

# FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

AUGUST 1992

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## SUMMER READING



**BRAHIM**

by John Bovey

**TIGER IN THE BARBED WIRE**

by Howard R. Simpson

**THE CONSUL AND THE MUTINY**

by Ellis O. Briggs

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# AFSA VIEWS

## HAIL AND FAREWELL, ALL OVER AGAIN

It's the one thing we never quite get used to in the Foreign Service. We come together for too short a time, work together, share the ups and downs of both our professional and our personal lives, just about get really to know one another, and then . . . we part. Foreign Service life seems to be one continuous hail and farewell, especially at this time of year. As an organization of Foreign Service people, AFSA shares this affliction. And so it is that we reluctantly accept the resignation of Hume Horan as president of AFSA, thank him for his leadership during the past year, and wish him well in his new duties in Cote d'Ivoire.

Just two days before replacing Hume, I attended a memorial service for Phil Habib at the National Cathedral. That event highlighted for me some other aspects of the Foreign Service.

About 20 minutes before the service was to begin, a very worried senior member of the Cathedral staff approached me to express concern that people were not taking their seats but were milling about in the aisles. There were indeed any number of animated knots of people, and the whole scene looked more like a reunion than the prelude to a solemn occasion. But where she had seen a rather undisciplined and perhaps disrespectful crowd, I saw a group of Foreign Service people in a very typical mode. With many in from out of town and out of touch, they were simply catching up on events since "the last time," before paying tribute to their common mentor—who would have enjoyed both the Service camaraderie and the fact that it unnerved the establishment.

I was struck by the number of Foreign Service secretaries at the service, but I shouldn't have been surprised. I had the chance to watch Phil Habib, while on special missions after his retirement, take special care to make sure the secretaries who worked on his behalf knew how much he appreciated them. He personally visited the commo room to thank the communicators as well. He knew that his activities during the day would remain lost on Washington without their efforts at night. Another good reason to emulate the master!

Finally, the fact that the service was held at all reminded me of what happens at every post abroad on a regular basis—Foreign Service people banding together to meet a need. The service was not planned—or even supported to any meaningful degree—by the Department of State. It was conceived, organized, and carried out by individuals and groups who admired Phil Habib and what he meant to their Foreign Service. They simply knew it was the right thing to do—so they did it. AFSA was proud to play a role.

— BILL KIRBY



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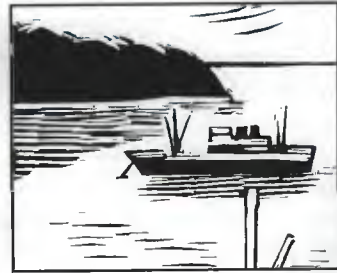
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## THAT WAS GOOD

TO THE EDITOR:

Before I started reading James Gormley's article on his experiences in the war on drugs (*June Journal*), I had no idea what to expect. After finishing it, I said aloud, "Damn, that was good."

*The Foreign Service Journal* has a history of publishing prescient and perceptive viewpoints on this subject. There were Dorothy Dillon's "Speaking Out" in October 1988, and Andrew Kaufmann II's letter in support of Dillon in January 1989. This is the wonder of democracy: small voices of reason and sanity are allowed to express themselves unmolested in the cacophony of hype and foolishness. The sadness of democracy is that these voices are so rarely heeded.

Gormley's suggestion that we adopt Norman Mailer's campaign slogan—"No more bullshit"—as the cornerstone of our drug policy is a good one. I can think of some other policies to which that slogan would apply.

Lewis K. Elbinger  
Nairobi

## PERSONNEL ISSUES

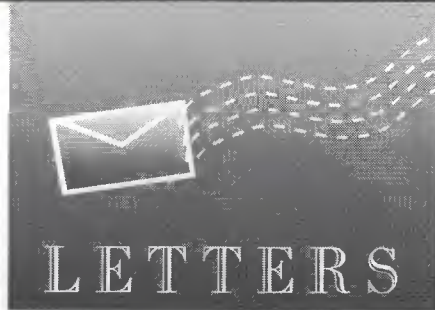
TO THE EDITOR:

As an ex-director of the Foreign Service, I was naturally interested in Lee Hamilton's remarks at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy (*May Journal*). There is much in his remarks that I enthusiastically endorse, and I applaud his interest and understanding.

However, there are parts of the recommendations for the service that I believe are mutually incompatible. Basic to achieving the goal of a competent career service, there are at least two elements that stand out. . . . his objection to the selection-out process practiced by the boards is one of the suggestions I would question.

The other principle which is so often overlooked is that in such matters as language and kindred accomplishments no officer is going to dedicate his life to acquiring these qualifications if he does not have reasonable hope of reward.

John M. Steeves  
Ambassador, retired



## 50 YEARS AGO

TO THE EDITOR:

*The Washington Post* recently reprinted an extract from "50 years ago" (*May Journal*). The print size of the Post's attribution was so small that many readers may not have noticed that the originators of this article were British, not American. I would like to provide background to the extract.

The writer who reported on the reasons why women are unsuited for Foreign Service work, Sir Harold Nicholson, was a prominent British diplomat and acknowledged authority on diplomatic problems and procedures. As the author of *The English Sense of Humour* and husband of Vita Sackville West, a woman famous in feminist circles, he most assuredly wrote tongue-in-cheek.

During World War II, England and America grappled with the idea of increasing Foreign Service personnel needs by admitting women, many of whom were already serving in auxiliary capacities as clerks, typists, and decoders. British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden allegedly refused to admit women in the diplomatic and consular services. However, the American Foreign Service's response was more positive.

The precedent for female officers had been established in 1922 with the entry of Lucille Atcherson, the first U.S. woman officer. With the establishment of the Foreign Service Auxiliary as an emergency war corps, 20 American women were, by 1944, serving overseas as vice consuls, economic analysts, special assistants, and cultural affairs officers.

Following complaints about the feminine incursion by some old-time male FSOs, whose minds were as closed (Sir Harold wrote) as "locked dispatch boxes," a 1944 edition of the

*Foreign Service Journal* published the following from Nathaniel P. Davis, chief of Foreign Service Personnel:

"It is time to stop squawking about the Auxiliary and thank Heaven that we have in it a group of loyal and devoted public servants without whom the Foreign Service could not have fulfilled its obligation in so magnificent a manner."

The zeal of Mr. Davis' support for women in the Foreign Service surely must have raised the eyebrows of proper "dispatch boxes," both American and British.

Kathleen Heffron  
Washington, D.C.

## PAN AM REVISITED

TO THE EDITOR:

Harry Johnson's properly nostalgic "Farewell to Pan Am" (*June Journal*) evoked a few of my own recollections.

When I was growing up in Guatemala in the 1930s and early 1940s, the three paramount symbols of the U.S. presence in Central America were the American Embassy, the United Fruit Company, and Pan American World Airways. The latter was clearly the most visible and familiar. Pan American's flights to New Orleans and Miami were Guatemala's window to the world, taking travelers to places only imagined by moviegoers and bringing visitors from distant lands. I'll never forget the sight of Eleanor Roosevelt—who was considered the embodiment of her husband's Good Neighbor policy—emerging from a Pan Am Clipper behind the promise of her radiant smile. Such events contributed forcefully to the image of Pan Am itself as the tangible manifestation of the Good Neighbor throughout Latin America.

Pan Am gave me both my first job and my first flight. In 1942 Guatemala contributed to the war effort by allowing the United States to operate a military air base at the capital's small airport. . . . But for such use the airport needed improvement. The work was done by Pan Am's Airport Development Corporation, which hired me to interpret for the construction boss. I



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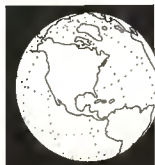
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## LETTERS

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In 1944 I finally flew on one of the planes I had been watching for so long; a Pan Am Clipper brought me to New Orleans on my way back to the New York I had left 11 years earlier. As I recall, everyone sat in six-person compartments and really enjoyed the service. The flight, via Merida, Mexico took almost seven hours.

Like many others, I flew Pan Am throughout my Foreign Service career. It saddens me that such familiarity bred occasional unhappiness about deterioration of service. It saddens me much more that none of us have Pan Am "to kick around" anymore.

*Alfonso Arenales  
Bethesda, Maryland*

## MISCONCEPTION ABOUT SPOUSES

TO THE EDITOR:

Your coverage of the role for spouses (*June Journal*) was factual although somewhat incomplete. Times have changed. The days of the "dragon ladies" may be gone. Today's Foreign Service spouse population, female and male alike, is much more diversified and sophisticated. Degrees from some of America's best schools abound. Professionally trained and experienced, fully bilingual—occasionally even trilingual—spouses are not unusual. Therefore, I believe that neither the 1972 "hands-off" policy nor the artificial creation of nonsubstantive jobs at post is the best way to handle today's complex overseas spouse problem. With many experienced family members joining their diplomat spouses, it is time for State to make better use of this loyal although sometimes demoralized and wasted talent. A few low level, poorly paid, part time, short term renewable positions will not do the trick.

*Jorge P. Osterling  
Berlin, Germany*

TO THE EDITOR:

I read with interest the series of articles on spouses of Foreign Service



officers in the June edition of the *Foreign Service Journal*. I commend the *Foreign Service Journal* for drawing attention to some of these problems. However, I fear that these articles inadvertently perpetuate misconceptions about the nature of today's Foreign Service families.

The articles steadfastly refer to the needs and problems of Foreign Service *wives*. The reality is that the number of Foreign Service *husbands* is rapidly increasing. Page 4 of the June *AFSA News* makes a point that the newest group of incoming Foreign Service officers is mostly female. Presumably there are male spouses attached to these women. I have also had the unusual experience of recently being posted to a small embassy where all the dependent spouses/partners were male. The male dependents at this post suffered the same disruption in their careers, the same impositions, and served as brilliantly without compensation as the women cited in your articles.

Secondly, your articles imply that unmarried FSOs do not share in these concerns. Not true. Unmarried FSOs have families that may include parents, children, and/or partner of the same or opposite sex. I comprehend the problems that confront Foreign Service spouses. Imagine the greater problems facing partners that, in the eyes of the Foreign Service, do not even exist.

If the Foreign Service is truly committed to becoming more representative of the American people, then its policies and practices must recognize that the typical American family is not headed by a married couple, but more often by a single parent or unmarried partners. The 1990 census reports that only 102 million Americans, or less than half of the population, live in families headed by a married couple. An overhaul of Foreign Service family policy is long overdue, but revisions should take account of the reality of the family in the 1990s and not a stereotype from the 1950s.

David W. Larson  
Washington, D.C. ■

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Cut Along Dotted Lines

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## IN SEARCH OF

*THE WASHINGTON POST*, MAY 26, 1992  
BY KIRSTIN DOWNEY

The fledgling republic of Belarus... is well-stocked with nuclear weapons. It is desks and chairs the country lacks, as it seeks to furnish its new U.S. embassy, located in a suite of offices about the size of a modest one-bedroom apartment at 1511 K St. N.W. Fortunately, the new landlord has lent a few pieces of office furniture to tide the republic over.

"We are starting not just from scratch but from zero, which is difficult," said Belarus chargé d'affaires Serguei Martynov, who spent much of last week overseeing the installation of telephones and fax machines.

Thus far Belarus, Ukraine, and Armenia are the lucky ones who have found places to hang their hats. Of the remaining 11 new countries that sprang from the old Soviet Union most are still uncomfortably bunking at the former Soviet Embassy... which was appropriated by the Russian federation, or are crunched in shared facilities scattered around the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Relations among the new countries



are bound to be tense, given still-simmering animosities among the different nationalities. Many of the new countries resent that the Russian federation claimed the prestigious embassies around the world... formerly held by the Soviet Union.

All are learning the hard way that ethnic pride doesn't count for much in the search for shelter in the United States... economic Darwinism determines who gets space, how much, and where. Only countries with cash are finding themselves with quarters at all.

One piece of good fortune for these newly formed nations, however, is the overbuilt real estate market here means that some landlords are willing to consider the financially struggling countries as tenants. Emerging countries, after all, are one of the few growth industries these days in the Washington area.

[The] foreign diplomats were quick to stress that their current locations are

## WARTIME DIPLOMACY

*LIFE*, AUGUST 13, 1945

Alexander Comstock Kirk arrived in Italy as United States ambassador shortly after the arrival of the Allied armies, and is profiled by Life magazine as "probably the outstanding career diplomat now functioning for the U.S. State Department."

In modern times the dual function of an ambassador is to transmit directives from and reports to the country which he represents... for U.S. foreign policy, or the lack of it, is not his responsibility but that of the State Department, based, presumably on reports from all its agents in the field.

Kirk regards diplomatic entertaining as a thing of the past. The ambassador has advanced ideas about diplomacy of the future. He believes that, in addition to expanding its diplomatic corps numerically, the United States should also improve it in other

ways. According to Kirk, diplomats of the future will be technical experts in one line or another, chosen for their ability not only to diagnose economic, industrial, and political trends, but also to adjust their dislocations before they can start wars. [But] he is a realist and knows that governments, while always ready to spend billions to pursue hostilities, are rarely ready to spend comparable sums to avoid them. One year of Kirk's stay in Washington in the late 1920s was devoted to supervising the State Department budget. He regarded it as an obligation to spend as much money as possible in order to stress the need for larger appropriations and managed to get rid of \$17 million, or roughly the cost of one hour of the war resulting from a situation which more dextrous and extended diplomacy could assuredly have rectified.

strictly temporary, and they have big dreams for the future... The State Department's Office of Foreign Missions has the right to review and approve or disapprove the embassies' locations. All will eventually locate in the District. In some cases State Department officials have accompanied diplomats as they looked for space.

Leasing office space was a learning experience for the foreign officials... Martynov has spent his life working as a diplomat, but in the past few months, he has been working the calculator to decipher price per square foot. "For me it was a first time," Martynov said. "I was doing disarmament all my life. It was educational. I learned to be insistent."

## EMBASSY BATTLE ENDS

*USA TODAY*, JUNE 19, 1992

The United States reportedly has agreed to drop claims totaling \$30 million against the Russians for bugging the new embassy in Moscow, news reports said. Secretary of State James Baker and Russian Foreign Minister Andre Kozyrev did sign an accord on the U.S. and former Soviet embassies...

The agreement means the United States will get land in Moscow to build a bug-free embassy and a long-term lease on the existing facility in Moscow... The Russians will be able to move into the still-vacant embassy of the former Soviet Union in Washington.

## SLUSH FUND

*U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT*, JUNE 29, 1992  
BY GLORIA BORGER

Buried deep in the State Department budget is a secret account called the K-fund. By government standards, the \$7.5 million to \$10 million item—also known as the secretary's confidential fund—isn't much. But lately it has been the center of a private war pitting the department against Congress.

The K-fund first hit public radar last year when Congress required the disclosure of all new travel, gift, and entertainment expenses in the account. Now, California Democrat Howard Berman wants all past accounts out in the open, too...

Secretary of State James Baker's team now calls itself "agnostic" on the sub-

ject, warning senior staff, if you can't do it openly, rethink how you're spending money. Baker loyalists say it's the "career bureaucrats" who wanted secrecy. "The last think we'd do is run a protection racket for people spending money down lower in the building," sniffs one.

The first two declassified 1992 quarterly reports raised internal questions: Thousands spent for private limousines for visiting delegations prompted one official to ask why department limos were not used instead. Flowers worth \$2,730 were ordered for a conference on aid to the Soviet Union; another \$1,625 bought plants for a lunch for Argentine President Carlos Menem. The gift list included thousands for Steuben glass and more than \$200 worth of items from Toys "R" Us—no recipients' names. The reports also showed \$2,152.76 spent on flags for the Greek prime minister; \$9,487 for Argentina; \$7,194 for Sweden.

Berman may lose his fight to declassify all K-fund information. "The State Department classifies everything but the menus," says one official. "But I guess the days of thinking these things can be kept secret are long gone."

## TEAM 100 WINNERS

*DETROIT FREE PRESS*, MAY 22, 1992

BY CARL M. CANNON

The most clear-cut examples of favoritism to Team 100 members [250 Americans who contributed \$100,000 to help Bush get elected in 1988] may be the foreign embassies they were awarded. . . . With Bush's nomination last week to send Kansas City financier Donald Alexander to the Netherlands, the president brought to nine the number of \$100,000 contributors selected as ambassadors.

At least three of these appointees, according to Senate sources, were rated as unqualified to serve as ambassadors by the American Academy of Diplomacy. . . . They were Joseph Gildenhorn, a Washington lawyer appointed ambassador to Switzerland, and two Florida businessmen, Joseph Zappala, appointed ambassador to Spain, and Melvin Sembler, ambassador to Australia. . . . Zappala had no foreign policy experience. Moreover, he did not even speak Spanish. . . . Zappala's appointment

prompted the American Foreign Service Association to [charge] that the Bush Administration was keeping its reports of ambassador appointments secret to hide their poor qualifications. Baker made the reports available to the union.

## EAGLEBURGER LIES LOW

*NEW YORK TIMES INTERNATIONAL*,

JUNE 19, 1992

BY DAVID BINDER

Old-timers call Larry Eagleburger "Lawrence of Macedonia," an allusion to his exploits of 29 years ago as a diplomatic troubleshooter . . . in Yugoslavia. The current Yugoslav crisis . . . has resisted all diplomatic interventions, making this an agonizing time for Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger.

For two years now, Eagleburger has had a major part, mostly behind the scenes, in managing the unsuccessful American efforts to find a solution to the Yugoslav crisis. . . . Because of his long and deep connections with Yugoslavia, including private business relationships, Eagleburger has been subjected to particular scrutiny and second-guessing.

His varied experience on Yugoslavia is a case study of how a seasoned diplomat balances his long friendship for a country with American national interest, even letting his emotions show occasionally. "There simply has to be a better way to part company than at the point of a bayonet," he commented. "That is important for Yugoslavia and for the world."

When the Yugoslav conflict began to heat up, Baker asked his deputy to become directly involved again, dispatching him to Belgrade in February 1990. "He didn't push his way in," a colleague said. "He was dragged in."

But within the State Department, some younger diplomats have begun to criticize Eagleburger . . . and other old Balkan hands for being wedded too long to the old, unified Yugoslavia, and thus, ill-prepared to cope with the jackals of nationalism that have eviscerated the country. Some Balkan specialists within the State Department also criticize Eagleburger, Brent Scowcroft and Ambassador Warren Zimmermann . . . for allegedly holding on too long and too tightly to their vision of a unified

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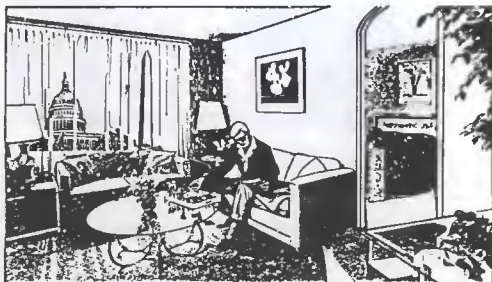
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Yugoslav state. Some even say Eagleburger has been biased toward the Serbs. Those are criticisms Eagleburger vehemently rejects. He said, "I told Milosevic more than two years ago that he couldn't hold Yugoslavia together by force."

### **POLITICAL DUMPING GROUND**

*THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY, JUNE 1992*  
By ERIC KONIGSBERG

Today, GSA, the Small Business Administration, USAID, the Department of Agriculture, the Office of Personnel Management, and certain divisions within the departments of Commerce and Justice are the most expansive dumping grounds for marginal Republicans who want to cash in their campaign chits for one of Washington's 3,000 political jobs.

Dumping of this sort reflects White House contempt for the agency it dumps on. . . . In cases like USAID and HUD, the hostility is primarily ideological. Of course, loading up an agency with bad apples only exacerbates its root problem.

Consider Ronald Roskens, director of USAID, who arrived there in 1990 after being fired as president of the University of Nebraska. If he couldn't run a university, why should he be entrusted with a \$7.5 billion government agency? Probably because his sponsor was Dick Herman, a Republican National Committeeman from Nebraska. . . . At USAID, he promptly ushered in friends like Katherine Morgan, his new head of the foreign aid policy office, whose resume included no work in government or international development. . . .

But the director also had some help from the White House. . . . USAID was a safe and profitable place to dump Sally Montgomery, a former stewardess; there, she earns \$90,000 a year as deputy assistant administrator.

Baker and Bush now bypass USAID on all significant foreign aid activities. Dick Armitage at the State Department is in charge of aid to the Soviet Union, while Lawrence Eagleburger runs assistance programs for Eastern Europe. Other agencies, from the Peace Corps to Agriculture, are picking up the rest of USAID's slack. ■

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## In Time of War

From the Congressional Record of June 22, 1942  
Published in the Journal, August 1942

**S**tories of personal bravery have come from many points, and perhaps the following from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, is typical. In this city one side of the American minister's residence was completely torn away by a bomb and many of his personal effects were destroyed. A block away, an employee of the legation was killed by a bomb as he was saying goodbye to his son who was being mobilized.

A junior Foreign Service officer, who was under orders to report to duty at Belgrade from a nearby capital, reached the outskirts of the city during the height of the first bombardment. He was carrying a diplomatic pouch. Realizing that, if he delayed, the bridge across the river, which separated him from Belgrade, might be destroyed, he proceeded directly into the bombardment, bringing the pouch through safely.

Throughout the subsequent bombings of Belgrade, the minister and his staff

ignored the danger and carried on their work, under every conceivable disadvantage, and completely cut off from communication with the outside world, with diminishing food supplies and very limited means of transportation. As the Yugoslavian government was retreating, making successive moves to escape bombs and machine-gun fire, another officer of our legation followed and stayed with it until they reached Greece; this officer later succeeded in returning to Belgrade through areas occupied by the German and Italian armies, bringing with him a score of Americans who had been stranded on the coast.

All railway bridges over the Danube having been destroyed, the only feasible means of exit from Yugoslavia was by river boat to Budapest. The minister arranged to charter such a boat and eventually all Americans who desired to leave made their way safely out of the country with the minister and his staff. ■

## FOREIGN SERVICE QUIZ

### Latitudes and Longitudes

- Which of the following countries does **not** cross the Arctic Circle? United States, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland
- Which of the following cities lies the furthest north? Toronto, Genoa, Vladivostok
- Name all the independent countries lying wholly south of the Tropic of Capricorn.
- Traveling due south from Key West, Florida, what country does one first strike on the South American mainland?
- Through which (five) of the following countries does the equator **not** pass? Colombia, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Papua-New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda.

**Answers:** 1. Iceland 2. Genoa 3. New Zealand, Lesotho, Swaziland, Uruguay 4. None. Key West is entirely west of South America. 5. Equatorial Guinea, Malaysia, Papua-New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda

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EXPO'92

# Prestige and Perception at the World's Fair

BY RICHARD GILBERT

**I**n the midst of a dazzling, high-tech world showplace, the pavilion at Spain's Expo'92 that communicates an idea most forcefully and poignantly is a pavilion that doesn't really exist.

In a corner of the World's Fair site, where few visitors stroll, is a half-tipped rusty crane surrounded by heaps of construction debris. In the center of this incongruous eyesore on the edge of Expo's shine and sparkle, a bronze plaque is mounted. "Monument of the Non-Pavilion," it reads, "to those absent, to those who have no voice, to those who have a voice but are not heeded."

As I stood at this odd but moving junk heap, it occurred to me that the anonymous builders may have spoken with unwitting irony for the people of the United States, whose culture and accomplishments are so remarkably under-represented in the midst of Expo's abundance. ▶



*Above right, the Monument of the Non-Pavilion.*

*Right, Entrance to the U.S. pavilion.*

*Below, One of two Peter Max murals is visible through the entrance to the U.S. pavilion.*





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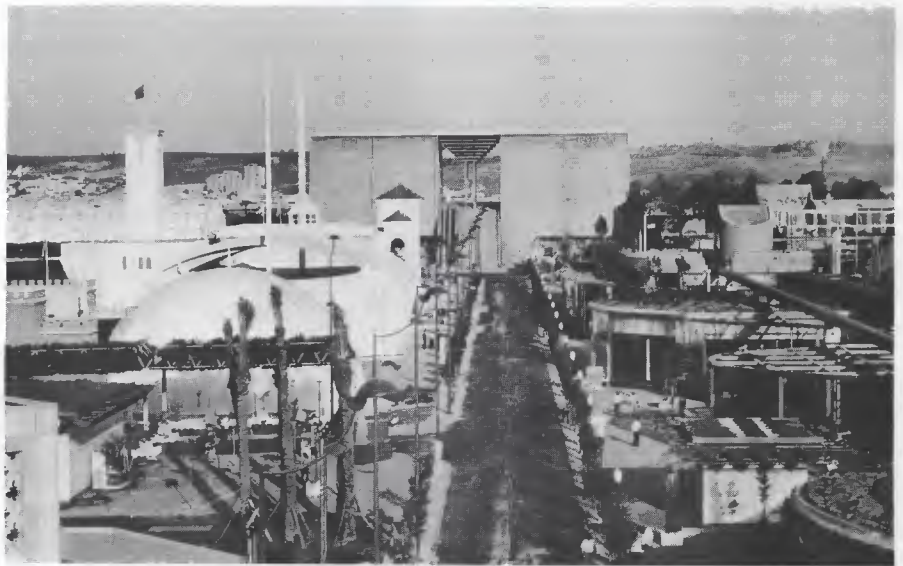
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Japan's monumental pavilion, one of the world's largest wooden structures, looks down "Fifth Avenue" at the Expo'92 site.

## HEART, SOUL, AND HIGH-TECH

It was late April in Seville. I had come from Madrid to see the just opened Expo'92, the last Universal Exposition of the 20th century. As a former USIA officer, I especially wanted to look at the U.S. pavilion about which so much had been written and to consider what images other nations, without imbroglios of funding and politics, had wrought in anticipation of Expo's 20 million visitors.

With 111 nations participating, together with Spain's 17 autonomous regions, the principal international organizations and some of the world's corporate innovators, the quincentennial celebration being staged on Seville's La Cartuja island but has flash and dazzle, it also has heart and soul.

From 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. (remember, this is Spain), Expo visitors (more than 200,000 on some days) can enjoy quaint traditions or high culture, see artifacts of invention and innovation, and experience exhilarating, and often bewildering, varieties of national identity. It's fun too. Film is the educational and entertainment medium of choice. Thanks to the popularity and drama of Canada's IMAX projection process, you can be super-maxed, hyper-maxed, hexi-maxed, mega-maxed and even solido-maxed. With a credit card and a cavalier approach to life, you can dine and drink in swish restaurants and shop in similarly upscale national boutiques. Goya's "Naked Maja" is here for the duration

along with Rembrandt, Rubens, El Greco, Dali, and Picasso, and, frequently, Placido Domingo in person. There's history, 500 years' worth—Ferdinand and Isabella, after all, along with Columbus, provided the excuse for the show—and Seville too, one of Spain's most charming, colorful, and richly historic cities.

Still, Expo'92 is far more than Spain's version of a Disneyland of the world. It's also a meeting ground for buyers and sellers of goods, technologies and services. In the corporate salons, VIP lounges and Expo's World Trade Center, contacts are being made, deals are being discussed, and contracts are being signed for goods, technologies, and services. More than anything, however, Expo is a gigantic stage on which nations are projecting images of themselves and competing to communicate messages to the millions of persons expected to pass through the gates until the show finally closes on Columbus Day, October 12.

## PERSONALITY PARADE

Japan, for example, is represented at Expo'92 by a design achievement of dramatic simplicity, one of the world's largest wooden buildings. Inside the Japanese have mounted a quiet, understated exhibition emphasizing traditional arts, history, and culture to allow the visitor "to absorb the atmosphere of Japan." Visitors gain a strong sense of a

confident, non-assertive modern state with a highly developed, subtle culture.

Canada has managed one of Expo's truly boffo pavilions through a combination of good location, excellent design, and by carefully selecting, training, and promoting a talented and attractive group of trilingual young Canadian "hosts." Inside, a dose of self-deprecating Canadian humor and the huge IMAX screen with its smashing cross-country travelogue has the crowds laughing and applauding. With an investment of \$50 million in its Expo activities and five years of preparation, Canada is attempting to show itself to 12,000 daily visitors as a diverse, multi-racial, technically innovative, "friendly and caring" nation.

Entering Saudi Arabia's pavilion, a visitor crunches across a floor of sand leading to a darkened corridor with exhibits illustrating the kingdom's pre-Islamic past. It's a startling and transporting effect. From there, successive displays, each more impressive, lead through Saudi Arabia's ancient and modern history, its Bedouin traditions, the place and role of religion in Saudi

life (with huge models of Islam's holy shrines) to contemporary, technological Saudi Arabia. The point is clear: a modern nation, proud of its desert past, with deep and persisting cultural and religious traditions, transforming itself for a 21st century role. And there's scarcely a mention of oil.

Just down the block from the falling water fronting the U.S. pavilion, another water wall—before the \$55 million U.K. pavilion—is attracting 15,000 visitors daily with a deliberate effort to challenge the thatched cottage and Beef-eater stereotype of Britain and of reserved British people. With a mix of show business and sales, the United Kingdom seeks to portray itself as "a technological society, forward and outward looking." If the reactions of visitors are an accurate guide, it works. Warmed up and worked over like a quiz show audience by "navigators," the talented British guide staff, visitors are easy prey for the pavilion's overall theme of "Britain in Partnership with the World."

That's just a sampling of Expo's offerings. There's much more to see. Chile

brought its own Antarctic iceberg (dwindling daily in the Andalusian summer). The Russians have come with a familiar Soviet-style mix of space hardware and clunky tools, a recipe now leavened by a religious icon or two. The French designed an ultra high-tech pavilion that offers "an encounter with the third millennium" and a stunning film of the heavens projected in something deep, dark, and mysterious called "the image well." Sunset at La Cartuja brings out the "Cabalgata," Expo's cavalcade of Catalan-created fantasy and caricature unlike any parade Main Street ever saw. And the activities don't stop just because the sun's down; Expo has attracted dance and theater companies, rock and jazz groups, the Metropolitan Opera, and symphony orchestras from just about everywhere.

#### BARGAIN-BASEMENT AMERICANA

As everyone knows by now, the participation of the United States in Seville has an unhappy genealogy. Late starting and unfunded to any significant



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degree by Congress, the project was bruited about for months without meaningful support. Spanish hosts, meanwhile, nervously contemplated the vacant weed-choked site (the second largest after Spain's) that was to be, in their initial projections, one of Expo's star anchor pavilions.

In the end, Americans and other Expo travelers have been left to decipher the mixed message of the extraordinarily feeble U.S. participation. "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, that's what the U.S. presence at Expo'92 is all about," the U.S. commissioner general in Seville, Fred Bush, has said.

Comprising of little more than a parchment copy of the Bill of Rights in a strange, shrine-like setting, a fuzzy feel-good film about the family of man financed by General Motors, and whatever other unrelated freebies could be found to surround USIA's now infamous recycled geodesic domes (obscured behind the water wall), the exhibits lack any unifying concept. In addition to the movie and the Bill of Rights, they consist chiefly of an "average" American detached home donated by the American Plywood Association; a very modest display from Kansas City, which is Seville's sister city; three GM cars, including a Cadillac; and a couple of Baskin Robbins ice cream stands.

Our exhibition says little about the qualities of America that most of us share and admire. Totally absent are the examples of art, handicraft, and imagination that define us and tell others what Americans, as peoples, have accomplished and continue to achieve separately and as a nation. In many ways, the exhibition speaks negatively: Desultory, volunteer guides hawk beer and popcorn; junk food and cheap T-shirts are on sale; there are good-hearted but amateur "cultural" performances; and a gimcrack, no-tech, no-design look. "Nobody could be this broke," I overheard one American visitor say as he left the U.S. pavilion.



**Top, the U.S. pavilion's snack bar, "Yankee Stadium" serves ballpark fare. Bottom, the U.S. pavilion's "water wall."**

There are those within the U.S. government who disparage the notion of U.S. participation in world's fairs. Elsewhere, notably within the Paris-based Bureau of International Expositions, questions are being asked about the frequency and cost of fairs and about whether the currency they represent is being debased by repetition. As long as fairs continue to be staged, however, American pretensions to global leadership seem to require that we participate. Clearly, we need fresh thinking about what constitutes an appropriate scale and purposeful presence for the United States. No one recommends that money be wasted on monumental but temporary structures, as if the world had not changed since Chicago celebrated Columbus in 1893. As we struggle to adapt to new fiscal realities, however, Seville should teach us never again to allow ourselves to be represented on the cheap.

#### **PROSPECTS BEYOND THE BELTWAY**

As every other nation and business represented in Seville seems to understand, money spent to participate in a World's Fair ought to be an investment

made with the clear expectation of gain. Profit is derived from the exposure of technologies, sales of products and services, increased tourism, and projecting an image of a society with commercial, cultural, and political values and achievements worthy of respect and emulation.

There are lessons to be learned from how other nations plan and fund their place in universal exhibitions. For them, and for

the United States, an important part of the solution lies in new partnerships beyond the federal government. For Seville, the British Ministry of Trade approached more than 1,000 firms with opportunities for sponsorship before recruiting 40 corporate participants ranging from British Steel to the Milk Marketing Board of England and Wales. Canada successfully undertook a similar effort, despite the relative paucity of direct Canadian commercial interests in Spain, and brought in the Canadian provinces as full partners in the project.

Few would deny that self-interested corporate participation, within a structured design and thematic context, will be imperative to success in future undertakings like Expo'92. So too will be meaningful participation by states, communities and our major cultural and folk institutions. Our experience in Seville illustrates, however, the folly of attempting to forge such cooperation by last-minute scrambling instead of through a carefully calibrated process of long-term cooperative planning.

If you've been to Expo'92, you probably missed the Monument of the Non-Pavilion. It's an unmarked empty square on the official Expo site plan, just between the Baltic and the Algerian pavilions. If you intend to go to Seville this summer or fall, seek out this unique spot. For Americans at Expo, where so little represents us, it's especially pointed and relevant. ■

**Richard Gilbert is a former USIA Foreign Service officer now living in Madrid.**

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## DIPLOMACY AS A WEAPON

BY MICHAEL ANTONUCCI

The conventional view of diplomacy is one of negotiation and compromise leading to a settlement of differences. But history often shatters this view. The conduct of international relations is also a struggle between competing national interests—and diplomacy can be as potent a weapon as any army. For more than 1,100 years, the Byzantine Empire survived and expanded by skillfully manipulating opponents through its intricate foreign policy. Hundreds of years before Machiavelli, Byzantine historian John Kinnamos wrote, "Since many and various matters lead toward one end, victory, it is a matter of indifference which one to use to reach it."

The Byzantines were the inheritors of the Roman Empire. Emperor Constantine founded a new capital on the site of the ancient city of Byzantium in 330 AD, renaming it Constantinople. Strategically situated, the city stood at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, where commerce between the Black Sea and Mediterranean could be regulated. By the year 395 the empire had been permanently divided into Eastern and Western halves, each ruled by a coequal emperor. When the last emperor of Rome was deposed in 476, the "Roman" emperor in Constantinople continued the imperial tradition.

As the years passed, the Byzantines were continuously beset by a flood of hostile peoples who coveted the lands and riches of the empire. Huns, Goths, Persians, Slavs, Arabs, Bulgars, Normans, and others each had a turn at destroying the empire, but all were

turned away. The Byzantines employed an activist foreign policy that enabled them to expand their influence throughout Central Europe and Italy while preserving the Graeco-Roman culture for posterity.

The Byzantines had an absolutist government in the person of the emperor. Almost all diplomatic functions were centralized. Though he established no permanent missions in foreign countries, the emperor, through his minister of foreign affairs, usually sent the same highly trained nobles and clerics on his embassies. As a



Gold Medallion of Constantine I

PHOTO BY BYZANTINE VISUAL RESOURCES © 1992,  
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matter of practice, these ambassadors were familiar with the countries they visited, either through previous travels or their ethnic backgrounds. Even so, they were thoroughly briefed before they set out. Not only were they drilled

on the details of the goals to be achieved, but they were also apprised of current developments in the court they were visiting. Constant contact was maintained with Constantinople, and diplomatic missions could sometimes last up to a year. The Byzantines probably initiated the practice of sending regular diplomatic reports home to the government.

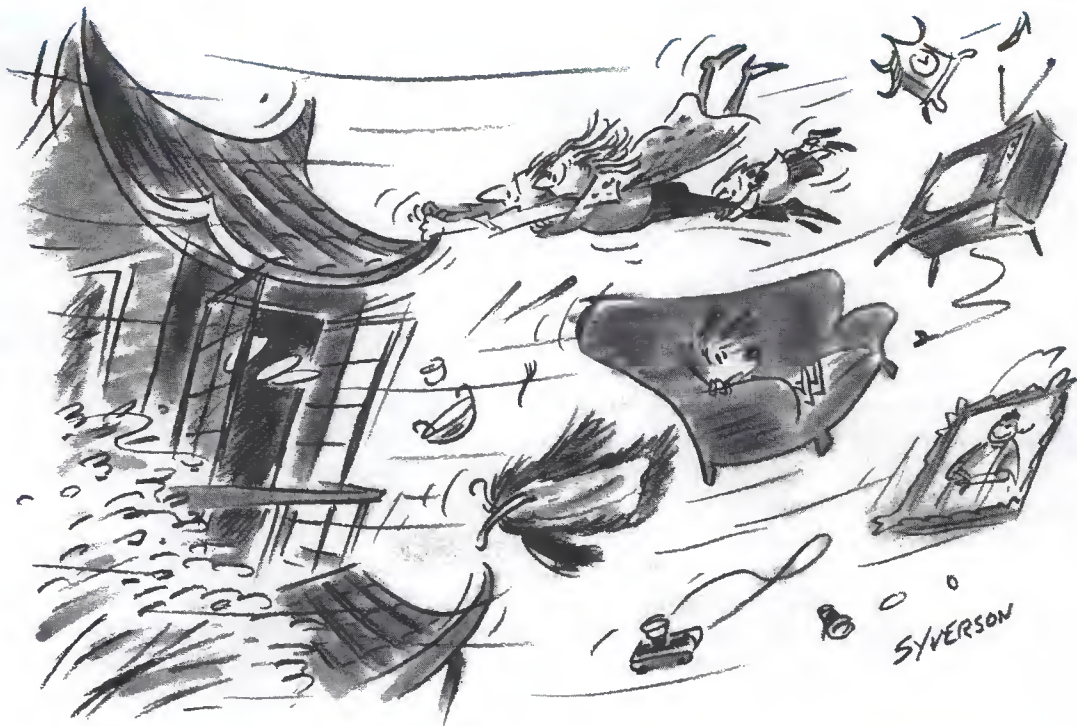
### Amiable infiltration

What separated the Byzantine foreign service from other organizations of the early Middle Ages was its active involvement in manipulating internal events in other countries. Today we take for granted the existence of government agencies that gather and interpret intelligence, cultivate support in foreign circles, and perhaps even instigate rebellion. To find such a sophisticated and centralized arrangement as early as the sixth century, however, is astonishing.

To aid in dealing with other nations, the Byzantines established an organization called the "Bureau of Barbarians," which gathered information from every source imaginable (even priests) and kept files on who was influential, who was susceptible to bribery, what a nation's historical roots were, what was likely to impress a nation's people, and so on. In many cases, the information gathered by the bureau was the first written record of these peoples, since tribes from the steppes of Central Asia rarely had writing systems of their own.

The knowledge served the Byzantines well. Imagine yourself, for

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example, as the chief of a nomadic tribe whose home is the steppes of Central Asia. You are visited by representatives of the Byzantine emperor who shower you with fabulous gifts and invite you to the imperial palace in Constantinople. Your entourage arrives in a city inhabited by almost half a million people—perhaps three times the size of your entire tribe. Its buildings are protected by huge walls, deep moats, and well-armed soldiers. You see goods from all over the world in the bazaars. You view centuries-old cathedrals and are mystified by Christian ritual.

You are led to a huge, ornate palace. On either side of the audience hall stand golden mechanical lions that open their mouths and roar. In golden trees sing mechanical birds. In front of you, seated upon a golden throne, is the emperor, attended by a chief minister. You prostrate yourself in front of the throne, are bidden to rise, and when you look up, you discover that the emperor, throne and all, is suspended 10 feet above your head.

Later, imperial officials give you rich

presents and inform you that more wealth and support will be forthcoming if you will fight the emperor's enemies (pocketing any booty you may pick up along the way). It was a rare tribal chief who would turn down such an offer. This process was repeated time and time again throughout the history of Byzantium, and it encouraged many to ally themselves with the empire.

### Buying influence

The bezant or "nomisma," as the Byzantines called it, was the dollar of the Middle Ages and it purchased a lot of influence. The bribery was quite cost-effective; often a well-placed bag of gold saved Byzantium from raising, supplying, and deploying an army. No one was considered above targeting for bribery. In the late eleventh century, the Seljuk sultan sent an ambassador to Constantinople to settle a border dispute. The Emperor Alexius I Comnenus struck a secret deal with the ambassador, "buying" the fortress of Sinope from him. By the time the sultan discovered what had happened, Byzantine troops

had already occupied the city.

Some 200 years later, the empire's greatest enemy was Charles of Anjou, who controlled the island of Sicily and much of the Italian mainland. Charles had ambitions to take Constantinople and establish himself as emperor. Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus prevented an Angevin attack in 1270 by sending a shipment of gold to Pope Nicholas III. In exchange, the pope forbade Charles to attack Constantinople and diverted his efforts to a crusade in Tunisia.

### Surrogates

The Byzantines hated the expense of war and could hardly afford the cost in human life. Often they would get others to fight for them. If the Bulgars were troublesome, the Russians were called in. If the Russians were troublesome, the Patzinaks, a Central Asian Turkic tribe, were summoned. The Cumans and Uzes acted as checks on the Patzinaks, and so on. The Byzantines almost always had an ally to the geographic rear of a potential enemy.

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The Byzantine emperor maintained a stable of pretenders to almost every foreign throne in the world. For instance, if the Turkish sultan seemed poised to attack, the Byzantine emperor could release a pretender, perhaps a younger brother of the sultan. With Byzantine gold in his pockets and some armed supporters, the pretender could be counted on to wreak havoc in Turkish territory, spoiling the sultan's attack.

In 1282, faced once again by the threat posed by Charles of Anjou, Michael VIII helped instigate the War of the Sicilian Vespers, in which native Sicilians rose up against Angevin rule. The rebellion ended Charles's dreams of ruling in Constantinople. Michael VIII himself wrote, "Should I dare to claim that I was God's instrument to bring freedom to the Sicilians, then I should only be stating the truth."



Apolausis mosaic

### Double dealing and delay

The word Byzantine has come to

mean devious or characterized by intrigue. This is due to some of the plots of questionable morality (but indisputable utility) that Byzantine emperors concocted. The Byzantines were of the opinion that anything done in the name of the Sacred Empire could not be judged treachery. Though they were diligent in adhering to the letter of their international agreements, they often violated the spirit of them. Strategic advantage was sought with fervor in every situation.

Emperor Heraclius once intercepted a message from the Persian King Chosroes that ordered the execution of one of his generals, Shahr-Baraz. Heraclius added the names of four hundred other Persian officers to the list and diverted the message to Shahr-Baraz. Heraclius' stratagem was devi-

ously brilliant. Had the executions been carried out, the Persian military would

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have been decapitated. Instead, Shahr-Baraz and the other officers rose in rebellion against Chosroes and overthrew him, subsequently making peace with Byzantium.

In another episode, a hostile Venetian fleet wintered at the island of Chios, directly threatening Byzantine territory. The Venetians sent ambassadors to Constantinople to negotiate an agreement. Emperor Manuel I Comnenus refused to see them. The ambassadors returned to Chios with a Byzantine official, who suggested another embassy. The Venetian doge, commanding the fleet, agreed to do so. After the second embassy had departed, illness swept through the Venetian camp. More than 1,000 soldiers and sailors died within a few days. The second embassy returned without having met with the emperor.

Sick from the plague (rumors spread that the Byzantines had poisoned the water), the Venetians sent a third embassy to Constantinople. By now well-informed of conditions in the Venetian camp, Manuel realized he need make

no concessions. He stretched out negotiations for so long that the doge was obliged to withdraw the fleet or face a mutiny among his ailing sailors. As the fleet limped back to Venice, a Byzantine naval force attacked without warning and decimated the Venetians. Soon afterwards, Manuel sent a message to the doge: "Your nation has for a long time behaved with stupidity."

The Byzantines were not above attempted assassination, though they were rarely successful at it and brought fearsome reprisals down upon themselves. In one of the most infamous and gruesome tales of Byzantine history, the Emperor Basil II is said to have caused the death of Bulgar Tsar Samuel in the year 1014. Basil had just won a battle over the Bulgar army in a narrow pass of the Belasica Mountains. In an effort to end any further resistance, Basil took the Bulgars he captured in the battle—said to number 10,000—and had them blinded. One of every hundred was left with one eye in order to lead the captives home. When Tsar Samuel saw this horrifying procession approach his

capital, he fell senseless to the ground. Two days later he was dead and Bulgaria became a Byzantine possession. There can be no question that Basil committed an act of terror, but it must also be recalled that 200 years earlier Bulgar Tsar Krum had killed Byzantine Emperor Nicephorus I in battle and used his skull as a goblet. Despite Basil's terrible deed, Byzantine emperors preferred the carrot to the stick, and such offenses were rare.

Many historians have vilified the Byzantines for their tactics, often justifiably. Still, one does not have to approve of Byzantium's tactics to learn from them. When a nation is unable to compete militarily or economically with a larger power, it is apt to employ controversial methods. Though diplomatic practices today tend to be more civilized, we should recognize in advance a country's tendency to use diplomacy the way the Byzantines did: as a low-cost, low-risk, maneuverable, and effective weapon. ■

*Michael Antonucci writes on military and diplomatic history.*

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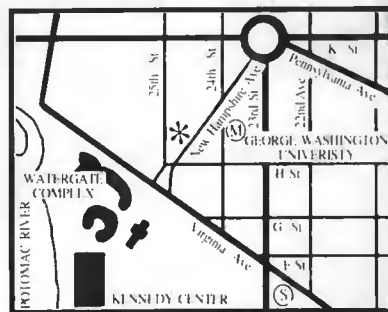
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# Brahim

**B**rahim came to us from the service of a retired admiral who had left Casablanca to return to his old home in Corsica. Many Frenchmen and their families were leaving Morocco. The "Happy Empire" was on the eve of serious disturbances, and even the perennial optimists of our consular corps agreed that the French protectorate, in its 40th year, was heading into stormy weather.

Behind our ad in the *Petit Marocain*, which brought Brahim to our villa, lay six months of desperation in the household—months of *fatmas* who stole and nursemaids who drank, of Spaniards who beat their wives, and French viragos for whom my wife and I were unkind enough to wish the same treatment. We had also suffered more than our share of racial and religious complications. During one hysterical phase, my wife, Helen, coordinated not only the needs of a husband and young daughter but also the holidays and diets of a Jewish cook, an Arab gardener, and a Spanish maid. Neither the Arab nor the Jew could cook in or eat from dishes used by the other. The Spaniard had her own utensils and her own calendar, in which she managed to dovetail Moslem holidays with Christian. This melting pot often boiled over into caterwauling disaster, so that even at this distance I recall the throb of hope with which I greeted the erect and tranquil figure who appeared at our door in white coat and fez and bag trousers.

I recognized as Berber the high cheekbones, tawny skin, and clear hazel eyes. It was not only the mountaineer physique that struck a sympathetic chord; I noticed immediately the asymmetric demarcations that 40 years had etched around his mouth and eyes. Forty years in Moroccan lives is a long time, but they had not destroyed an intrinsic serenity: his face was both sage and childlike. Brahim was an ancient; no schism had yet divided his soul.

## The beginning

In our front hall Brahim produced a scruffy black wallet, from which he fished out the usual wad of papers: birth certificate, police record, references—all the paraphernalia that French bureaucracy had tried to impose upon a restless people. They trembled in his brown fingers as he handed them over with a little stiff bow. Stepping back a few paces, he assumed the stance of parade rest, with one hand behind him. His eyes were fixed on me in the stoic appraisal of a soldier.

My own hands shook a little as I unfolded the documents. These frail witnesses to one man's history were folded over and over so that they nearly came apart at the creases. What a fiasco it would be if I found anything wrong with them, any trace of misdeeds blurred over by vague formulas. But I needn't have worried; the meager contents were above reproach. Brahim ben Lahcen—birthplace Marrakech, birthdate unknown—had cooked for only two households in the seven years since demobilization. And even in the clichés of domestic reference, I detected a special tone of enthusiasm that presaged a decent kitchen and a proper table.

"Where were you before you were a cook?" I asked, handing back the papers.

He answered me in the Moroccanized French that was lingua franca in foreign households. "I was in the army." And he added with a stiffening of pride, "I was a *goumier*, *m'zieu*, a Moroccan scout, with the French. In Tunisia, Italy, Ger-

BY JOHN BOVEY

many. Artillery it was."

"Artillery? But you *are* a cook?"

"*Oui, m'zieu*. That is my profession." He paused. "*La cuisine française*—at the admiral's I learned it by heart."

This sounded rather sweeping. I thought I should issue a warning, since Helen, in deference to Islamic taboos, was taking no overt part in the hiring. "Here," I announced, "you will be under the orders of madame. And we have one child, Eleanor, who's just seven."

"*Bien, m'zieu*." His eyes lit up. He must like children, then.

"Are you married, Brahim?"

"*Oui, m'zieu*. Twice." He looked a shade uneasy. "But I will come alone. My wife stays at home with our sons."

"Now, what about your wages?" I asked.

"Whatever you say. *C'est comme ti veux*."

I had got used to the Moroccan version of the familiar pronoun, but here was intimacy charged with feudal loyalties. Clearly Arab haggling wouldn't do; Berber dignity ruled out that gambit. Brahim must have liked the look of things, and, as he might have done with an officer in the army, he left his welfare in my hands. I didn't want to sour our luck by being niggardly. Extravagance would go down no better; most Moroccans had a benign contempt for that American trait even when they exploited it. I pondered, feeling for middle ground, took a deep breath and named a figure.

"*D'accord, ça va*." He gave me another bow, but this time he spread his fingers lightly over his heart in the *baraka*, which is a kind of benediction. Brahim was now a member of the household.

I falter as I try to chart our course during the months that stretched into two years and then, in the third, ended in the torrent of Morocco's troubles. Few Americans breathe easily in an atmosphere of inequality; even as we acquiesce, we paper it over with first names and other democratic affectations. I lack the means to convey the bittersweet of a devotion so selfless and yet so personal as that of Brahim to Helen and little Eleanor and me. Not that Brahim muted his own character to please anyone.



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM NUTTLE

... even at this distance I recall the throb of hope with which I greeted the erect and tranquil figure who appeared at our door in white coat and fez and bag trousers.

## In charge

Once the Jewish cook was gone, no more pots and pans banged in the kitchen. The young Arab gardener Brahim treated like a slightly backward son. The chattering Spanish maid fell silent; she steered clear of embroilment with a soldier. And Brahim remained uncorrupted by any servility toward us. He knew his profession and, whether we approved or not, he would practice it in his own way. One evening he burst into my study to complain that Helen was interfering with his work.

"Madame does not trust me." He twisted his apron in his fingers. "Madame is not content."

I assured him that madame was quite content, pleased, nay even delighted. How, I asked, had he arrived at this curious misconception?

"She spends much time in my kitchen."

"But that's because she's interested—in your work, I mean. In our country women watch over the house. And she wants to be sure you know what we want."

"But everything she tells me—I know it already."

I saw that access to the kitchen was compromised; it would have to be handled with delicacy. Helen, with her usual good grace, bowed to the conspiracy of the menfolk, though she couldn't refrain from muttered speculation about conditions in the sink and the area behind the gas range.

She drew the line, however, at departures from agreed menus, and there we made common cause. Many of Brahim's variations were justified. His unorthodox almond sauce transfigured the perpetual couscous into splendor. Other initiatives were less happy. He had carried over, I suppose from the army, a weakness for starches. On the same menu spaghetti would be followed by rice, or couscous by potatoes. His mashed potatoes were delicious and so was his pasta. Clearly they were different dishes. Why not serve two masterpieces? Helen explained about vitamins and green vegetables and balanced diets, but this brand of witchcraft made no sense to him.

"Perhaps madame is saying that it is the color of foods?"

"Yes, yes," Helen said. "That's exactly the problem."

After that he deferred to this odd American aesthetic, as he did to our dislike of nutmeg. It had crept into everything: fruits, sauces, spinach, even the famous mashed potatoes.

Helen attacked the problem on the highest ground: that of nationality. "Americans," she said, "do not like nutmeg."

Then the insidious flavor faded away like the Cheshire cat, until only a faint olfactory smile hung in the kitchen air.

Brahim held fast to the principle that nothing was worthy of our table unless he had taken great pains with it. Frozen meat and vegetables from the commissary at the airbase were condemned *ex cathedra*. "The ice is bad for the liver, madame."

One time we proposed to serve corn chowder to visiting

**Our own conduct when we were sick and our hysterical asepsis amid the amoebae and the unfamiliar microbes of Morocco baffled him. He could only smile at our faith in doctors. What did any *toubib* know that Allah couldn't confound in a twinkling?**



American friends. Corn was, of course, a food for pigs, and since pigs were anathema in Islam, to pigs was where it should go. When Helen handed him the wretched stuff in cans, Brahim turned pale. "*Oh, madame, je ne peux pas!*" His hands crisped at his sides. "One can't serve garbage to guests."

We made clear that such was our intention, and the enthusiasm with which our homesick guests greeted the corn soup (I had coached them beforehand) shook him. Loyal though he was, this bitter hour did little to increase his admiration for the culinary quirks of the *Amerloques*.

Brahim loved parties; they were like military campaigns. Although our hospitality seemed exhausting enough to us, he was distressed that we didn't entertain more. When we let him moonlight with French or American friends, as he often did in Casablanca, he always came home eager to refurbish our prestige.

Cocktail parties elevated Brahim to true glory. He would pass and repass, his tray balanced aloft, the tassel on his fez swinging, his tawny face radiant. Now it was his turn to command: let the borrowed subalterns look alive! But whenever my wife or I needed him for anything—a guest with an empty glass, a platter to refill—he always appeared at our elbows himself. After the last guest had left, we would all take off our shoes. I remember still the thud of Brahim's bare feet on the tiles of the terrace as he brought us bowls of cold soup. There were always platefuls of curling sandwiches, and always, in the violet light of the long Moroccan evening, that shared sense of anticlimax that follows a successful opening night or a near thing in diplomacy.

## In sickness and in health

Toward illness Brahim displayed the fatalism of the Moslem. One simply struggled on with one's work, or, if things got too bad, lay down in some hidden corner and waited for events to unfold as they would. Our own conduct when we were sick and our hysterical asepsis amid the amoebae and the unfamiliar microbes of Morocco baffled him. He could only smile at our faith in doctors. What did any *toubib* know that Allah couldn't confound in a twinkling?

In one remedy he did have confidence: mint tea. He brewed this in an old Quimper pot with a chipped spout and a stiff-legged rooster painted on the side. The pungency of the steeping mint was a comfort in itself. During one bout of asthmatic bronchitis, Eleanor, who was then seven, for several days vomited everything we gave her, even water. Our worried faces and the comings and goings of the American doctor, as well as the untouched trays that came back to the kitchen, incited Brahim to intervene. He waited until the doctor had gone and then padded into the room where Eleanor lay, propped up on the pillows, half asleep. When he had swept the bottles of pills and sticky syrup from

the bedside table onto his tray, he perched gently on the edge of the bed, holding a cup of mint tea in one brown hand. While we watched from the doorway, he administered this potion, spoonful by patient spoonful, until the last drop was gone. Eleanor looked up, gave him a wavering smile, and closed her eyes.

Helen and I shrugged at one another—what harm could tea do?—and tiptoed into the next room to await the familiar symptoms of distress. But no sound came. We heard the shuffle of Brahim's *babouches* on the tiles of the hall, and then there was long, blessed silence.

The next day Eleanor ate an *escalope de veau* and demanded a slice of apple tart. When I asked Brahim to explain his sovereign remedy, he gave me a knowing smile. "The mint has liberated the stomach, *m'zieu*."

To Eleanor, Brahim was the object of an inexhaustible and consoling wonder. He could repair anything—dolls, tea sets, tricycles—lift anything, cook anything, and he was a soldier to the bone. What more could a girl of seven ask for? Our Spanish maid was jealous of their affection, but Helen and I marveled at their complete and unbroken understanding. They were the two perfect equals of the house.

By his second wife Brahim had three boys. He had lost his only daughter, the youngest child, in one of those epidemics of dysentery that swept through the Moroccan quarters despite the best efforts of the Protectorate's health services. The *toubib* had told him his wife could have no more children.

## The sentence

Brahim had certainly known many women, and although he was not young, his eye still wandered now and then. The war, he told me, had separated him too long from his first wife. He had gone off to Tunisia and Italy, and during his absence one thing had led to another. He was vague about the details, but after he came back, they had "broken the card." (This was how Moroccans described the voiding of marriage documents that constituted a Moslem divorce.) Like Brahim, the first wife had remarried: the chauffeur of the senior *khalifa* of Casablanca, he informed me with a certain pride. But since she had custody of the son from her marriage to Brahim, the matter had not ended there.

We were worried when Brahim began to request advances on his wages. Although he scorned to play fast and loose with the grocery money as his predecessors had done, he did make constant raids on the little cash fund which we were setting aside for him against our departure. And then came days of brooding that were not typical. Finally I found the courage to ask him what was wrong.

"They're going to put me in jail." He spoke calmly, with a soldier's glum resignation.

With great effort I wormed it out of him. He staggered under the load of a stupendous, a really fantastic alimony, which the ineffable but tainted wisdom of the *cadi*, the Moroccan judge, had imposed. Although Brahim could never have paid more than a fraction, the clerk of the court had persuaded him not to have recourse to the pasha, as was his right, and had let the date for appeal slip by. The clerk

then demanded installments, more and more lavish, which he doubtless put in his own pocket, as a fee for delaying execution of the judgment. Now the fees too had passed beyond Brahim's means.

I decided to take Brahim with me to the palace that housed the native administration and the pasha's courts. I wanted to consult there with the French commissioner who was assigned to "advise" the pasha. The clerk of court who had been milking Brahim was startled when he saw that this time his victim was not alone. His raisin eyes revolved in jerks behind his steel-rimmed glasses. When I asked to see the commissioner, he fidgeted.

After a long wait, the three of us were ushered into the presence of the commissioner. This exalted Frenchman turned out to be a Burgundian, red-faced, jovial but urbane, and well versed in the complexities of the laws of the Cherifian Empire.

I explained Brahim's problem in halting French, but I thought it wiser not to mention the role of the clerk. My chief point was that the senior *khalifa's* chauffeur was better placed to support the child of his wife's first marriage than a veteran of the Italian campaign with a whole new family.

The commissioner smiled indulgently. My bland deductions did not satisfy him. "Why did you fail to appeal to the pasha?" he asked Brahim.

Brahim hesitated. "They told me it would do no good," he said, finally indicating the clerk with an embarrassed shake of his head.

This produced a moment of stunned silence and then a loud and voluble exchange in Arabic among Brahim, the clerk, and the commissioner. The corners of the commissioner's mouth twitched. He was amused. "If you would be good enough," he said to the clerk, "To allow me a word in private with the consul."

The two Moroccans left in a hush that was profound but electric. Brahim managed to maneuver the clerk, who by now had turned gray with fury, into holding the door for him.

The commissioner waved a leather cigarette box at me and got out a yellowed pipe. When we had lighted up, I leaned back in my chair. "*Monsieur le commissaire*, have you any idea how the *cadi* reckoned the alimony in this case? The amount is really fantastic."

He drew on his pipe. "Just between these four walls, the judgments of the cherifian courts do now and then present a fantastic aspect. But you should have come to me sooner. I can sometimes make suggestions to the sultan's judges in advance of their decisions—plant a seed, so to speak—but the treaties of the protectorate prevent me from modifying any Moroccan sentence once it is pronounced."

I felt as though I were facing a sentence myself. "Do you mean that Brahim will go to jail? What good would that do for anybody?"

He reflected for several minutes. "I cannot undo the substance," he told me at last, "but since a question has been raised—an official question—the decrees permit me to write to the *cadi* and ask him to clarify the legal motives of his judgment. The sentence is automatically suspended until the *cadi* replies."

"But when he replies?"

The commissioner gave a little sigh. "You should understand that like many venerable people in the Moroccan administration, the *cadi* is rather old. He is also rather preoccupied. For a man of his age, his correspondence—well, I can only describe it as overwhelming." He paused. "Do I make myself clear?" He gave me a faint smile. "I think you and your family should be able to eat well for some time."

I got up at once. "*Monsieur le commissaire*, I thank you. I hope you will dine with us one of these days."

I never explained to Brahim the frail structure of expediency, of complicity, that had saved him. If so much as a wink had passed between us we would both have been disloyal, and as usual, he had the delicacy to refrain from questions. But when the commissioner came to dinner, his glass was kept filled, his plate well garnished. I think he found his decision vindicated.

## Politics

Morocco was now entering its rebellious adolescence. First came the riots of 1952, then the long agony of the Sultan's deposition, and finally the outbreak of terrorism. The first victims were Moroccans who were judged to be too friendly with Europeans.

Brahim, the soul of punctuality, began coming to work late and leaving early, while it was still daylight. No one was free any more, he explained, to move about in the *medina*. There were the gendarmes and the Pasha's militia; there were French soldiers and police; greatest humiliation of all, there were the Senegalese soldiers, for whom, as an old *goumier*, he entertained a deep, and probably unjust, contempt.

We easily forgave Brahim's derelictions, but that didn't solve his problem or ours. Nationalism looked less attractive in close-up than it did from Foggy Bottom or the United Nations Plaza. The fever chart of Morocco followed classic lines, the infernal cycle of India, and Ireland, and Indochina and a dozen other places. Everyone made dreadful mistakes. In terms of daily life it was all baffling, then infuriating, and for many simple people, tragic.

After the UN debates in 1954, we became conscious of a tightening ring of hostility toward us. In the onrush of revolt, Americans were Europeans and infidels like anyone else. I went down one morning to find the wall of our garden tarred with slogans. Brahim was disgusted; he said there must have been some mistake. He and the gardener covered the inscriptions with whitewash, but they reappeared. At the house across the square, where a major of the United States Air Force lived, a homemade bomb exploded among the orange trees, luckily without hurting anyone. Two extra policemen came and went, like supers

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in a comic opera, in the narrow street that led out of the square. Eleanor was confined to the back garden under our eyes or Brahim's. She found it all rather exciting, but at nightfall she kept asking where Brahim had gone.

Brahim never wavered in his devotion to us, nor did it occur to us to doubt him. The swift unraveling of the social fabric puzzled and saddened him. Like many Berbers, he was less attached to the sultan than the Arabs were; he did not share wholeheartedly in the common ferment. Neither the nationalist *Istiqlal* nor the protectorate loomed large on his horizons, although, like many unpretending people, he perhaps understood the conflict better than we thought.

"It's the rich people who make the others fight," he told me. When I thought of our contacts at the consulate—Moroccan as well as French—I couldn't deny the justice of his remark.

One morning after breakfast Brahim stopped me at the front door as I was leaving for the consulate. He twisted his apron in his fingers in a way that always spelled bad news. His voice was choked.

"I can't work for you anymore," he said. "They bother my wife and my children. I can't leave them alone there any more. People know that I work here."

I saw that there was nothing I could do either. No commissioner could cope with this one. "I'm terribly sorry, Brahim. I needn't tell you how madame will feel. And as for Eleanor—but what will you do? Can you get work nearer home, in the *medina*?"

"*Non, m'zieu*. I'm taking my family back to Marrakech. My brother is still there. He says the old pasha is keeping things quieter down south. I might even go into the army again—if they'll have me."

"I don't know what to tell you," I said. I made a quick calculation of the sum we would give him, but it was not the moment to discuss that. So I added—but I didn't sound very convincing—"When things get better, you can come back to us, of course."

"I won't forget you, *m'zieu, ni madame, ni la petite*." He paused, stiffening. His stance had never been more military. "And if you needed me, I would go with you, even to America."

I couldn't help smiling at that *even*. His French employers had indoctrinated him well. "We'll never find the right way to thank you, Brahim—I mean for everything you've done for us." I held out my hand.

He grasped it for an instant in both of his. His eyes, bright and wet, looked straight into mine. And then, once again, he touched his breast in the *baraka*. "*T'es tout pres de mon coeur*," he said.

And we left it that. ■

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*John Bovey is a retired Foreign Service officer.*



# afsa news

## Good housekeeping

### AFSA/USAID agree on two issues

by Mark Smith  
Legal Assistant

USAID and AFSA have agreed to new guidelines requiring reasonable notice before USAID changes conditions of employment. And, in another aspect of "housekeeping negotiations," the agency has agreed to provide more office space to AFSA if a full-time position is granted for a USAID vice president.

For more than a year AFSA has been negotiating a framework agreement with USAID. Four issues were unresolved: whether the USAID vice president would work full-time for AFSA; whether to allow bargaining during the life of an agreement—EER preparation, for example—on an aspect not covered in the original agreement (midterm bargaining); how much office space USAID would provide to AFSA; and the notice the agency must give AFSA before implementing a change in conditions of employment. To break an impasse in the negotiations, the parties asked the

Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel (FSIDP) for assistance.

AFSA submitted briefs in early June supporting its positions and rebutting those of USAID. Through continued negotiations, AFSA and USAID were able to reach agreement on two of the issues.

If the panel grants AFSA full official time for its USAID vice president, the agency will make its best effort to provide an additional office for the incumbent. The two sides also agreed to deadlines for negotiating if AFSA wants to bargain over changes in conditions of employment proposed by the agency. The new limits are workable and fair, allowing AFSA time to elicit opinions from its USAID constituents before drafting proposals.

AFSA would rather reach agreement than face the uncertain outcome of FSIDP deliberations. By settling two issues before the panel reached its decision, the parties ensured a resolution that both sides can accept.

However, AFSA will not compromise on full official time for an AFSA vice president or midterm bargaining. USAID's proposals are unacceptable, reducing our ability to serve employees through midterm bargaining and the services of a full-time AFSA representative.

## Fourth of July salute



*Once again, AFSA hosted a Fourth of July celebration for 350 of its members and their families in the department's Diplomatic Reception rooms. The evening took guests back to July 4, 1792, with a group of historical interpreters, including George Washington (left), dressed in period costume, who danced and performed in character. Ms. Eleanor Dulles, 97, (right) made a special appearance at the event to cut the cake and celebrate the Independence Day holiday. The eighth-floor location made for spectacular viewing of the fireworks.*

## Changing the guard at AFSA

AFSA bids a fond farewell to President Hume Horan, who is leaving Washington in July to serve as ambassador to the Cote d'Ivoire. By unanimous vote of the Governing Board, William Kirby, State vice president, has succeeded him as AFSA president, and Joseph Melrose has assumed the position of State vice president. In addition, William McKinney has been appointed USAID vice president to replace Priscilla Del Bosque, who has been posted to Cairo.

## Petitioning for better housing

by Rosemary Sheridan  
Labor Relations Specialist

The current overseas housing policy is up for review, and AFSA intends to be heard. Foreign Service personnel do not expect to live in palaces, but neither should they be packed into sardine cans. Yet some overseas employees are assigned cramped quarters in inconvenient neighborhoods, with insufficient space for belongings and with little regard for security concerns, representational responsibilities, or children's welfare . . . the housing litany goes on and on.

The source of the problem is the current Interagency Housing Policy and Standards contained in Department of State Airgram 171. Airgram 171 was issued in June 1991 to quell congressional criticism of supposedly "luxurious" quarters assigned overseas government employees. The policy was based on a housing survey of "typical" Washington D.C. accommo-

dations of Civil Service personnel.

Unfortunately, the survey methodology was suspect and failed to take into consideration factors unique to the Foreign Service. One such factor is the representation responsibilities expected of relatively junior employees at many posts, particularly those employed by USIA. Another is the fact that an employee's years of dedicated service do not translate into better housing. Thus, mid-level employees with 20 years of service may live in quarters too small for their household effects. Single employees, in particular, find themselves discriminated against in the housing sweepstakes. The Foreign Service is clearly unique in other ways as well.

To the extent that cost reduction was a reason for squeezing space allocations, often the policy has turned out to be penny-wise and pound-foolish. In a number of cases the new policy required employees to move into

smaller but more expensive quarters.

Fortunately, Airgram 171 is up for review this summer, and AFSA intends to be a major actor in the review process. Our first step is the distribution of petitions supporting a better housing policy. Be on the lookout for the petition at your post.

Bolstered by these petitions and guided by the cables we have received from many posts, AFSA's representatives will then seek improvements in current overseas housing policy. At the appropriate time, AFSA also will approach Congress, striving to improve the legislation that affects Foreign Service housing conditions. For those maintaining homes in the United States, AFSA will continue to support an extended deferment of the capital gains tax on the sale of primary residences during periods of assignment overseas.

## AFSA Insurance Programs

AFSA offers its members access to five different insurance packages: personal property, disability, accident, in-hospital, and long-term health care. These plans are specifically tailored to our Foreign Service membership and offer significant savings, whether members are active or retired, living domestically or abroad.

**Personal Property and Transit Insurance.** AFSA members may insure their goods and valuable property, including automobiles, overseas and between posts. This plan, administered by the Hirshorn Company, is an honor policy and covers full replacement value.

**Group Disability Income Insurance.** AFSA members and their spouses under age 60 will receive continuing income if disabled by a covered illness or accident which prevents the insured from working. Albert H. Wohlers & Company administers AFSA-sponsored disability insurance and offers three different levels of coverage depending on the needs of the individual.

**In-Hospital Income Insurance.** Members and their spouses under age 70, as well as dependent children under age 25, may receive benefits up to \$100 per day of hospitalization for covered accidents and sickness. In-hospital income insurance helps alleviate the unexpected costs associated with hospitalization, including co-payments, housekeeping, and child care.

**Group Accident Insurance.** Regardless of occupation or health, members are eligible for coverage which helps defray the costs of all types of accidents, including those that are automobile related.

**Long Term Health Care Insurance.** AFSA's newest sponsored group insurance plan offers the best combination of coverage, cost and convenience, and is available to AFSA members as well as their parents and in-laws. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, half of all persons age 65 and older will require nursing home care, and AFSA is pleased to offer an opportunity to assist its members by easing the financial hardship that could otherwise be incurred.

To receive more information on any of the AFSA-sponsored insurance plans, call the membership department at (202) 625-7153 or write to AFSA at 2101 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

# Scholarship funds increase

by Michael Dailey  
*Scholarships Assistant*

The AFSA Scholarship Programs have enjoyed one of their best fundraising years ever, raising a total of \$73,512 to date. The second year of AFSA's combined annual drive (AFSA Fund and Scholarship Fund) raised \$14,512. Special thanks to Marc Grossman, Jane E. Grunwell, Raymond A. Hare, and Raymond W.T. Pracht for their very generous contributions.

AFSA Scholarships also participated for its first year in the 1991 Combined Federal Campaign, receiving an overwhelming response of nearly \$25,000 in pledges. The AFSA Scholarship Fund has also been accepted for the 1992 Combined Federal Campaign.

## Individual Efforts

The Scholarship Programs especially thanks two generous individual donors: Mrs. Tapley Bennett, daughter



**PMA President E.D. Frankhouser presents AFSA President Hume Horan with an AFSA scholarship donation, which is earmarked for needy college juniors or seniors interested in foreign affairs.**

of John Campbell White, who furthered the endowment providing John Campbell White's perpetual scholarship for the last 25 years; and Donna Mae Holmes, who again renewed her commitment to fund an annual James Holmes Memorial Scholarship. Annual

scholarships are established when \$1000 or more is donated in one year; \$10,000 or more will establish a perpetual scholarship.

Additional thanks to all those who gave to the AFSA Scholarship Fund in memory of Richard Blalock.

## Organizational Efforts

The Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR) will fund a third year of the Heyward G. Hill Scholarship Program. This extends their initial commitment in 1991 to a two-year pilot project. Funds for this program are provided by the DACOR Bacon House Foundation from the estate of Heyward G. Hill.

The Public Members Association (PMA) has donated \$2,500 to the AFSA Scholarship Fund to commemorate the PMA's 25th anniversary.

Finally, special thanks to the Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW), who provided half the support for Merit Awards and 24 of this year's financial aid grants. Through their tireless efforts with the annual BOOKFAIR, AAFSW has provided assistance to Foreign Service youth since 1976. AFSA encourages all members of the Foreign Service to be generous at the annual BOOKFAIR which continues to benefit this worthy cause.

## Speakers wanted

by Gil Kulick  
*Outreach Coordinator*

All AFSA members, retired and active-duty, who are knowledgeable about current foreign-policy issues and Foreign Service life are encouraged to volunteer for the new AFSA Speakers Bureau.

Platforms will include world-affairs organizations, universities, and business and civic groups throughout the country. Overseas officers who are willing to do some speaking during home leave or consultation are especially welcome.

If you'd like to promote a strong Foreign Service and an enlightened foreign policy, send a resume and a list of speaking topics to Gil Kulick, AFSA outreach coordinator.

## legislative news

### Freedom, democracy, and open markets

by Rick Weiss  
*Congressional Liaison*

With public opinion polls reflecting disapproval of a do-nothing Congress and a do-nothing executive branch, the government remains in gridlock. Yet some decisions are already made: in January State will face a new chairman and ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee with the retirements of Dante Fascell (D-FL) and William Broomfield (R-MI). The economic facts of life indicate that the resources available to State, USAID, and USIA will be curtailed and reduced.

Before Congress recessed for July 4 and the Democratic Convention, the House passed the Foreign Aid FY93 Appropriations Bill, the CIA Authorization Bill, and marked up State and USIA appropriations legislation.

On the other side of the Capitol, the Senate passed the aid package for the former Soviet Union, entitled the "Freedom for Russia and the Emerging Euroasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act." Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), a supporter of the legislation, responded to a concern of Congress that any money spent on foreign aid is questionable when so many domestic programs are underfunded: "When we speak of what we are doing in this bill, we are doing \$620 million of new foreign aid [including] \$18 million for use in diplomatic expenses [operational expenses for new embassies] and \$7 million for USIA posts in the former Soviet Union. . . . Frankly, as I view this, I am astonished that the president and Congress are planning to spend no more than 5 percent of the global foreign aid in the former Soviet Union. None of this money is coming from domestic spending. And we are protecting 95 percent of the other foreign aid recipients." The House has yet to move on the Soviet aid bill.

## newsbriefs

**Malaria prophylaxis:** Several posts contacted AFSA when the State Department switched from chloroquine and paludrine as the preferred malaria prophylaxis to the drug mefloquine. Although mefloquine is more effective, it may have serious side effects in small children and many women. After meeting with State, AFSA reviewed a department cable and sent its own in an effort to ensure that employees received complete information.

**City-Pair revision cable:** The May "AFSA News" addressed the revised City-Pair travel policy. While the revision was a significant improvement over the old policy, it caused some confusion among employees. At our request, the department sent a clarification cable to the field to allay remaining confusion regarding the policy. The cable, which contained language provided by AFSA, was sent to the field in May.



At the annual prize day at the National War College on June 9, the first AFSA Award for Excellence in Writing was given to FSO Diana M. Dameron by Major General Gerald P. Stadler. The newly established AFSA prize, a gift of books, was conferred for a paper on "Weapons of Mass Destruction: Cold War Lessons for a New World Order." AFSA President Hume Horan welcomed this new cooperation between the Foreign Service and the uniformed services.

## Position Open

### Director of Member Services:

Responsible for counseling on grievances and federal personnel system; responding to inquiries on federal benefits and allowances; advising on statutory, regulatory, and tax provisions. Participates in labor-management negotiations. Strong writing and interpersonal skills are crucial; knowledge of the Foreign Service desirable, as is familiarity with federal sector labor relations. Salary \$30-35k; excellent benefits. Send resume, cover letter to: AFSA Executive Director, 2101 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

## Courier TIC limit proposed

By Deborah M. Leaby  
Member Services Representative

The department has proposed instituting a time-in-class (TIC) limitation for diplomatic couriers. The TIC was proposed in conjunction with regulations that would permit administrative promotions to FP-04. For employees currently in classes FP-04 and above, a 25-year multiclass TIC would run from FP-04 through FP-01. For all other current couriers as well as future hires, a 22-year multiclass TIC would begin when they are administratively promoted to FP-04.

The department has been moving toward implementation of a TIC for most specialists (only three groups, including couriers, are not subject to a TIC). State believes that a TIC is necessary to provide predictable flow-through at all grades. AFSA remains unconvinced that couriers at the FP-04 level and above, who do not receive the benefits of the new administrative promotions, should be subjected to any time-in-class limitation.

AFSA solicited and received many excellent comments from couriers about the proposed TIC and will begin negotiations on the proposal shortly.

## 1991 AFSA Fund Contributors

The following are the final names in our list of AFSA Fund contributors for 1991. AFSA thanks all who gave so generously.

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BY HOWARD R.  
SIMPSON



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM WITTE

*This account of a USIS officer's experiences in Vietnam is an edited excerpt from **Tiger in the Barbed Wire**, to be published this month by Brassey's Inc. This excerpt, **North to Hanoi**, details Simpson's introduction to USIS Saigon and his assignment as war correspondent. Copyright 1992 by Howard R. Simpson.*

## North to Hanoi

The last days of the rainy season in 1952 brought sluicing downpours to Saigon. They were heralded by flashing lightning and the cannon crack of thunder. The rain fell in solid, perpendicular sheets, overloading the city's drains and flooding the streets. Taxis stalled, cyclos moved slowly through the rising water like small, canopied boats, and shoeshine boys put aside their boxes to splash and cavort in the gutters. Drinkers on the terrace of the Continental Hotel retreated from the terrace to the open-arched inner bar that looked onto the street.

An indefinable tension existed under this facade of apparent normality. You didn't have to be a student of Clausewitz to know that the dry season inevitably heralded increased military action. General Giap's great victories in 1950 had begun with the end of the rains. Now, leaks and rumors from official French sources indicated that Giap,

# Tiger in the Barbed Wire

smarting from his setbacks in the Tonkin Delta, was preparing an offensive toward the northwest and the mountains of the T'ai region. This strategy appeared eminently sensible. It would threaten the thinly garrisoned French posts, pose a direct menace to Laos, force the French to commit troops held in reserve to protect the Delta, extend the tenuous French lines of communication, and force them to fight in

mountain and jungle terrain where the effectiveness of air support would be reduced.

These rumors, based on solid intelligence reports, proved to be correct. In late October French radio intercepts identified the presence of Giap's elite assault divisions, the 308th and 312th, in the T'ai region. Agents and observers confirmed enemy troop movements on the Red River near Yen Bay and reported close to 20,000 coolies in support of the Vietminh forces. Within weeks, after bloody fighting in the eerie, fog-shrouded mountains, the Vietminh had overrun the important post of Nghia Lo. General Salan had ordered the commanders of other isolated strongpoints to fall back toward the old, French-held airstrip at Nasan.

### Correspondent de guerre

It was against this backdrop that I suddenly found my press officer role expanded, and I assumed the role of USIS war correspondent. Somewhere, out there beyond Saigon, Washington was sure there were Vietnamese troops in action using American-supplied equipment. Both VOA and IPS needed newsworthy copy on the Vietnamese National Army and its performance in battle.

USIS chief Lee Brady and his deputy "Black Jack" Pickering agreed that it was time I traveled north to Hanoi. I had *carte blanche* to cover any military operations that looked promising, familiarize myself with our small office at the consulate, and make contact with officials and journalists, both Vietnamese and French.

A few days later I left the press section in the able hands of Dinh Le Ngoan, my Vietnamese assistant, bid goodbye to Saigon, and took an Air Vietnam flight to Hanoi. I was carrying a rucksack containing warm clothes, two bottles of duty-free scotch, a Rolleiflex and film, two boxes of Manila cigars, and my Colt revolver. A hastily fabricated shoulder tab identified me as a "*correspondent de guerre, USIS.*"

### Grim and gray

Hanoi was the opposite of Saigon. A cold wind was rattling the hangar doors of Gia Lam Airfield when our flight disembarked. One immediately sensed the proximity of a shooting war. The guard-post and machine-gun positions in the South had been softened and disguised by lush foliage, scattered flowers, and verdant paddy fields. Here they jutted out of the landscape, utilitarian and grim, with cleared fields of fire surrounded by double-apron barbed wire fences. Mud-spattered military vehicles moved with an urgency not seen in Saigon. A Vietnamese driver from USIS Hanoi picked me up and inched his way into the backed-up column of trucks, overloaded buses, and private vehicles waiting to cross the Doumer Bridge, the long steel span over the muddy waters of the Red River. There was a two-way flow of foot



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traffic along the narrow walkways on each side of the bridge. I had the impression that the Europeanized facade of Indochina exemplified by Saigon had been ripped away and I was seeing Asia for the first time.

The Tonkinese peasants shuffling past under the heavy loads of their balanced baskets were a compact human mass. They seemed to have stepped from an ancient Chinese print or the flickering news-reel coverage of mass movements during the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. But this unending crowd wasn't fleeing a rampaging army. They were engaged in basic commerce, scrabbling for a living in a region accustomed to floods, droughts, wars, and invasion. Most of the porters, both men and women, wore woven, conical hats. Their teeth were blackened by protective lacquer and the betel nuts they chewed and spat onto the roadway in sudden jets. They were carrying covered baskets of squawking ducks

and clucking chickens, precarious piles of green onions and herbs, pole-slung piglets, deep panniers of coal chips, firewood, cases of condensed milk, vegetables, and large, mud-smear river fish. The whole landscape and those moving through it were a study in gray. The lowering sky was gray, the peasants' tattered clothing was gray. Gray mud lined the riverbanks, and the roiling water below was gray with a tint of ocher. Even the Tonkinese faces that looked at us—and through us—with dull acceptance radiated a gray light.

Hanoi appeared as a drab garrison city, reminiscent of newly liberated French towns just behind the front lines in the winter of 1944. Military traffic was heavy, and jeeploads of armed troops from combat units sped through the streets. We passed a tank park on the outskirts of the city, where the walls of private dwellings had been knocked down to shelter M-24 tanks, and grease-smear French mechanics were cooking food over an open fire. The city became more attractive as we reached its center. Tree-lined avenues, squares, and cafes appeared, and the small electric trolleys unique to Hanoi rocked along on narrow rails.

The driver dropped me off in front of the USIS house at the consulate complex, where I was shown to my room by a servant, and dutifully made my presence known to the officer-in-charge. After a late lunch and an informal briefing on local developments and relations with the consulate staff, I arranged for a driver to take me to the French Army press camp. It was far from a "camp." It was located in a tree-shaded, walled complex in the European residential area and housed in a peak-roofed colonial villa.

### Looking for the action

General Giap's offensive had drawn Saigon-based newsmen, and I recognized a familiar face. Lucien Bodard of

*France-Soir*, one of the Hotel Continental's regulars, examined my war correspondent's tab with obvious distaste, as if he'd encountered some form of human chameleon, and gave me a limp handshake. I introduced myself to Larry Allen of AP, a thin, laconic American considered the unofficial doyen of the press camp. Allen, to whom the French would later award the *Croix de Guerre*, was a legend in Hanoi and a fixture of the camp. He had good contacts among the French military. While other journalists were rushing from province to province seeking action, Allen put his stories together with a few telephone calls and discreet inquiries over a few drinks at the Hotel Metropole or the Cafe Normandie. When he did venture into the field, his sources had already assured him the displacement would be worthwhile.

Reassured that the new Yank would be no competition, Allen welcomed me to the fold and suggested we take our seats for the briefing. The correspondents gathered around, bringing their drinks, and settled down to listen. The officer read off a list of minor engagements in various locations, posts attacked, assaults repulsed, mop-up sweeps by armor-supported *groupes mobiles*, weapons recovered, and casualty reports. It was a dull litany and few of the newsmen took any notes. There was a slight rise in interest when the officer revealed some details of the 6th Colonial Parachute Battalion's fighting withdrawal from Tu Le, one of the abandoned posts near Nghia Lo. A certain Major Bigeard had led his men through 70 kilometers of jungle, carrying their own wounded, while under constant enemy pressure. It had the makings of a modern military odyssey. Allen confirmed that a number of Bigeard's parachutists were Vietnamese. I made a note of it for future reference.

I shared a table that evening with the denizens of the press camp listening to their cynical insiders' comments and projections on the war. The consensus was that something was shaping up at Nasan, where General Salan had ordered the fortification of the terrain surrounding the airstrip. Rumor had it that he hoped to draw Giap out of the jungle, tempting him to launch an attack in the area where his forces would be vulnerable to French artillery and air strikes. The table soon split into two argumentative camps. One group was certain the Vietminh would make a major effort in the Delta south of Hanoi, the other was convinced the clash would come at Nasan. The problem was to be at the right place at the right time.

Professional rivalry made it unlikely that anyone receiving a solid tip on the upcoming battle would rush to share his information with a colleague. Larry Allen told me of his foolproof method for sniffing out the truth. A small team of army combat photographers and cameramen shared a room in the press camp. They were inevitably tipped off in advance on major operations and slipped out of the camp well before any official announcement was made to their civilian counterparts. Allen kept a weather eye on these young sergeants. Any sudden absence on their part would send him down to the motor pool for a quick chat with the duty driver. The driver, having driven the team to the airfield, usually had a good idea of their final destination. Allen would

then spend some time confirming the tip with his higher-ranking contacts. Ordering a last scotch before retiring, Allen informed me the combat cameramen and photographers were already at Nasan.

### The waiting game

I spent the next morning putting in an urgent request for an *ordre de mission* that would take me to Nasan. It was then a question of waiting. I spent a minimum of time at the consulate. The two USIS officers stationed in Hanoi were busy with their small operation and the consul, Paul Sturm, was preoccupied with his reporting task. Our occasional meetings in Hanoi were correct, if cool. He obviously would have been happier if I'd remained in Saigon. As it was, I spent much of my time at the press camp waiting for my travel to be approved and trying to learn more about the war.

I'd already done considerable cramming on the genesis of the Vietnamese National Army (VNA), but I still had much to learn. Press camp opinion on the VNA was clearly divided. Army press officers were ready with statistics and quotes of praise from French generals to show the VNA was a dependable, growing military asset. Veteran correspondents had their own favorite horror stories about VNA incompetence and corruption. Seeking a middle ground was difficult.

The VNA drew much of its strength from the old colonial regiments of the French Army, and its units were cadred by French officers and noncoms, veteran Vietnamese noncoms, and Vietnamese graduates of the French officers schools at Dalat and Thu Duc. Until the Indochina War, the Vietnamese had been considered more apt to serve in supply and service units. Even some of the old French Indochina hands, who had led Tonkinese or Annamite riflemen, tended to promote tough Cambodians into the noncommissioned ranks in preference to the Vietnamese. To many French officers, the idea of a fighting Vietnamese national army was a grim joke. Fortunately, there were French officers who had commanded Vietnamese troops in combat and knew how capable they would be if properly motivated and well trained. But, from its very inception, the VNA was to bear the stigma of its "colonial" origins. The bravery or skill of individual units, officers, and men, and all the propaganda or psychological warfare techniques in the world would never change that basic fact.

The French Expeditionary Corps (FEC) was easier to analyze but no less complicated. Without fully realizing it, I was about to witness the twilight of one of the world's last colonial armies. The FEC numbered 200,993 in 1952, including 69,513 Frenchmen, 20,082 Foreign Legionnaires (Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Spaniards, etc.), 52,323 Africans and North Africans, and 59,075 Indochinese (Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and tribal peoples). A typical operation in the Tonkin Delta could include a French tank unit, Moroccan, Vietnamese, or Senegalese infantry, a Legion mortar company, and French Navy gunboats from the Riverine Force.

The officer corps was a strange amalgam from an army that had suffered severe trauma during World War II. There

were officers from the colonial units of the *Armée d'Afrique*, the *anciens d'Indo* who had remained in Indochina, surviving the long-distance directives of Vichy, the Japanese occupation, and the first Vietminh insurrections; the Gaullists, veterans of the Resistance and the heady days of the Liberation; and a new generation of officers, recruited following the Liberation, who had experienced their baptism of fire in Germany just prior to the Nazi collapse.

In the 1950s the FEC was already archaic and vulnerable in a new age of revolutionary warfare and political evolution. Protests against the war and the use of conscription were mounting in France, the hot wind of independence was sweeping Africa, and each military reverse in Indochina shook the foundations of traditional political balance in Paris. The FEC's racial and religious mix was in itself a potential political problem. The Vietminh had been quick to exploit this Achilles's heel in dealing with prisoners of war. Subtle psychological methods of privation and reward, a drumfire of lectures on the evils of French colonialism, and continued exploitation of non-French prisoners' homesickness often resulted in changed loyalties. Under the circumstances it was surprising that so many colonial troops did remain loyal to their officers, their regiments, and to France. But those who did not were to form the indoctrinated, dedicated cadres of such revolutionary groups as the FLN in Algeria during the twilight of French colonial rule.

### The attacks begin

The attacks on Nasan began the night of November 30. A strong point to the northeast of the airstrip held by T'ai tribal irregulars cadred by Moroccans was overrun by Vietminh infantry led by sappers with bangalore torpedos. A heavy mortar barrage supported the assault. The next morning at dawn a counterattack *a la fourchette* (with fixed bayonets) by the Third Colonial Parachute Battalion retook the position. More attacks followed, but the details were sketchy. I renewed my request for orders to Nasan and vented my frustration by familiarizing myself with Hanoi. Meanwhile my orders came through. As I walked into the graveled driveway of the press camp the purple-nosed major was waving at me from the balcony.

"*Bon Dieu!*" he shouted. "Where have you been?" I had missed a flight to Nasan. The major, after a conciliatory drink at the bar, promised to put me on the manifest for the next day.

The flight to Nasan took about 50 minutes. It was a cold, uncomfortable experience. The C-47, loaded with ammunition, bucked through gray clouds, the noise of its straining engines rising and falling. My fellow passengers, a Legion captain and three enlisted men, were sprawled in their bucket seats, wrapped in blankets and fast asleep. Far below, the rough, mountainous terrain appeared sinister and hostile. I tried to sleep but couldn't. I had been told there was a Vietnamese battalion at Nasan, the 55th, under the command of Captain Pham Van Dong. I had also been instructed to make contact on arrival with Lieutenant Colonel Fourcade, the chief of staff of the Nasan commander, Colonel Gilles.

Nasan resembled the set of a Cecil B. De Mille extrava-

ganza. We were surrounded by activity. A column of mules loaded with cased artillery shells and led by North African troops was climbing toward a nearby hilltop position. Green and white cargo parachutes were blossoming overhead from aircraft not scheduled to land on the strip. French parachutists, stripped to the waist, were manhandling jerry cans full of water into a weapons carrier. Barbed wire glinted on a nearby slope like a silver blanket. Nasan was a busy, bellicose, human beehive, and the prevailing urgency underlined a sense of imminent threat.

I was brought to the command post (CP) to meet the commanding officer, Colonel Gilles. The cave-like dugout was cold and damp. The earthen walls and thick log beams glistened with moisture. It was a busy place. A long trestle table supported an array of field telephones and radio receivers. Maps were fixed to the walls and displayed on easels. Staff officers were sending and receiving messages, reading reports, and tracing the progress of patrols on the maps. The hum of electronic equipment and the crackle of radio static filled the narrow space. I was led farther into the labyrinth, past some screening blankets, to a long table in the center of a sandbagged room. A grinning Senegalese soldier with tribal scars on his cheeks poked his head out of an alcove. Lieutenant Colonel Fourcade shouted something I couldn't understand and within seconds I was served a steaming canteen cup of black coffee.

### The commander

I settled down to wait, lit a Manila cigar, and sipped the strong coffee. The howitzers went into teeth-jarring action again, and dirt sifted from the dugout ceiling. I felt like an actor in a World War I film. A few minutes later the hanging blanket was pushed aside and a stocky parachute officer with heavy black eyebrows stood glaring at me.

"Who are you!" he demanded, as if the wrong answer could have dire consequences. I stood up to explain my presence and noticed his rank. I was in the presence of the redoubtable, one-eyed, *Pere* Gilles, the commander of Nasan. He listened to my flustered reply with obvious impatience. When I'd finished he muttered a grudging "*Eh bien*" and withdrew, flicking the curtain shut behind him. The blanket did little to mask the tirade he loosed on his staff officers. What was an *Amerloque* doing in his CP! What idiot in Hanoi had sent him to Nasan! Didn't the colonel have enough to worry about with the Viet sniffing at the defenses! There was a marked lack of response, but things moved very fast thereafter. A supply officer appeared to lead me out of the CP to a nearby dugout where I was assigned a bunk belonging to an artilleryman who was on night alert and slept during the day.

Once settled in, I left the dugout to take a good look at Nasan. I found a raised vantage point behind the CP and tried to orient myself. The briefing officers in Hanoi had described Nasan as a direct threat to the rear of Vietminh forces menacing the Kingdom of Laos. The fortified camp was approximately 90 miles from the frontier of Communist China. The military briefers had compared the surrounding mountains to "impenetrable walls" advantageous to the



Franco-Vietnamese defenders. Watching the last of the C-47s touching down before sunset, I had the uneasy feeling an argument could be made that the dark heights dominating the airstrip could also pose a threat. Another column of North African infantry with slung rifles was moving over the open short ground below. Far across the valley a heavy machine gun began a baritone chopping, the gunner tapping out rounds as bright tracers arced through the gathering darkness and ricocheted off a distant hillside.

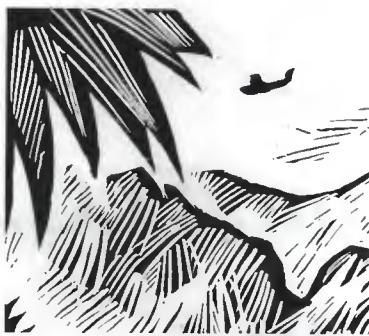
I learned more about the fighting during dinner. The staff officer estimated that the Vietminh 308th and 312th divisions had taken heavy casualties. Close to 500 dead had been found in front of the French positions. I was feeling my way in an entirely new environment. I wanted to ask these officers about their own casualties but I decided it could wait till the next day. Considering Colonel Gilles's reaction to me, I'd need all the allies I could get if I wanted to remain at Nasan.

The night was a mix of pyrotechnics and potential menace. Multicolored tracers from the defensive positions hosed into the darkness periodically. Was it a new attack or the reaction of a nervous gunner? Illumination flares dropped from C-47s threw a ghostly, temporary light over the barbed wire. Cryptic messages from perimeter listening posts reporting real or imagined enemy movement could start the 105mm batteries thumping, their rounds gurgling up out of the valley and slamming into the hills. Daylight brought a tenuous relief, and clear skies meant a continuation of the sky bridge from Hanoi.

### The front position

I visited the position of the 55th Battalion of the Vietnamese National Army the day after my arrival. Captain Dong, the commander, was a Nung—a professional soldier and member of the warrior tribe from the Chinese border region. The heavy smell of death flooded my nostrils as I climbed to the 55th's CP. Work parties were still burying enemy dead from the previous attacks. It was no easy task. Few of the corpses were in one piece, and fleshy fragments hung from the wire. I found the captain squatting near a field radio, shoveling steaming noodles into his mouth with chopsticks. His high cheekbones, aquiline nose, and brush-cut black hair gave him the appearance of an American Indian.

Dong's battalion was still cadred largely by French officers, but he was definitely in command. He insisted I accept some *pho* soup in a dented enamel bowl. One of his men wiped two chopsticks on his pants leg and handed them to me. I forced myself to eat, despite the stomach-wrenching stench and the horrors on the wire. Dong told me of the attacks with a disarming simplicity. The Viet had made a special effort to overrun his battalion. Led by suicidal sappers who were stripped to the waist and carrying satchel charges



**I borrowed a typewriter from one of Gilles' staff and, struggling with the French keyboard, managed to knock out a detailed story on the battle performance of the 55th Battalion.**

and bangalores, the enemy regulars had breached the wire in several places. Dong, seeing his losses grow, had ordered his supporting howitzers leveled, loaded with fragmentation rounds, and fired point-blank at the oncoming attackers. The gamble had worked and his men were still cleaning up the result. I spent the day with Captain Dong, talking with him and interviewing some of the young Vietnamese officers under his command. It was only the first of many meetings between us and the beginning of a long friendship.

I borrowed a typewriter from one of Gilles' staff and, struggling with the French keyboard, managed to knock out a detailed story on the battle performance of the 55th Battalion. I addressed the copy to the major at the press camp with full instructions for filing to USINFO and VOA in Washington. An Army Information Service noncom taking film to be processed agreed to hand-carry the story on to Hanoi.

The days I spent at Nasan were a mix of impressions: the incongruous sound of a German marching song rising along a mountain trail as a Legion parachute battalion returned from a reconnaissance on Son La; the Chinese-style padded jackets that made already swollen Vietminh corpses look like Michelin men; the little-boy-lost look on the face of a French casualty with a fatal chest wound as they loaded him aboard a Medevac C-47; the pungent, acidic aura of *nuoc mam*, the fish sauce staple used by all Vietnamese troops; and the deathly silence of the surrounding landscape in contrast to the bustle and clatter of the French stronghold.

As the days passed and patrols from Nasan ventured farther from the perimeter without making contact, it became clear that General Giap had pulled back his divisions. The nervous tension of expecting another assault gave way to a certain frustration palpable at the CP mess. Colonel Gilles was particularly testy. His parachutists were not trained or conditioned for defensive warfare. To him, each day the paras spent inactive in the trenches and dugouts was a waste of a prime operational asset. Even the battalion-size sweeps they were conducting outside the perimeter were proving useless. He wanted his paras out of there, and his arguments with Hanoi headquarters were not improving his temper.

It was time for me to return to Hanoi. I rolled my bedroll, left what remained of the scotch with the CP mess officer, said my goodbyes, and found space aboard a Bristol transport as it was warming up on the strip. Before long I would realize that Nasan had been a dress rehearsal for Dien Bien Phu. ■

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**Howard R. Simpson, a retired USIA Foreign Service officer who served as an advisor to the Vietnamese prime minister in 1964, returned to Vietnam for a three-week stay as a journalist in 1991.**

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# THE CONSUL and the Mutiny

A day in the life of Achilles Zenophon MacGregor



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM NUTTLE

BY ELLIS O. BRIGGS

I first heard of Achilles Zenophon MacGregor in a phone call from Joseph Kennedy, chairman of President Roosevelt's Maritime Commission. It was not a promising introduction.

The Kennedy conversation took place in the 1930s, in Washington. "Is this the Latin American section of the State Department? Secretary Hull's office referred me to you. What I want to know—who the hell is Achilles MacGregor?"

I said I was the acting chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs, and what about Achilles MacGregor?

The brisk Boston voice sharpened. "I'm asking you again, Mr. Acting Chief, who the hell is your Achilles MacGregor?"

My secretary was turning the pages of the Foreign Service list. "Wait a moment, here I have him. MacGregor, Achilles Z., Z for Zenophon, that's a name for you isn't it? Achilles Zenophon MacGregor is the American vice consul in Valparaiso—that's the principal seaport of Chile. What about him, Mr. Chairman?" I refrained from adding that Valparaiso was apparently Achilles MacGregor's first post. He had been there two months.

Mr. Kennedy snorted into the telephone. "What about him? Your Vice Consul MacGregor has thrown the crew of an American merchant ship into a Chilean jail. That's what your Vice Consul MacGregor has done, and then he had the brass to telephone me all the way from Valpa—that port in Chile. He demanded that the Maritime Commission back him up.

First he puts the crew of an American ship in jail, and now I have the seaman's union on my neck. That's what your Achilles MacGregor has done."

"Did the vice consul say why he put the crew in jail?"

"Sure he did. That's what he telephoned about. He said there was a mutiny."

"A mutiny?" I could see things ahead, on a congested horizon.

"That's right, a mutiny," said the chairman of the Maritime Commission, "M-U-T-I-N-Y, mutiny, as in *Bounty*."

"The whole crew?" I persisted. "You mean the vice consul threw the whole crew in jail, captain and all?"

"Listen," said the Boston voice, the tone not friendly, "I'm only repeating what your vice consul told me. The entire deck crew, the forecabin hands."

"That's different," I said, "that is 10 or a dozen men out of 25 or 30. Can you tell me, Mr. Chairman, what happened?"

"He said the captain accused the deck crew of mutiny, 11 men out of 31. The vice consul agreed with the captain so he called in the Chilean police. The Chileans went aboard the ship, an American vessel, and they forcibly removed the deck crew, including American citizens. And now your Achilles Macgregor wants the Maritime Commission to support him."

The repetition of "your Mr. MacGregor" did not augur well for the American vice consul in Valparaiso. I recalled that my caller had a potent voice at the White House.

"I am sorry for the phone call," I began. "Consuls are supposed to communicate through the State Department, not directly with other agencies of the government. He was off base there. But mutiny is a serious business. He probably figured the phone call would save time, because the case will have to be considered by the Maritime Commission pretty soon anyway." Poking my neck out, I said. "Mr. Chairman, Vice Consul MacGregor may have been wrong to telephone you from Chile, but he is not 'my Mr. MacGregor' or 'the State Department's Mr. MacGregor.' He is the American vice consul. He has a presidential commission. And, as the official in charge of consular services to American ships in Valparaiso, he has responsibilities under American law—the same law that governs the Maritime Commission."

"Does that mean the State Department endorses the action of your—all right—our vice consul—when he throws American seamen into a foreign jail?"

"No, it doesn't, Mr. Chairman. Until the vice consul's report reaches Washington, the State Department takes no position, one way or the other."

"I don't know any more about this mutiny than you have told me. I don't even know the name of the ship. But I do know the west coast of South America and I've done consular work there. It's a rough part of the world. If the seamen come across a 'soft' consul they harry him from Guayaquil to Talara. That creates problems for captains, ship



**...the captain accused the deck crew of mutiny, 11 men out of 31. The vice consul agreed with the captain so he called in the Chilean police.**

operators, and, yes, for American maritime interests in general. I've had plenty of mean customers on the public side of the consular railing. And I've summoned the cops and thrown American seamen in jail—when they were too drunk or too fighting mad to go back aboard the ship. So all I ask is, please keep an open mind about Vice Consul MacGregor until we have all the facts."

"And how long do you think it will take to assemble the facts, while American seamen rot in a South American jail? In the meantime, what does the open-minded State Department suggest I tell the Seaman's Union?"

"It shouldn't take more than a couple of days—mutiny, alleged mutiny—is an urgent matter. Tell me the name of the ship and we'll get off a telegram to the ambassador in Santiago, asking him to look into the case and report by cable."

"Now you're talking," said the chairman of the Maritime Commission. "The ship is the *Periwinkle Hall*, home port, Baltimore. According to your—I mean our—vice consul, the crew was jailed yesterday morning. And it had better be good," concluded Mr. Kennedy.

### The story

When the ambassador received the State Department cable, he sent an embassy officer to Valparaiso, accompanied by the naval attaché, who went aboard the *Periwinkle Hall*. The captain declared that on the morning of arrival off Valparaiso, members of the deck crew had been drunk on duty; they had willfully defied the orders of the deck officers and himself, thus endangering the vessel during the approach to the port—rain and patches of fog prevailing, with a strong offshore wind, which made docking hazardous. In addition, the crew used obscene and abusive language, accompanied by threats of bodily injury. A certified copy of the corresponding Note of Protest, signed by the captain before the vice consul, was being forwarded to Washington.

The captain of the port and the chief of police of Valparaiso confirmed, respectively, the condition of the deck crew on the arrival of the ship and the receipt of a request for assistance. The last Chilean witness was the collector of customs, who spoke of charges pending against the *Periwinkle Hall* crew for smuggling American cigarettes into the port of Chanaral in order to buy *pisco*. The embassy representative noted that Vice Consul MacGregor appeared to have established good relations with local Chilean authorities, who characterized him as "*macho*" and "*muy buaso*," the second being an untranslatable expression of esteem in those latitudes.

The ambassador's report was a model in fence straddling, "on one hand it might appear . . . whereas on the other hand, one might well conclude . . ." He suggested that the State Department might consider whether the ship was inside or outside Chilean territorial waters at the time the alleged offense occurred. The ambassador "hesitated to draw the

line between insubordination, apparently induced by alcohol, and mutiny . . .”

Finally, the ambassador “found it difficult to condone” the use of the international telephone. (In those days the international telephone was a new weapon in the arsenal of communications; a call to Washington cost \$45 for the first three minutes.) Clearly the ambassador was no help to the vice consul. I appended a memorandum and sent the file to the legal adviser of the State Department with a brown tag marked “urgent.”

The ambassador’s cable also went to the Maritime Commission. Pouncing upon the uncertainty about the position of the ship, the owners were importuned by the commission to withdraw the mutiny charges. Drunkenness, opined the commission’s attorney, was deplorable, but it was not necessarily mutiny. In the meantime, demurrage would soon be piling up against the vessel in Valparaiso.

The company capitulated. A cable was dispatched to the captain, and the purser paid subsistence-while-in-jail charges submitted by the local police and a larger fine (equal to the sum of the deck crew’s accumulated wages) to settle the smuggling charges, and clearances were obtained to sail.

The 11 members of the deck crew, now sober and unshaved but otherwise intact, were released to the jurisdiction of Vice Consul MacGregor, who housed them at the local Seaman’s Institute, pending repatriation. Four of the seamen, now penitent and expressing contrition, were reshipped aboard the *Periwinkle Hall* as ordinary seamen at reduced wages. The seven remaining crew members were shipped as workaways, at 25 cents a month, aboard a vessel bound for New York via Callao and the Panama Canal—a 20-day voyage. No record of their enthusiasm survives.

## Off with his head

When hearing of these operations, the Seaman’s Union, appeased by the withdrawal of the mutiny charges, shouted anew for the head of Vice Consul MacGregor. Cries of “false arrests and unlawful detention” rent the Potomac air. The union attempted to establish proceedings against the secretary of State, with MacGregor cited as agent. It was decided to summon the vice consul to the United States. Ostensibly a witness at a judicial hearing, MacGregor would, in fact, be testifying in defense of his official performance. His chances, I figured, were not good, but I hoped to improve them.

Transportation costs—10,000 miles, round trip—were to be defrayed by the Maritime Commission, and there was a further delay over travel by airplane. In the 1930s, officers were not required to fly; they had to volunteer to do so and sign a waiver absolving the State Department of liability in the event of an accident. MacGregor quickly volunteered for the four-day flight from Chile to Washington.

There was thus time for the State Department to consider what to do about Vice Consul MacGregor. He was so junior that his entry in the *Register* was brief: Born in Santiago de Cuba, bilingual, a bachelor’s degree from an eastern college, passed the Foreign Service exam with credible but not outstanding grades.

The director of the Foreign Service School remembered

Achilles. “Small man,” he said, “aggressive, take on anybody.” A contemporary in the State Department supplied additional comment. “Very dedicated guy,” he said. “Flag goes by and he snaps to attention. He got a black eye one day for pulling the hat off a stranger. Comes from a Caribbean island,” continued my informant, “but wants everyone to know he is 100 percent American.”

I wondered where he got that weird name. It turned out that Achilles had no more Greek blood than the Greek royal family—which is none at all. Achilles’s father went to Cuba in 1898 with General Leonard Wood as an American volunteer. Electing to remain after Cuban independence, MacGregor prospered in public utilities and later in sugar. Achilles’s mother was born in Cuba and became a naturalized American citizen. The son’s dark eyes and heavy brows came from her, plus dashes of fortitude supplementing the plentiful supply inherited from his Scottish-American father.

## Department of defense

Achilles, all five feet five of him, reached my office the morning after he arrived from Chile, and he declared that the airplane was the transportation of the future. “Four days against nearly three weeks,” he said. “Another 20 years and there won’t be a passenger ship on the ocean.”

I introduced him to Anne O’Neill of the Legal Adviser’s Office; she knew more international law than most secretaries of state had learned and forgotten.

It quickly became apparent that Vice Consul MacGregor had also been doing some homework—not only the Consular Regulations in their hard green cover, but also the corresponding U.S. legislation, including that establishing the authority of American consuls in foreign ports. He had learned that the decision of a consul in determining when a stranded American seaman is destitute and eligible for relief—board and lodging at the expense of the American taxpayer—is final. Not even the ambassador can overrule such a finding. MacGregor also was aware of the connection between the reputation of a consul in interpreting “destitution” and the number of American seamen deserting their vessels at a given port.

I gathered that, to Vice Consul MacGregor, responsibility was never a burden. To him official position was a trust, and in matters involving the American government, any effort to question the power derived from his commission aroused his immediate resistance.

And he had strong opinions on the American Merchant Marine. “I’m all for good conditions aboard ships,” he told Anne O’Neill and me. “American seamen are the best treated in the world, with the shortest working hours and the highest pay . . . and the best working conditions. I wouldn’t be surprised if American ships become so expensive to operate that they can’t compete with foreign vessels in world trade. And when that happens, American capital will switch to foreign flag ships—and then what will happen to the American Merchant Marine? But I guess that isn’t the vice consul’s business.”

“What gets me down,” he said, “is that with all the advantages and benefits, the discipline on American ships is

so lousy. The kind of men the officers have to work with . . . worthless, three-quarters of them. Take the *Periwinkle Hall*," he continued. "Before Valparaiso the vessel called at Chañaral and the deck crew went ashore, AWOL, to bring back a case of *pisco*. When the ship reached Valparaiso half the deck crew were plastered, and the rest hung over. When the crew decided they wanted to lay to, offshore, until the rain and fog lifted, instead of groping for the pier in the rain, the trouble started. You've read the captain's statement. He and the mates brought the ship in by themselves. The captain came ashore immediately and, after taking his deposition, I went aboard myself. The forecabin was a madhouse. Drunks, fights, passed-out seamen, sailors waving bottles, trash all over. From the pier I called the police."

Miss O'Neill nodded. "Tell me," she said, "about the position of the ship when the seamen refused to obey orders. Is there evidence to show exactly where it was?"

Achilles conceded that evidence was lacking. The captain estimated they were about four miles offshore. The chief mate thought less. They were close inshore, within a mile, when the fog lifted.

"Then we could argue that the vessel was inside Chilean territorial waters while the mutinous behavior was occurring," said Miss O'Neill, "that is, outside the jurisdiction of the United States."

"Including the Maritime Commission?" asked MacGregor innocently.

"Possibly not," said Anne O'Neill. "That's the sort of question the court will answer. The fact that the captain withdrew his charges, even though under pressure, doesn't help us any. The captain's statement about "extreme pressure from the Maritime Commission" may come in handy. Another thing, where does the smuggling charge fit into the picture?"

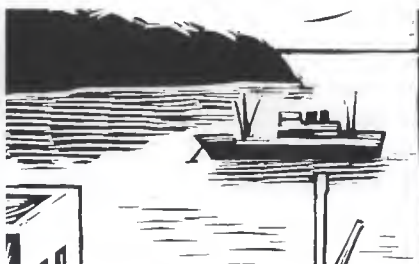
### Wages of crime

"It fits," said Achilles. "Two days before the mutiny, at Chañaral, the crew sneaked several cartons of American cigarettes past the customs and sold them for a case of *pisco*, which they took back aboard. Chañaral is a small place, and the word got around. Cigarettes, pesos, *pisco*, mutiny. The four men who were reshipped have signed a confession about these events." He produced it, and I read the document over Miss O'Neill's shoulder.

"How did it happen that the Chilean fine equaled the accumulated wages of the deck crew?" she queried.

It was my turn to smile, but Achilles bristled. "I didn't want to see the ship itself stuck with a large fine," he told us. "Don't forget how those seamen behaved. If I had been in charge they would have been in jail yet!"

"Take it easy," said Miss O'Neill. "Now please explain what really happened about that cigarette fine."



### Vice Consul MacGregor stuck to his convictions. The wages of mischief are not paid in the debased coin of appeasement.

"Well, after the withdrawal of the mutiny charges, the smuggling business was the only thing holding up the departure of the vessel. Customs found out about the confession. The fine could have been two or three times as large, but I didn't see why the ship should be stuck with it, after all the other trouble. So I invited the collector of Customs to have a drink with me, and we wound up having a meal together." He grinned. "I agreed to find out how many wages the deck crew had on the ship's books. The restaurant was only a couple of blocks from the waterfront. One of the waiters took a note aboard to the captain. The *Periwinkle Hall* sailed that evening."

"It might have saved trouble," remarked Miss O'Neill, "if the Chileans had arrested the crew on the smuggling charges, on their own, instead of at the request of the American consul, charged with mutiny. Did that occur to you Vice Consul MacGregor?"

"Sure it did," said Achilles. "The *aduanas* people were waiting in my office that morning when I came back from visiting the ship the first time. But don't forget, I'd seen the crew's quarters; I'd smelled that forecabin. Those men deserved a real penalty—not a piddling fine for smuggling cigarettes through Customs."

Vice Consul MacGregor stuck to his convictions. The wages of mischief are not paid in the debased coin of appeasement. I advised him to take Miss O'Neill's advice and wished him luck with the judge in Baltimore.

Vice Consul MacGregor made a good witness. He told his story and he did not volunteer extraneous comments or make pronouncements on the state of American shipping. The hearing was less eventful than anticipated, and Vice Consul MacGregor was dismissed with his story intact and the union unable to convince the court that he had exceeded his authority. "That," said Miss O'Neill, "was in itself a victory."

The Maritime Commission thereupon subsided; by then its chairman had been nominated to be Roosevelt's ambassador to the Court of St. James.

In the final reckoning MacGregor was personally charged with the cost of his telephone call from Valparaiso; the Bureau of Accounts wanted to prove that a postage stamp would have done just as well as the phone call and saved \$100. I vetoed MacGregor's proposal to return to Chile by air and sent him back by passenger ship, the equivalent of three weeks' vacation.

Later I heard that for the balance of MacGregor's service in Chile, not a single American seaman deserted his vessel at the post of Valparaiso. ■

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*Ellis O. Briggs, a Foreign Service officer for 37 years, died in 1976. This story, which has been edited, was found among his unpublished papers. His son believes Vice Consul MacGregor may be a composite figure. The fictitious story contains several episodes known to be true.*

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# HOME LEAVE— it's NOT a VACATION!

BY WESLEY ANN GODARD







**A**LIGHT IS SUDDENLY SHINING IN MY EYES. The clatter of dishes assaults my ears. Reluctantly I pull myself up out of a deep well of sleep. "Where am I? What's happening?" Gradually the room takes shape and I remember that I have stepped through the looking glass again and changed from minor royalty back to Jane Doe. Yesterday I was the wife of the deputy chief of mission in Managua, Nicaragua with a servant to wash the dishes; today I'm waking up in Shawnee, Oklahoma on the sofa bed listening to my father-in-law unload the dishwasher. It's 6 a.m. on our first day of home leave.

Foreign Service families look forward to home leave. Despite experience, we always assume this time will be different. This will be the relaxing vacation with family that senators and representatives probably envision when they think of places to cut the State Department budget.

Actually, what Congress envisioned had nothing to do with vacationing. According to the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM), "The purpose of home leave is to ensure that employees sent overseas for extended periods . . . undergo reorientation and re-exposure in the United States on a regular basis." You aren't supposed to have fun, you're supposed to be in a self-directed crash course on Americana.

Your "re-exposure" to the United States will sometimes feel like a nightmarish Disney World ride through Tomorrowland. By the time you remember what an HOV lane is, you will have been issued a traffic ticket. You are frustrated every time you try to dial friends in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs and forget to use the appropriate area code. When you dust off your MOST card at the automatic teller, you suddenly realize that you can't remember your code number. That comfortable little neighborhood restaurant you were looking forward to for dinner has been replaced by a half-empty high rise or a high-energy trendy new mega-restaurant. Television commercials are advertising products whose use you cannot divine (what are odorless garlic tablets for anyhow?). Worst of all is the drive by your

house—purchased the last time you were on home leave and rented out to a pleasant couple with no kids. The dead azaleas, weedy grass, and lawn littered with motorcycles make you wonder if you are on the right street.

In the meantime, you are staying with relatives. Glossy brochures from beach resorts and mountain retreats notwithstanding, the only way to afford home leave is by appealing to friends and relatives to take you in. There are advantages to this arrangement besides the budget. Your children have time to become reacquainted with their grandparents and play with their cousins, while you and your siblings laugh about old family stories. You reenter American society at its most vital, basic level, not as a tourist, but as a participant. However, after about three days of family bonding while vying for a time slot in the bathroom, personality quirks that are charming at a distance begin to grate.

#### THE LITTLE DECISIONS

Food differences quickly become major battlefields. My mother-in-law believes everyone should greet the dawn with a hearty breakfast—no matter how late the arrival the night before or how many time zones traversed. Where to stop to eat when traveling with the extended family is another area of stomach-tightening discussion. My in-laws, for whom spices stop with salt and pepper, do not like ethnic foods. My kids, long deprived of the artificial flavor of frozen, microwaved burgers and fries, always

want to hit a fast-food place. My dad, whose tight-fisted approach to every dollar is a legend throughout the family, prefers a cafeteria where he can eat the low cholesterol vegetable platter and save on the tip. My sister has a favorite place in the city—never mind that it means a rush hour detour into the heart of the approaching metropolis. My peacemaker mother's willingness to go anywhere seems especially irritating at this point. (No matter where you end up, try to remember that gorging on food that you can't get at post does not lower its caloric value—even though it should.)

Everyone who has ever been through home leave knows that it is not about relaxing or even visiting, it's about doctors' appointments and shopping, buying all the things that cannot be found in Tegucigalpa or Ouagadougou—tires, shoes, vitamins, Pampers, flea collars, school supplies. . . . The list goes on for several pages and always exceeds the budget. The shopping bags and boxes quickly fill your temporary quarters and spill out into the hall. Your friends and family think the government must pay you really well, because you are on a buying spree every time they see you. They won't believe your explanation that you haven't seen a supermarket or drugstore in two years. They won't believe that life with servants is not always heaven either; go easy on complaining about the maids while helping your sister-in-law load the dishwasher.

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uled doctors' visits ahead of time, all packed into a couple of days so as not to ruin the rest of the trip. But unforeseen events do come up. Some law of nature requires that Foreign Service children be exposed to chicken pox just before departure for home leave. No one ever considers canceling plans, but strategies for getting kids through customs have to be developed. (Darth Vader helmets were great strategies in the 1970s.) An 18-year-old who has never had a cavity will sprout four impacted wisdom teeth if you leave the dental checkup until just before he starts college. Getting in to see an oral surgeon in August with three days notice is comparable to obtaining a new telephone line in Central America—it can't be done without large sums of money changing hands.

#### LEAVE THE PICTURES AT POST

Those on home leave for the first time will inevitably make the mistake of dragging along several slide magazines or videotapes to show the relatives how exotic their new life is. Don't waste the luggage space. Only other Foreign Service friends can relate to your experiences, and they only tolerate your slides to get the chance to tell their own tales. "You think the traffic is bad in Bangkok, why I remember one time in Istanbul. . ." The only way to keep your relatives' attention is to pass around photos with your kids appearing prominently in the foreground.

Pets are a problem wherever you stay, and traveling with them can add excitement to any home leave—just try smuggling a hamster through airport security. The best solution is to leave animals with someone at your previous post to be shipped to you once you are settled at your new post. Friends, sorry to see you leave, can be convinced in a weak moment to agree to this proposition—after all, people are always asking how they can help. Since you won't be seeing these people for a while, there is time for the memories to fade of chasing your escaping pet down the street and treating cat scratches before you meet again. Try not to impose on strangers in the new post—you need to be

# Home Leave Getaways

Despite the demands of family and friends, home leave should include time to enjoy the history and beauty of the United States. Within a few hours of Washington you can swim in the ocean, hike in the mountains, and help the kids learn about America at countless historical sites. Beaches range from the relative quiet of Rehoboth and Bethany in Delaware to the boardwalk and high rises of Ocean City and Virginia Beach, to the dunes and wild ponies of Assateague National Seashore and the surf and sand of the Outer Banks in North Carolina. The trails and campsites of the Shenandoah Mountains and the Blue Ridge Parkway are just a few hours west, history is ubiquitous, and unique cultures thrive only a short drive from Washington D.C. Following are some ideas for travel beyond the mall.

History is hard to escape. Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America, and Yorktown, where the colonies won their independence, are near Norfolk (information 804-253-4838). Williamsburg is also in the Tidewater region of Virginia, as are the non-historical but crowd-pleasing amusement parks, Kings Dominion and Busch Gardens (Williamsburg Area Tourism 804-253-0192). Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home near Charlottesville, is another fascinating historical stop (804-295-8181). For Civil War exposure visit Manassas or Fredericksburg in Virginia; Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, or Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. All have informative and child-pleasing tours.

In Maryland, try Annapolis, an important seaport since colonial times and home of the Naval Academy as well as the state capital. An hour north of Washington is Baltimore, where you can visit the U.S. frigate *Constitution*, the oldest ship still afloat. The National Aquarium, with hands-on exhibits on coral reefs and marine mammal shows, is here, as is the Maryland

Science Center (Baltimore Visitors Association, 301-659-7300).

For hiking and camping, head west to the Shenandoah National Park. On the way, stop at Skyline Caverns in Front Royal, Virginia (800-635-4599) or Luray Caverns (703-743-6551). West Virginia state parks and forests have accommodations ranging from lodges with resort facilities to rustic log cabins lost in the woods (800-624-9110). White water rafting on the upper New River at Hico, West Virginia is fun and safe for children as young as 5 years (800-950-2585).

To visit distinctive American cultures, travel to the Lancaster Pennsylvania Dutch area (information, 800-735-2629) or Tangier Island in the Chesapeake Bay, where watermen live and work as they have for centuries. A boat departs from Reedville, Virginia every day at 10 a.m. returning at 4:15 p.m. (804-333-4656).

Sooner or later every family looks beyond Washington and heads to Florida and Disneyworld. Once you've done the Orlando area you might want to have family fun without so much family togetherness. Sandpiper Resort is an international Club Med on the Florida coast, north of Palm Beach. Here, babies as young as four months have their own program and kids under 5 stay free. This might be the perfect ending to home leave and traveling with kids (407-335-4400).

— Nancy A. Johnson

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making friends, not incurring wrath.

You are exhausted, your pockets are empty and your luggage is bulging. You are finally ready to return to post to cope with electricity cuts, water shortages, and gridlock traffic in order to be with friends who understand what you have been through. U.S. international airports are good transition points for travelers preparing to reenter life abroad. The babble of languages is overwhelming; oversold

flights will be no challenge to those of you who have elbowed your way onto airplanes in West Africa; and you will wonder why you paid all that money to mail your excess baggage since travelers with carry-on bags the size of Manhattan board your flight and cram into the seat next to you.

Once back at post you realize that home leave is only half over. Now the credit card charges begin to arrive. And the two years' accumulated dan-

ger pay, hardship differential, and cost of living allowance are wiped out with one stroke of the pen. The kids have already outgrown their new tennis shoes, the vacuum cleaner broke while you were gone, and you start making a list for the next home leave. Only this time it will be different: you will relax and have a real vacation. ■

**Wesley Ann Godard and her family are posted to Managua.**

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## IN MEMORY

**Ethel R. Hill**, 76, a retired communications and records supervisor at USAID, died in Washington, D.C. May 5 following heart surgery.

Born in Tampa and raised in Brooklyn, Hill joined USAID in 1954 after working for the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Before her retirement in Arlington, Virginia and Bethesda, Maryland in 1974, she served in India, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Panama, Chile, Brazil, Cambodia, Japan, and twice in Vietnam. After retirement she returned on a contractual basis to serve in Egypt, Somalia, Ivory Coast, and Guinea.

Survivors include three sisters, Helen Hines, of Mays Landing, New Jersey, Olive Hampton, of Philadelphia, and Loretta Gibbs, of Largo, Florida; and three brothers, John Hines, of Vineland, New Jersey; Wilder Hines, of Hamonton, New Jersey, and Arthur Hines, of Burlington, Vermont.

**Frederick Cable Oechsner**, 90, an expert on the Nazi era and retired Foreign Service officer, died April 19 at home in Orlando following a brief illness.

Born in New Orleans, Oechsner graduated from Tulane University with bachelor's and law degrees. Instead of practicing law, however, he became a reporter.

Covering the Third Reich and the Second World War for United Press International, Oechsner interviewed Hitler and prominent members of his regime. After six-month internment in 1942, he was repatriated, and he co-authored *This Is the Enemy* on Hitler.

Oechsner served as special assistant to Director General William J. Donovan in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in England, Germany, North Africa, Sicily, Egypt, and France. Then, after a brief return to journalism, Oechsner joined the Foreign Service. His posts included Warsaw, where he served as deputy chief of mission, and Monterrey.

He is survived by his wife, Marion,

and stepdaughters, Ann Bauer and Mary Bray Sharp, of Orlando; a stepgrandson, James E. Bray, of Denver, five grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

**Loren E. Lawrence**, 66, former ambassador to Jamaica and chargé in Grenada, died March 6 in Fort Lauderdale of a brain tumor.

Born in Hamilton and raised in McPherson, Kansas, Lawrence served in the Air Force during World War II and in Germany as a counterintelligence specialist during the Korean War. He joined the Foreign Service in 1954.

His Foreign Service posts included the Netherlands, Hong Kong, Israel, the Philippines, and Great Britain. He also served as deputy assistant secretary for consular affairs and a senior inspector in the Inspector General's Office. He retired in 1986.

Survivors include his wife, Jeanette, of Fort Lauderdale; three sons, Christopher, of Corpus Christi, Texas, Timothy, of Kensington, Maryland, and K. Alexander, of Cary, North Carolina; a sister, Phyllis Francke, of Albuquerque, and three grandchildren.

**James Warren "Rudy" Roodhouse**, 74, a Foreign Service officer who had retired in 1977, died of respiratory failure in Boulder, Colorado on March 9.

Born in White Hall, Illinois, Roodhouse attended the University of Illinois and served 22 years in the Air Force before joining the State Department.

After joining the Foreign Service as a general services officer in 1965, Roodhouse served in Baida, Libya; Asmara, Ethiopia; Khartoum, Sudan; Khorramshahr, Iran, and Frankfurt, Germany.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Gladys, of Boulder; a daughter and a grandson, Carol A. Annand and Brian C. Annand, of Pueblo, California; a sister, Rosetta Erb, of Green Valley, Arizona; and a brother, C.E. Roodhouse, of Whiteville, North Carolina. ■

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# BOOKS

## Pure Malice

### ABU NIDAL: A GUN FOR HIRE

By Patrick Seale, Random House, 1992, \$22 hardcover

#### Reviewed by Mayer Nudell

The organization headed by Sabri al-Banna (Abu Nidal) is currently the most dangerous terrorist group in the world. Its activities over the past decade have encompassed attacks on tourist cafes and synagogues, hijackings and assassinations, bombings, and attacks on airports. Between their "traditional" attacks on Westerners around the world and their efforts to eliminate any Arab who might consider peacefully resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute over a Palestinian homeland, Abu Nidal's minions are responsible for hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries. Hundreds more have been victimized through internal purges.

Over the years, many efforts have been made to describe the life and character of Abu Nidal and to explain why his terrorist group appears to be more mercenary and less "idealistic" than other Palestinian groups. This eye-opening new effort, by British Middle Eastern specialist Patrick Seale, a former correspondent and author of several books dealing with the region, recounts how Abu Nidal came to be the terrorist mastermind of the bloodiest group in the world.

Seale spent several years interviewing mainstream Palestinian leaders as well as defectors from Abu Nidal's group. The picture that emerges is of a self-serving mercenary who has an obsession with secrecy and his own security. His management style is ruthless and his organization so structured as to prevent anyone else from becoming too important. Seale paints a bleak picture of an organization held together through fear and torture, one in which even the most

senior members are not permitted to speak privately together, are under constant suspicion, and are unable to voice opinions that differ from their leader's.

Seale does not stop there, however. For most readers, his next step comes as a surprise: he suggests that Abu Nidal and his organization are controlled (or at least manipulated) by Israeli intelligence. Admittedly, this

Israelis and other Jews in order to discredit the entire Palestinian movement.

Seale, who suggests that he accepts this theory, grants that there are many reasons other than Israeli manipulation that would encourage Abu Nidal to act as he does. However, he repeatedly returns to the theme that the Israeli failure to attack Abu Nidal (as they have all other Palestinian

*The picture that emerges is of a self-serving mercenary who has an obsession with secrecy and his own security. His management style is ruthless and his organization so structured as to prevent anyone else from becoming too important. Seale paints a bleak picture of an organization held together through fear and torture, one in which even the most senior members are not permitted to speak privately together, are under constant suspicion, and are unable to voice opinions that differ from their leader's.*

astonishing concept has circulated within Arab, Palestinian, and other intelligence circles for some time. Its basis is mostly circumstantial and revolves around a few key ideas: first, that the Israelis have never retaliated against or directly attacked Abu Nidal or his bases, despite his attacks; second, that Abu Nidal particularly attacks Palestinian moderates; third, that Abu Nidal appears to become most active during periods of progress in peacefully resolving the Arab-Israeli problem; and, finally, that Abu Nidal has occasionally admitted the presence of Israeli agents within his organization. The thread sewing together this analysis is the theory that the Israelis believe their security is best served by blocking the establishment of a Palestinian homeland, and they are willing to go to any lengths to prevent it from happening—including influencing Abu Nidal's organization to attack and kill

terrorist groups) is sufficiently out of character that it must mean something.

Seale's book makes for highly interesting reading. It contains, however, an undertone of justification for Palestinian terrorism. In the final paragraph of the book, Seale equates the democratization of Eastern Europe with the controversy over a Palestinian homeland. With what seems to me disingenuous cynicism, Seale quotes Eduard Shevardnadze as saying that revolutions in Eastern Europe were "the price we had to pay in order to become a civilized country." Seale adds, "It is an answer Israel might ponder, as it considers the fate of the occupied territories, suffering and seething under its rule."

Whatever one thinks of the larger Palestinian issue, *Abu Nidal: A Gun for Hire* is worth reading for anyone seriously interested in the problem of

terrorism. Some of its reasoning is flawed, and there is a hint of bias, but the book also contains solid investigative reporting.

*Mayer Nudell, a former Foreign Service officer, is executive director of the International Association of Counterterrorism and Security Professionals.*

## Bad Neighbor Policies

CUBA AND THE UNITED STATES: TIES OF SINGULAR INTIMACY

By Louis A. Perez Jr., University of Georgia Press, 1990, \$30 hardcover, \$15 softcover

Reviewed by Roy Sullivan

Surprisingly, this slim volume is not a diatribe against Fidel Castro nor does it predict and date his demise. It is a discomfiting, well researched, and documented history of Cuban-U.S. relations. Why discomfiting? Because it develops in detail how the United States's proximity and propensity to reshape Cuba and the Cubans have influenced our neighbors, usually for the worse.

The author, professor of history at the University of South Florida, reviews examples of U.S. heavy-handedness, beginning with our first (1898) armed

intervention (albeit requested) in Cuba, when we ostensibly fought alongside Cuban rebels against the Spanish colonizers. The Spanish were quickly vanquished. But there was no mention of U.S. recognition of Cuban independence: we didn't trust the Cubans to govern themselves and wanted to preserve the status quo, always a safe bet.

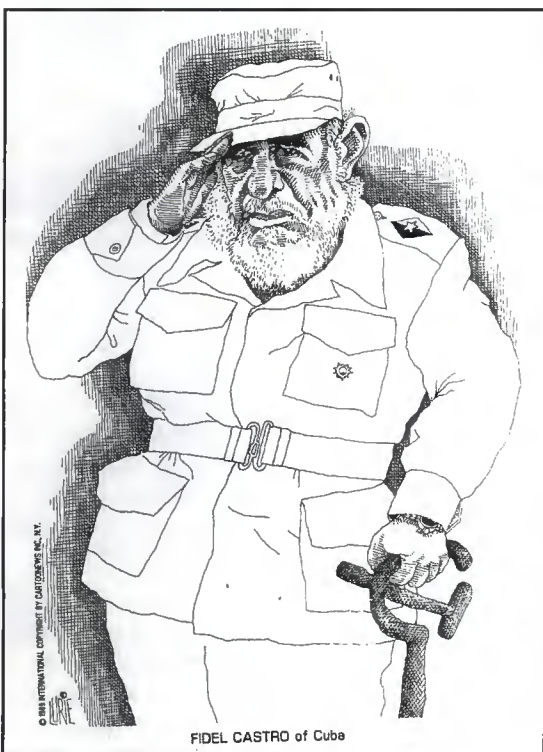
In 1901, the United States coerced a fledgling Cuban government to attach the Platt Amendment to its new constitution. Under the terms of the Platt Amendment, Cuba consented to the right of the United States to intervene at will to preserve Cuban independence and to protect "life, property, and individual liberty." The amendment, long a humiliating symbol of impotence to Cubans, was not abrogated until 1934.

A second armed intervention, this in 1906, replaced the moderate government of President Estrada Palma. Later, in 1919, America's Crowder mission arrived to reorganize the government of Cuba following an election dispute in 1916 and a revolution in 1917. By 1923, Perez notes, "Crowder had become the Cuban government."

Not only was the North American influence overpowering in government, it pervaded the economic and commercial sectors as well. Even Cuba's social fabric was rendered in part by the materialism and free-wheeling example of the *gringos*. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. recalls being "appalled by the way that lovely city is being debased into a great casino and brothel for American businessmen over for a big weekend from Miami. . . . One wondered how any Cuban—on the basis of this evidence—could regard the United States with anything but hatred."

The author carefully builds a case against the interventionist foreign policy toward Cuba. But equal detail on the corruption of most Cuban politicians, a causative factor for the policy, is lacking.

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once described by President McKinley as "ties of singular intimacy"—made their acceptance of a revolutionary Fidel Castro all the easier. This book tells us how Cuba-U.S. relations got to this point. With the insights afforded by Perez, perhaps we can improve those ties with a Cuba *despues* Castro.

*Roy Sullivan is a Foreign Service officer in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs.*

## Half the World

WORKING WOMEN FOR THE 21ST  
CENTURY: 50 WOMEN REVEAL THEIR  
PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

By Nelda LaTeef, Williamson  
Publishing, 1992, \$19.95 hardcover,  
\$13.95 softcover

Reviewed by Jewell Fenzi

With the avowed goal of providing role models for American women of any age embarking on new careers, *Working Women for the 21st Century* adopts oral history techniques for an upbeat examination of career recollections by 50 women of demonstrated achievement in the arts, sciences, business, communications, government, and, yes, the Foreign Service.

These women, ranging from Senator Nancy Kassebaum to cartoonist Cathy Guisewite, describe, often in poignant terms, the juggling of careers and personal lives that accompanied their ascents on the various roads to professional success. Talent seems to be a prerequisite, but persistence and hard work also factor into the equation.

The gender foibles of the Foreign Service past also come into play, as revealed in comments from U.S. Ambassador to Zaire Melissa Foelsch Wells. In the late 1950s, during the oral exam, "there was a dreadful question about

'what are your marriage plans,'" Wells says. "[I]n my day, they had you over a barrel with that question. If you said, 'I'd like to get married,' they'd say, 'Stop wasting our time, little girl.' If you said, 'I'll never get married,' they'd say, 'What's wrong with this lady?' So I had thought this thing through as to how I was going to answer it. The first three or four minutes went by, and then the question came, 'Miss Foelsch, what are your marriage plans?' I said, 'Well, I don't have any at the present time. I am six feet tall and weigh two pounds more than Sugar Ray Robinson, and the right guy just isn't around.'"

The question-and-answer format is difficult to master in any journalistic effort, as this book shows. Fortunately, Nelda LaTeef makes it work well in most of these interviews, with each woman introduced by an essay that provides context as well as depth. The photograph accompanying each interview also adds to an overall impression that these are real, accessible people.

But, in a few instances, the format magnifies the inadequacies of individual interviews. While it's nice to get Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day

*These women describe, often in poignant terms, the juggling of careers and personal lives that accompanied their ascents on the various roads to professional success. Talent seems to be a prerequisite, but persistence and hard work also factor into the equation.*

O'Connor on paper in a (very short) personal conversation, to have her tell us that the most challenging thing about her work is "trying to resolve some of the most difficult legal issues in our nation" is, at worst, disingenuous, and, at best, just plain silly. A judicious editor might have wielded

a stronger blue pencil and, in the process, changed the book's subtitle to "46 or 47 Women Reveal Their Pathways to Success."

*Jewell Fenzi is the director of Foreign Service Spouse Oral History Inc. She is working on a history of the Foreign Service spouse for Twayne Publishers, a division of Macmillan Inc.*





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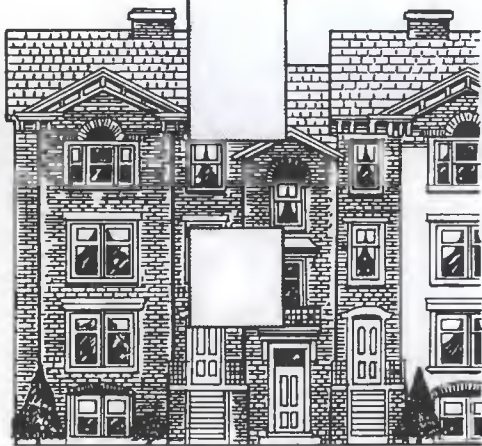
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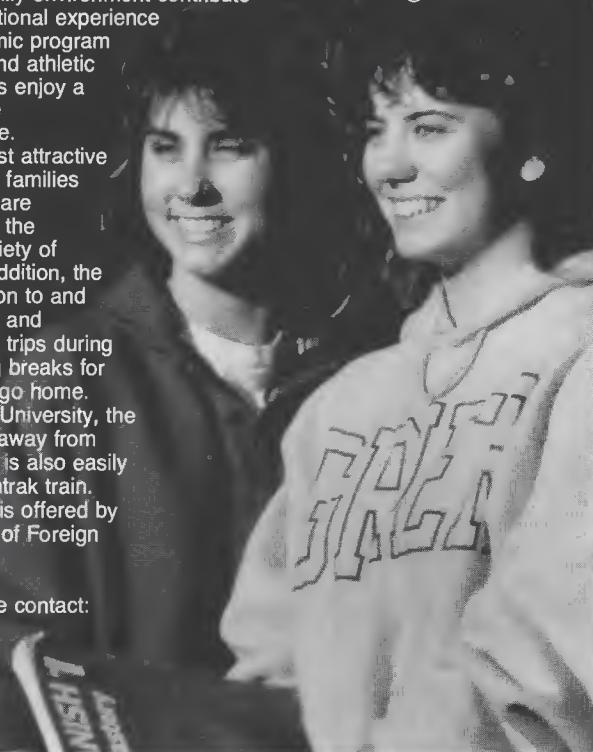
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## BOOKS

### By Our Readers

#### RELUCTANT ALLY: UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD JEWS FROM WILSON TO ROOSEVELT

*By Frank Brecher, Greenwood Press,  
1991, \$45 hardcover*

This study, by a former USAID Foreign Service officer, traces the origins of U.S. policy toward European Jews, before the attempted German genocide forced these issues from the shadows of U.S. foreign policy. Topics examined include the problem of Jewish minorities in Europe, U.S.-Zionist relations, and the American response to the Holocaust.

#### THE STAR-SPANGLED MIRROR: AMERICA'S IMAGE OF ITSELF AND THE WORLD

*By Richard J. Kerry, Rowman &  
Littlefield, 1990, \$27.50 hardcover*

This long essay by a retired Foreign Service officer attempts to analyze the American world view and how it has colored U.S. foreign policy. Kerry argues that Americans persistently believe others should share our values and understanding of the world, while that understanding tends to be excessively simple.

#### A BODY IN A SLOT

*By Janice Plowman, The Janric Press,  
1991, \$8.95 softcover*

These reminiscences of Foreign Service life include chapters on Switzerland, Rome, Korea, Japan, London and Paris, Turkey, and Egypt.

#### FLOATING CANDLES

*By Mari Shimasaki, Carlton Press Inc.,  
1991, \$7.95 hardcover*

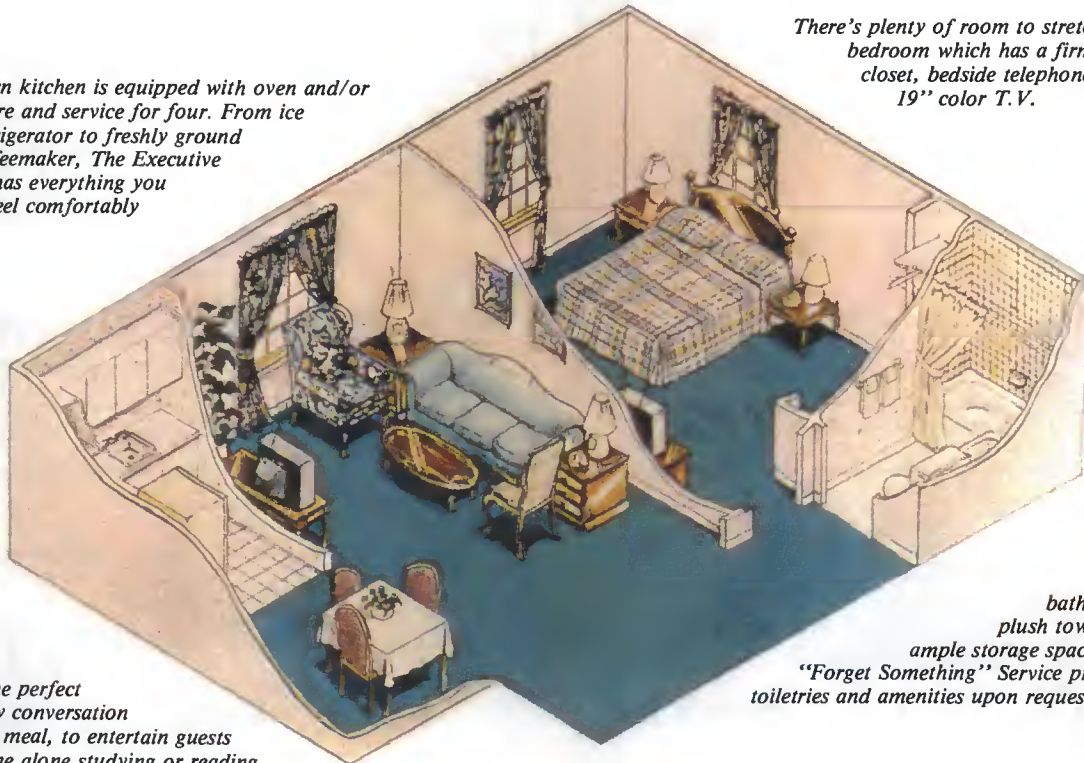
During her sojourns abroad with her USAID husband, Mari Shimasaki wrote annual Christmas letters home updating friends on the family and the countries they lived in. This volume collects some of those Christmas letters from 1959 to 1990. ■

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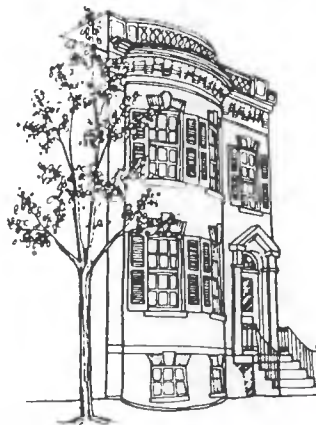


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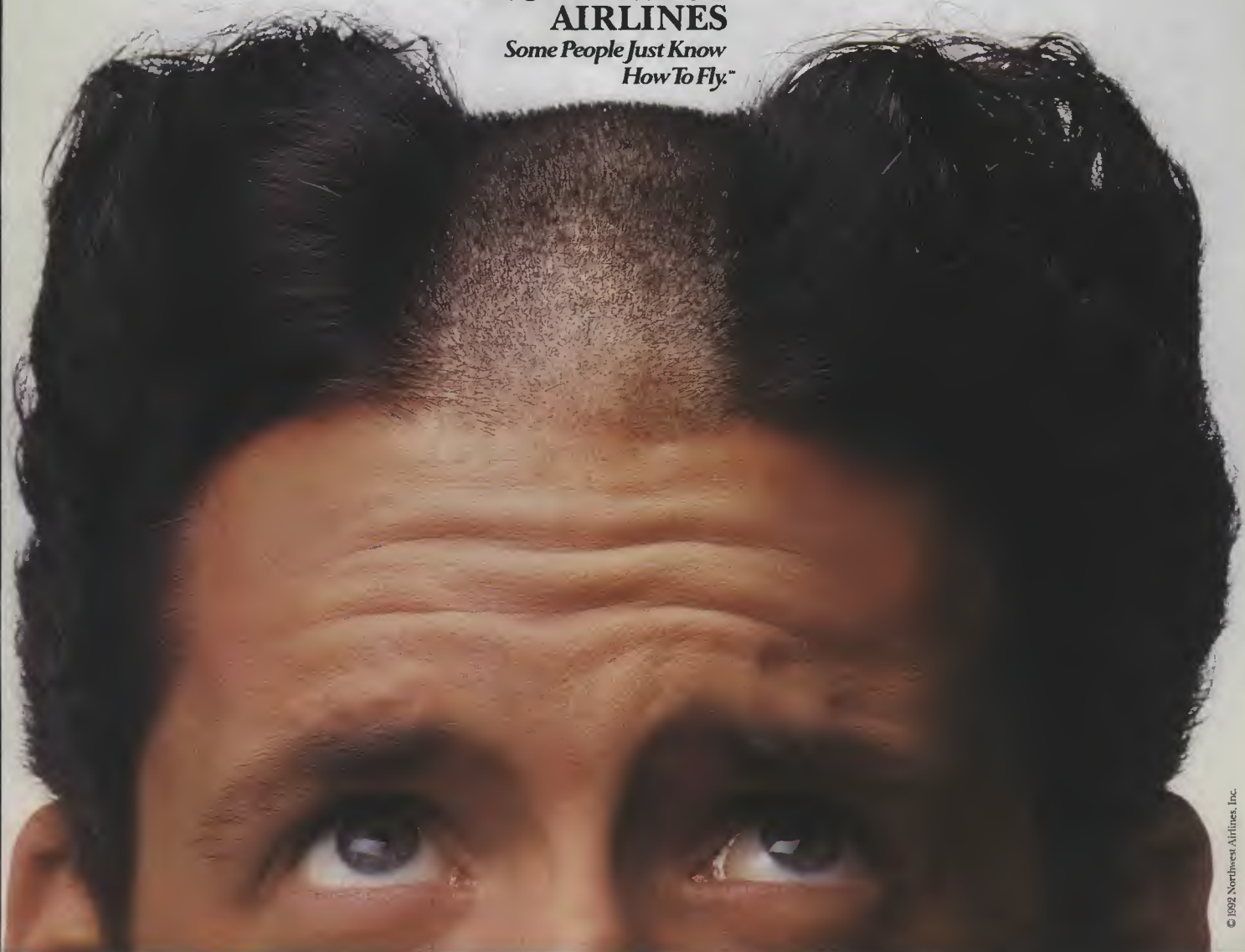
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