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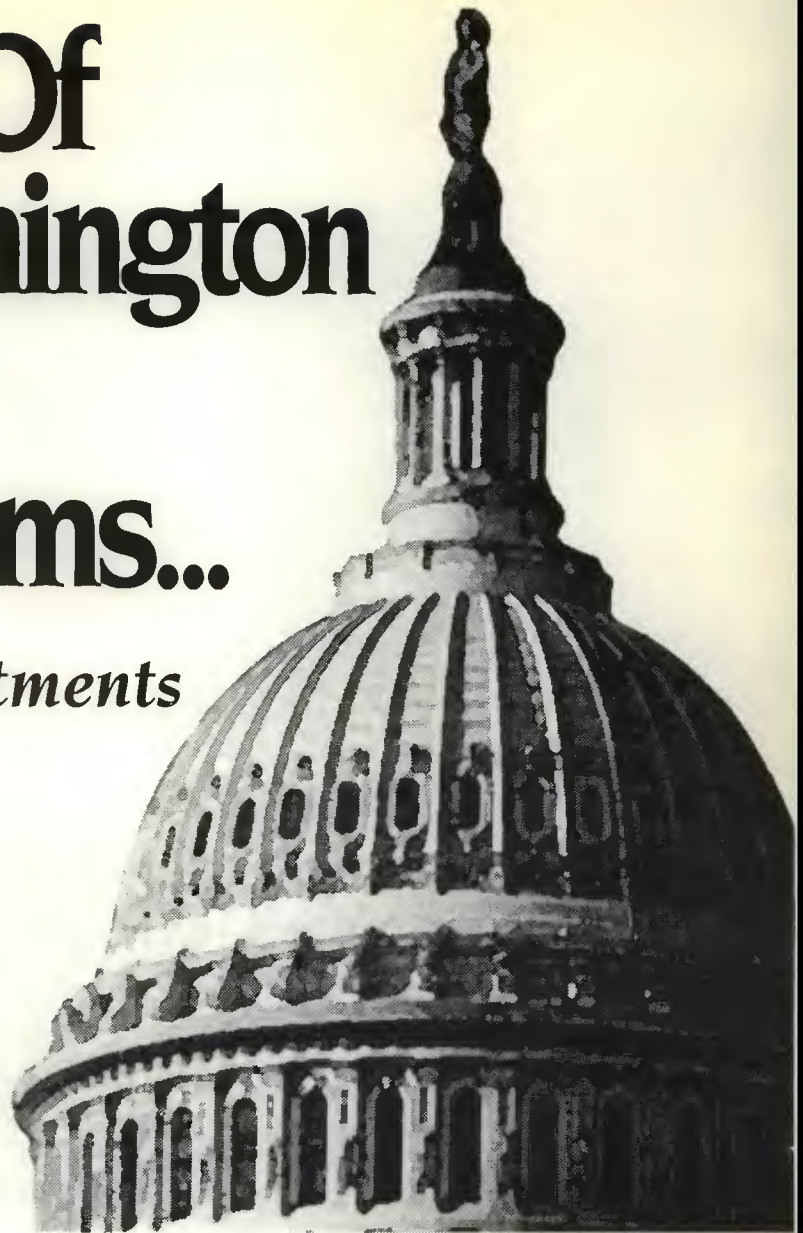
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CONTENTS

AUGUST 1995 ■ Vol. 72, No.

COVER

FOCUS ON SUMMER READING

26 / FICTION: THE EMPRESS TREE
By Ruth Kling

30 / FICTION: DIALLO AND THE BOB-YAM
By Michele Sison and Jeff Hawkins

36 / FICTION: INSCRUTABLE IN ROME
By James F. O'Callaghan

42 / FICTION: THE DOLL
By Frances M. Knowles

48 / FICTION: AN EGG FOR BREAKFAST
By Edward J. Cvetan

52 / WANDERINGS OF A COUCH POTATO
An Armchair Traveler's Guide
To the Best New Foreign Travel Books
By Karen Krebsbach

55 / CHOOSING A COUNTRY GUIDEBOOK
By Karen Krebsbach

COLUMNS

5 / PRESIDENT'S VIEWS
An Open Letter to the Senate:
Defeat S.908
By F.A. "Tex" Harris

13 / SPEAKING OUT
The Political Strength of 'Visa Diplomacy'
By Kevin D. Stringer

68 / POSTCARD FROM ABROAD
Comforting Americans in Mexican Jails
By Linda Eichblatt

Cover illustration by Rosemary Henry-May

FEATURES

CUBA POLICY IN DISARRAY / 16
After Months of Flipflops, Secret Talks
Is Clinton Agenda On Course Yet?
By George Gedda

SLOWING NATO'S GROWTH / 22
East Europe Membership
Would Weaken Security Alliance
By Jonathan Dean

FOCUS



Page 26

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS / 7

CLIPPINGS / 10

AFSA NEWS/CENTER PULLOUT SECTION

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS / 67

FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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Delavan Award: Charlotte Stottman, R. Diana Clayton
M. Juanita Guess Award: Denine L. Scott
Avis Bohlen Award: Anne Bridgman
AFSA Achievement Awards: Stephen A. Klaus, L. Bruce Laingen



U. Alexis Johnson
FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN DIPLOMACY



PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

An Open Letter to the Senate: Defeat S.908

BY F. A. "TEX" HARRIS

The American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) commented on the proposed Foreign Relations Revitalization Act of 1995, S.908, sponsored by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This is what AFSA wrote to each senator:

"The Senate is considering S.908 at a time of unprecedented hollowing out of America's diplomatic capabilities. S.908 is an effort to reform U.S. foreign affairs in the face of enormous pressures to balance the budget.

AFSA, the representative of more than 23,000 active and retired Foreign Service professionals, welcomes constructive changes to strengthen America's diplomatic efforts overseas. However, AFSA's judgement is that other provisions in the bill significantly weaken, rather than revitalize our foreign affairs structure. Because we have come to a different conclusion than the SFRC regarding the implications of S.908, AFSA urges its defeat.

The bill's funding and staff cuts to U.S. diplomatic operations do not make sense at a time when American leadership is needed throughout the world, when U.S. economic competitors are expanding their diplomatic and economic reach, and when the American public demands continued U.S. leadership abroad. Lack of adequate funds and staff to conduct for-

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

*Over the last
decade, the U.S.
foreign affairs
account has
been halved.*

eign policy abroad sends the message that America will do less in the world, and less for its own citizens. This is not a sound policy. The costs of fighting totalitarianism during World War II and the Cold War were extremely high. Today we cannot afford to turn our back on the world and our hard-fought victories by failing to fund diplomacy — our country's first, lowest-cost and least-risky line of defense.

Over the last decade, the U.S. foreign affairs account has been cut by nearly 50 percent. In S.908, the authorizations for the critical State Department operations account are reduced by \$53 million below the fiscal '95 levels and \$95.7 million below the administration's request. Other foreign affairs accounts are cut as well. These accounts fund the basic U.S. presence overseas — the presence that, among other things, advances U.S. security, economic, political, and commercial interests; fights terrorism and narcotics trafficking; helps build free markets; promotes democratic values and exchange programs; provides humani-

tarian assistance; controls the entry of visitors, emigrants and refugees; fosters sustainable development; and protects the global environment.

Our diplomatic readiness is decreasing. The State Department can no longer afford to staff some key positions overseas. About a third of the recent trainees in the department's core diplomatic tradecraft course are from another government agency. The Foreign Service examination this year had to be postponed to save funds; the number of incoming officers now is a third of the levels of previous years.

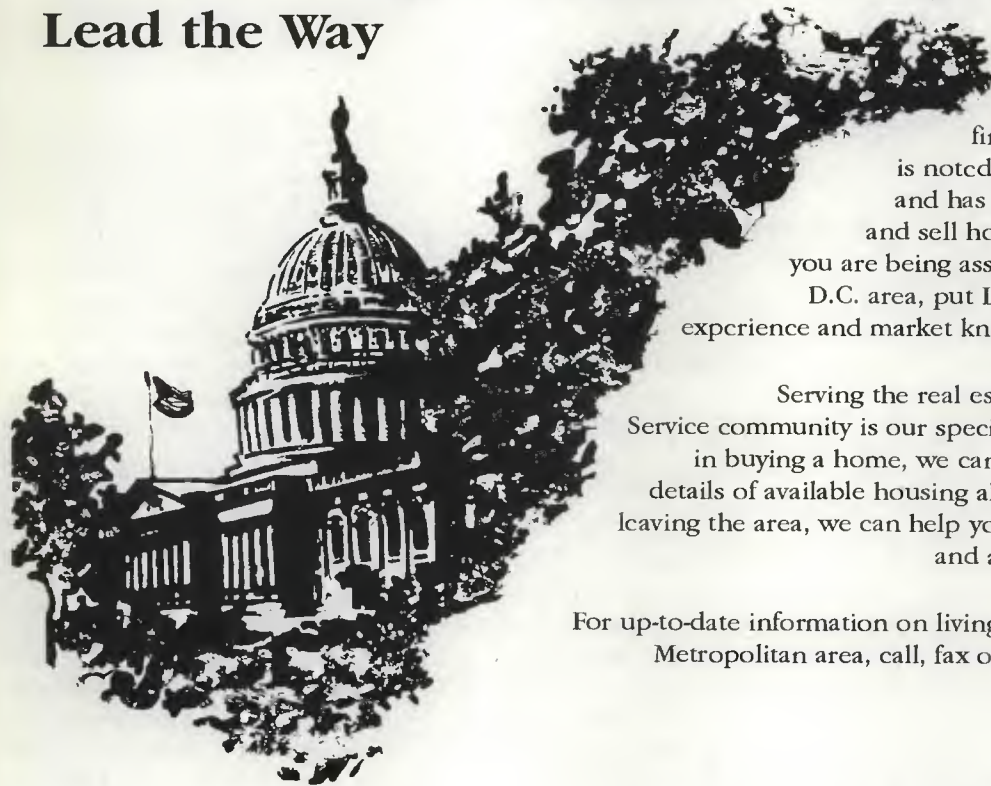
For the first time in history, forced management decisions have led the U.S. mission in Zagreb, a small but important embassy, to close down its classified communications for a month. The embassy in Caracas declared virtual bankruptcy, and announced it was unable to provide the usual administrative services to other agencies in the mission.

What is really needed is a thoughtful review of how the more than 40 U.S. government agencies working abroad can accomplish the key objectives of this nation in this post-Cold War era. A recent Inspector General of the State Department's report on the 10 largest U.S. embassies shows a significant gap between priority goals and the levels of resources at all government agencies. The United States is not putting its money and its people where its interests are.

Because of our deep concerns about staffing and funding cuts that will erode U.S. diplomatic readiness throughout the world, AFSA urges you to vote against S.908." ■

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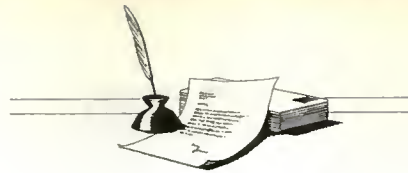
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LETTERS

To the Editor:

Those organization charts you displayed in the May *Journal* ("The Consolidation Game") were pretty devastating and certainly led me to the conclusion that, in this case, Sen. Jesse Helms is "right on." A reorganization proposal I sent in to the State Department in 1977 and favored during the five-plus years I was in management was very similar.

I did not argue for moving the Agency for International Development (AID) into the department since its mission was *sui generis*. Things may have changed now, however, and I certainly recall wishing AID was a part of State when I was overseas. As far as the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) is concerned, I think the Helms proposal is correct. As regards to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), I argued without success against a separate status when I was a special assistant to [State's Coordinator for U.S. Disarmament Activities] John McCloy at the outset of the Kennedy administration. Nothing in the intervening years, in which ACDA was largely marginalized, has altered my view. That function is integral to foreign and security policy and belongs in the department as a bureau, which was the direction in which things were moving in the waning days of President Eisenhower's administration. Perhaps the politics of the situation now make this possible. Certainly the savings involved, though perhaps

not large, might mitigate some of the distressing situations George Gedda ("Doing More With Less") described eloquently in his article in the May issue.

Perhaps the administration has a better approach in the Strategic Management Initiative, but the interview with [Deputy Secretary of State] Strobe Talbott of the same issue did not press me inexorably to that conclusion.

Ronald I. Spiers
Retired FSO
Londonderry, Vt.



To the Editor:

Sen. Jesse Helms's letter in the May *Journal* had more dignity than your cheap-shot front-page caricature of the man. You should not assume that all your readers enjoy Herblock-style agitprop art on the front cover of an otherwise reasonably reasonable, all things considered, magazine.

Michael Mates
Vice Consul
U.S. Embassy Islamabad



To the Editor:

This is just a note to tell you why I am enjoying the *Journal* more than ever. The May issue was terrific! The features and [AFSA News] buff

pages have always been important to me. Here in the "provinces," the "Letters," "Speaking Out," and "Clippings" sections, however, have become more relevant because we get so little by way of national coverage in the local media. So the *Journal* becomes a means to better understand the happenings in D.C. that impact on the foreign affairs community. Even with the inevitable delay in getting the publication, this aspect of the *Journal* is very important to me and perhaps others outside the beltway, as well.

John A. Patterson
Retired FSO
North Kingstown, R.I.



To the Editor:

Wesley Ann Godard's ambivalent feelings about celebrating traditional holidays in untraditional seasons ("Postcard," June *Journal*) are sure to strike a chord with anyone who has ever served in the Southern Hemisphere or the tropics. However, her family's readjustment to life in the United States might go more smoothly if, instead of continuing to celebrate Thanksgiving on "the third Thursday in November," they join the rest of America in celebrating it one week later.

John Underriner
Refugee and Migration
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LETTERS

To the Editor:

I was pleased to learn from Francine Moddero's article, "The Stuff of Envoys," (*June Journal*) that Ben Franklin's statue is, at last, being given the appreciation it deserves in its new resting place at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center.

Those who enjoy Ben's presence might enjoy a full and accurate account of the statue's origins. Moddero's version was mistaken in a few details, as was earlier reporting that asserted that the statue was a copy of one that sits in the courtyard of the Paris embassy and that it was donated by the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA).

Ben's antecedents go back to a committee I chaired in 1980-81 as coordinator for the department's bicentennial celebration. The committee suggested that we obtain a statue of our first diplomat to be placed in the department's inner courtyard, and I set about to locate a suitable statue. One was located outside the old post office on Pennsylvania Avenue, but the postmaster general vetoed its removal. Searching for alternatives, we recalled the statue that graces the courtyard in front of the embassy in Paris. We explored the possibility of casting a copy of the Parisian original but learned that casting the statue and transporting it to Washington would be well in excess of \$100,000.

However, the librarian at the embassy in Paris discovered that a second, identical statue had been east in the United States, and was now in front of the public library on the central green in Waterbury, Conn. The sculptor, Paul Wayland Barrett, had received a commission

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from a wealthy patron in Waterbury, Barrett's hometown, to do a statue of Ben Franklin. Barrett then resided in Paris where he modeled and cast the statue. The statue was completed about 1916. Wartime shipping restrictions prevented Barrett from shipping the heavy, bulky statue to the United States. Undaunted, Barrett took the ship himself to the United States where he completed a virtually identical statue. It was cast in Baltimore and duly placed on Waterbury's central green, where it still resides.

His work concluded, Barrett returned to Paris where he died in the late 1920s. His widow could find no buyer for the earlier Franklin statue that remained in a Parisian warehouse, and she finally donated it to the American Embassy. There the handsome likeness of Franklin continues to remind both French and Americans of the vital role diplomacy played in obtaining French aid during our War of Independence.

Armed with the knowledge of a second Franklin closer at hand, committee members flew to Connecticut to inspect the statue and to enlist the cooperation of the city fathers of Waterbury. They agreed to let us make a mold from their statue, once assured that no harm would come from the city's prize.

The difficult part came next. Official funds for such a so-called "frivolous" undertaking were unavailable. Undaunted, the committee decided to raise the money from private donations. Individual donors ranged from the late Jackie Kennedy to many ordinary Foreign Service people. AFSA contributed a modest \$2,000 - 3,000. Ultimately, a

total of some \$75,000 was received to finance the casting and placement of the statue. Unfortunately, the department's administrators refused permission to place it in the inner courtyard and, instead, hid it among the shrubs to the side of the diplomatic entrance. Fortunately, this stupidity has now been corrected.

The confusion over AFSA's role, as previously reported, was probably caused by our need to use a non-official body to receive funds. AFSA came to our rescue, setting up a special account for these funds. When all the bills were paid, I was told, a small balance remained. If this is true, perhaps the money might be used to honor the donors' generosity with an appropriately inscribed plaque.

*Francis Terry McNamara
Retired FSO
Falls Church, Va.*

Editor's note: No funds remain in this project's account.



To the Editor:

I read with interest the article about Ambassador Richard Gardner's perception that his use of the facilities in Seville, Spain, did not cause any suffering for his charges ("Clippings," June *Journal*). Using a military analogy, his behavior is much like officers leaving their troops out in the field while they drive back into town for a meal at the local restaurant. It may be true that the men are not any more hungry or cold, but it's certainly not leadership. Will they follow when the going gets tough?

*Charles T. Winburn
U.S. Commercial Service
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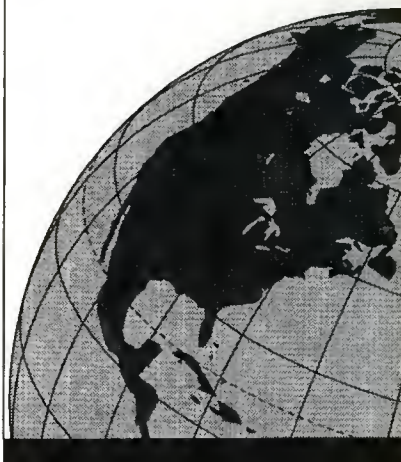
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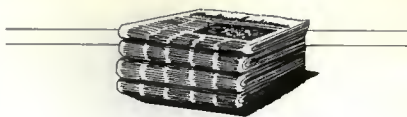


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PAYING THE PRICE FOR BUDGET CUTS

State Department bureaucrats will have to make more choices, say defenders of Congress’ budget cuts. But, columnist Norman Ornstein wrote in *Roll Call* on June 19, State has been making choices and consolidating embassies around the world for years. “Any choices of this sort in the future will have a cost in terms of American interests,” he wrote. “Somewhere, because we don’t have our own eyes and ears to the ground, or our own trained people working for our interests, we will pay a price ... by cutting out the kind of dialogue over our politics, culture and values that the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) has facilitated, we will pay another price. ... Worst of all, by cutting the non-military presence of America, we are removing any flexibility from our response to crisis or opportunity in the world — leaving military options more likely ones.

“The world is still a very dangerous place, maybe even more so since the Cold War ended. It is more fluid and more diffuse. An American presence is even more necessary for our own interests and good.”

AMBASSADORS ATTACKED IN AFRICA, KAZAKHSTAN

Ambassadors have often been attacked, but recently in Burundi and northern Kazakhstan, U.S. ambassadors were literally under the gun, reported Al Kamen in *The Washington Post* of June 16 and June 28. Ambassador Robert Krueger’s convoy in Burundi came under heavy fire from unknown assailants on

June 14. The quick action by diplomatic security agents Larry Salmon and Chris Reilly, who returned the gunmen’s fire, saved Krueger’s life, the *Post* reported. The gunfire left two people dead and at least eight others wounded.

Also in mid-June, this time in Kazakhstan, U.S. Ambassador to Russia Thomas Pickering was ambushed during an overland trek with his wife and several friends. The 8,000-mile, month-long jaunt by four-wheel drive through Russia and four former Soviet republics was largely official, but partly vacation. The ambush occurred in the middle of the night on a lonely stretch of road in northern Kazakhstan. A Kazakh truck driver, in the lead, spotted a makeshift barricade of concrete blocks, and when he noticed people emerging from the culverts along the highway, he blasted his heavy truck through the barricade, with Pickering’s vehicle in close pursuit. “Our Kazakh driver really saved us,” Pickering said, according to Kamen. “I think it was bad. We didn’t stick around to find out.”

On a lighter note, the U.S. ambassador to Argentina, James Cheek, a fan of the San Lorenzo soccer team in Buenos Aires, was verbally attacked by Argentine President Carlos Menem for criticizing an Argentine soccer referee, who made a call that he didn’t agree with.

“He’s a total fanatic,” said Menem, “but that doesn’t give him the right to criticize one of Argentina’s best referees.” The June 17 *Washington Post* reported that the criticized referee “accused [Cheek] of meddling in internal Argentine affairs.” Cheek sent an apology to the Association of Argentine Referees and pledged to walk to the Catholic Basilica in Lujan, 30 miles, if San Lorenzo wins a first division title.

CLIPPINGS



WHERE ONE STANDS VARIES WITH VIEW

There is a correlation between an organization's core mission and its stand on unauthorized weapons technology transfers and retransfers, wrote Duncan Clarke in the June *Foreign Policy* magazine. Commerce urges loose restrictions, while the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) and the Defense Department want tighter controls of defense items to all but the United States' closest allies. Clarke's thoughts on how the State Department handles this issue varies with the bureau. "The prevalent culture of the Foreign Service — a tendency to compromise, to avoid abrasiveness, and to preserve cordial diplomatic ties — discourages State from confronting otherwise friendly countries that violate their agreement not to re-export U.S. defense goods and services," he wrote. "However, the State Department units dealing with weapons proliferation, such as some Political-Military Affairs offices and the Intelligence and Research Bureau, take a sharply different stance." He wrote that the CIA and the intelligence community are very critical of unauthorized technology retransfers, while the Customs Service and the FBI also favor a tough approach.

MISSING RELIEF WORKER WINS \$305,000 GRANT

Fred Cuny, the relief worker missing in Chechnya, has won a \$305,000 grant from the MacArthur Foundation. According to reporter Stephanie Grist in the June 13 *Washington Post*, Cuny disappeared on his second relief trip to Chechnya, where he is now presumed to be a hostage.

As chairman of the Intertect Relief and Reconstruction Corp, he has led relief efforts in Somalia, Bosnia and post-war Kuwait. He disappeared sometime after March 31, the date of his last telephone conversation with his company,

when he was delivering relief supplies to those left homeless by the war between Russian troops and rebel Chechens.

STATE IG REPORT: GARDNER CLEARED

Political Ambassador to Spain Richard N. Gardner, who took it on the chin from career diplomats for spending lavishly in a climate of ever-tightening budget cuts, was exonerated by a State Inspector General report, columnist Al Kamen wrote in *The Washington Post* on May 24.

A State Department spokesman said that the IG had completed "a review of all the allegations, including sending investigators to Madrid and Seville, and found no evidence of waste, fraud and abuse on the part of Ambassador Gardner." Gardner had been investigated for building a movie theater in the embassy and for his weekend jaunts with his wife "to entertain the Spanish who's who in an old consulate building in Seville," the article said.

In a related State Department statement released last month, the department defended Gardner's actions, saying, "the ambassador and his wife have restored to use at virtually no cost the residential portion of the property, which was last utilized by the U.S. delegation to the Seville Expo in 1992. As a result, the Seville property is now being used as a place to stay and receive Spanish guests not only by the ambassador, but by other members of the embassy who are in the city on official business."

Notes the statement: "At a time of severe budget reductions, it is often necessary to do less with less. Ambassador Gardner has done that in ... his innovative program to supplement diminishing Fulbright funds with nearly \$1 million he has raised from the Spanish private sector. We consider him one of our most effective ambassadors and we commend him for his efforts."

No word yet if State will petition to have Gardner's title changed from "ambassador" to "saint." ■

50 YEARS AGO



In a special ceremony at the State Department on June 29, 1945, "The Father of the United Nations," Cordell Hull, former secretary of State, signed the United Nations Charter. According to the *Journal* of August 1945, Alger Hiss, secretary general of the UN Conference, brought the original document and interim agreements to Washington from San Francisco by plane. Precautions included a parachute strapped to the 75-pound safe, which held the papers and bore signs, "Do not open — return to the State Department." The original draft of the charter, with the signatures of the delegates from 50 nations, was deposited in the State Department's archives, as directed by the conference. ■

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SPEAKING OUT

The Political Strength of 'Visa Diplomacy'

BY KEVIN D. STRINGER

The consular dimension of diplomacy often takes the back seat to the political, military and economic aspects of foreign policy. Nowhere is this more evident than in the often overlooked, and seemingly mundane area of consular visa operations. The lowly visa, however, serves an important purpose in international relations and is a well-used instrument of foreign policy in today's system of sovereign states.

Basically, visas are used to control alien entry into a country. They are often used either to restrict or facilitate travel and commerce between countries, depending on the current climate of interstate relations. Special cases of visa issuance, changes to a nation's visa process or denials of visas can be symbols of shifts in foreign policy, government displeasure with other states, or as a step in conflict escalation, particularly in the economic and commercial arena.

Four recent examples of the use of visa diplomacy give insight into the visa's continuing importance as a tangible measure used to communicate a government's diplomatic mood and illustrate its continuing relevance to policy-makers in the international political environment.

Kevin D. Stringer, a first-tour FSO, is a vice consul at U.S. Embassy London.

*The lowly visa
provided a useful
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were constrained.*



In the spring of 1995, Canada took unilateral action against Spanish fishing trawlers operating outside its 200-mile national limit by cutting their nets and detaining a ship. These Spanish trawlers, by exceeding quotas and using small nets in violation of international fishing agreements, were in violation of maritime rules, and were contributing to the depletion of world fish stocks and negatively affecting the Canadian fishing industry.

Canada felt it had to protect its halibut stocks, even though the Spanish operations occurred outside Canada's national jurisdiction. Its detention of the trawler, in contravention of international law, cre-

ated an uproar among Canada, Spain and the European Union, of which Spain was a member.

With the European Union serving as both a mediator between parties and a representative for Spain, the fishing crisis escalated. Threats were exchanged, demands were made and various types of countermeasures were discussed by all parties. Canada threatened to continue to cut nets and detain vessels until the Spanish stopped overfishing and complied with set quotas. Spain used harsh words and even threatened to send warships to protect its trawlers. Since both Canada and Spain are members of NATO, this talk was seen by the world community as counter-productive.

However, one of the first concrete unilateral countermeasures announced and implemented by the Spanish government was the introduction of visas and visa fees for Canadians traveling to Spain. This action, effective as of April, although symbolic and only mildly inconvenient for Canadian travelers, allowed the Spanish to take real action against Canada and reflected the Spanish government's displeasure with Canada's perceived effrontery. The lowly visa provided a useful weapon for Spanish diplomatic action when other conflictory tools were constrained.

A second example of visa diplomacy was the issuance of visas by



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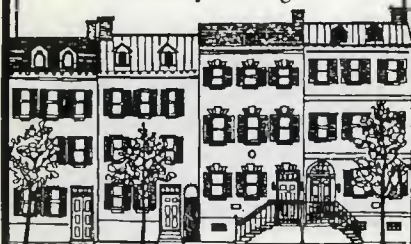
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the U.S. government in 1994 and 1995 to Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, the political arm of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), for travel and fundraising in the United States. Issuing these visas marked a shift in U.S. policy toward Northern Ireland and were seen as advancing the prospects of peace in this troubled province. Prior to this, the United States had denied visas to terrorists or those affiliated with terrorist groups. Gerry Adams, therefore, had been ineligible for a visa due to his affiliation with the IRA, which has a history of terrorism.

Strong Anglo-American relationships and British wishes had induced the United States, despite certain domestic political pressure to the contrary, to adhere to a policy of no official recognition or contact with Sinn Fein or the Irish Republican Army.

A change in the U.S. administration and ceasefire overtures from the IRA, however, altered this political environment. Issuing visas to Adams provided a tangible symbol of an American foreign policy shift toward Northern Ireland, with both positive and negative implications for the relationship between the United States, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Another example of the importance of visas to international relations was the May decision by the U.S. government to issue a visitor's visa to Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui to attend a reunion at Cornell University, where he studied for his doctorate 27 years ago. Given Lee's position in the Taiwanese government, this visa had special significance since it perhaps symbolized a strengthen-

ing of the unofficial U.S.-Taiwan relationship — a relationship the People's Republic of China views as counterproductive to its overall goal of reunification with Taiwan.

Since 1979, when the United States shifted diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing, the American government has acknowledged Taiwan as a part of one China and has promised to maintain only cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan. This decision satisfied China's desire to keep Taiwan isolated diplomatically in the context of its overall goal of peaceful reunification with Taiwan. Issuing a visa to the Taiwanese president appeared to the Chinese to alter American promises and also touches on Chinese national sovereignty issues, since the Chinese view Taiwan as an integral part of China. Any overt recognition of Taiwan diplomatically, such as issuing a visa to a high-level Taiwanese official, is seen by the Chinese as direct interference in their national affairs.

China's reaction was, of course, anger at this decision. Beijing summoned U.S. Ambassador Stapleton Roy to the foreign ministry to express China's "grave concerns" over this visa. Additionally, a high level, seven-member delegation led by the Chinese Air Force commander abruptly curtailed its tour of the United States because of the Taiwan visa decision. China accused the United States of violating three Sino-American joint communiqués on normalization of relations with China, undermining peaceful reunification efforts with Taiwan, and interfering in Chinese sovereignty issues. China's interpretation of this symbolic but tangible diplomatic action of visa

SPEAKING OUT



issuance to Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui could have adverse long-term effects on future Sino-U.S. relations.

A final example of visa diplomacy is the United States' visa policy to Libya. By making visas extremely difficult to obtain for Libyan nationals, the U.S. government can express its discontent with the terrorist regime of Muammar Qaddafi. Although American policy-makers have used censure, sanctions and force in their dealings with Libya, the lowly visa has also played its part in a concerted foreign policy strategy against Qaddafi's government. The restrictive visa policy, which requires approval from the Department of State and limits entry to a single time, has been a small, but valuable tool in the United States' overall policy of monitoring and controlling the travels of Libyan citizens to the United States. In addition to the national security, commercial and economic implications of this procedure, this restrictive policy provides a constant and continuing reminder of the United States' dissatisfaction with Libya's support of international terrorism and its behavior as an outlaw state in the international community.

Visas continue to provide states with a simple and low-cost vehicle of diplomatic communication and action used to express both subtle and not-so-subtle shifts in administration policy or emotions. Visas often allow regimes to make policy statements that cannot be expressed by other diplomatic means. Clearly, this small dimension of consular work should not be overlooked by future policy-makers as they continue to review options for implementing foreign policy. ■

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CUBA POLICY IN DISARRAY

AFTER MONTHS OF FLIPFLOPS, SECRET TALKS,
IS CLINTON AGENDA ON COURSE YET?

BY GEORGE GEDDA

Dennis Hays, the State Department's coordinator for Cuban affairs, stood recently before a predominantly Cuban-American gathering in Union City, N.J. He had been invited there by the local Democratic congressman, Bob Menendez. In response to a question, Hays gave assurances that no secret talks with Cuba had taken place nor were any planned. Unbeknownst to Hays, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Peter Tarnoff secretly had sat down in New York two days earlier with Cuban National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcon to discuss a major shift in U.S. policy towards Cuba. They were to meet again 10 days later in Toronto — again in secret.

During their meetings, the two diplomats worked out a deal under which the United States would phase out the camps housing some 20,000 Cubans at the Guantanamo Naval Base and would henceforth forcibly return all Cuban boat people trying to flee the island. For its part, Cuba agreed to accept the 500 or so migrants at Guantanamo ineligible for resettlement in the United States. Country officials also promised not to harass or otherwise penalize boat people returned by the U.S. Coast Guard. U.S. diplomats would be permitted to monitor treatment

George Gedda is the diplomatic correspondent for the Associated Press.

of the boat people on their return.

But when the Tarnoff-Alarcon talks became public in the spring, Hays and his top deputy, Nancy Mason, both career FSOs who disagreed with President Clinton's about-face on the issue, promptly asked to be reassigned in protest. Career diplomats are expected to give unbending support for their president's policies, and under different circumstances Hays and Mason might have been dispatched to distant Third World backwaters. However, Secretary of State Warren Christopher sensed immediately that charitable treatment of the two was the best course. Why make martyrs of them? Hays received a "Don't-worry-Dennis" phone call from Christopher on the day he asked for a transfer, and shortly thereafter he was tapped for the key post of director of the office of Mexican affairs. Mason was designated as the No. 2 officer at the U.S. embassy in Uruguay.

But many in the Cuban-American community as well as conservatives on Capitol Hill also felt betrayed by the new policy. Cutting a deal with Castro was bad enough; to do so behind the backs of Congress and the Cuban-American community was worse. Critics groped for words to articulate their outrage.

Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., chairman of the House International Relations subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, called the new policy "blood-curdling."

Suspicious about the administration's intentions towards Cuba have always run high among

conservative Cuban-Americans, and the early May deal only reinforced them. The United States had not repatriated Cuban boat people for more than 30 years but Tarnoff and Alarcon had overturned the policy in four hours of secret talks. Within days, there was a somewhat incongruous sight at the Cuban port of Cabanas: a U.S. military vessel making a star-spangled arrival to turn over repatriated boat people to Cuban authorities. Was this really the beginning of an accommodation with the long-reviled regime in Cuba? Not really. The new policy was driven by factors far removed from any desire to get cozy with Castro.

Guantanamo had become a time bomb, particularly after the population at the camps had swelled to almost 30,000 with the transfer in February of 7,000 who had been given a temporary haven at military facilities in Panama last September. Pentagon officials were pushing hard for the camps to be closed, warning that when temperatures soared past 100 degrees this summer, the frustration of the migrants could well erupt into violence, with a strong possibility of casualties among the U.S. servicemen stationed there.

The administration sought ways to reduce the number of migrants, creating "exceptions" to its prohibition on direct resettlement from Guantanamo to the United States. The seriously ill and the elderly were given exemptions and so were children and accompanying parents. But there seemed to be no way to get the number much below 20,000, mostly unaccompanied males. The fury among this group was palpable. As their long weeks of idleness stretched into months, their rage grew. Some leaped off cliffs surrounding the base and swam back to Cuba proper. Others tried to pick their way through mine fields surrounding the base; some died or suffered serious injuries. Still others drank diesel fuel in hopes of being evacuated to the United States for medical treatment. Some drove tent stakes into their limbs. Pentagon officials began arguing that a way must be found to shut the camps down.

The problem, of course, was that any such

step would inevitably lead to a new exodus of boat people. After extended debate, the administration decided on its new policy of phasing out the camps and forcibly repatriating fleeing Cubans. Of the two parallel decisions, the latter was by far the more controversial. On the one hand, the administration had been assailing dictatorial rule on the island for years; on the other, the new policy called for sending migrants back to the same dictatorship they were trying to flee. The administration countered by pointing out that Cubans had alternatives to escaping by boat: It had agreed last September to accept a minimum of 20,000 legal migrants from Cuba per year. If Cubans were fed up with communism, they could apply for immigrant visas at the U.S. Interests Section.

New realities made it easier for the administration to adopt a get-tough policy with undocumented Cuban migrants compared with previous years. Anti-immigration sentiment in Florida has been an increasingly potent force in Florida politics. There is a strong sense among many Floridians that the state has borne a disproportionate share of the immigrant burden in recent years. The flow of migrants from Cuba, Haiti and other Caribbean countries has disrupted school systems and strained social services, particularly in the southern portion of the state. Some in the administration felt that the outrage over the new policy in the exile community would be more than offset by support for the new approach by the more numerous, albeit less vocal, anti-immigrant majority. The elections last November indicated that the administration's determined effort to strike a tough posture toward Castro had won it almost no gratitude from Cuban-Americans, who voted 80 percent for Republican candidates. Some analysts believe Clinton may have even helped himself in his

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quest to win Florida's rich harvest of electoral votes in 1996; he lost the state by a single percentage point in 1992.

Not long after the shakeup on the Cuba desk, the administration decided to name old Cuba hand Richard Nuccio to the newly created White House position of special adviser to the president and secretary of state for Cuba. Creation of the post seemed to acknowledge the folly of running what is largely a domestic policy issue out of a third-floor office at the State Department, where the Cuba desk officer sits. Nuccio was given responsibility for coordinating overall Cuba policy as well as outreach to the public — meaning he likely will be spending a lot of time in Miami. Nuccio was seen as a good choice for the post because he enjoys credibility among many exiles based on his former role as Cuba point man for Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.), author of the 1992 Cuba Democracy Act, which tightened sanctions against Cuba and also encouraged greater people-to-people contact among Cubans and Americans.

One of Nuccio's first assignments was to deal with Cuba's surprise arrest in late spring of Robert Vesco, the fugitive financier who is one of the Justice Department's two or three most wanted men worldwide. His arrest was based on alleged ties to an unnamed foreign power. For a time, officials wondered whether Castro would try to ingratiate himself with the administration by turning Vesco over to U.S. authorities. But Castro scotched that idea when he said it would be immoral to use Vesco as a pawn in U.S.-Cuban relations.

As part of Nuccio's new mandate, he is expected to try to find ways of increasing contacts

between non-governmental groups in the United States, including church and human rights organizations, and their counterparts on the island. The new approach recognizes that development of a strong civil society in Cuba is essential for any transition to democracy. Fortuitously, declining resources have eroded the communist regime's ability to control the daily lives of Cubans. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of independent groups of lawyers, journalists, economists and other professionals visiting the island. In addition, the Catholic Church has become far more outspoken in recent years and is gaining large numbers of new adherents. Nuccio sees possibilities in these changes. "Civil society is reemerging in Cuba," he says, quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*. "It is fragile, it is tentative and needs to be nurtured."

The shift in migration policy towards Cuba marked a turning point in the administration's relations with the anti-Castro exile community in Miami, led by the chairman of the Cuban-American National Foundation, Jorge Mas Canosa. Early on, Mas felt Clinton could be trusted to keep the pressure on Castro.

After the May 2 announcement, he said, "They made this policy alone. We don't feel any other obligations to the administration." Previously, deference to Miami seemed to drive Cuba policy. At the height of the boat people exodus last August, Clinton sought the advice of Mas and his allies in an Oval Office meeting before imposing onerous sanctions designed to cut dollar flows to Cuba.

The exile community showed its influence in other ways. In 1994,

the administration decided it would be a good idea to lift the ban on American media outlets from opening bureaus in Cuba. The problem was to find a time to make the announcement that would not generate suspicion among exiles. November was for a time considered opportune but then National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcon decided to visit Washington to take part in a conference at the Pan American Health Organization, of which Cuba is a member. So November was ruled out on grounds that an announcement occurring in the same month as the Alarcon visit would have smacked of a secret deal with Cuba. If Cuba agreed to it, that would have raised the perception that there was something in it for Castro. By December, rumors spread on Capitol Hill that the inspiration for the idea was National Security Council staffer Morton Halperin, never a popular figure among conservatives. That perception was enough to kill the proposal for the time being even though officials felt the case for expanding the flow of news from Cuba was overwhelming. They reasoned that heightened awareness among Americans about sorry conditions in Cuba would further damage Castro's reputation.

Cuba became a front-burner issue in February when the new Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Jesse Helms of North Carolina, joined with Burton, his like-minded House colleague, to introduce legislation further tightening sanctions against Cuba. In consultation with allies in Congress and elsewhere, Helms and Burton produced a 36-page proposal whose intent was to deliver a knockout blow against communism in Cuba.

The complexity as well as the political sensitivity of the issue was such that it took the administration two and one-half months to decide to oppose the bill, which is still pending in Congress.

Ironically, the pressure to isolate Castro among his U.S. critics has increased even though he is much less of a menace to American interests nowadays than he was when he was in league with the Soviet Union and aided kindred regimes and movements in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. But, sensing Castro's vulnerability because of Cuba's precipitous economic decline, his tormentors were not about to let him off the ropes. They point out that U.S. pressure has induced Castro to undertake a series of economic reforms that would have been unthinkable in an earlier era. Castro has moved aggressively to open Cuba to foreign investors, legalized the dollar and allowed free market sales of agricultural and consumer goods. He also has permitted families to open restaurants with up to 12 seats and to operate other kinds of businesses. Castro's enemies ask: Why ease the pressure on him now? To do otherwise would stop reform in its tracks.

There are, of course, those in the State Department and on Capitol Hill who argue that a more magnanimous posture toward Castro is appropriate now that the Cold War is over. U.S. policies, they say, enhance the suffering of the Cuban people while seemingly having no impact on the regime's ability to survive. Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), says draconian measures such as a trade embargo are warranted if applied for a brief period only, but cannot be justified over the long term (33 years in Cuba's

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case) if the result is widespread deprivation of ordinary people. Other critics ask, is it really appropriate for the United States to adopt a policy of unremitting hostility toward a country simply because it adheres to a political and economic system different from the U.S. one? Why not embargo Saudi Arabia? Does foreign policy based on high principle stop at the water's edge in Cuba?

But those who espouse these views seem to lack the tenacity of Castro's enemies in Congress, led by Helms, Burton, Menendez, and two Florida Republicans, Ileana Ros Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz Balart. (The latter has an aunt, Mirta Diaz Balart, who married Castro in 1948 and divorced him in the mid-1950s.)

The Helms-Burton proposal seeks to pressure Cuba in a number of ways. To ensure that Cuban sugar

does not reach U.S. markets through the back door, the bill would impose certain restrictions on trade with countries that export sugar products to the United States and also import similar products from Cuba. It would require the administration to seek in the United Nations internationalization of the U.S. economic embargo. It would deny visas to any foreigner linked in any way to investments in properties expropriated from Americans, valued at between \$5 billion and \$6 billion in 1995 dollars. It would allow American individuals and companies with expropriated properties in Cuba to sue foreign companies in American courts, if these firms are profiting from the assets. And it would allow Cubans who have since become American citizens to lay claim to their houses and other properties left behind when they fled the island.

In Havana, Cuban officials saw

an opportunity in the latter proposal to score political points. In early May, they organized a series of town meetings partly aimed at highlighting what they saw as an effort by Miami exiles to drive Cubans from their homes. In effect, the Cuban people were told: "The Miami reactionaries talk about democracy and human rights; what they really want is to take your homes away."

Drafters of the legislation insisted that was not their intent and the wording was revised to make clear that the homes of ordinary Cubans would not be affected. But the homes of the party elite would be subject to legal action if they had been seized from their original owners. This was one of a number of revisions Helms-Burton underwent during legislative fine tuning in the spring and summer.

Another involved the attempt to punish countries involved in sugar



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and sugar-products trade with both Cuba and the United States. Canada, Mexico and the European Union complained loudly and won a sympathetic ear from the administration. Officials saw the provision as a violation of several international trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and as comparable to what Arab countries have tried for years to hamper Israel's trade, a practice long condemned by the United States. Helms and his colleagues agreed to soften the provision but the administration wanted it deleted in its entirety.

The proposal to internationalize the U.S. embargo against Cuba was a long shot indeed since the U.N. General Assembly already is on record several times vigorously condemning the U.S. embargo. The last time, the vote was 101-2 with only

Israel supporting the U.S. position.

The legislation also seeks to punish Russia for continuing to maintain an electronic eavesdropping facility in the town of Lourdes outside Havana. It would cut U.S. assistance to Russia by the same amount as the rent Russia reportedly pays for use of the facility — \$200 million. Again, the administration voiced opposition, contending that Russia needs the facility to monitor arms control agreements.

Finally, the bill lists a set of rigid criteria for providing U.S. assistance to a post-Castro government — there must be no political prisoners, human rights must be fully respected and the government must organize free elections under international supervision. The bill's proponents agreed to water down this provision after the administration argued that it robbed the president of flexibility and was an assault on

his constitutional authority to carry out foreign policy.

"The embargo is working," says Helms, defending his overall proposal. "We must not relieve [Castro] of the pressure of the embargo by giving him the undeserved legitimacy and hard currency he so desperately wants. If Castro wants us to lift the embargo, we must move in the opposite direction."

But Harvard University professor of Government Jorge Domínguez says, "The U.S. must remember that its main goal is a peaceful and democratic transition in Cuba, not the punishment of Fidel Castro nor the defense of U.S. property rights. The U.S. needs to shift its policy with regard to Cuba — not to abandon the totality of the trade embargo but to reposition and engage the embargo as a bargaining chip for democratic peace." ■

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SLOWING NATO'S GROWTH

EAST EUROPE MEMBERSHIP WOULD WEAKEN SECURITY ALLIANCE

By JONATHAN DEAN

Over the past two centuries, the central issue of European security has been to define a place for Germany in Europe. The main task of European security for the next century is to find a comparable place for Russia, and also for the many states in Central and Eastern Europe that have recently gained independence. The task must be carried out by peaceful means, far more rapidly than with Germany, and in a way that includes Russia rather than isolating it.

The method that Western states have chosen for defining the place in Europe of Russia and the other states is "integration," linking them with the West in a tightening network of trade, cultural and security relationships. After the success of the integration approach with Germany, it was both inevitable and right that it would be tried with Russia, although the task of integrating Russia is far more difficult than with Germany. Russia is far larger than West Germany, is not militarily defeated or occupied by Western troops and has a very large nuclear arsenal of its own.

In the security field, the problem is to embed

During his long career in the Foreign Service, former ambassador Jonathan Dean worked mainly on issues of East-West relations, European security and international peacekeeping. He is now arms control adviser for the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington, D.C. This article is based on a recent article in Arms Control Today.

Russia and the states it formerly dominated in the network of security agreements, arms control agreements and organizations for coordination of security policy in Europe — NATO, Western European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The constant tinkering with security pacts and organizations that began with the fall of the Berlin Wall will not be finished until Russia's place in Europe is defined. This will be a long and difficult task, requiring a lot of perseverance to meet the many ups and downs of Russian democracy. If it can be done for Russia, the job of finding the right position for the states of Central and Eastern Europe will become far casier.

The Clinton administration endorses the approach of integrating Russia. But, instead of focusing on the task of tying Russia into Europe, the administration, together with the new Republican congressional majority, has taken a dangerous detour. It is giving priority to expansion of NATO membership to a few central European states — Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and possibly Slovakia — as the main vehicle for its integration policy.

A healthy NATO remains essential for European security, but the concept of expanding its membership as a device for integrating the Eastern states is seriously flawed. If this idea brings about serious, enduring confrontation between Russia and the West, it may be the worst mistake in United States policy toward Europe since World War II.

Active U.S. engagement in Europe is essential to prevent conflict and to gain the support of the

European states for U.S. global policies like non-proliferation, controlling environmental damage and peacekeeping. More specifically, the U.S. role in Europe is to assure that fears of German dominance do not paralyze the operation of the European Union, to provide residual insurance against Russian misbehavior and to help Western Europe to integrate Russia and the states Russia formerly dominated.

For the sake of a constructive relationship with Russia, NATO leaders do not speak publicly about the alliance function of ensuring against a resurgent Russia, but it is much in their thoughts. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argues that NATO is essential for handling the two most dangerous contingencies from Russia — rising nationalism or implosion of the Russian polity. This NATO function of ensuring against a resurgent Russia is desirable and reasonable. Russia is unstable and unpredictable and will remain so for decades. Without NATO and its assurance of American support, the European states might easily become intimidated by the threatening behavior of an authoritarian Russian government. As far as Germany is concerned, take NATO away, and concerns about German power would immediately become audible throughout Europe, whether or not these concerns would be justified.

NATO can ensure against Russian misconduct, and cope with fears of potential German misconduct and coordinate peacekeeping. But NATO is seriously overtaxed when it comes to the task of being the main vehicle for integrating Russia and the East European states into the European security system.

The administration project of bringing in the Central European states is quite far advanced. President Clinton has said that the issue of expansion has been positively settled; the only open question is how and when. This position has been endorsed by the NATO Council.

An internal NATO report laying out admittance conditions will be prepared by mid-summer. These conditions include democratic governments; free-market economies; civilian control of the military, police and intelligence services; ability to pay a fair share of the NATO costs; respect for human rights and for the territorial integrity of neighboring states. The time will approach within the next few years when some candi-

dates, like the Czech Republic, can justifiably claim to meet all conditions. Unavoidably, movement toward the inclusion in NATO of Central and Eastern European states and leaving Russia out has the appearance of bolstering NATO's function of insuring against Russian misbehavior. In doing so, it frustrates the common Western aim of integrating Russia. Instead of complementing each other, NATO's two most important functions are clashing.

Actual NATO membership for East European states, if it is ever accorded, will bring further costs. The legislatures in the United States and other NATO member-countries will have to agree to defend the territorial integrity of East European states if they are attacked. Enlarging NATO's membership raises questions about the continuing effectiveness of NATO decision-making, which will still be based on consensus. It will also entail some economic obligation from NATO states for aid to the Eastern European armed forces. If this aid is effective in building up these forces it will add to Russian annoyance with the program.

In pursuing its policy of NATO expansion, the administration cites the need to counter instability in Central Europe. In practice, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary want to use NATO membership to gain the support of the U.S. and other NATO members against any future pressures from Russia and Germany. But the Central European states are neither unstable nor presently threatened by Russia. Moreover, NATO has already stated formally that the security of the NATO countries is inseparably linked with that of all other European states. The entire course of the subsequent debate has made it clear that NATO will, in fact, respond to negative Russian moves if they materialize.

Rather than concern for the stability of Central Europe, the administration's underlying motive for expanding membership is the health of NATO,

The constant tinkering with security pacts and organizations that began with the fall of the Berlin Wall will not be finished until Russia's place in Europe is defined.



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which the administration considers the sole effective vehicle for maintaining U.S. influence in Europe. In this view, expansion can revitalize NATO after its failure in Bosnia. However, expansion may have the opposite result, weakening NATO instead of strengthening it.

Giving Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary NATO membership will leave most East European states outside of NATO, along with a seriously dissatisfied Russia. Many countries would be left in a no man's land between NATO and an increasingly resentful Russia, strengthening negative trends in these states.

Russia, too large and uncertain, cannot be brought into NATO or the European Union. Its membership in NATO would make NATO incapable of fulfilling its function of protecting against potential Russian misconduct. Russia can be brought into NATO only after Russia has become a dependably functioning democracy, and NATO's protection for Europe is therefore no longer needed. This would be a desirable long-term outcome for NATO. But it is far off. Meanwhile, Russia's frequent proposals for NATO membership from the time of Gorbachev to the present — suggestions which attest to Russia's own desire for a Western connection — elicit only pained grimaces and silence from NATO governments. NATO and the European Union can only integrate other states while continuing to exclude Russia.

The administration insists that it can overcome the highly negative Russian reaction to NATO expansion, but Russian opposition seems deep-seated and widespread, coming from every point of the Russian political spectrum. Russians consider, correctly, that one main motive of the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians in seeking NATO membership is fear and suspicion of Russia. For example, after the Chechnya disaster, NATO Secretary

General Claes freely admitted that fear of Russia was intensifying pressures to gain NATO membership.

This evidence is not confined to Europe. The National Security Restoration Act, passed by the House of Representatives in mid-February, called for rapid action to confer NATO membership on the Central European states. It is clear that this action, in part, was motivated by traditional suspicions of Russia.

For over 40 years, Russians themselves have been taught to fear NATO as their main antagonist. Inevitably, there is a strong emotional residue of these views despite NATO's post-Cold War efforts to appear cooperative. The NATO member with increasing influence in alliance affairs, Germany, is Russia's traditional enemy. Events since the collapse of the Soviet Union have already revived historic Russian fears of encirclement by enemies. Expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe will keep these concerns at a high boil. It could establish an escalating mutual alienation between the NATO states and Russia, bolster Russian nationalism and undermine the prospects for liberal democracy.

Instead of NATO expansion, the U.S. should follow a different course which offers better prospects of achieving its aims in Europe. NATO and its core functions would be retained. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary would be offered full membership in the Western European Union (WEU), the defense arm of the European Union. Neither foreign WEU troops nor NATO troops would be stationed on the territory of the three new WEU member states, but if the security of these states were threatened by an outside power, this prohibition would be lifted. WEU membership would meet these states' common desire for a closer Western association, support their candidacy for membership in the European Union, and provide them security assurance. At the

same time, because WEU is still growing as a military alliance, expanding its membership will appear less threatening to Russia than expanding NATO.

Parallel to WEU expansion, the United States, other Western countries and Russia would assure the security of all the countries of the North-South belt. The countries could have close association with NATO and with the Russian-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States but would not become or continue as full members of either security grouping. Their security status would not become a source of friction between the West and Russia, but their security would be assured.

Meanwhile, an Advisory Committee on European Security, with the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Russia as members, would be established. Its function would be to discuss current issues of European security. Through its membership in the advisory committee, Russia could have some say

in decisions of the NATO Council. The advisory status of the group would diminish criticisms by non-member states about big-power domination. The suggested arrangement should be strengthened by new arms control negotiations in the conventional and nuclear fields. France and Britain should join the United States and Russia in a reciprocal system of safeguarding nuclear warheads and fissile materials, also designed as a framework for future cooperation with China on nuclear issues.

Under this approach, without being subject to the strains of expansion, NATO could continue to carry out its basic functions of assisting the strengthening and expansion of the European Union and of insuring against Russian misbehavior. The United States would remain fully engaged in Europe and in a position to pursue its interests productively. Finally, this European security architecture would move toward effectively integrating Russia — rather than alienating it. ■

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THE EMPRESS TREE

BY RUTH KLING

Every morning Teacher Wang talks to his dead wife, Pure Fragrance, as he performs his daily ritual. He inhales the fresh morning air and spits into the enameled basin at the foot of his bed. He talks to her as he sits up, clears his throat, sips from the earthy-tasting infusion of ginseng in the covered cup by the bed and scratches his bald head.

Pure Fragrance teases him about his modest rooms in the house in the alley off of South Gate Road in Nanjing. She tells him how shabby it looks. "It is true," he sighs. "It is a spare room with only a bed, some chairs and a table. I only have six wicker shelves to hold my library." She laughs at him and says there is not even room for her in his tiny home, and she is only a ghost. "You are so beautiful," Wang says out loud, even though in life she had never been a great beauty. She was pear-shaped, her hair was a dull brown and her teeth were crooked. But her laugh made up for everything. He was not handsome either. He has a bald spot on his head and only a few teeth left that

are so crooked one of them sticks straight out from his lips. Saliva flies from his mouth when he talks, and hair grows out of his ears.

It had all been a mistake of course. Teacher Wang did fervently love the chairman. He really did. Wang would never knowingly do anything to insult the chairman or the party. He was just writing a note to Pure Fragrance that evening 23 years ago in the early days of the Cultural Revolution. It was an honest mistake. The note said that he would be late for dinner. He used a scrap of yellowed newsprint to write a note in his beautiful, yet hopelessly bourgeois calligraphy. Then he tacked the note to his office door. The nail pierced the heart of the character of the chairman's name and the graceful brush strokes of ink obliterated one of his famous quotations. A quotation that Teacher Wang would be forced to recite over and over.

Teacher Wang recites that quotation as he digs for the box of treasure that he has been told is under an Empress tree somewhere in Nanjing. He always carries three bags to the digs, one inside of the other and each larger than the last, since he isn't sure how big the box is.



ROSEMARY HENRY-MAY

Ruth Kling is coordinator of the China Studies program at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University. She lived in China twice for a total of three years, including a two-year stint in Nanjing. She is also a student in the part-time writing program at Johns Hopkins; this is her first published piece of fiction.

Editor's Note: Readers responded to the call for fiction with more than 60 submissions; we regret we could not publish more stories. We encourage contributors to submit pieces of no more than 3,000 words for the 1996 fiction issue; the deadline is June 1, 1996. Meanwhile, enjoy this year's fine selection.

F O C U S

Today he will dig under the Empress tree closest to the South Gate. Not only is it the most promising of all the trees, but it is in the most pleasant setting.

Would he need a small, a medium or large bag? Would the box be ruined by the damp? Was it a box of wood or metal? Would her photo still be clear? On good days he brings Yellow Feathers, his songbird, out for the walk to the tree. The bird sings and watches him with his little black jade bead eyes, cocking his head from one side to the other.

Sometimes the uncertainty of it all causes Teacher Wang to hesitate and on those days he stays in bed, reciting quotations and talking to Pure Fragrance.

"Today is the day," Teacher Wang says confidently to Pure Fragrance as he ties his robe around his protruding belly and opens the door to the alley. "I am sure of it. The box will be found today."

"Good morning Mrs. Mao. Today I will be successful," Teacher Wang says, as he sees his neighbor on her way to the public toilet carrying her chamber pot. She responds with a little nod of her head and a grunt, as she does most mornings when he declares that his search is almost over.

Teacher Wang always smiles and waves at his neighbors in the narrow alley of low brick houses. He wears striped pajamas covered by a threadbare velvet robe as he fills his teakettle at the public faucet. Teacher Wang stokes up his coal stove, just outside of his low doorway, and boils water for the day.

The neighborhood children find him terribly funny. They find everything about Teacher Wang to be quite funny — his pajamas, his faded velvet robe, the wire-frame glasses that always sit on the tip of his nose, his habit of talking to himself and most of all they think his nervous giggle is quite hilarious. Teacher Wang's conversations with his neighbors are punctuated with a giggle that sometimes seems to burst forth from his lips of its own volition.

"When Teacher Wang taught in a middle school, he had an unpleasant experience with the Red Guard," Mrs. Mao, the street monitor from down the alley and around the corner, explains to the children.

This modicum of understanding does not keep the neighbors from finding some of his behavior to be odd. "After all," they say to each other, "who but a man not quite right in the head would go about the city digging holes around all of the Empress trees?" Except for the digging and an occasional moan from his small house, he was harmless enough. "But you never know," Mrs. Mao would say, as she nods her square head of gray-black hair, arms resting on her substantial stomach, her hands in the sleeves of her quilted jacket.

Once Mr. Hu, two doors up next to the water spout, the one with the walleye, asked Wang about his habit of digging under Empress trees. He giggled and sputtered so violently that Mr. Hu had to help Teacher Wang back in to his tiny room and make him drink some warm water. Wang then took to his bed during the day for two weeks, reversing his morning ritual to the evening and only digging at night. Mr. Hu had been one of Teacher Wang's students a long time ago.

No one in the alley knows the real reason why Teacher Wang digs obsessively around the trees. They have their theories. Some believe that he was from an old landlord's family and had hidden his wealth during one of the anti-landlord campaigns. This was common practice among the landlord classes.

Mr. Hu was of the opinion that Teacher Wang was so completely senile that he thought he was digging in a garden. Mrs. Mao and most of the older ladies of the alley believe that he is looking for a buried treasure rumored to be loot from the time of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. The Taiping had ruled the city of Nanjing for 11 years in the 19th century. It was said that one of the servants of Hong Xiuquan, the founder of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, had foreseen the fall of Nanjing and hidden a treasure of gold and jewels somewhere near the Porcelain Pagoda.

F O C U S

This pagoda was a fantastic structure covered with white glazed bricks and green tiles with tiny gold bells hanging from the eaves of each of its nine stories. Hong was a mad genius who believed that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ. He kept treasures beyond compare in his palace, the former home of the first Ming Emperor, and a harem of 80 women, all with unbound feet. The story goes that the man who buried the treasure had heard that this pagoda was about to be destroyed by a rival rebel leader and ran there to save his treasure, but was blown to smithereens in the blast. The only remaining evidence of this famous structure is pale shards of porcelain embedded in the bricks of the low houses near the site of the pagoda. No golden wind chimes remain.

Teacher Wang's book-lined room seems to lend credence to this theory and he rarely discusses his digging habits with the neighbors, a sure sign that he has something to hide. He always has his nose in a book, as if searching for something, and he frequently digs near the Old South Gate where the pagoda once stood.

Wang's conversations with his neighbors are limited to brief discussions about the weather, the price of vegetables in the market and occasionally a new campaign. The campaigns of today are usually aimed at social behavior: It is not like the old days when a campaign meant life or death and the neighborhood committee had real power. Mrs. Mao appears to miss those days. Mr. Hu was sorry that the comradely feelings everyone had for each other back then were now gone.

"Today it's everyone for themselves, no socialist values or obligations," he says. They all agree that the younger generation is quite rude. Teacher Wang nods his head in agreement, a sycophantic smile hung on his face.

When Teacher Wang thinks about the old days, long before the campaigns of the '60s that his younger neighbors dream about, he thinks of Pure Fragrance. She was old-fashioned in every way, even her name was old-fashioned and more suited to the vaulted halls of a Mandarin's palace than the library of the middle school where they met and fell in love.

Wang meditates on her image, the image of her that he carries in his mind. He tells her about what is happening in the alley — who was married, who was pregnant, who was fighting, which ones made it on to the

waiting list for a gas stove, and who pulled connections and got a new apartment in a building with running water. Pure Fragrance's ghost is amused by these stories. She loves to hear the pet bird, Yellow Feathers, trill as the towel covering his cage is lifted. She comments on the vegetables Wang buys in the market.

"Too expensive. How could you pay so much for these rotten cucumbers?" she asks him. She reminds Wang that she prefers fried bread and soy bean milk for breakfast, not the rice porridge and pickles that he eats every morning. "If you were alive, my dear, I would make you anything you wanted for breakfast," he says as he smiles at her empty chair, the steam from his rice porridge fogging his glasses.

When Wang talks to Pure Fragrance he does not giggle; in fact, his voice is quite melodious, as clear as the song of Yellow Feathers and almost as deep as the horns of the river boats that one can sometimes hear in the valley, which is not far from the river.

Wang hunts for his treasure every day when the weather is good. If the earth is so cold and hard that he cannot dig or it is raining and muddy, he stays home. When he does go to one of the trees, he stares at it first, assessing its potential.

"Would it be buried here, or is this the wrong angle? Should I go around to the other side? Would that be where he could have buried it?" he wonders out loud.

At first, Teacher Wang had hoped that the Empress tree that hid the treasure was the one he had stared at from his hospital bed. Young Li had said that he had buried the box of Pure Fragrance's possessions under an Empress tree. "Like that one," Li said, as he pointed out the window of the hospital ward where Teacher Wang lay barely covered by a thin blanket. After that brief conversation, Young Li was sent to the cold, high deserts of Gansu where he froze to death watching the commune's herd of goats. Wang never had a chance to find out the exact location where Li had hidden the box.

If he could find that box, he could see her image again. In the box were a few of her possessions — a string of blue plastic beads he had given her, a pair of silver and glass earrings, a jade bracelet, two tortoiseshell hair combs, seven tiny chipped porcelain wine

F O C U S

cups and a rosewood-framed photo of them on their wedding day, the only photo of her that still exists.

The hospital stay was 20 years ago, but Wang still remembers the Empress tree and its hopeful shape, all its bare branch tips pointing up to heaven. In the spring its conical clusters of trumpet-shaped purple flowers also reach upward, pointing to the sky as if it is trying to show him something. Their light purple fragrance came in through the window, sometimes making the dank hospital smells disappear.

The tree had kept Wang alive throughout his recovery from his leap out of the window of the classroom he had been imprisoned in for three years. He was forced to recite the chairman's quotations over and over again, as his young jailers, some of them his former students, shouted at him and slapped his face. Teacher Wang still chanted quotations every morning even now, just in case.

The doctors did not give him any painkillers after he jumped from the window. They weren't real doctors anyway. They were all peasants who were from politically correct backgrounds, transformed from peasant-janitors to peasant-doctors one day by order of the Red Guard. Since he had thrown himself out of the window, they were not very sympathetic except for a doctor-janitor who had once tried to comfort him.

Wang had gotten it into his head that they would forget about him if he didn't do something to gain their attention. The truth was that he had never understood why he had been locked up. He could never quite write a self-criticism to their satisfaction. His hand would shake, the words would not come. Sometimes the walleyed student's stare would confuse him so much that he would not know what was expected from him. Wang was certain that Pure Fragrance had not done what they had accused her of. Her suicide did not prove her guilt.

"Today will be the day we find the treasure, Yellow Feathers," Wang says as he lifts the bird's cage. Teacher Wang emerges from the darkness of the alley into the sunlit street dappled by the shade of beech trees that line the avenue. He walks up South Gate Road, passing a dry goods store, a hardware store and street vendors who sell everything from key chains to motorcycle parts. Wang stops at a bakery where he buys a bread roll. Yellow Feathers trills softly at the

bicycle bells as Wang carries his covered cage through the crowded streets. He is secretly proud of his bird's beautiful muffled voice. Other pedestrians stare at him, surely hoping to get a glimpse of his wonderful bird.

Today he will dig under the Empress tree closest to the South Gate. Not only is it the most promising of all the trees, but it is in the most pleasant setting. The tree stands just outside of the South Gate that used to be part of the old city wall. The tall grey brick fortification rises above a canal on one side and sits at the head of a traffic circle on the other.

The canal side of the gate appears to be taller since it grows out of the algae-covered black water of the canal. The water has a dank petroleum smell. Teacher Wang walks around the gate, since he does not want to have to pay the 5-cent entrance fee. The gate is part of the city's historical fortifications. Tall tunnels lead into the grounds where steep inclines and steps climb up to the ramparts and long vault-like rooms. These are empty now, but once stored munitions and housed the soldiers who guarded the city. Now there are vendors in the rooms selling paper cutouts and carved soapstone chops.

Teacher Wang stops at a soft-drink stand on one side of the traffic circle. A young woman in a traditional dress sells him a small bottle of brilliant orange soda he drinks right there, so he can forgo paying a deposit on the bottle. Her dress is maroon velvet, with a mandarin collar and slits up the sides. She sits with her legs open, fanning herself with the front flap of the dress. She wears red plaid boxer shorts underneath the dress.

Teacher Wang walks around to the back, near the canal, and hangs Yellow Feathers' cage on a small, scraggly pine tree. He takes off the towel covering the cage and the bird sings and whistles loudly. Wang puts down the bags, pulls out a small shovel and stares at the tree for a few minutes, with his hands on his hips, the shovel sticking out at an odd angle. As he sits on the banks of the canal and shares his roll with the tiny yellow bird, he looks over to the other side where the Porcelain Pagoda once stood, staring at the low houses of brick that line the canal. Teacher Wang explains the scene to Pure Fragrance as purple-scented trumpets drop on his head. ■

DIALLO AND THE BOB-YAM

BY MICHELE SISON AND JEFF HAWKINS

"Mogo yeni o te a lon ye."

("To see a man is not to know him.")

— Dioula proverb

If that kid doesn't cut it out, I'm gonna haul off and hit him. Really, I've just had it. Every day, the same damn thing. "Boss, boss, give me 100 francs so I can eat." Pulling at my pants with his dirty hands, looking up at me with big, melodramatic eyes. In this West African country, at least, everyone eats. He'll just have to find his coins somewhere else. I'm not made of money. If he knew how many bills I have to pay, he wouldn't even ask.

The kid's constant badgering is just one more example of what we consular officers have to put up with every day. Everybody wants something from me. Those 50 or 60 people in the visa line at 7 o'clock each morning, jostling each other to get to my window. The young toughs offering to guard my car, not bothering to hide the menace in their voices. The vague friends of friends who call at odd times in the hopes of getting to know a diplomat. And then this kid. Every single day.

This new guy is something else. He's young, he dresses cool, and he has a new car. I followed him home from

Michele Sison is a political officer in U.S. Embassy Abidjan and Jeff Hawkins is an administrative officer at that embassy. This is their first published piece of fiction.

the embassy yesterday. He's got an apartment two blocks away in that tall shiny building with the glass doors. He's loaded! But what a tightwad. All the other Americans dig into their pockets for loose change, but not him! What's this guy's problem anyway? He looks like he has a pretty good job. I saw him once sitting next to the Big Man in the big black car with the flag flying as it swung around the corner. That Big Man always keeps coins in his car to give away as he's stopped at the traffic light up ahead. He's good to us street kids.



ROSEMARY HENRY-AMAV

It's not like I'm asking for a lot. I haven't been here in the capital long enough to find an apprenticeship or other work. While we wait for job offers or for relatives to help us settle in, we kids on this block scrounge money for food from the people who work in these office buildings. Not much, really, just a few coins to buy some pounded plantain or a little rice. That's why it seems so unfair that the new guy can't just give us a little. He has so much. I want to find a job, and I want to work hard. But I need to eat first. Like my grandfather back in the village used to say, "An empty sack can't stand up."

It's just as sticky and hot as usual, but at least it's not raining anymore. I'm crossing my fingers that the torrential downpours we've had every day because of the

F O C U S

The new guy's name is Bob — I overheard one of the drivers calling after him. Bob — what a funny word. It sounds like our word for "big yam."

rainy season will give us a break today, because I've been asked to take our visitor, Ambassador Franklin, on a short walking tour of the city. Ambassador Franklin is an important man in our bureau and could help a lot in getting me a good job next tour. Normally, a junior officer wouldn't have much hope of getting face time with him, but he wants to see the downtown area before he goes with our ambassador to see the defense minister, and I got picked to show him the sights.

I'm in luck. Those heavy, billowing tropical clouds have broken a bit. As we set out into the palm-lined, bustling streets of the town, things seem to be going well. I try to make small talk as we dodge market women with mangoes and inexpensive sandals piled on their heads, businessmen heading home for lunch, and hawkers selling everything from cheap sunglasses to strong-scented hair tonic. I show off a bit of my knowledge of the city to Franklin and proudly point out landmarks like the prime minister's rather unimpressive little office and the infinitely more imposing presidency complex. Ambassador Franklin seems genuinely interested. He mentions the bureau's need for new blood, initiative, enthusiasm. This is my cue. I'll tell him how much I'd like to work for him next year.

Then he shows up. That damn kid. Tugging at me, begging for money. Interrupting me with his constant nagging. Buzzing in my ear. I ignore him, but he just keeps going. I tell him to go away. He keeps it up. Franklin looks distracted, and I tell the kid in street French to "get the hell away from me." Franklin looks shocked. He shakes his head and says gravely, "I think it's time to go back to the embassy."

The new guy's name is Bob — I overheard one of the drivers calling after him. Bob — what a funny word. It sounds like our word for "big yam." Anyway, Bob-yam walked out of the embassy this morning with this old man in a suit. What a sight! That suit made the old man sweat like one of the workers down by the port. I've never owned

a suit. My cousin Mamadou bought an almost new dark blue one for himself at the used clothing market the other week. He looks pretty good when he goes off to work as a guard for the cars outside that fancy nightclub down the street. I tried Mamadou's suit on last night just to see how it fit. I looked like someone — I don't know who — someone who didn't hang around in front of the American embassy all day long, I guess.

As I was saying, Bob-yam came out of the embassy with this man, and they started to walk down the hill toward the market. Bob-yam didn't notice me because I kept a few feet behind. I didn't understand everything they said, but I heard Bob-yam point at the tax office and say "prime minister." He was wrong, but the old man didn't seem to care. The old man was sweating a lot by that time, and looked tired. These Americans must never feel the sunshine where they're from. It isn't even a hot day — it's the rainy season, after all. Bob-yam kept chattering away in English — what a funny language. I called out, "Hey, mistah" to Bob-yam to show that I speak a little English, too. He didn't hear me the first time, so I tried again. "Hey, Mistah Bob — wha' new?" He looked mad. Don't Americans greet each other? I know that Bob-yam knows who I am. He sees me every day on his way to work, sees me when he leaves the embassy at noon to meet his friends for lunch, and sees me every night when he trudges home with that little black suitcase he carries everywhere.

Bob-yam pretended not to see me. I caught his coat sleeve, and he turned around and told me to "go to a fiery place that has no exit." I couldn't believe that he would say something so offensive to a neighbor, and as my uncle Ibrahima says, "Strong words are like a mango tree bark: Once it's split from the tree you can't put it back." At least Bob-yam's friend looked pained. Maybe he's more polite than Bob-yam.

Needless to say, I didn't get a chance to talk to Ambassador Franklin again. A couple of days later, I

F O C U S

drove over to the annual trade fair at the government-owned, white-elephant luxury hotel on the other side of town. I went with Anne from the consular section. We went casual, just shorts, T-shirts, and Ray-Bans. We didn't stay long, too much emphasis on rhetoric about the good things the president has done for the country and not enough local products on the floor.

The next day the strangest thing happened. That kid comes up to me and says, "Hey, boss, I saw you and Miss Anne at the fair. Good fair, huh? Give me 100 francs." Now, I wasn't wearing a suit at the fair, and it was across town. How the hell did he know who we were? If I saw that kid somewhere else and not wearing some dirty T-shirt and torn shorts, I wouldn't recognize him in a million years. Not him or any one of the dozens of kids that hang around outside the embassy and pester us unmercifully for pocket change. I always just assumed that we looked as anonymous to them as they do to us. It makes me nervous that they watch us that way.

The guys on the corner told me and Mamadou about free samples of fruit juice that they were giving out down at the fair at the Hotel de la Republique. It was a Sunday, and there wasn't much traffic, so we were able to walk down there in about an hour. I saw Bob-yam near the juice right away. He was dressed like regular people — not in a suit, but I'd recognize his walk anywhere. He was with this pale-haired woman. I tried to remember what they called her. "Anne," I think. Was this his new girlfriend? I like her; she always smiles at me. I saw Bob-yam go into the fancy shop near the embassy yesterday and pull out six blue bills from his pocket to buy a bottle of perfume. I couldn't believe he paid that much for a bottle of smelling water. Mamadou takes that much home in a good month, and it keeps the whole household going. I hope the pale-haired one likes Bob-yam's gift.

What the hell is that kid doing?! I look out of the window of the consular section. There, just across the street, a crowd has gathered around my car. I run outside to see what is the matter. The front side window of my car is shattered, the alarm is blaring, and he's standing there with that guilty, idiotic look on his face. Not running, just standing there. Maybe I could tolerate begging and hanging around, but not theft. I yell to the embassy guards to follow me, and I tear across the street. Suddenly, he seems to realize what

he's done and that he's about to get caught. He takes off.

The chase doesn't last long. It's the busiest time of day, and the streets are full of taxis and mopeds and salesmen. The kid darts in and out of traffic, and he obviously knows his way around town. I run, but the hot, humid air is heavy with diesel exhaust that sears my lungs. I trip on some broken pavement just as the kid rounds a corner into a network of small shacks and market stalls. I know I'll never catch him in there and give up. The embassy guards, yelling, "Thief! Thief!" keep after him, though, and disappear in the market after the kid.

Back at the embassy, I go up to the Med Unit to have the nurse take a look at the knee I banged up chasing the kid. As I return to my office, I see a seething, noisy crowd moving down the center of the street towards the police station near the embassy. There seems to be some kind of fight going on. I have better things to do than to watch this kind of nonsense and go out to look at the damage to my car.

My nose is still bleeding, my shins are scraped, and my whole body is bruised and aching. It's the fault of Bob-yam, that pasty, slow-running, excuse for a man. Why, I'm sure that he could not run fast enough to catch even an elderly guinea fowl for his dinner, much less a meaty young bush rat.

I was hanging out near my usual corner this morning, chatting to the newspaper vendor Abdoulaye, a good-natured fellow who comes from near my father's village up north. Abdoulaye pointed to a gang of boys who looked unfamiliar to me — they weren't any of the kids I've gotten to know since I came to the city. Abdoulaye yelled for the boys to move away from one of the embassy cars, one of the shiny new ones with the bright orange and black license plates.

"Get out of the way, you ruffians," Abdoulaye belatedly, as he started to chase them away. This was our corner, our territory and Abdoulaye did not appreciate outsiders thinking they could be on our spot of the city pavement. I turned around to take a look, and saw that the car the boys were vandalizing was Bob-yam's. All of a sudden, Bob-yam's car let out a shrill keening sound, like the wails of one of our women during the days following a great chief's funeral. The boys scattered, and I ran over to look at the damage. But just as I reached the side of the car on which the window had been smashed in, I saw the embassy guards, all of them beefy southerners who never

F O C U S

miss an opportunity to show their superiority to those of us from further north, heading for me. Right behind them, charging heavily, was Bob-yam, who huffed and puffed as he shouted "Thief! Thief!" at me.

I ran as fast as I could toward my aunt Fatima's stall in the market, hoping that she would hide me beneath her yards and yards of cotton print cloth — but before I reached the safety of her stall, the embassy guards and a rag-tag band of onlookers caught up with me and dragged me to the police station next to the embassy. I was pummeled and pounded by the nastier of the two embassy guards on the way to the police station, and by the time I was dragged before Big Man on duty, I was a pretty sorry sight, all bloodied and dirty.

Luck was with me this morning, though. I could tell from his facial scarring that the Big Man was from my home region. I tried a few words of greeting, using the form we use for the oldest and most exalted chief back home. From the moment I uttered the first syllables out of my swollen and bloodied mouth, I knew I was right. This man was a kinsman, or not very far from one. He listened carefully to my story, and nodded his head in appreciation when I reminded him that someone as unworthy as myself would never tell an untruth to such a great man. After all, everyone knew that, "The goat who wishes to watch his family grow does not play with the panther." After hearing my piece, the Big Man yelled in annoyance to the embassy guards and the crowd to go away. He then turned to me once more, and gave me some cool Fanta to drink and handed me a good chunk of sweet maize pudding he had tucked in banana leaf and a bit of newspaper.

The Big Man leaned closer to me as he chomped loudly on a large mouthful of maize paste. In a fatherly manner, the pot-bellied police chief explained that he was required by the new law to come up with a certain number of arrests per week. The district police commissioner had insisted that the Big Man make the precinct look good. Thus, the Big Man said he was going to have to put me in one of the back rooms for a few days. Not to worry, he reassured me, he would make sure no harun would come to me, as I was obviously a young cousin who knew how to mind his manners around his elders. I just got out this afternoon, after three not very comfortable nights in the back room of the precinct. My northern "uncle" was true to his word, though. I suffered from nothing more serious

than severe boredom during my short imprisonment.

I was in a good mood. Self-satisfied. I had just read my evaluation from the consul general and had typed out the obligatory "employee remarks" section — the last bit of real work I'd do here, as I was leaving in a few weeks. I felt more or less at home in this country now, and the fact that I had received my top choice for my next assignment made it easy to feel a certain detached affection towards this place. My French was much better, and I had even tried a few words of Dioula at the visa window today, which made the applicants smile good-naturedly.

I propped my feet up on my desk and took a deep sip of strong black coffee, glancing at the afternoon papers as I relaxed after a long day interviewing applicants. I especially liked *Informations du Soir*, a less-than-sober daily that reminded me of grocery-store tabloids. Legitimate stories about arrested bankrobbers or the latest postal strike were liberally spiced with news about evil sorcery and shocking scandal — such as the woman who had reportedly given birth to a toad.

Then I saw the picture. Despite the injuries and bruises, I knew it was him. That kid. Or Diallo Toure, since the article gave his name. The short article told the full story. Toure, 13 years old, had been falsely accused by employees of the U.S. embassy of theft and had been caught and beaten severely by a crowd of bystanders. Following three days of imprisonment at the police station, Toure had been released after two adult males confessed to the crime.

Thirteen years old — the same age as my youngest stepbrother, Travis, who still revels in the Saturday morning kids' shows at home, while shoving down the neon-colored, sugary junk cereal he loves so much. I dropped the newspaper on my desk. My stomach knotted up, and I felt uneasy, anxious. This mess was my doing. That kid, Diallo, had been in the wrong place at the wrong time. After two years here, I really saw so little, understood so little. And Diallo Toure, not me, had paid the price.

I looked for him several times after that. I don't know what I would have done if I found him, but I wanted to somehow make things right. I never did come across him again. After a while, I stopped searching. I stopped thinking about that kid. I've gotten very caught up in packing out, preparations for a vacation with the folks, and language training. I leave in two days. I wonder if I'll ever come back to this city, or even to this continent.

F O C U S

I'm back at home now, living in my father's compound, getting reacquainted with my many stepbrothers and stepsisters. Although I am enjoying the tasty stews prepared by my fathers' wives, I miss the noises of the city — the sirens, the clamoring of the sellers, the loudspeakers of the mosques calling worshippers to prayer. Here in the village, life is quieter, calmer.

I think back to my last day in the city. After leaving the police station, I had walked back to my corner and found my cousin Mamadou, waiting for me. Mamadou had saved up a small sum of money, and added to the money he got for his shiny suit at the used clothing market, this was enough for both of us to take a crowded bush taxi back home. It was the planting season, Mamadou reminded me, and our families needed our help in the manioe fields. The city was getting more and more dangerous, he said, and the police sweeps for clandestine foreign workers were getting increasingly frequent. Neither Mamadou nor myself had ever had the extra cash to go to the authorities and obtain a national identity card. So, we had said goodbye to our city

friends, who wished us well and joked with us that they, too, would soon retire from city life to live in the countryside.

Every Monday afternoon, one of the big airplanes from the capital traces a pattern over my village. I cannot hear it, but I see its shimmering form glide in an arc towards France, or America, or wherever these beautiful silver birds go. I have forgiven Bob-yam, as I heard from Mamadou's friend Issa (who came up from the capital last week) that Bob-yam had actually gone to look for me after I left my three days in jail. I guess he figured out that I hadn't done anything bad. He had given Issa a rectangle of paper with shiny blue printing on it and a strange symbol of a haughty hawk with talons. Issa read to me what the card said: "Robert L. Simpson, Vice Consul and Third Secretary, Embassy of the United States of America." Bob-yam had told Issa and the others that he was returning to America.

I dream of riding one of those shiny airlines one day, and of meeting Bob-yam in the street in America. I'm sure he would recognize me. ■



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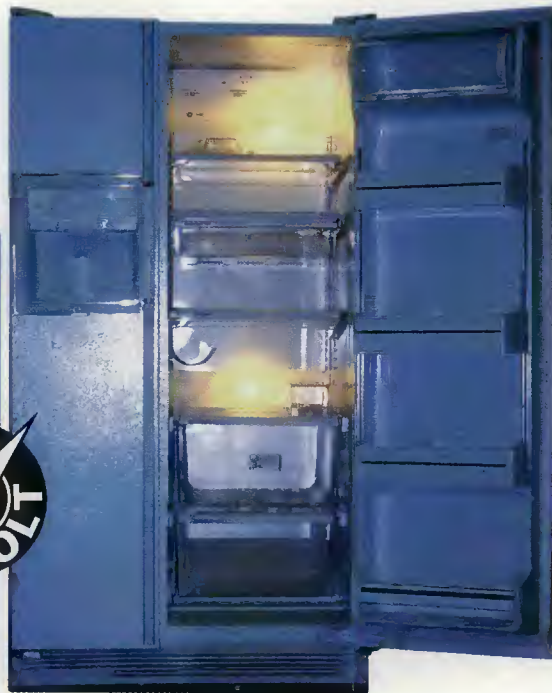
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AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association



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HARRIS, LA PORTA WIN AFSA ELECTION

By DEIRDRE FERNANDES
 Journal Intern

A FSA's newly elected Governing Board, a hybrid of former and new members, needs to unite and work toward common goals, according to President F.A. "Tex" Harris, who was reelected by a 3-to-2 ratio on the Building Unity for Strength slate.

"Producing a united board which works together is the first order of business," he said, noting in AFSA's past, divisions on the board "produced a lot of heat, but very little light."

But the biggest challenge before the board is publicizing the need to maintain America's diplomatic corps with sufficient funds for foreign affairs programs, he said. "We are less ready each year to advance and protect America's interests in the world. The agencies are not successfully telling this story to

Congress and the American public. AFSA must do it."

Alphonse F. La Porta, who captured the State vice president's slot, agreed with Harris on the importance of finding common ground. La Porta was the highest-ranking winner on the Foreign Service Leadership slate, winning 826 votes, compared to 617 for Robert Pringle.

"I would look at our objective as trying to develop, if not a synergistic - a symbiotic - relationship on as many issues as we possibly can," said La Porta. "And I hope that right reason will prevail on the basic issues ... such as resource management, personnel [and the] employee benefits area. The bottom line is that the board has to work together to promote sound management practices and ultimately to protect our careers."

The new board, which took office on July 14, also included five new State representa-

Continued on page 3

• 1995 AFSA Election Results •

CONSTITUENCY	PRESIDENT		SECRETARY		TREASURER		VICE PRESIDENT		
	Dell	Harris	Norland	Godec	Crumpton	Lecce			
TOTAL	1612	2422	2371	1533	1716	2126			
AID							Davidson	Horween	
	103	314	266	105	87	322	290	132	
FAS									
	15	25	24	15	16	23			
FCS							Santillo		
	17	40	40	17	18	39	61		
RETIREE							Rowell	O'Donohue	Shepard
	591	1280	1320	531	674	1118	1086	604	155
STATE							Pringle	LaPorta	
	826	645	623	794	844	537	617	826	
USIA							Byers		
	60	118	98	71	77	87	168		

tives, all from the Foreign Service Leadership slate: Marshall Carter, Angela R. Dickey, Valentino E. Martinez, Francis T. Scanlan, and Mary Tamowka. Other vice-presidential winners included Garber Davidson (AID); Bruce K. Byers (USIA); Patrick Santillo (FCS); Edward M. Rowell (retiree); and as secretary Donald R. Norland; and as treasurer Gail Lecce. AID representatives elected were Gregg Baker and James R. Washington; for USIA, Jess L. Baily; for FCS, Tom Kelsey; and for FAS, William W. Westman, who all ran as independents. The four retiree representative slots were split between the two slates, with Willard DePree and Dennis Kux elected from the Unity slate, and William Harrop and Arthur Hartman from the Leadership slate.

Overall, the 22 new Governing Board members, who all have two-year terms, include six Building Unity for Strength members, eight Foreign Service Leadership members, and eight independents.

"I think that both the numbers and the fact that all of the state representatives elected are from the Leadership slate is a very good and a very strong mandate for what we [State officers] would like to see done," said La Porta.

In the next two years, Harris vows to improve and strengthen AFSA's outreach programs. "We must resist focusing all of our energies inward on immediate personnel concerns," he said. "We need more members and

more resources to accomplish our objectives as a professional association and a union."

La Porta plans to reform the State Standing Committee, as promised in the Leadership slate platform. One of the committee's main goals will be to formulate agendas that can be forwarded to management at State. To accomplish these goals, La Porta said he would like to enlarge the Standing Committee and form sub-committees and task forces.

La Porta agreed with Harris that the new board should focus on reducing proposed cuts to the foreign affairs budgets. "The board should, as a matter of first priority, look at the impact on all of the foreign affairs agencies of the budget reduction measures and develop a common approach," La Porta said. "This is something that up until now the AFSA board has not been able to do."

Although there was a 24 percent increase in the number of ballots sent in this year, compared to the election two years ago - 4,150 vs. 3,350 in 1993 - both Harris and the opposition presidential candidate, Christopher Dell, said they were disappointed that more people didn't vote.

Harris said he had hoped for broader representation on the Governing Board, and he bemoaned a lack of retiree representatives from AID or USIA, and a lack of specialists, noting that about half of Foreign Service employees are specialists.

"I am very disappointed with the election results in that they failed to reflect the true

character of the Foreign Service," Harris said. "The challenge of the board is to represent all the Foreign Service, and not any particular subset of its members."

Dell, who lost to Harris by 810 votes, said he was disheartened by poor voter participation from State Department members. Only 31 percent of the 4,869 eligible State AFSA members voted, as opposed to 51 percent of the retiree AFSA members.

Harris received his most predominant backing from the retiree constituency - 68 percent voted for him - although he still would have won the election without those votes. Dell, on the other hand, received most of his votes from active duty State employers.

There was a 52 percent increase in Washington-based active duty ballots returned this year over the 1993 election: 1,173 compared to 558; and there was a slight increase in the number of post active duty ballots returned in this year - 1,043 compared to 985 in 1993. In addition, the highest number of ballots were returned from retirees, followed by State, AID, USIA, FCS and FAS constituencies.

AFSA Executive Director Susan Reardon said, "I think that everybody cares about AFSA, and they are all going to work for a common future. But they are definitely bringing different perspectives, and I think in the end, it's going to make AFSA stronger."

• 1995 AFSA Election Results •

CONSTITUENCY	REPRESENTATIVES									
AID	Washington	Baker								
	342	363								
FAS	Westman									
	38									
FCS	Kelsey									
	59									
RETIREE	Kux	Boyatt	Kelly	Hartman	Chandler	DePree	Fernandez	Harrop		
	1145	936	350	974	914	1048	862	951		
STATE	Tarnowka	Bates	Carter	O'Neill	Dickey	Kushner	Scanlan	Krieger	Fukutomi	Martinez
	825	541	857	493	771	604	808	528	550	753
USIA	Baily									
	176									

AFSA EXPANDS MINORITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS



Left to right: USA Intern Eric Holt, AFSA President F.A. "Tex" Harris, USA Intern C.D. Glin Jr.

BY TONY LIN
Journal Intern

In an effort to expand its minority outreach programs - and ultimately to diversify the Foreign Service - AFSA is sponsoring six interns in the Department of State, USIA and AID.

Minority Mentoring Program Coordinator Kenneth Longmyer will continue to match students with retired FSO volunteer mentors. He will also help raise awareness of internship and mentoring opportunities in minority communities.

Before he retired from the Foreign Service, Longmyer served in Israel, Sweden and Germany. Most recently, he was director of international affairs at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. He believes the minority outreach programs will be "very, very helpful" in raising minorities' awareness of the Foreign Service.

For the first time, AFSA is working with USIA to sponsor three interns in Africa. This year's recipients are Hompton University junior Tomara Frazier, who is working in Harare; Howard University senior C.D. Glin, Jr., in Accra; and Howard University junior Eric Holt, in Kampala.

AFSA has also begun a cooperative

project with the Thursday Luncheon Group. Together, they are sponsoring the 1995 internships of University of Texas senior Beth Boburg in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Crime; Howard University junior Jania Richardson in the office of the Deputy Secretary; and Morehouse College senior Reginal Shaver in AID's Bureau for Africa.

AFSA's sponsorship this year helped more interns than any other year since the program began three years ago. AFSA believes that internships "expand students' interest" in foreign affairs, while follow-through mentoring sustains it. Ward Thompson, AFSA's retiree liaison who has been involved in AFSA's minority outreach programs in the past few years, says the program's contributions are two-fold: exposing minorities to the Foreign Service and involving FSOs in the process.

Susan Reardon, AFSA executive director, says that the awareness of the need to diversify has been there "for a long time," but only in recent years has this belief been placed into action. "If [the Foreign Service] is going to survive and be relevant, it needs to be diverse." Starting at the roots will prove to be most effective, she says.



Front, left to right: Chairman of Diversity Committee Jim Washington, Intern Beth Boburg. Back: Ward Thompson, Intern Jania Richardson.

CHILD CARE BOARD SEEKS VOLUNTEER

The Board of Directors for the State Department child care center is seeking a volunteer to serve as treasurer on the board. The board's primary responsibilities are to oversee fundraising activities and the child-care provider's contract. The treasurer will be responsible for handling the accounting needs for the board. The board meets several times a month for about two hours. The board is also seeking a volunteer to assist with fundraising. Those who are interested should contact Donna Mavitt at (202) 647-2955 or Sharon Papp at (202) 647-8160.

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Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig Jr. with U. Alexis Johnson, who won AFSA's Lifetime Contributions Award.

JOHNSON RECEIVES AWARD

U Alexis Johnson received an AFSA award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy from former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. at the AFSA award ceremony on June 29. Johnson, along with other AFSA award winners, were honored at a ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the State Department.

Read at the ceremony were letters from former secretaries William P. Rogers and Henry A. Kissinger praising Johnson. Rogers wrote, "There is no more honorable, dedicated and effective public servant than Alex. He exemplifies the very best in Foreign Service." Kissinger wrote, "In the course of his extraordinary career, Alex Johnson was a model of the skilled and valuable diplomat. As one of the country's foremost experts on Asia and Japan, Alex made his greatest mark. He was a model Foreign Service officer, dedicated at all times and often at considerable hardship, to serving his country."

After a welcome by AFSA President F. A. "Tex" Harris and introductory remarks by Foreign Service Director General Genta Hawkins Holmes, AFSA Achievement Awards were presented to Stephen A. Klaus and L. Bruce Laingen; the Avis Bohlen Award to Anne Bridgman; the M. Juanita Guess Award to Denine L. Scott; and the Delavan Award to R. Diana Clayton and Charlotte Stoltman.

The W. Averell Harriman Award for junior officers was presented to Gregory H. Stanton; the William R. Rivkin Award for mid-level officers went to Janice Weiner; and the Christian A. Herter Award for senior officers was won by Dennis C. Jett.

A comprehensive article on the awards appear in the July "AFSA News."

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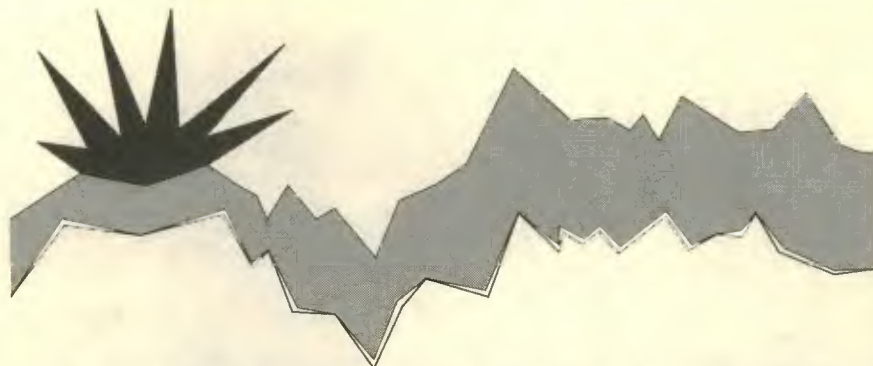
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BY JAMES F. O'CALLAGHAN

She was a first-tour econ officer and he a junior consul, and Brian loved Diana but she spurned each fond advance. Wisdom urged him leave this hopeless quest, yet when has love been wise? His heart was hers from the moment she exulted, majestic and beautiful in the Sexual Harassment Workshop, "Any man tries that with me, I don't care if it's the ambassador, I'll punch him in the mouth!"

"Noble Diana!" he named her, and Bold! Alive! and Vibrant! But also Cold and Distant, she changed his name to Grief: If love denied is torment, love despised in Rome is Hell. Venus mocked him from her thousand statues, and Eros jeered wherever Brian walked. He might have died for love, wan and wasted on the Spanish Steps or drowned in the Trevi Fountain where he cast his hopeful coins, but first the gods took pity in their playful Roman way.

Suspicious Diana frowned on learning, at the second Pre-Pre-Advance Countdown, that she would be the Inscrutable Control Officer. She turned plainly angry when the White House Pre-Pre-Advance confirmed that, yes, he was referring to that Inscrutable, the president's cat.

"You wouldn't assign a man to babysit a cat!"

James F. O'Callaghan is director of the American Republics branch of the Fulbright program at the U.S. Information Agency in Washington. He has served in Italy, Uruguay, Chile and Ecuador.

"Ms. Ventura," interrupted the DCM. "I myself walked LBJ's beagles in Cairo."

Diana flashed angry eyes at the bespectacled, pot-bellied man at the conference table, and mumbled that State probably had no women then.

"This is important," droned Pre-Pre-Advanceperson. "The president is very fond of her cat, a gift from the king of Siam, as is Mr. White, I mean, Mr. White is also fond of the cat. It is important the First Family feel at home as much as possible so they can concentrate on their official duties. Now then, Bob, if you'll continue with the assignments?"

Surely she needs sympathy now, he thought, and, again, "Faint heart ne'er won fair lady." He overtook her in the hall.

"Diana!" he cried through the heavy murmur of bureaucrats. "Tough break. I mean, I wish ... you know."

"Easy for you to say. You get — what'd you get?" She had stopped, and Brian's heart leapt: She had never asked a personal question before, nor stood this close. He had not realized how blue her eyes were, nor noticed the yellow highlights in her red-blond hair, nor seen her complexion change from alabaster at the forehead to soft rose petal on the cheeks.

"I said, What'd you get?"

"Me? Luggage. I got luggage."

"Oh." She started down the hall again.

"It might not be so bad," he offered. "You might get to meet the president!"

"Sure, as Kitty Litter Control Officer." She walked faster.



ROSEMARY HENNINGMAN

F O C U S

*Venus mocked him from her thousand statues, and Eros
jeered wherever Brian walked. He might have died for love,
but first the gods took pity in their playful Roman way.*

He tried to keep up, but the slow, fat bureaucrats made it impossible. He reached the elevator as she squeezed into the last space.

"They say it's a really nice cat," he said feebly, as the door shut.

The huge airplane crawled loudly across the tarmac, drowning out the sound of applause. Dignitaries scurried to look dignified, and Security to secure, and Brian jumped into the truck to join the fleet of vehicles swarming around the plane. As in the practice drills, they reached the cargo door in precisely one minute and 12, just as the crew secured the conveyer belt.

Each piece of luggage would have the owner's name and hotel assignment, and Brian had only to see that they were loaded in the right sequence: Hotel Excelsior last, because first off. He reminded the crew to double-check everything, for even though the luggage of the really important people was going by other means to Villa Taverna, the ambassador's-residence-made-temporary-White-House, a misplaced suitcase here could mean a sub-secretary's wearing a rumpled suit to the Quirinale. The horrified FSNs sorted the bags quickly and truly and well, as Brian dealt with incomplete or missing tags; consulting his room list he deduced the missing information and directed firmly, "Excelsior!" or "Ambassador!" or "Europa!"

In precisely 22 minutes they were racing for Rome behind the flashing lights of the carabinieri. And she was ahead in the darkness: the White House luggage, including the cat, had left almost at once. But he would catch up with her somewhere, somehow, and sometime she would be kind.

He was boarding the shuttle for home when his cellular telephone beeped.

"Brown! Where's Simpson's luggage?"

"Simpson?" Brian repeated.

"Right. GLORIA Simpson, White House chief of staff. Don't tell me you've never HEARD OF HER!"

"Sure, George ... Sure, the Europa. That one didn't have the right tag, just a sort of leather personal thing —

but I found him on the list. Only it's Howard Simpson."

"That must be some communicator or something! THIS Simpson is at Villa Taverna! TA-VER-NA! Capeesh? That's the president's chief of staff! She stays with the president! You get that suitcase to the residence RIGHT NOW!"

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOUT!" Brian shouted. "I'll handle it. But all the Taverna stuff was supposed to be separate."

"Yeah, I know, I know." George sounded repentant. "But someone screwed up and I've got the ambassador on my back."

"O.K., George. No problem."

As he walked quickly to the motor pool Brian consoled himself that he might see her at the residence, both of them insignificant among the VIPs. They'd trade airport stories and laugh together. He mused on possibilities in the car, even as a red-eyed Howard Simpson denounced the injustice of being awakened, at this hour, by some idiot who couldn't read tags.

Where presidents sleep, no underling may drive; thus Brian afoot endured the Secret Service, their ID checks and suitcase search and consultation with "Control." He gladly left behind their stony faces — implacable as angels barring Eden — to walk the long and lovely tree-lined driveway to the villa. City noises faded and died, returning the perfumed night to primordial peace and promise.

And suddenly, she was there, her still form white marble by moonlight, as if some jealous god had turned her to stone rather than lose her to Time! But then she moved gracefully toward a bush and bent down, and he heard her say, "Here, kitty, kitty."

"Diana," he called softly.

She turned. "Brian! How you doing?"

He thought he would die.

"Fine, fine. And you, look..." He must not offend. "You look for the cat. Yes?"

"Yeah. The First Gentleman was real specific: Inscrutable needs his walk. Inscrutable doesn't like a leash!" She mimicked the famous voice. "And now Inscrutable has hid somewhere. Great."

F O C U S

"Diana ..."

What?"

"Oh, nothing. I just wanted to say, I really like that name."

"Inscrutable? Good name for a Siamese, I guess. Except it's racist. Ah, there he is."

The biggest cat Brian had ever seen strode across the patch of grass, its tail high in the air and its sharply-pointed ears testing the four directions.

"Big sucker, isn't he?" asked Diana.

Brian nodded, afraid to speak and not to speak, lest he break this magic moment in which fair Diana spoke him fair. "Big," he croaked.

"Bet he'd eat these Roman cats alive."

Perhaps in that moonlit circle words had power to summon, for at that moment a Roman cat appeared from some park or street or ruin. It looked miserably insignificant creeping beneath the manicured bushes, dashing ahead a few feet and then crouching fearfully. But Inscrutable found it significant.

"Uh-oh," said Diana. "What kind of cat is that?"

"Just a regular Roman cat, I guess ... oh. Ah. I see."

Inscrutable on stiff legs stalked the scrawny feline, which began to utter a baby-like wail.

"Oh hell," muttered Diana. "We gotta grab him. You cut him off and I'll sneak up behind him."

"Right."

Brian moved carefully to place himself between the Siamese and the Roman cat. The latter stayed frozen while the former looked up at him indignantly. Diana crept on silent goddess feet toward Inscrutable, who now changed course to maneuver around Brian, who moved right as the cat moved left, like they were playing one-on-one.

Inscrutable stopped. Brian stopped. Inscrutable right, Brian left. Diana was almost on him. He moved to his left and forward; Brian moved right and backward, and stepped on something soft. A high-pitched eerrooRAWOW! pierced his skull as claws raked his ankle. He yelled and jumped and Inscrutable jumped and Diana jumped and something scurried away, and then Brian was on his back with Diana's elbow on his chest. She held desperately to the Siamese's tail and the cat, looking to escape, scratched its way twice across Brian's face. Then it turned on Diana, biting her thumb. She screamed and the cat vanished into the darkness.

Diana held her wounded right thumb in her left hand and wailed sort of like the cat. "Goddamn horny bastard!"

"What'd I do?" asked Brian.

"Come on, we've got to find it."

Instead of cats, they found Secret Service agents, who told their lapels to "be advised two embassy personnel report Saratoga missing," which brought dozens of people from the residence. A tall woman, who identified herself as Gloria Simpson, took a radio from an agent and began barking orders. The ground lights came on and, organized by a dozen conflicting voices, diplomats and drivers and cooks and agents spread out to search the spacious gardens.

Brian and Diana avoided the hostile sleepy eyes all around them, but no one said anything except Simpson, who demanded, "Where's my suitcase?" before she disappeared. No one else dared disappear and they wandered through the night from bush to cranny to shed, until the dawn brought two busloads of sailors and Marines from Naples; soon after, Brian and Diana were sent away.

The DCM assigned both of them as search party liaisons "for the duration," and although not in her party, Brian was happy to be out looking for the cat; finding it would win gratitude, perhaps admiration. Perhaps more. In any case, it was better to search for cats than to placate White House aides or edit transcripts. He even enjoyed his widening tour of Rome — by the second afternoon they had searched from the far end of the Borghese Gardens to the Piazza del Popolo — except for the grinning Marines showing him scrawny cats and asking, "SIR! IS THIS THE FELINE, SIR?" He'd growl back, "Stow that crap, Marine!" But he couldn't stop their speculating about "that blonde number who screwed up bigtime." They had no right at all to imagine the gratitude of moon-bright Diana.

He saw her next in twilight, in the embassy parking lot where the president would greet the staff — an event to which even the disgraced were summoned. But his joy at seeing her was chastened by her tired troubled eyes.

"Maybe I can get a job on one of those tourist buses, pointing out the Vatican to senior citizens from Des Moines," she said bitterly.

"You'll never have to do that, Diana." Promise.

"All my life I'll be Diana Ventura, The Woman Who Lost the Cat."

You don't have to be Diana Ventura all your life.

"You know what Bob told me? 'Find the cat or get on the plane.' Like I'm not miserable enough already, he has to stomp on my face."

F O C U S

"Well, he's the DCM, Diana. It's his job."

The assembled staffers stirred when a parade of important paper-carriers emerged from the Consular Section door. Then the ambassador appeared to announce "the president of the United States!" and suddenly she was there in the floodlights, the president herself, and the first gentleman! The staff applauded and cheered the familiar faces so long known to all of them.

"Hi! Thanks for being here! Thanks for all your help!" the president said cheerfully, adding a few words about the importance of it all, and then she began shaking the worshipful hands introduced to her by the ambassador. As she worked the crowd, the line of people collapsed and reformed and split again. Diana and Brian maneuvered backward, trying to escape notice, but it was not their week: Suddenly The Hand was extended to Diana and the ambassador nervously announced, "Diana Ventura, one of our young economic officers."

"Diana!" smiled the president. "Are you the one —?"

"Yes, Ms. President, I'm the one."

"No," coughed Brian. "Excuse me, Ms. President, I'm the one."

"Brian Brown," sighed the ambassador. "Consular officer."

"How sweet," said the president, looking from Brian to Diana and back again. "And I'll tell you a secret," she added, leaning close. "I hate that cat. But find it anyway — Pat's driving me crazy! I'll be so grateful."

And then she was gone.

"She'll be 'so grateful' that you'll get double promotions or something. Maybe." Brian spoke cautiously, afraid either to dash hope or encourage illusions.

"Or a job in the White House," she added dreamily.

"I hope it's not real soon." He looked at her with all the pain of separation in his eyes.

"Not likely," she answered harshly, the pain of disillusion in her own. "That cat's probably dead by now, flattened on the Corso d'Italia or somewhere."

Brian kept a respectful silence as they walked slowly through the tree-lined parking lot. That lousy cat!, he thought. It's somewhere at this moment. Where? "Well," he asked himself. "Where would I go?"

He gazed around the ever-illuminated embassy grounds. Cats lived here, of course, and in the Villa Borghese; he'd seen them sunning themselves in the Forum and on the battlements of San Angelo Castle. But where would a tomcat go to find an inexhaustible supply of cats all together? He

had only to pose the question to answer it.

"Diana!" he said urgently. "The Coliseum!"

The wizened little guard stepped out of his smoke-filled cubicle looking as though he'd been guarding the place since it opened. As they explained their mission, his face changed from irritation to puzzlement to amazement: *i signori americani* wanted to enter the Coliseum now, four hours after it closed, to look for a cat?

"I'm sure the Foreign Minister will be most grateful," coaxed Brian.

"But," asked the guard, "What about the minister of *Beni culturali*, eh? The Foreign Ministry doesn't control the Coliseum, does it?"

"Oh Brian," said Diana hopelessly. "That would take weeks! And how could he have come this far anyway?"

Diana discouraged was more than he could bear. "Just give me a minute, OK?"

She let out a long sigh and shrugged.

Brian smiled wanly at the guard, opened his hands in a Roman gesture and put an arm gently on the man's shoulder, leading him a few feet away.

"*E la fidanzata*," he confided. "My girlfriend's heartbroken about the cat."

"Ah, *poveretta!*" the old man sighed, looking towards her. "And so beautiful!"

"Yes," agreed Brian sadly. "But she can't think of anything until we find it."

The guard began nodding and moving his right hand jerkily up and down, emitting a low melodious sympathetic ceeehhhh. "*Va bene*, just this once—but don't take any of the stones!"

They stumbled down the walkway to the small viewing area and, despite their urgency, stopped to gaze: The moon shone on half the ancient stadium, only to leave the other half in deeper obscurity; the effect was almost musical.

"Beautiful," said Diana. "But how will we see a cat?"

"Look," he whispered. "There's one — and another. And two more."

On the ruins of the ancient tribunes, and in the niches along the wall, and the ledges, and on the stairways which had led festive Romans to their seats 1,800 years before, small vague spots of darkness moved cautiously, or jumped, or calmly sat and licked themselves. All cats are gray in the moonlight, too, but soon they could distinguish them by size at least. None looked half the size of Inscrutable.

F O C U S

"He could be out there and we still wouldn't see him," complained Diana. "And if he's down there," indicating the blackness of the ancient subterranean passages long since exposed to the sky, "we'll never find him, even if he's here!" She seemed on the verge of sobbing. Brian's own heart ached. He determined to be brave for both of them.

"Wait," he said. "Just wait. Inscrutable isn't here to study architecture. He'll be moving."

Weary Diana leaned lightly against him as they searched stones old beyond imagining, bathed in moonlight as ancient as time yet always newly arrived to show lovers in softest light. Perhaps they'd find their prize, perhaps not, but for Brian this moment mattered more than a cat or a career.

"He's there," she said quietly, breaking the spell.

"Where?"

"On the other side, climbing up from the ... locker rooms, or whatever."

In a stadium full of cats, there was no mistaking his heroic stature and majestic stride, as if he were a waking lion eager for Christian breakfast. Most of the other cats edged quickly away from him, like waves pushed from the bow of a warship, but some sat and looked back in coy admiration. Inscrutable studied them appraisingly.

"You go that way," whispered Brian, pointing with the gunny sack. She nodded.

It wasn't easy picking a route through the maze of ruined walls and bleachers. Sometimes they had to jump carefully over chasms through which lions and gladiators once passed and then look quickly again for their moving prey, for Inscrutable had set his own course toward a gray shadow 10 feet above him, which jumped from one stone to another, wailing as Inscrutable closed. Brian willed the Roman cat to cooperate, to occupy the single-minded visitor just long enough.

Their progress described a strange clock-like dance to the cat's singing as Diana and Brian, the hands, moved around the face of the Coliseum to Inscrutable's noon. The female reached the outer wall as Brian and Diana closed behind the Siamese, which seemed to lose patience.

Brian got the sack ready. The female could go no further: Inscrutable and he crept forward together — and then she jumped, somehow elevating herself 10 feet onto the top of the wall. Brian cursed but Inscrutable seemed neither surprised nor concerned; surveying the distance casually, he jumped himself, landing within two feet of the

other cat. The low wailing grew urgent.

Brian moved quickly now. What need caution when all could be lost within minutes? Throwing the bag to Diana he began climbing, digging his fingers into the ancient wall, scratching for footholds. The rough bricks raked his face and legs, opening old wounds, but he ignored the pain, concentrating entirely on the wall's edge, which jerked steadily closer.

He could not see the cats but their raucous lovesong guided him truly and well. He slipped, and made a racket catching himself, then listened breathlessly. Still the wailing. He sighed in relief: One more foothold and his head would pop above the wall.

He calculated the cat's location in relation to his head and hand as he stood up.

Picture it in your mind, he thought, like shooting freethrows. Push up with the left leg, right arm around the cat, tuck him to your side, and scramble down, pluck him in the sack. Right. He took a deep breath and pushed up.

The two of them looked at him in surprise and disgust but their shock provided his opportunity: He punched his fist through the air and wrapped it around the Siamese in one motion, then felt for the foothold below. But Inscrutable was no longer in shock.

They really do go for your throat, Brian thought in amazement. Even a damned housecat. He turned his face away and held as tightly as he dared — Inscrutable dead solved no problems. But the ungrateful beast reached across somehow to draw deep gouges in Brian's left hand, causing him to lose his grip, and his balance. He landed backwards on something hard and jagged; despite the pain spreading from head to hips to feet, he rejoiced that he could now use two hands to control the demonic thing on his chest.

"Put him in! Put him in, quick!" Diana rushed to his side, holding open the sack.

Brian rolled to his left, pushed Inscrutable deep into the sack and let go as Diana closed it. As he squeezed his hands out, the cat got in some final shots at his fingers.

"We did it!" Diana announced happily, tying the sack.

"Yes," he moaned. "We did." As he sat up he heard strange clicking noises in his neck and back.

"You son-of-a-bitch," she smiled, holding up the sack which twisted and hissed.

As Brian stood up his ribs seemed to grate. "Ooo-ahh!"

F O C U S

Brian groaned, standing up shakily.

"You O.K.?" she asked, putting down the sack.

He gazed at her gratefully, saying, "Sure. Just a scratch."

"Hey, good job getting the cat, Brian. Thanks."

All the pain disappeared. It dissolved away like the heat of a summer's day when sun gives way to moon, and soft seaborne breezes chase away the dust and noise of noon. She had seen; she knew; she cared. He looked on her face in the moonlight and thought it wonderful that he had found future happiness in this site of ancient suffering.

"Diana," he said hoarsely, "I'm just glad ... just glad I could do it. For you."

"Oh," she said, surprised, looking at him again in a different way.

"I mean, these have been the happiest hours of my life, Diana. Being with you, I mean."

She continued to gaze at him, her lips parting slightly. The moonlight reflected off her alabaster forehead and in her blue eyes, and her dainty hand shone as white as the stone on which it lay. He could contain himself no more:

Placing his rough hand gently on her white hand, he choked, "Diana, I think — I know, I'm ... in, like, love. With you."

Her eyes flashed recognition, or perhaps confirmation, as if she saw now clearly what she felt but did not understand before. A smile played on her lips as she watched his hand gently slide up her arm, as if he had awakened some primal memory deep in her modern woman's heart, and transformed fond fantasy to frank proud desire which demanded satisfaction here and now without fear or guilt or shame. She pulled her hand gently away from his, pivoted slightly toward her right, and then swung back gleefully to punch him in the mouth.

Brian fell back over a low wall and sprawled among the ruins, staring vaguely past Diana frozen in triumph, toward the upper wall of the Coliseum, at cats. They returned bored glances: Cruelty was nothing novel here, nor harsh justice, nor the decline and fall of empires. ■

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THE DOLL

BY FRANCES M. KNOWLES

The first I ever heard of the colonel and his wife came about when my husband proposed, midway during our home leave in late 1957, that I accompany him to Macy's in New York City to advise him regarding the purchase of a doll. "A doll?" his parents and I chorused simultaneously. "For whom?"

"For an acquaintance. ... A colonel ... in the Japan Self-Defense Force." They had been introduced by a mutual friend at a males-only social function. After exchanging calling cards — a ritual among men in Japan — they had a spirited conversation, each taking an immediate liking to the other. When the colonel suggested they meet again, my husband enthusiastically agreed, stipulating, however, that such a meeting must be postponed until after the first of the year, for he was to leave Tokyo the following week for home leave where he would join me. I had preceded him to the United States to spend time with my ailing father. My husband happened to mention that his hometown was a few miles from New York City.

Two days prior to his departure, my husband received a telephone call from the colonel, who pleaded for an appointment to discuss a personal

matter of much urgency. They met for dinner the following evening, during the course of which the colonel related this heart-wrenching tale: A few years after the end of the war, the colonel's infant daughter, born after almost 12 years of a childless marriage, had died. She had been ailing since her birth, suffering from a heart problem untreatable in 1948. Although the prognosis was terminal, the colonel and his wife never gave up hope, tending to that baby every minute of every day during the four months she clung to life.

When the infant finally succumbed, his wife was inconsolable, withdrawing into a world of her own, wanting little contact with him and none at all with their family and friends. It was not until the early 1950s that he came into possession of an American-made doll — a pink-and-white, chubby, baby doll with blue eyes that opened and closed, flexible arms and legs, a rotating head, and — the colonel bragged — the ability to trigger little "mama" cries when it was held in a certain position. His wife's recovery from her depression, the colonel said, was instantaneous from the moment he had put that baby doll into her arms. For all the years since, she had cared

for the doll as though it were her own dead baby, dressing it, bathing it, talking to it, pretending to feed it, and nursing it when she thought it was ill. The outside world, even the couple's families, knew nothing of the doll. The colonel said he was telling his secret to my husband because of a favor he was about to ask.

Lately, the colonel confided, he had become concerned about his wife. She was sinking into another



ROSEMARY HENRY-MAW

Frances Knowles is a Foreign Service spouse whose husband John was posted twice to Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Sapporo, Wellington, and twice to Okinawa, where he was consul general. She is finishing two novels, and this is her first published story.

F O C U S

The colonel pleaded for an appointment with my husband to discuss a personal matter of much urgency. The following evening, the colonel related this heart-wrenching tale.

deeper, more severe depression than her previous one, claiming that the baby she had tended during the past five years should have grown some by now, but that the doll was still infant size. The colonel had seen somewhere — who knew where — a New York City Macy's advertisement depicting a doll that resembled a little girl and he thought it the perfect replacement for the baby doll, in which his wife was showing less and less interest. Since my husband had mentioned he would be staying near New York City, would he be kind enough to purchase this doll and bring it back to Tokyo? My husband said he could do nothing but agree to the man's request.

"And you're going to do it? Buy a doll that looks like a little girl? Prolong that poor woman's fantasy?" I asked, disbelieving that he would actually be a party to such mischief.

"I promised," was his answer.

"Well, I'll have nothing to do with it. The woman is obviously demented and the colonel sounds as though he could benefit from a session with a psychiatrist himself," I said. But, despite my objections he did go to Macy's, returning in mid-afternoon carrying a cumbersome box. He wanted me to look at the doll to see if it did, indeed, meet the colonel's requirements, but I refused to even peek at the thing, and the box was never opened.

Our home leave nearly at an end, we repacked our footlocker which we planned to forward to Tokyo a week prior to our departure with the hope that it would arrive there at about the same time we did. The doll and its box weighed only a few pounds and fit perfectly into the footlocker, but it took up so much space that we were obliged to purchase another suitcase to accommodate the overflow of our personal belongings. This extra bag and its contents, when added to our other baggage, put us over the weight limit, thereby requiring a hefty sum to be paid to the airline. We flew to San Francisco, boarded a President Line ship and sailed to Yokohama via Honolulu. To be honest, I harbored no small amount of ill will toward the colonel for these unnecessary expenditures.

I had all but forgotten the colonel and his accursed doll during the passage across the Pacific. But even before the door closed behind us in the *genkan* or foyer of our Japanese-style house, the maid, Kiku-san, informed my husband that a man, identifying himself as a colonel and a personal friend, had been telephoning every day for the past week, sometimes twice a day, to ascertain whether or not we had returned home. It was imperative, she emphasized, that *danna-san* (the master of the house) return the colonel's calls immediately, for it was a matter of utmost importance.

I heard my husband's part of that telephone conversation, which was in Japanese, and the word "footlocker" mentioned several times. When he hung up, he looked pensive. "The colonel's wife is seriously depressed. She's neglecting her baby — I mean the doll! Hasn't fed or bathed it in a week or more. The colonel's very worried."

"He should be worried about being worried that his wife is neglecting a doll! And I'm worried that you're worried about the colonel being worried!" I snapped at him.

"I hope that footlocker gets here soon."

"So do I! Most of our winter clothes are in it!"

"We can always buy new clothes," he answered. "But the doll —"

"Forget that doll! Forget the colonel and his demented wife!"

But my husband was unable to forget. He made a nuisance of himself, telephoning a staff member in the embassy office that handled such matters as incoming overseas baggage to ascertain when he might expect delivery of the footlocker. At last, 12 days after our return, he was informed that it had arrived and we could expect to receive it on Wednesday, two days hence. That night my husband called the colonel with the good news.

"I've invited the colonel and his wife to come here on Thursday, about 4 o'clock. Is that all right with you?"

"Thursday? I'll tell Kiku-san to prepare something. I might not be here. I don't really want to meet the colonel and his goofy wife," I said.

F O C U S

"Please don't be so hard-hearted. It means a lot to the man."

"Hard-hearted? I'm not hard-hearted! I'm sensible! No couple in the whole world would spend all these years devoting their time and energy rearing a doll! For God's sake, face reality. A colonel, a bona fide colonel, aiding and abetting his wife into believing she's caring for a baby, a live, honest-to-goodness baby! It's wicked. Do we have a baby? No, we don't. What if I bought a doll and began mothering it? You'd put me in a loony bin!"

"No, not if it was your only solace," he said in such an anguished voice, I melted.

"All right then. I'll be here. I'll play the game. But I'm still dubious. What happens when the colonel's wife thinks this new doll should have grown up? Will you go back to Macy's and buy a full-size mannequin for her?" He didn't answer me.

The front gate bell ground out its alert at precisely 4 o'clock on the appointed day. The doll in its box stood in the far corner of the living room. The day was sunless, damp, cold, and gloomy: funereal weather. All the lamps were lit and the gas stove, our sole source of heat, glowed red. The maid ran — she always ran — from the *genkan* around the house to receive the callers. My husband and I stood at the window watching them as they made their way up the winding path: the colonel walking, military style, shoulders back, immediately behind the maid, while his wife, somewhat hunched over, followed. The visitors carried umbrellas, for the sky looked ominous.

We greeted our guests in the tiny *genkan* with the obligatory bows which were returned two-fold. The maid relieved them of their coats, footwear was exchanged for felt slippers, and the visitors stepped up into the living room. I was introduced, first to the colonel and then to his wife, and then my husband was introduced to the colonel's wife, or vice versa; I was so tense I can't remember precisely. The wife handed me a small, nicely wrapped package and indicated, by a gesture of her hand, that I might like to open it. Two dainty little handkerchiefs, with a "K" embroidered in the corners brought forth an appreciative "Ah" from me. "My wife, she make them for you," the colonel said in English.

I bowed and thanked her profusely. She returned the bow gracefully, mumbling the customary, "Don't mention

it; it is insignificant." We all sat down. Kiku-san brought in the refreshments. I poured coffee, proffered the plate of sweets while the colonel, my husband, and I made inane conversation about the miserable Tokyo weather, the number of days it took a body to readjust to the time difference between Japan and the United States when one flew, but how fortunate my husband and I were to be spared that problem having come by sea, and how we all looked forward to spring. The colonel's wife spoke not a word. She sat on the edge of her chair, her hands folded in her lap, her eyes riveted to the floor.

Even now, some three and a half decades later, although I've forgotten their surname, I can visualize the colonel and his wife as they looked that day. She was a glum-faced, slightly buck-toothed, diminutive woman in her mid-forties, with a sallow complexion, black hair rolled into a loose chignon, attired in a dark brown kimono, a somber grayish *obi* wrapped around her waist, and immaculate white *tabi* on her feet. The colonel, conversely, was a head taller than his wife, robust, with high color, affable, and handsome with graying hair plastered down with a sickening sweet-smelling pomade. He must have been older than his wife, as are most Japanese men older than their spouses, but he looked years younger. I remember thinking that the colonel's wife was one of the most unattractive Japanese women I had ever seen and wondering how he, so pleasing to look at in his well-tailored dark gray suit, white shirt, and dark blue tie, had ever coupled himself with her.

"And your vacation in America. How was it?" the colonel asked me in English.

"Very enjoyable," I replied.

"And how is your father? Your husband, I recall, said your father was not well and you were visiting him for a few months."

"His health is improving," I answered. "Thank you for asking." For the next 15 minutes or so, we chit-chatted, my husband to the colonel's wife in Japanese, she never looking directly at him, answering his questions in the Japanese equivalent of, "Yes, that is so," or some such. The colonel and I spoke in English, his intelligible but somewhat stilted. Still, I thought him charming.

My husband had just about exhausted his repertoire of male-to-female small talk with the colonel's wife. He looked at his watch. "Colonel," he said in Japanese, "It's getting on to 5 o'clock. How about switching to something more than

F O C U S

coffee? Would you join me in a drink?" The colonel's face broke into a broad grin, his eyes almost disappearing as his substantial cheeks ballooned. He nodded enthusiastically. "And as for you," my husband addressed the colonel's wife, "may I get you something? Sherry? Sake? Scotch?"

The colonel put up his hand. "Don't even ask her. She's quite content with coffee. She doesn't drink alcohol, none at all, not even a sip of beer," he explained. "But, of course, I do, maybe too much sometimes." He leaned toward his wife. In a gentle, cajoling voice, different from his conversational tone, almost as though he were speaking to a child, he asked her, "Isn't that right? Don't you often tell me so, that I have a tendency to drink too much?" Her lips parted into the smallest of a smile and her head bobbed up and down.

Another 30 minutes passed. The colonel looked about the room and spied the box in the far corner. "About that favor I asked of you," he said to my husband. The box was retrieved from its resting place and set down next to the colonel's chair. Not until he had finished his drink and set

his glass down did he rise and carry the box to his wife. He placed it in front of her and she bowed her head in thanks, not looking at him. He smiled at her. "Open it! Open it," he urged. When she made no move to do so, he said, "Do you want me to open it for you?" She shook her head no.

"Then open it! Pull the string, take off the paper and look inside," he commanded, resuming his seat. Ever so slowly she did exactly that: First the string was untied and rolled up, then, carefully, the Macy's paper was removed, folded neatly and set at her feet and finally the cover of the box was lifted. The rustling of tissue paper in which the doll was wrapped and the hissing kettle on the gas stove were the only sounds in the room.

"Oooh," she whispered. "Oooh." The colonel got up and walked the few steps to stand at her side. She looked up at him and her little, homely face changed as she smiled her thanks.

"Do you like her?" he asked in a soft voice.

"Subarashi! Subarashi!" she answered.

"My wife thinks she is beautiful. Very beautiful," he

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interpreted for me. His wife finally lifted the doll from its container. The thing appeared to be a few inches above two feet tall but with its blond Shirley Temple curls and the blue bow pinned over them, it seemed taller. On its feet were white socks and black patent leather Mary Janes. Its lips, in a perpetual smile, were painted red and little white teeth showed between them. There were dimples in its pink cheeks. It wore a blue velvet dress, the shade matching its thickly lashed eyes, which opened and closed flirtatiously when its head was moved. On one chubby wrist was a bead bracelet while a miniature velvet purse dangled from the other. She caressed the doll's cheeks, fondled the curls, peeked under the skirt, set the thing on the floor in front of her where it stood for a few seconds and then she lifted it, enfolded it in her arms and hugged it to her flat chest. She rocked with it, from side to side, murmuring unintelligible words into its blond curls.

That pitiful gesture brought tears to my eyes so that I was temporarily blinded. My husband was so overcome, he bolted from the room. The sounds of coughing and

hearty nose-blowing in the bathroom went unnoticed by the colonel and his wife who appeared to be aware of nothing but each other and the doll. When I could focus my eyes again, I saw the colonel bent over, holding the doll's arms, as one would do when helping a child take its first steps, guiding the thing along the carpet. His wife clapped her hands as though encouraging the doll to walk on its own. She, for the first time since her arrival, looked me directly in the eyes. She was beaming. She rose, bowed to me not once, but three or four times and said in Japanese, "Thank you! Thank you very much! I am so grateful to you."

I made a dismissive gesture, replying, hypocritically, "Oh no. Don't even mention it. It was nothing. Nothing at all."

When my husband reappeared, I could see that he had splashed water on his face and eyes, for his shirt was spotted, and he was now completely composed.

The colonel returned the doll to his wife's lap. "Look how happy that woman of mine is!" he said, gesturing

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toward her. "I know how it will be! She'll start making clothes for the little one the minute she gets home and that will keep her so busy, she'll have no time to shop or prepare my meals or keep the house in order. I'll be completely ignored. Isn't that so?" he asked her.

"You!" she said reprovingly and grinned at him. She was not so homely when she smiled. Not so homely at all.

"Well," the colonel said after another few minutes had passed, "this has been a momentous day. I know I also speak for my wife when I tell you how appreciative we are for your kindness to us." He made a slight bow to my husband. "It was providence that brought us together, I think. The little one," and he gestured toward the doll, "is even more beautiful than I'd hoped for." Then in English he said, "Perhaps it was your good wife who chose her?" He looked to me for confirmation. I forced my lips into a smile, neither agreeing nor denying that I had participated in its purchase. "Now it's time for us to be on our way." He motioned to my husband and both men adjourned to the far side of the room where they talked for a moment

or two. A piece of paper was handed over — the receipt from Macy's, I surmised — and the colonel looked at it, removed an envelope from his pocket, checked its contents, and placed it on a shelf of the bookcase.

His wife gave the doll another hug then carefully laid it in the box, fidgeted with its dress, covered it with the tissue paper, rewrapped the box in its Macy's paper, tied the string around it and rose. She bowed several times as did the colonel. My husband and I saw the guests to the *genkan* door where they dropped their slippers, the colonel putting on his shoes and his wife slipping her feet into her *zori*. The maid helped them into their coats. Another round of bows and they were gone. We watched them as they made their way toward the front gate and the street, Kiku-san, with a flashlight illuminating the path, in the lead, the colonel, clasping the unwieldy box in his arms, right behind her, and the colonel's wife, carrying their umbrellas, in the rear. They saw us at the lighted window and bowed several times. We waved goodbye. We never saw either one of them again. ■

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AN EGG FOR BREAKFAST

BY EDWARD J. CVETAN

Each evening Musick Mikaush had prayed to Our Blessed Mother that the chickens in the unused roof cistern would not be discovered, that their innocent noises, their clucking and the lone-crow-ing of his one rooster wouldn't betray him. Every morning when the sun sent its tender arms around the callused land, the cock unruffled his feathers and crowed. It was a happy sound not even Musick could hear, for he had chinked the old walls so that no sound from the cistern could reach the military men on the ground.

Now Musick regretted that his fervent heavenly pleas had not covered all eventualities. He should have prayed for his dog, too. He should have implored heaven to protect him from this dog he called Ferdie, the constant companion that followed his every step, and looked to him time after time, as if asking questions Musick would guess at and take time to answer in childlike tones.

Yet, how could Musick have thought to pray for the dog when he had no idea that Ferdie's animal ignorance would prompt the dog to take up the

empty shell, and with friendly enthusiasm, carry it, cradled in his mouth, and drop it at the steel tocs of a military patrol?

How does one pray for protection against something that could not happen but inexplicably does?

Soon, in the bleached dawn, the military contingent will come, five or six, out of formation and dressed in wrinkled olive drab. Musick has watched them each morning since the revolution and prayed whenever neighbors were pulled from their home and marched in front of the squad. Never again to be seen.

The squad leader is Suskow, an owl-faced man, his age too young and at the same time too old to guess. He wears a saber. It is sheathed in heavy leather tooled with howling silver wolves and two dingy tassels knotted at its throat. At each step, the saber slaps his knee. Suskow wears the Order of the Twelve High, an orange star, on his tunic and this alone is reason to fear him.

When this detachment reaches Musick Mikaush's old door it will stop and the coarse, hob-nailed boots of the five or six will rasp on the gravel. Because these men are

bored with the routine duty they must perform — arresting those who are known free-thinkers and, therefore, capable of being anarchists — they are impatient and that gives them the nerve to say dirty things to each other about Suskow. The squad leader will curse them. "Quiet, you fools!"

He will toss his head, which looks so much like a night predator's. The men know what will happen if



ROSEMARY HENRY-MAV

Edward J. Cvetan is a retired Foreign Service staff officer for State. He served at 10 missions, primarily in Europe and the Near East. His last assignment, before retiring in 1983, was Djakarta. This story is based on an idea that germinated during a 1979 visit to an illegal farmer's market near U.S. Embassy Moscow.

F O C U S

How does one pray for protection against something that could not happen but inexplicably does?

they persist. They will hold their tongues and their uneasy boots will be quiet. Suskow will clench a fist, bring it down on Musick's door, hammer until the planks threaten to separate from their ancient spikes and cast hinges. "Hey!" Suskow will shout. "Traitor of the people, show us your soiled backside."

Inside, Musick will cringe and wish he had the courage to be self-disposed and to have the bravery to open the door and face Suskow's fearsome scowl. But Musick knows he is not courageous or brave. He will shiver and will be immobilized as he imagines what will happen when Suskow breaks down the door.

"Hey, you, Musick Mikaush. You want it should go hard on you? Traitor! Show yourself before I break in the door."

Musick knows this will happen to him and Musick also knows he will be taken away and he will disappear so that no one he knows will see him again. He has seen this unholy scene acted out on his neighbors, who, like him, had scorned or violated the decrees of the conquering regime.

He thinks of valiant Drezda, the bent great-grandmother who had lived next door. She had made a gift of a basket of potatoes, laced with Paris green, and delivered them herself to the palace gate. One of the Twelve Most High died and two others were gravely ill for days. Musick watched through cracks of his bolted upstairs shutters as Suskow's group dragged her from her small cottage. An hour later shots rang out from the palace courtyard.

An edict was announced: Every citizen was required to show respect to the Twelve Most High by spitting on Drezda's corpse. How his spine had iced and pained when he forced himself to spit! He had knelt, his way of apologizing, knowing she'd understand how he detested what he had to do.

The morning he awakened and learned their humble king was gone and new leaders were in power seemed incredibly long ago, although it had been less

than a year. The king hung from the church spire in the square to remind the people they had new rulers. Alongside, the village priest was hanged, still in his cassock.

Raptors stripped the bones of these two martyrs. Today they are weathered skeletons dangling from the tarnished cross of the church whose once sacred structure is defiled by dirty words and obscene markings. When the wind blows from the north the martyrs rattle against the spire and villagers murmur that God is talking to them.

"Listen!" they admonish their young ones. "Pay attention!" they warn. On the day the king's army lost its final battle the new rulers held a contest. The first person who put a stone in the glorious rosette window just above the great church doors would be called a state hero. A medal would be awarded in the town square and every other citizen would have to bow to that person.

The rosette window wreathed Christ in His agony of contemplation at Gethsemane. The wondering citizens thronged in the square revered the church but were too frightened to protest. They formed small knots. Some were so nervous they giggled, but most were morose. Women, some in aprons, and one, interrupted in bread making, hands white with flour, made their signs of the cross. Men were seen striking their breasts. School boys, ambitious to have fun no matter how serious the proceedings, chased each other around the square. One boy, the town bully, shouted a boast: He could hit that window from a mile away.

"Oh, yeah?" his companions taunted. They dared him to try. A woman in the crowd, the bully's mother, shoved through the crowd and tweaked his ear.

"Don't you dare," she said.

The gang of boys roamed to the other side of the square where Musick stood with his neighbor, an 80-year-old man.

The citizens stood around and waited. The church had been there before any one of them, had guided

F O C U S

them past the sign posts of life: births, baptisms, confessions, communions, romances, marriages, deaths.

It was their companion and their confidante to the day they died. They did not doubt that what the church said about everlasting life was truth. They believed they would look back from a better world and see their loved ones and friends left behind. They had faith that from this other world they would watch while their abandoned earth-body was anointed, mourned and buried in the church yard.

For a time nothing happened. Not one of the citizens threw a stone. They wanted the rosette window saved for their children's children. They needed the anguished countenance of Jesus Christ to remain, to show future generations how to respect God in prayer. Then from the depths came a stone.

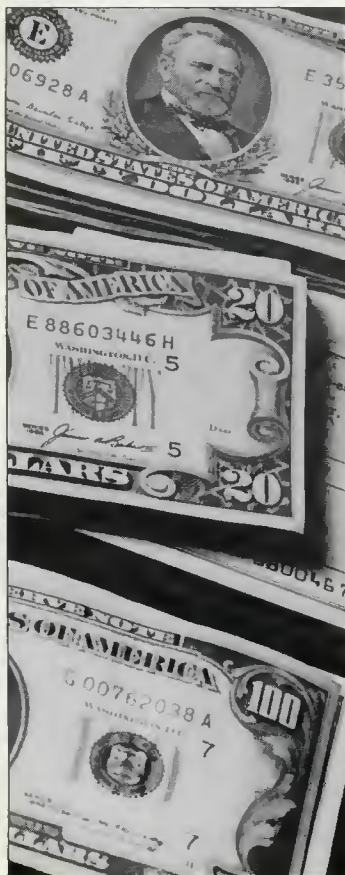
It hit the front of the church, clattered away and didn't damage the window. Someone whispered that the stone was thrown by one of the conquering soldiers. There were gasps. That stone should have been the only

one but instead it made some think that hitting the window was a game of skill. Excitement mounted; some in the crowd began to shout; others wept.

Still others, mostly boys but also a few men, wanted to be the first to score. Stones clattered like scattered hailstones from the spire, from around the window; one even from the doorway of the church, so far from its mark that the one who hurled it was jeered.

Then one found its mark. A soldier bet Musick's neighbor, the 80-year-old man, that he was too old to throw a stone that far. The man took the offered stone and heaved it. It was the only stone he needed. It destroyed the window. The very center — Christ's face bathed in celestial light — shattered.

Two soldiers paraded the man around the square on their shoulders. Women hissed and men scowled. Musick's neighbor swore at them all, but that night he hanged himself in the nave, his noose slung from around the right arm of his crucified Savior. The brass hero medal dangled from his breast and glared at the people.



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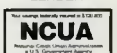
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F O C U S

Now the hearts of the people are full of fear and as empty of love as the hollow church.

Musick shivered. Tomorrow the reassuring comfort of his old oaken door would be violated. It was dark without a moon and Musick could hear the slaps of the boots of the soldier on the corner as he made his rounds. Musick slept a while, was awakened by Ferdie's nose. The dog was anxious for the day to begin.

Musick rose and lighted the old stove. The strong blue smoke of horse chips made his nostrils twitch. He put a shallow pan of water on the fire and climbed the cistern steps. Ferdie followed close at his heels.

By the thin light of starting dawn, Musick searched the roost. The dog, his ribs smooth and even beneath his tight fur, waited at the door. His tail hugged his flanks as he waited.

A mile away, from the military barracks, a bugle sounded. The Home Guard would now be filing outside to stand muster. A few minutes later, Suskow's

detachment would march with their orders.

Morning showed itself with mere gray streaks. Musick made a hole in the small end of the egg, sucked at the smooth insides. It was a luxurious meal. A regal meal. No wonder the Twelve Most High had imposed the penalty of death on anyone bold enough to steal an egg from the state.

He returned the empty egg shell to the chickens, then bolted the cistern door as if that could keep the chickens safe from the military men.

In the street came the pounding of boots on pavement. These sounds, common each morning, commanded the street's discreet attention. From behind shutters the people watched as Suskow's cadence brought his detachment closer, then, if one was lucky, past their door.

Musick reached for the dog. Ferdie's nose came into his palm. He held the dog's muzzle in the quiet way he had of showing his love. The dog's breath was slow and even on Musick's skin. ■



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WANDERINGS OF A COUCH POTATO

AN ARMCHAIR TRAVELER'S GUIDE
TO THE BEST NEW FOREIGN TRAVEL BOOKS

By KAREN KREBSBACH

Yawn. Stretch. Yawn. As usual, muggy Washington summers just make me wanna curl up under my beach umbrella and read. And, as millions of Americans pack suitcases and verify flight schedules for their annual foreign sojourns, this weary tourist-wannabe is gonna relax and read herself around the world.

As usual, books about Europe top the lists as Americans' most popular tourist destination, with hundreds of new books out this year alone. George and LaVerne Ferguson's 19th edition of *Europe by Eurail* (Globe Pequot Press) is jammed with schedules of training it through 23 cities in 17 countries via the various Eurailpasses. Though useful for its train culture — it even carries maps of innercity subways of most capitals — the guide isn't comprehensive in any other way. Most photos are out of date and out of focus, but, hey, if you can get there by train, this book will get you there on time. PBS Host Rick Steeves' *Europe Through the Back Door* (John Muir Publications) promises to help travelers through Europe with under \$50 a day — and down to \$20 a day, if you must — by following his "Six Commandments." These include: Minimize the use of

Karen Krebsbach is editor of the Journal. Most of these books can be found at the Rand McNally Map & Travel stores, via The Literate Traveler at 1-800-850-BOOK, or through their respective publishers.

hotels and restaurants; budget for price variances; adapt to European tastes; avoid the tourist centers; swallow your pride and save money; and be a good guest. His philosophy is simple: "A tight budget forces you to travel close to the ground, meeting and communicating with the people, not relying on service with a purchased smile. Never sacrifice sleep, nutrition, safety or cleanliness in the name of budget. Simply enjoy the local-style alternatives to hotels and restaurants." Smart and funny, this well-organized guide is useful even for the non-budget conscious.

Thinking about returning to Europe after many, many years? You might prepare yourself with Elaine Kendall's *Seeing Europe Again ... Confessions of a First World Traveler* (Capra Press), a witty, if uneven, collection of "confessions," as she calls them, that cover the basics of travel, including how to read the ads: "'Cozy,' 'tranquil' and 'centrally located' might well be 'cramped,' 'nothing do do' and 'smog and noisy motorcycles.'" Kendall believes the difference between First and Third World traveling often comes down to whether one's acquisitive instinct is sparked: "Once out of the First World, you might be excited, thrilled, challenged, edified, even stunned by your adventures, but chances are you'll zip right through customs, with nothing to declare," she observes.

Those who prefer to travel Europe like the Europeans do may consider renting a Venetian villa or a Swiss chalet with Michael and Laura Murphy's *Guide to Vacation Rentals in Europe* (Globe Pequot Press). This comprehensive detail-packed guide covers Austria,



ROSEMARY HENRY-MANN

F O C U S

Travelers' Tales, that romantic series of travelers' anecdotes, this year turns its eye on France. This sampler is rich in emotional nuance unavailable in fact-based guidebooks.

France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the U.K. This guide includes names, addresses and phone numbers of dozens of rental agencies; price averages; accessibility of the units to railway lines, highways and ferry terminals; and information on buying, leasing and renting cars.

Ten years ago, the Dublin-born Niall Williams and Christine Breen, who is also of Irish heritage, left behind their New York City careers to take up life in Breen's grandfather's stone farmhouse outside the village of Kilmihil in County Clare. Why? Because they sensed they belonged there. The fourth book in a series on the couple's life in western Ireland, *The Luck of the Irish, Our Life in County Clare* (Soho Press), is lush, reflective and, well, pretty darned compelling. Here in Ireland, the people are real, the scenery is extraordinary, and the life is difficult but satisfying.

The English have often been called the most idiosyncratic of Europeans, and this year, three new playful guides are available to help travelers tour a bit of England not experienced by the average traveler. Cedric Dickens, the great-grandson of Charles Dickens, penned his *Drinking with Dickens* (New Amsterdam) as a tribute to his famous relative. Replete with illustrations from Dickens' books, this volume also contains dozens of recipes of the elder Dickens' favorite alcoholic beverages. The author points out that his great-grandfather included many vivid drinking scenes in his fiction and was a regular at the pubs along the south bank of the Thames, as carefully chronicled here. But if you prefer rock and roll to rum, join Piet Schreuders, Mark Lewisohn and Adam Smith with a tour of more than 400 Beatles sites in and around London in *The Beatles London* (St. Martin's Press). Everything you never knew you wanted to know about the Fab Four. Even more fun is John Brooks' *The Good Ghost Guide* (Jarrod Press), which details 1,000 ghost sightings, hauntings and other supernatural legends of England, Scotland and Wales. Divided into 10 regions, the guide takes a no-non-

sense approach to ghost hunting, including an 11-symbol key to help the tourer distinguish which sites include ghostly music and which ones feature animal ghosts.

In 1950, Marie Bennett Alsmeyer and her husband Henry did what they now say was "a crazy, senseless thing to do." The couple bicycled 1,200 miles through France's Loire Valley, Normandy and Brittany, crossing to Southampton and back through the hook of Holland to Paris. This charming travelogue of two World War II veterans on a shoestring budget, *Six Days After D-Day: Cycling Through Europe* (University of North Texas Press), will probably never be a best seller, but it's a delightful read nonetheless. Alsmeyer pours over her old journals, letters and black-and-white photos to recreate the couple's nostalgic six-month journey.

Travelers' Tales, that creative, romantic literary series of travelers' anecdotes born in San Francisco, this year turns its eye on France, with *Travelers' Tales France*, collected and edited by James O'Reilly, Larry Habegger and Sean O'Reilly. This sampler, as have previous years' Tales on India and Thailand, is rich, providing the emotional nuance unavailable in fact-based guidebooks. This is the stuff memories can be duplicated from.

Tom Higgins' idiosyncratic *Spotted Duck, s'il vous plait: An English Restaurant in France* (Soho Press) is the story of an English couple's decision to open a restaurant serving English food in Lyon, arguably the world center of culinary excellence. As the English would say, it was a mad idea, but, in this delightful chronicle, Higgins actually pulls it off, churning out many a laugh as he pokes gentle fun at the French.

But for those who'd rather eat French and live French, Alastair Sawday's *Guide to French Beds and Breakfasts* (Alastair Sawday Publishing) is a good bet. Chosen by the French government's tourist office as the guide most recommended to tourists, its 500 offerings range from 200-year-old farmhouses to 15th-century hunting lodges to rooms in houses on working vineyards.

F O C U S

Documented with color photographs of each B&B and detailed maps — this guide's main goal is to present the authenticity of France. A tour operator and environmental activist, Sawday also lets travelers know which B&Bs offer organic food, wheelchair access and working farms. Not your typical guide.

Active families who want to see France on foot can check out Chet & Carolee Lipton's *Walking Easy in the French Alps* (Gateway Books), aimed at recreational walkers of all ages, but especially those over age 50. Covering Paris and five popular mountain towns in France, this book advises what to pack, what to wear and which trails to take, separated among "gentle," "comfortable" and "challenging" routes. The series also includes *Walking Easy in the Swiss Alps* and *Walking Easy in the Italian Alps*, the latter of which covers Venice and six popular mountain towns in Italy.

Two other recommended new books on Venice include Jan Morris' *The World of Venice* (Harvest Books) and John Freely's *Strolling Through Venice: Walks Taking in the History, Monuments and Beauty of Venice* (Penguin Books). Freely tours the banks of the Grand Canal, including 115 churches and 33 museums. Who can resist a closer look at this city, the "Gem of the Adriatic, Bride of the Sea?" Neither guidebook nor travelogue nor history, Morris' book is a strange compilation of all three. First written in 1960 when she was a foreign correspondent in Italy, Morris has revised the volume three times, becoming "a highly subjective, romantic picture less of a city than of an experience. It is Venice seen through a particular pair of eyes at a particular moment — young eyes at that, response above all to the stimuli of youth." No question, it's an odd assortment, out of sync with this decade, but Morris creates a composite portrait that rings true of one of the world's most romantic cities.

For a new take on Italy, Marlene McLoughlin's whimsical *Road to Rome, An Artist's year in Italy* (Chronicle Books) is an artist's sketchbook in watercolors, where the viewer travels from Florence to Rome via the hill towns of Arezzo, Siena, Montepulciano, Assisi, Todi and Cortona. Her illustrations are recommended more highly than her poetry, though. American novelist Henry James' 1909 luminous collection of essays, *Italian Hours* (Penguin Classics), was re-released this year, a welcome addition to the few 1995 travelogues of that region. In these essays

written from 1872-1909, James explores politics, culture and religion in meanderings ranging from Venice to Naples to Rome. This edition also includes an appendix of James' book reviews on Italian travel writing.

Finally, someone's thought about the children on the trip. Betsy Biggs' *Kidding Around, Spain, A Young Person's Guide* (John Muir Publications) is a colorfully-illustrated introduction to that country, jam-packed with the right mix of recreational and historical tidbits guaranteed not to bore even the youngest traveler. Also available for London and Paris, these guides are not recommended for children under age 10.

If uncrowded isles are more your cup of tea, check out Linda Lancione Moyer and Burl Willes' *Undiscovered Islands of the Mediterranean*. Reviewing islands off the coast of France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey, this guide promises to show travelers the ruins of a medieval castle, an active volcano, a funky nudist colony and secluded grottos for swimming — all without the bother of crowds. However, since the authors recommend traveling only in spring and fall, maybe these islands can only be considered "undiscovered" by American tourists.

In Eastern Europe, Rob Doston's *Eastern Europe by Rail* (Globe Pequot Press) has filled an information vacuum in that part of the world. Unfortunately, it's unsophisticated and not terribly detailed. *Chronicles Abroad's Istanbul, Tales of the City* takes on that city with a charming collection of writings from Herman Melville to Gore Vidal. For a deeper historical view of the area, try John Ash's *A Byzantine Journey* (Random House), a sort of odd, scholarly travelogue that begins in Istanbul, moves over the Sea of Marmara to Anatolia. A good read.

Few new Russian travelogues were published this year, but one delightful companion is John and Kirsten Miller's literary compilation of the best about St. Petersburg, the jewel of the Russian empire, *St. Petersburg's Tales of the City*, including some not-to-be-missed classics like Dostoyevsky's "Most Beloved" and Tolstoy's "Father Sergius." (Chronicle Books).

Traveler's Yellow Pages and Handbook (Info Services International, Inc.) for English-speaking residents and travellers to Russia & the Baltics, are terrific little "Yellow Pages" for Estonia, Northwest Russia, Moscow and Saint Petersburg, all new editions for 1995. It's organized alphabetically in English, with thousands of listings, maps

CHOOSING A CITY/COUNTRY GUIDEBOOK

The best way to choose a city or country guidebook is to read through a couple of versions of the series at a bookstore. The key is to find a series that addresses a traveler's particular needs, including the required level of travel comfort, budget limits and cultural interests.

Once a traveler selects a series — and uses it successfully — most travelers will stick with it as a source for additional city and country guides — at least until they're steered wrong. Indeed, guidebooks depend on reader loyalty, with many urging readers to correspond with the publisher on incorrect information or future additions. In most cases, however, a country guidebook is only as useful as its most up-to-date information. Frequent travelers, however, quickly realize that a book is only as good as its author, even if the series sets a level of standards. Many guidebooks, particularly the budget guides, are farmed out to inexperienced, lower-paid stringers who may not speak the local language or may have limited experience in the country.

Below is a list of the most popular country guidebooks, complete with 1995 publication schedules. The number in parenthesis indicates the number of its 1995 edition. Travel city and country videotapes are not included in this list.

The Asia Guides (Passport Books): Beijing (3); Bhutan (2-Nov.); Guizhou (1); Hong Kong (4-Oct.); Koh Samui (2); Shanghai (3); Nepal (1).

Berlitz Discover Guides (Globe Pequot Press): Canada (1); Turkey (1); Scandinavia (1).

Berlitz Pocket Guides (Globe Pequot Press): Athens (18); Bali (1); Berlin (1); Channel Islands (11); Copenhagen (17-Sept.); Corfu (21-Sept.); Costa Dorada & Tarragona (2); Cote d'Azur (17-Sept.); Cyprus (1); Dordogne (1); Florence (1); Greek Islands (18-Nov.); Ibiza (18-Sept.); Istanbul (6-Nov.); Jamaica (13-Nov.); Madeira (1); Mallorca (24-Sept.); Malta (2); Rhodes (1); Tunisia (17).

Baedeker Guides (MacMillan Publishing): Athens (2-Nov.); Austria (3-Sept.); Brazil (1); Budapest (3-Sept.); Copenhagen (3-Nov.); Greece (3-Sept.); Greek Islands (2-Sept.); Hong Kong (3-Nov.); Israel (3-Sept.); Nepal (1); Paris (3-Sept.); Prague (2-Sept.); Provence (2-Nov.); Singapore (2-Sept.); Tokyo (2-Sept.); Venice (2-Sept.); Vienna (3-Nov.).

Birbaum Guides (Harper Collins): Bahamas (2); Bermuda (2); Canada (2); Cancun (2); Caribbean (1); Eastern Europe (1); Europe (3); Europe for Business Travelers (3); France (3); Germany (3); Great Britain (3); Ireland (2); Italy (3); London (3); Mexico (1); Montreal & Quebec City (2); Paris (4); Portugal (2); Rome (4); South America (3); Spain (2).

Bradt Guides (Globe Pequot Press): Albania (1); Burma (2); Central and South America by Road (1-Dec.); Central America Backpacking (1-Dec.); Cuba (1); Estonia (1); Latvia (1); Lithuania (1); South Africa (1); Vietnam (2).

Cadogan Guides (Globe Pequot Press): Crete (1); Northern Ireland (2); South India (2); Southern Spain (1); Western Ireland (2).

Essential Travel Guides (Passport Books): Athens (1); Australia (1); Budapest (1); Florence and Tuscany (1); Israel (1); Ireland (1); New Zealand (1); Prague (1); Venice (1).

Fodor's Irreverent Guides (Random House): Bahamas (1-Oct.); Cancun & Cozamel (1-Oct.); London (1-Oct.).

Fodor's City Walking Tours (Random House): Spain's Favorite Cities (1); Tokyo (1); Venice (1).

Frommer's Driving Tours (MacMillan & Co.): Australia (1); Austria (1); Britain (2); France (2); Germany (2); Italy (2); Mexico

(2); Scandinavia (1); Scotland (2); Spain (2); Switzerland (1).

Frommer's Bed and Breakfast Guides (MacMillan & Co.): Bed and Breakfast in the Caribbean (1).

Insider's Guides (Hunter Publishing): Hong Kong (2); India (2); Mediterranean France (1 - Oct.); Portugal (1); Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (1).

Insight Guides (Houghton Mifflin): Argentina (3-Oct.); Budapest (2); Burma (9); Caribbean (3); Cuba (1); Ecuador (3); Greece (1); Greek Islands (1); Hungary (1); India (5); Malaysia (16); Prague (3); South Africa (2); Spain (2); Trinidad & Tobago (2-Oct.); South America (2); New Zealand (5); Israel (3); Mexico (6).

Inside Guides (Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center): Costa Rica (3); El Salvador (2); Honduras (1); Panama (1).

Karen Brown's Guides (Globe Pequot Press): Austrian Country Inns & Itineraries (1); English, Welsh and Scottish Country Hotels and Itineraries (8); French Country Inns and Itineraries (8); German Country Inns and Itineraries (5); Italian Country Bed & Breakfasts (3); Spanish Country Inns and Itineraries (5).

Handbooks of the World (Passport Books): Caribbean Islands (6); East Africa (1); India (4); Indonesia and Malaysia (3); Mexico and Central American (5); North Africa (2); South America (71); Thailand and Burma (3); Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (1).

The Latin America Guides (Passport Books): Caribbean (1-Dec.); Cuba (1); Galapagos (1-Sept.).

Let's Go Budget Guides (St. Martin's Press): Austria (2); Britain and Ireland (14); Eastern Europe (1); Europe (26); France (14); Germany, Austria & Switzerland (4); Greece & Turkey (7); Greece, Israel & Egypt (14); Ireland (2); Italy (14); London (5); Mexico (8); Paris (3); Rome (3); Spain & Portugal (8); Thailand (2).

Lonely Planet Shoestring Guides (Lonely Planet): Africa (7); Central Europe (1); India and Bangladesh Travel Atlas (1); New South Wales (1); Thailand Travel Atlas (1); Western Australia (1).

Lonely Planet Travel Survival Guides (Lonely Planet): Brazil (3); Britain (1); Colombia (2); Ho Chi Minh (1-Oct.); Indonesia (4); Jakarta (1); Java (1-Nov.); Korea (3); Mexico (5); Morocco (3); Micronesia (3 -Nov.); New Zealand (1); North Africa (1); Queensland (1-Dec.); Rio di Janeiro (1-Nov.); Slovenia (1-Oct.); Thailand (6); Tibet (3); Tokyo (2-Sept.); Vietnam (2); West Africa (3-Oct.); Yemen (3-Nov.); Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia (2-Nov.).

Lonely Planet Walking Guides (Lonely Planet): Tramping in New Zealand (3).

Moon Handbook Series (Moon Publications, Inc.): Alberta & Northwest Territories (1); Atlantic Canada (1-Nov.); Bangkok (2); Belize (3-Dec.); Cabo (1-Nov.); Caribbean (1-Nov.); Indonesia (6); Pacific Mexico (2-Dec.); Puerto Vallarta (1).

Thomas Cook On the Rail Touring Handbooks (Passport Books): Britain and Ireland (1); France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (1).

Thomas Cook Passport Illustrated Travel Guides (Passport Books): Bali and Java (1); Berlin (1); Greece (1); London (2); Madeira (1); Mallorca (1); Mexico (1); Morocco (1); Normandy (1); Paris (2); Provence (1); Rome (1).

Trip Planner Series (Passport Books): Spain (1); Turkey (1).

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F O C U S

of city squares and useful pronunciation guidelines. Each one even has a huge, fold-out city map.

Writer Philip Marsden won Britain's prestigious Somerset Maugham Award for his historical narrative, *The Crossing Place: A Journey Among the Armenians* (Dodansha Globe), which describes his six-month journey across 17 borders — from the Balkans and the Middle East to Central Asia — in search of the diaspora of Armenians. This intricate, passionate chronicle is sparked by one simple act: A Turkish farmer's tossing of the bone to the author's dog. When the farmer is asked what animal the bone has come from, he answers, "An Armenian." So begins this heartbreaking tale of the persecution of this culturally rich people whose history dates back centuries.

Travel writer Sheila Paine, who has spent the last 20 years researching tribal and peasant embroidery, has written a wonderful account of her two-year search for an amuletic pattern, which took her through Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, Iraqi and Turkish Kurdistan and, finally, Bulgaria. Lively, passionate, and beautifully

written, *The Afghan Amulet* (St. Martin's Press) is like Paine's elusive textile itself. An admirable original.

Asia once again tops the list of travel books as one of the most intellectually, physically and philosophically satisfying regions for experienced travelers. But man cannot live on words alone, so if you're doing Asia as a vegetarian, a handy friend to have along is Teresa Bergen's *Vegetarian Asia: A Travel Guide* (Noble Poodle Press). It covers everything from learning how to say "I'm a vegetarian" in 10 languages to where to find vegetarian cuisine in China, Northeast Asia, the Himalayas, South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Travelers' Tales (Travelers' Tales), that California company that collects the tales of travelers, has chosen India and Hong Kong for its 1995 Asia releases. Though Hong Kong won't be out until the fall, the India book is ravishing in the texture and variety of tales. Note editors James O'Reilly and Larry Habegger in their introduction, "India — monsoon and marigold, dung and dust, colors and corpses, smoke and

TO THE LONG-TERM WASHINGTON VISITOR, WHICH WORD IS MOST APPEALING: "HOME" OR "HOTEL"?



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ash, snow and endless myth — is a cruel, unrelenting place of ineffable sweetness. Much like life itself. And, like life itself (if reincarnation be true) worth visiting repeatedly, in this turn of the wheel and the next." My personal favorite was penned by Hugues de Montalembert, a veteran world traveler blinded by acid-throwing thieves in Manhattan, who writes about his first trip since the accident. He speaks of how his new sight, "a visionary state that overcomes me unawares," helps him "see" things the ordinary tourist would miss. De Montalembert makes India come alive like no other in this collection.

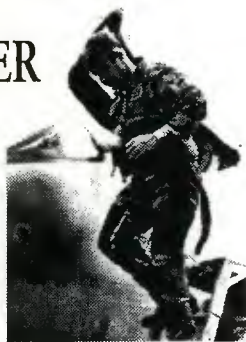
Daniel Taylor-Idé is in search of the *yeti*, or the abominable snowman, at the start of his book, *Something Hidden Behind the Ranges* (Mercury House). He first heard stories of the creature when he was an 11-year-old growing up in India, and so as a young man, he returns with his small family and camps out in the wild, uninhabited valleys deep in Nepal to find and follow the large footprints. The family's odyssey, an oddly touching tale borne of myth and nature, completely changes focus when his

mission turns to protecting the India wilderness — after he finds the wilderness in himself.

If cycling your way around China is your idea of a relaxing vacation, let Roger Grisby's *China by Bike*, (The Mountaineers) help you out. This painstakingly detailed guide, however, is much more concerned with getting cyclists exactly where they need to go than to provide much help in tourism. A must if you're cycling, but bring another guidebook for the rest.

Is there a place on Earth more mysterious — or with a reputation for being more mysterious — than Tibet and its medieval capital of Lhasa? British reporter Peter Hopkirk, who wrote *Trespassers on the Roof of the World, the Secret Exploration of Tibet* (Kodansha International) thinks not. This is a fascinating account of all the explorers, missionaries, reporters or spies who sought to visit the three-mile high "Roof of the World," as Europeans called it, and its capital, "The Forbidden City." Many never returned to tell their tales, but for those who did visit — or said they did — their stories have become part of folklore of, as Hopkirk calls

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them, "gatecrashers ... who tell the story of the forcible opening up of a land which only ever wanted to be left in peace." As a historian, the author does a more than credible job of sifting through the fact and fiction of this land, and his vivid writing makes this place come alive.

Two good literary anthologies on Japan have emerged this year: Lafcadio Hearn's *Writings from Japan* (Penguin Classics) and Harry Guest's *Japan, A Traveler's Literary Companion* (Passport Books). The first are of the writings of Hearn, a man born of European parents who married a Japanese woman and would become a Japanese citizen, who sees his adopted country through loving, but clearly Western eyes. The second anthology, with 75 extracts from fiction, poetry and travel writing, is also worth a read. A third book, Alan Booth's *Looking for the Lost, Journeys Through a Vanishing Japan* (Kondasha) is an elegant, meditative look at the slow death of a culture, and a moving examination of an author's life as he nears death. As his last work before dying of stomach cancer, the 46-year-old Englishman recounts his journey by foot through three of the most remote regions of his adopted country, where he lived for 20 years.

If action is more on your mind, T.R. Reid's guide, *Ski Japan!* (Kodansha International), is it. Written by *The Washington Post's* East Asian Bureau Chief based in Tokyo, who took up skiing out of boredom when Desert Storm was the center of news in 1990-91, it packs a wallop in terms of facts, maps and skiing terms in Japanese.

Chinua Achebe did it. Both Graham Greene and V.S. Naipaul did it quite well, in fact. Nadine Gordimer even won a Nobel Peace prize for doing it. Doing what? Writing about Africa, that continent that has inspired so many writers that "it is said there are as many Africans as there are books about Africa — and as many books about Africa as you could read in a leisurely lifetime," according to Oona Strathern, editor of *Africa: Traveler's Literary Companion* (Passport Books). A delicious survey of literature from 51 African countries, this literary companion contains work by locals, exiles, explorers and foreign visitors — from poets, playwrights and authors. The sheer diversity of the works are cause for celebration, but there's more: The volume provides a detailed overview of each region's geography, culture and politics as well. Could there be more? Indeed. The book attempts to chronicle the various literary movements across the conti-

nent, from the rich oral history of early Africa to the self-conscious words of self-described colonial "oppressors" to the haunting phrases of the "oppressed" in search of identity. If Africa interests you at all, this volume is imperative.

Although John Updike called author Edward Hoagland "the best essayist of my generation," he's, well, no John Updike. His spotty, arrogant *African Calliope: A Journey to the Sudan* (Lyons & Burkford Press) is hardly commendable, a sort of long-winded stream of consciousness that leaves the reader wondering: What's the author's point?

One definitely doesn't get that feeling from Tim Youngs' study of African narratives in *Travellers in Africa, British Travelogues, 1850-1900* (Manchester University Press). Nineteenth-century British publishing was ripe with travelogues, becoming the dominant form for the explanation of foreign cultures to the British. But because so many were born of this adventure-writing tradition, Youngs' ability to provide cultural context is useful, and in an odd way, almost required. In fact, these writings about Africa probably say more about Englishmen than Africans. By any account, these pieces are an entertaining step back a century, when men were men and colonialists were colonialists.

Academic Dale Peterson of Boston, who penned the very funny *Chimpanzee Travels: On and Off the Road in Africa* (Addison-Wesley), is quite honest about his disinterest in traveling. It's the chimps he's following, not the adventure. Amateur primatologist Peterson is merely trying to educate himself about "those hairy creatures with thumbs on their feet" in the hope of convincing famous chimp scientist Jane Goodall to collaborate on a book. Thus begins his adventure of traveling through East, West and Central Africa in search of the elusive chimps, so similar to humans that he finds himself remembering the words of an anthropologist he had interviewed before the trip: "They're human." Practically every person he meets is chimp-centered, either anthropologist or wildlife expert, and most of them are pretty strange — but in a good way.

Who hasn't thought about wildlife when considering a trip to Africa? Darn few, notes safari leader Mark K. Nolting in *Africa's Top Wildlife Countries* (Global Travel Publishers). Though it often reads like one long advertisement for his tour company, which organizes personalized safaris and tours, this book has quite a bit of useful information, including data on game reserves and parks in 15 African countries and with descriptions of 20 kinds of safaris.

F O C U S

Irritating though his prose may be, Nolting knows his species — and has the color photos to prove it. To keep yourself organized on safari, try Global Travel Publishers' *Travel Journal Africa*, a journal that promises to "be more than a diary of dreams come true but a trip planner, packing guide, financial record keeper, wildlife encyclopedia, photo log and more." That, plus 41 pages of wildlife you may see.

Connecting with animals is one thing; humans are another. Elizabeth Devine and Nancy L. Braganti, authors of *The Travelers' Guide to African Customs & Manners* (St. Martin's Press) penned similar tomes for Latin America, the Middle East and Europe. Ambitious though this volume is, it comes off as superficial. Although this guide promises to "give you the inside track on such issues as what to wear, when to dine, how to converse, how much to tip, how to gesture and when and where to bargain," I learned not one new fact about traveling in Africa. In fact, their best advice is: "There's no better way to enhance a trip than by immersing yourself in the culture of the country. Read, read, read. Read history. Read biography. Read

fiction." But don't read this book.

Looking for an affordable vacation close to home? Consider Latin America. Mexico, the Caribbean and parts of South America offer some of the best bargains. Travelers should note that three new guides on the region are now available from some of the most superb guidebooks: from Moon Publications. All written by travel writer Chicky Mallan, the new guides include the *Yucatan Peninsula Handbook*, the *Cancun Handbook* and the *Central Mexico Handbook*. All are lightweight, portable softcovers jam-packed with everything needed in a guidebook: background, maps, photos, insider tips and — the often overlooked cultural context. From tourist traps to off-the-beaten-track hideaways, these guides offer consistent, accurate details without pretension. Their only flaw is their attempt at offering Spanish vocabulary: Three pages is hardly enough to aid a stranded American tourist even in the most desperate situation; better to bring another, phrase book.

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Writers from John Steinbeck to D.H. Lawrence have long been captivated by the country that is Mexico, and editor Alan Ryan has helped collect all their voices in *The Reader's Companion to Mexico* (Harcourt Brace). These personal "reports," some laudatory, some whining, come together to provide a fascinating, nuanced portrait of a country loved and hated by Americans for centuries. Clearly, Ryan's keen eye has been trained by years of reporting on Latin American literature, music and culture. Ryan, clearly a man who's been in love with Mexico for a long time, had one goal, which he has met: "I wanted a book that would be like a trunk filled with letters from a branch of the family that's lived and traveled for many years in Mexico."

For the first time in three years, Carl Franz has updated his very popular *The People's Guide to Mexico* (John Muir Publications), whose philosophy is summed up not only in the title, but in the foreword: "[The recent devaluation of the peso] is going to be a bonanza for budget travelers. Aware travelers will note that when prices do start to

edge up again, it will erode the paychecks of Mexican workers and *campesinos* before it affects our travel dollars. ... Please be extra generous with tips, please don't haggle excessively in the *mercado*." This no-nonsense guide, irreverent and playful, offers lots of tidbits the tourist simply wouldn't find anywhere else. The three pages of illustrations on universal hand signals are particularly useful if insults are a big part of your vocabulary. Don't laugh too loud, though; with more than 150,000 copies sold, this is one of the more popular guides to surviving travel in Mexico.

Two new travel journals are now available on that odd strip of land called Baja California. Englishman Graham Machintosh's *Into a Desert Place* (W.W. Norton) chronicles his 3,000-mile, two-year walk around the desert wilderness of the Baja. Eating rattlesnake and cactus and distilling seawater, this fellow's journey was anything but relaxing. As travel accounts go, this one was amusing, if un compelling. Much more fulfilling is filmmaker Jonathan Waterman's restless, two-month jaunt kayaking with his wife Deborah,

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as told in *Kayaking The Vermilion Sea* (Simon & Schuster). Here, the focus isn't on the desolate land, but on the life-filled sea; Waterman's account is a fine, even-handed view of life above and below the floating kayak.

Elsewhere in the Americas, Canada has produced the noteworthy homegrown travelogue, Edward Hoagland's *Notes From a Century Before: A Journal From British Columbia* (Sierra Club Books). Hoagland's modest offering, actually a journal of his three-month trip in 1966 through British Columbia, is humorous and, in a strange, northern kind of way similar to the way the television series *Northern Exposure* got under the skin of many a television addict, is, well, entertaining. The characters Hoagland meets — missionaries, explorer, gold prospector, Indian guide — and the tales he tells are from an era long past, but they're still fresh.

A host of general travel books are also on the market, including a handful of recommendations, such as Sharon E. Karr's *Traveler of the Crossroads*, *The*

Life of Adventurer Nicol Smith (Log Cabin Manuscripts). This is an odd jewel of a biography of Smith, whose claim to fame was as the first American to travel the Burma Road; the first American to visit Hainan Island; and the first to take movie footage of the world's highest waterfall — Venezuela's Angel Falls. Karr does an admirable job of drawing a clear portrait of a man whose wanderlust earned him a reputation, as well as wealth.

Jim Rogers, who penned *Investment Biker: On the Road With Jim Rogers*, also vowed to make money off his travels. In this unique travelogue, which unfortunately dishes up more than its share of boredom and bad photos, Rogers and his girlfriend spend 22 months driving their motorcycle 65,067 miles by road (and thousands more by air, sea and rail) across six continents. Unfortunately Rogers' lack of writing skill has made many of the mundane details of his trip no more interesting than looking at somebody else's family photos. However, as a multimillionaire investor who was able to retire at age 37, his interest was financial: He sought out bankers, business owners

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and investors for long chats. The result? A pretty interesting take on the world's many economies. Just skip the appendixes, which itemize what the pair packed in their bags and which provide a daily mileage log. At least Rogers will be able to write off the trip as a business expense.

Two books on travel health should be at the top of your pile of reading: Dr. Stuart R. Rose's sensible and well-organized *The 1995 International Travel HealthGuide* (Travel Medicine, Inc.), updated annually, which lists the health advisories and hospitals of every country in the world. For those with psychiatric needs, such as help in overcoming the fear of flying, authors Cherry Hartman and Julie Sheldon Huffaker's *Fear of Flying* (The Eighth Mountain Press) do a credible, if simplistic, job in tackling one of the great phobias of all time, via visualization and affirmation techniques.

There are few new books to recommend for children this year, but Ann Banks' adorable *Children's Itinerary* (The Little Bookroom) is a perfect travel companion for kids aged 6-12. Encased in a thumbprint-proof and spill-proof plastic cover, the book allows little tourists to record every detail of their trip, from museums and restaurants to memories of their best and worst days on the road. Maureen Wheeler's practical *Travel With Children* (Lonely Planet) helps parents deal with babysitters, kids' health and even how to travel while pregnant. It's of limited use for coping with teenagers, but then what is?

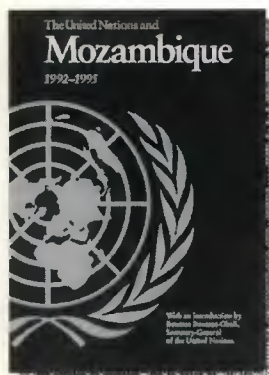
Do women travel differently than men? *Travelers' Tales: A Woman's World* (Travelers' Tales) is unconvincing in its premise that they do. Trying to capitalize on its successful series of country-focused tales, this anthology isn't up to the same standards. But with 50 stories of travels to every continent, there's plenty to wander among.

In contrast, *Writing Away: The PEN Canada Travel Anthology* (McClelland & Stewart), edited by Constance Rooke, offers a high-quality selection. This PEN anthology includes an impressive collection of the travel writings of 34 of Canada's best, from Margaret Atwood's low-budget sojourn in Europe to Gaeme Gibson's birding expedition to Cuba. Not every story is a prize — and certainly the photos are unspectacular.

Speaking of birds and Canadians, birdwatching is reportedly becoming one of the fastest-growing pastimes in North America, if you believe what the travel magazines report. But don't be a birdbrain and forget to take along Peggy van Hulsteyn's *The Birder's Guide to Bed and Breakfasts* (John Muir Publications), which features 250 bed and breakfasts in North America, as well as an exhausting index of birding sites, the American Birding Code of Ethics and an Aid to Understanding Bird Jargon.

So you thought you had a bad trip last year? Commiserate with 51 travel writers, novelists and journalists who coughed up their greatest travel disasters in the delightful *I Should've Stayed Home!* (Book Passage Press), edited by Roger Rapoport and Marguerita Castanera. This is a terrific find, with pieces from Isabel Allende to Helen Gurley Brown, who regale readers with foreign tales about "The Flight From Hell," "Libidinous Finns," and "I Think Our Driver is Stoned." Believe me, if you haven't had the energy or the funds to take a trip abroad this year, this book will ensure that you'll never leave home again. ■

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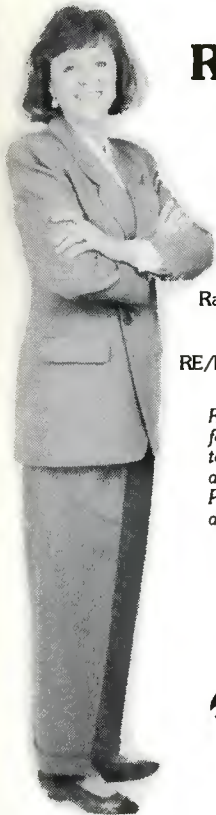
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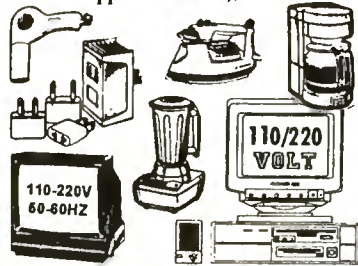
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ADVERTISING INDEX

Automobiles

American Service Center/18
Chrysler/OBC
D.B. Volvo/67
Ford/IFC
Martens Volvo/24
Passport BMW/8

Books

Aletheia/59
Book Call/59
Hoover Publishers/57,61
Kreiger Publishers/62
United Nations
Publishers/63

Exports

Embassy Exports/67
General Electric/34

Finance

MCG Financial/45

Smith, Barney,
Shearson/AFSA News/4
State Department Credit
Union/50

Insurance

Clements & Co./1
Hirshorn/35
Jannette/AFSA News/5
Unirise/12

Miscellaneous

Classifieds/AFSA News/7-8
National Public Radio/9

Real Estate & Property Management

Century 21 Royal/72
Diplomatic Properties/73
J.P. Properties/72
Long & Foster, Cornick/6
Long & Foster, Simunek/46

MGMB/74
Prof Prop Mgt VA/15
Prof Prop Mgt. MD/73
Property Specialist/72
Prudential, Zerolis/74
Remax, Brandt/73
Stuart & Maury/72

Housing

Barton House/2
Chase at Ballston/20
Chase at
Bethesda/AFSA News/6
Exclusive
Interim/AFSA News/5
Execustay/14
Executive Club Suites/IBC
Executive
Housing/AFSA News/3
Executive Lodging/74
Georgetown Suites/61
Hotel Anthony/25

Inn at Foggy Bottom/21
Mass. Ave. Property/51
Oakwood/12
Remington/47
Remington Condos/73
River Inn/56
State Plaza/AFSA News/4
Towers/67
Virginian/8
West Park Hotel/41
Winston House/19

Schools

Christ School/AFSA News/6
Calvert/45
Leysin American
School/AFSA News/5
North Country Day
School/15
Patterson School/AFSA
News/24



POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

Comforting Americans in Mexican Jails

BY LINDA EICHBLATT

When I met him, David had been held in a Mexican jail near the Chiapas border for two years already. As the lone gringo in the rural jail, the 35-year-old was easy to spot — a tall, blond fellow who spoke little Spanish. He had been arrested for the possession of marijuana seeds, after being stopped by police for vagrancy. Though it was not a large quantity, the self-described hippie was sentenced to seven years in jail.

I visit American prisoners in jails throughout Mexico every three months to provide vitamin supplements and English books — and to remind them that their government cares about their welfare. Unlike most of the 50 prisoners I'm visiting this month, David took responsibility for his crime. In Mexican prisons, many of the inmates' families live with them, but in the midst of the small village that was the prison, David was alone, surrounded by roosters, children and women frying tortillas.

I told David he could call me collect once a month, and in a way, I became his lifeline. "I was a joke when I came here," he told me. "A 35-year-old teenager who wanted life to be a party. But after two years of enforced sobriety and isolation, I have become a grownup. ... And I'm starting to fall apart."

Back in Mexico City, I asked the

Linda Eichblatt is U.S. Embassy Mexico's arrest and detentions officer for the capital's consular district.

*I try not to judge.
I learn about
their lives, and
I contemplate
their existence.*

senior Foreign Service national at the consulate to write monthly letters to the government of Mexico, inquiring whether the law still required a full seven years for possession of a handful of seeds. To everyone's surprise, the four monthly letters had an effect, recently prompting David's release five years before his sentence was up.

He was brought to Mexico City for deportation, ironically on my 53rd birthday, and we celebrated by sharing a hamburger and malt from the local Burger King. Every bite he took was accompanied by a low moan of pleasure. He had lost 40 pounds during his confinement, surviving primarily on beans and rice. He promised he'd never go near marijuana again, and I believed him.

The remainder of my time is spent visiting the folks I call my Margaritaville people. They are the American down-and-outers, the drunks and the mentally ill men and women who are picked up for loitering by the Mexican immigration

authorities, detained for a couple of weeks and ultimately deported to the nearest U.S. port of entry.

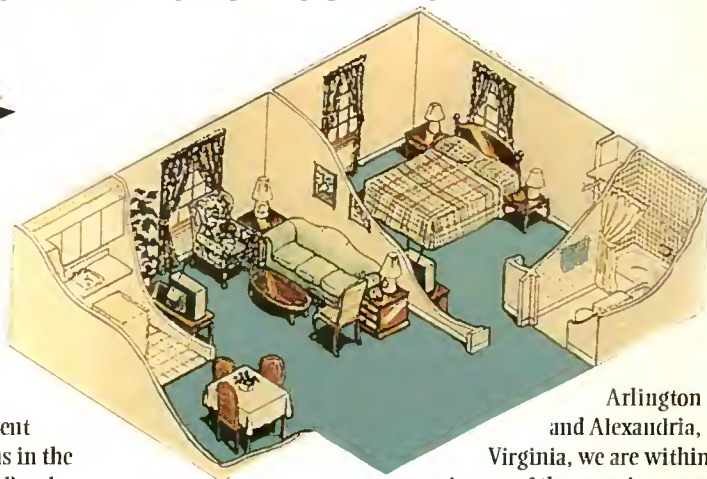
Before they are driven under guard to the border, however, I must visit them, verify their citizenship and explain what's happening to them. These people rarely have any identification papers. Some are psychotic. One woman did not want to talk to me because she claimed I had irradiated her with plutonium. Another woman, whom I call the American Pie Lady, explained that she left the United States because "she drove her Chevy to the levy, and the levy was dry, alas." The majority are alcoholics. They want nothing to do with U.S. detox centers and social services caseworkers. They don't want to face the disappointment of their families. Everyone and everything has failed them. They are true loners in the world.

And me? Well, I just write the arrest cables that are sent to the State Department, make the rare contact calls and process the paperwork. I try not to judge. I learn about their lives, and I contemplate their existence. A dollar goes far here, and the kindness of strangers is not a forgotten precept in Mexico. Few really want to go back to the United States, and many will return to Mexico almost immediately, crossing the long border by avoiding checkpoints. Back to the bus stations, the warm beaches, and the tree-shaded plazas. Back to the slow road to the death they are seeking. Back to Margaritaville. ■

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