was a huge success. Why not expand the program to two new embassies per geographic bureau, for a total of ten embassies around the world? As more resources become available, we should encourage more and more embassies to move in this direction.

Change the "culture" of the management. This is perhaps the most difficult recommendation. We have a very capable leadership on the seventh floor at State, and some good people sitting on the Foreign Service Promotion Board. But foreign language abilities and area specialization all too often hinder a Foreign Service officer's promotion if the officer lacks management experience. To borrow a phrase Perry Shankle, President of the American Foreign Service Association, used in our hearing on Foreign Language Competence, we need a change in "the culture of management." A two-track promotion system (one for area specialists, one for management specialists) has recently been accepted. It remains to be seen how this will work out in practice, but it is a move long overdue.

We should encourage more career specialization. Part of this is making every effort to get that diplomat back to the region or country in question for a second or a third tour of duty, and prolonging his or her time in country.

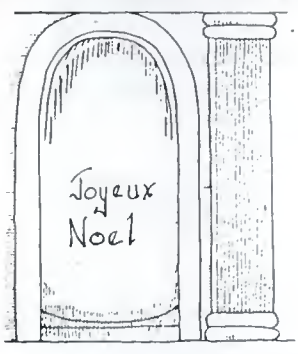
We should offer more incentives, including financial, for reaching a 4/4 proficiency level. To show our seriousness, at least one person on the Foreign Service Promotion Board—by statute—ought to be at least at the 3/3 level, and probably the 4/4, to ensure that proper attention and sensitivity is given to foreign language competence.

ABOVE ALL, the State Department ought to place less emphasis on MBA-like management skills, and more on those qualities that have always made an excellent diplomat: foreign languages, area expertise, sensitivity to other cultures, and a firm grounding in our own traditions, history, and values. Too often substance and diplomatic skill are sacrificed on the altar of managerial acumen.

Foreign language competence is crucial to the performance of a diplomat's overseas task. We can do much better. That is essential in bolstering an already strong Foreign Service. By doing better on foreign language competence, the Department of State will be more effective, more productive, and more professional. □

The State Department ought to place less emphasis on MBA-like management skills, and more on those qualities that have always made an excellent diplomat

Language Expertise: Personnel Implications



Language and other Foreign Service expertise can be improved through the judicious use of incentives

LANNON WALKER

BECAUSE I RECENTLY SERVED as ambassador to Senegal while the U.S. diplomatic mission there was a model language post, I was asked to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the subject of language competence in the Foreign Service.

My testimony concluded that the model language program in Dakar had been a resounding success, contributing to significantly higher levels of mission-wide productivity and morale. Imagine a situation where each Marine Guard could handle, in French, emergencies and important calls, where staff members in the budget and fiscal office, the warehouse, not to speak of AID or FAA—everyone—could get by in French and many could communicate at a professional level. This ability to get one's job done without an interpreter, to know firsthand what was going on and to be able to participate in social and cultural events, was the key to a happy as well as to a productive tour of duty.

The pride of accomplishment was shared by the family members, who participated in record numbers in the post language program. Thus the base for the high morale in the official community was both broad and deep. Inspectors were unanimous in their conclusions that the model language program had been a major factor in making Dakar a model post in every sense of the word. The department's management evaluation agreed completely. Yet the program has been discontinued because the department judged that the costs of extending it worldwide would have been prohibitive. Of course, Dakar went from riches to rags when our regular language program was also cut, along with everyone else's, because of the budget crunch.

At this point in the story, I can imagine my colleagues' commenting that we in Dakar had briefly profited from a windfall program that had no chance of surviving. Welcome back to the real world. On the contrary, I do not believe that the game is over, and neither does Senator Paul Simon, who clearly intends to pursue the resources and the policies that will give language competence a higher priority in the Foreign Service. This goal is, of course, a good deal broader and more complicated than simply reinstituting the model language program.

In effect, we are talking about three different concepts. First, there is the language designated position (LDP) program, where only key positions in an overseas mission are designated to be filled at a given level of language competence. Secondly, there is the notion embodied in Senator Simon's model language post, where everyone in every agency has to speak the foreign language at a given level. And, not least, there is the question of language training at the advanced level. These

Lannon Walker is currently diplomat-in-residence at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C..

distinctions are important because each program requires different levels of commitment by the various foreign affairs agencies and by individuals, different resource requirements, and different incentives within the personnel system to make them work.

TO DISCUSS THE LDP program, I must go back to my first working experience in the Foreign Service. Twenty-seven years ago, I was assigned the task of writing a report to Congress on the department's progress in implementing a program which required that certain positions in each mission abroad be designated at a given level of language competence. Congress had instituted this program following criticism aimed at the department because of the tongue-tied image of the Foreign Service presented in the book, *The Ugly American*. The department had not done well in implementing the program and had not kept Congress informed of the problems it had encountered.

My study concluded that given the relative shortness of our tours of duty, plus the reality that a percentage of staff members would be in training or in motion at any one time, it was literally impossible to keep the positions involved continuously, or even consistently, staffed at the designated language level. Even to come close would require significantly larger sums of money than were then allocated, and language competence would have to take on a much higher priority. The department agreed with my recommendations and so did Congress. As a result, more money was allocated, and for a time language learning took on more importance, with significant improvement in the Foreign Service's ability to get its job done.

So these same hurdles—staffing gaps caused by the need for language training and inadequate training budgets—existed 27 years ago and almost prevented us from undertaking the LDP program. Congress acted then to find the additional resources and provide the mandate for change in the department's language program. FSI and the personnel system made a major effort at improving language competence, and the results have been significant and positive. For example, 75 percent of State's language designated positions are filled on a regular basis at the required level of competence. In spite of this progress, the challenge today is to do even better. We need to expand the language requirement to include all agencies and ultimately, as the model language program suggests, everyone.

While we wait for Senator Simon and his colleagues on the appropriations committees to find additional resources to improve language competence in the Foreign Service, we should use the resources we have to do better under the LDP program, and we should reinstitute the model language program in as many posts as possible, beginning with selected world languages. A few posts where we do it right are better than none at all.

SUCH ISSUES concerning the need and resource requirements to expand foreign language competence throughout all the foreign affairs agencies raise a more basic question: How should the personnel system build in incentives, rather than disincentives, for language training or, for that matter, any longer-term investment in professional development? The question of incentives is particularly crucial for those officers who may wish to develop intensive language/area or other expertise, but who feel that such an investment will take them out of the perceived mainstream to the detriment of their promotion prospects.

State has set up certain incentives to encourage language study, such as the bonus for hard languages, the language requirement for tenuring, and stopping the clock on time-in-class during language training. But the perceptions remain that there is little room at the top for real experts, because managers and generalists seem to get the promotions into the Senior Foreign Service and the plums thereafter. In fact, the personnel system tends to discriminate against experts of all stripes, and as a result, language learning and therefore language competence suffers too. In the process, the Foreign Service is not performing its primary function—to produce the very best language, area, functional, and interfunctional experts to assure that the essential foreign affairs jobs are performed and performed well.

As in every other organization, the Foreign Service needs to hire and develop staff that can produce in its basic fields of expertise—consular, administrative, political, and economic (including language/area, financial, political-military), etc. Given the fact that U.S. foreign affairs programs play out in the main through overseas posts, program coordination in an interagency context is also a form of expertise, which needs to be developed through training, assignments to other agencies, and possibly service in several cones. From the pool of both functional and interfunctional experts, senior leaders will be chosen. True, these experts will require broadening, and in some

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We have perpetuated a personnel system where the signal from the top is that there is little incentive to engage in serious professional development

cases deepening, at several points throughout their mid-careers. But if the Foreign Service fails to maintain its expert cadre throughout the ranks in the race to become managers, it will have failed in its basic mission. In this connection, foreign language competence is at the heart of its basic mission, as well as of the claim to foreign affairs expertise.

HOW SHOULD the personnel system use the proper incentives to improve not only foreign language competence but the quality of Foreign Service expertise in general?

First, start at the beginning. Require at least one world language at the S-3, R-3 level for entry into the Foreign Service and give bonus points on the exam for needed hard languages. If imposing this requirement immediately would cut out too many otherwise highly qualified candidates, then phase it in over a period of time and use a bonus point system in the meantime. If the language requirement is found to be unfair to minorities and other disadvantaged candidates, make exceptions on affirmative action grounds, but set the basic standards high. In a word, shift some of the burden of language training onto the private sector; send a strong signal to the universities and the candidates that the Foreign Service takes language competence very seriously. Surely contemporary Foreign Service entrants, who are joining at an older age than did my generation, can learn a foreign language along with or instead of work experience and higher academic degrees.

Then, reform the system at the top of the Service. The department and AFSA in 1985 negotiated a change in the precepts at the senior threshold, which would have required officers to choose, as of 1988, whether they would compete for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service either as a language/area or functional expert or as an interfunctional expert (service in more than one cone, agency, set of experiences). The purpose of the choice at the threshold was to encourage deeper professionalism by giving an incentive to officers to concentrate early on in their careers in one of the tracks available at the senior threshold. Interfunctional experts would seek out-of-agency tours, today certain death. They would look for different experiences such as program direction and multilateral affairs. Functional and language/area experts would deepen their expertise through training, longer tours, and assignments in their field to other agencies.

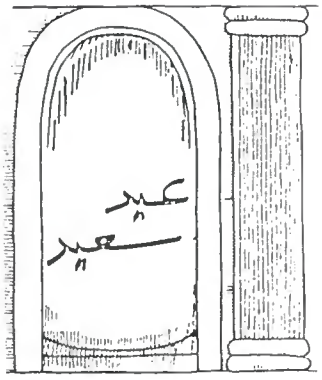
Both categories of experts would need executive training and experience along the way to prepare for the top positions. But in such a system, it would be clear that the Senior Foreign Service is made up of functional and interfunctional experts, and that we need more and better of both. For the purposes of the question before us, language competence in the Foreign Service, it is clear that the choice at the senior threshold would be a powerful inducement. To reinforce that incentive, we should also make clear in the senior threshold precepts that an S-3, R-3 in at least one language is a major factor to be considered, and at some point, a requirement, for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service.

Unfortunately, management and AFSA both lost their nerve as the time to institute the choice approached, and they agreed to return to the old system whereby each officer competes twice at the senior threshold, once in his primary cone and once classwide. In so doing, we have perpetuated a personnel system where the signal from the top is that there is little incentive, indeed there is a disincentive, to engage in serious professional development.

After we reestablish and maintain the choice of competition groups at the senior threshold, the next most important incentive for encouraging language competence and expertise would be to institute a Qualifications Review Board for each specialty, including the interfunctional track.

The board would establish criteria and the benchmarks required to attain the certification of a board-qualified language/area specialist, or financial economist, or interfunctional officer, etc. Appearing before the Qualifications Review Board would be voluntary, but if an officer did qualify, it would be noted in his personnel evaluation file. Being board-qualified would not be a requirement for promotion, but selection boards would obviously give great weight to the certification, all other things being equal.

In my opinion, the foregoing are positive and powerful incentives that would raise standards, productivity, and morale in the Foreign Service. We would have the tools for a real professional development program, including increased foreign language competence. If we could apply these basic incentives to all the foreign affairs agencies, the quality of our senior leadership would dramatically improve. Senator Simon and Congress may allocate the resources and offer encouragement, but it is up to the Foreign Service to reform itself. □



The Way to Language Success

"He perfected himself in speaking French, he visited the art galleries, the theaters, the opera, and found time to write poetry."
—*William R. Thayer,* The Life of John Hay

HUME HORAN

WE CAN PROBABLY DISPENSE with FSI language training altogether, someday—linguists speculate that all languages today descend from two or three basic structures, rooted in pre-history, and that they may "ascend" to two or three basic structures in the future. Unfortunately, however, Foreign Service people can't wait. If we need a language, then it's weeks, months, or in some cases, years of training at the Foreign Service Institute.

As Ambassador Monteagle Stearns wrote in his 1986 *Report on Hard Language Proficiency in the Foreign Service*, "If there is one skill that epitomizes the Foreign Service as a profession, it is the ability to understand and negotiate in a foreign culture."

From even brief discussions with FSI educators, one sees that Ambassador Stearns continues to be listened to. Hard-language bonuses were fought for and won; career candidates no longer face the same disincentives to hard-language training—during such training, their time-in-class clock stops for up to a year. The promotion panels are listening, too. The likelihood that a monoglot officer will cross the threshold or that one already in the Senior Foreign Service will receive further promotions is less than it was before.

But what can the Foreign Service expect of the students themselves? And what more can it do to make sure its linguistic product is as useful and good as the needs of the Service require?

As we consider our language shortcomings, do we give too much weight to external factors such as insufficient funding by Congress, faults in materials or methodology, or subtle disincentives in our administrative or bureaucractic environment? Such factors should be considered. But we must remember also that the only really indispensable asset for successful language training is the committed, hard-working students themselves. Foreign Service people, as professionals, have a self-interest, a duty, (somehow) to learn the languages they need.

The Stearns reforms will facilitate language learning, but even if they were all implemented, language success would still depend upon a language student's serious purpose—his or her willingness to endure months, perhaps years of sheer slog for our country's sake, and for the student's own professional education.

The routes to fluency are many: Edward Lane occupied a tomb at the base of the Pyramids while toiling at his monumental Arabic-English dictionary. His successors may use one of FSI's modern laboratories or field schools, where the most up-to-date materials and facilities are available. Both then and now, the student cannot shift the responsibility, and ef-

Hume Horan, currently at Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, has been tested in Arabic (S4+, R4+), French (S4, R4+), German (S3+, R4), and Spanish (S3+, R4).

Language success depends on a student's serious purpose—the willingness to endure months, perhaps years of sheer slog for our country's sake, and for the student's own education

fort, for language learning onto other shoulders. FSI should never be seen as a kind of bottling plant, where simply passive, empty receptacles are filled, capped, and shipped off to market.

Even the best facilities and methodologies will demand much midnight oil, compensated in part by the sure prospect of interesting work, and those moments of illumination when one finally reaches a higher plateau of fluency—only to see other, higher plateaus in the distance. Such landscapes may seem forbidding. But the committed, hard-working language student, heading overseas for Foreign Service duty, will find the rewards proportionate to the effort.

I have found them so. Language study has fulfilled my hopes and expectations. It's helped me to get a succession of interesting, even exciting jobs. I've come to know and work with Foreign Service colleagues I'll always admire. Through Arabic, the non-Western society of the Middle East seemed less opaque. Arabic helps one deal more effectively also with the impasses and frustrations of work in that part of the world. The most repetitive, unyielding issues are not quite so grinding when they offer the opportunity to practice one's linguistic tradecraft. (That's on good days, of course. On bad days, the language turns insubordinate: even simple words and ideas won't be ordered into formation.) Through language, moreover, an officer can become accessible to experiences that are professionally and educationally important, and which go beyond tradecraft. To read the Quran, or Goethe's lyric poetry (and translate it), to listen to the Luther Bible read out loud, to follow the popular literature of your country of assignment, can be humanizing. It can also help you bring a more receptive, perceiving state of mind to your daily work. There is an Arab proverb to the effect that, "He who knows a people's language is safe from their wickedness."

AMONG THE ARABIC-language students at FSI Beirut in the early 1960s were some who had only recently put college or graduate school behind them. We could hardly believe the learning opportunities the Foreign Service offered us. After graduate school, after all the grubbing for fellowships, assistantships, and grants, to be in Beirut, on a salary, plus living quarters allowance and diplomatic privileges, was to be in a sort of language student's Elysium.

It was no vacation, of course. Students were pushed hard. The school's director, Dr. Ray Chambers, was a brilliant psychologist, motivator, and coach. We learned there was as yet no easy, medical cure for monoglottism. No pill, no simple surgical procedure. We were told that only hard work by the students, faculty, and administrators would get the job done. Students were given a simple homework SOP: they should spend at least three hours on language homework a night. In addition, the school expected students to learn the history and culture of the area, through outside reading and field trips. The FSI Beirut library was superb.

The school understood that hard-language study was stressful. Arabic, a non-Indo-European language, offered no "finger and toe holds" to English speakers, who merely by speaking English unconsciously practice French, Spanish, and even German a good part of the time. To reset the odometers of our conscious and unconscious mind on zero, and begin again, was hard for some.

It seemed most stressful on older, more professionally finished officers. Perhaps their family responsibilities and distractions were greater than those of younger students. Perhaps their capacity for single-minded concentration had flagged. Or else, older officers may have felt threatened in competing with a younger group, in a context where an older officer's professional experience did not help.

FSI Beirut further urged us to perform periodic maintenance on our language skills when we had left the area. "What a waste!" one linguist remarked, "when a student acquires a skill through hard work and great cost to the government, and then drops it, like a child's toy on the lawn!" There were limits, he thought, to what a refresher course could do, if a Foreign Service person allowed language (like anything else) to deteriorate too far.

WHAT MORE CAN the State Department and the Foreign Service do to promote the language success of its hard-working, committed language students? To begin with, we don't need to reinvent the Stearns Report. It's a document of long-term validity, and we should keep referring back to it to see how we are doing. In addition, every hard language educator and student has his or her own list of judgments, prejudices, and opinions about language training. These include:

Funding: There is agreement between the Stearns Report and FSI's instructors and man-

agers that more money is needed for language instruction. In past years, hard-pressed budget planners may have thought that in language training—like bridge maintenance in John Lindsay's New York—needed expenditures could be deferred, without any harm becoming visible. Both assumptions were incorrect. As a first order, therefore, FSI's funding levels for language should be defended, and if possible increased. There should be no further cases where a non-career ambassador is denied language training at FSI in the language of his non-Western country, because his position "was not language designated" and because training money wasn't available.

DEFINE THE MISSION: The Foreign Service Institute truly represents the people and the pedagogy of the society it serves. Like a good public school, it does its best for all comers, the talented and less talented, the motivated and the bored. It hates to flunk anyone. It will seem to work harder to pull a poor student across the S-3, R-3 line—on a second or third try—than to push a gifted one upwards to the 4/4 level, where the U.S. government can truly amortize its investment through on-the-job performance. The FSI's position reflects a generous, caring spirit, but when language funds are short, could one perhaps ask more insistently, "Is the way we now allocate training resources best for the needs of the Service?"

A harder look could result in more tracking, maybe even some triage. And by divesting itself early of really poor or unmotivated students (plus an occasional instructor, too?), the FSI could lighten the burden on its able, motivated instructors, and save money.

With the savings, more Foreign Service people should be pushed to the 4/4 level. One cannot compare the utility to the Service of a 4/4 speaker with that of a 3/3. It's the *Monitor* or *The Merrimack* versus a wooden-hulled ship. The proficiency of an officer who graduates with a 4/4 may continue to improve—because he or she can successfully insist on using the language with foreigners in many different situations; but the proficiency of graduates with a 3/3 in a hard language may degenerate—because a foreign interlocutor will usually speak English better than the American does the foreign language.

Training in the higher levels of a language, especially a hard one, almost has to be "on location." A Washington ambiance simply doesn't place the student under sufficient cultural "atmospheres" to assure progress to the 4/4 level. During the early 1960s, we saw that students who began their Arabic with six months or so in Washington were on arrival in Beirut almost always behind those students who had been in Beirut from the start.

Also, training once begun had better be continuous. It may be good in theory to bring language officers back to school after a first assignment in the field. In reality, though, such officers will probably not want to interrupt their career for a second round of training. The best and most ambitious ones are especially likely to escape. Accordingly, FSI should push its officers as far and as fast as it can the one time it has them in training.

Raise the bar: Is it unreasonable to expect candidates who are serious about a career in *Foreign* Service to have learned *something* of a foreign language in their preceding lifetimes? World languages are well taught at U.S. colleges and universities; any Foreign Service candidate with a real desire could at least have learned to read in a language other than English. If a foreign language were required—or even rewarded—many candidates would certainly make it their business to go and study one. The FSI would receive trainees with better language skills; it would not have to devote so many resources to "zero time" programs. The savings could help pay for a denser, higher level curriculum. (Some modification of this language requirement could be made for EEO candidates.)

Personality traits: When I asked various linguists what qualities they looked for in a hard language student, their replies went far beyond the MLAT score. Motivation ranked high, and so did other qualities: a spirit of adventure, curiosity, self-confidence, cheerfulness, a sense of humor, a sense of personal worth (but none of self-importance), a wish to communicate, plus an omnivorous appetite for the many different flavors that foreign cultures come in. I had the impression, however, that under present exam procedures, at least a number of new entrants to the Service may lack—because of a deliberate, reflective, impersonal style—the cultural gusto needed to excel even at world languages. (After recent service on both State and USIA Selection Boards, it's my impression that USIA does the best language job of all our foreign affairs agencies; their officers seem to *enjoy* communicating in foreign languages.)

Need to anticipate: The FSI, like other offices of the department and the U.S. government,

The committed, hard-working language student going overseas will find the rewards proportionate to the effort

If our senior diplomats don't speak the local language well, host country nationals may conclude we don't really care enough, or that as a nation we lack the will to do a good job

should try to anticipate the demand of emerging situations. This is easier said than done. Why, if present resources aren't enough for present needs, divert some resources to needs that may never arise? I think, however, of the visit to Washington by the leader of the Afghan resistance movement in 1987. He preferred, I was told, that a native-born American be his interpreter, rather than a naturalized American of Afghan origin. But, no native-born American was available. Pushtu, it is true, has only a limited currency. But considering the importance of Afghanistan to our foreign policy in the last ten years, and the amount of assistance we have given the Afghan freedom fighters, could not the value of say, one Stinger missile, have been spent on developing one officer (from any agency) who could speak Pushtu really well?

We may next be looking at Persian, and finding the cupboard as bare as that of Arabic became after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Imagine the reaction of a spouse or friends to the news that one had just opted (in response to one of the department's breathless "All hands" circular cables) for Persian training: "Have you forgotten the Tehran hostages? 444 days . . . and the Beirut hostages . . . the torture killing of James Buckley . . . those horrible ayatollahs . . . the children's schooling . . . my career? . . . that staff assistant's job that you were offered . . . ARE YOU NUTS?" All understandable, even justifiable reactions, but still, it may soon behoove the United States to have some able Persian/Arabic speakers ready to serve in Tehran.

It is hoped the Foreign Service Institute will manage an adequate, foresighted response. Competent language and area specialists are a civilian "weapons system"; their development takes time—the kind of time needed to develop military hardware, or turn a high school senior into a law firm associate.

Top jobs: Hard-language officers should be able to lift up their eyes from flashcards, to the likely prospect of someday becoming deputy chiefs and chiefs of mission in their areas of language specialty. Who wants to work for years at a hard language and in a tough area, only to be known as a "State Department Arabist"? The percentage of language-qualified officers in senior jobs in the Arab world is fairly good now; it has not always been so, however.

Excellence in world languages: As a postscript to Ambassador Stearns's report, I would add that language expertise is important, too, at senior Foreign Service levels where "world languages" are spoken. Europeans of a post-World War II generation, for instance, are making up their own minds about the United States. They are not content simply to countersign their fathers' (or grandfathers') opinions. They may wonder, as Europeans have always done, if the United States *really* has those qualities of judgment needed in a wise world leader—not just a powerful and indispensable one. For an answer, they look closely at our senior diplomatic representatives on the scene. If these don't speak the local language well, host country nationals may conclude we don't really care enough about our most important alliance, or that as a nation—and as an educational system—we lack the will to do a good job in Europe, where presumably we are putting our best foot forward.

IT'S PROBABLE, HOWEVER, that all the efforts of State Department management and FSI professionals can only moderate by a little the uphill gradient of the hard-language track. Languages will always be hard, and will give up their secrets only to students capable of prolonged, penitential, solitary concentration. Hard-language study is no team sport. Afterwards, moreover, those students and their families may face years of hardship, isolation, and danger.

How then can we expect Foreign Service people in any numbers to opt for hard-language training? The answer is that there have always been patriotic, adventurous young men and women who want to serve their country overseas, along the strategically important, crisis-ridden "hot spots" and fault lines of the non-Western world. They may not at first be interested in foreign affairs management and process (though they often are in leadership). Eventually, they will become familiar, and some even expert, in these important aspects of our work. But first, they want to see things for themselves—from a position of immediacy that no other career affords—and, by applying their expertise to areas unfamiliar to most Americans, make a difference for their country.

In 1865, these motives helped send John Hay, a patriotic and culturally inquisitive young man, to France. Since then, our linguistic and foreign policy frontiers have moved on—but hard-language students now, like John Hay then, will be challenged as few young men and women ever are in peacetime; they'll have extraordinary educational experiences, and never be bored. □

Gorbachev's campaign for openness is supported by 30 years of U.S.–Soviet cultural exchanges

U.S.–Soviet Cultural Exchanges

YALE RICHMOND

THE GIFT for 30-year anniversaries is either pearls or diamonds. The Soviets in the late 1980s have presented Americans with several gems on the thirtieth anniversary of cultural exchange between the two countries. They are now saying *da* to many U.S. proposals which they had rejected with a firm *nyet* only a few years ago. For example, some 285 Soviet musicians, dancers, and other artists spent three weeks in Boston in March performing with Americans in a festival appropriately titled "Making Music Together." Several years in the making, it was the first major joint U.S.-Soviet artistic undertaking. A similar festival will be held in Moscow in 1989. At the Boston festival, Mikhail Baryshnikov, the former Kirov Ballet star who is now artistic director of the American Ballet Theater, became the first Soviet defector to perform with Soviet artists.

In another first, two dancers from Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet were in residence in New York during the 1988 winter season, performing with the New York City Ballet. And for the spring season, two dancers from Leningrad's Kirov Ballet joined the American Ballet Theater.

Several U.S. theater directors have directed American plays in Moscow during 1988. While not a first, this is a new trend in Soviet theater—foreign directors working with Soviet companies performing foreign plays. Former Soviet cultural figures now resident in the West are being invited to return to the Soviet Union and perform or work there.

Filmmakers of the two countries have formed a U.S.-Soviet Film Initiative in an attempt to eliminate stereotypes of Americans and Soviets in their works and to encourage cooperation between film artists of the two countries. In a related development, the first festival of American films was held in the So-

Igor Podchufarov gets a kiss from a Russian bear cub at the Moscow Circus, touring the U.S. for the first time in 10 years.

People-to-people contact is now a stated goal of the two governments

viet Union in 1988.

Television spacebridges, with American and Soviet panelists and audiences debating live via satellite, are now routine. Among these is a series between members of the U.S. Congress and the Supreme Soviet debating such issues as mutual security, human rights, and regional conflicts. The spacebridges are broadcast on national television of the two countries.

People-to-people contact is now a stated goal of the two governments. Soviet visitors to the United States are accepting invitations for overnight stays in American homes, and several thousand Soviet citizens are receiving exit permits each year to visit relatives in the United States.

Chautauqua "town meetings" with the Soviets have been held each year since 1985. In these meetings, Soviet and U.S. government officials and public figures debate issues between the two countries before public audiences, with extensive coverage by the media. At the second Chautauqua meeting, held in the Latvian resort of Jurmala in 1986, American diplomat Jack Matlock (currently ambassador in Moscow) addressed the opening session. Speaking in Russian, he presented a critical review of Soviet policies, including the forced annexation of the Baltic states after World War II, a move not recognized by the United States. In a severe test of *glasnost*, Matlock's remarks were reported in the Latvian media. *Glasnost* survived the test, as did the Chautauqua meetings with the Soviets.

In youth exchanges, a breakthrough was made at the Reagan-Gorbachev Moscow Summit in June 1988. In the past, the Soviets had moved slowly and cautiously, and the exchange of thousands of U.S. and Soviet students called for by American presidents from Eisenhower to Reagan appeared to be far in the future. A small start had been made in high school exchanges, long sought by the United States, and the Soviets had chosen to go first class. The first high school exchanges—in 1987 and 1988, by small groups of American and Soviet teenagers accompanied by a teacher—were with Phillips Andover Academy and Choate Rosemary Hall, both elite eastern prep schools.

At the Moscow summit, however, General Secretary Gorbachev accepted President Reagan's proposal to greatly expand high school exchanges. Negotiations have begun for pairing 100 American schools where Russian is taught and an equal number of Soviet high schools, with the goal of exchanging 1,000 or more students in each direction within two years.

In academic exchanges, the Soviets have preferred to send abroad students who had completed their formal studies and were engaged in scientific or scholarly research. For many years Soviet "students" coming to the United States were in their late thirties, although in recent years the average age has dropped to the early thirties. By contrast, American students going to the Soviet Union have been mostly in their twenties. In academic year 1987-1988, some 700 American students and scholars, most of them undergraduates, studied in the Soviet Union (for periods of 30 days or more). The corresponding number of Soviets in the United States was about 400, but only twenty were undergraduates.

The number of Soviet undergraduates in the United States will increase in 1988-1989 however, and their average age will decrease further, when some 50 students arrive at the invitation of a consortium of colleges and universities headed by Middlebury College. And in a departure from past policy, the Soviet students will be placed singly on U.S. campuses rather than as a group accompanied by a faculty adviser.

Soviet policy on student exchanges becomes all the more evident when contrasted with that of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Although U.S.-PRC exchanges began only in 1979, in academic year 1987-1988 there were more than 25,000 Chinese students, scholars, and scientists in the United States. While the PRC has recently announced a major reduction in students studying in the West, the future number of Chinese in the United States is still expected to be much larger than for the Soviets.

VETERANS OF U.S.-SOVIET exchanges are pleasantly surprised by these developments. For 30 years the two governments—and scores of Foreign Service officers—laboriously negotiated a series of cultural agreements which spelled out exactly what would be exchanged and under what conditions. And for most of those years, the Soviets took a "strict construction" approach, permitting only those activities which were specifically mentioned in the agreements. The 1985 cultural agreement, for example, required 65 meetings over a period of 15 months to negotiate.

Now, in a complete reversal the Soviets have switched to a "loose construction," permitting a much wider range of exchanges. Indeed, the intergovernmental cultural agree-

ment, so laboriously negotiated, is of little or no concern to most participants in these exchanges.

The first U.S.-Soviet cultural agreement, signed in 1958, was a product of the "spirit of Geneva" and the post-Stalin thaw. For the next three decades, although exchanges were endorsed by every administration from Eisenhower to Reagan, and supported by Congress and the public, the rate of exchange fluctuated, expanding when relations were good, and decreasing when they were not.

The initial years, 1958-1972, can be called exchange tourism, in which specialists in a wide variety of fields visited the other country, met leaders in their fields, and wrote reports after returning home. Follow-up was infrequent, and the watchwords on both sides were suspicion, control, security, and strict reciprocity. The number of persons exchanged was not large—about 1,000 on each side annually—depending on how many symphony orchestras or track teams traveled in a particular year.

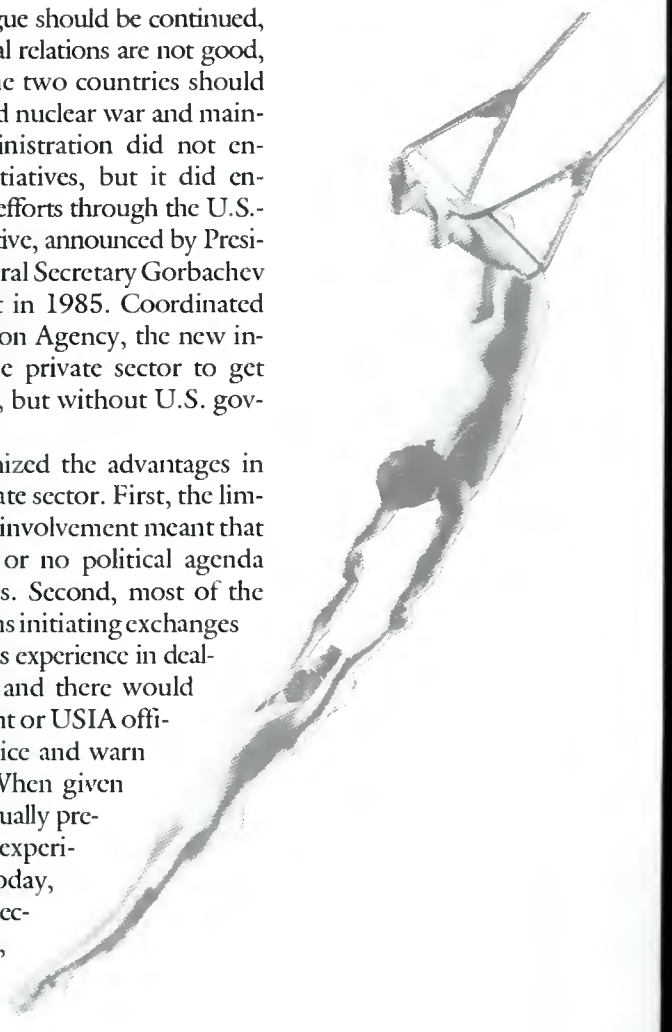
Cooperation was the objective in the second phase, 1972-1979, the detente years. Science and technology exchanges were spun off from the cultural agreements into 11 bilateral agreements for cooperative activities in such fields as environmental protection, medicine and public health, and space. U.S.-Soviet working groups were created under each agreement to conduct cooperative research in fields of common interest. While the objective was mainly political on the U.S. side—to establish habits of cooperation—these agreements considerably broadened interaction between scientists of the two countries. The number of persons exchanged annually for all exchanges rose to about 3,000 on each side.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 ended most U.S.-Soviet cooperation. The Carter administration suspended many government-funded or -supported exchanges to show its disapproval of the Soviet action. This policy was continued and reinforced during the first Reagan administration after the imposition of martial law in Poland and the Soviet shootdown of Korean Airlines flight 707. The number of persons exchanged dropped dramatically.

After an administration reassessment of its Soviet policy in 1983, most of the government-funded exchanges were resumed. The major player on the U.S. side, however, was no longer the government but the private sector.

Reacting to the reduction in official contacts in 1979, many U.S. private sector organizations began exchanges with the Soviets in the belief that dialogue should be continued, especially when bilateral relations are not good, and that citizens of the two countries should work together to avoid nuclear war and maintain peace. The administration did not endorse these peace initiatives, but it did encourage private-sector efforts through the U.S.-Soviet Exchange Initiative, announced by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at the Geveva summit in 1985. Coordinated by the U.S. Information Agency, the new initiative encourages the private sector to get involved in exchanges, but without U.S. government funding.

The Soviets recognized the advantages in working with the private sector. First, the limited U.S. government involvement meant that there would be little or no political agenda for the new exchanges. Second, most of the American organizations initiating exchanges had little or no previous experience in dealing with the Soviets, and there would be no State Department or USIA officers along to give advice and warn of potential pitfalls. When given a choice, the Soviets usually prefer to deal with such inexperienced Westerners. Today, more than 250 private sector organizations, mostly at the grassroots level, are involved in direct exchanges with Soviet counterparts. The exact number of organizations and persons involved is not known because the Americans deal directly with the Soviets and are not required to inform Washington of their activities.



The Flying Cranes perform during the Moscow Circus, currently on a U.S. tour.

IN ITS BROADER SENSE, cultural exchange includes all exchanges of people and ideas—students and scholars, scientists, exhibitions, foreign radio broadcasts, and tourism, as well as the arts and culture—and other activities which help people of one culture to understand another culture better, and their own as well. Soviet interest in cultural exchanges serves a variety of objectives.

The main objective in 1958, as the Soviet Union emerged from the self-imposed isolation of the Stalin era, was to acquire Western know-how, an old Russian tradition going back to Peter the Great. The Soviets also wanted to show Americans their achievements under "socialism," and to gain legitimacy through bilateral agreements and cooperation with their principal rival. In the performing arts and ath-

Cultural exchange includes all exchanges of people and ideas which help people of one culture to understand another culture better

letics, they recognized that international experience is necessary to compete in world-class competitions. And the Soviets soon learned that they could earn hard currency with their performing artists and athletes. Exchanges were also used by the Soviets to vent the pent-up desire of their intelligentsia for travel abroad. There was also a political bottom line, as with all Soviet actions. Exchanges could be used to present an image abroad of a country pursuing peaceful coexistence and international cooperation.

These objectives have not changed much in 30 years, although the Soviets have become more experienced and skilled in achieving them. In particular, the Soviets today appear confident of their ability to use cultural exchange to present their political agenda directly to the American people and thereby bring pressure on Congress and the administration.

For the United States, the major objective has been to promote a freer exchange of people, information, and ideas, in order to encourage change toward a regime which will be less oppressive at home and more likely to cooperate, rather than confront, abroad. A second goal has been to learn more about the Soviet Union, an objective of the academic, scientific, and business communities as well as the government. And in more recent years, there has been a growing belief that exchanges are good in themselves, and that citizen groups in particular need to maintain a dialogue with the Soviet people in order to introduce a human, people-to-people element into U.S.-Soviet relations.

After 30 years it is fair to ask what these exchanges have accomplished. Originally regarded as a curiosity and with suspicion on both sides, cultural exchange is now accepted in both countries as a normal and useful element in bilateral relations. Thanks to exchanges the two countries now know considerably more about each other. In universities, scholarly and scientific institutions, business, and government there are people who have studied in the other country or have at least visited it. They have the experience that comes only with having spent some time in another country, mastered its language, and become familiar with its culture. They are able to distinguish fact from fiction and to understand what is really going on. Their expertise provides some assurance that the two governments in the future will not misjudge each other's actions and intentions, as they have all too often in the past.

Exchanges have provided a framework for increased bilateral cooperation. The initial contacts between the two countries established during the the years of "exchange tourism" provided the basis for today's talks on arms control, political differences, and trade. Through exchanges, each country has learned that it can accept large numbers of foreign visitors without threat to its national security. Indeed, it can be argued that today there would be no intrusive military inspections under the INF agreement were it not for the experience gained by the two sides in cultural and scientific exchanges. The painstaking interventions by Foreign Service officers on increased access and travel for U.S. scholars and scientists in the Soviet Union over the past 30 years have helped the Soviets gain the confidence they need for today's military inspections.

Exchanges, including foreign radio broadcasts, have also helped to break the Soviet government's monopoly in information—what is reported in the Soviet media about other countries and the Soviet Union itself. As more and more Soviet citizens have traveled to the West and made the inevitable comparisons with their own country, the Soviet media have had to become more honest with their readers and viewers.

Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* are due, in great part, to three decades of exchanges with the West. During these years an entire generation of the Soviet intelligentsia—creative artists, filmmakers, scholars, scientists, theater directors, and writers—has traveled to the United States and other Western countries. These representatives have seen the creative freedoms which their colleagues in the West enjoy and they have learned how far the Soviet Union lags behind the West in economic development. And they recognize that these disparities have not been reported in the Soviet media. Gorbachev, under his policy of *glasnost*, has given the intelligentsia more creative freedoms. In return, he has the intelligentsia's support in selling his economic reforms to the Soviet people.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE hold for these exchanges? This question was addressed at the first joint conference on exchanges at Gettysburg College in January 1988 convened under the auspices of the Eisenhower World Affairs Institute. Twenty-five Soviets and 25 Americans met for five days to commemorate their thirtieth anniversary and to discuss their future needs and direction.

The conference joint statement confirmed

the value of exchanges in contributing to improved understanding between the two countries. It noted that new forms of exchange activity are now possible but recognized that they require the involvement of broader segments of the two societies, in particular greater participation by young people and individuals (as opposed to organizations).

On administrative issues—where the Soviets are notoriously weak—the conference noted the problems likely to arise with the anticipated increase in exchanges. Improved communications were suggested, a veiled reference to U.S. difficulties in communicating with Soviet partners and getting prompt responses. Referring to the "vast array of exchange programs," the delegates cited the need for greater interchange of information—who is doing what in exchange and with whom. And in recognition of the inadequacy of funding on the U.S. side, the conferees called for increased government financing, noting that funding instability makes long-term planning difficult.

The big question, only alluded to in the joint statement but well known to U.S. veterans of exchanges, is whether the Soviet system, with its obsession for control and security, can handle a major increase in the number of people exchanged. Currently only a few thousand participate annually on each side. Not very many, considering the size of the two countries and the number of years that they have had exchanges.

A major increase would require the Soviets to relax their controls and permit organizations and individuals to enter directly into exchange arrangements with Americans. Are the Soviets now sufficiently confident to send large numbers of young people to the United States—the "thousands" suggested by U.S. presidents—for study as individuals rather than as members of groups whose activities are monitored by a group leader? The new high school and undergraduate exchanges may provide answers to these questions.

The Reagan administration has appeared divided on the issue of a major increase in exchanges. Some in Washington recognize that a gradual improvement in bilateral relations must include increased contact between citizens of the two countries. Others, believing that well meaning but inexperienced Americans will be outmaneuvered by their Soviet counterparts, are reluctant to open the United States to large numbers of Soviets whose activities the FBI will not be able to monitor. This is an issue which needs to be resolved by the next administration. If appropriate safeguards are maintained to ensure that exchanges are conducted on the basis of "equality, mutual benefit, and reciprocity," as stated in the cultural agreement, the United States has much to gain from an expansion.

If past practice is any indication of future behavior, the Soviets will move slowly and cautiously, seeking to expand exchanges but not to relax their control appreciably. Much will depend, of course, on the future of Gorbachev and his reforms. If Gorbachev fails in his efforts at reform, exchanges will also suffer and, as in the past, they will continue to follow, rather than lead, political relations between the two countries. □

The Moiseyer Dance Company, one of many cultural groups from the USSR which have performed in the U.S. in recent years.

Yale Richmond, a retired USIA officer, is the author of U.S.-Soviet Cultural Exchanges, 1958-1986: Who Wins? *(Westview Press)*

The Year of the Three Kaisers

Jane Pendleton Brice

One hundred years ago, three different emperors occupied the throne of Germany: the aged Kaiser Wilhelm I, first emperor of the young confederation; his son, Friedrich III, then terminally ill with cancer; and his grandson, Wilhelm II, who became Kaiser before 1888 was out.

George Hunt Pendleton, former senator from Ohio, was appointed President Cleveland's minister to Germany in 1885. Accompanying him to Berlin were his wife and their two daughters, then young women in their twenties. In 1895, his younger daughter, Jenny, my grandmother, wrote an account of her experiences among the Berlin diplomatic corps that was published in an unidentified newspaper, probably in Washington, D.C. The newspaper clipping recently was discovered among some family papers, and this year, the centennial of the "Year of the Three Kaisers," seems an appropriate time to share again the pomp and circumstance of this age.

Frances C. Cox

AS A MEMBER of the diplomatic corps from 1885-89, it was my good fortune to have been in Berlin at a time full of interest. When I first went to Berlin, Wilhelm I was living and surrounded by his old friends and advisers, Bismarck, Von Moltke, Von Rauch, and others, those grand old men of "blood and iron" men who had made the empire. The youngest of them was more than 70 years of age. The emperor and empress were then far advanced in age and it seemed but natural that the great dignity of the imperial court should have been borne by the old and tried retainers, who had supported the royal couple while Prussia was yet a kingdom.

Among the ceremonies of great interest that I witnessed was the last Schleppen-court held by the old emperor. The opening ball of the season, it takes its name from the court-train which etiquette requires to be worn on that occasion. At the Schleppen-court, all the German girls of noble birth, upon reaching the age of 17, make their debuts and are presented at court. They look very fresh and pretty in their light dresses, long trains, and white veils.

The diplomats also are presented on this occasion, and that night, I felt some trepidation. It was the 28th of January, 1886, a bitter cold night, and the ground was covered with snow. At 8:30 p.m., we drove to the Alte Schloss. On entering the lofty and spacious rooms, I was struck by the heavy, unpleasant atmosphere. The chamberlain explained that the rooms had been so cold that the large German porcelain stoves had made no impression in spite of huge fires, so they had simply ordered a regiment to march through the rooms and remain in them long enough to warm the air. Not a very pleasant idea, but the German nose is not as sensitive as ours.

The ladies of the diplomatic corps were to be received first and we formed a line, according to our official rank, in one room while the gentlemen did the same in another. At 9 p.m., the folding doors were opened; I shall never forget the splendor of that sight. The Ritter Saal (Hall of Knights) was lighted by hundreds of wax candles, which reflected in the armor that covered the walls and then again in the polished parquet floor. When my eyes became accustomed to the dazzling light, I saw their imperial majesties at the end of the room, sitting upon the throne with crowns on their heads and scepters in their hands. The dazzling splendor of this sight was more like a fairy tale of old than real life.

The throne was on a raised dais and the empress, who for years had been too infirm to walk, sat upon it clad in white satin robes embroidered in gold, her corsage resplendent with jeweled orders and decorations. Around her neck hung the famous pearls of Queen Louise of Prussia, the mother of the emperor, that were the only jewels she had not given to free her people from the yoke of the first Napoleon. These she had kept and told her son they represented her tears, shed for her country's woes.

By her side, and no less splendid in attire, stood the emperor. One step below them stood the crown prince,

and his consort, the Princess Victoria Adelaide, daughter of Queen Victoria of England. Another step below them stood the Prince and Princess Wilhelm and their son, the present crown prince, then a child of four. Thus the four generations were represented. Behind the imperial family were grouped the princes and princesses of the blood and at the other end of the room stood the ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting.

The dresses of all the women, though perhaps not in the best of taste, were splendid in color and resplendent with jewels, and the uniforms of the men were simply gorgeous. Finally, our turn to curtsy came—my mother entered first and, after curtsying low, stood waiting for me at the foot of the throne. As I passes through the door, Herr von Roder, chamberlain and introducer of the diplomatic corps, whispered as he spread out my train, *"Deux reverences, Madmoiselle, et ne tomber pas, surtout."* His caution was well-timed for the floor was polished like glass. It was a very lonesome feeling walking the whole length of that splendid room dragging more than three yards of heavy satin train behind me. At last I joined my mother who, as I curtsied, murmured, *"Majestes, ma fille,"* and together we went into the next room, where all the ladies stood chatting until the gentlemen joined us. Then together we through the picture gallery, lined with officers in brilliant uniforms, into the historic Weise Saal (Concert Hall).

It was in this room that the old king of Prussia, father of Frederick the Great, had, upon the occasion of some court ball or other, two coffins produced. Thinking his wife, poor woman, was enjoying life too much, he required her, in the presence of the entire court, to get into one while he deposited himself in the other.

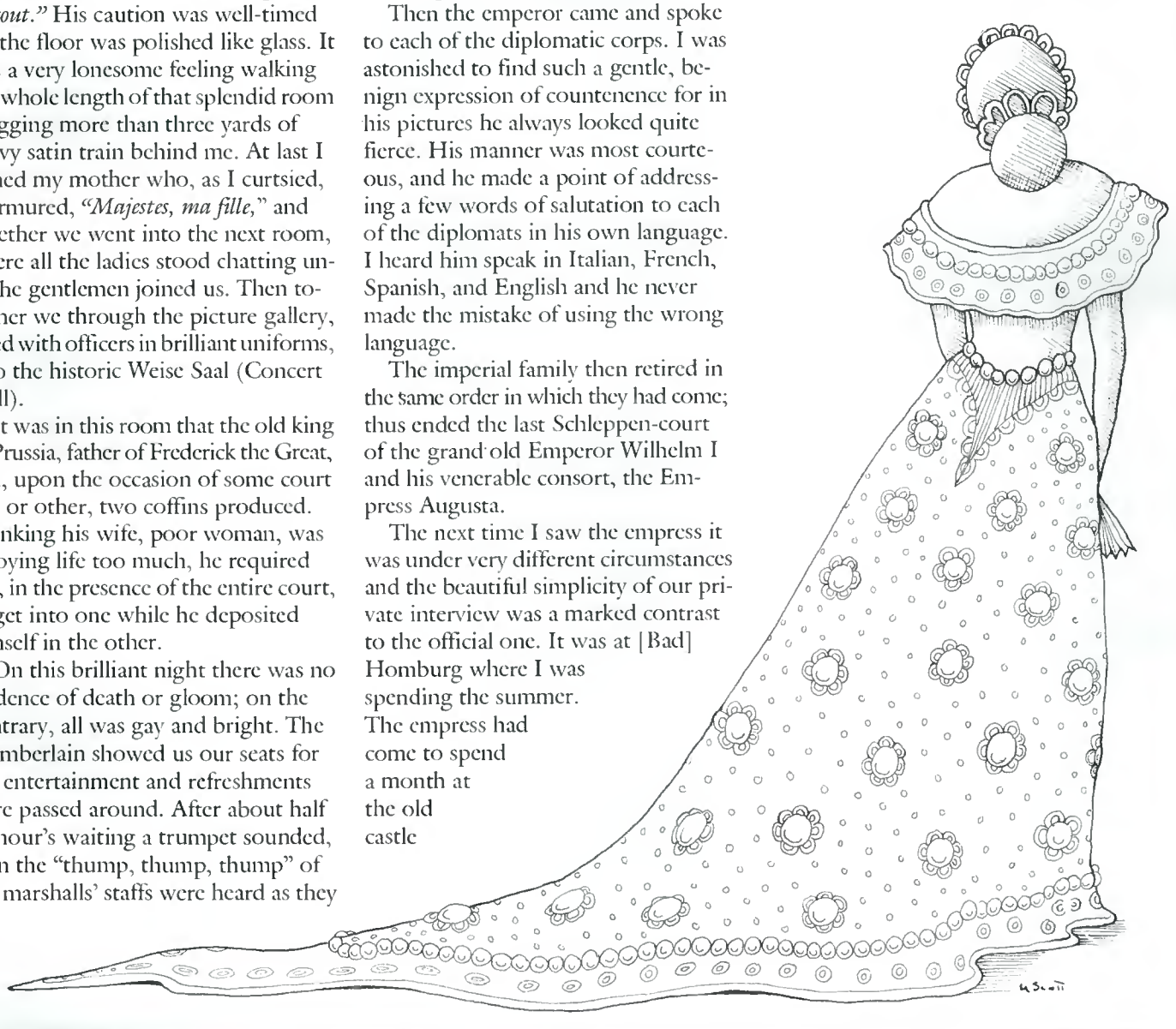
On this brilliant night there was no evidence of death or gloom; on the contrary, all was gay and bright. The chamberlain showed us our seats for the entertainment and refreshments were passed around. After about half an hour's waiting a trumpet sounded, then the "thump, thump, thump" of the marshalls' staffs were heard as they backed into the hall, ushering in their majesties. First came the emperor, leading the crown princess by the hand in true minuet fashion (the empress being too old to leave her seat). The train of red velvet was carried by four youths, sons of noblemen, wearing the pages' dress of white silk hose, buckle shoes, red velvet coats embroidered in gold lace, jabot, and plumed hat swung by a gold cord over the shoulder. As she ascended the steps of the dais they dropped on their knees and spread out her train, then rising, backed to the far end of the room.

Next came the crown prince with the pages. And thus they all came, two by two, and took their seats assigned them, the ladies and getlemen in attendance grouping behind their respective princesses. When the imperial family was seated there was a beautiful concert in which Niemann, the famous opera singer, took part.

Then the emperor came and spoke to each of the diplomatic corps. I was astonished to find such a gentle, benign expression of countenence for in his pictures he always looked quite fierce. His manner was most courteous, and he made a point of addressing a few words of salutation to each of the diplomats in his own language. I heard him speak in Italian, French, Spanish, and English and he never made the mistake of using the wrong language.

The imperial family then retired in the same order in which they had come; thus ended the last Schleppen-court of the grand old Emperor Wilhelm I and his venerable consort, the Empress Augusta.

The next time I saw the empress it was under very different circumstances and the beautiful simplicity of our private interview was a marked contrast to the official one. It was at [Bad] Homburg where I was spending the summer. The empress had come to spend a month at the old castle which she loved so well. The day after her arrival, hearing we were there, she graciously sent for us. I had been out in the woods all afternoon and on returning to my lodgings to find a summons to the Schloss for 8 p.m. I hurriedly made my toilet and reached the castle just on time. A royal footman opened the door and ushered us into the large, simply furnished drawing room where the old hunchback, Countess Haacke, received us. She led us into a smaller sitting room where we found Her Majesty seated in an armchair, a small table in front of her upon which rested her poor, palsied hands toying with her vinaigrette. Her Majesty looked so ill and so old, almost like a corpse, in spite of the black wig, paint and powder. We sat there in the summer twilight for about an hour, conversing upon all kinds of subjects. Her courtesy and tact were so great that it put me at my ease and



so far forgot myself as to venture to correct Her Majesty's English which, by the way, was very good.

She inquired with great interest about the customs of our country and particularly about the wider field of usefulness opened to women in America. Her whole life was spent in endeavoring to ameliorate the condition of the women of Germany. She had founded a girls' school at Charlottenburg. This school was her pet hobby and she always attended the examinations. We chatted more about the school, but as the clock struck nine o'clock, Her Majesty extended her hand, and we understood that the interview was at an end. I curtsied low and kissed the proffered hand with a true feeling of reverence for the noble, kind, and good woman I had learned to know in this short hour.

Some years later, we had other audiences with two of the other empresses of Germany. These interviews plainly showed the very marked characteristics prominent in the three women. With Empress Augusta it was kindly consideration for others and an earnest desire to do her duty to the people that made her so much beloved. The Empress Friedrich showed great qualities of mind and possibilities, thwarted by disappointed ambition. It is undoubtedly true that her want of popularity was greatly due to her own lack of tact and condescension. Still I feel that she was to be pitied, for she was disappointed in her highest ambition, which was to see her husband wear the imperial crown. The long years during which he was crown prince were full of restraints and lamentations—then, when the realization came, her husband was a dying man and his short reign was but one long agony. So that when I last saw her, she was a disappointed, aggrieved woman and did not have sufficient tact to conceal it.

Our interview with young Empress Victoria Augusta was just before we left Berlin in 1889. She was a sweet and placid woman and in her the gentle qualities of wife and mother predominated. The interview was in her private drawing room, in the Alte Schloss in Berlin. She received us alone, save for the presence of her mistress of the robes. The empress is a very tall woman with a beautiful figure, and was simply dressed in black. In one corner of the room was a table upon which toys of various kinds were spread out. She called our attention to it, saying that her boy, the crown prince, had celebrated his seventh birthday a few days before and those were his presents. She told us of the surprise they had arranged for him. She had taken her four sons to play in the grounds of Charlottenburg and told the young crown prince to look for something that had been hidden for him. He searched the grounds and finally went to the stable where he was delighted to find his father's gift, a little pony.

The empress chatted on in this way for half an hour, and then with many expressions of friendship and regret, bade us goodbye. This was our last interview at the Alte Schloss.

Eight days after his father's funeral Emperor Wilhelm II formally opened the Reichstag for the first time under his reign. This ceremony is, in effect, the imperial coronation, and it was only the second of the kind since the establishment of the empire, as Emperor Friedrich was too ill to perform it himself when he came to the throne. To me it was the occasion of greatest interest during my stay in Germany. The Reichstag, being the upper of the two houses of the German parliament, corresponds somewhat to our Senate, and is composed of one or two representatives from every kingdom, principality, or duchy.

The uniforms of the military members and the brilliant court dress of the civil representatives worn on this occasion made a scene of splendor. As I looked down from the diplomatic gallery into the Weise Saal where they were assembled, it was very different from our own Senate chamber, even upon inauguration day. The wide stairway leading to the diplomatic gallery was lined with pages standing shoulder to shoulder, and as we ascended we heard the strains of sacred music from the royal chapel where the emperor and princes of the blood were attending a religious service. The empress entered, leading her little son by the hand, with her attendants. The empress has a very sweet face, and in her mourning cap and crepe veil she looked most attractive as she watched everything with the deep interest of a proud wife and affectionate mother.

The emperor entered alone, wearing the decoration of the Order of the Black Eagle about his neck and the long, red velvet mantle of the same order hanging from his shoulders and trailing on the floor. He ascended the steps and stood upon the throne, the great Von Moltke just behind him, holding the flag of his country above His Majesty's head; the clear-cut intelligent features of the old man, rigid with profound emotion, stood out against the black background, draped in memory of the late emperors. The crown and imperial scepter lay on cushions on either side of the throne.

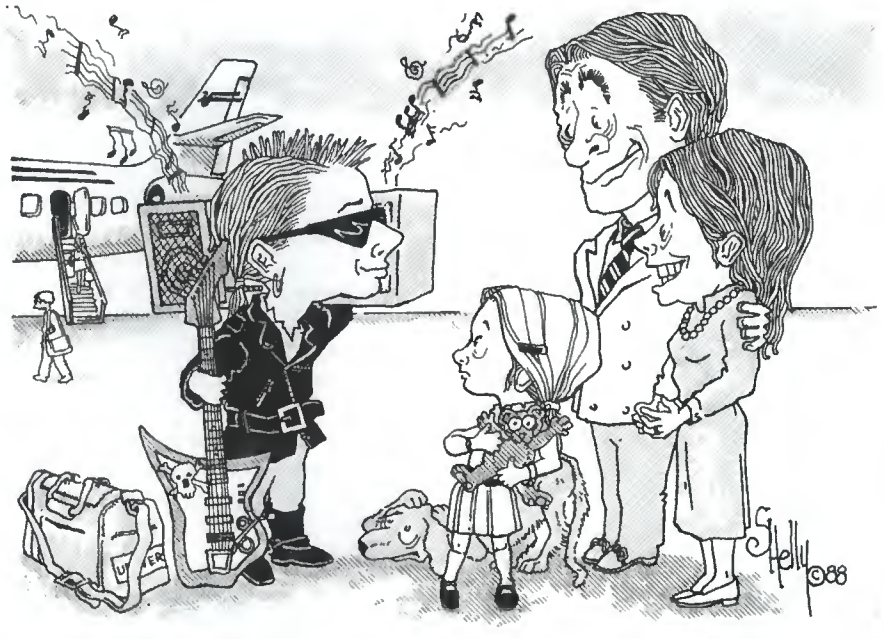
From the group of senators then stepped forth the grand and imposing figure of Prince Bismarck, the iron chancellor of the empire. Dressed in the pure white uniform of the Cuirassiers, he looked like a mighty giant: "The man without whose dogged resolution, absolute want of scruple, fertility of resource, fiery strength of will, the empire has been an impossibility." As he raised his hand the stirring "*Hoch, Hoch, Hoch!,*" the German cheer, resounded through the hall.

I was absorbed, as were all present, by the deep, intense interest of the ceremony. Here stood this young man, just come into supreme power over his countrymen, surrounded by the greatest men, not only of Germany, but of the civilized world, then old enough to be his grandfathers. In point of fact, they had been the mainstays of his grandfather's throne, and they were now bowing before the youth they had seen in the cradle, pledging their allegiance to him as the imperial sovereign.

The old king of Saxony, in passing through the room, stopped before the little crown prince and kissed the head of his future sovereign. It was indeed a solemn and impressive sight to see the aged kings and princesses, the tottering remnants of the old confederation, come to swear allegiance to the new kaiser and to the empire founded by Karl I, "Der Grosse" (Charlemagne), more than a thousand years ago. □

Welcome Home

by NANCY PIET-PELON



For many parents the holiday season this year will include a significant right of passage. Their college-age son or daughter will be returning home for the first time during school vacation—an event anticipated with joy, but also with some trepidation.

Like parents everywhere, parents overseas are eager to see their children, to assess how being away is affecting them, to pump information from them about college life and events during the months of separation.

But the overseas parents are at two disadvantages not shared by their Stateside peers. First, they have not been able to keep particularly close tabs on their freshman—unless he or she is a better letter writer than most. Thus, the changes they see in their child come December may have been gradual in the making but hit like a thunderbolt when they confront each other. Stateside parents have the advantage of seeing their child at intervals—homecoming, a quick laundry weekend—and changes seem less shocking.

A second disadvantage for many overseas parents is that their child may be joining them at a new post rather than returning to old friends and favorite haunts. This means that the student has no one to share experiences with except the family. Parents must remember to help their child adjust to the loss of a home community.

What happens between September and December? There will have been many adjustments for the new collegiate, which will often have been painful (as the many articles over the years about re-entry have pointed out). There may be some outward changes in style—a pierced ear or an outlandish hairstyle. Or, while Stateside peers may be copying the newest look of a popular rock band or, at the opposite extreme, becoming totally preppie, the overseas-raised child could be "going native." This phenomenon of acting out an overseas sojourn once back in the United States can take parents by surprise. But parents should look behind the smoke screen of the smoldering *Kretek* (an Indonesian clove cigarette), for example, and find a child verging on adulthood who is seeking to establish an identity.

Students may be struggling with fundamental value adjustments and may appear to be mesmerized with new ways of living—adapting to new sexual mores and the "partying" on American campuses. Academic effort may have taken second place to socializing and by December a freshman may be worried about his grades, but hesitant to share his concerns with his parents. Parents could be surprised with a weight gain or skin blemishes on a formerly slim and clear-complexioned child, a not uncommon result of an adjustment to a combination of cafeteria and junk food.

On the positive side, parents may notice a new appreciation of the family and an eagerness to see siblings. The student may be excited to return overseas, even if it is a new home—after all, a long trip to a different climate can seem very exotic to local home-bound friends.

But what is there to do when that much-anticipated visit gets off to a rocky start because the student's appearance or attitude is alien to expectations? The initial reaction is to say something—"What happened to your hair, clothes, weight?" But that is the worst thing to do. Rather, experts suggest that parents should not only accept the new person who confronts them but also say positive things! This may not be easy—a common reaction is to try to hide your student until he or she meets your appearance standards, standards that may not be important to your now independent teen.

While parents tend to concentrate on the changes in their teen, they often forget that there have been changes in the family caused by the student's absence. These changes may include the blossoming of a younger sibling who had been in the shadow of the older child, or the life style of the parents, who may now be working, entertaining, or traveling more. Simple changes may have become a well-ordered pattern by the time the holiday arrives.

In short, the fit of the family is different and it will never be the same again. One student spoke to me about this concern even before he went to college. He came from a close-knit family and had two younger siblings. They were all high achievers and had the full support of their parents in each of their activities. He knew that his going would create a change in their family and wondered what that change would mean. "I won't be able to fit in again like I did before" was his rueful conclusion. He was right. He would not be able to fit in again as a dependent child with his parents assisting him at each decision-making crossroads. That is the inevitable passage. But he would always be the older brother, and the first son, whose presence would be acutely missed by each other member. When he returned to his family, he would have a richer identity, but he would still be his parents' child, whether he

changed radically or gradually in his inexorable passage to full adulthood. There was no question that he and his family would change with his departure, but change at this point is part of what life's passages are all about.

While parents may find it hard to accept the person they see before them, this first visit marks a special passage for both parent and child. This visit should represent a final letting go rather than a grabbing ever closer. But, that can be difficult—and often that difficulty is based on practical considerations. At this stage in their offspring's life, parents are still investing enormous chunks of money into the student's future—and into his or her present lifestyle. They feel that gives them the right to have a say not only in how their investment behaves on a daily basis but also in what course he chooses to take for his life. Or does it? Judith Viorst, author of the book *Necessary Changes*, says that parents are often "change-resisters." They "defy the realities of time by hanging on to their power and to their nonnegotiable ways of doing things."

So, if it is somehow damaging to the independence of a young adult to try to change what he or she has become in the months of separation, what attitude can parents adopt when confronted with their still-dependent student? Emotionally and realistically, it is often hard to accept the outward manifestations the transition into independence can take. However, parents should remember that, by virtue of the fact that they have been raised overseas, their children are going through more transitions than the average college freshman (and often more pain), and parents should try to be even more accepting of their swings of behavior or style.

Parental acceptance is a minimal requirement for those making the transition from a parent-to-child relationship to one in which they are still the children but recognized by their parents as adults. Thus, the new relationship should become one of more equality.

Establishing the new level in a parent-child relationship can be one of the most exciting times for both parent and teen. For parents, getting perspective on this first visit is essential. It is important to remember that the child is in a *transition* stage and that no matter how he or she may look or what his or her manners or mannerisms have become, it is another phase. Parents might like to think that by university-age, phases and fads are a thing of the past. Not so—especially for those teens raised overseas who have often had little opportunity to try on new styles and test the values of their parents. This transition time will not be easy, it certainly will not be without some pain for many families, but there is an end to it. What parents must keep uppermost in their minds is the value of accepting. While their child is on the path to adulthood, there is little a parent can do but to be caring, to listen, and even if they cannot accept what they hear, continue to accept the person they hear talking.

Nancy Piet-Pelon is the author of In Another Dimension: A Guide for Women Living Overseas.

In Memory

Henry William Spielman, retired Foreign Service officer, died of cancer September 7 in San Francisco, California.

Mr. Spielman was born in Chickasha, Oklahoma and received an M.S. from Oklahoma State University in 1935. He was sent to Sao Paulo, Brazil by the Department of Agriculture in 1942. He later served in the Consulate General in Bombay and in Karachi, Pakistan. From 1954-55 he was officer in charge of the Consulate General, Dacca. Subsequently, he served in Ankara, Turkey, Washington, D.C., and Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

The Spielmans moved to San Francisco after retirement in 1966, where he served as president of the United Nations Association and on committees of the World Affairs Council, Commonwealth Club, and the Friends Committee on Legislation. He and his wife Jan have traveled extensively throughout the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Mexico and New Zealand. He maintained an active interest in Oklahoma State University where he established a graduate fellowship.

He is survived by his wife, Jan, a sister, Joan and two nephews.

Alan Fisher, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of a heart attack August 30 at his home in Sarasota, Florida. Mr. Fisher was 75.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Mr. Fisher worked as a staff photographer for the *New York World-Telegram* from 1934-1940. In 1942, he covered the Latin war effort for the U.S. Inter-American Affairs office in South America, subsequent to which he served as a war correspondent with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy.

Joining the Foreign Service in 1945, Mr. Fisher served as motion picture officer in Rio de Janeiro until 1956, and subsequently served in similar positions in Paris and Saigon, before being transferred to Washington, D.C. in 1960 where he headed the domestic production of motion pictures for USIA and, in 1962, was named chief of the foreign production division. From 1966 to his retirement in 1973, Fisher served as public affairs officer at the Consulate General in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

While in Brazil, Mr. Fisher established an art gallery at the Consulate General to showcase Brazilian artists' work; in 1982, he and his wife opened a gallery of Brazilian art in Sarasota. In 1987, a gallery of primitive art in Sao Paulo was named in his honor.

Mr. Fisher is survived by his wife, Florence, and a daughter, Stephanie Fisher-Mathews.

Jack Blair Button, a retired Foreign Service officer specializing in economics, died of a heart attack September 12 in Washington, D.C.

Originally of Lebanon, Kansas, Mr. Button was graduated from the University of Kansas, where he also received a master's degree in political science. During World War II, he served as a medical corpsman in the Navy.

A graduate of the National War College, Mr. Button joined the Foreign Service in 1949. His early tours of duty included Iraq, West Berlin, and Israel. He also served as the head of the tropical products division at the State Department. In the 1970s, Mr. Button was an economic counselor in Tel Aviv. Later, he served as minister counselor for economic and commercial affairs in Tokyo. Upon his return to Washington, he was named executive director of the U.S.-Japan group.

Mr. Button is survived by his wife, Jean of Kensington; four children, Alexander Button of Stuttgart, West Germany, Van Tries Button of New Orleans, Margaret Button Nosco of San Pedro, California, and Jonathan Button of San Diego; one sister, Marilyn Halliday of Los Altos, California; and eight grandchildren.

School Scholarships Available to Foreign Service Students

The following scholarships are available to dependent children of Foreign Service personnel. Applicants should write for complete information **directly to the schools, colleges, and universities indicated.**

Secondary Schools.

The American School in Switzerland (TASIS), and **TASIS England:** $1000 tuition reductions are offered at the TASIS schools in Switzerland and Great Britain to all sons and daughters in grades 7-12 of State Department personnel stationed overseas. Additional financial aid may be offered on the basis of need. 250 boarders in Switzerland and 150 in England represent 40 different nationalities. For more information, contact: Caroline Cox, TASIS U.S. Admissions Office, 326 East 69th Street, New York, New York 10021. Telephone: (212) 570-1066. Telex: 971912.

Castilleja School, Palo Alto, California: Scholarships based on demonstrated financial need are available to daughters of personnel in the Foreign Service agencies or of U.S. military personnel serving overseas who are registered at Castilleja School for admission to grades 7 to 12 inclusive. For complete information write to Nancy L. Hoffman, Director of Admission, Castilleja School, 1310 Bryant St., Palo Alto, California 94301.

Dana Hall School: The Congdon Prize Scholarship is awarded on a competitive basis to two entering sophomore resident students. In addition to the $2500 prize, each winner is eligible for financial aid up to full tuition when warranted by need. Financial aid for all grades is also available based on need. Applications must be completed by February 1. Inquiries should be addressed to: Olive B. Long, Director of Admission, Dana Hall School, Wellesley, Massachusetts 02181.

Grier School: A $1000 reduction in tuition is available to daughters of Foreign Service personnel. Additionally, girls may compete for scholarship support on the basis of demonstrated financial need and all-round abilities. For information please contact: Admissions Director, The Grier School, Tyrone, Pennsylvania 16686.

Miss Hall's School: A $2500 reduction is available for the daughters of Foreign Service personnel. Miss Hall's enrolls 200 students in grades 9 through 12. For further information, contact Diederik van Renesse, Director for Admissions, Miss Hall's School, Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201.

Middlesex School: Scholarship offered on the basis of proven financial need for grades 9 through 12 to the son or daughter of a Foreign Service family. For information write to Sibyl F. Cohane, Director of Admissions, Middlesex School, 1400 Lowell Road, Concord, Massachusetts 01742.

The New Hampton School: A $1000 abatement on tuition to Foreign Service boys and girls. The school enrolls approximately 300 students in grades 9 through post-graduate. For information write to Admissions Office, The New Hampton School, New Hampton, New Hampshire 03256.

Northfield-Mount Herman School: A $1000 reduction in tuition is offered all sons and daughters of State Department personnel stationed overseas, grades 9 though 12. Additional financial aid is available on the basis of need. At present, students from 45 states and 64 countries are enrolled. For further information contact Virginia deVeer, Director of Admissions, Northfield-Mount Herman School, Northfield, Massachusetts 01360.

Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts; The Charles and Jane Stelle Memorial Scholarship is awarded to the son or daughter of a Foreign Service person. The award is based on financial need. For more information, write to Jeannie F. Dissette, Dean of Admissions/Clement Morell, Director of Financial Aid, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts 01810.

St. Albans School, Washington, D.C.: The Phillip Hayes Funkhouser Memorial Scholarship provides partial scholarship aid to an academically qualified student in grades 4-12. The award is based on proven financial need and is offered to the son of a Foreign Service family. For information write to A. Wayne Gordon, Scholarship Committee, St. Albans School, Mount St. Alban, Washington, D.C. 20016.

St. Andrew's School, Middletown, Delaware: The Norris S. Haselton Scholarships are awarded to sons and daughters of career Foreign Service families where scholarship assistance is indicated. The school enrolls 245 students in grades 9 through 12. For further information write the Director of Admissions, St. Andrews School, Middletown, Delaware 19709.

Vermont Academy: An Edward R. Cheney Memorial Scholarship is being awarded to the son or daughter of a Foreign Service person. The academy enrolls 250 students in grades 9 through 12. For information write to the Director of Admissions, Vermont Academy, Saxtons River, Vermont 05154.

Wykeham Rise: A boarding school in Washington, Connecticut, with an international student body of 85 girls, grades nine through post-graduate year, has announced a $2000 tuition reduction available to daughters of Foreign Service employees stationed abroad. For more information, write Ruth Boerger, Director of Admissions, Wykeham Rise, Washington, Connecticut 06793.

Colleges

Dartmouth College: S. Pinkney Tuck Scholarship. For students at Dartmouth College who are the children or grandchildren of Foreign Service officers and who are in need of financial assistance. Address inquiries to the Director of Financial Aid, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire 03755.

Vassar College: The Polly Richardson Lukens Memorial Scholarship is awarded to children of Foreign Service personnel. Another scholarship, awarded by an anonymous donor, is granted to the child of an American Foreign Service officer. If no such applicant qualifies, the scholarship may be awarded to the child of an employee of the federal government or of a state government. Both awards are based on financial need. Apply to Director of Financial Aid, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601.

Yale University: Children of American Foreign Service officers will be considered for a need-based scholarship made possible by the gift of Gilbert H. Kinney and Mrs. Kinney. If no child of an American Foreign Service officer qualifies, children of members of the U.S. military services or of employees of the federal government will be considered. Recipients must demonstrate financial need. Contact: Director of Financial Aid, Box 2170 Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

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AFSA ♦ NEWS

AFSA wins institutional grievance on accountability review boards

In what AFSA considers a major achievement, the Department of State has confirmed AFSA's right to negotiate the procedures governing the operation of Accountability Review Boards and has awarded relief in our institutional grievance charge.

As reported in the September *AFSA News*, AFSA filed an institutional grievance on June 27, 1988, in response to the department's convening of two Accountability Review Boards. These boards are designed to investigate incidents involving loss of life or destruction of property at U.S. missions abroad, such as those occurring in Greece and Honduras in the spring. The findings of such boards may serve as the basis for disciplinary action against employees who are found to be negligent in the performance of their duties.

In order to safeguard the rights of individuals investigated, AFSA sought to negotiate specific procedures with the department.

The department admitted that the convening of these boards prior to formal negotiations with AFSA is a violation of our Collective Bargaining Agreement. The department assured AFSA that our right to negotiate the regulations governing future Accountability Review Boards will be honored. The department has also guaranteed that no finding made by the two previously convened boards will adversely affect any Foreign Service employees.

AFSA look forward to constructive negotiations with the department on this important issue.

ASFA files suit to prevent discontinuance of Overseas Option

AFSA has filed suit challenging the Department of State's discontinuation of its special relationship with the American Foreign Service Protective Association (AFSPA).

AFSPA had been offering an "Overseas Option," in which the department acts as primary payer of medical expenses for employees serving overseas. However, as a result of the department's decision, AFSPA will not offer its Overseas Option in 1989, and it is not listed as an available option during open season bidding on health insurance plans.

In its suit AFSA requested that the court order the department to maintain its role as primary insurer until bargaining with AFSA takes place, and order OPM to do all that is necessary to allow AFSPA to offer the Overseas Option. As the alternative, AFSA asked the court to order that those individuals affected by the discontinuance of the Overseas Option be reimbursed the difference in premiums between the Overseas Option and their new insurance.

AFSA will inform all posts as soon as any court decision is issued. If open season ends before then, overseas personnel must choose an insurance plan from among those that will definitely be offered next year.

Psychological screening delayed

AFSA has been successful in delaying implementation of the department's proposed psychological screening program for individuals assigned to posts in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Negotations were proceeding slowly, due in part to the department's reluctance to provide AFSA with information on what motivated them to initiate such psychological testing. In an attempt to force AFSA to proceed with negotiations, the department filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) and informed AFSA that it planned to begin the testing program on October 1, prior to completion of bargaining.

But Senator Claiborne Pell, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, spoke out in support of AFSA. As a result of Senator Pell's letter to Under Secretary Ronald I. Spiers, the department has withdrawn its ULP and stated it will delay the program pending negotiations. AFSA has made a number of proposals to mitigate the adverse effects of the screening program and we are awaiting the department's response.

AFSA Holiday Festivities

Thursday, December 8
4—7 p.m.

Foreign Service Club

AID Standing Committee addresses issues

After three months of negotiations, the AID Standing Committee has been notified that management is filing for impasse on the proposed agency affirmative action plan. The Standing Committee is also seeking to advance discussions with the inspector general's office on the conduct of investigations and the associated rights of employees.

After receiving a number of thoughtful responses on the agency's proposed affirmative action plan (AAP), AFSA began negotiating with the agency in August. After a number of sessions, AID and AFSA have reached agreement on most facets of the AAP, among them the reactivation and increased role of the now dormant EEO Oversight Board, broadening of responsibility within AID for identification of EPAP positions and candidates, and improvement of EEO counseling, especially overseas. However, on the most problematic issue—special promotion consideration for EEO target groups— we have not been able to reach agreement. AID had proposed, in cases where there is an imbalance or absence of minority representation at a given grade level and backstop, that management be permitted to reach up to five places below the established promotion cutoff line to promote members of targeted groups (women and minorities). As most of the responses we received opposed this aspect of the plan, AFSA made a counterproposal that would have addressed the most glaring cases of underrepresentation while attempting to preserve the integrity of the promotion system as mandated in the 1980 Foreign Service Act. However, while AFSA has offered several compromises, we have seen virtually no management movement on this issue. Given that we are now at impasse, AID Standing Committee is actively soliciting further member input as to how to proceed.

The AID Standing Committee is also attempting to open discussions with the AID Inspector General's office. After several posts raised questions about the methods used by IG agents during investigations, AFSA sent a cable to all posts requesting viewpoints from personnel who have had experiences with IG investigations. While all of the respondents agreed that the role of the IG—to root out waste, fraud, and abuse—is an important one, the responses also suggested that the procedures used by the investigators were worthy of study.

Some members expressed concern that in individual instances certain investigators had failed to fully brief employees on their rights and on what was being investigated. Further, it was felt that full Constitutional rights, including the presumption of innocence until proven guilty, should be guaranteed to all employees under investigation. AFSA wishes to ensure that employees are fully briefed about their rights before investigations begin, while making sure that the IG's mandate is in no way compromised. We have contacted the IG's office to discuss these issues, and are waiting for a response.

Congressional Action

In its closing days in September, the 100th Congress attended to a number of Foreign Service issues. The Integrity in Post-employment Act was passed, without the provision that would have excluded former government employees from working for international organizations. The Federal Employee Health Benefits Act amendment of 1988 was passed. The Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill was passed—minus an amendment concerning diplomatic immunity. And, in separate actions, Foreign Service officers were commended.

On October 21, the House passed its version of Senate bill S-237, the Integrity in Post-employment Act of 1988. The bill had been amended by both houses to exclude the provision which would have restricted individuals from working for international organizations of which the U.S. is a member for a period of 18 months following government service. AFSA members posted to U.S. missions at international organizations contributed compelling arguments about why this provision was detrimental to U.S. interests; the members' insights were relayed to key Senate and House congressmen.

The Federal Employee Health Benefits Act amendment of 1988 allows federal employees to keep their FEHBP insurance for up to 18 months after leaving the government. Dependent children and former spouses are also covered for up to 36 months. Enrollees must pay the full premium cost. Private sector employees have had this protection under COBRA legislation since 1985. AFSA had written to Senator David H. Pryor (D-AR), chairman of the Subcommittee on Federal Services, Post Office & Civil Service, urging him to support this act.

In other legislation, after extended discussion in both the House and the Senate, the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill was passed. The bill that was forwarded, however, will not include a provision proposed by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) on the diplomatic immunity issue, which was strongly discouraged by Shultz and by the President's office.

The diplomatic immunity amendment, meant to provide greater leverage in prosecuting foreign diplomats in the United States suspected of criminal activity, would have jeopardized reciprocal immunities and thereby threatened the well being of American diplomats and their families, according to a letter from Shultz to the House. In addition, AFSA alerted key members of Congress on the potential dangers of such a provision.

House member Dante Fascell (D-FL), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Robert A. Roe (D-NJ), chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, co-sponsored Resolution H-369, which noted: "The Department of State science and technology officers are often outnumbered by their counterparts from other nations." Congressmen Benjamin R. Gilman (R-NY), Manuel Lujan, Jr. (R-NM), and Ralph M. Hall (D-TX) also voiced their support for "S&T" officers, urging the secretary of state to make every effort to enhance their number and professional standing.

Finally, Congress paid tribute to Ambassador to Chile Harry G. Barnes, Jr., for his contributions to "the restoration of democracy" in Chile. In commending him, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) said, "I want to pay special tribute to him, not only for his extraordinary skill as a diplomat, but also for his personal courage, his professionalism, his patience in time of great testing and trouble, and for his faith in our country's own best values." AFSA has nominated Ambassador Barnes for the congressional Excalibur award.

Professional Issues

Dick Thompson
Coordinator for Professional Issues

My column this month consists of two commercials, but please don't tune them out:

Submit nominations for AFSA awards! We had impressive winners at an impressive ceremony this year, based on a large number of nominations, and hope to do even better in the next round. Instructions for submitting awards (due December 31) were packaged with the October JOURNAL, and are also contained in a cable to the field and a Red Top circulated in Washington. The October JOURNAL also contained reflections on the awards by past winners and judges. The awards are not an end in themselves but a way of reminding each of us that we should strive in our own work to achieve the standards suggested by the awards.

Attend AFSA discussion meetings! We had two highly successful get-togethers this month on promotion panels and on assignments. The first filled the library, and so many signed up for the second that we had to move to the larger East-West room, which was in turn filled to capacity. Watch for our Red Tops, or call or write to have your name put on the mailing list. To ask about the awards or learn about future discussions write me at AFSA, 3644 NS, Department of State, or call 338-4045.

Scholarship Programs

WHO? For dependent students of all Foreign Service personnel who are serving or have served abroad for foreign affairs agencies covered by the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

WHAT? *Merit Awards* for graduating high school students in 1989 only, based on academic merit. *Financial Aid Grants* to full-time undergraduate students in the United States, based on need.

HOW? Apply immediately to AFSA Scholarship Programs, 2101 E Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037. Phone (202)338-4046. Specify type of scholarship and Foreign Service affiliation.

WHEN? All applications must be completed and materials returned to AFSA before February 15, 1989.

Panel discusses evaluation system

The Foreign Service Act of 1980 established a promotion system which has encouraged rigorous and cutthroat competition as compared to our former, and relatively more gentlemanly, process. That was one of the conclusions reached by Ambassador Larry C. Williamson, director of the Office of Performance Evaluation (PER/PE), at a well-attended AFSA Professionl Issues Discussion, on **"Why did all those people get promoted and I am not on the list?"**

Williamson, William C. Ramsey, Mark R. Parris, and Richard J. van Wagenen, shared their recent experience as promotion-panel members with a lunchtime group at the Foreign Service Club, October 6. The event was publicized and open to all interested personnel.

Williamson described how a promotion board panel is formed. Each panel has no less than five members. The panels are organized according to grade, cone and population. At certain levels there is a panel for each grade. Other panels may review several cones separated within a grade level or several grade levels. By law or by regulation, public members, women, and minoritics serve on each panel. Board members initially review the performance files and separate them into three groups: Those possibly ready for promotion; those low-ranked for possible referral to a Performance Standard Board; and everyone else, the "mid-rank" group. The board then re-reviews and rank orders the high and low groups.

Panelists noted that the director general spends considerable time deciding who should be on the Board. AFSA consults with PER/FCA to ensure that the best panelists possible are chosen. But neither the DG nor PER, after choosing and initially instructing panels, get involved in the selection process; lists are not tampered with once they have been approved. Williamson also said that the 1980 Act forbids the White House from influencing who gets on the promotion list, and that although the DG has the right to raise issues concerning the final list, "he would be ill advised to do so." Congress, which has an "advise and consent" role, is not so constrained.

Parris, who evaluated political and administrative FS-2 officers bucking for FS-1, recommended the promotion panel experience to anyone: "I got to think about the Foreign Service as a whole in a way I had not done since my A-100 class."

The panelists remarked that in general the promotion system does work; that the best people are promoted, that people low-ranked deserve to be. However, when initially identifying those recommended for promotion, panel members do not know what the designated number of promotions per grade will be. Thereafter, the boards are told how many will be promoted, and carefully look again at the files just above and below the limit. Whether you are on the right, or wrong, side of the cut-off has an arbitrary element, in that panel members themselves may be hard put to distinguish why individuals were placed in their particular rank order, particularly when it comes to those hovering at the cut-off line.

A promotion, all agreed, is not a reward for long and faithful or even good service. The purpose is to provide the U.S. government with a Foreign Service of excellence and needed capabilities. "Administrations want an instrument they can trust and use," Williamson pointed out, especially in the Senior Foreign Service.

Ramsey further explained why you can't get promoted merely on the basis of doing a job well. As a panelist promoting FS-3s to FS-2, he looked for individuals who are ready for a bigger job, who can expand. "The system is promoting potential," he stressed, not rewarding accomplishments.

Why did they get promoted?

"Corridor reputation" means everything in getting good assignments, and those assignments can be the key to why your name isn't on the list. Not having a glamourous job can easily make your file non-competitive. Headquarters versus field experience can play a factor; there is an illusion that "headquarters" has the best people, but panelists attempt to compensate for that. In fact, for the political cone, the majority of those promoted serve in the Third World, because "it's harder to shine in the big puddles of missions in developed countries."

Other passed-over files reflect too

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much experience out of cone or in other agencies. To be competitive multifunctionally, for example, your qualifying experience has to be current and your performance outstanding.

All in all, to get a promotion you must satisfy the precepts for promotion for your cone and grade. One panelist suggested that precepts for promotion not be defined too narrowly, as that would limit panel members from "seeing around" a tight definition to recognize qualifying experience.

Williamson said there is also a "wild card"—time in class. Reports are not supposed to reveal age, sex or other distinguishing factors, but time-in-class may reveal a great deal about an individual's promotable prospects. TICs could influence promotion in two ways: 1) the impression of quality created by accumulated experience, or alternatively 2) the suggestion in reports that, though "brilliant," an employee may be "not ready yet." But Ramsey did not find a long- or short-term bias against time-in-class. He gave percentages for the FS-3s he evaluated: those promoted spent 4.9 years in grade compared to 4.88 for the promotable pool, and had 12.8 years in the Foreign Service compared to 12.5 years for the pool.

Among other factors in getting promoted, panelists described how the most crucial one is the actual content of your file. That stack of paper may make you promotable or unpromotable.

One report doesn't make a promotion, but inconsistency among reports will raise questions and may lead to your file ending up in the mid-rank pile.

Maybe your boss actually didn't intend for you to get promoted and wrote a mediocre report, which the panel may interpret as "damning with faint praise."

The language used to write a report can make or break your chances for promotion. Bad reports can result when your boss is a bad drafter.

The four panelists (left to right) William C. Ramsey, Richard J. van Wagenen, Larry C. Williamson, and Mark R. Parris.

Panelists agreed that over-writing and exaggeration abound. But they held that the varying quality of writing didn't get in the way of their ability to evaluate and reach consensus on the rank order list. However, the writer of an employee evaluation report should anticipate that the panel "may not feel charitable" to idiosyncratic or trite writing.

Raters too often write reports that are drab, uninformative or not sufficiently supported. Reports written just before the due date are also easily identifable, compared to balanced reports crafted over the course of the review year.

Another frequent evaluating style is a mere job description that details the mechanics of a position rather than brings the person occupying it to life. "Write in *concrete* terms," William Ramsey emphasized. "Illustrate what 'good' is." Rating officers should look beyond categorization and provide more narrative.

Careless report drafting by a rater can lead the panel to consult files that contain every efficiency report the rating officer has done in the last year. Letters of commendation or criticism may be sent to specific raters, for reports done especially well or poorly.

Why am I not on the List?

Participants shared ideas on how you can help control the outcome of a promotion review.

"Many of us don't accept the responsibility of our own promotion as we should; we don't look at our files, don't use the two counselling sessions each year we're entitled to; don't look at our PARs," Williamson advised.

The reference to PARs elicited concerned comments, especially that they be made a more informative instrument. Often a PAR will not reflect the true content of an assignment or record an achievement. PARs have only recently begun to give evidence of managerial positions, but do not always indicate awards. "The PAR office is very helpful, but understaffed, or else it needs more direction from above," one attendee said. Participants said that the computer software used for PARs has limited flexibility when recording job titles, responsibilities, or the location of an assignment.

However, panelists read everything in a file to get as full a picture as possible. They become thoroughly familiar with every individual under consideration; files are gone over repeatedly by each panel member until the consensus on rank-order is finally achieved. So if something relevant to the end result of the review is missing or not fully documented, the responsibility lies with the individual.

The unavoidable question is did you actually do lousy work this year. People frequently shoot themselves in the foot by putting a statement in the self-rating box that is too defensive, and often backfires, explained van Wagenen, a FS-4 to FS-3 panel's "public member." The board then has a tangible illustration demonstrating why the individual's performance was lousy! The board he sat on referred to the self-rating page as the "suicide page."

"Lack of communication with one's boss, with one's colleagues, was probably the most frequent comment" that led to a poor review, van Wagenen stated. This shortcoming is usually recorded over the years in grade, which means that the rated person did not look at his or her file and work at overcoming the lack—further proof of failing not only to send but to receive communication.

AFSA staff news

AFSA is pleased to announce the appointment of Cristin Springet as scholarship administrator. Cristen has had eight years experience in administering scholarship programs, most recently as a consultant for the AID Presidential Training Initiative in Barbados, where she was posted with her FSO husband, William Mooney.

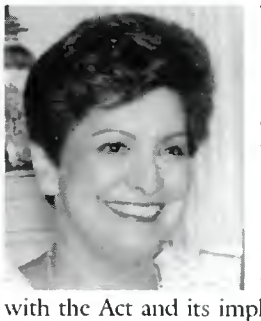
Ms. Springet looks forward to increasing awareness of the scholarship program and making more funds available for scholarships.

Your first point of contact when you call AFSA or visit our State Department offices is likely to be Ashley Ney. As executive assistant and office manager, Ashley is in charge of the day-to-day functioning of the office, as well as scheduling meetings, greeting visitors, and assisting members. Ashley majored in studio art at Virginia Polytechnic and State Univ.

State Standing Committee

A new partnership

Evangeline Monroe
Vice President



The Foreign Service Act of 1980 was passed under one administration and implemented under the leadership of another. Whatever faults we may find with the Act and its implementation cannot be blamed on either administration, since both the concept and the implementation represented a partnership between the political leadership and the career Service. Next month the Foreign Service begins a new partnership with a new administration and will have another opportunity to examine and adjust the way the Act has been implemented.

Success in a better implementation of the Foreign Service Act will benefit both partners. Political appointees and the career Service have the same goal—the promotion and defense of American interests. We are likely to find that both partners have similar attributes but will have different strengths. We will most certainly have different perspectives. The Foreign Service must, as it has with each administration, learn the political imperatives of the new administration.

The new administration will come prepared with policy positions in the major foreign policy issues. It will be up to the Foreign Service to be prepared to suggest organizational and personnel policies that will assure a Foreign Service healthy enough to work with the new administration in meeting its foreign policy objectives.

No personnel system or management policy will be effective if it is not based on openness, fairness and respect among all Service segments. Fairness is an elusive quality, but there certainly will not be fairness unless it is a widely held, basic tenet. The Whitehead plan announced in September, 1987 to reorganize the Department was widely resented because it had been designed secretly, without consultation of those affected. By contrast, the administrative reforms developed under Ambassador Brandon Grove's task force are proceeding without wide-scale resistanee because an effort was made to develop consensus and to subject proposals to broader scrutiny.

With rare exceptions the Foreign Service has always succeeded in gaining the respect of its political leadership and political colleagues before the end of an administration. This process can and should be speeded up, and the Foreign Service can do its part by recognizing that respect is a two-way street. Respect within the Service would be enhanced if there were a greater recognition of the truism voiced recently by General Vessey, former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "the duties of those who do not rise to high rank are just as important as the duties of those who do."

An open session with the Commission to Study the Personnel System of the Foreign Service concluded with the remark that the Service needs 'water walkers' as well as those who carry water. We will not have a healthy Service until there is career stability for both. As the Foreign Service Act is now implemented a 'water walker' who reaches the Senior Service early is as vulnerable to involuntary retirement as is the officer who moves more slowly and barely misses being admitted to the Senior Service. A combined time-in-class requirement for OC's and MC's of 12 or 15 years would provide the security a Senior needs for maximum productivity. An eight-year window would provide an extra tour in which an O1 officer could demonstrate potential for promotion into the Senior Service. Multiple and longer limited career extensions for specialists would result in the retention of people with talents without which the modern Foreign Service cannot function. All of this could be accomplished without amending the Foreign Service Act.

None of the above will be feasible without more rigorous selection out for poor performanee for mid-level employees. Selection out at mid-level is likely to be an unpopular suggestion, but it is consistent with the Foreign Service's continuous support for an up or out (not up and out) personnel system. By winnowing out employees earlier in their careers we would have a stronger, more effective service, and a more humane one. For the individual whose performance reveals an incompatibility with the Foreign Service, selection out earlier in a career is far preferable than later when an employee may have maximum family responsibilities and be less competitive in the job market.

Since the passage of the Aet there has not even been agreement about the optimum length of a career. As the Act is presently implemented by the Department of State, an officer who does not make the Senior Service can expect a 26-year career **if he or she is promoted slowly**. We cannot build a strong Foreign Service by encouraging mediocrity and asking people to trade off security for promotions. We certainly cannot adequately provide for career development and predict our human resources needs if there is no clear understanding about length of service.

The Foreign Service will be weakened if it does not have a coherent personnel system that is understood by all employees. At present, we do not have such a system. We have specialists who feel they must become generalists in order to rise to the top, and we have generalists who are divided into groups of junior, mid-level, and senior officers clamoring for a larger share of a shrinking pie. Eaeh group attaches different meaning to the Foreign Service, yet each group needs the other if the Foreign Service is to be a strong and healthy institution.

There should be no argument about the need for a strong and healthy Foreign Service. The international arena has become even more complicated since the Foreign Service Act was passed in 1980—too complicated to permit a shrinking Service. In an era of fiscal limits, the Department of State's priorities must be its people. People, not technology, will make the difference in how we meet the challenges to diplomacy posed by a Soviet Union undergoing radical internal reform. People, well trained and secure in their partnership with the political leadership, will determine whether we can redefine for the country's benefit the shifting seeurity and eeonomie relationships with Western Europe and Japan. And only people can solve the intractable problems in the Third World. The new administration will need an institutionaly healthy Foreign Service as it confronts the growing threats of narcotics, terrorism, and third-world debt.

Legislative Action Fund Contributions 1988

The following individuals are a partial list of those who have given their support to the American Foreign Service Association's legislative efforts in 1988. Future issues of the JOURNAL will publish the names of additional contributors.

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