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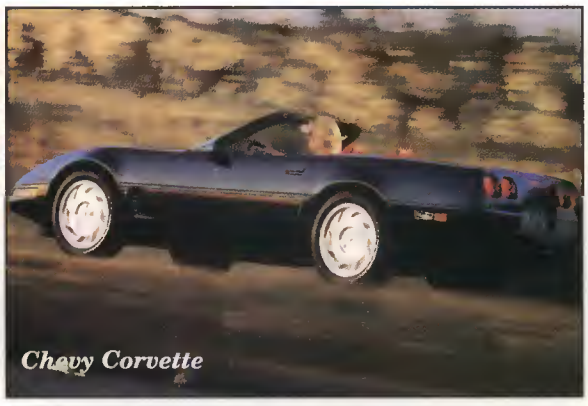
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CONTENTS

March 1996 ■ Vol. 73, No. 3

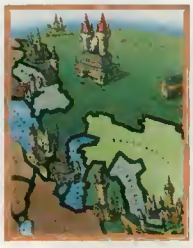
COVER

FOCUS ON THE NIS

COLUMNS

FEATURES

FOCUS



Page 20

DEPARTMENTS

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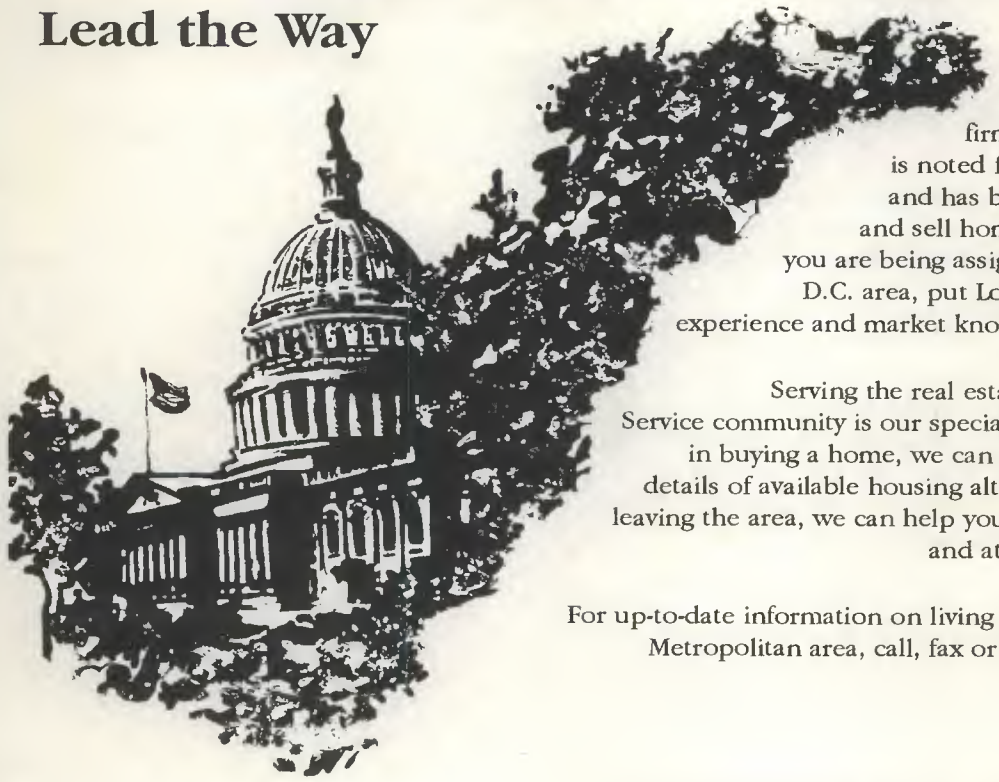

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President's Views

Engaging America in the World

By F. A. "Tex" Harris

America's turn inward and away from trust in government challenges the American Foreign Service Association, the hundreds of non-governmental organizations working in foreign fields, and all the American businesses and citizens committed to American leadership in the world. The community is focusing on a new issue: defending diplomacy.

This enormous and historic task confronts the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) at a time of great strain, due to its equally compelling mission to protect the Foreign Service in times of dramatic downsizing. AFSA has concluded, however, that to protect people and their careers, it's essential to defend diplomacy and the Foreign Service profession at the same time. Our most immediate task is to develop, first, a focused message on the critical needs for American diplomacy and, second, an action program to get that message to executive and legislative branch decisionmakers, to opinion leaders throughout the nation and to grassroots America. We now have to "just do it."

The challenge is daunting because of a sea change in American public attitudes toward its government and its involvement in the world. Recent polls confirm that Americans distrust their governments, local and national. They feel less uneasy about local officials — mayors, aldermen and the like — with whom they can talk directly and whose actions they think they can influence. Americans are frustrated by the gap between their expectations, their dreams and their economic realities. They're anxious about immediate local problems, such as crime and environmental degradation. Americans know little about foreign relations and affirm that dealing with immediate, local concerns leaves little time to learn about such things. Knowing little, they disbelieve much of what they hear about foreign relations, distrust the legislative and executive branch leaders on whose judgment they have to rely, and resent everything that suggests the end of the Cold War did not end all need for American engagement abroad.

> *We now have to "just do it."*

We as diplomatic professionals understand and applaud successes in Bosnia, Haiti, North Korea; in 80 trade agreements around the world; and in thousands of American citizens helped by consular and trade and investment efforts. But to many Americans, diplomatic successes such as Bosnia, Haiti and North Korea are seen, at best, as short-term fixes for continuing problems with significant future risks; at worst, in Bosnia and Haiti, as proof that diplomacy failed or was useless since military force was also required. There is no understanding that military engagement was unavoidable and that without diplomacy the costs, risks and likely outcomes would have been far worse. America's fixation on quick solutions clashes with the long-term evolutionary problem solving and problem avoidance that America's diplomatic leadership provides. The result is a popular support base for funding America's defense and intelligence operations at increasing levels, but not for diplomacy. The lack of support for diplomacy as part of the U.S. national security triad is all the more striking, given that defense and intelligence institutions well understand that without the diplomatic arm their roles are more arduous, more costly and more risky.

So what is our message? To start, we must clearly establish the concept that America's national security should be viewed as a strong blade whose sharp edge is effective American diplomacy and whose shaft is made up of America's intelligence and military capabilities. Diplomacy's best defense appears to be its cost effectiveness, lower risk and lower degree of foreign entanglement relative to deployment of American intelligence and military assets. We must cite, iterate and reiterate the many and substantial U.S. diplomatic successes, and make the point that every prominent negotiator's success is founded on the bedrock of the professional diplomatic establishment. The examples have to be concrete enough to be real for Main Street, USA. ■

F. A. "Tex" Harris is president of AFSA.

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LETTERS

To the Editor:

Charles Schmitz's article, "Speaking Out," (January *Journal*) regarding downsizing our missions overseas was right on. U.S. embassies and consulates during the earlier years were revered by the people of foreign nations. Following World War II, this atmosphere changed.

Perhaps you can blame it on the influx of tourists and business people who may have left the taste of an "ugly American" behind them, helped by the appointment of unqualified personnel who rendered poor service. And as the author implied, there has been too much expansion of the embassies and the endless government agencies attached to them. From all this the unwanted impression can come that we are the Big Brother dictating terms. Even one presidential hopeful, Ross Perot, claims that the embassy structure overseas should be changed, that it does not have relevance anymore in a world of instant communication with all nations by voice and picture.

Weikko Forsten
Retired FSO
Boca Raton, Fla.

To the Editor:

I appreciate Charles Schmitz's frank discussion of the need to reconsider our diplomatic presence in light of shrinking resources (January *Journal*). However, it is a mistake to think we can replace people with machines. The Foreign Service is not just an information service. Our physical presence overseas is our competitive edge.

While technology has changed dramatically, people have not. There is no substitute for face-to-face interaction. To think that personal conversation can be replaced by faxes, e-mail messages or videotapes is to mistakenly think that persuasion and influence, not to mention insight and judgement, are nothing more than information exchange.

In Latin America and Asia, where I have worked, the work of business as well as government is based on personal relationships. American businesspeople I have talked to here are shocked by the thought that their government is thinking about cutting back [diplomatic] people overseas. They have already learned the hard lesson: no personal relationships, no business.

I agree that we must identify priorities and focus limited resources on what matters most. Perhaps we can no longer afford the administrative support structure we now maintain. But the way we do business is critically important. My experience is that if you want no for an answer, do it by phone. If you want yes for an answer, do it in person.

Robert Griffiths
U.S. Embassy Bangkok

To the Editor:

As a colleague of Bob Martens in the Moscow Embassy, 1956-58, I very much enjoyed his article, "Cold-War Moscow," (December *Journal*) and find his analysis of Ambassadors [Charles "Chip"] Bohlen and [Llewellyn "Tommy"] Thompson perceptive and instructive. I am only surprised that he did not analyze their poker-playing styles, perhaps because he was too modest to reveal that he was the big winner at that table in those years. Playing with Bohlen was always a pleasure. He loved the game and the relaxed fellowship it provided him and seemed to care little whether he won or lost. Thompson, on the contrary, seemed to want to win and played his cards close to his chest. The game was therefore less enjoyable for me after Bohlen's departure.

Their poker styles were reflected in their diplomatic styles; Bohlen being charming and outgoing, a man whose company statesman enjoyed, and Thompson being discreet and soft-spoken, a man whom American presidents called on in many a crisis, from the Trieste settlement and the Austrian peace treaty to the Cuban missile crisis.

FSOs like Bob Martens and I were extraordinarily fortunate to serve under both of them.

Theodore L. Eliot Jr.
Retired FSO
Sonoma, Calif.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

We agree with Jonathan Dean ("The Lessons of War," December *Journal*) that the United Nations needs a "small, highly trained standing readiness force ... to head off or extinguish conflict in the crucial early stages."

The need for a U.N. military force was never better illustrated than in Rwanda in 1994, where massacres left half a million dead and another two million in refugee camps. Gen. Romeo Dallaire, the Canadian who headed the U.N. peacekeeping mission to Rwanda thinks this genocide could have been prevented or mitigated. He has asserted that "a force of 5,000 [military] personnel rapidly deployed could have prevented the massacres in the south and west of the country."

Unfortunately, the United Nations — and its member states — came up short in speed, people and resources, even though the Security Council had foreseen the potential for disaster in Rwanda and had authorized a peacekeeping force of 5,500 military personnel. But the actual number of peacekeepers the United Nations could assemble was less than half this number during the worst of the genocide. Moreover, the peacekeepers lacked the weapons, equipment and authority to combat aggressively the violence occurring around them.

Dallaire also suggested a solution to this problem. "If the world community wants the United Nations to respond to flash points throughout the world then the United Nations has got to have more tools to do that. And one of the tools it requires is a capability to deploy, in a timely fashion, the troops, the headquarters and the equipment to implement decisions."

Our organization, Refugees International, advocates the creation by the U.N. of a small, well-trained, rapid deployment constabulary (RDC), which would be on constant alert, deployable by the U.N. on 24-hour notice. The RDC, approximately 10,000 in number, would consist entirely of volunteers to minimize political fallout in the donor countries in the event of casualties.

It may seem fruitless to buck a political trend by advocating these measures to strengthen the United Nations, but the United States — particularly the U.S. Congress — should stop its U.N. bashing long enough to look at positive ways it can do a better job for us — and the rest of the world. The United States, in its own national interest, must lead the fight to help the U.N. deal with trouble spots. Otherwise, we will face, over and over, inevitable pressures to intervene unilaterally. The cost will then be higher in both lives and dollars.

Lionel Rosenblatt and
Larry Thompson
Retired FSOs
Senior Associates
Refugees International

To the Editor:

I read John Harter's article on Nicholas Trist ("The Accidental Treaty," October *Journal*) with mixed feelings. Because I am very much interested in Trist as an unsung hero of American diplomacy, I was pleased to see that the story of his life and achievements was brought to the attention of your readers again in Harter's well-written piece. I use the word "again" because I wrote an article about him along the same lines which the *Journal* published in January 1992.

LETTERS

If you were aware of the first article, I am sorry that some reference was not made to it.

I am even more sorry, however, that Harter made no reference to my biography of Trist, which was published in 1991 by University Press of America. I believe it remains the only full-length biography of Trist published. As I read Harter's article, I came upon many passages and several whole paragraphs that were entirely familiar to me from the text of my own book. This may be a coincidence or, on the other hand, it may indicate that Harter was aware of my book and perhaps even found it useful. In any case, the book is entitled *Guilty of Making Peace: A Biography of Nicholas P. Trist*, and copies are available in the State Department library.

Robert W. Drexler
Retired FSO
Rockville, Md.

Harter replies:

The original draft of my article was twice as long as the published version, and it was punctuated with footnotes and an annotated bibliography that attested to the insight, in-depth research and narrative skill that distinguished Drexler's outstanding biography of Trist. The references were deleted because the *Journal* does not use footnotes and bibliographies, and residual references were inadvertently lost in shrinking the article to fit *Journal* requirements.

My own interest in Trist dates from the late 1940s, when my mentor at the University of Southern California, Richard W. Van Alstyne, extolled Trist's largely unsung contribution to American diplomatic history now properly documented by Drexler. I regret I missed his January 1992 article. ■

CORRECTIONS

Due to incorrect information provided to the *Journal*, the publisher of David D. Pearce's *Wary Partners: Diplomats and the Media* (January *Journal*) was incorrect. Available from Congressional Quarterly Books, the softcover edition is $24.95 and the hardcover edition is $37.95. There are 205 pages.

—

Due to an editing error, the hometown of C. Patrick Quinlan, who wrote a letter to the editor in the January *Journal*, was incorrect. Quinlan lives in Edina, Minn.

—

Due to an editing error, the country of Uganda was incorrectly placed in Anne Dammarell's review of *Embassies Under Siege: Personal Accounts by Diplomats on the Front Line* in the "Books" section of the February *Journal* ["FSOs Serving in the Line of Fire"]. As *Journal* readers know, Uganda is on the continent of Africa.

AN INVITATION FOR FICTION

The *Foreign Service Journal* is seeking works of fiction, from 2,000-4,000 words, for its annual fiction issue. Preference will be given for Foreign Service settings, situations and characters. A small honorarium is offered. Submissions, by mail (disk preferred) or fax, may be made by June 1 to Karen Krebsbach, Editor, *Foreign Service Journal*, 2101 E St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, or at (202) 338-8244. No exceptions to the deadline. The four or five favorite stories of the Editorial Board will be published in the *Journal's* August issue.

CLIPPINGS

"I am not a politician. But I do have a bias: for the kind of foreign policy that projects America's unique purpose and strength."

— SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN CHRISTOPHER, ADDRESS AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, JAN. 18

A BATTLE BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE

The Nation in its Feb. 12 issue called the Department of State "A House Divided." Bruce Shapiro wrote that the State Department, "long a bastion of prep-school patronage, where change has come harder and slower than in any other cabinet-level department, is in the midst of an internal war over racism in its ranks."

In chronicling the history of race relations in the State Department, Shapiro wrote that the Carter administration was "a time of real decency for blacks at State," and many young blacks joined the Foreign Service. But, he continued, "the Reagan/Bush years were difficult for blacks at State. The number of African-American ambassadors fell from 15 to five. ... An investigation by the House subcommittee on the Civil Service found that minorities in the Foreign Service were denied tenure at a radically higher rate than whites, with blacks "selected out [for failure to be promoted within mandated time limits] at roughly six times the rate of whites."

Shapiro notes that knowing discrimination exists, but proving it are two different things, "particularly at an agency like State, where the entire culture is one of educated obfuscation." He maintains that the tradition of discrimination has persisted more stubbornly at State than any other federal agency. A September 1995 General Accounting Office report showed that of the four cabinet departments with the poorest records on minority and female employment — State, Interior, Navy and Agriculture — State showed the least improvement over the past decade.

Shapiro wrote that in 1994, State's lawyers suddenly seemed ready to settle a class-action discrimination suit filed in 1986 on behalf of some 300 present and former African-American Foreign Service officers. But when Walter Thomas and Raymond Robinson and other original plaintiffs looked at the proposed settlement, they were "stunned" to see that it offered pay raises to some promotion-delayed black officers currently in the department, but the original plaintiffs — "those who fought back" — received little. The group of 30 original plaintiffs voted to reject the settlement and negotiations continue — now among three sides.

STATE PREPARES FOR MORE CUTS

"The budget ax ... is poised to fall hard on Foggy Bottom," wrote reporter George Moffett in the Jan. 12 *Christian Science Monitor*. State officials say the possible loss of up to one-third of the foreign affairs budget over the next several years comes as the end of the Cold War has broadened the agenda of U.S. foreign policy and as new diplomatic missions open in the dozen nations formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"The implications of the pending budget cuts are still hard to quantify, but our capacity for carrying out our basic mission will be very much diminished," said Richard Moose, under secretary for management. The State Department has already trimmed its overseas operations, closing 18 consulates and two African embassies in 1993-94, and phasing out 13 more in 1995-96. Moose said that the department will also have to scale back the scope of its activities, providing less support to other government agencies overseas and cutting back on programs such as promoting trade, fighting international crime and

CLIPPINGS

drug trafficking and dealing with environmental and population control issues.

State Department officials calculate that foreign affairs spending could drop from its current $20.5 billion to $15 billion or $16 billion over the next seven years. Subtracting the annual $5 billion in foreign aid earmarked for Israel and Egypt, the working budget for foreign affairs could actually drop by as much as one-third.

CUTTING STAFF AT BLOATED UN

The United Nations, saying it is facing bankruptcy, announced last month that it would be cutting about 10 percent of its permanent staff of more than 10,000 at its New York City headquarters and seven foreign cities over the next two years, reported *The New York Times*.

Joseph E. Connor, under secretary for Administration and Finance, said that the organization would be $420 million in debt by the end of the year for regular budget expenses alone, not counting pricey peacekeeping operations. Worldwide, 53,589 people work for the United Nations and its related agencies.

The personnel cuts were forced on the United Nations by "a combination of reduced budgets and the failure of member nations to pay dues on time, would begin to shrink for the first time an organization that has been widely criticized for its bloated bureaucracy for underemployed political appointees around the world," reporter Barbara Crossette reported.

The United States, for example, still owed the organization about $1.5 billion, a sum Connor referred to as "very severe," according to the article. "The total in annual assessments owed to the United Nations by members rose to $2.3 billion by the end of 1995, a jump of $500 million over the previous year," Crossette reported, quoting Connor as saying the sum was "unprecedented" in the organization's history.

GLOBETROTTERS CURTAILING TRIPS

Congressional trips to foreign countries can be vital to the success of American foreign policy, providing representatives with a view of the wider world and updates on crisis conditions. But, too often, wrote reporter Sam Walker in the Jan. 17 *Christian Science Monitor*, "Lawmakers treat them like glorified vacations ... pressing embassy personnel into virtual butlerhood." According to Walker, lawmakers face mounting pressure to stop wasteful travel as the diplomatic corps struggles with deep cuts in funding and voters clamor for a more austere government.

Congressional delegations (CODELS), he noted, "have ample opportunities to spend the [taxpayers'] money." CODELS travel aboard Air Force jets and use per diem rates 50 percent above the government standard for food, lodging and expenses, even though their status often affords them upgrades and complimentary meals and transportation.

Walker wrote that diplomats were chafing at CODEL demands and after the disclosure of congressional travel plans in December, as many as nine January CODELS were canceled. Yet serious work is accomplished on some congressional trips. Walker wrote that Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.), traveling with only one staffer, visited nine African countries in 16 days, including visits to refugee camps and a stopover in civil-war-torn Liberia. ■

50 YEARS AGO

The March 1946 *Journal* in "News from the Department," printed a telegram that was received from Consul General Walter Foote about the upcoming assignment of a vice consul to Batavia now known as Jakarta. "It is my duty to state that any such [assigned] officer should be selected with extreme care," cabled Foote. "He must be man who will not be rattled by rifle, machine gun and handgrenade fire which continues all night. I was missed by inches last night by a stray bullet. He must be able to accept short rations of bad food. My food for the past 10 days has consisted of rice and a small amount tinned fish or tinned meat. He must be willing to bunk in a room with others. If [assigned officer] has these qualities, he will be of great help to me now. If not, please withhold him."

SPEAKING OUT

Furloughs Tarnished Foreign Service and US Image Abroad

BY WESLEY ANN GODARD

Dozens of jubilant visa applicants in Buenos Aires threw a party in the park across from the U.S. embassy on Jan. 7. After waiting around the clock outside the embassy consulate section during the three-week government shutdown, the second in less than two months, the Argentines were celebrating congressional approval of the continuing resolution that allowed the embassy to reopen. The saga made headlines daily here during the two furloughs, complete with photos of weary Argentines standing in front of the U.S. chancery.

Those of us who represent the U.S. government abroad were as relieved as the Argentines when the ordeal ended. However, we worry that the ongoing stand-off between Congress and the White House over the budget may have changed how America is viewed abroad. In addition to the demeaning, demoralizing effect of being labeled "non-essential," government workers at U.S. Embassy Buenos Aires and their families faced the embarrassment of explaining the situation to perplexed foreigners who were at best uneasy and at worst enraged over the shutdown of the U.S. embassy.

Argentines noted the irony that America, which supported austere fiscal reforms of President Carlos Menem, failed to meet its own payroll.

In Argentina, where my husband is deputy chief of mission (DCM), we are in the middle of summer and in the height of tourist season. This time of year, the line of visa applicants seeking to visit the United States usually snakes around the block outside the U.S. embassy. Like every other American associated with the embassy, I received several distressed calls from Argentine friends. One woman had a visa, but it did not cover her nursing infant. Mother and baby's flight left on Dec. 30 without them. Another Argentine headed to study in the United States missed a week of university classes.

A Dec. 28 article in a daily newspaper, *La Nacion*, quoted the head of the local association of travel agencies as saying that some Argentines had lost up to $3,000 by cancelling services or tourist packages contracted in the United States. The article also carried comments from people waiting futilely in line, "I spent all my savings on this trip. I should be leaving tomorrow," Ana Lauro Bruno was quoted as saying. Another hopeful applicant, Luisa Dardi, wanted to attend her niece's wedding. "I had such dreams for this trip," the newspaper quoted her as saying. "It's my first outside the country, and besides I'm getting older, and I can't plan many more trips."

Bryant Salter, the U.S. consul general at the embassy, often reminds his staff of the importance of their work. "When we send people to Disney World, we make friends," he said. However, preventing someone from spending Christmas with loved ones, causing an entrepreneur to lose money on a business deal, forcing a family to cancel vacation plans can make enemies for life. Salter admitted, "There is no telling what we have lost in intangibles."

Wesley Ann Godard is a freelance writer who has accompanied her FSO husband, Ronald, to postings in Panama, Nicaragua, Turkey, Costa Rica and Chile. She lives in Argentina, where her husband is deputy chief of mission.

The consulate would ordinarily have issued 800 to 900 visas a day to travelers, who spend an average of about $1,400 each on a typical trip in the United States. In 1994, tourist travel to the United States totalled $700 million, not counting airfares, which is more money than the United States earned that year from any of the standard U.S. exports to Argentina. This year, with the visa line shut down, U.S. airlines complained about the loss of revenue, and the yelp from the tourism industry in cities like Miami and New York could be heard all over Latin America.

Embassy officers, frustrated about the work waiting in their in-boxes, know that their inactivity caused U.S. long-range interests to suffer. During the first furlough in November, a trade mission from New Jersey looking for new markets in Latin America visited Buenos Aires. The office of the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), which sets up meetings for visiting groups with local business leaders and government officials, was suddenly reduced to two Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) on the day the delegation arrived, and only with their considerable efforts did the trade group complete a no-frills agenda. In a country where U.S. exports have increased more than 300 percent this decade to $4.5 billion in 1994, short-changing American business interests in Argentina costs money back in the United States.

Democratic initiatives have been a priority of U.S. foreign policy under Republican and Democratic administrations. Yet

the shutdown forced the May date for a conference promoting democratic institutions through civic education to be pushed to July, and the non-governmental (NGO) representative was worried that the promised funds had not materialized. Having been in many meetings in numerous countries where U.S. diplomats gently pressured the representatives of the host country to meet their obligations, I admit I was profoundly embarrassed to have the roles reversed.

My Argentine neighbor, a well-informed Brown University graduate, asked me to explain the government workers' "strike" to her. I told her it was closer to a lock-out. Argentines cannot help noting the irony that the United States, which has supported austere fiscal reforms implemented by President Carlos Menem's government, failed to meet its own payroll.

Like stateside federal workers, U.S. embassy workers abroad have mortgages, car loans, college tuition, Christmas bills and phone bills.

However, when considering the effect of the budget crisis on federal employees, I doubt if anyone was thinking about Jorge Pezzimenti. True, he cannot vote in the U.S. presidential elections next November, but when payroll checks were issued in the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires on Jan. 4, his was half its normal sum, just like other FSN and American federal employees around the world that day. At U.S. Embassy Buenos Aires, about 70 Americans and 153 FSNs work for agencies whose budgets had not been approved.

Pezzimenti is the senior FSN in the embassy's Regional Security Office. His liaison work with the local police is essential to embassy security and he is often the first at the scene when an embassy employee is in an accident in Buenos Aires' treacherous traffic or is the victim of one of the increasingly frequent household burglaries. Probably his presence went unnoticed by the heavy stream of congressional leaders and Cabinet members who passed through the city last year, but he was there making sure the security arrangements were in place.

Pezzimenti's reaction to the budget crisis — typical of most FSNs — was disbelief. "This can't be true, the U.S. government has a system to solve situations before they degenerate into emergencies," he said. Pezzimenti said he has a mortgage that costs him 19 percent interest in U.S. dollars. To buy his apartment, he had sold his car.

Others were in worse shape. Plagued by a history of rampant inflation, Argentines do not place much trust in savings accounts. Like most people, embassy employees often live from paycheck to paycheck — confident that the U.S. government would meet its financial commitments. Argentine landlords are not interested in U.S. budget problems.

On Jan. 5, John Salazar, the embassy's administrative officer, called me to an emergency board meeting of the American employee association — the commissary board — to respond to the predicament of several FSNs who temporarily would be unable to cover their food, rent and utility

bills without their full salaries. The central commissary fund in Washington had been made available for short-term FSN loans and we needed to review applications. Anguishing over how to deal with requests for $200 to $400 each, we knew how difficult it must have been for FSNs to reveal their financial problems to foreigners. The embassy patched together several possible options, such as applying to the central employee association fund, asking local U.S. banks for low-interest loans, tapping the paltry treasury of the Embassy American Group that aids local charities, as well as the Marine Security Guard's mess fund. We discussed community fund-raisers and passing the hat. Fortunately, Congress adopted a continuing resolution before the crisis became acute. However, in a culture where borrowing is tantamount to applying for food stamps, the residue of resentment among FSNs at this embassy will be hard to overcome.

Once the consulate's office was able to reopen, it borrowed personnel from other embassy sections to handle the crush of visa applications of up to 1,700 people a day — or a total of 15,000 in three weeks. But that doesn't erase the harm done by waging this battle before the eyes of the whole world. The image of the United States has slipped overseas — its reputation, its good word, its shining example of a democracy and market economy. Its reputation is tarnished. Americans and the Foreign Service have lost prestige abroad. FSOs and their families must live with that reality daily, no matter who wins the ideological battle over entitlements vs. a balanced budget. ■

The Leak that Dripped

How Loose Lips Helped Save US Embassy Malabo in 1987

By Frank Ruddy

I just read in the paper that the State Department announced it's going to close a number of foreign posts, including the U.S. embassy in Equatorial Guinea. I was the ambassador there the last time State went through this exercise, and it was not a fun time. For one thing, the government of Equatorial Guinea got the news before I did. For another, its officials heard the news first on the radio. This was not the way it was taught in "Embassy Closing 101."

The date was Sept. 21, 1987. I was supposed to be long gone from Equatorial Guinea by then, but State asked me to stay on a while longer. Seems my successor was having a little trouble learning to *hablar Español* and needed more classroom time. Without Spanish, he would not have been able to order *arroz a la Cubana* at The Beiruth, the capital's premier and recently tarantula-free restaurant, or do ambassador stuff like delivering Washington's policy pronouncements, called demarches, to the government. I never really knew why our little embassy was asked to deliver so many demarches, on subjects having nothing to do with Africa or Equatorial Guinea. But I did have a theory.

When what is now Equatorial Guinea was a Spanish colony, it was known as Fernando Po. It was during that time that I entered government. Knowing as little about Africa as I did, I thought Fernando Po was a person. When I saw a cable slugged "Copy Fernando Po," I visualized a planter looking not unlike Ezio Pinza in "South Pacific," dressed in white linen and Panama hat, smarter than Kissinger, sitting on a veranda and ready to be of service to the U.S. of A, and someone on the secretary's staff saying, "Fernando needs to know about this. See that he gets our white paper on nuclear proliferation." In those days, I wondered if Fernando ever met Laurenco Marques who, I assumed, was providing us a similar service in Portuguese East Africa.

When I arrived in Equatorial Guinea 20 years later, and all these demarches on every topic under the sun came pouring in, I figured State had hired another me, who was working on the assumption that Fernando had somehow become affiliated with the new government, and the ambassador's job, as the other me saw it, was to keep Fernando in the picture. If my replacement needed more Spanish to keep Fernando briefed, I was happy to oblige.

But first I had to see if the embassy would still be here. At 11:47 a.m., the U.S. consulate in Douala in neighboring Cameroon radioed to ask if we had heard the Voice of America announcement about the embassy closing. We hadn't — but the Guinean minister of defense, Fructuoso Mba Onana, had, and he told the foreign minister, Marcelino Nguema Onguene, who naturally was anxious to see me.

Frank Ruddy was a non-career U.S. ambassador to Equatorial Guinea from 1984-88. He also served as assistant administrator for Africa at the U.S. Agency for International Development and is now a lawyer with Johnston, Rivlin and Foley in Washington, D.C.

Embassy personnel listened to the news at noon on VOA's Spanish service and learned that the VOA was not actually announcing our closing. Someone at the State Department ("an informed source who did not wish to be identified") had told *The Washington Post* that the U.S. embassy was going to close. The Post had run the story, and VOA picked it up as a news item. However, I knew this was a distinction that was not going to fly with the Guineans.

When Thomas Jefferson was president he wrote about his minister in Spain, "I haven't heard from him in two years. If I don't hear from him next year, I will write him a letter." We at the Guinea embassy were like the minister in Spain. State knew where we were, and if it didn't hear from us in a long time, they would get concerned. They also got concerned, when, as actually happened before I arrived, the charge d'affaires murdered a fellow officer. But in the meantime, it was live and let live. It would have been nice to be able to pick up the phone and ask State what was going on, but our phones were essentially props. We hadn't been able to reach Washington, or Washington us, in years — an arrangement not without its advantages except in times like these. I could and did cable the State Department several times about our rumored closing and finally received a very polite reply to the effect that officials didn't have a clue what was going on.

When I gave up on getting any clarification from State, I went to see the usually jovial foreign minister. He had what children's stories call a "scowly-owly" look. I explained that news stories weren't policy, but I might as well have been distinguishing phlogiston from fire for all the good it did. I told him of the critical role of the press in a free society, even if people occasionally got sand-bagged. The minister's eyes glazed over. He was schooled in Moscow where the Voice of America really is the voice of America. "What does the State Department say?" he asked.

I explained, trying to avoid looking sheepish, "They're as much in the dark as I am, Excellency."

"Look," he said. "It's one thing to close the embassy, but the way your government has chosen to do it, announcing it on the radio before telling us, is a calculated insult." He thought I was an idiot or one terrible liar. He had good reason.

The next day, miraculously, the embassy phones worked just fine. The phone company had given us Equatorial Guinea's one international line. I reached the desk officer at State. Still no news, he said, and there wouldn't be until Assistant Secretary of State Chet Crocker "learns of the situation."

"You mean I'm here sounding like Baron Munchausen, and nobody's even told Crocker? He's two floors above you. Why don't you walk up and say: 'Mr. Crocker, there is an enormous foul-up in E.G.?'"

"Sorry, Mr. Ambassador. We can't do that. Channels, you know."

I called Crocker myself. By then he had "learned of the situation," and allowed, "there really is nothing we can tell you, Frank. There was an unfortunate leak of a preliminary and tentative but non-definitive decision, but nevertheless, we cannot say it is not true."

Moi: "That's it, Chet?"

Crocker: "Afraid so. Do the best you can, but you're on your own on this one, Frank. I'm sure you'll do just fine. Be sure to drop in when you're back in town."

When Thomas Jefferson was president he wrote about his minister in Spain, "I haven't heard from him in two years. If I don't hear from him next year, I will write him a letter." The Guinea embassy was like the minister in Spain.

There was a happy ending, however. A *New York Times* reporter arrived in Equatorial Guinea a few weeks later and wrote up the snafu in the *Times*. State's leak of the closing caused so much embarrassment that there was a reprieve. The embassy stayed. Secretary of State George Shultz sent the president of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, a nice letter. President Ronald Reagan sent a personal representative to smooth things out. The new ambassador learned Spanish, and by all accounts did a bang-up job delivering demarches. I stopped by to see Chet Crocker when I got back to Washington.

A reprieve is not in the cards this time. There was no leak of a "preliminary and tentative but non-definitive decision," and those are the things that save embassies. ■

EXPANDING US INFLUENCE

For years the Soviet Union, the embodiment of communism and dictatorship, was the arch-enemy of the United States, or in former President Ronald Reagan's infamous words, the "Evil Empire." All that changed in 1991, when the Soviet Union crumbled, worn down by worsening economic problems and fractured by internal political reform movements. Suddenly, the U.S. "us vs. them" foreign policy seemed meaningless. A new strategy became necessary, one that would allow U.S. influence to permeate the 12 emerging states of the former Soviet Union to shape them into democracies that would no longer threaten U.S. security and, in the brightest scenario, would become thriving economic markets for U.S. goods. The appointment of Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott as ambassador at large for the New Independent States in 1993 was a sign of the administration's concern with the region.

"It's an important time in history," said Daniel Speckhard, deputy to the Senior Coordinator and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the NIS (S/NIS). "We have an opportunity that may not come again. There is a window that is really needed to be taken advantage of." Helping the NIS countries become viable, friendly nations to the United States and to each other will prevent the threat and expense of another Cold War, noted James Collins, senior coordinator for S/NIS. "The surest way to do that is to turn former adversaries into partners in the international community," he told Congress in November 1995 testimony. "The most reliable partners are democratic, market economies. Drawing these countries into a matrix of relationships — political, economic, security — is part of ensuring this result."

The 12 new republics, often grouped together as the NIS, include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The republics were loosely joined together in 1991 as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Early issues focused on the military. In January 1992, seven republics agreed to a unified military command and, in May 1992, six signed a mutual-security treaty.

AFTER FALL OF USSR, AMERICA MOVES QUICKLY TO ESTABLISH POSTS

BY CHRISTY WISE

The NIS countries span a huge area: 8.6 million square miles, or more than twice the size of the United States and cover a mosaic of nationalities and ethnic groups — ranging from Muslim populations in the Central Asian republics to Slavic peoples in the European republics. Russia's land area of 6.5 million square miles far outstrips the new countries, which range from tiny Armenia (11,500 square miles) and Moldova (13,000 square miles) to Ukraine (233,100 square miles, the largest country within Europe) and Kazakhstan (1 million square miles).

The United States was poised to mobilize its resources quickly after the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, opening 11 embassies in the NIS within six months.

After Russia itself, which has a population of almost 150 million, Uzbekistan has the second-largest number of people, with 22.6 million.

Each republic, with its own variety of resources, also comes with its own individual economic and social problems. In some cases, the seeming failure of economic reform has led to political changes. Symptomatic of each republic's turmoil is widespread ethnic strife, including conflict between the Russian populations in each country and other ethnic peoples, and a nationalistic war between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The new republics in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) cover a vast, largely barren land, mostly uninhabitable due to severe cold, high mountains and parched deserts. The road and rail transportation systems remain primitive in most, but large reserves of petroleum, coal, gas and metal portend potential economic growth in the region. Agriculture, which has been mechanized in many areas, includes cotton and grain crops, as well as sheep and cattle. Industrial activities are petroleum and gas refining, chemical and metal production, cotton and silk textiles, equipment manufacturing and construction projects.

The European republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) have a varied terrain and many have a rich agricultural base as well. Belarus's flourishing agriculture industry includes cattle, hog and dairy production and various grain crop production; Georgia's diversified and mechanized agriculture industry includes thriving wine production. Cities such as Yerevan, Kiev, Tbilisi and Minsk are industrial centers for chemicals, motor vehicle factories, textiles and other industrial goods.

Christy Wise is a freelance journalist in Washington, D.C. Dale McGeehon, another freelance Washington journalist, also contributed to this report.

Several major pieces of U.S. legislation support programs in the NIS. The Freedom Support Act (FSA) of 1992 authorized $273 million, growing to a peak of $2.41 billion in fiscal years 1993-94, as a transitional measure to help NIS countries achieve economic and political reform. The Nunn-Lugar Act of December 1991 provided $400 million to help dismantle nuclear weapons in Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The Defense Appropriations Act of 1993 provided $400 million more for such activities. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and U.S. Information Agency (USIA) programs concentrate on democracy building and building market economics through training and exchange programs. Agricultural development through Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) programs, business development from the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), law enforcement training by the FBI, denuclearization through the Department of Defense and education and training by the Peace Corps are all part of the overall U.S. assistance package.

The United States was poised to mobilize its resources quickly after the September 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, opening 11 embassies in the NIS within six months, somewhat of a record for the State Department. In February of 1992 embassies opened in Yerevan, Almaty, Minsk, Kiev and Bistek; in March, embassies opened in Baku, Ashgabat, Dushanbe, Chisinau and Tashkent; and in April, another one opened in Tbilisi. By spring of 1992, the United States was represented in every capital in the region. In the newly renamed Russian Federation, the United States maintains its long-standing Moscow embassy and St. Petersburg consulate general, and opened additional consulates in Yekaterinburg in March 1994 and Vladivostok last December.

Not only were the NIS embassies installed in record time, but they were put into place when other embassies were being slashed by budget cutting and austerity moves. Moreover, further budget cuts might impact these

new embassies. Collins pointed out that "to cut back now is going to hurt us in an area which is, frankly, of the highest foreign-policy priority."

Opening embassies in this region is probably more challenging than establishing posts in other developing nations, particularly because there's no existing diplomatic infrastructure in the NIS, Collins said. "They are basically starting from zero," he said. "The embassies are just barely beyond the stage of dealing with essentials and survival and building the minimum infrastructure. We're getting awfully good value for our money right now. This is the time to put the infrastructure in place, train the people, get a cadre of local employees in the facilities because it is relatively inexpensive. We can do our job effectively by using some innovative ways of communication and regional expertise and circuit-riding representation.

"What we need is a continuing presence and continuing relationship in a part of the world where we have important objectives and where you do not get them accomplished unless you have good working ties with the people who run the governments."

To facilitate these relationships, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in 1992 began crash courses in the region's 10 languages and now teaches [FSOs] assigned to language-designated positions in the NIS embassies either Russian or the appropriate local language: Armenian, Arzerbaijani, Belarussian, Georgian, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, Ukrainian or Uzbek.

As budget cuts continue to threaten State's middle-management layers, Collins said he is troubled by "the department's [lessening] ability to provide the support and guidance and policy oversight. ... The department faces the prospect of becoming more of an administrator for other agencies than the chief policy instrument in the region."

Another trend has been the shifting of State Department resources to allow embassies to open in the NIS countries. In fiscal year 1996, 13 posts are scheduled to close: consulates in Zaire, Brazil, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Spain, France, Poland, Germany and Switzerland and embassies in Equatorial Guinea and the Seychelles.

Changing resources have demanded changing methodologies, forcing FSOs to conduct diplomacy and business differently than elsewhere. USAID, which has historically aimed for the painstakingly long view of results, has representatives in all NIS countries — one American and one or more Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) to coordinate programs in each of those countries — and full-scale missions in only Kiev, Almaty and Moscow. Yerevan has a six-person office. The agency views these missions — opened since 1991 — as short-term sparkplugs expected to shut down once they've accomplished their goals of establishing firm democratic traditions, press freedom and legal and banking reforms.

FSN's, as elsewhere in the world, work side by side with roughly 60 American counterparts in these countries. "Many of [the FSNs] are Ph.Ds but in subjects that have nothing to do with what they are doing now," said Thomas A. Dine, USAID assistant administrator for Europe and the NIS. "They're bright, and they're willing to learn and we're training them."

To compensate for the shift in funds to the NIS region, USAID has already closed down some of its 11 missions in Central and Eastern Europe, including the Czech Republic and Estonia. However, in the NIS, "the growth period is over," says Dine, who noted that none of the new NIS posts is slated to close. "Although I think I've got the most money of all the bureaus, I have the fewest people, so our operating expenses are the lowest. I started lean to begin with."

FSA, the 1992 congressional legislative mandate to help support the democratic transition in the NIS countries is expected to receive only $641 million for fiscal year 1996, down from $850 million the year before. "Within the NIS there will be some shifts that will result from one, there being less monies, and second, some of the Congressional earmarks," according to Richard Morningstar, special advisor to President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher on assistance to the NIS. He said that money spent in 1996 will actually be higher, since previous years' funds will still be in the pipeline, but "reduced resources still will have a major effect on the program and the effect will be felt the most when we move into 1997 and 1998."

Dine agreed, pointing out that "the earmarking prevents the [foreign affairs agencies] from responding to opportunities, and takes funds from programs that are proving successful. Even with a lean operation, "the latest round of cuts hurts."

USAID's democracy-building programs are working with political parties and electoral commissions to conduct fair elections and draft new laws. Help to

Continued on page 25

COMPETITION IN ASIA

BY MICHAEL GELB

Like nature, politics abhors a vacuum, and the collapse of the Soviet Union left a whopper in Central Asia. Today more than half a dozen states have maneuvered to shape the future of the region. Competition for vast new oil and gas reserves, along with issues of nuclear security and ideological questions make Central Asia's future potentially volatile. The triangular tug of war among Russia, Iran and Turkey is reminiscent of the "Great Game" played by England and Russia a century ago, but today the Eurasian heartland is much more important to the rest of the world. Conflicts along even the peripheries of the region are matters of international concern.

Despite tremendous losses, Russia remains the greatest power in the region. Its interests lie not so much in a restoration of empire — little more than rhetoric suggests Moscow considers this possible or even desirable — as creation of an integrated political, economic and military sphere of interest.

The collapse of the USSR severely disrupted the economies of Central Asia, but neither Iran nor Turkey is likely to replace the thousand ties that once bound them to Russia. Native elites once ruled the Soviet provinces to their own — as well as Moscow's — benefit, and the current administrations remain flesh of the old system's flesh, bone of its bone. Though freer, the NIS states are economically worse off today, and if nationalist pride precludes renewed federation, they still might share common perceptions, habits and interests with a re-Sovietized or neo-imperialist Russia. Security cooperation through the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) remains the best hope for preventing nationalistic problems from spinning out of control. With or without petroleum, restoring industrial, transportation, trade and other links is a precondition of economic revival. Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyzstan have joined Russia's customs union with Belarus; Uzbekistan and perhaps others will soon follow.

Moscow's new determination to "protect" Russians in the "near abroad" is taken seriously. Unlike the Baltic states, Central Asian governments try to avoid offending their Russian citizens, though hundreds of thousands of Russians have already left before any trouble erupts. In war-driven Tajikistan rebels have killed not only Russian soldiers but civilians too. Threats have been heard elsewhere.

On the other hand, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan permit dual citizenship under certain conditions. The very security of the new states depends on friendly treatment of Russian minorities, for the officer corps of their armies and security structures remains heavily Russian; the Caspian navies of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan consist of little more than "shares" in the old Russian flotilla. Azerbaijan has eschewed cooperation, but is under pressure to grant Russia bases and accept joint naval and air patrols.

In Azerbaijan Russian collusion in coup plots has been alleged and Communists banned for advocacting the restoration of the USSR. Nevertheless, the government was forced to placate Russia by agreeing to ship part of its oil via Russian pipelines north of the Caucasus, as well as permitting Russian participation in the consortium that will ship oil via the Transcaucasian route to Georgia and Turkey. Azerbaijan's President Heidar Aliev has bemoaned the flight of skilled Russian technicians, and there is even talk —as in Kyrgyzstan — of making Russian a second state language.

Central Asia has to transport its mineral wealth to European and Asian markets. Russia cannot salvage much from the region's exports to East and South Asia. Nor can Russia easily compete with international investors for building or financing the pipelines. But it can pressure Azerbaijan to live up to its commitment to transport oil through the Black Sea port of

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Novorossiisk. Kazakhstan, potentially the world's fifth largest oil producer, seems likely to join Azerbaijan in this route, motivated as much by the desire to avoid sole dependence on the southern route as to placate Russia. More tantalizing is the goal of sharing in all the oil and natural gas recovered under the Caspian. Soviet agreements in 1921 and 1940 defined the Caspian as a lake, establishing the principle of joint exploitation. Today Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan define the Caspian as a sea, claiming exclusive rights over their own sectors. In its position that the Caspian is a lake to be shared by all the neighboring states, Russia has a strong ally in Iran, also afraid of being left out.

Should diplomacy and economics fail, Russia can make it difficult for those states that ignore its interests. Kazakhstan felt it necessary to concede virtual extra-territorial rights to the Russians of the Karaganda industrial region and the Baikonur space complex; one of the reasons for moving the capital from Almaty to Akmola is the desire to stake a clearer claim lest its northern neighbor demand territorial adjustments in what Russian nationalists are now calling "South Siberia." The Georgians recently granted Russia military bases, but have received no guarantee that Russia won't encourage separatists in the autonomous republics of South Ossetia or Abkhazia.

On the other hand, the Russian "Eurasianist" tradition, which sees Asia as the source of Russian vitality vis-a-vis a greedy and wily Europe, could influence a diplomacy friendly to Central Asia. Russia's Union of Moslems works closely with the Russian nationalists; the autonomous republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan could act as bridges to the Turkic world. And the new Russian foreign minister, Evgenil Primakov, has expressed Eurasianist points of view in the past. For their part, the states of Central Asia have gone out of their way to be conciliatory to Russia. Oil and gas could also help resolve regional contradictions. If the Russian foreign ministry has criticized the Trans-Caucasian pipelines, the energy ministry — interested in possible Russian investment — has supported them. Japanese and Chinese investment in the colossal trans-Asian pipeline project could fuel economic development throughout Central Asia, making well-paying jobs more attractive than nationalism and fundamentalism. And vibrant Central Asian economics might increase opportunities for Russia's ailing industries to restore many of the positions they lost after 1991.

America is likely to play a secondary role in Central Asia, but this should not mean the region is not of great concern. Stability and prosperity offer Americans numerous opportunities; disorder and violence offer opportunities for Iran and Russia.

Teheran's hopes that the spread of fundamentalist Islam might reorient Central Asia toward Iran have not borne fruit. Beyond participation in some of the pipeline deals, Iran exerts little economic attraction to the newly independent states. With an investment of only a few hundred million dollars in Central Asia, Iran's involvement amounts to only a fraction of Turkey's.

Turkey stands to gain the most from Central Asia's transformation. Linguistic and cultural affinities are much closer with Turkey than with Iran. Turkey has made a much more comprehensive diplomatic effort. One of the world's fastest-growing economics, Turkey has invested billions in the region and expects to double that sum over the next few years. Central Asia needs to strengthen relations with the West, and in Central Asia, "West" means Turkey. Turkey's increasing prosperity and its gradual but steady democratization illustrate to the region's people the benefits of capitalist economics, parliamentary democracy and a pro-Western orientation. Turkey should be a key U.S. partner in this region.

If the human rights record of the NIS states has been poor so far, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have at least protected the most important precondition of progress: stability. Their healthy willingness, along with Kygyzstan and Azerbaijan, to invite foreign investment, should be encouraged, as well as encouraging them to live up to the democratic promises of their constitutions.

It is crucial for the United States to take into account Russian interests in Central Asia. U.S. diplomats should pursue legitimate interests there in periodic consultation with Moscow. Not only the Russian executive, but the legislature as well, must see the profit in peaceful cooperation. ■

Continued from page 22

develop market economies in the region is provided through privatization programs. According to Dine, these have had mixed results — and in Ukraine, in particular, the economic transition has been slow. "We're very dissatisfied with the lack of progress in privatization [in Ukraine]," Dine said. "The technical assistance dollars that we have put into this have not shown a flowering. There haven't been real results. We've told them we're going to stop spending that money until they get their privatization act together." USAID had hoped to privatize 800 to 1,000 enterprises a month in that country, Dine said, but only about 80 are actually privatized.

USAID has funded programs through USIA to help create more free media. In Ukraine, USAID financed the International Media Center, an Internews project that broadcasts the news four times daily on the government-owned Channel 2, the first independently produced television news program to be broadcast throughout the country, Dine noted. Media projects have been particularly successful in the Russian Federation, where small television studios in provincial Russian cities are linked to a growing network of producers and broadcasters around the country, sharing programs, spreading expertise and bringing uncensored news to viewers.

Another key USAID program in Russia has provided technical assistance to reintroduce jury trials to the country and train judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers and jurors in the concept of due process. Since jury trials were abolished by the Bolsheviks after 1917, criminal trials became tools of state control. More than 300 jury trials have been held in nine regions or oblasts of the Russian Federation. Four more regions are expected to join the program this year.

Commercial and tax codes and bankruptcy laws have also been created in many NIS countries through training funding by USAID. In January 1995, the first part of Russia's new civil code became effective, which contained basic business laws on ownership, mortgages and contracts. New tax codes have been drafted in Russia and Uzbekistan.

In banking, U.S. technical assistance is focused on helping Russia build the legal and institutional framework for stock trading and new stock offerings. Most of the financial regulatory efforts will end this year, by when necessary laws and institutions are expected to be substantially in place.

USAID's Dine said, "Clearly, we cannot be involved in the same things we were involved in fiscal year 1994 ... but we are seeing real results in four countries — Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Moldova."

In Moldova 1,171 enterprises have been privatized and 67 percent of the dwellings are now in private hands. A stock exchange has been established and financial laws implemented. In Kyrgyzstan there has also been mass privatization. Financial and real estate enterprises have been established and work on the criminal code has moved forward. Armenia has established an active real estate market and USAID funds have helped supply heat to 40 percent of apartment buildings in one district.

"In Russia, we've had a spectacular success in providing the technical know-how to privatize that economy," said Dine. "This is a time of great opportunity for the United States ... to develop a partnership. Russian reformers have asked us for technical know-how to totally restructure their society and this is the opportunity of the century."

However, success in the NIS is taking longer than USAID expected. "It's turning out to be very hard work," Dine said. "I always use as my reference point the countries in Eastern Europe — Poland, the Czech Republic,

Hungary and Slovakia — the four most dynamic and mature economies, and they're still having a hell of a time." In Russia itself, Dine said he believes Moscow is beginning to become as dynamic as its Eastern Europe counterparts, with a proliferation of small shops jammed with merchandise whose owners are using signs and displays to lure customers. "Real stores!," exclaimed Dine. "So it's happening. But there are all kinds of impediments. Communists, power-hungary bureaucracies, crime, corruption and a general sense of 'What is this free enterprise stuff?'"

USIA programs involve citizen exchanges between the United States and the NIS, and in-country training on leadership issues. Morris Jacobs, deputy director of USIA's Office of East Europe and NIS Affairs, said, "We concentrate our resources on areas directly linked to the goals of economic and political reform." USIA resources last year included FSA money as well as $24 million of USIA funds — the same amount they expect if and when a 1996 appropriations bill is passed.

USIA has one or two FSOs at every NIS embassy except Moldova, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. In Moscow, USIA has assigned 23 FSOs, who work with 50 FSNs; in Ukraine there are four FSOs. Other resources include libraries in Moscow and two Russian consulates and information resource centers, basically computer centers, at most other NIS posts.

But the bulk of the money is spent on training citizens who officials believe will be involved in economic and political reform in the coming years. Training programs range from year-long Fulbright fellowships to short-term internships that bring businesspeople of small companies to the United States to work with American businesspeople. Since 1992 more than 22,000 citizens from the NIS have come to the United States for training of one kind or another. Jacobs sees this as a long-term effort: "We've been running programs in the former Soviet Union for more than 40 years, and we will still be there after foreign assistance money has dried up and blown away."

Funding for Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) programs ran out Sept. 30, but it is expected that '96 fiscal year funding will extend funding authority for the emerging democracies programs at the same rate as last year — $10 million, according to James O'Meara, director of the Emerging Democracies Office at FAS. Agricultural attaches in Moscow and Ankara cover the NIS countries, with an additional adviser in Ukraine.

The Emerging Democracies program has a two-fold objective: to expand and preserve overseas markets for U.S. agricultural products and services and to share expertise with the NIS to help develop their food and rural business systems through technical assistance programs. Other FAS programs include long-term concessional sales, donations, export credit guarantees and technical assistance, which are funded through Commodity Credit Corp. funds and other laws, O'Meara explained.

The Peace Corps also is active in the NIS area — 3,000 volunteers have assisted in English-language and business training in those countries since 1990, said Fred O'Regan, regional director for Europe, Central Asia and the Mediterranean. Peace Corps funding has held steady at about $12 million to $15 million each year for the past three years. "We've plugged in personnel in areas where [the countries] were weak," he said. "We are not building latrines. These are very highly educated countries with a very high literacy rate." Peace Corps relations with Central Asia and the Caucasus will probably be longer term than those with Russia and Ukraine because of the different rate of development progress.

However, no monolithic answer exists for the question of when U.S. assistance objectives will be fulfilled in the NIS, concluded Morningstar. "Helping small businesses, training people and exchanges are programs that should just go on in some form because they're critical to the development of society — whether they come under the Freedom Support Act or ultimately end up as part of other agencies' budgets," he said. "There will be a need for some base program for some period of time. My main concern is that we don't set upon ourselves arbitrary deadlines to be totally out of some of these countries."

For the United States to pull out of the NIS now could potentially be disastrous, say many proponents of foreign assistance, including USAID Administrator J. Brian Atwood. "If we want to help nations resist the lure of autocracy, then we have to fund programs that enable people to empower themselves economically and politically and create a political order that demands accountability," Atwood said. ■

A Message from the President

The year 1995 was a challenging, difficult year for the American Foreign Service, despite notable diplomatic initiatives. Despite great successes for American diplomacy in troubled areas around the globe and exemplary performance in the day-to-day advancement and protection of American interests and citizens, Congress targeted America's diplomatic function for a 25 percent reduction in fiscal year 1996, climbing to 40 percent by the end of three years (fiscal year 1998). AFSA refocused its energies to meet this new challenge from Congress, both on the hill and with the American public and media. As always AFSA's activities were lead by the efforts of its governing board and many active and retiree members volunteering their time to protect and strengthen the Foreign Service.

Sen. Jesse Helms (D-N.C.), chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, started the year by questioning whether the United States needed a Foreign Service at all. Consultation with staff and senatorial colleagues led him to focus on radically downsizing and "streamlining" the foreign affairs agencies through consolidation into the Department of State. This was to be accompanied by a massive cutback of both funds and personnel, the State Department losing 9 percent of its people, USIA 25 percent, USAID 50 percent and ACDA 100 percent. Past years of uncertain management and erratic priorities in the conduct of foreign relations had led to a wrong-headed, but widespread belief that there is "substantial fat" in the foreign affairs agencies' budgets. Unfortunately, for three quarters of 1995, the foreign affairs community centered its attention on the structural changes and not on the major resource cuts of the Helms proposals. The structural debate was both divisive — especially within AFSA — and dangerously distracting in terms of the budget threats. In the end, both the old and the new AFSA boards concluded that AFSA must remain unified and continue to represent all the members of the Foreign Service; that the fight between the vice president and Congress had become partisan and AFSA's potential impact on it limited; that the real battle is in the budget arena and in its direct threats to diplomacy and the members of the Foreign Service; and that AFSA can play a more effective role by being proactive in the preservation of all the diplomatic functions and by making focussed proposals to improve management and efficiency. No one is completely satisfied with all of AFSA's decisions, but we remain united, feisty and effective.

> *"The structure of peace is rickety and various ceasefires could burst apart at any moment. ... Nevertheless ... [1995] ended with fewer guns being fired and fewer people being killed as conflicts long deemed intractable yielded to diplomacy... the progress of peace in 1995 confirms that even the oldest, angriest conflicts are amenable to energetic diplomacy."*
>
> *The New York Times, Dec. 31, 1995*

The Foreign Service's can-do attitude has meant that people, despite the free fall in resources and skyrocketing workload, have worked countless extra hours of uncompensated overtime in order to get the job done. AFSA's responsibility is to represent these dedicated professionals by insuring that the agencies focus on critical tasks and manage their resources accordingly and not just continue to demand more from already overburdened staff. The resource problem was exacerbated by two partial government shutdowns, which AFSA and AFGE protested in a nationally publicized rally outside the State Department. Our message was heard on all the networks local news, and internationally through BBC, CNN International, and the news wires. U.S. News & World Report featured a two-page color picture of our anger over being held hostage by the budget impasse.

The year 1995 was an election year for AFSA. I was honored to be reelected along with 21 other dedicated governing board members and officers to actively protect our profession and our careers. The new board held a weekend retreat in October at FSI, resulting in a dual focus: a more effective union and concentrated outreach to Congress and the American public to defend diplomacy.

The development of AFSANET, AFSA's Internet communication system, enabled AFSA to quickly put information and its viewpoint before thousands of its members and other citizens interested in American diplomacy. This major achievement improved AFSA's two-way communication with its members, many of whom are posted abroad. We are now moving to use the Internet via the World Wide Web to communicate with the public on issues critical to American diplomacy and the protection of our country and its people.

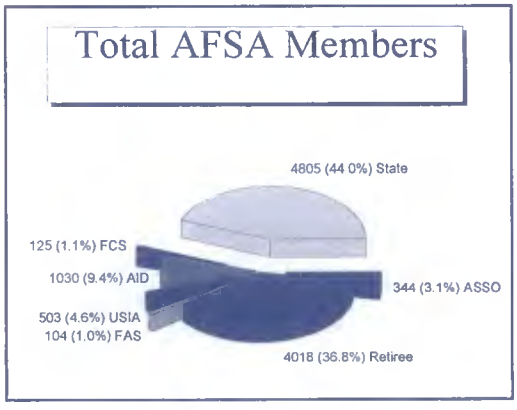
AFSA's strength in dealing with the expanded challenges the Foreign Service faces comes not just from its having won representation rights, but from the dedication and active support that it receives from its members around the world. Thanks to each of you for your support. It's your Foreign Service — participate!

Ted Harris

MEMBERSHIP

AFSA added 897 new members in 1995, bringing the total to a new high of 11,010. A new software program has allowed more accurate tracking of our membership: active membership is 11 percent senior Foreign Service, 30 percent specialists and 58 percent generalists. Approximately 74 percent of the membership is male and 26 percent, female.

The following chart shows AFSA's current membership breakdown:



Last year, AFSA added a new membership category of retiree Foreign Service spouses, with 82 members in this category. AFSA has also seen a 12.6 percent increase in membership in USIA, 12.9 percent increase in the Foreign Commercial Service, and 39.8 percent increase in the Foreign Agricultural Service. AFSA membership in State and USAID has not seen any increase this year, due to the personnel decrease in these agencies. The number of Foreign Service employees in the State Department has decreased by approximately 1,000 in the past few years. USAID has decreased by approximately 350 in the past two years. With declining budgets, this downward trend is unfortunately likely to continue.

— Janet Hedrick, director; Yolauda Oduusi, membership representative; Marguerite Madland, administrative assistant.

LABOR MANAGEMENT

AFSA's labor management staff scored numerous successes assisting individual members, as well as for the entire Foreign Service. The two grievance counselors assisted more than 300 people in 1995. The following issues were highlighted during 1995:

Furloughs/Shutdowns: AFSA provided up-to-the-minute reporting to employees overseas on developments relating to furlough policies and procedures and later on the shutdowns and budgetary implications — information that the department could not always disseminate.

Medical Issues: Problems created by the department's introduction of modified medical billing procedures prompted AFSA's intercession to resolve complaints and facilitate communications. Additionally, following a controversial medical evacuation, AFSA secured the IG's commitment to review medevacs and the department's assurances of the continued integrity of the medical evacuation program. AFSA has also successfully opposed proposals that would eliminate the department's payment

of hospital expenses for persons medevaced to the U.S., London or Singapore and deny reimbursement for illnesses not attributable to being overseas.

Integrity of the Foreign Service Grievance System: AFSA worked extensively with outside counsel on legal briefs in support of the FSGB's authority in separation-for-cause cases. In February 1995, the D.C. District Court agreed that the FSGB, rather than the secretary of state, had the authority. The department appealed the decision and AFSA filed an amicus brief in February 1996 urging the Court of Appeals to affirm the District Court's decision.

State: A diplomatic security grievance, core precepts and RIF rules and secretarial careers were important issues in 1995.

■ As a result of a grievance decided in 1995, DS officers assigned to the Secretary's Detail are now receiving overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The department had erroneously treated these employees as exempt from the FLSA and had placed a cap on their overtime. Employees assigned to the Detail have received approximately $350,000 in back overtime pay and AFSA expects they will receive an equal amount of liquidated damages. Similar grievances are pending for approximately 300 DS agents in other divisions and several IM specialists.

■ AFSA completed negotiations with the department on the new core promotion precepts, which are presented in a user-friendly matrix form. Consultations on State's RIF rules have opened. After surveying member reaction, AFSA identified a number of issues about the point system itself, the underlying needs analysis, and grievance rights, which it wishes to pursue in these consultations.

■ In response to persistent AFSA requests, the department has agreed to renegotiate the Secretarial Career Path Program. On the agenda are AFSA proposals concerning restructuring of the secretarial specialization, training opportunities, career mobility and workforce planning.

USAID: AFSA negotiated on RIF rules, employee evaluations, promotion precepts and tour extensions.

■ Consultations on RIF rules were concluded, with many positive changes adopted.

■ In accordance with an agreement, reached after two years of negotiations, the USAID Employee Evaluation Plan (EEP) will be reviewed at the end of the 95/96 cycle and negotiations will commence on revisions once the boards have finished their work.

■ After several rounds of negotiation on the promotion precepts, with many improvements incorporated into the draft, the precepts were issued; many changes will still have to be made in the precepts as reengineering evolves.

■ When a management notice appeared to involuntarily extend the overseas tours of some employees, AFSA alerted USAID that this was not what had been previously agreed to with AFSA and requested a correction, which was subsequently issued.

USIA: In 1995 AFSA worked on the performance evaluation system, RIF regulations, VOA concerns and job transfers within the foreign affairs agencies.

■ AFSA's recruitment efforts at USIA brought overall membership to nearly half of the total bargaining unit.

■ In an AFSA-conducted poll on the performance evaluation process, most respondents opposed dismantling it. AFSA also developed an official response to the USIA- proposed RIF regulations, making nine recommendations of which seven were accepted and incorporated into USIA's regulations.

■ AFSA worked closely with its constituents in the International Broadcasting Bureau to seek a successful resolution to FS personnel problems for VOA engineers and in holding VOA management accountable for how it sought to implement USIA RIF regulations.

■ In support of an AFSA policy to protect Foreign Service jobs across the foreign affairs agencies, AFSA worked with USIA management to enable untenured FSOs who might be separated through a RIF to "transfer" to the State Department.

FAS : Negotiations on the collective bargaining agreement were concluded; 25 percent official time was provided each for two FAS representatives. Throughout the year, AFSA members participated in a Partnership Working Group that produced a report on personnel reform at FAS.

AFSA also fought attempts to eliminate or reclassify positions traditionally occupied by the Foreign Service and worked with FAS FS

secretaries to limit secretaries' tours to three years, from the proposed four-year tours.

FCS: Negotiations on the collective bargaining agreement are nearly completed, with one of the few remaining issues being the amount of official time for the AFSA FCS vice president and representative. AFSA also concluded negotiations on issues in the Lateral Entry Program.

— Sharon Papp, general counsel; Colleen Fallon, staff attorney; Audrey Chynn, Henry Sizer, grievance attorneys; Richard Scissors, Jack Bryant, labor management coordinators; Carol Lutz, USIA labor relations specialist; Peter Gaasenid, labor management specialist; Monica Riva, law clerk; Judy Shinn, office manager.

Congressional Action

In 1995 the foreign affairs agencies, the Foreign Service and AFSA confronted an unprecedented challenge from the Congress as the foreign affairs agencies were, and still are, faced with major decreases in funding, the reorganization of the agencies, downsizing in personnel and posts, and two government furloughs. To meet this challenge, AFSA increased its legislative effort with the addition of Ken Nakamura as a full time director for congressional relations, also retaining Rick Weiss as a contractor for legislative relations. As frustration over the furlough increased, AFSA cosponsored a public demonstration on Jan. 3 in front of the State Department to protest the shutdown. During the furloughs, AFSA answered numerous inquiries and disseminated materials regarding the shutdown.

AFSA developed a three-pronged strategy for 1995. The first was to continue our presence on Capitol Hill, gathering information about the dynamics behind the legislation and presenting AFSA views to members and staff on the various issues before Congress. AFSA provided testimony before the House Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Subcommittee, and the Senate Banking Committee regarding personnel concerns of the Foreign Service. AFSA worked with the administration in seeking higher funding levels (which we got in part) and changes in provisions affecting the Foreign Service. At other times, AFSA opposed the administration as it considered seeking legislative changes to accelerate separation procedures and change existing RIF legislation. This battle goes on, even as we prepare for the resource fights of fiscal year 1997.

The second part of the AFSA legislative strategy was to expand our work with 25 other like-minded non-governmental organizations through our sponsorship of the Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (COLEAD).

The third part is a long-term grassroots effort to ask AFSA retirees and others to contact legislators and to ask AFSA retiree organizations to support legislation, such as American Foreign Service Day. AFSA also sought to involve employees of the various agencies in our legislative efforts, asking them to contact their representatives about budget cuts to the international affairs account. Finally, to keep AFSA members and others informed, AFSA has utilized telethons, mass faxes and e-mail through our AFSANET service.

— Ken Nakamura, congressional affairs.

Public Programs

Awards & Foreign Service Day

AFSA had again the sad duty of adding names to the Memorial Plaque on Foreign Service Day (May 5). The secretary eulogized Barry S. Castiglione, drowned while saving a colleague in El Salvador, and Gary C. Durell and Jacqueline K. Van Landingham, killed by terrorists in Karachi.

The highlight of the AFSA awards ceremony June 29 was the conferring of a new award for "Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy" on former Under Secretary U. Alexis Johnson by former Secretary of State Alexander Haig. The three awards for officers went to Dennis Jett, Janice Weiner and Gregory Stanton — individuals who had demonstrated intellectual integrity and creative dissent while furthering democracy and human rights. Other awards honored two secretaries, Diana Clayton and Charlotte Stottman; a community liaison officer, Denise Scott; a family member, Anne Bridgman; and two persons for furthering AFSA goals, Stephen Klaus and Bruce Laingen. Ten officers were recognized for achievement in the study of hard languages.

AFSA Speaker Lunches

The series included Ambassador Chas. W. Freeman on why diplomacy should be considered a profession, Admiral William Owens the changes in the U.S. military structure and a panel on the congressional-presidential relationship. Other professional activities included cosponsorship of a panel discussion and recep-

tion at Georgetown University to mark the publication of *Embassies Under Siege: Personal Accounts by Diplomats on the Front Line*, and convocation of a distingnished group of Washington thinkers to consider U.S. interests in the post-Cold War era.

COLEAD

The Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (COLEAD), an AFSA-fonnded alliance of some 25 non-profit foreign affairs groups, celebrated its full first year. A key success was the November COLEAD/State-sponsored Town Meeting, which focused on the importance of American engagement abroad. Some 570 grassroots activists participated, with Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott giving the keynote speech. C-SPAN broadcast the meeting. COLEAD also held weekly legislative coordination meetings and initiated a program to organize local foreign affairs coalitions to educate the public about the importance of foreign affairs.

Conferences

AFSA sponsored two very successful conferences that continued the dialogue between government and business on key economic issues. A spring conference, "World Trade in Services" had Joan Spero, State under secretary for economic, business, and agricultural affairs, as the keynote speaker. The second conference, "Vietnam: Challenges and Opportunities" was held in November. The keynote speaker was David J. Barram, deputy secretary of Commerce.

Diplomats Online

AFSA's Diplomats Online, an interactive program on America Online designed to bring students and teachers together with diplomats, had an up and down year. In the spring we forged a partnership with Turner Broadcasting to bring Diplomats Online into the CNN America Online space. Unfortunately Diplomats Online came offline while CNN's space was redesigned. We expect to have the program running in early 1996 in time for the start of our project funded by the U.S.-Japan Foundation to develop classroom and on-line curriculum modules to study U.S. and Japanese relations. Diplomats Online also received funding from the Marpat and Delavan Foundations.

International Associates

Our 40 corporate affiliates pursued an ongoing dialogue between the Foreign Service and the U.S. international business community through off-the-record lunches with State Department officials, such as Under Secretary Lynn Davis, Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke, and Ambassadors Marc Grossman, Melvyn Levitsky, J. Stapleton Roy and Frank Wisner.

Minority Interns

AFSA sponsored or cosponsored six summer interns: two at State, one at USAID and three overseas working with USIA employees. The Charles DelMar Foundation contributed to the program, along with the Thursday Luncheon Group and AFSA members.

Scholarships

In the 1995/96 academic year, AFSA awarded $113,002 to 65 students for Financial Aid Awards and $21,200 in Merit Awards, sponsored in part by AAFSW and DACOR. The Committee on Education reviewed its Articles of Incorporation and reaffirmed its mission, choosing not to expand into other types of scholarship assistance. The 1995 Scholarship Appeal raised $20,194 and more than $5,400 was donated to the Scholarship Fund in Robert Frasure's name.

— Lori Dec, scholarships; Dick Thompson, professional issues; Robert Krill, corporate relations; Harry Blaney, COLEAD.

Retiree Programs

AFSA's retired members topped 4,000 in 1995 and provided vital support to AFSA in the areas of legislative and public outreach — raising congressional and public awareness of the importance of U.S. diplomacy. Working with COLEAD, AFSA retirees helped organize and staff telethons which reached hundreds of FS alumni and signed up over 200 for our Legislative Alert Network.

State and regional Foreign Service retiree associations continued to flourish and provided welcome assistance to these outreach efforts. AFSA and COLEAD representatives met with groups in Texas, Florida, New York, Northern California, New Mexico and New England and were in close touch with other groups in Arizona, Southern

California, Washington State, North Carolina, and Minnesota/Wisconsin. In the D.C. area, AFSA coordinated closely with groups in Northern Virginia and Maryland, whose members took on the task of finding 50 cosponsors for a Senate Resolution for a new national Foreign Service Day.

AFSA continued the bi-monthly "AFSA Letter" for all retired members and provided individual assistance to over 300 retired members who called our toll-free number (1-800-704-2372), concerning health care, life insurance, annuities, taxes, or problems dealing with agency bureaucracies.

— Ward Thompson, retiree liaison

Administration and Finance

Keeping expenses in line with income was difficult in 1995; the AFSA Finance Committee monitored AFSA's financial position very closely. We increased spending in several areas to meet the very serious challenges facing the Foreign Service and to improve our services to members. The legislative budget was significantly increased with the addition of a new staff position, along with additional mailings and phone banks to activate FS retirees around the country. Our grievance staffers were upgraded to grievance attorneys and AFSA's Internet e-mail connection (AFSANET) was initiated in 1995 to improve our communications with members.

Maintaining the AFSA building and office computer systems continues to be a challenge and expense. A significant investment in equipment and software was required to link our Labor Management office with the DOSNET e-mail system.

The Foreign Service Club under the management of HMC, Inc. had a successful year. 1995 was the first full year of operations under a new contract which kept the losses in Club operations to their lowest level in over 10 years.

— Susan Reardon, executive director; Kara Harmon Ebert, controller; Leslie Lehman, executive assistant; Dianna Dunbrack, administrative manager.

Foreign Service Journal

In 1995 the *Journal* won the Apex '95 Award of Excellence from Communications Concepts. This year the *Journal* changed printers, which is expected to reduce printing costs by about $12,000 a year. Tara Delaney was hired as the first professional designer, a move expected to greatly enhance the association's publications. A consistent schedule of advertising supplements, including schools, camps and tax and financial advertisers, was implemented to bring in additional revenue. In November the magazine was distributed for the first time in bookstores around the country, selling out its monthly allotment for November and December.

The Editorial Board in 1995 included: Sheldon Krys, chair; Terrence Brown; Angela Dickey; Judith Henderson; David Hitchcock; Lisa Bobbie Schreiber Hughes; Mark Matthews; Daniel Newberry and Anne Sigmund.

— Karen Krebsbach, editor; Nancy Johnson, managing editor; Janet Emery, advertising and circulation manager; Tara Delaney, graphic designer.

Correction

The 1995 Tax Guide in the February *Journal* listed the personal tax exemption incorrectly. It should read, "for each taxpayer, spouse and dependent the personal exemption is $2,500."

AFSA Positions Available

Accounting: Responsible for weekly accounts payable, vendor maintenance and filing, petty cash, cash receipts, some general ledger work and analysis. Great Plains and Lotus experience preferred. Accounting experience desired. Part-time 20 hours a week, schedule flexible, available immediately, salary $12 per hour.

Assistant Editor: For the *Foreign Service Journal*, 2-3 years editing experience required. Foreign Service background preferred. Full-time position available in May, salary low 30s.

Executive Assistant/Office Manager: In AFSA's labor management office in Dept. of State. Duties include all aspects of managing a busy office, overseeing information system and e-mail operations (DOSNET), word-processing (Word Perfect 6.0), responding to telephone calls and other inquiries. Knowledge of Foreign Service issues and operations desirable. Full-time available in March, salary low 20s.

To be considered for these positions please send cover letter, resume to: AFSA Personnel, 2101 E St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. Fax: 202-338-6820. No calls please.

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CHATTING WITH PICKERING

US ENVOY DETAILS EXPANSION OF RELATIONS WITH NIS, RUSSIA

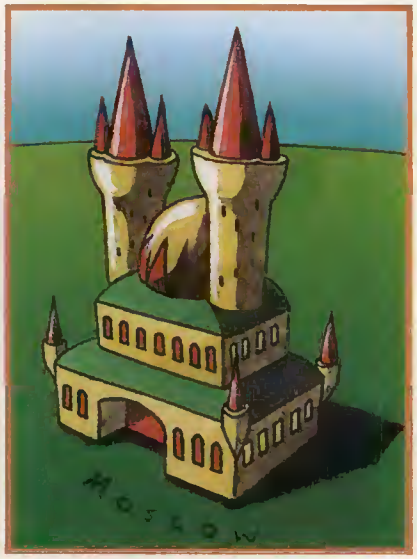
BY TATIANA C. GFOELLER

Thomas Pickering is the U.S. ambassador to Russia.

Q YOU HAVE TRAVELLED EXTENSIVELY THROUGHOUT RUSSIA AND THE NIS. HOW DO YOU VIEW THE REGION'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROGRESS?

A I should stress that I am the ambassador to Russia, not the former Soviet Union. But my position in Moscow affords an interesting view over the processes of change and transformation operating in Russia and the NIS. The collapse has presented a historical challenge and opportunity for U.S. foreign policy to assist the transformation of the former Soviet Union into a region of sovereign democratic states respectful of the human rights of their citizens, the security and independence of their neighbors, and committed to participation in the European family of nations as fully integrated participants in a future undivided Europe. Of course, the principal responsibility for this order rests with the peoples of the area.

My trip to the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan added valuable perspective. A great deal of Russia's foreign policy focus and the issues we work on in Moscow relate to Central Asia. I was particularly impressed by a number of factors in the areas I visited, including the historic influence of Islam; the growth of industry and agriculture; the current problems of the dearth of water resources, pollution, and industrial decline resulting from the economic failures of the Soviet era — and the determination of the leaders of the four countries I visited to reverse these negative aspects.



In all four, I held frank discussions on the relationships between Russia and the concerned NIS. Everyone I met with evinced a certain wariness towards Russia, natural among the newly independent toward a former colonial power. However, they also noted the economic ties uniting them to Russia that could not, and in many cases, should not be broken. Overall, they were cautious on the need for a relationship of trust and confidence with Russia. Some have large Russian populations. They want to treat these people with respect and fairness, knowing that Russia has a significant domestic political interest in this issue and that they don't want to repeat mistakes on human rights. The Central Asians understand the need to avoid this kind of controversy. Some are dependent on Russia for industrial development, oil and gas supplies and transportation, and have lingering military ties.

Q HOW ARE PROBLEMS SUCH AS ORGANIZED CRIME AFFECTING THESE COUNTRIES?

A There is certainly plenty to comment on in Russia regarding organized crime, though this was not the

"Everyone I met [in the NIS] evinced a certain wariness toward Russia, natural among the newly independent toward a former colonial power."

focus of my trip to Central Asia. There is a clear and present danger to Russia's future from organized crime. It affects popular attitudes, the economy, reform and has political and social impact. There are many competing criminal groups. The tentacles of Russian criminal organizations extend into each of the NIS states. All of these gangs are highly interrelated.

The United States is well along in developing a cooperative effort with Russia to combat this situation:

■ Training is an important component of this, as we are beginning to train Russian law enforcement officers in combatting new crimes they are not too familiar with, such as money laundering, commercial crime and the networking of international criminals;

■ Opening an FBI office, which has been operating in Moscow for a year now and which has led to a five-fold increase in the joint caseload of Russian and American law enforcement agencies in pursuit of Russian criminals in the United States, as well as to a number of arrests. Our ties to Russian law enforcement agencies continue to expand; lately we have branched out into cooperation with Russian customs, anti-narcotics squads and anti-terrorism officials.

Q How have the problems and potential of the NIS affected the relationship between Russia and the United States? Can you give specific examples?

A A key point of focus for Russian foreign policy is the NIS, especially the CIS — the former Soviet Union less the Baltic republics. Much of it is defensive, such as preventing the impact of conflicts there from spilling into Russia physically and into Russian domestic politics.

Russia also sees advantages, primarily economic ones, from close ties with the NIS. The buildup of the old Soviet economy took place through a rigid and centralized planning process. Close ties were created, as a result, among different parts of the entire Soviet Union based on industrial development, agriculture and other interrelated economic activities. Economic relations between Russia and the NIS are now on a primarily "cash and carry" basis, but they still illustrate that it is to the investment relationships. Of course, individual NIS states have widely varying views on Russia and what they want their relationship with Russia to be.

On security, we have to be aware of Russian interests in the treatment of ethnic Russians in NIS states. In Moldova, the presence of Russian forces has created an additional problem. However, we believe Russian commitments to withdraw these forces in three years are serious. The ongoing armed conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia and Tajikistan also preoccupy Russian security and foreign policy interests. Russian efforts to resolve these conflicts have met with mixed success and have led to deepening concerns on the part of some states.

In some NIS states — Tajikistan, for example — ongoing conflicts cannot be resolved without Russian participation, but also not by Russian mediation alone. The international community, including the United Nations, is therefore also active in this area, sometimes with Russian support and sometimes with some reserve on the part of the Russians. Let me point out that this is in stark contrast to Soviet foreign policy, which attempted to extend its reach and intervention to the entire world community of states.

Q Is nuclear proliferation and the transport of nuclear materials a factor in the relationship between Russia and the NIS?

A When the Soviet Union broke up, nuclear weapons remained on the territories of the three states of the

Tatiana C. Gfoeller is an FSO who is deputy chief of the political-internal section at U.S. Embassy Moscow.

ex-Soviet Union — Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan — in addition to Russia. This preoccupied Russia and the U.S. alike and equally. The most significant area of preoccupation was Ukraine. The U.S., Russia and Ukraine cooperated closely in an effort to secure full Ukrainian acceptance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the dismantlement and shipment to Russia of nuclear weapons on Ukranian soil. This effort led to the Tripartite Agreement of January 1994.

The U.S. has also encouraged the removal of nuclear weapons from Belarus and Kazakhstan. The U.S.- initiated Nunn-Lugar program has provided funds for some of this, including increasing the safety of equipment used to transport the nuclear weapons back to Russia. Some of the funding for the removal of weapons from Ukraine has come from the sale of 500 tons of uranium from this deal, since it has received nuclear fuel assemblies for power plants in return for nuclear materials in weapons Russia has received from Ukraine, with the U.S. assisting in the financing.

Q DO THE NIS COUNTRIES LOOK TO RUSSIA OR TO THE UNITED STATES AS A ROLE MODEL? HOW DO THE NIS COUNTRIES VIEW YELTSIN? WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT CAN THE UNITED STATES PROVIDE TO THE NIS AS THE INDIVIDUAL STATES STRUGGLE TO PROGRESS DEMOCRATICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY? WHAT AID DO THEY GET FROM RUSSIA?

A I am only able to answer those questions based on my perspective here in Moscow. You would receive much more complete answers from my colleagues, the U.S. ambassadors to the NIS.

I believe the NIS states wish for a balanced relationship with both Russia and the U.S., though the kind of equilibrium envisaged varies widely depending on the individual country. The cases of Belarus, on one hand, and Ukraine and Uzbekistan, on the other, are probably the two extremes of this picture.

Traditional ties, especially in the economic sphere, will likely remain in the forefront of Russian-NIS relations. The opportunity to balance the overwhelming Russian presence in the region is being sought by some of the NIS, as evidenced by their high interest in increasing ties to the U.S. Yet Russia remains the provider of significant economic support to the region. Examples of this include the provision of gas to Ukraine and some others, and intense economic relationships in the defense and machine-building industries as a result of Soviet placement of some elements of these industries in various parts of the NIS. Russian dependence on Central Asian cotton continues to be significant but may decrease in the future. Russia looks to Ukraine and Kazakhstan for wheat purchases.

Q COMMUNISM LEFT BEHIND TROUBLING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN THE NIS REGION. HOW ARE THESE PROBLEMS BEING ADDRESSED?

A Russia has so many environmental problems which are so serious that the topic would warrant a separate article. The genesis of this comes from the fact that Communist practices in industrial development paid little attention to environmental concerns. This led to industries being built which now pollute Russian air, water and land.

One good recent development is that with the general slowdown in economic production, a number of smokestack, military-industrial plants have been shut down, which has led to a decrease in pollution, especially in the air and water. Unfortunately, this has also led to economic and social losses for a great many people.

American environmental aid to the region is distributed and managed on a direct country-to-country basis, though some sharing of specific expertise available in USAID missions in the NIS does take place throughout the region.

Russian-American cooperation is taking place in the environmental field and we are providing aid in a number of areas, such as working together to deal with radioactive waste water from decommissioned Russian naval vessels in the Arctic and North Pacific and providing Russians with new technology and approaches to environmental problems never seen before by Russian government officials and industrial managers.The political purpose is to support and help increase the numbers of Russians in environmental groups and lobbies and the number of officials whose duties and interest are involved in rectifying the environmental depredations of the Soviet regime.

Q IN ADDITION TO THE NIS STATES, THE RUSSIAN EAST IS OPENING UP TO THE UNITED STATES, WITH NEW CONSULATES IN VLADIVOSTOK AND YEKATERINBURG. IN THE U.S. CLIMATE OF DECLINING RESOURCES, WHY ARE NEW CONSULATES NECESSARY IN THOSE CITIES?

It's very important to expand American outreach across the entire Russian Federation. For years the Soviet policy of closing off cities and harassing travellers made it impossible for us to reach vital people and regions.

Our two-year-old consulate general in Vladivostok and one-year-old consulate general in Yekaterinburg have shown in their activities that support for our presence in these areas is great. They have done this by getting to know the leaders of the eight to 10 regions where they are accredited. This has also given us significant advantages in supporting American business there.

Especially valuable have been various American business missions to these areas, some led by Cabinet officers, which have led to investments. At present, Americans are working in the Russian Far East in developing mineral resources, building supermarkets and providing defense conversion assistance. A major American oil company has opened a factory in Yekaterinburg. Programs on environmental assistance and oil and gas technology research are opening the door to more U.S. business expansion there.

The American-Russian relationship is also expanding, thanks to the activities of USIA, the Department of Commerce and USAID. They have opened American information centers in universities, business centers to support American business people in key cities and have their contractors training Russian businessmen. This is being done with a balanced focus on the consular districts of both Vladivostok and Yekaterinburg.

These activities mirror a major new phenomenon in Russian life: the decentralization of authority and investment from Moscow to the capitals and major cities of the 89 regions of the Russian Federation. If we are to know what is happening in Russia and make U.S. policies successful, then we must deal with the new federalized and regionalized Russia. Our consulates general in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok are especially important to us in this significant and challenging task. ■

OPENING A US CONSULATE

TANDEM COUPLE THRIVES AT AMERICAN OUTPOST IN YEKATERINBURG

BY JACK SEGAL

The cavernous Urals Airlines Airbus unfolded its stairway at Yekaterinburg's Stalinesque airport and a harsh gust of arctic wind welcomed my wife, Karen Puschel, and me to the edge of Siberia. It was April 1993 and we were here for a three-day preliminary look at the place we would soon call home — the third-largest city in Russia and the future site of the U.S. consulate general planned for the Urals/western Siberia region. We had been asked by the U.S. ambassador to Russia, Thomas Pickering, to join a growing list of married couples who would open small posts in remote locations of the former Soviet Union. We naturally had some doubts about living in a city and region that the Soviets had declared technically off limits to foreigners for 50 years.

At the foot of the stairs, waiting for us in the blowing snow was Viktor Yevstefayev, a 250-pound, gold-toothed bear of a man who served as our guide, hotel keeper and, eventually, friend. Yevstefayev, known to all embassy personnel in Moscow as "Viktor the KGBeeznessman," was determined to show off his city. Snapping orders to our driver, he guided us into the city on the decrepit highways that are an inevitable byproduct of the harsh climate. We stopped not at a hotel — there was, at the time, only one to speak of — but at a typically drab and dilapidated suburban apartment block. Navigating the trash-strewn entryway and up the standard Russian mini-elevator, we worked our way through the triple-locked steel doors to arrive at a relatively spacious, immaculate two-bedroom apartment decorated in a wild mixture of Soviet kitsch and equipped with the latest western gadgetry.

Greeting us was Natasha, Yevstefayev's wife, who produced a delicious meal of imported German cold cuts, cold chicken, Pelmeni (Siberian meat-filled dumplings) and caviar. Yevstefayev led the inevitable vodka and champagne toasts to everlasting peace and friendship, the future U.S. consulate, and most of all, to Karen and me for taking on the job of opening the consulate.

By the time we left Yekaterinburg three days later, we had decided that while we would be giving up many Western comforts, life in Yekaterinburg would be an adventure we wouldn't dare miss. Two years later, we look back on our work in Yekaterinburg with nothing but good memories.

It was March 1993 when the United States and Russia agreed to establish the second U.S. consulate in Russia, as well as

We had the opportunity to show our hosts what is best about America and how the United States takes care of its people's economic, cultural and social needs.

an analogous Russian mission in Chicago, and we left Moscow for good eight months later to open U.S. Consulate General Yekaterinburg. We found an apartment, hired a vehicle and driver through Yevstefayev and made our first contacts with the regional government. The official opening ceremony was to feature a visit by Ambassador Pickering, U.S. Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown, and 25 CEOs of major U.S. corporations that America hoped would be interested in doing business in Yekaterinburg — a scenario designed to underscore the consulate's export and business promotion emphasis.

Since we had already served 18 months in Moscow, where high-level visitors are part of the daily milieu, we weren't concerned to find ourselves preparing for the arrival of 80 VIPs just a few weeks after arriving. True, we were in an unfamiliar city with one brand-new Foreign Service National (FSN) and no support network, but we scrambled to find a venue for the opening ceremony, located a tape of the Russian anthem to play after the "Star Spangled Banner" and sent out invitations to our district's seven Oblast (state) governors, two republic presidents and three Okrug (territory) administrators, plus 200 Russian guests.

The diplomatic guest list was short — just a Mongolian third secretary and a Hungarian trade representative — both accredited to Moscow. The U.S. consulate was to become the first foreign diplomatic presence in central Russia since the counter-revolution, when a British consul accompanied the White Army during its unsuccessful attempt to rescue the Tsar before he and his family were murdered in Yekaterinburg in 1918.

After the pomp and ceremony of the opening day on March 31, 1994, Karen and I looked at each other with a touch of trepidation as Secretary Brown's gleaming Air Force jet taxied away, and we returned to our as-yet-unfinished apartment to start the business of running a consulate.

Those first weeks were a challenge. Living conditions were difficult: Our apartment lacked a kitchen; we didn't know where to buy things; we had only our Russian contacts and a few intrepid advisers from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to commiserate with; and we had been handed a huge piece of Russia as "our" territory to explore. The consular district was a region the size of western Europe, stretching from the Kazakhstan border to the North Pole, and from the western slopes of the Urals to the heart of Siberia. Forty million people awaited the first visit of the newest celebrities in this isolated, frigid region.

Our first order of business was to find apartments for the soon-to-arrive American staff and a permanent office building for the consulate. When a beautiful pre-Revolutionary mansion, originally chosen by Washington as both an office and residence turned out to be prohibitively expensive to renovate, we had to choose between sacrificing most of the living space in our apartment to the consulate's offices — or slowing the rapid expansion of the consulate activities. We opted for less living space. Little did we know that, a year later, our apartment would still be doubling as our office.

From 1993-95 Jack Segal was consul general in U.S. Consulate General Yekaterinburg and Karen Puschel was his deputy. The tandem couple is now posted in Washington, he to the office of the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, and she to the office of Commerce's Under Secretary for International Trade.

Bureaucratic foot-dragging by Russian security services, the Washington budget crunch and a scarcity of office space in Yekaterinburg's boom-town economy made finding an office building difficult and frustrating. Although we ultimately managed to find permanent housing and offices faster and less expensively than any NIS post before ours, by the time our new offices were ready, our apartment looked like an overstuffed Russian sausage — crammed every day with a 15-person Russian and American staff.

We had a militia man in the foyer, four employees working around the dining room table, and three more in each of two tiny spare rooms. The living room doubled as meeting place and conference room; the kitchen served as the employee cafeteria and coffee room; and even our bedroom did double duty as the deputy's office. As consul general, I had a room to myself — even if it was only eight feet square — and accommodated meetings of as many as 10 people.

Our intrepid cat, Teppo, a veteran of Gulf War Scud missile attacks in Tel Aviv, was so fed up he would occasionally march out into the hallway to bellow his displeasure with all the racket 15 people, a Xerox, a shredder, four phones and a fax can generate in a 60-square-meter apartment.

The consular district included some of the world's largest oil and gas producing regions, which had been a major consideration in the decision to open the consulate. The region's vast military-industrial complex also offered opportunities for U.S. firms to find Russian partners who could produce to the relatively exacting standards of Russia's space, nuclear and defense industries. The region also is rich in key natural resources, including gold, diamonds, titanium, uranium and iron ore. Some cities we served would be vaguely familiar to Russophiles — Perm, Omsk, Tyumen, Chelyabinsk, Magnitogorsk, Tobolsk, and Orenburg, Kurgan, Ufa,

ONE COUPLE'S OWN COLD WAR

BY LEE FORSYTHE

In March 1992, I arrived in Yerevan with my wife, Rosemarie, who as the political and economic officer, was the first FSO permanently assigned to that new U.S. embassy. Later that night, we were escorted into our temporary living quarters, an icy room in the Hotel Armenia. When the electricity promptly went out, we summoned help. The floor matron glided in with a candle-lit tray of tea as two electrical engineers criss-crossed the room examining the outlets by the glow of their cigarette lighters. Suddenly, as if to demonstrate that the room was not totally devoid of amenities, a torrent of water gushed out of the middle of the ceiling onto the bed where Rosemarie was resting. Our Armenian tour had begun with a splash.

By summer we had moved into a spacious apartment and warm, sunny weather lifted our spirits. But by late 1992, the country was unknowingly on the brink of its coldest winter in more than 40 years, when the only energy source — the gas pipeline through Georgia — was blown up, plunging Armenia into a pitch-black deep freeze like something out of the Middle Ages. In a city of more than a million people, the nights were so eerily silent and dark that pedestrians floated in and out of the gloom like shambling zombies in a bad horror movie. The cold was continuous and without relief. There was no going inside to warm up; it often felt colder in our meat locker of an apartment than on the icy streets. Early in the winter we could still sleep in one of the bedrooms by wearing several layers of clothing, including hats, gloves and boots, and piling on multi-layers of blankets. Once it became too cold to do that, we slept on the kitchen floor in front of an open fireplace.

For most of that winter we received one or two hours of electricity per day, prompting what we called "The Yerevan fire drill." We left the kitchen lights permanently in the "on" position so that if the current came on in the middle of the night, we could wake up and spring into action — cooking something to eat, collecting enough warm water for sponge baths, and fine-tuning the electrical flow so the circuit breaker would remain on.

Because the water supply was sporadic, the bathtub functioned as an all purpose reservoir, which we filled up whenever water was available to be used for drinking, cooking, washing and flushing. One night, one of the embassy's political officers removed from his bathtub what he assumed was a loofa sponge, only to hold it up to a candle and find a frozen rat. It was difficult to convey the quality of such a life. I'll always remember my brother asking, "If you don't have electricity, doesn't your food spoil?" Well, I told him, "Not unless we put it in the refrigerator and shut the door."

Of course, whatever discomfort we Americans endured was minor compared to that of most of the population. Having enjoyed a comparatively high standard of living among the Soviet republics, the newly independent Armenians found themselves in a precipitous downward spiral, punctuated with nightmare visions: a totally blacked-out capital of overnight breadlines, roving packs of starving dogs that attacked people, and a proliferation of stumps along avenues once lined by full-grown trees.

I look back on those strange days with mixed feelings. My wife and her coworkers succeeded in getting the new embassy up and running in a troubled land under extremely difficult conditions. And the Armenian people, despite their plight, always went out of their way to offer hospitality, friendship and a helping hand. ■

Lee Forsythe, a freelance writer and Foreign Service spouse, is the husband of FSO Rosemarie Forsythe, now posted to the U.S. Mission to the European Union in Brussels. She was the political and economic officer at U.S. Embassy Yerevan from 1992-93 and was subsequently posted to the National Security Council.

Izhevsk. All had been closed by the Soviet government to foreigners for decades.

Our modus operandi was pretty straight forward. I traveled the vast consular district while Karen, joined later by Warren Hadley, the administrative officer, and his wife Martha, the consular assistant, ran the consulate in Yekaterinburg. I logged over 30,000 road miles and 50,000 air miles. I learned to live with the realities of traveling in Siberia and the Urals. Even the sight of a thick coating of ice sliding off the wings during takeoff eventually didn't catch my notice, although I did feel a twinge of concern once when the heating failed on my AN-24 twin-prop and the nearby emergency exit was coated thickly in ice.

Road travel was a necessary evil. Our Ford Taurus was a clear symbol of America and stood out among the Volgas and Zhigulis common to the region. People constantly wanted to roar up alongside to catch a glimpse of the American consul general. My driver, Sergei Vorontsov, became a trusted friend as we traveled the icy roads, visiting every major city at least twice during the first year. Between the cities there was little to attract the eye — frozen farmland, an occasional village of wooden shacks, a lonely camp for oil workers, and the knowledge that similar scenes stretched four time zones in each direction across Russia's vast land. We sometimes felt a long way, indeed, from the outside world.

Early in our tour, we got a taste of the kind of reception we could expect when we were invited to the premier of a Russian-language version of the Broadway hit, "Oliver," staged by Yekaterinburg's highly-regarded musical comedy theater. Before the opening curtain, as we took our front row, center seats, the theater director announced that we were in the audience. The people rose to their feet as one and applauded us.

That was one of a long string of unforgettable moments, such as the day we arrived at a county fair

in Bashkortostan and took the lead sled in a procession of 15 troikas — each team of horses decorated lavishly with bells, feathers and brightly-colored fabric. Each troika represented a collective farm which, in turn, took us to their pavilion (like a Mongolian yurt). There we were presented with Russian bread and salt, a traditional presentation for honored guests, and sampled roasted duck washed down with fermented mare's milk, common fare in this Turkic region.

As our tour in the Urals drew to a close, Karen and I came to realize that we had been incredibly lucky. Far from the bureaucracy of Moscow, we had created an outpost of America in the heart of Russia. American trade and investment to the region expanded enormously in less than 24 months. As de facto commercial officer, Karen was cited by the U.S. Commerce Department for generating more than $30 million in new U.S. exports to the region, including agricultural products, industrial and medical equipment, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods.

We had recruited and trained a Russian group of foreign nationals who quickly proved to be dedicated, hard-working and proud to be a part of their region's opening to the West. Soon, with the arrival of Consular Officer Brook Hefright in April 1995, Yekaterinburg offered full-fledged consular operations to all of central Russia. The British, Germans and Chinese followed the U.S. lead, all opening their own missions in the Urals last year.

Whether helping to arrange the first showings of American films in the region — we started with a Russian-language version of "Schindler's List" — or raising funds for the local veterans' hospital to celebrate the end of World War II, we showed our hosts what is best about America and how the United States takes care of its people's economic, cultural and social needs. We in turn saw quite clearly that the bridges being built today between our two peoples may well change the world inherited by our children. ■

The Sleaze Factor

After Years of Fighting Corruption, Others Join US to Curb Growing Worldwide Problem

By George Gedda

Meetings of the United States and its European allies are invariably accompanied by sentimental references to the shared democratic values that have cemented trans-Atlantic ties for decades. But there is a fundamental division between Americans and Europeans on at least one issue: How to deal with the growing problem of cross-border commercial bribery — the kickbacks that entrepreneurs from wealthy countries pay to get contracts in poor countries. In general, Europeans are far more tolerant of the practice than are Americans, at least at the governmental level. The differing attitudes could reflect a conflict between the youthful idealism of the new world and the somewhat more jaded attitudes of the old.

Attempts at bribery by U.S. corporations overseas have been a violation of American law since 1977, and in that principled stand, the United States is all alone. Public pressure for such legislation grew out of disgust over business scandals of the 1970s, particularly Lockheed Corp.'s bribery of Japanese politicians, as well as the perception that economic growth worldwide would benefit from fair competition.

In many European countries, there is much less stigma associated with bribery; indeed, it is often treated as a tax-deductible expense. It was an issue that attracted little attention not long ago, but the problem now has reached such proportions that the U.S. government is moving far more aggressively than before to combat it. In fact, it is becoming a front burner issue worldwide — Europe included.

Although commercial bribery often involves wealthy corporations operating in the Third World, sleaze does not exist only within tightly drawn geographic or income boundaries. Attempts are often made to legitimize the practice by using benign terms to characterize it: commissions, sweeteners or inducements, to name a few.

But Daniel Tarullo, assistant secretary of State for economic and business affairs, says use of these terms amounts to "semantic manipulation" that obscures a problem that has become "frighteningly widespread." To the British daily *Financial Times*, 1994 was so disreputable on the sleaze front that the newspaper labeled it, "A Year of Corruption."

Some highlights from that year's press accounts: A British construction firm openly acknowledged a policy of bribing Malaysian officials to gain business. A Canadian company was alleged to have bribed a parastatal in South Korea to win a nuclear reactor contract. A German firm allegedly bribed a Zambian official of a government-owned steel and iron company.

George Gedda is the diplomatic correspondent for the Associated Press in Washington.

In developing countries, corruption seems most likely to flourish in those without elected leaders, a strong judicial system or a free press. Countries with high economic growth rates also seem to invite corruption. Huge foreign investment projects in India have led to a dramatic increase in corruption, and the country's democratic institutions thus far have had difficulty containing it.

Globally, as the corruption problem has intensified, so have U.S. efforts to combat it, including support for private-sector initiatives. The United States also has been pushing hard to persuade fellow industrialized countries, particularly those that are members of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to criminalize commercial bribery. After years of resistance, the OECD finally agreed in 1994 to recommend that each member state "take effective measures to deter, prevent and combat bribery of foreign public officials in connection with international business transactions."

Also, a strong anti-corruption resolution was approved at the 35-nation Summit of the Americas in Miami in December 1994. With U.S. support, the Organization of American States is taking a modest crack at the problem by drawing up a hemispheric convention on corruption. "Fighting corruption is becoming big business in Latin America," says Michael Skol, a former top aide in the State Department's Latin America bureau who recently retired from the Foreign Service. Skol says remedial actions in hemispheric countries are being taken which were "unthinkable, even unmentionable, a few years ago." Skol and others applaud the emergence of private firms that serve as primary purchasing agents for government ministries around the world. This helps limit potentially corrupting contacts between government officials and foreign businessmen.

Some analysts believe corruption is too pervasive in Latin America to be rooted out completely. "Latin Americans keep hearing that something will be done about corruption," says Douglas Payne, of the pro-democracy group, Freedom House. "Yet every year there are more and more mammoth scandals that confirm that in most Latin American countries, the problem is not corruption in the system but rather that corruption is the system." Pointing out that punishment is still rare in Latin America, Payne says, "Impunity perpetuates the system."

The relationship between commercial corruption abroad and the well-being of the average American is somewhat murky. Logic suggests U.S. attention to the issue is just one aspect of a recasting of foreign policy that sharply raises the priority given to combatting criminal activity that affects Americans around the world. President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher have both referred to the issue in public statements. The new emphasis was welcomed in a *Wall Street Journal* column last fall by Zoe Baird, Clinton's initial choice to be attorney general and now a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

In general, Europeans are far more tolerant of the practice than are Americans, at least at the governmental level. The differing attitudes could reflect a conflict between the youthful idealism of the new world and the somewhat more jaded attitudes of the old.

Baird recounted the growing number of ways Americans are vulnerable to sinister influences from abroad. She mentioned international narcotics traffickers, smugglers of explosives and foreign-based computer hackers who can target the U.S. banking system, the telephone system or air traffic controls. She even sees the potential for international crime fighting to become the centerpiece rather than a mere adjunct of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. "The most fundamental crisis facing American foreign policy is dwindling support and related isolationist tendencies," she says. "By finding a new language and justification for many foreign policy initiatives root-

ed in domestic security, there is a chance that this tendency might be reversed."

Many American companies may have lost big contracts in the Third World because they were barred from offering a bribe that their foreign competitors were all too willing to pay. One example cited by the *Wall Street Journal* was a $320 million contract that a U.S. power-generation company lost to a Japanese company. The American firm walked away after government officials demanded a $3 million bribe.

Some U.S. companies ignore the law and, on occasion, get caught. In 1995, Lockheed-Martin Corp. pleaded guilty to making payments of $1.5 million to an Egyptian government official who helped it win a contract for three C-130H aircraft. Lockheed paid $24 million in fines, more than twice the profits from the sale.

In attempting to build an international coalition against corruption, the United States faces entrenched attitudes, typified by a comment in 1994 by Lord Young, former British minister for trade and industry. He said that without kickbacks, British entrepreneurs would be unable to compete abroad and the British economy would suffer as a result. "The moral problem for me is simply jobs," Young said.

That sentiment was echoed last year by Gunther Rexrodt, German minister of economics. "If others pay grease money and commissions but the Germans don't, then I have to accept the justified criticism that we jeopardize jobs," he said.

Some experts believe democratic development around the world — clearly an American interest — could be set back if the growth of commercial corruption continues unchecked. It is "the single greatest enemy of democracy," says Frank Vogl, vice chairman of Transparency International (TI), a group formed three years ago to crusade against sleaze. He warns that the "rampant corruption" in post-communist Russia could lead to disenchantment with that country's democratic experiment and usher in a return to authoritarian rule. "It doesn't make sense to campaign for democracy without addressing the issue of corruption," says Vogl, a former World Bank spokesman. *Newsweek* says the scale of corruption in some developing countries is such that "it risks political unrest or — just as bad — a backlash against free market reform."

Among other goals, TI has been pushing for companies who bid on major foreign contracts to make contractually-binding pledges against bribery. It also is trying to pass on to corruption-riddled countries the anti-corruption techniques of the clean ones. Increasingly, grassroots organizations are being established in the Third World to demand that corrupt officials be called to account for their actions. For South African President Nelson Mandela, there are few higher priority issues than the fight against graft.

In Tanzania and elsewhere, corruption has become a dominant political campaign theme. Anti-corruption commissions have been set up in Thailand, Zimbabwe and other countries. More than ever before, aid donor institutions are withholding assistance from corrupt countries. In Malawi, more than 100 legislators turned out last year for a seminar on how to draft effective anti-corruption legislation.

It's hard to overstate the detrimental effects of bribery on Third World development. In a corrupted economy, costs are higher and the quality is lower. Vogl says that in Kenya, government funds earmarked for badly needed aircraft were used to finance cement factories being pushed by French interests. *Newsweek* magazine reported that the social welfare minister of Angola — one of the world's poorest countries — imported 300 Mercedes Benzes.

In Zambia, Roger Chongwe resigned his Cabinet post in protest over kickbacks. "Building a road which would be built for £1 million costs £1.5 million or £2 million. The projects will cost more because the top leadership will get their cut," Chongwe told BBC. Tarullo, the State Department official, says that "when competitive bidding becomes competitive bribing, market forces no longer guarantee efficient outcomes."

George Moody-Stuart, a retired international businessman who knows Asia and Africa well, says nobody in the business world pretends any more that corruption "is not one of the most important and damaging factors in Third World development." Illicit payments by their very nature are covert so it is impossible to quantify their amount or frequency. Does a Rolex watch on the wrist of a Nigerian military officer imply an illicit payoff?

Moody-Stuart knows enough about the subject to come up with rough estimates on typical bribe costs: A 5 percent cut of a $200,000 contract may be interesting to a senior official below the top rank, Moody-Stuart says. He continues: "Five percent of $2 million is in the permanent secretaries' area. Five percent of $20 million is real money for a minister and his key staff. Five percent of $200 million may attract the serious attention of the head of state."

In the late 1970s, a German state-owned company won the serious attention of the Shah of Iran. He awarded the company a contract in return for a $70 million deposit in his personal Swiss bank account. The deal went sour when the Shah fled in 1979, and the fate of the $70 million

has been in litigation ever since. The corruption that went on between the German company and the Shah is a kind of first cousin to the strictly domestic sleaze so prevalent these days in some of the newer democracies. Not long ago, it was rare that corruption could cause a government crisis or topple a president but such occurrences are common nowadays. After retiring, Mexican dictator Porfirio Diaz, who ran the country almost continuously from 1876 to 1911, was asked how it was possible for him to rule for so long. He replied, according to legend, "A dog with a bone in his mouth can't do two things: He can't bark and he can't bite."

Times have changed. In recent years, the presidents of Brazil and Venezuela have been hounded from office accused of corruption, and former President Roh Tae-woo of South Korea was arrested last year and charged with funneling more than $650 million in kickbacks into a personal slush fund. The war on sleaze has intensified in developed democracies such as France and Italy where judges have been going after corrupt politicians with unusual vigor.

But new opportunities for corruption have cropped up elsewhere. With the collapse of communism, a void was created as the transition to a free market progressed. And in the absence of anti-trust authorities and other regulatory mechanisms, corruption has been able to flourish. "You've got to have a lot of new rules and new laws if capitalism is to work in a healthy way," Vogl says. In its new flirtation with capitalism, Cuba seems alert to the potential dangers of corruption. *The Miami Herald* reported last year that Cuba canceled the licenses of dozens of foreign firms because of corrupt practices. "If the former U.S.S.R. countries are 10 on a [corruption] scale of 10, Cuba is a two," says John Kavulich, head of the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Business Council, which advises potential investors on the business climate in Cuba.

It's hard to overstate the detrimental effects of bribery on Third World development. In a corrupted economy; costs are higher and the quality is lower.

Vogl and his companions have to be careful about who they enlist to advance their cause. Some politicians may mouth the anti-corruption thoughts but do so merely for the public relations benefit. TI suffered a minor embarrassment this past fall when the chairman of its advisory council, Ecuadoran Vice President Alberto Dahik, fled to Costa Rica after being accused of corruption. The charges against Dahik are open to question but Dahik has acknowledged control over a slush fund he used to purchase the votes of legislators. Although his supporters say there is no evidence he benefitted personally, bribing legislators obviously ran counter to the squeaky clean image TI wants to project.

TI won attention last summer when it published a ranking of 41 countries of their perceived corruptibility, or at least their willingness to tolerate unfair business practices. The group blended the findings of seven different surveys to draw its admittedly unscientific conclusions. In large measure, the survey reflects the views of businessmen and journalists. New Zealand, Denmark and Singapore were found to be the cleanest countries while Indonesia, China and Pakistan were found to be the worst offenders. The United States ranked no better than 15th. This partly reflects the cozy ties U.S. corporations often have with political leaders through donations. While less crass than outright bribes, foreigners complain these types of relations create an unlevel playing field. A major shortcoming of the TI survey is that the countries considered to be among the most corrupt — Russia, Nigeria and Zaire — were not ranked because of a lack of firm data. "We don't consider the survey to be a bible," says Vogl.

To compete abroad without being able to bribe has tested the creativity of U.S. corporations. Some offer scholarships for family members of key officials. *The Wall Street Journal* reported last fall that foreign trips are a favorite ploy. Foreign officials or executives who visit the United States on the tab of large corporations often have as part of their overall itinerary visits to Disney World, Las Vegas and Atlantic City. "For Chinese officials, the daily allowances given them by American companies over two weeks can equal a year's pay," the *Journal* reported. "U.S. companies say it isn't uncommon for Chinese delegations to arrive in the U.S. with no luggage, expecting their hosts to buy them clothing."

The *Journal* reported that one U.S. electronics company operating in China pays allowances of $125 a day for visitors to its California headquarters. The Chinese find the money so tempting that they often try to cram four into a hotel room. "Is it corruption?" a company official asked. "I mean, if someone came to me and offered me something worth 18 months' salary, it certainly would get my attention." ■

BOOKS

LEADING IN MIDDLE OF TURBULENT TIMES

The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace, 1989-1992

James A. Baker III with Thomas M. DeFrank, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1995, hardcover, 672 pages, $32.50.

BY WILLIAM C. HARROP

Most of the 20th century has been turbulent, but the four years of the Bush administration saw truly historic change and concentrated drama: the fragmentation of the Soviet empire and the close of the Cold War, the reunification of Germany, Tiananmen Square, the U.S. invasion of Panama, the end of apartheid in South Africa, the Persian Gulf War, the launch of the Middle East peace process, the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

This long book is former Secretary of State James Baker's account of his role, frequently a central one, in these extraordinary events. Such an exhaustive, individualized record adds to our understanding of recent history and of Baker himself. He could not be accused of modesty, but does not seem to claim disproportionate credit for himself either. He put American strength to full advantage, such as extracting repeated concessions from a floundering Soviet Union or demanding and obtaining — over the less ambitious advice of his advisers, he asserts — $15 billion each from the Saudis and Kuwaitis to fund the Gulf War.

Baker is justly proud of the effective — and rather one-way — relationship he developed with Eduard Shevardnadze, who became on critical occasions an advocate of American views within the Soviet government. He also takes pride in his sponsorship — overcoming National Security Council opposition — of the "two-plus-four" formula, under which the two Germanys and the four occupying powers could effectively address the neuralgic issue of reunification. Baker worked tirelessly to achieve U.N. Security Council support for the key resolutions against Iraq, again skillfully capitalizing on American power.

And no one should doubt how critical Baker's part was in launching the Middle East peace process. It is all well to argue that, with the demise of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Saddam Hussein, the objective conditions of peace were at hand. In fact, without Baker's commitment of energy, time, patience and skill, an historic opportunity would very probably have been lost.

This is an honest book. Baker does not hide his own episodic fits of temper, nor his proclivity for sudden shocking outbursts of crude language, which could change the tone of negotiation in different ways. His intimate, longstanding relationship with George Bush was a tremendous strength. Secretaries of state will always benefit from the perception that they really do speak for their president. Baker's sensitivity to psychology and his intuitive pragmatism come through. Like President Bush, he is more comfortable with action than vision. Thomas Friedman once wrote, reportedly to the great irritation of the secretary, "You can take Baker out of politics but you can't take the politics out of Baker."

Style is not a strength of this book. It is longer and more detailed than necessary. The narrative thread is carried by extended accounts of one-on-one meetings that can become homogeneous. Long quotations interweave with Baker's internal dialogue. Some fault may lie with note-takers, but it is distracting when so many world leaders are portrayed as communicating in similar cadence, often in similar drawn-out and artificial-seeming sentences.

Most secretaries of state start out mistrustful of the Foreign Service, which they are warned to regard as an institution with its own values and its own pragmatic view of the national interest, more loyal to its understanding of the Constitution than to the administration in office, overly sensitive to foreign concerns, intuitively cautious. Secretary Baker cites these perceptions, but his initial reserve toward the professionals was rather special, more like disdain. He was determined to master the Foreign Service. In contrast to most of his predecessors, he did not develop respect for the Service and confidence in its loyalty and ability.

He wrote, "[FSOs] tend to come from the nation's top colleges, partic-

ularly the Ivy League, and have an understanding of and affection for things foreign: languages, geography, history, culture, food and drink. ... Most FSOs are talented and loyal public servants, and any secretary would be foolish not to harness their strengths. I did so, and was served ably by many of them."

Baker acknowledges that he might have been more attentive to the mores of diplomatic culture and "could have done more to cultivate some of the younger and brighter FSOs." He seems, oddly, to regard relating to his staff as a "protocol aspect of the job of secretary of State," to which he admits he was not very attentive because "substantive results were what President Bush expected of me, not expertise with regard to the nuances of diplomacy niceties."

Because he believed the Foreign Service so inadequate, "[I] preferred to centralize authority in a small team of talented, loyal aides, and build outward from them," he wrote. His experience is "that managers who surround themselves with weak subordinates [such as FSOs] are doomed to fail." He goes on to extol the qualities of his "inner circle" of Bob Zoellick, Dennis Ross and Margaret Tutwiler, and to gloat that Zoellick and Tutwiler "were the most feared in the State Department."

What a caricature of leadership and of modern management. How much more effective might this forceful secretary have been had he understood how to motivate subordinates and to use the Foreign Service professionals so eager to be of service to him.

FSOs, despite their bemusement and chagrin at Baker's pointed lack of confidence in them, and their frustration at being denied the information required to do their jobs, had great admiration for his foreign policy achievements.

William C. Harrop is a retired FSO who served as chief of mission in five posts under four administrations.

BEING CAPTIVATED BY REAGAN'S WORDS

The Nightingale's Song
Robert Timberg, Simon & Schuster, 1995, hardcover, 544 pages, $27.50.

BY JACK R. BINNS

The shape and significance of the Iran-Contra affair are familiar to all, and have been explored in great detail from a number of perspectives. Robert Timberg's book, however, reprises the events that constituted the gravest political crisis of the Reagan administration as part of a larger theme, in his words, "the illumination of a generation seared by the Vietnam experience." That is an ambitious task. In essaying it, Timberg sheds new light on three of the principal Irangate players — Robert McFarlane, John Poindexter and Oliver North — and contrasts their attitudes and actions with those of two other Naval Academy contemporaries, Sen. John McCain and former secretary of the Navy and author James Webb.

Timberg's central thesis, briefly stated, is that these five men were "secret sharers" of common experiences at the Naval Academy, in the killing fields of Vietnam and in post-Vietnam America. All were later captivated, or seduced, by the nightingale's song, his metaphor for the patriotic, though often empty, promise of Ronald Reagan's rhetoric,

because "they believed in America." In the cases of two, McCain and Webb, the result was positive; in the other three it was negative and, in many respects, tragic.

A seasoned and respected journalist, Timberg covered the White House for *The Baltimore Sun* from 1983-88 and is the deputy chief of the *Sun's* Washington bureau. He is also a 1964 Naval Academy graduate and Marine veteran of Vietnam, and brings an experienced, sensitive and penetrating eye to the lives of five very complex — and, in some cases, deeply flawed — individuals. He does not pull punches and offers a number of new insights into the motivations and behavior of the Iran-Contra trio, as well as the counterpoint personalities of McCain and Webb. Three — McCain, Webb and North — are legitimate, combat-tested military heros; McFarland, though he served in Vietnam, and Poindexter who did not, are less so.

North, to no one's surprise, emerges as a self-serving, action-oriented rogue, apparently given to self-delusion. He is clearly the most charismatic and least sympathetic of the five. Poindexter, unquestionably the most intelligent and liberal of the lot, turns out to be a political naif. McFarland is depicted as a complex mixture of driving, almost pathological, ambition, religious mysticism, and self-doubt, coupled with a large measure of basic human decency.

These three, the author concludes, were out of their depth, and the story he relates demonstrates that unequivocally. The thread that unites McCain and Webb, besides their common experiences, is their personal integrity. But they are also strikingly different. McCain — the most likable and admirable — claims to have put Vietnam behind him the minute he returned to the United States after more than five years as a prisoner of war, and largely succeeded in doing so. Webb has never put it behind him, and probably never will.

Timberg's narrative is frequently riveting and always interesting. While some assertions as to the subjects' accomplishments may raise an eyebrow among those who were part of the foreign policy process at the time (e.g., McFarland's purported intellectual authorship of the Caribbean Basin Initiative), his descriptions of events are acute and prodigiously researched.

Yet despite the marshaling of extensive new information and insights, Timberg's central thesis remains unproven. Clearly, the song of Reagan the nightingale captivated all five. It is less clear that their "shared secrets" determined their respective behaviors when in positions of responsibility or that these collective experiences "illuminated a generation." As one who has long puzzled over what caused or allowed three men who shared the Naval Academy experience to become entangled in actions that violated not only their oath of office, but the central academy tenet as well, I was not persuaded. The Naval Academy imbues its graduates with many values and qualities, not least of which is pride, an essential and positive attribute in any leader. But it is also a quality that, if unchecked, can become destructive hubris. Thus, it may have been such hubris that led the Iran-Contra trio to their inglorious folly, its absence in the two others safeguarding their honor. Timberg also raises, at least implicitly, a larger question of whether career military officers are well suited for responsible policy positions on the National Security Council. The example of the Irangate three, however, is belied by the performance of Brent Scowcroft.

Whatever the answers to these questions, Timberg makes an important contribution to understanding just what went wrong and why. His book is well worth the read.

Jack R. Binns, a retired FSO and former ambassador, is a 1956 graduate of the Naval Academy. He lives in Tucson, Ariz.

HISTORICAL SWEEP OF SOVIET ENVOYS

The Ambassadors and America's Soviet Policy
David Mayers, Oxford University Press, 1995, unpriced, hardcover, 335 pages.

BY DICK COMBS

Well-written, aneedotal and entertaining, *The Ambassadors and America's Soviet Policy* is more a meandering historieal essay than a thorough historical ehroniele or penetrating historical analysis. It covers almost the entire expanse of U.S.-Russian relations, from 1780 to 1991, with emphasis on the period of Josef Stalin's rule.

Mayers provides interesting facts about little-known early American envoys to Tsarist Russia. The reeord, still standing, for the longest single stint as ehief of mission, for example, belongs to patrician planter Henry Middleton of South Carolina, who served in St. Petersburg from 1820-30. One of the most eolorful U.S. envoys was frontiersman Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky (1863-69), who was fond of sporting a bowie knife and a pair of pistols.

Mayers has diffieulty summing it all up, however. He declares that the historical record reveals "no ready formula for success" in serving as

chief of mission in Russia, that "diplomacy will continue to reflect the peculiar blend of U.S. political habits and institutions," and "the U.S. cannot afford to neglect the quality of its major ambassadorships." These points are valid for all U.S. diplomatic posts and shed little new light on the diplomacy between the United States, Russia and the Soviet Union.

Mayers interviewed or corresponded with relatively few U.S. diplomats who served in Moscow during the postwar period. As a result, the most recent period is covered superficially and sometimes inaccurately. The microwaving of Embassy Moscow curiously is treated as part of Ambassador Malcolm Toon's tenure, when in fact it was a major event during Ambassador Walter Stoessel's service in Moscow. The tension between Toon and the Carter administration over the embassy's involvement in the Soviet human rights movement is somewhat garbled. Problems with embassy security during Ambassador Arthur Hartman's tenure are inadequately described. And Mayers correctly reports that Ambassador Jack Matlock warned Gorbachev about a coup attempt but does not add that, to Matlock's personal dismay, the warning also was incautiously conveyed by Secretary of State James Baker to Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

In short, this book will appeal to students of U.S.-Russian and U.S.-Soviet relations for its unusual historical sweep. It will disappoint those looking to deepen their understanding of this relationship. ■

Dick Combs, a retired FSO who served under five U.S. ambassadors in Moscow, is a senior scholar in residence at the Monterrey Institute of International Studies in California.

REAL ESTATE

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ADVERTISING INDEX

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POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

Requiem for US Consulate Udorn

BY DIANE RIVERS POLLARD

It wasn't until I actually watched the U.S. flag being lowered that I concluded that it was the wrong thing to do. Before then I had been swayed by the U.S. government's rhetoric that we had to "do more with less." Management at the Department of State, under budgetary pressure from Congress, had declared that 19 posts around the world, including Udorn, Thailand, should be closed.

These days more people can locate Bishkek on the map before they can find Udon Thani, also known as Udorn. In fact, in March 1994 when my FSO husband, Robert, and I received our new assignment, I told many of our non-Foreign Service friends the name of the city only. When they finally located Udorn, the next question always was, "Why does America have a consulate there?"

First, I replied, Thailand is a country the size of France with a population of roughly equal number — 60 million. Foreign Service political and economic reporting cannot only come out of U.S. Embassy Bangkok, for the capital city is not representative of all the Thai regions. In the July 1995 election for prime minister, Banharn Silpa-archa was not elected by Bangkok citizens, but rather by those voters who live up-country, particularly in Isaan in northeast Thailand, which is Udorn's district. For the U.S. government to keep abreast of events in Thailand, reports are needed from many areas.

When Old Glory comes down, it means everything.

Second, U.S. connections in the region go back to the time of the Vietnam War, when Udorn was the site of a large U.S. Air Force base and Americans were engaged in major battles in Southeast Asia. U.S. wartime activities had a significant impact on the economy and lives of those in the region. The consulate's staff has built relationships that will not be easily duplicated.

Many male U.S. veterans who served in the Vietnam War married Thai women and settled in Udorn as part of the American community in the region. Without the consulate, area Americans will now have to travel across the country to Bangkok for U.S. citizen services. Consular officers in U.S. Embassy Bangkok will also have the added responsibility of monitoring the region through travel to the northeast, if and when they find the time and resources.

Third, Thailand is one of the rising stars of the Pacific Rim area. With Japan, China, Singapore and many European countries investing in this region, the U.S. presence is probably more important than ever, since it signals not only continued American interest in all of Southeast Asia, but U.S. support for American investors who rely on embassy expertise developed from decades of local experience. In the final analysis, even though worldwide communications have improved dramatically, who will continue to promote the good will generated by American FSOs over the last 30 years?

In the ceremony closing the consulate, U.S. Consul Robert Pollard pointed out all the reasons why this era had come to an end. The U.S. Consulate Udorn was established at the height of the Cold War, he said, and that crisis has passed. The United States and Thailand share mutual successes from that era and their relationship remains close. However, when the U.S. flag was lowered, I was filled with great sadness. I understood that budgetary figures mean nothing, but when Old Glory comes down, it means everything.

At the ceremony, I stood with many who could probably still remember the roar of jet fighters overhead, the boom of their afterburners pushing them ever higher toward North Vietnam, many pilots never to return. It is not just Americans who think their flag is special: It is a symbol of freedom to people all over the world, and when it is lowered, many feel its loss. ■

Diane Rivers Pollard is the wife of FSO Robert A. Pollard, former consul at U.S. Consulate Udorn. Now posted to U.S. Embassy Bangkok, the couple's previous posts were London, Munich and Singapore.

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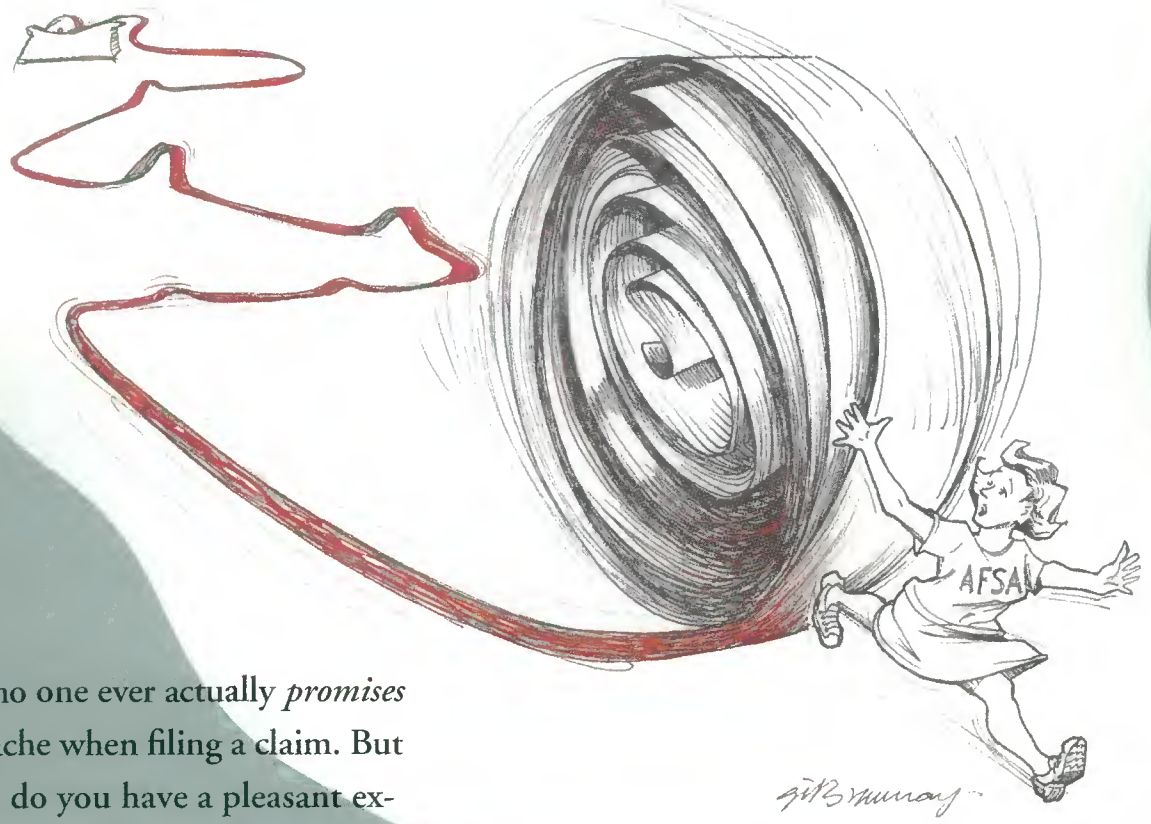

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