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FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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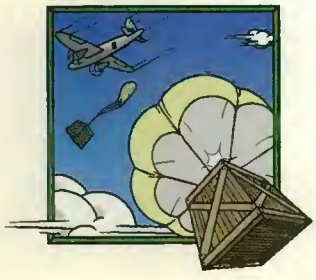

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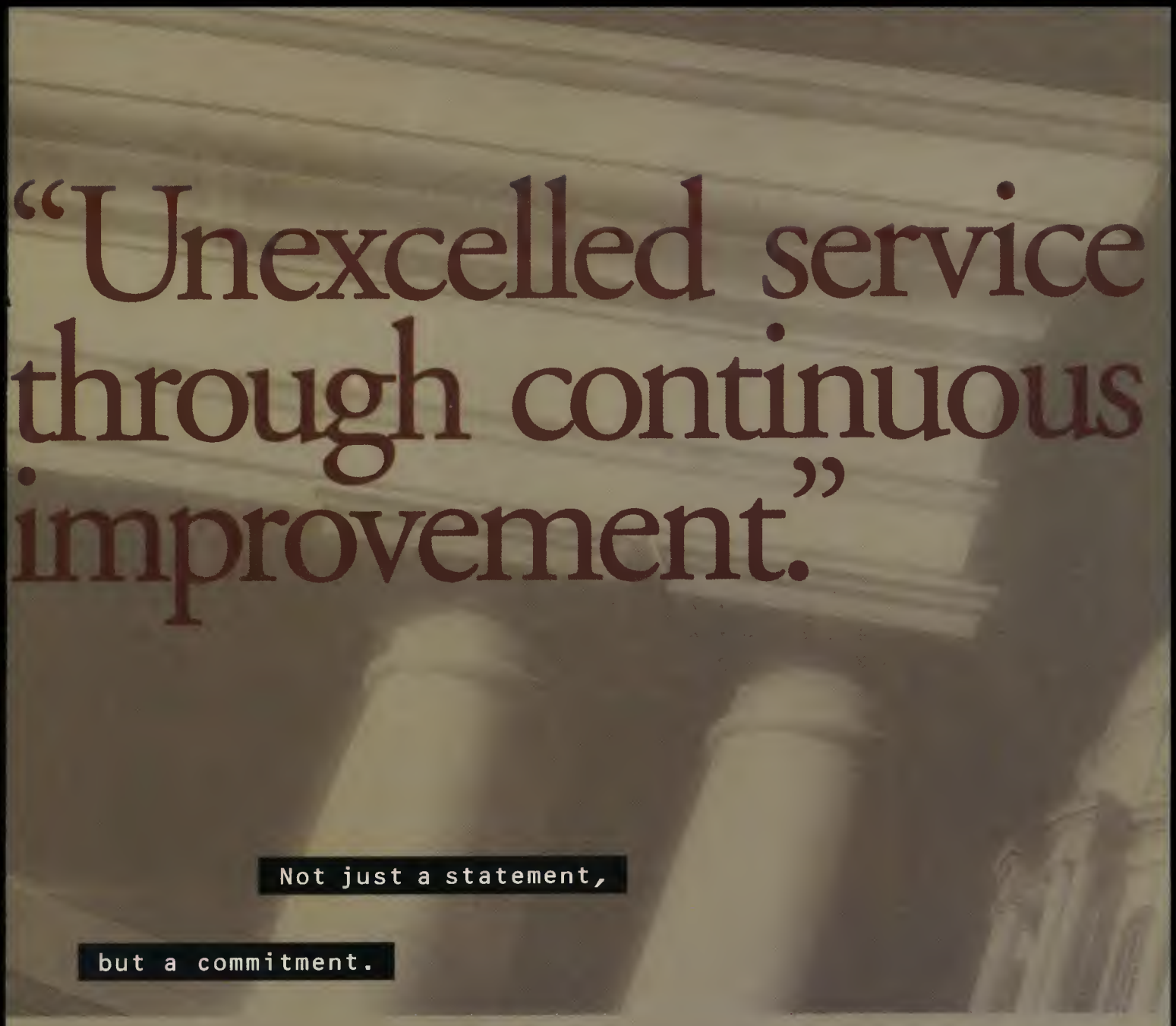

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President's Views

Of Diplomats and Foreign Correspondents

By F. A. "Tex" Harris

The tremendous repercussions of proposed budget cuts in foreign affairs, coupled with the introspective focus of the American media, are being noted by some of the most attentive foreign policy professionals in this country. One, Peter Krogh, took the occasion of his recent retirement from 25 years as dean of the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University to deplore the new emerging isolationism:

"Over the span of more than a score of years, two interrelated phenomena have impressed, or, rather, depressed me. ... Our public capacity to conduct foreign affairs has been reduced. ... So has our private capacity to report on foreign affairs. These reductions have our foreign affairs caught in a pincer movement which threatens their quality and effect.

"With respect to this country's public capacity to conduct its foreign policy, the shocking statistics rise to the surface as the latest feeding frenzy on the federal budget unfolds. In the last 10 years, there has been close to a 50 percent decrease in the country's international affairs budget... There has been a combined 72 percent reduction in the defense and international affairs budgets with international affairs taking a 10 percent bigger hit than the defense budget. We are not turning swords into plowshares.

"When I arrived here as dean in 1970, the U.S. contributed .3 percent of its GNP to aid. Today that figure stands at half or .15 percent. These reductions translate directly into the closing of posts and the elimination of personnel. Since the start of the Clinton administration, 17 posts abroad have been closed, accompanied by a reduction in force in the Department of State of 1,100.

> *'Deeply informed individual insight from the field is fast disappearing.'*

"Over the past 25 years the numbers of foreign bureaus and foreign correspondents have declined. Deeply informed individual insight from the field is fast disappearing. News and media services compound the problem by making news more homogenous. The media increasingly are reduced to establishing a fleeting physical presence only after CNN announces there is a crisis abroad ... Yet CNN itself is, by its very nature, flawed. It provides unevaluated and sometimes exaggerated reports of developments abroad which drive a domestic rush to judgment and a correlated reaction.

"The world that we can and must know is a bigger, more palpably complex place than it was in the smaller, simpler days of the Cold War. Vast and complex expanses of the globe — previously sealed off behind various walls and curtains, but historically and strategically significant — are now open to our ideas, investments and presence. Twenty-five "new" countries have appeared or reappeared since the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

"Paying attention on the ground to a ... more insistently pluralistic world is more important than in the past because the price of neglect and ignorance can be so much higher. The ready availability of weapons of mass destruction and the reality of nuclear proliferation raise substantially, and potentially catastrophically, the price of avoidable conflicts.

"As the world gets bigger, the foreign policy agenda simultaneously grows longer. Replacing the set agenda of the Cold War is a veritable avalanche of pressing international issues ... Our diplomats and journalists need to inhabit these issues where they reside in a far-flung world.

"In an age of real-time, multimedia, interactive forms of communication, there is a tendency to declare obsolete the diplomat and the foreign correspondent in the field. We will do so at our peril. The myriad forms of instantaneous, interactive communication threaten to substitute immediacy for insight, reaction for reflection, sentiment for judgment, hyperbole for reality, and deniability for integrity. No amount of technology can substitute for the educated, experienced eyes and ears of observers, interpreters and advisers on the ground, in the field, overseas." ■

F. A. "Tex" Harris is president of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA).

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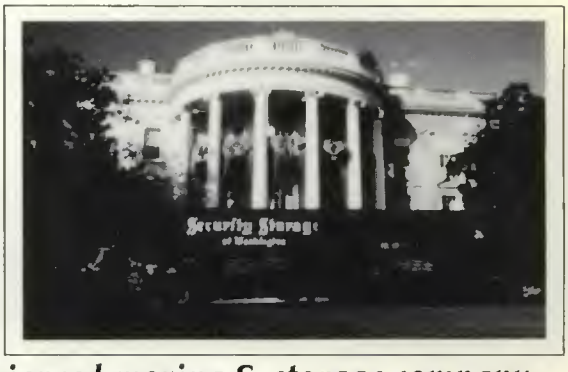

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DESPATCH

Now More Than Ever, Africa Matters

BY KAREN KREBSBACH

No part of the globe is more threatened by impending U.S. cuts in foreign aid and foreign affairs budgets than the continent of Africa. President Clinton has proposed spending $802 million next year on aid to Africa — about the same as this year's funding levels — which is just a small portion of the administration's $14.7 billion foreign aid package. But Republicans, who call foreign aid "international welfare," intend to cut those numbers, particularly in Africa, in part because the region is "unimportant to the security interests of the United States," says Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), who chairs the Senate foreign operations subcommittee.

And AID recently announced plans to close 29 missions worldwide by 1996, including nine in Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Zaire, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, Lesotho and Cape Verde. Robert Berg, head of the International Development Conference, which organizes forums on developing countries, noted that the current U.S. political climate poses "the most significant threat in aid levels to Africa in memory." He has reason to worry.

Africa has always been the biggest challenge for development advocates. Chronic health and population problems, political chaos, ethnic conflict and environmental hazards often combine to make any substantial progress hard won in the region. In fact, of the 47 countries officially labeled by the United Nations as Least Developed Nations, 31 are African.

Karen Krebsbach is the Journal's *editor.*

Does the US have a moral obligation to help Africa?

On average, these countries' per capita income dropped to $349 a year in 1991 from $369 in 1980. Among developing countries, per capita income rose from $1,035 to $1,118 during that same period.

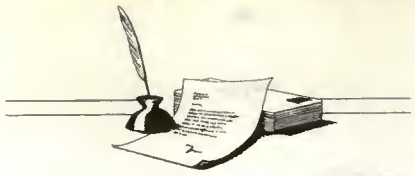
Yes, chaos is swirling in Somalia, Liberia and Angola; ethnic conflict is rife in Rwanda and Burundi; and corruption is rampant in the majority of nations. But Africanists say there is reason for optimism, pointing to growing evidence that the nations are undergoing dramatic political and economic reforms, comparable to the growing pains Latin America went through 10 years ago. For example, as Assistant Secretary of State George Moose recently pointed out, nearly two-thirds of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa are at some stage of democratic transition, compared to only four in 1989. Isn't that progress?

But much more needs to be done if the diverse nations of Africa are to not lose the ground they've worked so hard to gain. Since the region attracts only 6 percent of foreign investment, help cannot be expected from the private sector, though it is potentially the best source to advance progress once the infrastructure is in place. Government leaders both inside and outside Africa need to press for more banking, legal and public sector reforms. Many nations need economic relief from the crushing burden of overindebtedness. Although there's no doubt that the continent's colonial legacy has contributed to its failures, more culpable are the nations' poor governing, rife corruption and nepotism, and perennial conflicts and civil strife. But this requires change — from the inside.

Economists say the continent is rich in untapped potential, from the mining of emeralds and gold to commercial farming of sub-Sahara's fertile soil. Many entrepreneurs, both on and off the continent, would invest more in Africa's underdeveloped oil, agricultural, mining and fishing industries, if they were reassured of improved infrastructure.

In this issue, the *Journal* explores the continent's problems and prospects with some of the best-known Africanists, including career ambassador Herman J. Cohen and Chester A. Crocker, both former assistant secretaries of State for African affairs. Rep. Donald M. Payne (D-N.J.), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, weighs in on American blacks' reluctant relationship with Africa.

If Congress approves major cuts to the U.S. foreign aid budget — with some Republicans calling for an outright end to aid to Africa — other nations may follow America's lead. But as the global village grows ever smaller, are the world's wealthiest nations morally obligated to recommit themselves to helping 600 million of the neediest of the needy? ■



LETTERS

To the Editor:

Most Americans accept the need for the United States to remain engaged in the world. And most will agree that clearly defined national interest should guide that engagement. But many are finding it difficult in this complex post-Cold War world to reach consensus on what engagement means and where the national interest lies.

In the current debate over these issues we sense a tendency among some to equate a pragmatic pursuit of vital interests with unilateralism — arguing that international engagement must be a one-way street and that our interests are best served when the United States dictates the terms or acts alone whenever it chooses. This appeal of unilateralism doubtless arises from varied impulses, including the disappointments we have encountered from the shortcomings of the United Nations.

But in a world of instant communications, globally linked financial markets, easy migration of devastating diseases and impoverished peoples, threats to the earth's oceans and atmosphere, terrorist networks operating without heed to frontiers, it is inconceivable that the United States could go it alone successfully. When nuclear weapons can be delivered by missile, ship or in the baggage of a terrorist, the necessity for active international collaboration is self-evident.

The United States can and will do some things alone. Recent negotiations with China over protection of cultural and artistic properties and their direct relevance for jobs at home serve the point. But similar success with more intricate and strategic issues — extending the non-proliferation treaty against nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, for example — plainly demands engagement with others. It is illusory to think that the nation's needs are so limited that they can be served without a high degree of planning and effort with other nations, including at the U.N. — the example of the Gulf War is surely not forgotten.

No country has so large a stake in the effective functioning of such institutions as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and in the evolution of the new World Trade Organization. Development of export markets and investment opportunities is vital to our general prosperity. But these require a framework of international rules and cooperative action — as for that matter does coping with volatility in international currencies and any threat to the stability of our financial system. The fact is that the economic well-being of virtually every American is affected by what happens outside our borders.

Finally, it should be clear that unilateralism today, like isolationism in the past, would risk nullifying American leadership in the world. With the Cold War at an end, our allies and friends are no longer automatically responsive to our judgments on security concerns. Nor are we able or ready unilaterally to devote massive financial resources to the solution of international economic issues. Effective leadership, therefore, cannot be dictated by the United States; it depends on recognition by others that we share security and economic interests in common.

To protect and advance our own national interests as we go forward will require careful articulation of those interests, their alignment where possible with those of others, and a commitment to lead cooperative efforts. To do otherwise would invite forms of international anarchy both dangerous and costly to our own national interests.

Bruce Laingen
President
The American Academy of Diplomacy

To the Editor:

I was delighted to see the "Focus on Info Superhighway" in the March *Journal*. At the same time I was disappointed that none of the authors gave Internet addresses for foreign affairs resources, such as the Department of State Foreign Affairs Network referred to in Dan Kubiske's article. By the way, how soon will we be able to send e-mail to AFSA through the Internet?

Robert Mikulak
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
U.S. Embassy The Hague
100332.3171@compuserve.com

Editor's Note: AFSA's e-mail address, as noted in the "AFSA News" masthead, is AFSA@dcez.com. The gopher address for the State Foreign Affairs network is dosfan.lib.uic.edu.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

It's been an eye-opening, eventful and sometimes dismaying first year in the Foreign Service. As we are all painfully aware, the State Department is in the midst of a jolting period of reinvention, introspection and belt-tightening. The debate in the *Journal* on the nature of change in the department ranges from deep philosophical questions about the role of the Foreign Service in a post-Cold War world to more mundane, and more hotly debated, issues such as differentials and post allowances.

With Congress, the press, and department management asking so many questions about where we're headed and whether we should be doing more with less or less with more, a first-tour junior officer begins to wonder: What have I gotten myself into? Is what we do important? Will I still be here in five years?

One advantage of working at an embassy in a smaller, developing country is that the effects of what we do are easier to see and feel than in the larger posts. In one year, the influence and importance of the Foreign Service abroad has been made evident to me in dozens of tangible ways.

We shouldn't forget the following:

■ We help Americans. From the consular to the commercial section, we are in the business of helping Americans. In the last year, I've seen our consul rescue an American citizen from an abusive spouse, get a lonely, destitute American on a plane home on nothing more than his good word, counsel frantic Americans in the United States on how to deal with the imprisonment of a family member here.

■ We help other people. In a hundred little and not so little ways we help promote development, democracy, and human rights overseas; our aid and moral support go a long way towards promoting a better life for people in other countries.

■ We look out for American interests. From pushing the government to improve airport security so an American air carrier can expand into a new market to negotiating foreign government support for a study on the emission of greenhouse gases, FSOs carry much water on behalf of the United States.

Amidst the reform movements and congressional critiques of America's overseas involvement, the work of Foreign Service officers goes on. And, based on one year's experience, it's good work. I'm proud of what we do.

Jeff Hawkins
Junior Officer Trainee
U.S. Embassy Abidjan

To the Editor:

The February 1995 *Journal* series on retirement was most enjoyable and very well balanced. Doug Jones' article was particularly to the point. I noticed one gap, however. Francine Modderno indicated that the Foreign Affairs Reserve Corps (FARC) was a going enterprise. In my experience, it is a waste of paper.

I am retired, and now an adult family member (or dependent spouse). I do not want or need a second career in the sense of working for pay. The privilege of being in the Foreign Service, being able to study new languages, learn new cultures, meet new people, explore new places and continue to ride my bike and scuba dive without having to respond to urgent telegrams from Washington is quite reward enough.

But as I prepared to retire, I applied for and was accepted into the FARC. On arrival at post, I said that I would be available if needed for short-term jobs. My FARC membership

meant that I was an available cleared additional resource.

Post asked Diplomatic Security (DS) for verification of my clearance. DS responded that they would verify a clearance only if requested by the department, which in turn would request verification only if a position had been created. The post must first request approval for a position from the regional bureau, then write a position description and have the grade approved by Washington, then go through a formal recruitment process, make a selection, and submit various forms to Washington. No post is going to go through this process for short-term employment. It is much easier to send a request for TDY assistance.

From my perspective, the FARC was a good idea that failed in implementation. These days, that means that the portion of a position used to administer it should be abolished.

PS: To those who, like Doug Jones, may suffer from IDS (Information Deficit Syndrome): Get on the Internet and discuss far more than you could ever hope for in the Operations Center.

Dan Gamber
Retired FSO
U.S. Embassy Amman

To the Editor:

It was surprising that Bernard Unden ("Speaking Out," April *Journal*) did not consider the legal environment in which the State Department operates before suggesting that the Foreign Service emulate hiring practices of the German Foreign Service.

There are at least 25 years worth of legislative history, executive orders, Office of Personnel Management and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations and guidelines, and several [affirmative action] lawsuits which contributed to the development of the current oral examination process. When he comes back from Germany, perhaps he should find out what has been going on in the United States for the past generation.

Gilbert M. Johnson
Economist
Economic Bureau
State Department
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor:

As a retired FSO who spent six months as a deputy examiner, and as an "old timer" who came in under the system where one had to pay one's own way to Washington for the oral exam, I agree in many ways with Bernard Unden's comments about the shortcomings of the current oral examination system. Most deputy examiners during my period of service (1977-78) would agree that the bonus for offering a foreign language should be restored, that an age limit be imposed again, and that applicants be more intensively questioned about their own preparation and background. But there are reasons complicating the U.S. selection process which do not apply to the German system. My associates and I sent many memos to the Board of Examiners recommending improvements to the system, virtually all of which proved impossible by reason of federal law:

■ Requiring a foreign language: It seems virtually no American university today requires a foreign language as a graduation requirement. To impose a language requirement means denying the Foreign Service most of the best brains otherwise interested in service abroad. I nevertheless continue to

believe that the old system of affording a five- or 10-point bonus for a second language would be entirely possible.

■ Requiring a master's degree: In fact, no formal educational requirement is imposed on American candidates for the Foreign Service. As a deputy examiner I kept informal notes on successful candidates and found that while many successful candidates indeed had graduate degrees, the highest proportion of successful candidates had been Eagle Scouts with experience as summer camp counselors, rather than MAs or PhDs from Yale or Princeton.

■ Requiring a maximum age: Congress in its wisdom has banned age as a recruiting qualification.

■ Sending examination panels abroad: Examining panels now travel to every major regional capital in the United States, including Hawaii, and the written exam is given in virtually every city of any size — including at U.S. embassies abroad. The cost of sending entire oral examining panels abroad at a time when the department is undergoing budgetary cutbacks is unrealistic. Indeed, I think a more attainable suggestion would be to return to the previous system, imposing the relatively modest expense on candidates of paying their own travel to Washington, thus assuring that only the most serious candidates persevered with their candidacy.

■ Writing an essay: Composing an essay on an assigned topic, together with editing a paper containing a number of subtle orthographic and syntactic errors, took up most of one morning in the old two-day exam. Given the continuing importance of written communications to a successful Foreign Service career, I recall that virtually every officer assigned to the examination process back in 1977-78 endorsed a memorandum arguing for the re-introduction of the English grammar/composition requirement as part of the written exam. If it's been tacked on to the oral exam, I see this only as progress towards Linden's worthy objective.

■ A more broadly devised written exam: The general knowledge part of the exam in 1955 included questions about European, American and world history; questions about the great composers; and the themes of the great operas. These questions were eliminated as it became increasingly evident that the U.S. educational system was not preparing culturally aware individuals qualified for the Foreign Service.

On top of this, my months as an examiner came during the worst days of so-called affirmative action. A group of oral examiners wrote a memorandum questioning the legality of arbitrary "ethnic norming," which took place following the work of the examiners, whereby Personnel raised the necessary number of lower-scoring individuals of desired ethnic background, placing them above higher-scoring individuals on the list. This left many of us wondering where the Service would be in 20 years. Of course it may well be that many of those to whom this form of social generosity — which many minority leaders are beginning to consider was misplaced — were selected out early. A disappointment to them and wasted taxpayer money in training and posting costs. Of course this memo, too, got nowhere.

D.B. Timmins
Retired FSO
Bucharest

To the Editor:

A Bronx cheer to the *Journal* for running without accompanying critical comment the nonsense-crammed article by Jim Anderson,

LETTERS

"Chugging up the Onramp of the Info Interstate," in the March issue.

The idea of policy-making through a kind of consensus-building town meeting conducted via computer terminals, including foreigners to whom the policy would apply should have been instantly labeled as idiotic.

The article posits as an example of the New Thinking: "The embassy's primary purpose would be to create a platform, supporting the work of all agencies involved in foreign affairs," and "A chief of mission's success would be judged on how well the interlocking team worked." New? That was long established boilerplate when I first became a senior Foreign Service inspector 23 years ago!

The idea that traditional ambassadors "signed cables at the end of the day" and that such ambassadors "will soon be an anachronism," attributed to a deputy assistant secretary, suggests that whoever uttered this has never served overseas.

The article asserts that "traditional reporting will be less important than the ability to analyze available information quickly." I ask, in the USSR successor states? In the Middle East? In South and Southeast Asia?

The whole thrust of the article is, in fact, that the media is the message. Well, the media isn't the message.

William E. Knight
Retired FSO
Bethesda, Md.

To the Editor:

In the article on Lu Bloch (April *Journal*), a reader might feel that Lu had been abandoned by all her Foreign Service contacts. While active members of the Department of State were silent indeed, a number of former Foreign Service friends, retired or working in new fields, rallied to form a core of support for her and her cause.

I do not know the names of all who have worked hard to be of help but surely they are a goodly number. A woman of Lu Bloch's quality does not walk through life without making lasting friendships. No matter what.

Kay Polansky
Spouse of retired FSO
Bethesda, Md. ■

NOTICE

The *Foreign Service Journal* is seeking short memoirs from those who served overseas in the Foreign Service during World War II for a special issue on the 50th anniversary of the ending of World War II. Memoirs can include reminiscences of officers and families traveling though war zones, post experiences and glimpses of the human condition during the war, internments or other hardships, etc. Limit: 1,000 words.

Old photos of FSOs of the period are also welcome and will be returned. Please send typed manuscripts and photos to Karen Krebsbach, Editor, *Foreign Service Journal*, 2101 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20037.

CORRECTION

Due to incorrect information reported in *The Washington Post*, a "Clippings" citing (April *Journal*) repeated inaccurate details about the Feb. 7 arrest of the alleged mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing. In fact, only the State Department regional security officer in Islamabad knew the location of the alleged suspect and reported his presence to Pakistani officials, according to Janet Shafer, a desk officer in Diplomatic Security at the State Department.

CLIPPINGS

"If the backdoor isolationists have their way; much of what we have worked for over two generations could be undone."

— TONY LAKE, ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, APRIL 27

FEDERAL WORKERS & ULTIMATE SACRIFICES

In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, federal workers paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country, opines a *Washington Post* editorial on April 22.

"Far away from the national spotlight, in places as remote as Khartoum and Karachi, federal workers on the front lines have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service of their country," according to the editorial. "Women and men on the federal payroll in those locations bear the title of Foreign Service officer, or AID worker or U.S. embassy staff. But they pursue the same basic mission [as] federal employees [in Oklahoma City]: They are trying to make their government work. And most work long and hard to make that happen."

ARE FS MINORITIES UNDERREPRESENTED?

Minorities are underrepresented at the professional level in every agency of the U.S. government, according to Allan Goodman, dean of graduate studies at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, in an April 19 speech in New York. At present rates of increase — the highest in history — it would take more than a half century for people of color to achieve levels of representation in international affairs comparable to their 1990 level in the civilian work force, he noted. By the year 2000 people of color will constitute more than 40 percent of the U.S. labor force, according to Goodman.

Though increasing numbers of minorities are taking and passing the Foreign Service entrance exam, once in the Service minorities see little chance for advancement, he said. "Numerous internal studies suggest that promotion boards do not yet think that diversity is a valid departmental or foreign policy objective," he said. He concluded that if present trends continue, the face of those who conduct international affairs in America's third century promises to look less, not more, like the nation as a whole.

NO SAVINGS SEEN IN CONSOLIDATION

Republicans acknowledged there would be no cost savings in a foreign affairs consolidation after a Republican-ordered General Accounting Office study showed no real cost benefits, reported Al Kamen in the April 21 *Washington Post*. A House International Relations Committee member said, "We never assumed major savings out of the consolidation. The key factor is that there are going to be major program cuts. Consolidation gives the secretary greater control" over handling massive budget reductions in the overall foreign affairs budget.

FOREIGN AID BATTLE TO REQUIRE MORE PR

At a time when the public seems to favor less foreign aid, Anthony Lake, President Clinton's national security adviser, believes the battle over foreign spending can be won with an aggressive

campaign of public education. An interagency task force, including officials from the State Department and AID, has been assembled to orchestrate the lobbying campaign, John Harris reported in the April 28 *Washington Post*. Lake had decided that it was important for a senior White House official to speak out against foreign aid cuts, to counter impressions that State's opposition was simply defense of turf.

LOBBYING HEATS UP AGAINST BUDGET CUTS

Diplomatic Security agents are warning that further budget cuts will erode their ability to protect Americans at U.S. embassies and combat terrorism, writes James Morrison in *The Washington Times* of April 20. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is bracing for cuts of up to 20 percent in staffing over the next two years, which would "inevitably erode" the Service, according to the Diplomatic Security Special Agents Association.

DS agents have already absorbed 12 and 13 percent staffing cuts in 1993. Morrison also reveals that former U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski have joined efforts to save USIA from proposed legislation that would bring international broadcasting services under the State Department.

MCNAMARA: IN '70S FSOS WERE NEEDED

Robert McNamara, former secretary of Defense, in excerpts from his new book, *In Retrospect*, recalls that the government lacked Foreign Service experts on Vietnam. He writes, "Our government lacked experts for us to consult to compensate for our ignorance about Southeast Asia. The irony of this gap was that it existed largely because the top East Asian and China experts in the State Department — John Paton Davis Jr., John Stewart Service and John Carter Vincent — had been purged during the McCarthy hysteria of the 1950s.

"Without men like these to provide sophisticated, nuanced insights, we — certainly I — badly misread China's objectives and mistook its bellicose rhetoric to imply a drive for regional hegemony. We also totally underestimated the nationalist aspect of Ho Chi Minh's movement. ... Such ill-founded judgments were accepted without debate by the Kennedy administration. We failed to analyze our assumptions critically, then or later. The foundations of our decision-making were gravely flawed."

REALITY REALLY BITES FOR ENVOY TO SPAIN

Budget woes are making the Foreign Service rank-and-file discontented these days, Al Kamen reported in the April 17 *Washington Post*. Why? He gives examples of cuts in hardship allowances and slashed travel budgets. With this background, career employees in Madrid resent the expensive weekend visits to Seville by Ambassador Richard Gardner.

Gardner and his wife travel down on the two-hour bullet train, sending the maid, cook and another helper in the armored limousine for the five-hour trip, reported Kamen. Gardner uses the old consulate building, which no longer houses a full-time consulate staff, for his weekend jaunts. The building is rented from the Seville municipal government for virtually nothing, but maintenance costs of $20,000 last year, plus the costs of round-the-clock secu-

50 YEARS AGO

Behind the inauguration of the United Nations Conference on International Organization lay weeks of hard labor by the State Department. The lead article in the June 1945 *Journal* detailed "one of State's most difficult undertakings." To establish the setting for an assembly of several hundred representatives of 46 countries to the United Nations in San Francisco, a city 3,000 miles from Washington, heroic efforts were required to obtain adequate office space, hotel accommodations and local transportation. The commodious Opera House was the main auditorium, with the historic plenary session opening on April 25. When the State Department's special train, the PRE-CON, rolled into town, it seemed as if half the diplomatic establishment had moved to the West Coast. The Foreign Service played a notable role, supplying conference protocol officers and many special assistants, as well as serving on the U.S. delegation. ■

"Real men do politics and arms control, not the environment or human rights."
— *UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE TIMOTHY WIRTH, THE WASHINGTON POST, APRIL 20*

rity make keeping the building open an expensive proposition. Gardner replied to staff eritieisms that "the notion that anyone is suffering today because of my decision [to use the Seville building] is rubbish."

POLISH CHICKEN COOPS EARNING BIG PROFITS

The Polish town of Ilawa is a recipient of foreign aid that isn't likely to eost U.S. taxpayers a penny, Dana Milbank reported in the April 19 *Wall Street Journal*. The aid money was invested in a local ehieken-eoop maker by the Small Enterprise Assistanee Funds (SEAF), a venture-capital fund established by CARE using AID money. The chieken-coop maker is doubling sales each year and eventually could give the fund a big profit on its $188,000 investment.

Three-year-old SEAF is a curious new hybrid in international aid, a nonprofit group funded by governments and charities, reported Milbank. There are only half a dozen such funds and SEAF, the largest, has only $30 million of eommitted eapital. Milbank wrote that the funds will become more widespread as Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) tries to let private organizations dispense assistance instead of AID. However, many eharity groups acknowledge that private funds cannot entirely replace grassroots assistanee sinee profit-driven aid may overlook those projects and people who need it most. ■

SPEAKING OUT

Let's Rescue Public Diplomacy

BY HANS N. TUCH

"USIA was specifically [mandated] to counter a massive Soviet propaganda campaign worldwide." Thus, former national seeurity adviser Gen. Brent Scoweroft in recent congressional testimony defined the mandate of the U.S. government agency that conducts the nation's publie diplomacy. It is a wrong definition, but it is not unique. So mueh misinformation and ignorance about the U.S. Information Agency and public diplomacy have been bandied about in the current discussion about consolidation of U.S. government foreign affairs ageneies — diseussions that have degenerated into controversies among legislators, foreign affairs experts and even Foreign Serviee professionals. Therefore, in my view, it is necessary to clarify onee again some of the issues basic to efforts to make the exeeution of U.S. foreign policy more eost-effective.

In 1976 I wrote a then-controversial artiele in the September *Foreign Service Journal* advocating the reintegration of USIA into the Department of State. I wrote, "At this particular time, I cannot accept the duplieation in poliey formulation, applieation and execution that exists as a result of a USIA separate from the Department of State. I cannot accept the inefficieney inherent in the separation of foreign policy formulation, whieh takes plaee in State, from the foreign policy execution, the public affairs aspects of which take place ... in USIA."

Hans N. Tuch, a retired FSO, served in USIA in Frankfurt, Munich, Moscow, Sofia, Berlin, Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and Bonn.

> *Public diplomacy has become an indispensable element of the U.S. foreign policy process.*

I was then convineed that the publie affairs objeetives and operations of U.S. foreign affairs would be served advantageously if USIA's functions were to be re-merged into the Department of State.

Subsequently, while serving abroad and in Washington, I ehanged my mind for what I eonsider a very important reason: I don't believe the State Department's "culture" is prepared to recognize public diplomacy as a vital element of the foreign policy process, equal in importance to politieal and economic matters. The department therefore could not administer and promote publie diplomacy with the eonvietion and attention it requires.

Many legislators and others still do not understand that pubie diplomacy represents U.S. efforts to bring about understanding among foreign publies of U.S. ideals and ideas, institutions and culture, as well as national goals and current foreign policies. Public diplomacy has become an indispensable element of the U.S. foreign policy process.

In this interdependent world, it is necessary for the United States to communicate directly and effectively with foreign publics — not only with foreign governments — and that has been USIA's mandate sinee 1953, when President Eisenhower ereated the agency. USIA's public diplomacy has always had a global purpose — ineluding U.S. efforts to bring democracy to Germany and Japan in the late 1940s and early 1950s, similar to eurrent programs in the former communist world. It ineluded U.S. Cold War objectives but extended way beyond them.

To state, as Seowcroft does, that USIA was speeifically ereated to counter massive Soviet propaganda and that the Voiee of Ameriea's (VOA) sole purpose was to counter the propaganda machine, is a misreading of both history and the policies of the U.S. government. One need only consider VOA's World War II mission, or its impact in China over many years, or its importanee as a communication medium in other parts of the world. Or look at the long-term potential of the U.S. Congress-German Bundestag youth exchange program and the Freedom Support Aet that brings thousands of teenagers from the former Soviet Union to the United States for year-long stays — all public diplomaey programs run by USIA.

Just as it took the State Department a long time to aeeept eeonomies and

trade as important in the U.S. foreign policy process, I don't believe that the department is prepared yet to recognize public diplomacy is an equal partner in this process. It has been my experience, as just one example, that many policy-makers — including secretaries of state and NSC advisers — have been unable or unwilling to understand that an independent, objective and comprehensive VOA news operation, as prescribed by law, is necessary to create a communication medium that has worldwide credibility, such as the BBC, probably Britain's most effective public diplomacy medium since World War II.

It takes a strong USIA director — Ed Murrow seems to have been the model for many of us — to make sure that U.S. public diplomacy instruments, whether they are press, radio, television or educational and cultural exchange programs, are used effectively to serve U.S. public diplomacy objectives, and that foreign public opinion is recognized as important in forming U.S. foreign policy. There have been aberrations and peculiarities among some former USIA appointees, but I believe that USIA's public diplomacy professionals — both FSOs and civil servants — usually have been successful in carrying out the agency's mandate.

This is not an appeal for perpetuating a bureaucracy, but one to support the effectiveness and strengthening of the role of public diplomacy in the foreign policy process when it is more important for foreign peoples to understand America. And I don't believe the State Department is able to do that job.

The U.S. national interest would be served, therefore, if USIA were to remain independent, closely connected in policy matters at State, and that it would have the necessary personnel and material resources provided by an understanding and supportive Congress. ■

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The Stuff of Envoys

From Monticello to Hillwood to Dodona Manor, Envoys' Collections Preened for Tourist Season

By Francine Modderno

No doubt about it: Most diplomats love to collect. And the Washington area is fortunate to play host to several museums that house some very famous and lovely collections — all rich in history — of former U.S. envoys. Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, the first U.S. secretary of State and the American envoy to France, is one of the most well known and often frequented, but others are rarely visited. This summer, several new or refurbished exhibits of former diplomats will be open to viewing.

Reopening this summer is the "Dacha" outbuilding of the Hillwood Museum, home of Marjorie Merriweather Post, former wife of America's first ambassador to the Soviet Union, Joseph E. Davies. Hillwood is a lovely 25-acre oasis in the midst of Washington, D.C., overlooking Rock Creek Park. Although Post, who kept her maiden name, bought Hillwood in 1955 after her divorce from Davies, the house is the repository for the largest and finest collection of Russian imperial art outside Russia.

Better known as the beautiful and wealthy Post Toasties heiress and mother of movie star Dina Merrill, Post, in 1936, was horrified when her politically appointed husband was assigned to the capital of the Soviet empire. At the time, *The New Yorker* described the post as "the bleakest and dullest one that rates an ambassadorship." Post had hoped for something more glamorous. However, in the end, she did not regret the posting. The year and a half she spent in Russia from 1936-38 allowed her to begin a fascinating collection that, following her death in 1973, has become her chief claim to fame.

While in Russia, like many other Foreign Service spouses, Post explored the local shopping haunts. She discovered Russia's second-hand commission shops, where pre-Revolutionary art and anything else that would fetch hard currency was sold by the Bolsheviks in power at the time. To stock the shops, the Bolsheviks tapped their storerooms of loot taken from the former aristocracy and the palaces of former rulers. To Post's eternal amazement, the Bolsheviks seemed to have no appreciation of the value of the objects and sold everything by weight. She walked off with items such as two imperial Easter eggs that belonged to Russia's imperial family, a china service used by Catherine the Great, and a white imperial porcelain Bariatinsky vase, among other major finds. Among the important objects in her collection are rare eggs and small items made by master craftsman and jeweler Karl Fabergé. She later told friends in Washington that she had a field day in Fabergé's St. Petersburg shop, "crawling on hands and knees through the dusty, poorly lit storerooms to examine [his] work at close range." One of the Fabergé items she found was a snuff box of amethyst quartz that belonged to Prince Feliks Yusupov, the murderer of Rasputin.

Hillwood is almost as imperial as the gorgeous objects it houses. It is a formal mini-palace of cultivated gardens and dazzling internal beauty. The house contains not only a number of Russian items — most collected outside Russia — but also a large array of French 18th-century antiques that Post had pur-

ehased before the Moscow posting, as well as a collection of elaborate laee she obtained while her husband was ambassador to Belgium briefly in 1938. On tables throughout the house are photos of historic figures, including U.S. presidents John F. Kennedy, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower, and members of the Russian imperial family.

Hillwood's "Dacha" houses the more modest collection of Post's friend, Madame Frances Rosso, who was the American wife of the Italian ambassador to the USSR when the Davies were there. This collection of small objects, such as china, is more typical of the items acquired by the average diplomat abroad.

Hillwood Museum staffers were nervous when Russian President Boris Yeltsin's wife, Naina Girina, visited recently, because they feared she would be angered by the many Russian treasures being housed in the United States. However, at the end of the tour, Mrs. Yeltsin smiled and said, "You take such good care of our things here." Those items might not now exist had the "ambassadress," as Post preferred to be called, not purchased them.

House and garden tours are given Tuesday-Saturday, five times a day. Reservations can be made by contacting Hillwood Museum, 4155 Linnean Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, Tel: (202) 686-5807.

Another interesting museum is the former Leesburg, Va., home of Gen. George C. Marshall, President Truman's secretary of State and special envoy to China from 1945-1947, a 1953 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, and the father of the European Community and the Marshall Plan. Refurbishments to Dodona Manor have begun, and the house is expected to be open to visitors this summer.

Located on a quiet residential street at the eastern edge of Leesburg's historic district, Dodona Manor, like its former owner, is relatively modest. The house was the Marshalls' "country home," where the general and his second wife, Katherine, lived when not at their military residence at Ft. Myer, in a house provided by the federal government for the highest-ranking officer of the U.S. Army. The Marshalls took up permanent residence at Dodona Manor after the general retired; he lived there until his death from a stroke in 1959, at the age of 79. His widow remained in the house until she moved to a nursing home; her daughter Molly occupied the house up until the last few years.

The main part of the house, sitting on land owned as far back as the 1780s by George Washington Ball, a great nephew of George Washington, was built around 1820. A small mansion, enlarged by additions, it sits on almost four overgrown acres, among tall old trees that hide it from passersby.

Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, is one of the most well known and most often frequented of Washington area diplomatic museums.

Marshall's love of gardening is evidenced by the large flower gardens around the house, and the remnants of a huge vegetable garden in back. The gardens include a bed of flower bulbs planted by the wife of the former Chinese Nationalist leader, Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, a close friend of the Marshalls.

Inside, the house is blighted with rot, although it still emanates the lives of its former occupants. On the second floor is a large and inviting bedroom with a fireplace and a bay window that the Marshalls reserved for their guests. They themselves slept in more modest bedrooms at the rear of the house, because "Gen. Marshall was used to the military lifestyle," explains the guide.

Items collected by the Marshalls while overseas are as modest as the house and its owners, and include Chinese rugs brought back by the Marshalls from their 1946 tour in China. Among the items to be refurbished are blue silk curtains that still hang in the living room, a gift from Madame Chiang Kai-shek, who also sent them a Chinese nursemaid, or amah. Other important treasures, such as Marshall's favorite books and a painting of Marrakesh by Sir Winston Churchill, are being held elsewhere until the house is ready to be opened to the public this summer.

Most of the furnishings are representative of mid-20th-century Americana, including Marshall's favorite chair, which, like all the other decaying furniture,

Francine Modderno, a former Foreign Service spouse, is a freelance writer in Northern Virginia.

squeaky floors, rusty bathrooms and 1940s appliances, is being totally refurbished to reflect the man's life and times.

Dodona Manor is available for private group showings. Contact the George C. Marshall Home Preservation Fund, Inc., 20 South King Street, P.O. Box 489, Leesburg, Va. 22075, or at (703) 777-1880.

Another Washington mansion of a wealthy former American envoy undergoing refurbishment is the Anderson House museum, now used as the headquarters for the Society of the Cincinnati, the country's oldest patriotic order. The house, located near Dupont Circle, was built for Ambassador Larz Anderson and his heiress wife Isabel, who lived there from 1905 until their sudden accidental death in a 1937 train wreck. Anderson was appointed by President Taft as minister to Belgium in 1911 and ambassador to Japan in 1912.

Upstairs, the house is reserved for Anderson memorabilia, and has been kept relatively unchanged from the days when the family lived there. The dramatic collection includes a mixture of Asian and European art and artifacts gathered by the couple while they were at overseas posts, or during the international "touring" they so enjoyed. The objects include rare Japanese and Chinese carvings and lacquered furniture, and French and English antiques and tapestries.

When the Andersons built their mansion, they intended to bequeath it to the Society of the Cincinnati after their deaths. The society is an organization for first-son descendants of Americans and their French comrades who fought in the American Revolution. George Washington and Pierre l'Enfant were founding members.

Although the Andersons' furnishings remain downstairs, those rooms are primarily devoted to the display of Revolutionary War objects and a library, as well as rooms for private functions of the society and international organizations. The Andersons loved to entertain, and designed their house for that purpose, with large reception areas, a huge musicians' gallery, an enormous dining area furnished with a table that seats 28, and a two-story great hall for after-dinner dancing. Many state dinners and receptions have been held there, including one for the king and queen of Siam in 1931. Anderson wrote of several dinners they gave for the French, Japanese, Italian and Belgian ambassadors: "Our dinners proved successful. The house was full of flowers—azaleas, orchids, lilies, and tulips. We remained, I believe, the only house in Washington, except the embassies, which turned out the servants in full-dress livery, shorts and stockings, buckled shoes, and braided coats. These dinners were swan songs to the old order."

Anderson House is open Tuesday-Saturday, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Library hours are Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Contact Anderson House, 2118 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, Tel: (202) 785-2040.

A photo essay of U.S. diplomatic history, now on display at Arlington Hall at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC), was organized by the non-profit Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST).

Steve Low, president of ADST and a retired Foreign Service officer who headed the Foreign Service Institute for five years, is trying to launch a National Museum of Foreign Affairs. "The federal government administers 212 military museums and other specialized museums, such as the National Railroad and Maritime museums," he says, "Why not a museum devoted to American foreign affairs?"

Low's call for such a museum is supported by former senators Connie Mack, Charles Mathias and Charles Percy, former congressman Dante Fascell, and several private benefactors, who have helped fund a $20,000 recently launched feasibility study. ADST's Diplomatic History Research Center holds the libraries of several oral history projects on American diplomats and diplomatic spouses, as well as a library of biographies of American diplomats and books on U.S. diplomacy. Its artifacts include the 1850 exequatur issued to U.S. Consul Edwin De Leon in the name of the Ottoman Porte; the diplomatic uniform worn by the second secretary of the embassy to the court of Tsar Nicolas; and Currier and Ives portraits of seven presidents who were also secretaries of state.

One of Low's first efforts to preserve diplomatic memorabilia was to arrange the move of the Benjamin Franklin statue, which had been hiding in bushes by the main State Department entrance, to the quadrangle in front of NFATC. State didn't have a place to put the statute, he says, and few people even noticed it, much less appreciated it. The statue, a 1919 copy of one at the U.S. Embassy in Paris created by American sculptor Paul Wayland Barrett, was presented to the department in 1982 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the State Department. Now, America's first ambassador is finally receiving the recognition due him. He has become a favorite of the student body at NFATC, where the nation's diplomats honor their silent mentor by including him in various celebrations: Ben Franklin has been dressed in mortarboards, Santa Claus hats and St. Patrick's Day attire.

The photo display of U.S. diplomatic history at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center is open to those with State Department identification or guest passes. The exhibit is in the main corridor between the classroom building and the cafeteria. Membership in ADST is $50; $1,000 for patrons. Contact the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, 4000 Arlington Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22204, Tel: (703) 302-6990. ■

AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC MUSEUMS

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (Cedar Hill), 1411 W St., S.E., Washington, D.C.; (202) 426-5960. Home of black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who served as the U.S. minister to Haiti during the mid-1880s.

Decatur House, 748 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; (202) 842-0920. On Lafayette Square, across from the White House, this building was the home of secretaries of State Henry Clay, Martin Van Buren and Edward Livingston.

Diplomatic Reception Rooms, Department of State, 23rd & C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20520; (202) 647-3241. Among this collection are portraits of Benjamin Franklin painted in London and Paris while he was the American envoy in those capitals, and the desk on which the Treaty of Paris was signed.

Dumbarton Oaks, 1703 22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C.; (202) 338-8278. This house, dating from federalist times and host to President Taft and Alexander Graham Bell, was purchased by career diplomat Robert Woods Bliss in 1920. Given by Bliss to Harvard University in 1940, it now is a research center and houses Bliss's Byzantine art collection. The mansion's collection of pre-Colombian art also was started by Bliss in Paris. The music room hosted the 1944 diplomatic meetings that led to the creation of the United Nations.

Library of Congress, 10 First Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540; (202) 287-5000. After the British burned the Library of Congress in 1814, Thomas Jefferson offered to sell his own library of 6,487 books to the government to restock the national depository. Many of his books were purchased in Paris when he was the U.S. envoy there.

James Monroe Museum, 908 Charles Street, Fredericksburg, Va. 22401; (703) 899-4559. Home of our fifth president, father of the Monroe Doctrine, who also served as secretary of State and American minister to France, England and Spain. It contains costumes worn by the Monroes at the court of Napoleon, and Louis XVI furniture the couple collected in France, which they used in the White House.

Meridian International Center, 1624 and 1630 Crescent Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009; (202) 667-6800. The center, now used for activities for foreign diplomats and students, is comprised of two houses built for U.S. diplomats Henry White and Irwin Boyle Laughlin.

Montieello, c/o Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 217, Charlottesville, Va. 22902; (804) 984-9828. The home of Thomas Jefferson, this major work of American architecture and extensive gardens contains more than 800 objects collected by the former president when he was American envoy to France.

Montpelier, P.O. Box 67, Montpelier Station, VA 22957; (703) 672-2728. The home of James and Dolley Madison, fourth president of the United States and Thomas Jefferson's secretary of State.

National Museum of African Art, 950 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20560; (202) 357-4600, Dial-a-Museum information: (202) 357-2020. This Smithsonian museum was started in 1964 by former FSO Warren Robbins, and once was housed at Cedar Hill, home of the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, a former U.S. minister to Haiti.

Naumkeag, P.O. Box 792, Stockbridge, Mass. 01262-0792; (413) 298-3239. Situated in a beautiful small town, Naumkeag was the country and retirement home of Joseph Hodges Choate, President McKinley's ambassador to the Court of St. James. The house, which hosted President McKinley, contains objects collected in England during Choate's assignment, as well as objects from China collected by his daughter.

Old Executive Office Building, Pennsylvania Ave. & 17th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503; (202) 395-5895. This building, now used exclusively for White House offices, once housed the State Department. The south wing's four-story White House library and research center originally was the State Department's library; State's seal is visible in railings surrounding the balconies.

Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, P.O. Box 419, Forest, Va. 24551-0419; (804) 525-1806. Southwest of Lynchburg, Va., on Route 661, this house was designed by Jefferson as his personal retreat. It became a national historic landmark in 1984 and was opened to the public only a few years ago. The extraordinary octagonal house, the construction of which was overseen personally by the president while he was in office, is considered to be his finest architectural design.

Virginia House, 4301 Sulgrave Rd., Richmond, Va. 23226; (804) 353-4251. This is the fascinating home of career diplomat Alexander Weddell and his heiress wife Virginia. Weddell served in Zanzibar, Greece, Burma, Syria; as U.S. consul to India and Mexico; and as U.S. ambassador to Argentina and Spain, just before the outbreak of World War II. ■

WHY AFRICA IS IMPORTANT

DESPITE COMPLEX PAST AND UNCERTAIN PRESENT, GREAT POTENTIAL EXISTS

BY CHESTER A. CROCKER

We live in a time of mounting Afro-pessimism. Its companion — official Western disengagement from Africa — increasingly is in evidence. These trends are hardly surprising: Africa is the region bad news comes from. A one-dimensional picture of "the situation in Africa" flows naturally from the combination of facts and images available in the West. While some editors and writers make efforts to convey Africa's variety, nuance and historical context, most manage to paint a regional portrait of failure, destitution, brutality and hopelessness. Author Christopher Hitchens recently summed up the African landscape in a searing article in *Vanity Fair* by referring to the "abattoir conditions in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Angola, Burundi and elsewhere." The implication that these places represent the new African norm — and that there are lots more like them waiting to happen — is hard to escape.

Afro-pessimism feeds off Africa's horrors like vultures on a fresh kill. The horrors of Africa are very real. So, too, are their external political consequences: Elected leaders in both branches of our government — and from both parties — have approved reductions in the official U.S. presence in Africa. However sympathetic its African rhetoric, the Clinton administration cut and ran from Somalia and then glossed over genocide in Rwanda. Meanwhile, Sen. Mitch McConnell, the new Republican chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, reveals that he has a "hard time justifying expenditures in most of the African continent ... a hard time finding a national interest." U.S. assistance efforts in the region are viewed in significant Republican circles as the foreign-policy equivalent of Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

It would be coldly convenient simply to accept the Afro-pessimist case. But we cannot. It is not a fair or complete portrait, and the policy implications that appear to flow from it are foolish. It would be reckless to base our conduct toward an entire continent on selective snapshots. And it would be counter to every humanitarian impulse to write off Africa, encouraging doomsdays that do not need to happen.

LINA CHESAK

The administration's assessment of a region three times the size of the United States, comprising some 53 distinct political entities and one-eighth of the human race, cannot be reduced to a recitation of its well-known liabilities, without taking into account its quiet successes, exciting changes or the very diversity that is one of Africa's most striking features.

When we talk of Africa we are talking of vast distances and scales. The United States would fit inside the Sahara Desert; Sudan is larger than Western Europe; southern Africa is larger than China. This massive continent comprises huge

The starting place in considering Africa is to recognize the opportunities squandered, the time lost, the lessons learned.

differences of climate, culture, topography, resources and population density. Generalizations quickly get you into trouble. An arid place with fragile ecosystems and poor soils, Africa still provides 25 percent of the world's potential hydropower. The raw numbers would suggest that Africa, with a total population of around 700 million, does not have serious demographic pressures. But much of Africa is already burdened by human and animal pressures that exceed the land's carrying capacity using current levels of technology and capital.

The map tells us that Africa is highly balkanized, consisting of many ministates (37 boast populations of 10 million or less) and some 15 landlocked independent states (40 percent of the world's total). The continent boasts few mono-ethnic "nation states;" Swaziland, Botswana, Eritrea and Somalia are exceptions. Ironically, that is probably a good thing: If ethnicity were the basis of African statehood, there could be somewhere between 800 and 2,000 political entities.

Most African states acquired independence in the late 1950s and 1960s, during the height of the Cold War. This historical coincidence has profoundly shaped their experience. It gave African rulers a substantial base of external support to offset their striking internal weaknesses, and a fleeting illusion of importance and leverage. The early African nationalist elites acquired their position largely as a result of European decisions to cut the costs of empire and disengage. And they maintained themselves in power through the cultivation and manipulation of symbiotic ties to the former colonial powers, the two superpowers and world financial agencies. Africa's "non-alignment" was more than a defensive political response to Cold War bipolarity or an anticolonial reflex. Nonalignment was part of a calculated diplomatic enterprise aimed at raising the stakes of the African game and garnering higher bids from external players.

Today, this mating game is largely over. The international system no longer provides consistent and predictable support to the African state system or the incumbents who run it. By the same token, the legitimacy of the African state apparatus and even of inherited boundaries has been severely undercut by the loss of semiautomatic support from the international system. Generally speaking, states and governments which became most dependent upon outsiders during the Cold War era emerged with the weakest basis of domestic political legitimacy.

These trends were epitomized in the Horn of Africa in 1991-94: When the Somali state collapsed amidst brutal clan-based strife, foreign governments stood by. Seizing their chance, the northern, formerly British region effectively seceded from the previously dominant southern part — an action few noticed and even fewer bothered to recognize or oppose even after the Bush administration mounted its high-profile Operation Restore Hope to create secure conditions for distributing food. Next door in Ethiopia, as the Soviets abandoned their brutal client Mengistu Haile Mariam, northern ethnic rebellions cooperated to rout the regime in May 1991; one ethnic group seized power in the capital and another pressed successfully for independence as the new state of Eritrea.

The international system's primary impact on these events was to soften up the Somali and Ethiopian auto-

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crats and ease their departure. What replaced them — for good or ill — was primarily determined by the local actors. Even the intervention of nearly 30,000 U.S. troops was narrowly circumscribed in time and ultimate scope: The Clinton administration's brief fling with grandiose ideas of "nation-building" quickly collapsed when it became clear that Somali leaders would turn this into a contact sport. In the end, the U.S. succeeded in saving hundreds of thousands of Somali lives and opening up a window for political reconciliation. When Somali leaders appeared to blow this opportunity, we left.

Having ended their global contest, the United States and Russia disengaged in the strategic sense, removing quite suddenly an important element of the African status quo. Cold War pawns have collapsed or been obliged to redefine their policies in response to Western conditions relating to governance, structural adjustment, economic liberalization, accountability and democratization. This process of post-Cold War disengagement comes a mere 30 years after Europe's departure from its former colonies.

Many African societies today are worse off in material terms and under far more severe strain than they were in the final colonial phase 35 to 40 years ago. This is not to say that anyone can or should turn the clock back to recolonization. African economies may be in de facto World Bank/IMF receivership and Africa's wars and political transitions under the sway of U.N. peacekeepers and international observers. But there are no credible foreign volunteers lining up to police or govern Africa. Equally important, even the most traumatized African societies show little sign of wishing to go back to colonial or white minority rule.

The starting place in considering Africa is to recognize the opportunities squandered, the time lost, the lessons learned and the new situation created by Western diplomacy and the global political changes of 1989-94. Let's start with the positive side of the ledger. The status quo has been decisively weakened, which has opened up new vistas of hope for freedom and democratization and new chances for the unleashing of Africa's potential through a shift toward market economics. Compared to previous decades, the balance of power within African societies has shifted against incumbent rulers and their privileged urban constituents and in favor of farmers and Africa's embryonic civil society — media, churches, opposition politicians, professionals, and community and women's organizations. Incumbents have been placed on the defensive internally and externally.

Recent years have witnessed an unprecedented flowering of experiments in democracy. Some 27 multiparty elections have been held in sub-Sahara Africa since the Berlin Wall came down. Significant and heartening political change has resulted from some of these exercises. The end of apartheid and the emergence of a democratically-oriented culture of reconciliation in South Africa are by no means the only good political news from Africa. Democratic change in varying degrees and shapes has come to Cape Verde, Zambia, Malawi, the Central African Republic, Niger, Mali, Benin, Congo, Sao Tome & Principe, Lesotho and Madagascar. Namibia achieved its independence in 1990 after one of the most democratic transitions in modern African history, achieved under U.N. supervision supported by long-standing U.S. diplomatic leadership. Senegal, Mauritius, Seychelles and Botswana have operated for some years under democratic norms, most with a clearly dominant party. Mozambique has emerged from an October 1994 U.N.-supervised democratic transition, a process that could significantly strengthen Southern Africa's emerging democratic bloc. Potentially important constitutional and electoral exercises have been mounted in Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia, though their outcomes remain unclear.

On the economic side, there are signs of vitality in a number of African economies. This point has been clearly recognized in the New York and London financial markets, which have witnessed the debut of some eight Africa-focused mutual funds in the past few years. Emerging-market volatility in the wake of the Mexican peso crisis will hardly encourage investors to plunge into Africa's generally little-known, tiny and unliquid markets. But this region has become something of a new, high-potential frontier. There are now 13 stock exchanges operating on the continent, with another five being established. South Africa's Johannesburg Stock Exchange accounts for some 93 percent of total African market capitalization and is among the world's top dozen bourses.

Highly skilled African expatriates are starting to return to their home countries from the West. A growing number of African governments have jettisoned the once-fashionable socialist nonsense that passed for economic policy. African finance and trade ministries are increasingly in the

ENVIRONMENTAL CHAOS REIGNS

BY PETER C. MAFFITT

Climate is a controlling issue in Africa — where large areas of arid, poor soils make the continent subject to periodic, sustained droughts. Africa also has great rain forests, which are rapidly being destroyed.

Michael Garstang, an African environmental scientist at the University of Virginia, believes the changes stem from natural climate cycles. Africa was a dry continent in the last Ice Age with the Sahara Desert extending thousands of miles south to the Kalahari Desert. From the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age (10,000 BC) until 4,000 BC, there was a prolonged wet era in Africa; the Sahara was covered with lakes, rivers, rain forests, and grasslands. Then a great drying era started — and the Sahara Desert is now the size of the continental United States, about 3.5 million square miles.

Scientists are now realizing the close connection between regional climate and global climate. Climate in African regions directly influences climate and soil conditions in the rest of the world, and vice versa. In sharp contrast, many environmental experts are convinced African climate changes are largely man-made, particularly exacerbated by the population explosion. Population migrations, rain forest destruction and overgrazing of arable land are all traceable to increased population.

Dust storms are an age-old phenomenon in Africa, though they are much smaller today than in eons past. Today, about 200 to 400 million tons of dust — minerals, nutrients and assorted particles — are blown annually from the surface of Africa to other parts of Africa as well as to the Atlantic, Caribbean, Amazon basin and elsewhere. African dust builds Latin American soil and nurtures the Amazon rain forest. The Oklahoma Dust Bowl storms of the 1930s have entered American folklore as a great climactic catastrophe, but by African standards, the storms were minor.

Richard W. Underwood, a retired Houston-based NASA official, has studied satellite photos of Africa for more than three decades. Photos of recent years have indicated dramatic climate changes, with dust storms 350 to 450 miles across and 40,000 feet high, moving up to 130 miles an hour, and some covering 700,000 square miles — three times the size of Texas.

Garstang points out that Africa has many long-term and short-term weather cycles — several decades may be dry, wet or wet-and-dry. While the 1990s are a wet-decade cycle, 1993 changes in the El Nino phenomenon brought an exception — in the form of failed rains and a severe drought in southern Africa, putting at least 100 million people at risk. Unless rains return by mid-1995, donor nations will need to come up with 65 million tons of food for southern Africa.

For Underwood, water is the key African issue. In the last decade, satellite coverage recorded the drying up of the great swamp near Timbuktu, which covered 20,000 square miles. Lake Chad, once the size of Lake Erie, virtually dried up a few years ago. Great African rivers — the Niger, the Senegal, the Gambia, the Volta and the Congo — are increasingly drying up during prolonged dry spells.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census estimates the African population in 1995 at 722 million and 588 million sub-Saharan. In 1950 Africa had a population of 288 million and 184 million sub-Saharan. By 2050, if current trends continue, Africa could have an estimated 2.4 billion people, with mass migrations expected to continue.

The destruction of rain forests is a major ecological disaster; in the last half-century, three-fourths of the West African forests have vanished, due to the need for cooking and heating fuel, for housing and for farmland — driven by rising populations. Rain forests produce the moisture needed for cumulus clouds and eventual rain; fewer forests mean less atmospheric moisture and increased dust, with the resultant reduced rainfall — genetic pools vanish with the rain forests. At the current rate of destruction, the 1.7 million square kilometer Central African rain forest and the great Madagascar forests could be gone in 50 years. ■

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hands of Western-trained technocrats. Many governments have signed on to tough programs of fiscal austerity, deregulation, privatization and currency liberalization.

In regional security issues, some protracted and destructive conflicts have been terminated — e.g., in Mozambique, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Namibia. A ceasefire and political reconciliation has been signed by the parties to Angola's long-standing civil conflict, and a fresh U.N. peace operation is set to oversee its implementation. And there is inspiration and hope in the pragmatic miracle of South Africa's negotiated transition to democracy, a path-breaking transition conducted by South Africans themselves.

This brief summary makes clear that it is just plain wrong to throw our hands in the air in an Afro-pessimist frenzy. But positive factors must be viewed against the backdrop of a continent still battling to break out of a prolonged crisis. Most African states are not collapsing like Rwanda, Liberia or Somalia. They are in the early stages of what will likely be a prolonged and difficult transition away from one-party or one-man misrule. The Kenyan scholar Michael Chege observes, "Africa now harbors a large number of rudderless regimes, drifting between success and catastrophe, with pretensions to electoral legitimacy but no real popular backing to speak of." Of the 27 elections mentioned, at least 10 were aborted, manipulated, distorted or sabotaged in one way or another: Wily incumbents are learning how to rig elections, control campaign rules and divide or co-opt opposition figures. In a few cases, the military has simply thwarted electoral results.

African societies entered the post-Cold War era facing ecological and health challenges that are among the world's most severe. Our Census Bureau estimates an average life expectancy of 32 in Uganda in 2010, instead of 59 were there no AIDS epidemic. AIDS could reduce GDP by 15 to 25 percent in East African countries during the first decade of the next century.

Population increases too often eat up the bulk of GDP growth. Even with AIDS taking its awful toll, sub-Saharan Africa's population of nearly 600 million could double by 2020. Such scenarios virtually guarantee unchecked migrations to ill-prepared urban centers, burgeoning refugee populations, accelerated destruction of African rain forests and heightened man-made climate changes. Already, scientific observers are detecting the impact of dramatic climate changes flowing from natural climate cycles exacerbated by man and domestic animals. Massive dust storms, intermittent dry river basins, vanished lakes and recurrent droughts are ominous warnings that major parts of Africa may not be able to sustain current trends.

Africa is not the only region where corruption flourishes. But, too many African countries have desperately weak governmental institutions leading to the absence of anything resembling public accountability. In the worst cases, the sad result is gross mismanagement or outright theft of everything that is not nailed down. The tragic flight of so much of Africa's financial capital is another reason why sub-Saharan Africa still has too little to show for the external aid it receives — nearly 40 percent of global aid flows. One veteran observer sums up the record this way: Despite a decade of World Bank-IMF sponsored structural adjustment, net aid flows of $170 billion, a steadily mounting share of global aid, Sub-Sahara African economic growth remains well below the 3.2 percent annual rise in population. The World Bank estimates it could take 40 years before the region returns to its per-capita income level of the mid-1970s. Meanwhile, Africa's share of global trade has declined by one half to a mere 2 percent since the mid-1960s. These chilling statistics, of course, hide as much as they reveal when used to describe the condition of 53 countries. But even the relative economic winners are not growing fast enough yet to turn the corner decisively, and there are not enough of them.

Another liability on Africa's balance sheet is the belt of war-ravaged and unstable states spreading from Somalia and Sudan down through Rwanda and Burundi, parts of Zaire, and down into Angola. Four major African states — Algeria, Nigeria, Sudan and Zaire — are wracked by severe crises of political legitimacy including low-level strife that could spin out of hand, affecting entire surrounding neighborhoods. Liberia's four-year-long descent into butchery has infected neighboring Sierra Leone. The chances for sustained economic and political progress in more hopeful places like Tunisia, Morocco, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Chad, Burkina Faso, Congo, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia will depend in some measure on trends next door in the huge nations of Algeria, Nigeria, Angola, Sudan and Zaire. It is a delicate balance.

Back in June 1994, at a two-day White House conference on Africa, President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore sought to underscore the posi-

AIDS Overwhelms Continent

By Kathleen Henry

Since 1983, when HIV was first documented in sub-Saharan Africa, more than 11 million African men, women and children have been infected with the virus that causes AIDS. Two-thirds of the world's 17 million HIV infections and almost 75 percent of all reported AIDS deaths have occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa is also the only region of the world where more women than men are HIV-positive, since four out of every five infections are acquired through heterosexual transmission.

Although Asia is expected to overtake Africa as the region with the most new HIV infections per year by the year 2000, the worst is still ahead for Africa. In many sub-Saharan countries, HIV/AIDS is starting to reverse hard-won gains in health, education and economic development.

During the next 15 years, life expectancy may drop by 24 to 33 years in the African countries most affected by the epidemic. In Zimbabwe, for example, AIDS is projected to reduce life expectancy from 70 to 40 years by 2010. During the same period AIDS will also shorten the lives of Africa's most vulnerable citizens — children. Child mortality rates in Zambia and Zimbabwe are expected to triple due to AIDS.

According to the World Bank, the epidemic appears to be the main reason that per-capita income growth is slowing in 10 sub-Saharan countries. HIV/AIDS has a far greater economic impact on nations, businesses, communities and families than other diseases because it usually affects people during the most productive years.

One of the countries hardest hit by the epidemic, Uganda, is known for pioneering community-based approaches to HIV prevention and AIDS care. For example, The AIDS Service Organization (TASO), founded in 1987 by 16 Ugandans whose lives had been touched by HIV/AIDS, has provided counseling, supportive care and AIDS prevention education to tens of thousands of people through seven TASO centers and a network of community outreach workers.

Recognizing the potential of community-based AIDS prevention and care, many international donors focus on strengthening the ability of grassroots organizations to respond to the epidemic. For example, 75 percent of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (AID) AIDS Control and Prevention (AIDSCAP) support for HIV prevention in 16 African countries goes to organizations working at the community level. AID's contribution — $41 million in fiscal year 1993 — supports HIV/AIDS prevention programs and research in 25 African countries. The agency is also the largest contributor to the World Health Organization's Global Programme on AIDS (GPA), which has helped more than 40 African governments develop and carry out strategic plans for controlling HIV/AIDS.

Despite the daunting political, financial and managerial obstacles to AIDS prevention in Africa, carefully designed, well-managed programs have been able to influence people's behavior. Examples include programs in Tanzania, Nigeria and Zimbabwe that train members of the target audience to educate their peers about AIDS and encourage them to adopt safer sexual practices, particularly the use of condoms.

As a result of a peer education program at a mining company in Zimbabwe, the number of condoms distributed rose 63 percent and the number of treated cases of sexually transmitted diseases treated was halved.

Johnnie Carson, the new ambassador to Zimbabwe and the former envoy to Uganda from 1991-94, said AIDS is the most serious problem facing Africa today. "AIDS generally strikes the most productive, well-educated part of a country's work force, robbing many African countries of their best and brightest. Nothing can be done to alleviate poverty and promote economic development in Africa without productive work forces." ■

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tive, deploring public ignorance and a one-sidedly negative focus on Africa's grim realities. They called for positive thinking to help spur the development of a constituency to support U.S. engagement in Africa. But it will not work to gild the African lily; we need policies based on Afro-realism.

Presumably, in this age of "virtual" reality, we were supposed to view the White House conference as "action" on behalf of Africa. A presidential visit to Africa, rumored for 1995, would constitute more "action." Most disappointing was Clinton's failure to make good on his pledge to "explain to the American people of whatever race, region or background why Africa matters to all of us and to our common future."

Africa's transition from crisis to hope matters a great deal, and for many of the same reasons as the transitions under way in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Africa's success will mean a more decent and stable world order where American values and interests can flourish. Failure in Africa is a direct threat to Western humanitarian values as well as our national budgets: Costly peacekeeping operations will drag on, famine emergencies will recur and official assistance will be needed simply to avert disasters. The CIA's annual forecast of looming humanitarian disasters predicts that the next 12-18 months will see the greatest demands ever for humanitarian aid to Africa; 30 million people — 75 percent of the global total — are said to be at risk in 10 African nations.

By contrast, Africa's success would mean exports, jobs and investment opportunities for Americans. It is not generally recognized that we have been sustaining a long-term trade imbalance with sub-Saharan Africa — an estimated $38 billion imbalance during the 1989-93 period, according to the Department of Commerce. (Oil accounts for some 70 percent of U.S. purchases.) Greater African economic vitality will offer the chance for increased U.S. exports and jobs. Even today, U.S.-African trade is growing faster than overall trade. Though Africa accounts for only 1 percent of U.S. global exports, that was 20 percent greater than U.S. exports to the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1993; South Africa was a larger market than all of Eastern Europe combined. U.S. direct investment in the region is a

modest $2.2 billion; but that generated 32 percent on book value in 1992. In this time of global markets and industries, Americans cannot afford to write off markets like this.

Failure in Africa has consequences beyond the continent. The beneficiaries are narcotics rings and other mafias. Failure creates spawning grounds for state terrorists falsely flying the flag of Islam; it threatens world health in this age of travel and migration; it threatens world environmental security and biodiversity; it creates a growing pool of refugees and migrants, strengthening local strongmen at home while triggering social tensions in new lands of settlement. These high costs cannot be swept under a rug; Africa cannot be redlined like a strategic slum.

What, then, should the United States be doing? First, let us celebrate and contribute to the natural and growing differentiation among Africa's 53 countries. As the contrast between success stories and basket cases gets clearer, so should the variety and range of our policies. It has never made much sense to apply an "African policy" to places as varied as Morocco and Mozambique. Let's not get tangled up in our own abstractions. Do we conduct an "Asian policy" in the Philippines or Japan?

If we look closely, we will find that our natural partners in Africa are also becoming clearer. We can help shape a coalition of like-minded African and non-African players including our major allies in Europe and Asia and key financial bodies like the World Bank and the IMF. Special attention must be devoted to bolstering subregions where a critical mass of relatively well-managed countries may exist — such as in Southern Africa and, perhaps, the Horn of Africa/East Africa. Africans and their foreign partners need to make common cause, building a coalition with the legitimacy — as well as the teeth and spine — to help transform Africa's policy climate by establishing higher standards for economic management.

Second, we need to get the sequence right. There is much loose talk about free markets and democracy — as if these wonderful items could be obtained by placing African nations on autopilot, preaching our Western sermons and

sending over lots of AID-funded contractors. It doesn't work that way. Foreign money and technicians can help at the margins, but the institutions must be African. Neither economic growth nor democracy can take root until government becomes relevant to people and gains the capacity to sustain the minimum functions of a modern state.

The logical implication is that Africa's top priority — and ours — is to deal with the problem of collapsing states and civil wars so that they do not infect more promising places. It is not good news if these post-Cold War pressures overwhelm the remnants of African authority, leaving only vicious warlords and ethnic demagogues to fight over what's left. Americans have been engaged in African peacemaking for over two decades and have made decisive contributions. We have no higher calling than to engage ourselves across the full spectrum of peacemaking activities ranging from preventive diplomacy through mediation, strengthening African security institutions like the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community, and supporting U.N. and regional peacekeeping efforts as appropriate.

This is not a call for American military interventionism, which neither Americans nor Africans want to see. Rather, it is an appeal for leadership in specific fields such as conflict-resolution training, military logistics and other specialized support, help for demining and demobilization efforts, and determined and coherent diplomatic backstopping of negotiated settlements so that they get implemented. To be sure, there are many complex choices, and the United States cannot take the lead everywhere. But if we wait for a domestic "constituency" to show up and cheer us on, the price of our leadership failures will only go up.

Third, our goal should be to strengthen, not further weaken, African governments so that they become capable of carrying out the basic functions of government anywhere. Asia's economic miracles did not take place amidst imploding government institutions. In fact, the evidence suggests an important governmental role in maintaining internal security, macroeconomic stability, educating and training people to become potentially productive citizens

and shaping a societal consensus on economic strategy.

It is not engraved in stone tablets that Africa must follow the Asian pattern. But at a minimum, when new governments gain power professing adherence to all the right things, we and our friends, while insisting on clean and transparent management, should channel timely financial assistance and political support so they have a chance to deliver. When corrupt autocrats stand in the way, our task is to help identify soft landings and negotiated exits and not to cut off ties and impoverish their citizens with sanctions. Tilting against autocrats is easy and photogenic. But, ironically, it may prop them up and prolong the agony — or even make it worse. Our parallel task is to work through government and nongovernment institutions systemically to strengthen the African civil society. This means assistance, training, networking, exchange programs, and general institution-building across the spectrum of African social settings. There is no real reason for despair: Just look at what the South Africans have managed to do.

Fourth, the time has clearly arrived to get serious about research and monitoring of the interplay between Africa's demographic, climactic, ecological and conflict trends. An Africa increasingly caught up in waves of humanitarian disaster and ecoshock could make today's toll of 6 million refugees and 17 million displaced persons seem mild. The United States, for its own health and well-being as well as its values and global leadership role, cannot "disengage." There's just no place to hide.

A number of the recommendations provided above will require continued U.S. foreign assistance in Africa. Clearly, we will be less credible, less effective and less able to lead if we disarm U.S. diplomacy by taking away its tangible tools and cutting support of effective multilateral agencies. On the other hand, there is every reason for a basic reassessment of current U.S. assistance. Too much of it flows to assorted U.S. contractors, consultants and insider constituencies. Too little of it goes directly to nurture African capabilities to build the kinds of societies and institutions that can stand on their own. ■

US POLICY TOWARD AFRICA

CLINTON SHOULD GIVE 'PERFORMERS' MORE AID AND PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

BY HERMAN J. COHEN

Please, let's all stop generalizing about Africa: "The continent is being marginalized." "It's going down the drain." "The United States has no interests in Africa, nor are there any significant threats there." All of these generalizations are more or less true if one looks at Africa as a single geographic entity. However, the problem with such an approach is that there are a number of "Africas" today which are as different from each other as the Iberian peninsula is from Scandinavia. Sure, both are in Europe, but that's where the similarity ends.

Most observers, including experienced Africanists such as myself, are in the habit of lumping sub-Saharan Africa's 44 countries together. The independence struggles of the 1950s and 1960s, the mass African membership in the "Non-Aligned Movement," the Africa-wide adoption of the one-party state between 1960 and 1970, and the unifying element of the anti-apartheid struggle, all served to cast Africa in the same mold.

In reality, Africa was never really homogenous, and began to change even more significantly in the second half of the 1980s in response to the challenge of global economic interdependence. About a dozen African countries are meeting this challenge with courage and determination. This group is beginning to move significantly ahead of the pack. On the other hand, another group is mired down in failed policies, unable to break away from their stagnating and corrupt patronage systems. Others are either in the midst of civil wars, or are just emerging from them. Moreover, differences between French-speaking and English-speaking countries are becoming more and more evident.

LINA CHESAK

As a continent, Africa is way behind the rest of the world in economic growth. This is not surprising. With a few important exceptions, most African countries opted for statist command economic systems when they became independent from European colonialism during the period of 1958-1975. The experience with such systems in Africa has been analogous to the experiences of Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. State-owned enterprises wasted billions of dollars in taxpayers' money, becoming cash cows for political patronage in urban areas. Artificially high, fixed exchange rates for local currencies encouraged imports and discouraged production both for export and local consumption.

The vast majority of Africans

Giving up on Africa is premature. U.S. policy toward Africa needs to become more selective, pinpointing good performers with targeted aid.

who live in rural areas used to be the producers of most of Africa's wealth. But the majority of governments killed this goose that layed the golden egg by taxing all incentives for farmers to continue producing. Revenue diverted from the farmers was used for infrastructure and other benefits for urban dwellers, most of whom derived their incomes from government employment. Agricultural production declined. Government revenues declined. Gross national product declined. Going into debt to meet recurring costs of government was easy in the early 1970s because petrodollars had to be recycled, and the big money center banks were pushing sovereign loans. Debt burdens became unsustainable.

Between 1960 and 1980, European and American governments did not tell the Africans they were implementing self-destructive policies. The competition of the Cold War was certainly an element in our reticence to criticize African economic policies. But I attribute the U.S. silence more to a feeling of guilt over colonialism in Europe and the civil rights struggle in the United States. We told ourselves, "Africans are finally independent after a long struggle Who are we to tell them what kind of economic and political systems to adopt?" While western governments were averting their eyes, western social democratic movements were egging on Africans to nationalize and socialize. The result was that by the time the Reagan administration came into office in 1981, most African economies were either in a state of free fall or close to it.

The political systems adopted by virtually every African government after independence was also analogous to those of Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. The all-embracing one party state co-opted, and thereby destroyed, civil society. The one-party state appeared logical in the euphoria felt by entire populations immediately after independence. "Africa needs to harness all of its energies for development. It cannot afford the luxury of multiparty democracy," was the universal slogan. "The vanguard movements that led the independence struggles can lead their nations to economic independence," was the universal analysis.

The post-independence euphoria lasted for about five years. It soon became clear that the one-party state could stay in power only through increasing repression and corruption. Human rights abuse joined economic stagnation as the hallmarks of Africa's image between 1970 and 1985. In countries where the one-party state was unable to resolve normal political conflict through non-violent procedures, civil war broke out, generating millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. Some of these conflicts, such as in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia, were exacerbated by Cold War factors. Here again, as in the economic sector, the West observed Africa's destructive political evolution in silence, concentrating instead on a higher priority target — apartheid in South Africa.

By the mid-1980s, the situation in many African countries had become untenable. It became neces-

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sary for the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to enter the picture and prescribe harsh medicine. "Structural adjustment" became the order of the day. Eliminate the distortions of incorrect economic policies, and the economy will improve slowly, but surely. It is in the application of economic reform policies that African countries have started to separate into different groups corresponding to their performance and achievements.

The countries starting to move ahead of the pack include South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia in the south; Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Ghana in the west; Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Eritrea in the east. None of these countries is without significant problems, but they are distinguished by forward-looking leadership who appear to know what they are doing and have the courage to make tough decisions. Most of them are now led by a new generation of politicians who are relying increasingly on well-educated technocrats under age 45 ,who are making many of key economic decisions.

Unfortunately, some of the more potentially wealthy countries are among those suffering from internal conflict and political impasse, and are therefore either stagnating or moving backwards. These suffering giants include Nigeria, Zaire, Cameroon and Kenya. Two former Portuguese colonies, Mozambique and Angola, are currently emerging from two decades of devastating conflict, and are sending the right signals about their willingness to move into market economic systems. But their situations are still fragile, and it is too early to tell if they can move ahead.

What does all this mean for American foreign policy? Above all, it means that giving up on Africa is premature. Some

potential economic partners in Africa represent substantial markets that are embryonic now, but are likely to be big later. U.S. policy toward African needs to become more selective, pinpointing good performers with targeted aid linked to the potential for growth in U.S. exports and investments.

For example, economic reform means privatization of telecommunications, agro-industry and transportation infrastructure, in all of which American industry is highly competitive. It is noteworthy that overall infrastructure in southern Africa works well, and is way ahead of what we see in the CIS countries and most of Eastern Europe.

What about those African countries that are suffering from political blockages and cannot move ahead at this time? Should the United States ignore them until such time as they join the mainstream? In terms of development assistance and trade and investment promotion, the answer is yes. Scarce resources have to be utilized only where there is a decent possibility of achieving positive results. However, there is another dimension of national security policy that needs to be considered when we look at that part of Africa that is stagnating, unstable and dangerous.

As the only superpower and as the world's most vibrant democracy, the United States is condemned to be a leader in maintaining barriers against world disorder. The exercise of superpower leadership does not mean sending troops to restore order at the drop of a hat, nor does it mean throwing money at every problem. Nevertheless, it does mean exercising America's substantial moral authority whenever possible in the resolution of conflict, and in support of political liberalization.

In Africa, the moral authority of the United States has never been higher. African governments and African populations listen to what we have to say,

Are there truly no U.S. interests or threats to U.S. interests in sub-Saharan Africa? I would not use the term 'vital' when discussing U.S. interests in Africa, but there are interests.

and take our opinions seriously. It does not take much money to exercise that moral authority. But it does require focus, energy, and above all policy leadership. It also means that we should forge a strong partnership with the U.N. political and peace-making bureaucracies which are often the appropriate entities to be out in front in dealing with African instability. We need to reform and strengthen the United Nations, not kill it.

I also believe that NATO can play a constructive role in Africa, now that the Western Alliance is looking for new roles out of area. I note that NATO is already starting a political dialogue with countries on the Mediterranean periphery. Below the Sahara, military-to-military relationships between NATO countries, especially France, the U.K. and the United States and Africa have been significant for the 30 years. These relationships, which used to support Cold War objectives and the maintenance of the political status quo in many African countries, should now be recycled into support for the democratization of military establishments. The transformation of African military into defenders of democracy is absolutely crucial to the political liberalization of the continent. This task can be accomplished inexpensively in the form of mobile training teams.

Are there truly no U.S. interests, or threats to U.S. interests in sub-Saharan Africa? Since the end of the Cold War, I have yet to see a credible definition of U.S. national security interests beyond the Israel-Egypt-Persian Gulf nexus. I would not use the term "vital" when discussing US interests in Africa, but there are interests.

The Horn of Africa is the back door to the Persian Gulf. We did not use our military access rights in the Horn very much during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm during 1990-1991, but they are still there and available in case of need.

Within the Horn, the revolutionary Islamic regime in the Sudan has been identified by the State Department as a haven for Middle Eastern terrorists, and as a supporter of destabilization efforts in Egypt, Algeria, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda. It would appear to be a matter of U.S. interest to contain that regime and to demonstrate visible support for its beleaguered neighbors.

American oil company executives tell me that Africa is the last frontier for undiscovered petroleum reserves. They are certainly showing a lot of interest in countries like Angola, Eritrea, Congo, Gabon and Namibia. There is also biodiversity. A large percentage of the world's tropical rain forest is in Africa, especially Zaire. There is also food production. Africa is a food deficit continent, but the amount of arable land still uncultivated is high. When 1.2 billion Chinese and 900 million Indians start consuming like Westerners, that land will be needed. Finally, Africa represents a potential market of 750 million consumers that we should not be neglecting.

Political, trade and investment ties that we forge now will pay off later in increased export market share for U.S. companies.

As a junior FSO in 1961, I opted to specialize in African affairs. I was fascinated by the growing competition for Africa's soul between democracy/capitalism and authoritarianism/socialism. I wanted to get into the trenches in support of democracy. I don't regret the choice, even though for the first 20 years I thought our side had lost.

Now the challenge is different. Can Africa overcome its bad political and economic habits and vested interests to compete in a global marketplace? Some African countries will make it and some will not. ■

AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association

FS Day Speakers Focus on Budget Crisis

By Richard S. Thompson
Professional Issues Coordinator

As retired and active Foreign Service employees of the five foreign affairs agencies gathered May 5 at the 30th annual Foreign Service Day, the dominant theme addressed by nearly every speaker in the day-long series of events was the foreign affairs budget, which is being threatened with severe cuts.

Christine Shurtleff, president of the Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) in her welcoming remarks noted the serious effects budget cuts would have an the Foreign Service family.

AFSA President F.A. "Tex" Harris followed up with specific figures on proposed cuts. "In the last 10 years, there has been close to a 50 percent decrease in this nation's international budget," Harris said. "We need to educate the Congress and the public on the critical need for adequate funding to defend American interests in an unstable and very competitive world."

Diane Castiglione holds her son, Michael, before the memorial plaque at State, which now includes the name of the boy's father, Barry S. Castiglione.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott referred to the "massive assault" on the foreign affairs budget and defined the principles of reengineering efforts at State, designed to underscore to Congress that the department is making the best use af every dollar.

In remarks at the luncheon, USIA Director Joseph Duffey pointed out that budget pressures can force employees to be more efficient with monies.

AID Administrator J. Brian Atwood at an afternoon meeting affirmed the Foreign Service's need for adequate funds and a leading role to maintain American international leadership. "We remember aur [three fallen] colleagues on this special day, but people ... would also want us to reflect on the Foreign

Continued on page 2

• AFSA Dateline •

● FAS and AFSA formally signed a collective bargaining agreement on April 27. AFSA and FAS management now have an established framework within which to conduct labor management relations.

● On April 28, AFSA sent a letter, which protested the threatened budget cuts ta the 150 International Affairs Account, to the Senate Budget Committee. The letter asked for continued funding for the 150 Account at current levels, saying, "AFSA believes this is not the time to cut our internatianal account funding, which will entail the undercutting af aur leadership in the world."

● AFSA's 20th conference on business and foreign affairs, "World Trade in Services: A New Agenda to Ensure Continued Expansian," was held at the Department af State an May 2. Abaut 200 participants listened to keynote speaker, Joan Spero, under secretary for Economic,

Continued on page 3

STATE DEPARTMENT

V.P. VOICE

• BY TODD STEWART •

Public Sector "Take-Backs"

American lobor negotiators have traditionally gone to the bargaining table looking for "more." Recently, however, it has been management which has sought the concessions, asking for give-backs by unions of benefits won in previous negotiations. Management typically claims that the give-backs ore necessary for the health, or often the very existence, of the enterprise.

Not surprisingly, this phenomenon has now appeared in the public sector, where Congress, the administration, and agency managements are proposing cuts in benefits for public employees. The ability of federal unions such as AFSA to oppose these cuts is limited by a lack of authority to bargain over salaries and most benefits and, of course, an inability to strike. Private sector give-backs are thus generally "take-backs" in the public sector. However, some influence does rest with the unions, and AFSA has wrestled with the problem of when and how to use that influence to deflect or modify proposed take-backs.

Complicating the problem is the fact that State's operating budget is heavily personnel related, so much so that it is hard to find areas for significant reductions which will not affect AFSA members. If the budget is cut, the question is not whether employees will be hurt but how: in their benefits and allowances, in their working and living conditions, or in their career prospects? For example, should we finance a budget cut by lowering the differentials at hardship posts, foregoing the purchase of modern computer equipment, or increasing attrition by reducing promotion rates? If the answer is "all of the above," what weight do we assign to each method?

So far, AFSA hos developed the following answers: First, we are lobbying Congress to spare the "150 Account" – and, by extension, the operating budgets of the foreign affairs agencies – so that the need for painful cuts will be minimized. Second, we are working with the department to find and refine ways to save money that will have relatively little impact on employees. An example is AFSA's collaboration with the medical staff unit to develop a means of recouping from insurance carriers the cost of medical treatment paid by the deportment abroad without disadvantaging employees.

Third, and least successful, has been our continuing attempt to convince department manogers to describe the scope of the budget problem and the alternotive means to deal with it, so that employees might voice informed choices. Managers have recently provided better information about the department's financial picture, but they have thus far failed to pose alternative solutions and to seek employee input on those olternotive solutions. Insteod, AFSA has been presented with o series of money-saving proposals without any context that would allow employees to choose among the unpalatable alternatives.

Without such a context, AFSA has had no choice but to resist these take-backs, sometimes successfully, but often not, since most con be implemented without union acquiescence. However, we are conscious of the fact that successful resistance only increases pressure to find savings where AFSA need not even be consulted, such os with promotion rotes.

As my AFSA term draws to a close, I om troubled by our foilure to develop a more productive relationship with the department in this orea, where partnership could offer important benefits for both management and its employees.

FOREIGN SERVICE DAY

Continued from page 1

Llayd Van Landingham, husband af slain consulate emplayee Jacqueline Van Landingham, halds daughters, Amber and Ashley, at the May 5 memarial ceremany far public emplayees killed averseas in heraic circumstances.

Service as an institution. They would expect us to consider its role in a world of new challenges. And, I am sure, they would wont us to answer the critics of international engagement who would deny our notion the resources it needs to pursue its vital interests."

At the award ceremony, former ambassador Jean Wilkowski received the Foreign Service Cup – presented by Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR) – for 50 years of service to the nation in governmental and privote roles. The Director General's Cup was given to former ambassador Morton I. Abramowitz for his leadership during 35 years of service and his continuing contributions to the foreign policy debate and the Foreign Service.

In a solemn late afternoon ceremony, Secretary of State Warren Christopher praised the three Foreign Service employees whose names were added to the memorial plaque: Barry S. Castiglione, who died in 1992 while saving a fellow embassy officer from drowning in El Salvador; and Gory C. Durell and Jacqueline K. Van Londinghom, who were killed March 8 in Karachi when terrorists sprayed the consulate von they were riding to work in. Attending the ceremony was Mark McCloy, who wos seriously wounded in the Karachi attack.

AFSA Dateline

Continued from poge 1

Business and Agricultural Affairs and attended panel discussions, a luncheon and reception.

- AFSA/USIA hosted a general meeting on April 24 attended by more than 50 Foreign Service employees. Personnel Director Janice Brambilla and FS Personnel Chief Jeff Liteman addressed questions about the current evaluation system and training and assignments procedures.

- Updated information on AFSA issues and activities is available at AFSA's Internet gopher site, which can be accessed through the DC Easy-Link Gopher Home Page at DCEZ.COM. From most Internet terminals this can be reached by typing: gopher dcez.com at the $ or % prompt.

- Retirees are invited to a June 12 lunch at the Foreign Service Club with speaker Rep.Connie Morella (R-Md.). For reservations, contact Joe Kemper at (202) 338-4045.

- AFSA/USIA Vice President Raz Bazala and USIA Director Joseph Duffey were speakers at a May 3 town meeting sponsored by USIA's Joint Partnership Council. Bazala addressed the possibility of consolidation of the foreign affairs agencies. Duffey emphasized that he strongly supports the continued independence of USIA and stressed that he would do everything possible to avoid RIFs to downsize the agency.

- On April 28 several hundred information management career-area employees attended a town hall meeting sponsored by the AFSA/IM Joint Partnership Working Group. Questioners at the meeting were assured that the department will continue to need IM employees but that their functions will change, and the department will assist employees in acquiring new skills. The meeting was videotaped. Contact AFSA at (202) 338-4045 to obtain a copy of the IM Town Meeting for your post.

AID

V.P. VOICE

• By Garber Davidson Jr. •

Reengineered AID – A Reality

On October 1 AID will roll out the well-publicized reengineering scheme by which management will proclaim victory over the past. New methods of work, management, information and operational systems will replace existing systems. Already we have seen changes in the evaluation and assignment systems. Core values such as "empowerment and accountability," "teamwork" and "customer service" will become the precepts for success in the newly engineered development organization, and we are told that the old hierarchical structures of "top-down" management will disappear. October I promises to be a date when the development officer will become the "cultural change agent."

While the fury of reform swirls within AID, another dimension is closing in – the budget and the Congress. Congress' notion of reorganization does not focus on internal teamwork, but it mandates some sort of consolidation. It recognizes, barely, the internal reforms devised by the administrator and dismisses them as only preserving the best of the status quo. As one member of Benjamin Gilman's (R-N.Y.) staff put it to AFSA recently, people who believe such reform will win "just don't get it." According to this staffer, internal reformers don't understand that the administrator's reforms and the vice president's promises to "streamline" the foreign affairs agencies simply will not fly on Capitol Hill. Even friendly representatives like Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.) say the administration has not done enough to satisfy the revolutionaries on the Hill. Freshmen Republicans and others are looking for bold change and, of course, draconian cuts to the international affairs (150) budget. The administrator's reinvention and reforms do not impress these folks – even though they have put AID on the cutting edge of technology and communications. The Gilman staffer acknowledged that a consolidated State Department should adopt AID's financial management systems that are state of the art.

The reengineering effort is thus somewhat surreal in this atmosphere of counterrevolution. But internally, there are sharp contradictions, which also raise questions. With all the noise about "empowerment" and customer involvement, we see the opposite. Assignments, for example, shall be centralized under Human Resources, an office not previously noted for its efficiency or knowledge of developmental needs and priorities. Under current discussion is a reengineering Business Area Analysis (BAA) proposal to exclude completely mission directors and other managers from the final personnel selection process, reportedly because the agency cannot trust its managers to make appropriate personnel decisions. While the Senior Management Group gurus are busy "delayering" by deleting deputy mission directors in missions which are too small to merit such officers, management is busy "layering" PPC with, at last count, five new deputy assistant administrators, many of whom will monoge five to 10 people. This reorganization will result in the net loss of three FS positions. Proposals, also in the process of reorganization, are being seriously considered to limit the "normal career span" of a Foreign Service officer to FS-02, although that would require a change in the Foreign Service Act. At the same time, and due in part to faulty work force planning, the agency proposes to hire mid-level Foreign Service officers in areas of shortage. All of this looks strangely familiar. AFSA will sit down with management on the PPC proposal and continues to carefully monitor the BAA process. We need your support. If you are in Washington, please join the AID Standing Committee.

RETIREE

V.P. VOICE

• BY DON NORLAND •

AFSA Engaged on Issues

As this is written, Congress and the entire foreign affairs community are engaged in the most important foreign policy debate since the end of the World War. It's not labeled as such; rather it emerges as a byproduct of the Senate and House deliberations on the budget of the International Affairs (150) Account with funding for the State Department, USAID, USIA, peacekeeping and international financial institutions.

AFSA has expended an enormous effort to inform Congress, colleagues and the public of the consequences of this unprecedented assault on the foreign affairs budget.

There's a consensus on one point: The outcome of this debate will signal the direction and degree of commitment of the United States in the world. If the House or Senate budget committees have their way and slash funding by as much as 30 percent of the international affairs operating accounts, they should know that the U.S. leadership role will be seriously compromised – along with vital national interests. How? By undermining the effectiveness of the "front-line sentries of America's security," as Secretary Warren Christopher recently described the Foreign Service, the abdication of U.S. leadership, influence and clout in world affairs is signaled.

Although these proposed cuts come as no surprise to readers of the *Foreign Service Journal*, word that congressional leadership will fix budget ceilings by mid-May has the effect (like the executioner's noose) of concentrating minds – even at the highest levels. The most inspired reaction came from NSC Advisor Tony Lake in a speech entitled "The Price of Leadership." In sweeping terms, he told a National Press Club audience on April 27 that "we are on the verge of throwing away – or at least damaging – many of the ... tools America has used for 50 years to maintain our leadership in the world." He warned that "back-door isolationism threatens to propel us in the wrong direction....when our engagement can still make a dramatic difference by securing rather than frittering away our victory in the Cold War."

This sentiment was echoed by participants in an AFSA co-sponsored Conference on May 2: "Trade in Services." Several prominent participants noted that growing economic globalization and liberalization, on which trade in services depend, would be seriously jeopardized if the proposed foreign affairs budget cuts turn the U.S. inward. Many in the business community were not yet aware of the congressional budget threats; once word got out, several participants predicted that business leaders will realize the stake they have in keeping the United States in the forefront of world affairs.

Let the record show that AFSA has expended an enormous effort to inform Congress, colleagues and the public of the consequences of this unprecedented assault on the foreign affairs budget. With editorials, coalition building, mailings, speeches, telephone banks we've mobilized our constituency. In so doing we've learned how much remains to be done.

AAFSW Honors Overseas Volunteers

For the fifth year, the Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) has honored overseas volunteers for service that has made a difference in their communities. From entries submitted by overseas posts, one winner is selected from each geographical area.

The six winners have been active in groups ranging from women's development to local schools and children's centers. Their volunteer activities have helped local children, prisoners, villagers and the urban poor, as well as the English-speaking community at several posts. The winners of the AAFSW/Secretary of State Award for outstanding volunteerism in 1995 are: Bonnie Lea-Brown (Accra), Mary Jo Amoni (Monagua), Susan Summers (Tokyo), Elizabeth Motes (Islamabad), Lisa Matthews (Moscow) and Zahra Benesch (Tunis).

Employment Openings

AFSA seeks candidates for the following positions:

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- Outreach Program Coordinator - Speakers Bureau and Diplomats Online - part-time contract.
- Program Administrator - Minority Intern and Mentoring - part-time contract.

For additional information on these positions please write or call Susan Reardon, Executive Director, AFSA, 2101 E Street, N.W. Washington D.C. 20037, 202-338-4045, internet, AFSA@dcez.com

Correction

To speak to an AFSA staffer about retirement issues, call 1-800-704-2374.

USIA

V.P. VOICE

• RAZ BAZALA •

AFSA is Key Player in USIA

In these troubled times, it is worth considering the enormous potential of partnership to steer USIA between the Scylla of budget cuts and the Charybdis of consolidation. In less than 18 months, partnership has changed the very culture of our agency. Some may say, "So what? It failed to fend off the threat of RIFs, and the creation of the I Bureau is insignificant."

In essence, the Partnership Executive Order was intended to break down the barriers set up by rigid adherence to traditional prerogatives of both management and labor. It was designed to facilitate implementing new ideas. Thus, partnership was really aimed at altering process and not shaping specific outcomes.

To implement change rapidly, partnership proposed moving away from time-consuming negotiations based on hard and fast positions on both sides toward labor-management consensus and interest-based bargaining. Instead of accomplishment being measured by what one side denied the other, labor and management were encouraged to think in terms of win-win outcomes. At USIA partnership has changed the labor-management environment significantly. Gone are the days of management-appointed task forces being turned loose behind closed doors to recommend changes that management then handed down to unsuspecting employees. Partnership has really taken hold to an extent far beyond that in the vast majority of federal workplaces. USIA has a documented record of success that other agencies envy.

Openness and transparency in relations between labor and management at USIA has reached unprecedented levels. In fact, management has actually invited AFSA to participate in a review of the JOT process from recruitment to tenure, an issue over which AFSA has no right to bargain. But we can talk. Partnership has generated an environment for open discussion and serious consideration of ways to address issues of concern to all of us.

Partnership may help us avoid crashing in the aftermath of massive budget cuts. If this leads to consolidation – which I think appears increasingly likely – the agency's partnership model may help us preserve the functions and structures of public diplomacy in a new environment. We can make the case that change through partnership should be adopted by any institution we become part of.

I am convinced that the opportunity for union members to participate substantively in partnership is one of the main reasons why AFSA has grown so significantly at USIA. We had 180 members in January 1993, when we won the right to represent the Foreign Service. Today, that number stands at 520, close to half of all agency Foreign Service employees. This represents an enormous vote of confidence in AFSA's capacity to lead and to address effectively issues important to our constituents. My term as AFSA vice president ends in mid-July, but I will continue to participate on the AFSA steering committee with my prime objective bridging the gulf between the Foreign Service and Civil Service cultures at USIA.

Looking to the future ... The Joint Partnership Council must engage in thinking about the unthinkable – the consequences of consolidation. The threat of all of us hanging separately may compel all employees to hang together as we consider contingencies for consolidation.

AFSA/AASFW Merit Scholarship Awards Announced

Seven Merit Scholarship Award winners, wha represent the 20 Merit Award winners warldwide, received certificates at the Department of State on May 5. Kathryn Clark-Bourne bestowed the awards as a representative af all AFSA Schalarship programs contributors ta representative award winner Shimae Cross at Foreign Service Day ceremonies. Co- sponsored by the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) and the Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW), the competitive Merit Award Program was begun in 1976.

Merit Awards of $1,000 each are being given this year in honor of supporters af the AFSA Scholarship Program. Valunteer panelists from AID, AAFSW, State, USIA, and retirees participated in the selection process.

Fram left to right, Back Raw: Kathryn Hamilton, Erin Ruppecht and Nicole Martin; Frant Raw: Claire Bloom, Catherine Quinanes, Shimae Crass and Samuel Jacobs.

Award Winners

Merit Awards: Winners

James Ahn Jr.
Sarah Blackwill
Claire Blaom
Shimae Cross
Kathryn Hamilton
Alexandra Huddleston
Samuel Jacobs
Geoffrey Kish
Jeannette Louh
Jennifer Mandel
Nicole Martin
Patricia Meeks
Nicholas Penfald
Catherine Quinones
Ulla Rickert
Aaron Roth
Erin Rupprecht
Christina Svendsen
Cathleen Tefft
Nathan White

Honorable Mentions

Roger Bock
Lauren Butcher
Diana Der Koarkanian
Emily Farbman
Sarah Harrick
Margaret Jones
Emily Leonard
Ann Mason
Michelle Parker
Megan Scanlin
Jeannette Silver
Megumi Zorn

Best Essay:

Christina Svendsen

Honorable Mentions

Erin Rupprecht
James Ahn Jr.

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AMERICAN BLACKS AND AFRICA

THE CBC STRIVES TO REMAIN PLAYER IN GLOBAL GAME

BY DONALD M. PAYNE

Sub-Saharan Africa is the only area in the world where quality of life indexes are lower today than they were several decades ago. However, at the end of the Cold War, hopes were high for a new partnership between Africans and black Americans. With the expected new stability, the time was ripe to promote democracy, peace and prosperity. The all-important Development Fund for Africa (DFA) had increased from $500 million to $800 million. Democracy was coming to South Africa, Ethiopia, Zambia and a host of other nations.

There was a high level of excitement when the chartered jumbo jet carrying 330 black American delegates touched down in Abidjan for the first African-American/African Summit in April 1991. Organized by the Rev. Leon H. Sullivan, cheers of "Africa! Africa!" resounded when he said, "Let us build a bridge together that will help Africa move forward as it has never moved before. From this day neither Africans nor African-Americans will be the same."

Then came the continuous fighting in Angola, Liberia and Sudan, the repression in Zaire, the rejection of democracy in Nigeria, Africa's largest and most wealthy country. Add to this the loss of American lives in Somalia. Then there was the Rwandan genocide. A new wave of African pessimism set in, followed by the McConnell bill, which aimed to eliminate the line item for DFA, almost certainly reducing aid to sub-Saharan Africa.

LINA CHESAK

Just how 35 million black Americans, and specifically the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), should or will respond to Africa today is worthy of analysis. First, we have to recognize that black Americans, like white Americans, are just as concerned, if not more so, about domestic cutbacks in medical benefits, school lunches, aid to dependent children and crime prevention. Our community is no better informed of the fact that foreign aid makes up only 1 percent of the U.S. budget, or that the United States devotes a much smaller portion of its budget to Africa than do most other Western donors. Consequently, there will be an expectation that foreign aid must be cut.

American blacks' view of Africa is one of pluralism. Most have lived here as long as whites, but unlike the Irish, Germans, Swedes and Italians, most blacks cannot relate to a specific country of ethnic origin. Rather, their view is pan-African. This dilutes the galvanization of public opinion, since more than 50 countries and 800 million people on the African continent have to be taken into consideration. There have been exceptions to this premise when the issue was country-specific. As the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies noted in the 1991 book, *Africa in the Minds and Deeds of Black*

With the Congressional Black Caucus, blacks are considered a player in foreign affairs and an important political constituency that may help brake America's drift toward isolationism and remind us all that most of the world is non-white.

American Leaders, "When Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, the war became a main topic of conversations wherever blacks gathered. A championship boxing match took on mythic proportions as Joe Louis's fists became the instruments of race's vindication as he delivered a beating to the Italian, Primo Carnera. In northern cities where black neighborhoods abutted Italian-American neighborhoods, un-refereed fist fights broke out. Black Americans united in the face of threats to the sovereignty of an African nation."

At that time Haile Selassie became a symbol of black pride when he stood up to the well-armed Italians. More recently, we have the example of mobilizing support for South Africa and Haiti because of the added factor of racial discrimination and again it was country-specific. Mobilizing for aid to Africa when not country-specific will be more difficult.

In both South Africa and Haiti, the CBC played a crucial role. In 1976, the CBC sponsored an African-American National Leadership Conference on Africa to mobilize the black community in support of Africa. It was at this meeting that TransAfrica was born. Through almost single concentration, both TransAfrica and the CBC made a substantial contribution to ending apartheid, to reducing discrimination in U.S. immigration policies for Haitian refugees and to restoring Haiti's democratic elected government. This foreign policy role of the CBC is not unique; I dare say, there is not a ward leader in such ethnically-based cities as New York or Miami who does not have a position on Northern Ireland, Cuba or the Middle East. Columnist Richard Cohen, in *The Washington Post*, quoted me as saying, "This means the CBC is now 'up to the plate' and being considered a player. This means that an important political constituency, the African-American community, may help brake America's drift toward isolationism and reminds us all that most of the world is non-white." It may also suggest that the choice is not strictly between domestic and foreign obligations, but rather of how to arrange the chemistry to meet both.

To assist in this task, a new organization has been launched, called the Constituency for Africa (CFA), whose mandate is to increase communication between the various sectors of African interest. Recently, CFA sponsored a Foreign Aid Summit on Capitol Hill with a standing-room only crowd. Speakers included former ambassador Andrew Young, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Administrator Brian Atwood of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), the World Bank's Vice President for Africa Edward Jaycox, and myself. In addition to the danger of losing the DFA earmark, I pointed out to the group that approximately 45 percent of International Development Association (IDA) lending is targeted to sub-Saharan Africa. The administration has requested an appropriation to IDA of $1.25 billion. Since $617 million of last year's account has not yet been spent, and if one adds the possibility of recision legislation, we are talking about the vulnerability of losing $1.87 billion, of which almost half would have gone to Africa. Since IDA funds are matched 4-1 by other nations, potential cuts could encourage these nations to cut back, causing billions of dollars to be lost for Africa.

I also urged the group not to make aid to Africa a partisan issue, reminding them that in the last term, with Democrats in control, we had a difficult time saving the Subcommittee on Africa. Republican leaders like House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), although faced with

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Donald M. Payne, a Democratic congressman from New Jersey, is chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and a member of the House International Relations Committee.

a mandate to reduce more subcommittees, were sympathetic to the CBC's request to save the subcommittee this term.

Likewise, on the Senate side we have Republican support like Rep. Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, who chairs the Africa Affairs Committee; Oregon's Mark Hatfield, who chairs the Appropriations Committee; and both James Jeffords (R-Vt.) and Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.). In another area of cooperation we have always considered the Jewish community allies in fighting for social justice on the local level. Why can not this cooperation be expanded to the international level? Such discussions are now under consideration.

The CBC has not done so well in the case of Somalia and Rwanda. While we supported the expanded mission in Somalia, the United Nations was made the scapegoat in the loss of 18 American Rangers. We were not able to influence public opinion that the United Nations was not responsible for the unilateral action taken by our Central Command in Miami. Many CBC members secretly wondered if the public outcry would have been so loud had a dead black soldier instead of a white one been pulled through the streets of Mogadishu by Aideed's forces.

The Somalia problem carried over into slowing the U.S. response to the genocide in Rwanda. House Resolution No. 7, which concerned the command and control sections of U.N. peacekeeping, had to be redebated. It is not that we did not try. Three letters were sent by the CBC to urge President Clinton to involve positive U.S. leadership at the Security Council level, and not to stall. Oxfam/UK and Human Rights Watch made similar statements.

In final desperation to urge the administration toward action, our letter of June 16 to President Clinton said that invited members of the CBC had declined participation in the White House Conference on Africa so that the administration could better expend its energies saving the people of Rwanda. Unfortunately, the press played up the section that mentioned that the CBC was not properly consulted on

A Lesotho Peace Corps Memoir

By Paul A. Burns

Chilly dawns exploding in red; small boys herding placidly frightened cattle to the *kraal* in the evening and the ever-present *lumela*, the greeting for "Good morning." These are only a few of the unforgettable memories I could recount as a Peace Corps volunteer in Lesotho when I was 28.

Lesotho, an island surrounded by its dominant and powerful neighbor, South Africa, is a study in contrasts. Landlocked by rugged mountains, Lesotho's peaceful and proud people have managed to avoid the political turmoil of many of their neighbors. Because they lacked many of the material and natural resources that made the British and the Afrikaners scramble for hegemony in South Africa, the Basotho were spared some of the more insidious effects of apartheid.

As a black American, my reception by Africans was for the most part, open and welcoming. In fact, I experienced a level of acceptance that my white counterparts could never achieve. However, I too, like my white counterparts, stand outside the door of African society simply because of who I am. I dressed Western and spoke differently. To the average African, it is culture that defines identity. Therefore, I was viewed and often classified as *lokhoa*, or white person, although with my Native American and Creole ancestry, I would have been classified as Colored had I been born in Lesotho. Although socially and culturally limited, ironically, I could still more easily maneuver in a South African apartheid context than I could in an American one. For example, while shopping in Johannesburg or Capetown, never once was I monitored by shopkeepers as a potential shoplifter — I could never boast of this during shopping in the United States.

Ever since my undergraduate days at Tulane University, my commitment to the eradication of injustice and inhumanity both here and abroad has never waned. So when I was assigned to teach English and biology in Lesotho, a country in the center of the last vestige of colonialism in Africa, I saw it not only as an opportunity to assist others but also an incredible opportunity for my own growth and development.

However, the decision to sign up with the Peace Corps was fraught with internal struggle. "Why don't you get a real job?" was the response from my mother, when she heard of my decision. My mother grew up in South Louisiana on a plantation, one of two siblings who, at age 16, began raising the first of her eight children. She worked as a domestic, struggling to provide for us. Her hopes and dreams were supposed to be our realities. She equated happiness with having material resources that would allow us to support ourselves, have families and live comfortably. So when I told her that I would be living in Africa as a volunteer on a $200-a-month stipend in a one-room hut without running water and indoor plumbing — conditions not much different from the life she had escaped — she felt she had somehow failed to provide me with a vision for survival.

In fact, the reality I found at Mavuka Secondary School was overcrowded classrooms with 60 to 70 students each, few books, a simple blackboard and chalk and no insulation or heating during the winter months. But the students — and I — learned a great deal.

The time away from the United States provided me the perspective to clarify and de-mystify the issues of race, ethnicity and class, which underpin the American experience. It was during my experience in Lesotho that I, for the first time in my life, was viewed first as an American and then as a man of color. Africans made me feel welcomed and valued.

Now that I have returned to the United States, I continue to build upon the success of my experience and work to fulfill another Peace Corps goal of promoting better understanding of other peoples. My overseas service has helped to strengthen my capacity to serve communities of color here at home. ■

Paul A. Burns served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Lesotho from 1990-92. He now works in the organization's Washington, D.C., office.

the venue being the main reason for the CBC boycott. Presently, the CBC Foreign Affairs Task Force retains the unfinished business of Liberia, Zaire and Nigeria on their agenda, as well as the added issue of African slavery in Mauritania and Sudan.

CBC's main strategy is to push positive aspects in Africa, such as promoting free-market economies through greater participation of black U.S. business owners. Also, we are making sure success stories like South Africa, Ghana, Mozambique, Botswana and Haiti stay on track.

Unfortunately, U.N. peacekeeping has been crippled with the passage of H.R. 7. The U.N.'s Blue Helmets have served with distinction in all parts of the world for 47 of the 50-year U.N. history. One of the pioneers, and a main player in this history, was a black American named Ralph Bunche. Bunche received the Nobel Prize in 1950 for his role in ending the Arab-Israeli conflict the previous year. Later he negotiated the return of Gaza to Palestine, and along with Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold, created the U.N. Emergency Force, made up of armed troops rather then unarmed observers.

In defining the legal status of the force, it was Ralph Bunche who decided it could fly only the U.N. flag. Before his death in 1971, Bunche devoted more than two decades of his life to U.N. peacekeeping. Probably his most difficult assignment was the on-the-ground management of the Congo Crisis in the early 1960's. This civil war involvement was a controversial struggle — as Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda are today. However, U.N. peacekeeping survived and continued to serve with success in places like Cambodia. The CBC has to be true to the early work of such pioneers as Bunche, who fostered international cooperation. We must continue the fight to preserve this kind of a cooperative arrangement, otherwise, the United States will unilaterally be called upon to solve future problems which may be beyond the resources of this country. ■

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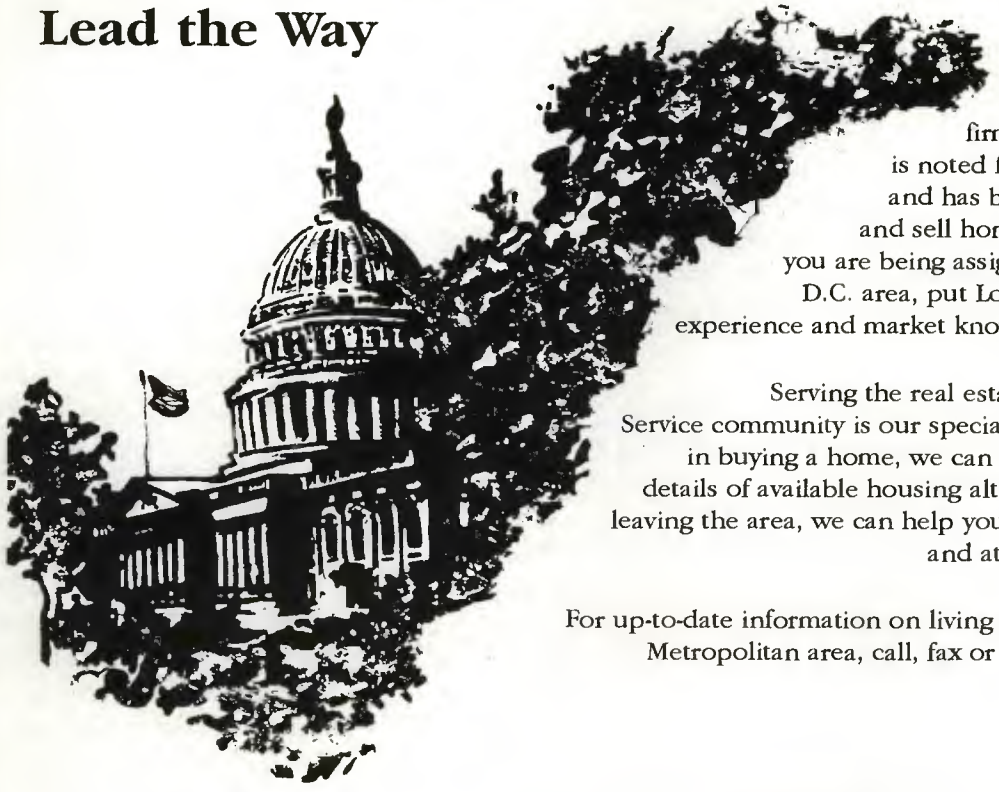

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A SUCCESS STORY: THE HORN OF AFRICA

Ted Morse, director of the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative at the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), was recently interviewed for the Journal. *The Horn of Africa includes Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania.*

Q COULD YOU DESCRIBE BRIEFLY WHAT THE GREATER HORN OF AFRICA INITIATIVE IS AND WHAT IT IS EXPECTED TO ACCOMPLISH?

A President Clinton was concerned that in 1994 it looked like another major famine was going to occur, and dispatched AID Administrator Brian Atwood to see if we couldn't get ahead of that drought. With a lot of good work to preposition food, accelerate deliveries, get other donors involved, and, with the grace of God, with some small rains that came, the 1994 drought didn't turn into a famine.

But at the same time then, the president's comment was, "Why are we always reacting to these things? Can't we prevent them?" So he asked that there be a U.S. government-wide interagency approach to looking at [prevention]. In the analysis, it showed that the food insecurity up in that region is no longer driven just by natural causes, but by twice as many manmade causes. Civil wars, racial and ethnic and tribal violence are now twice as prevalent as natural causes for this, and therefore the whole approach of, "Can you prevent some of this?" has to be on the basis of man-made conflict as well as, if you will, natural causes.

The other impetus is that it's a region of some chaos and continuing prolonged emergencies. We have spent $6 billion in this region in the last 10 years, $4 billion of which is for emergency aid for prolonged emergencies, and somehow we have to find ways to work out of that, go through the continuum — the transitions out of relief through recovery — to get back to long-term development, get at the root causes instead of just putting billions of dollars of Band-aids on.

LINA CHESAK

AID PROGRAM FOCUSES ON AVOIDING CONFLICT, PUSHING DEVELOPMENT

BY GILBERT D. KULICK

There's room for hope now, for a couple of reasons. In the Greater Horn of Africa, one neighbor or other has been in an overt war posture with its neighbors for practically the last 25 to 30 years, both interstate and intrastate. And for the moment, there is no cross-border war between any of the neighbors, and that lull in regional fighting gives some opportunities to step back and take a look at relationships. Quite frankly, we're blessed by some new quality of leadership in the region. You take people like President Isaias [Afwerki] of Eritrea, President [Zenawi] Meles of Ethiopia, even President [Yoweri] Museveni of Uganda, they're a lot different than Idi Amin [of Uganda], Mengistu Haile Mariam [of Ethiopia] or even Haile Selassie [of Ethiopia]. There is some new thinking about how they should conduct relationships with

their neighbors and their responsibility for good governance to their own people, and their people's food security and their peace. We think that that's a foundation to at least start, which you didn't have even three years ago in there. So I think that's very positive.

Q WHY WOULD THIS INITIATIVE PROVIDE REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT NOW, AFTER 35 YEARS, AID'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO HELP FIND ANSWERS TO THE PROBLEM?

A In addition to changing conditions in the region, there's a phenomenon that's grown up in the international community as a whole, not just within the U.S. government, where there's almost a getting bogged down in the relief phase. Structurally, the international organizations, and even the U.S. government, are not well positioned to come out of relief. If you look at how bifurcated [the U.S. government is] between the relief operations of State Department's refugee program, AID's Food for Peace, and its geographic bureaus, and we've got to break down those barriers ... and begin to move through that continuum. That's going to take some structural changes, and that's part of what the initiative is about.

Q SPECIFIC PLANS CONGRESS IS PUTTING FORWARD WILL, FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, ELIMINATE DEVELOPMENT AID TO AFRICA AS A U.S. PRIORITY. HOW CAN THIS INITIATIVE PROCEED IN THAT CLIMATE?

A It's an important context that is complicating the initiative at the moment. Obviously, if there is a congressional mandate to withdraw, then we're not going to be as much of a player. I think, though, that, quite frankly, the Hill will begin to realize that we have long-term interests there in terms of the access to the oil and the oil routes, and the stability for that. In terms of long-term development, of having markets that will come 50 years from now and in the short term of the need to not spend billions of dollars on relief.

Unfortunately, there's a misperception that as much as 20 percent of the budget deficit and the national debt are due to foreign aid, which, of course, is a gross misperception when we're not even 1 percent of the national budget.

Gilbert D. Kulick is the director of outreach programs at AFSA.

But there is another part of that poll that gets at your question, and that is that, when asked, 60 and 70 percent of Americans still favor humanitarian assistance. They are not isolationist, do not want to withdraw from the world at all.

I think that one of the problems that this initiative gets at is the problems that we, as a nation and as a world, face, and that is to prevent these crises before they get to the point of requiring billions of dollars and military troops and intervention in a failed state situation. Quite frankly, one of the problems we have within the U.S. government is that we are not organized at a low enough threshold to prevent these things.

Q HOW MUCH MONEY WILL THIS COST?

A I hope zero. This is not about more money. If you can put $6 billion in 10 years into a region and still have it in the kind of chaos that we discussed earlier, and no more progress, more money isn't going to solve that. What we need is integrating political solutions with economic solutions; integrating relief activities to get a higher developmental impact; integrating parts of our bureaucracy with other parts of it so that you get through those transitions; integrating our efforts with other donors. Not with additional money but to do things differently, where you have true strategic coordination, not just exchanging information after the fact, where you have a common objective of food security and you sit down, eyeball to eyeball, with the host country, the private sector, and the public sector donors, and trade off different strategies of where we may be hurting somebody, somebody may be working at cross purposes.

This is not about new money; it's about new ways of doing business. That doesn't take new money.

Q THREE CORE PRIORITIES IN ADDRESSING THE FOOD SUPPLY PROBLEM SEEM TO BE, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE: INCREASING AGRICULTURAL YIELDS, DECREASING POPULATION GROWTH AND PROMOTING STABLE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. IT SEEMS TO ME THE THIRD ONE IS KEY.

A First let me agree with your prioritization, that good governance, responsible to its own people for their welfare and progress, is absolutely the key factor. ...

But we think that there's a new realization in the world as a whole, and even in this region, that the kind of single-party autocratic authoritarianism isn't going to accommodate the racial/ethnic/political/religious/cultural diversity that exists within the countries and within the regions. And they're beginning to see this.

But there's some other concepts, too, that we think that they're beginning to learn from other Africans. ... New concepts of power-sharing, new concepts of pluralism, new concepts of tolerance of diversity have to come in terms of this governance. ...

In terms of things like population growth, quite frankly, without good governance and political leadership, you have situations like Ethiopia today where only 5 percent of the women in the child-bearing age are [using contraception]. That's lower than they had 30 years ago when I was the family planning officer in that country. They haven't had the political leadership to expand family planning in the face of what they thought was Coptic Christian Church resistance in a country where the Coptic Christians are a minority. So you need that political leadership to take the steps to go ahead and do some family planning programs that will balance the human resources and the natural resources.

Q HAVE OTHER INTERNATIONAL GROUPS JOINED IN THIS INITIATIVE?

A We have consulted with ... over 800 individuals in the Horn of Africa from government to private to other donors. Everybody that we've consulted says the analysis of the problems are the same: When we can see African leadership, we're all prepared to do things differently. And I think you're going to see that the world, the international community, and the private sector are ready to follow their lead on this.

This is a long-term process in the Horn of Africa. The countries in the Horn are probably further behind in the development process, meaning everything from political development to economic, to social, to racial development, than almost any other part of the world. ... What has

to be done from our, and most other people's, objective, is to put in place a new process to constantly do joint problem identification and joint problem solving. That means looking at political influences, economic resources, population. It's not a plan; it's a process to constantly integrate these activities. That's what we hope to achieve.

Q DO YOU SEE THE POTENTIAL FOR THAT IN MOST OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION?

A I think we're finding that the family planning and population programs that have been stagnated are beginning to take off again, but those are programs that won't have an impact for 20 years, and that's why you have to have a long-term perspective. Ethiopia had a huge and a very high population rate. It's beginning to come down now. It's been coming down for the last two and three years. It has to continue in that trend. Ethiopia has finally passed a population policy. When the elections are held in May of next year in Ethiopia and you have an elected government rather than a transition government that has a mandate for the people to meet the people's needs, hopefully they will have the political mandate to move more aggressively on that throughout the region.

Q WHAT EFFECT WILL AID'S CURRENT PLANS TO CLOSE 22 FIELD MISSIONS HAVE ON THIS REGION?

A The ability to carry out the strategic coordination requires an in-country, on-the-ground presence. Right now we only have full AID missions in four of the 10 countries of the Greater Horn of Africa. So we'll have to carry that out on a regional basis. The closing of the missions in Africa don't include any in the Horn of Africa. ...

The Food for Peace comes from the Department of Agriculture; the political insights from the State Department; the conflict early warning from the intelligence community; the on-the-ground insights come from the private and voluntary and missionary and academic organizations. It is the total presence, not just an AID presence that makes the difference. ■

A SUCCESS STORY: SOUTH AFRICA

AFTER MANDELA, GROUPS LEARNING TO HELP THEMSELVES

BY DEBORAH DERRICK

DURBAN — For much of the world, the image of South Africa in 1995 is embodied in the smiling, avuncular face of President Nelson Mandela surrounded by victory cheers and a colorful new flag. But in my mind is the image of a woman walking along a dusty road, carrying a 25-liter jug of water on her head.

While on a two-year tour in South Africa, I am working at the U.S. Consulate General in Durban, administering KwaZulu-Natal province's portion of the U.S. ambassador's self-help grants portfolio. These are small grants given to help community-based groups working to help themselves.

In a land with cellular phones, well-stocked supermarkets, and a thriving swimming pool servicing industry, it is easy to forget that basic living standards for the bulk of the population are much, much lower. South Africans enter the workforce facing a 42 percent unemployment rate. A rural child in South Africa can expect to share a teacher with 70 or more classmates. The amazing thing, though, is that in the middle of all these disadvantages are groups of South Africans who manage to make significant contributions to their communities beyond their own personal needs.

LINA GIESEN

Grant applications pretty accurately reflect South African society. They are largely directed toward addressing basic needs, particularly those that have been left unmet by the skewed, apartheid policies of the past. By far the most numerous applications are for schools, classroom additions and teachers' salaries; these days, requests come in faster than one can say "underfunded."

In KwaZulu-Natal — and in much of the rest of black South Africa — the government had had a policy of requiring parents and communities to raise funds themselves for building schools before the government would commit resources. This often was quite a barrier in communities where 60 to 80 percent of residents were unemployed and where those who did work earned an average of $2 a day. Miraculously enough, some community groups managed to raise funds anyway. However, schools in townships and rural sections are few, far-flung and overcrowded. It is not uncommon for rural students to walk two hours each way to school daily.

One of my favorite grantees is a group called Educate and Develop, which is trying to establish schools in the rural, far northeastern reaches of KwaZulu-Natal. After we arrived at a section of road where other cars are not a consideration but cows and goats are, my guide and I turned into the bush. We drove on sand tracks, crashing around lala palm trees for four hours to reach four communities. During this

In the middle of all such disadvantages there are groups of South Africans who manage to make significant contributions to their communities beyond their own needs.

time I saw only people, plants and huts — no cars, no stores, no roads. The water supplies are unprotected; worms were seen wriggling around in the holes from which the water comes.

Residents had a small, one-room school for 200 primary and preschool-aged children. Under the guidance of an inspired community worker, they managed to obtain teacher training and had organized themselves to build four more school rooms. They were asking the U.S. government for building materials, for which they received a $13,700 grant.

The second largest category of grant applications is for self-employment and income-generating projects. Throughout South Africa women and men gather together in informal groups to sew, grow vegetables, raise poultry and make cement/sand-brick blocks for building houses. Though many of these groups will never be viable businesses on their own, they provide a communal means of lowering living costs and, occasionally, they blossom into full-fledged operations that employ people.

In its grant application, the Ekuvukeni Savings Club wrote that it had started a garden, sewing and poultry-raising project because members were "unemployed housewives who wanted to develop themselves... Having discussed the matter together we managed to a certain extent to educate our children and grandchildren. We managed to feed our children and fight against malnutrition. Having said that, we failed to fight against poverty and to fulfill the aforesaid objective because of the unemployment, high inflation, continuous drought."

I arrived at my destination, a cluster of mud huts, to find a group of women, none of whom spoke English. They had worked for 15 years building a thriving gardening and poultry business, keeping complete records of the cooperative's meetings and decisions, and they had developed weekly work plans organizing members' tasks. The club was asking for funds to expand their operation. Again, the U.S. government agreed to supply a grant, this one for $7,500.

Finally, there are always a large number of grant applications for water projects. Like education, former governmental policies in South Africa have prompted great disparities in the availability of water. In rural areas the vast majority do not have water within 200 meters of their homes. Typically, a family's women and children make two or three trips daily to fetch water, walking from one to three kilometers each time; hence, my image of a woman carrying a water jug on her head.

One grant applicant came from Bhekumthetho, a rural community in the north and central part of KwaZulu-Natal, which had been working for three years to install a water distribution system that would serve 50,000 people. Each household had contributed $20 and the community put together a maintenance fee collection schedule. After having drilled for water and put a tank on top of the borehole, local funds had been spent. Furthermore, several members of the community had been stricken with cholera. The community was asking for funds to install a pump and a basic water reticulation system. These people, too, benefitted from a $8,900 U.S. government grant.

Mandela's South African government is taking steps to address these basic needs. It is clear, though, that community-based organizations will continue to play a prominent role in helping to develop black South Africa. The government itself is having to make use of non-government organizations to get its reconstruction and development program in place quickly. Furthermore, the amount of money needed to completely address people's basic needs is well beyond the capacity of South African government. I feel safe in saying that small community groups will continue to play an important role in uplifting the people of South Africa. ■

Deborah Derrick is an FSO in her second year of a two-year tour in South Africa where she administers self-help grants for KwaZulu-Natal province.

A SUCCESS STORY: ERITREA

TINY NATION'S VALUES INSPIRED BY 30-YEAR INDEPENDENCE FIGHT

BY KAREN KREBSBACH

Isaias Afwerki, president of Eritrea, was interviewed during a recent visit to Washington, D.C., where he also held meetings with President Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator J. Brian Atwood and others.

Q DID ERITREA'S 30-YEAR INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE AGAINST ETHIOPIA SHAPE A SET OF NATIONAL VALUES?

A Yes, the fact that we've fought this very long war to guarantee our basic rights as human beings as a nation and the values we have developed — values that relate to basic human rights of minorities in any place — and the fighting we've done against all sorts of tyranny and oppression, have developed a tradition we now see in the political process and institutions. I think these traditions, besides the democratic values we have developed in allowing a tradition of participation, are very important for us. Leaving out a section of the population — marginalizing groups in the community — becomes a liability for any nation. Participation in our politics has been very dynamic. Our national identity developed without a sense of allegiance to one language, or a kind of homogeneity. In our case, we have nine language groups, we have different ethnic groups, we have two religions. We say it's very unique because it has brought unity out of this kind of composition.

LINA CHESAK

Q HAS YOUR COUNTRY'S COMING TO INDEPENDENCE IN 1991, LONG AFTER THE REST OF BLACK AFRICA HELPED YOUR ADMINISTRATION AVOID THE PROBLEMS AND MISTAKES OF OTHER AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS?

A In many ways, yes. Because you can't take away the things that we've gone through. In the 1960s, the period after colonization when most African nations became independent, there were high expectations, that were frustrated. Political directions were flawed, there were a lot of mistakes of governments and the economic policies of many African states made them dependent. The crises we are witnessing today are the result of an accumulation of these many mistakes. Because we had not become independent like so many other African states in the '60s, we've been relieved of some of those problems. For example, Eritrea's sound economic policy is not the result of some very talented individuals who came here to formulate policy. It's the outcome of a very long experience in the region.

Q YOUR ADMINISTRATION APPEARS TO HAVE BYPASSED THE CORRUPTION AND NEPOTISM OF MANY OF YOUR NEIGHBORS' GOVERNMENTS. HOW WAS THIS DONE?

A We did get around corruption and nepotism by developing a mechanism of accountability. You have to gain the trust of the population. To be trusted by the

population, you need to be trustworthy, in terms of your attitudes and your actions. You will not be corrupt, you will not be tempted by anything of material value. Once you introduce corrupt practices, you have to disassociate yourself from the people, because the gap widens and widens and then you become a liability.

Q DID NELSON MANDELA INFLUENCE YOU?

A I can talk about one impact of this man: how he persevered in prison, with all the psychological pressure. Who could have done that, to stay in prison for more than 25 years under those circumstances? I think it is inspiring for many. Mandela's example in Africa has been unique because he really faced all those challenges and finally has achieved something that is now shining in Africa.

Q THE REVOLUTION FORGED AN EGALITARIAN MOVEMENT, WITH MEN AND WOMEN FIGHTING ALONGSIDE ONE ANOTHER, AND WOMEN POSTPONING MARRIAGE AND CHILDBEARING. HAVE WOMEN RETAINED THIS ROLE?

A It will continue because, one good thing about our experience is that, normally, in traditional (African) societies, you look down upon women. In our history, women have proved to men that they are equal; they have lived with men, they have fought, they have led battles, they've commanded units, they have done everything that men have done. It's not like any woman's movement in any other society; it came as a development in our saga, where people realize that women are individuals and are equal and contribute to society. If women can be equal in times of war, why can't they be equal in times of peace?

Q WILL THE EPLF (THE ERITREA PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT) CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A MONOPOLY ON POLITICAL POWER?

A Before independence in 1987, during our second Congress, without anyone telling us, without anyone even expecting us to do so, we decided that a pluralistic system is the only healthy political system. Immediately after independence, we didn't rush for unilateral declaration of independence, we wanted a process where we legally proved to the international community that it was a wish of our people — and 99.9 percent participated in that referendum. Now we have this traditional process where we are drafting a Constitution to allow democratic institutions in society, to allow for freedom of press, to allow for freedom of political association; it's a very dynamic process. It was a long process where at the end of the day, the EPLF became a dominant political party because of its values, because of its traditions.

Q IN THE COMING YEARS, HOW WILL ERITREA MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF SINGULAR PURPOSE AMONG ERITREANS THAT THE REVOLUTION PROVIDED?

A We are trying to preserve values that are important to us, such as working together toward a common goal. Unless we develop and cultivate participation, it's not going to be easy to maintain stability. It's difficult and complex, but we have in the last three years had difficulties, and many people are saying that, well, "This is the honeymoon and it will end. You will adjust to reality. What you had during the struggle's years will not be there in the future." But to the surprise of many, we've still maintained that mood, and I don't see a dramatic change.

Q HOW IMPORTANT WILL THE SKILLS AND EDUCATION OF RETURNING REFUGEES BE IN REBUILDING ERITREA? HOW WILL YOU DRAW THEM BACK?

A There are two types of refugees. The majority of (the first type) are in the Sudan, with no education, no health services, who have been living under very oppressed circumstances. They don't have skills. The other group includes highly educated, highly skilled Eritreans whom we need to help rebuild Eritrea. We have to benefit from the resources and skills of our educated Eritreans in Europe and America, and we have to create a climate conducive to accommodating refugees of both kinds. We are introducing programs for education, for health services, that would enable our returnees to be more productive and change their style of life. But we need the resources of our skilled people to change the realities of those who have not been exposed to that kind of reality. ■

Karen Krebsbach is the editor of the Foreign Service Journal.

The Art of Negotiation

How the US Recouped $16 Million From Failed VOA Project — a Decade Later

By Morton S. Smith

Unele Sam's willingness to give foreign governments substantial sums of money to realize U.S. policy goals is a well-established, if mundane, faet. It is a rare day, however, when other governments give money baek.

A $2 billion modernization program for U.S. international broadeasting was launched in 1983, with the aim of greatly expanding and improving faeilities and the programming of VOA and Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). The linchpin of this ambitious plan would be a shortwave relay station in the Middle East. A $300 million budget would buy powerful transmitters to reach into the heart of the Soviet Union from the south, providing strong signals to the non-Russian republics and into Russia itself. This project would impose an unbearable burden on the Soviet jamming system, whieh was suecessful in varying degrees in scrambling American broadcasts from Western Europe.

Efforts were made to find a site for the station in one of the Arab states, as well as Israel, but all declined. Finally, Unele Sam reopened diseussions with Israel. The Israelis saw the project as being in direct confliet with their need to minimize Soviet hostility and ensure a eontinued flow of Jewish emigrants to Israel. However, the United States offered, along with obvious goodwill, substantial financial and business benefits for Israeli firms. President Reagan even wrote a warm but firm letter to then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres, urging eooperation. Peres responded a few weeks later, explaining the plight of Soviet Jews and other eoncerns, but he would reluctantly begin negotiations.

Talks finally started in Jerusalem in the spring of 1984. Negotiating teams met often over three years. Israeli requirements, in addition to those emanating from military and environmental worries, centered about the need for the United States to assume financial responsibility for all costs before, during and after eonstruction, as well as for all operating eosts — ineluding salaries and benefits for more than 100 Israelis — and the assumption of all liability for any damage resulting from the station.

Negotiating sessions, tempered by humor, were marked by wide swings of emotion and eonstantly changing technieal requirements. After one tense meeting, the two sides adjourned. Thc Ameriean team took a long walk and stopped at a stand selling t-shirts, buying one they thought would be appropriate for the afternoon session: The shirt was steneiled with large letters, saying, "Relax."

Eventually, all obstaeles were overeome and an agreement was signed at the White House in June 1987, with President Reagan looking on. The aetual agreement included 23 artieles and seven annexes. One of the annexes dealt with the location and boundaries of the planned site. Finding 1,500 acres

Morton S. Smith, a retired USIA career minister, directed the VOA Modernization Plan and was co-chief negotiator with the Israelis from 1983-88. He returned in 1994 to lead the U.S. team in negotiating the termination agreement.

of unused land in Israel finally led to the Arava, a rocky desert south of the Dead Sea. It was a sparsely populated region, except for a few cooperative farming settlements, snakes and other small wildlife.

The Americans had done perhaps too good a selling job of the relay station. Contemplating a $300 million facility with an operating annual budget of $10 million, friends of Israel began seeing the project as akin to an aid project for Israel. This view was shared by Congress: Instead of the $28 million sought as a first-year startup budget, the VOA project was given $35 million.

So why was this project, well-endowed with political and financial resources, not built? Blame it on the birds and their self-appointed protectors. Bird lovers feared that the twice-annual flight of millions of birds over the Jordan Rift Valley would be seriously disrupted by the 400-foot-high curtain antennas and the radio waves. In spite of many studies showing no adverse effects from similar radio stations, the environmentalists were nothing if not tenacious. Said one, "I don't care what this or that study shows. We will always demand another one."

The environmentalist turned out to be a prophet. In 1991 the Israeli Supreme Court issued an injunction against further work until another study was completed. At that point, however, a seven-mile section of a highway had been relocated, flash flood earthenworks had been built, work in bringing electrical power to the site had begun and the major construction contract had been awarded. But the injunction proved to be the final blow, and in 1993 the U.S. government decided to halt the project. The Israeli government, now committed to the station, reluctantly acceded to the American view.

But much had happened since the original accord was signed, including $16 million given by the U.S. to the Israelis for a number of short- and long-term purposes, such as rental of the land and security during construction. Just how much had been spent from this fund was unclear.

Now, in accordance with the original agreement, a termination agreement would have to be negotiated. It took more than three years to negotiate the original agreement. How long the termination accord would require was anyone's guess. The bottom lines were quickly identified for Israel: how to secure no Israeli government responsibility for the project and how to ensure that Israeli companies would not be financially damaged by the cancellation. For the United States it was how to avoid new responsibilities and how to retrieve as much of the invested $16 million as possible.

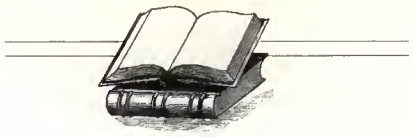
Preliminary talks began in May 1994, and negotiations were held the following June and July. As in all negotiations, the details, such as finding words that meant the same to both parties, were the challenge. By developing a formula that included the reiteration of the original responsibility of the U.S. government for all phases of the project, including its termination, the responsibility issue was settled.

It took more than three years to negotiate the original agreement. How long the termination accord would require was anyone's guess.

The final issue was the $16 million. The American side had great doubt anything would be returned; there had been no language in the original agreement dealing with the disposition of the funds should the project be canceled. In response to a U.S. request for an accounting of the funds, the Israelis provided only a rough idea of how much had been spent, without making any other commitments. The final account showed $12.3 million remaining, including accrued interest, which they were prepared to return to Uncle Sam. The American team left the negotiating session euphoric, skeptical over the amount of interest, but satisfied at the willingness of the Israelis to reach a fast, positive settlement.

A few weeks later the Israelis phoned to ask for some changes in the final settlement. Fearing disaster, the U.S team cursed its premature celebration. But much to the team's delight, the Israelis said that, instead of the $12.3 million, they were prepared to return $16.29 million. The team's questioning of the interest figures had paid off.

On Nov. 3, diplomatic notes were exchanged in Israel incorporating the terms of the final agreement and closing the project. The handling of this project was a rare example of the trust, goodwill and common sense that can prevail in international relations. ■



BOOKS

A DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF DIPLOMACY

The Diplomats: 1919-39
edited by Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert, Princeton University Press, 1994, softcover, 683 pages, $24.95.
The Diplomats: 1939-79
edited by Gordon Craig and Francis L. Loewenheim, Princeton University Press, 1994, hardcover, 706 pages, $35.

BY SMITH SIMPSON

Like an unexpected burst of sun in a stormy sky, Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert in 1953 edited a collection of essays analyzing what diplomats and ministries of foreign affairs of 13 countries did between the two world wars to introduce a new world order. Long out of print, the first volume has now been reprinted in softcover to accompany a second volume, which covers the period from 1939-79.

In the first volume, the essayists concentrated on Europe and the United States, with an additional look at Japan and Turkey. By and large, the authors dealt not only with the policy-guided approaches to foreign policy problems but with the strategies and the skills employed — in other words, the dynamics of diplomacy. The personal factor was brought into focus, something scholars have generally shied away from, finding that aspect too difficult to document despite it being a basic ingredient in diplomacy. The authors included the frustrating problem of fusing bureaucracy with the art of politics, a crucial dimension of diplomacy usually overlooked. Thoroughly researched, elegantly crafted and distinctly perceptive, *The Diplomats, 1919-39*, was such a stunning achievement that it quickly soared to the rank of a classic.

With the appearance of its sequel a few months ago, this promising burst of sun promptly paled. Apart from Craig's introduction, his brilliant first essay on diplomats and a concluding afterword, wayward contributors seem to have wandered about the pasture of foreign affairs, producing essays on such subjects as "Ernest Bevin and British Foreign Policy" (not British diplomacy), "The Foreign Policy of Charles de Gaulle," "Japan's Return to the World," "Cold War Strategy," "The Search for European Security," "Sadat's Presidency," "The Statecraft of Henry Kissinger," and "The News Media and Diplomacy." There is also an eloquent tribute to a non-diplomat, the transnational freelancer Jean Monnet.

This is not to say the essays are not meaty, well-written and worth reading. Most of them are. Nor is it to say that diplomats and diplomacy do not sporadically crop up in many of them. They do. It is a question of adhering to the subject the title of the book promises. Craig and Gilbert seem to have scraped the bottom of the barrel of historians who know and can analyze what diplomacy is, who diplomats are, how they work — and the results they do and don't produce.

Craig's co-editor particularly disappoints in his essay, "Dean Rusk and the Diplomacy of Principle," which purports to evaluate Rusk's performance as secretary of State, but deals superficially with only one of six roles a secretary must play: presidential adviser. The role of manager of the diplomatic establishment, which underlies all the others, is among those ignored. As for his role as a diplomat, it is not even discussed. So why is "diplomacy" in the essay's title?

The strategies, tactics, techniques and personal skills of diplomacy are the same from region to region and from age to age. What varies is the mix and the terrain over which diplomats must deploy their resources. I would suggest blending political scientists and practitioners with historians of developed countries to do conceptual research on diplomacy. There are few political scientists and no practitioners in *Diplomats I and II*.

The average American never encounters a diplomat in real life, never sees one when the lights go down at the multiplex, and, when a glimpse of one is caught on the evening television news, there is rarely mention of what he contributes to the world. There is something terribly wrong with this and these two volumes will help do something about it.

Smith Simpson is a retired FSO and the author of a number of books on diplomacy.

A FRENCH KISS FROM AMERICA

Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization
Richard F. Kuisel, University of California Press, 1993, hardcover, 296 pages, $30.

BY RICHARD T. ARNDT

Under its amusing if misleading title, here is the book francophiles, francophobes and anyone ever irritated by the pesky Gauls have long awaited. Not the first book ever devoted to disentangling the long love-hate relationship between France and the United States, it is the first on our side of the Atlantic to peer at the question through the lens of political culture.

Kuisel, of course, takes "culture" in the anthropological sense: that set of elements that makes us different from them, hence our polity and society different from theirs. "What remains after all else is forgotten," as former premier Edouard Herriot put it. Wisely, he has chosen to focus closely on selected details from the 1950s. His choices are courageous, resisting easy research and facile generalization: "I looked to direct, intensive encounters between the two peoples, especially those of a socioeconomic and political character where the American way was best displayed. Thus I chose the Marshall Plan, economic missions, foreign investment and American consumer products."

Each of six central chapters bears a revealing title: "The New American Hegemony (The French and The Cold War);" "Yankee Go Home (The Left, Coca-Cola and the Cold War);" "The American Temptation (The Coming of Consumer Society);" and "The American Challenge (Dollars and Multinationals)." At the end, before Kuisel's thoughtful conclusions, come two insightful if cursory chapters covering the last 30 years. Both hint at work still to be done.

Diplomats should grapple with this book. For example, try his thorough treatment of the "missionaries" of Point Four and their effort to remake French workers and employers by focusing a billion or so on the elusive concept of productivity. His cautious retelling of the moment makes it the easier to see things the planners may have missed: Kuisel's understated tale hints at smiling, energetic and well-intentioned insensitivity to French history, to the then power of France's intellectuals, the tenacity of industrial and trade-union structures, the immobility of legal practice, the rigidity of its social structure; to the articulate skepticism and genuine bafflement that greeted a concept like productivity and to France's early gropings towards a new sense of national identity — in short, to French culture, '50s style.

The imperfect vision extended to American perceptions of ourselves: Did we really know the whole story of American productivity and French inadequacy? Do we know, even today, the hidden costs of the productivity we preached? Kuisel sketches a tale of two enlightened nations trapped in a dialogue of the deaf.

Who was right? Think of France and Italy today: Italy, so quick to adopt and adapt American models, yet now so deeply bewildered, and France, so maddenly slow to "modernize," yet so brilliantly successful — as Kuisel and sociologists like Henri Mendras have shown — at retaining French identity in the midst of wracking change. Was France wrong to resist its American tempters?

One must take friendly issue with Kuisel for the titling of this important volume. First, "Americanization." As Kuisel writes, "There is a kind of global imperative that goes by the name Americanization... [but] it has become increasingly disconnected from America. Perhaps it would be better described as the coming of consumer society." Instead of developing this powerful truth, his title dramatizes "Americanization," deflecting attention from a useful truth: "The phenomenon to be observed in postwar France has parallels all over the world in recent decades."

Considering Kuisel's focus on culture, it may disappoint some that he pays scant attention to the role of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). In 1953, the State Department began the gradual devolution of much of its cultural program capability to the new USIA, culminating in the departure of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in 1977. In its new home, the orphaned cultural diplomacy has been whipped into line as a tool of something called "public diplomacy," defined as the moment dictates.

Kuisel reminds us that culture matters, that it has always mattered. The French may have been the first, but they are not alone among nations in seeing diplomacy as a three-legged stool, with cultural and educational relations an equal partner to politics and economics. This book may help remind us of the third dimension of a decent foreign policy. Perhaps it is not too late to rebuild it.

Richard T. Arndt has served as cultural attaché in Beirut, Colombo, Tehran, Rome and Paris. A former Fulbright scholar, he was principal editor of The Fulbright Difference (1948-92) *and was president of the Fulbright Association.* ■

The School Search

By Dan Kubiske

Your dream overseas assignment is within reach. The only thing holding you back is that the location does not have a school for your high school-aged children. Your daughters urge you to go for the assignment; your spouse also wants you to take the job, but is nervous about sending your daughters to a boarding school. Finally, you decide to bid on the job and, if you get it, send your children to a school in another country.

Your situation is not unique. According to the State Department's Family Liaison Office, 435 children of Foreign Service Officers attended boarding schools in the 1991-92 academic year, the most recent period for which there are statistics. Slightly less than one third of those students attended schools in New England, about one-quarter were at schools in the Mid-Atlantic region and another 30 percent were in Europe.

Once a decision has been made that a boarding school is necessary, parents should discuss each step of the selection process with their children. Peter Pelham, coordinator of International Services at The Association of Boarding Schools, says, "This is not something that can be decided by only the parents." Sidnee Tyson, FLO education and youth officer, agrees, "If the student is not consulted, you have a recipe for a major disaster."

But the search for the right school takes time and effort. Applications for most schools must be received by January or February, with acceptance letters issued in March or April. "The bottom line is to plan ahead," warns Tyson.

The FLO office maintains a network of parents who have gone through this process before. If you live in the United States, the reference section of your local library should have

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SCHOOLS

three directories with information about the hundreds of boarding schools in the United States and abroad.

The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) Directory includes more than 275 schools in North America and Europe. Peterson's Guide of Private Secondary Schools includes hundreds more world wide. The Vincent Curtis Register, which also lists summer programs operated by the schools. Each of the directories includes contact names at the school, student body size, and a brief description of the school, including special programs for students. State's FLO office also keeps a set.

For help overseas, each CLO office or administrative officer receive the TABS directory. Many USIS libraries have the Peterson's guides as well.

Travelers on the information superhighway can access information about many private schools on the Internet World Wide Web through Netcom. The Association of Boarding Schools will send free directories to those requesting them.

The questions you should ask about a school are similar to ones you would ask about your neighborhood school:

- ◆ Do you want your child living in the United States or in a third country that might be closer to your assigned post?
- ◆ Do you want your child to attend a large or small school?
- ◆ What is the academic structure of the school — progressive, traditional or a mix?
- ◆ Are you looking for a school with a particular academic program such as specialties in music or art?
- ◆ How well does the school environment mesh with your family's values?
- ◆ Which colleges do the school's graduates attend? If your goal is a Harvard-educated child, you will want to find a school that has a high ratio of placements at Harvard.

SCHOOLS

◆ What experience does the school have dealing with parents?

◆ How is the school set up to care for the student after school hours?

◆ What type of counseling is available for students?

◆ Are special weekend programs arranged for boarding students?

◆ What is campus security like?

◆ What are the eating and dormitory arrangements?

After narrowing your choices to a handful of schools, the next step is to obtain admission forms, arrange for your child to take the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) and set up appointments to visit the schools. Because getting registration material and arranging meetings can be difficult if you are stationed overseas, FLO can make requests for you and have the material forwarded to you. SSAT exams are held throughout the school year at more than 600 U.S. test sites and in Hong Kong and Paris.

Pelham and Tyson stress that for the parents' peace of mind and the students' happiness, the most important part of the school selection process is the personal visit. Many families considering boarding schools incorporate the campus visits as part of home leave.

During the visit, says Pelham, parents should arrange meetings with teachers and administrators. At the same time, student can visit classrooms and living quarters and talk with students already attending the school. "The visit gives the student a chance to picture (himself or) herself in that school," says Tyson.

Afterward, if the school does not seem right, the Peterson's guide suggests you move on to the next school on your list. "It is important to take a fresh look at your choices as you go along," guide authors note. Tyson agrees: "No one school is the best. You have to find what is best for your child."

Another consideration in choosing a school is cost. The amount paid each

SCHOOLS

year by the State Department is based on a formula worked out by the Office of Overseas Schools. In 1995, the cost covered by The State Department is up to $20,757 for each student. Travel costs covered can be added to that sum for up to three trips a year.

As an incentive to attract Foreign Service students, some schools offer an automatic discount of up to $2,000.

WHERE TO FIND HELP

American Montessori Society
150 Fifth Ave., Suite 203
New York, NY 10011-4384
(212) 924-3209

Association of Boarding Schools
Peter Pelham, coordinator of international services
1620 L Street, NW, 11th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20036
(800) 541-5908 or (202) 973-9700

Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States
9115 McNair Drive
Alexandria, Va. 22309
(703) 360-1678

Black Student Fund, Inc.
3636 16th Street, NW
Suite AG19
Washington, D.C. 20010
(202) 387-1414

Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Va. 22091
(703) 620-3660

National Association for Gifted Children
1155 15th Street, NW
Suite 1002
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 785-4268

National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children
1522 K Street, NW
Suite 1032
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 408-3338

Secondary School Admission Test Board
P.O. Box 6451
Princeton, N.J. 08541-6657
(609) 683-4440

State Department Family Liaison Office (FLO)
Sidnee Tyson, education & youth officer
23 & C Streets
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 647-1076

On-line help
Internet: http://WWW.netmarket.com/
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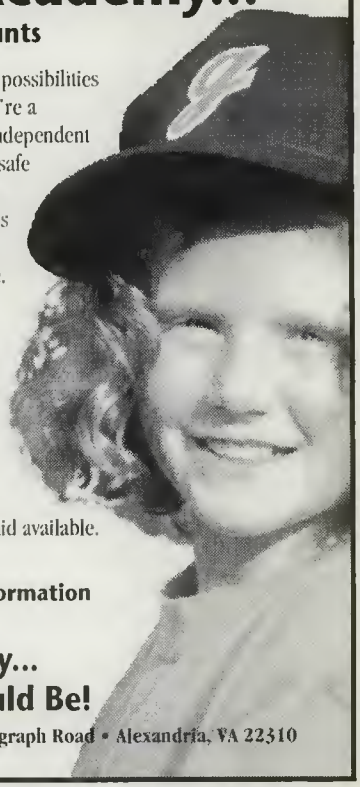

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Trish Saunders, Director of Admissions
Stoneleigh-Burnham School - Box FJ
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Norman S. Jason, Admissions
The Winchendon School, Winchendon, MA 01475
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Advertising Index

POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

Coping with Reverse Seasons in Buenos Aires

BY WESLEY ANN GODARD

As the folks back in the United States adjust to daylight savings time, here in Buenos Aires we are shaking the mothballs out of our woolens. With the days getting shorter and the temperature dropping, skiers are already booking reservations for July vacations in the Andes.

Fall in Argentina is an ambiguous season. In March and early April when the jacaranda trees that grace the wide boulevards blossom into purple flowers and the air is soft and warm, I can almost believe it is spring. The temperature soars, then makes a U-turn, and plunges to a chill that prompts one to want hot soup by a log fire. Being from West Texas, I grew up with temperamental weather, but our plains have nothing on Argentina. Abrupt weather changes throughout the year are punctuated by torrential rain, wind and lightening.

Years ago, before a satellite could beam the U.S. weather into my living room, I found it easier to adapt to the topsy-turvy seasons between the northern and southern hemispheres. These days, however, watching CNN reports of a heat wave in Iowa when I'm trying to get my furnace to work, I feel the distance more acutely.

As usual I put off my good intentions to order new winter clothes from the February catalogs. I just couldn't get excited about turtlenecks when the temperature hit 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Packing for a trip to the States last November was a nightmare. Padding around the house in sandals and shorts, I tried to remember where I put my lined boots. I left Buenos Aires in shirt sleeves to travel to crisp fall in Washington, D.C., then on to snowfall in the New Mexico mountains, and finally to sweater weather in southern California. Two suitcases of clothes didn't begin to cover the eventualities.

Watching CNN reports of an Iowa heat wave when I'm trying to get my furnace to work, I acutely feel the distance from home.

Nor did being home make shopping any easier. While everyone in Argentina was slathering on suntan oil, I was rummaging through displays of glove and muffler sets or sweaters with reindeer prancing across the chest, wishing I could find a new swimsuit.

The reversed seasons are most noticeable during special occasions. Holidays, when we miss home the most, can seem even more lonely when the weather is unfamiliar. "Home," as my wall plaque says, "is where the State Department sends you." At each "home" we try to meld our traditions with special decorations, food and family ceremonies. For many Thanksgivings now, we have carted our turkey and dressing to the beach. Friends saying grace outside around a picnic table with candles stuck in Coca Cola bottles will surely be my children's image of that holiday. When we move back to the States, we will probably continue to head for the sea on the third Thursday in November. Taking a swim on Christmas Day to work off the extra calories feels odd, but not unpleasant.

To me, the holidays that fall in the months that I think of as warm are the hardest to adjust to. On a cold drizzly Fourth of July in the Southern Cone, I miss the dazzle of fireworks. In Buenos Aires this year, the American community held a traditional Fourth of July picnic in early March while the weather was still warm. The Marines had a flag ceremony and hot dogs and hamburgers sizzled on the grill. The sack races and tug-of-war felt a lot like home even if it wasn't July.

The children are grown now and living in the United States. Having spent half their childhood years in foreign posts, I wonder which seasons they associate with the months? ■

Wesley Ann Godard is a Foreign Service spouse who has lived with her husband, Ronald, in Santiago, Managua, San Jose, Panama City and Istanbul. They have lived in Buenos Aires since 1993.

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