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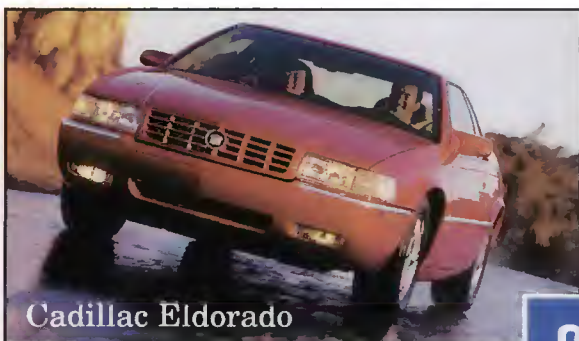
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CONTENTS

August 1997 ■ Vol. 74, No. 7

COVER

FOCUS ON FICTION

18 / CASTA DIVA

By Michael Canning

24 / HONEY TRAPPED

By Diana Deverell

30 / MY FATHER'S TOP HAT

By Barbara Curry Mulcahy

32 / THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

By Robert Hilton

FEATURES

FROM COLONY TO NATION / 36

Reviewing America's Role in India's Birth,
On 50th Anniversary of Its Independence

By Robert K. Olson

CHAOS IN CAIRO / 40

FS Spouse Remembers 1967 Evacuation
Of Embassy Dependents Before 6-Day War

By Maria Bauer

THE FUTURE OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE / 42

INTEGRATING ACDA

As First of 3 Agencies to Go Under Knife,
Arms Control Unit Should Retain Legal Adviser

By William S. Shepard

FOCUS



Page 18

COLUMNS

5 / PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

New Board, New Outlook

By Alphonse F. La Porta

15 / SPEAKING OUT

End Bidding War Politics

By Lewis K. Elbinger

52 / POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

In St. Petersburg, A Message for Masha

By Louise Belanger

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS / 7

CLIPPINGS / 12

BOOKS / 47

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS / 67

Cover and inside illustrations by Loel Barr

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Foreign Service Journal (ISSN 0015-7279), 2101 E Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037-2990 is published monthly by the American Foreign Service Association, a private, non-profit organization. Material appearing herein represents the opinions of the writers and does not necessarily represent the views of the *Journal*, the Editorial Board or AFSA. Writer queries are invited. *Journal* subscription: AFSA Members - \$9.50 included in annual dues; others - \$40. For foreign surface mail, add \$18 per year; foreign airmail, \$36 per year. Periodical postage paid at Manchester, NH, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Foreign Service Journal*, 2101 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20037-2990. Indexed by Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS). The *Journal* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photos or illustrations. Advertising inquiries are invited. The appearance of advertisements herein does not imply the endorsement of the services or goods offered. FAX: (202) 338-8244 or (202) 338-6820. E-MAIL: journal@afsa.org. TELEPHONE: (202) 338-4045. © American Foreign Service Association, 1997. Printed in the U.S.A. Send address changes for the *Foreign Service Journal* to AFSA, 2101 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20037-2990.

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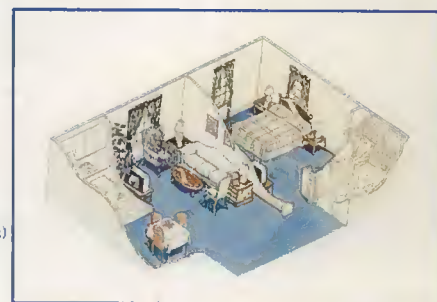


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PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

New Board, New Outlook

BY ALPHONSE F. LA PORTA

As the new board begins its biennial term, I would like to sketch some of AFSA's achievements and indicate where it should set its sights. This "in-reach" can help to bring the future into focus, as well as to interpret the continuing professional and career issues for those a little further removed from our daily routine.

First, the achievements:

■ At **Commerce**, a new collective bargaining agreement was signed and progress is beginning to be made in the integration of the agency's Foreign Service and Civil Service operations.

■ At **Agriculture**, AFSA's strong stands on assignment policies and other issues have boosted career opportunities and strengthened our voice in managing the Foreign Service system.

■ At **USAID**, AFSA's vigorous actions have turned the spotlight on numerous deficiencies, overseas staffing shortages due to poor work force planning, an overblown and underperforming computer system, serious shortcomings in the Office of the Inspector-General, a dysfunctional employee evaluation system, and a bungled reduction-in-force a year ago. Faced with daunting mismanagement, USAID also will be challenged in encouraging sound and humane practices to rebuild morale among colleagues.

■ At **USIA**, the agency is moving from uncertainty about future directions and a 25 percent resource reduction to consider how integration with

Your new Governing Board has the necessary skill, experience and dedication to succeed.

State can best be achieved. Strong rhetoric supporting the public diplomacy function is the good news, but the stresses of amalgamation and creation of new synergy within the larger State Department will absorb AFSA's energies for several years to come. Fortunately, AFSA/USIA brings with it a legacy of good labor-management relations and other practices that State should emulate.

■ For our **retiree** constituency, members have benefited from better services and communications, activism on Capitol Hill to maintain pension and other benefits, and more energetic local retiree organizations and outreach. Importantly, AFSA has immeasurably benefited from the time, skill and dedication of retirees who have contributed to our professional programs and deliberations on career issues.

■ At **State**, AFSA has worked under a less-than-satisfactory labor-management relationship, but has been

able to press its agenda of career issues. There have been long-awaited developments in the Secretary of the Future project; developing the mid-level multifunctional program; enhancing the Senior Foreign Service position base (which drives promotions through the ranks); improving bottom-out egress so that fewer good performers will be victims of the "stealth RIF" by time-in-class; and providing for what we believe will be an equitable, though not necessarily ideal, method of assigning functional cones to junior officers. We continue vigorously to oppose efforts to drastically reduce incentive pay for hard language study and whittle away at employee grievance rights, while fending off investigative abuses by the OIG and other initiatives which add to employee dissatisfaction.

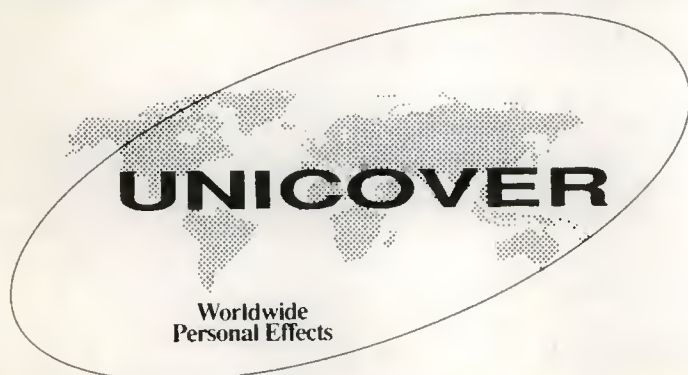
Family- and employee-friendly improvements are slow in coming, so we are developing a broad menu of initiatives. Diversity and EEO issues continue to trouble us; despite improvements in State's examination results, minority Foreign Service employees still believe their potential is not being maximized and there are concerns about reverse discrimination, and deterioration in the medical program concerns personnel worldwide.

The way for the new Governing Board is clear. We must work through each issue in each agency methodically, professionally and with an earnest desire to make a difference for the better. Your Governing Board has the people, experience, skill and dedication to be successful. ■

Alphonse F. La Porta is president of the American Foreign Service Association.

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To the Editor:

I didn't learn much about engines growing up. So, a few years ago I got myself over to Montgomery College in Takoma Park and took a couple of courses in automobile engine repair. I learned that the great internal combustion engine needs several different liquids to allow it to function properly, among these oil and water. Despite the indispensability of each to the engine's operation, at no time are they mixed. Each possesses its own unique role, properties and characteristics. They work best in coordination.

It strikes me that the same is true with respect to America's great Engine of Foreign Policy, especially in regard to the relationship between State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Each has its special role, properties and characteristics. Both are indispensable. President Clinton's proposed reorganization plan stresses enhanced coordination and this makes sense ("Turf War Reported Over Consolidation," "Clippings," June-July *Journal*).

The consolidation bill passed by the Senate, which purports to integrate State and USAID, does not do so effectively. It fails to acknowledge that each is separate and critical in its own right. Though State and USAID, like oil and water, must work well together in the Foreign Policy Engine, they shouldn't be stored in the same container.

Joel Schlesinger
Mission Director
USAID Bamako

To the Editor:

I heartily second F.A. "Tex" Harris's admonition about non-career ambassadorial appointees that "the Foreign Service must participate in the debate, speaking truth from its principles and experience" ("President's Views," May *Journal*). The first truth that must be spoken is that the present career ambassadorial appointment process is a spoils system that makes the non-career appointment process pale by comparison. Perhaps the "careerist" mote blinds us to our own foibles. But one has but to ask a simple question of the most current batch of nominees to understand the nature of the career ambassadorial spoils system: "Who appointed you?" I'm not asking here about the president; I'm talking about patronage — not unlike the non-career process. "Ah, but we are more qualified" is the common refrain. Is that so? The most significant qualification that stands out is membership in one of the State Department's constantly evolving power cliques, particularly a "Seventh Floor" or bureau clique.

A careful review of ambassadorial nominations during the current administration underscores that the fastest ticket to an ambassadorship is service on the Seventh Floor. Those who have benefitted from this distortion of the merit system argue that "the best and brightest" make it to the top — the Seventh Floor — and, therefore, to the ambassadorial ranks. The truth is otherwise. Those who have insinuated themselves in the

eries of the State Department have early access to vacancy lists and use the elevated cachet of their position to advantage — even over highly qualified officers with more relevant background and experience. It is this publicly hidden spoils system that denies [the Foreign Service] moral credibility to criticize the non-career appointment system.

Any ambassadorial nomination reform process should start with the career service: Apply the Presidential Advisory Board review process to all nominees, career and non-career. Take the career appointment process out of the Department of State, i.e., out of the current in-house spoils system, and establish a merit system — one in which patronage and Seventh Floor gamesmanship play no role. If you think you are qualified to represent the president and people of the United States, then bid on the job openly and completely, based on your qualifications, against other aspirants, career and non-career. Imagine how much work would get done if the focus was really on foreign policy.

Unfortunately, the second truth that must be spoken, based on experience, is that the Foreign Service is incapable of reforming itself. The State Department's spoils system, just like the non-career political appointment process, has too many vested interests to initiate establishment of a merit-based system. It is up to the Senate to establish through new legislation a nomination process that holds both career appointees of the State



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Department and non-career political appointees to the same merit-based standards that should apply equally to all U.S. ambassadors.

*David B. Dlouhy
Diplomat in Residence
American Graduate
School of International Management
Phoenix, Ariz.*

To the Editor:

"The Circumcision Party" (May *Journal*), which recounts a 1974 Turkish "celebration" of cutting the genitals of unconsenting boys, is truly anachronistic as we enter a new era of children's rights. Recent scientific research documents the anatomy and functions of the male prepuce (foreskin), the long-term consequences to children of pain and trauma and repudiates the alleged medical reasons for circumcising otherwise healthy children.

In the world today there are more than 100 million females and 500 million males who have been subjected as children to various forms of genital cutting. In the United States alone, this custom affects more than 1.25 million boys annually; more than 3,300 infants daily, one child every 26 seconds. Studies of the parental decision-making process confirm that the majority of parents subject their sons to circumcision not for valid medical reasons but for "social conformity." Research is just beginning on the long-term physical, sexual and psychological consequences to men from childhood genital cutting they did not choose.

The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by almost every nation except the United States. The Convention, like other human rights treaties, upholds two of the most basic of these rights:

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LETTERS

physical integrity and self-determination. Non-medically indicated circumcision of healthy, unconsenting children for reasons of social custom is in direct violation of these treaties.

Respect for family traditions, cultural customs and religious practices is a goal for which to strive. That respect ends, however, when those practices violate the rights of other individuals, especially vulnerable children.

Tim Hammond

Founder

National Organization

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of Males (NOHARM)
San Francisco, Calif.*

To the Editor:

Foreign Service Day on May 9 proved a sad affair. With the State Department's budget down 50 percent over the past dozen years, we heard that the problem was our failure to explain ourselves to the American people. Then we were told that we had an attitude problem. As usual, the Foreign Service blamed itself.

The real reason for our decline is the changed Washington structure for managing America's foreign affairs. Congress wants a Congressional foreign policy. So much foreign money has poured into Congressional pockets that members have learned they can raise millions if they listen to their "constituents" who represent foreign interests. Properly laundered through public affairs committees or Washington public relations firms, this is easy money. Of course, the politician has to provide something in return. In the distant past of the 1980s, an administration could always block such end runs by saying State did not agree. So in the mid-1980s

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Congress started cutting State's budget 5 percent a year.

Today, 50 percent lighter, the Foreign Service is an orphan. Presidents do not care about the Foreign Service. If George Bush, with all his foreign affairs experience and his two ambassadorships, could name James Baker to run State without the Foreign Service, what can we expect of incumbents with no interest in what we do? We are budgetary orphans ground down by Congress, ignored by presidents and headed for oblivion.

To be sure, those FSOs who could not recognize a different political environment from what they knew during their A-100 class will say that nothing has changed, that the "wonderful ethnic diversity of America and the expression of those views make us a democracy." Our budget is down 50 percent.

Some retired FSOs will recall a personal slight suffered decades ago and agree that the Foreign Service does indeed have an "attitude problem."

The threat to America is the political sea change that has drowned the Foreign Service and left it out of the money-centered foreign policy of Washington. Somebody smarter than I am could put together a strategy of how we use the Internet. I just do not know the technical details. We can fight back, however, over the Internet and make the points that American foreign policy is now for sale; that the Chinese fund-raising scandals under investigation are the tip of the iceberg; the Chinese and others are learning that they must launder their donations through domestic ethnic lobbies and Washington public relations firms; foreign countries now fund the political campaigns of many members of Congress; and America needs a foreign policy free of foreign money and

only a career Foreign Service can represent the American people.

We lack the mobilizing threat so many enjoyed during the Cold War. But now, rather than face a dramatic defeat from some evil empire, America's political leaders are selling us out a little every day.

AFSA deserves commendation for its programs to carry our story to the American people. But that gentle approach will not help our budget. Only an attack via the Internet can get us attention. Otherwise we die as a Foreign Service and blame it all on an attitude problem.

*Stephen P. Dawkins
Retired FSO
Alexandria, Va.*

To the Editor:

A recent issue quoted a *Wall Street Journal* story about an anonymous FSO consular officer suggesting that "deciding not to issue a visa may be the safest course for FSOs who receive only five weeks of training and typically must make an issuance decision within only minutes of meeting an applicant" ("U.S. Visa Policy Hurting Tourism," "Clippings," April *Journal*). I found that curious, because in my days in the visa business the opposite was usually intoned: "When in doubt, issue!" You may have had to justify a refusal, but you wouldn't be challenged on issuance. That earlier advice, even if it arose from personal considerations, at least also served the cause of better public relations.

All of us who have been there know the horrors of life in the visa mills. Anyone who recognizes the sad fact that our principal direct interface with citizens of other countries is through the visa process must wish it

LETTERS

could be different. A system that disheartens our young officers, turns foreigners against us, feeds a world-wide visa fraud industry, encourages immoral behavior on the part of an element of our own legal profession at home, and consumes so much of our scarce foreign affairs resources in what is often a losing cause should be a larger target of the *Journal's* breastbeating about foreign affairs reforms and adaptation to a changing world.

I have for some years been engaged in helping young people in my country of residence to enjoy the experience of studying at American high schools without having to pay the large fees of the so-called non-profit organizations proliferating in this business. The first experience of official America these young people have involves a full-day's trip to the capital, then a morning of standing in line and a hasty interview by a Foreign Service national, who all too often, my charges report, is curt, even imperious. Some visas are rejected because of typos.

Some months ago someone in my town was openly advertising that he could provide — for a fee — the documentation needed for a visa. I reported this to the embassy, but received no reply. Similarly, a boast by a local citizen that it was possible to buy the certainty of visa issuance from someone unnamed at the embassy in an adjoining country was reported to the U.S. ambassador there, and seemingly ignored. The same happened when I learned of, and reported, first-hand knowledge of the fraudulent documentation of a local immigrant visa lottery winner whom my wife and I were doing some document translation for. Again, not even the courtesy of acknowledgment.

Well, you might conclude, this just proves we have too few resources to do a proper job. Perhaps true. But the many hours of time

given by senior embassy staff to a recent tour of junketing old grads from my university, for briefings and other personal services, was nice to hear about. I was beginning to think the embassy was too short-staffed for just about everything.

Retired FSO

Name Withheld At

Author's Request

To the Editor:

The April *Journal* takes a rather cavalier attitude, it seems to me, in its response to GLIFAA President [Robert W.] Hansen's letter concerning the usage of the terms "sexual preference" and "sexual orientation." GLIFAA is the acronym for Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies.

It is particularly unfortunate that the FSJ chose to bring its stylebook to its defense where a matter of substance is at stake. If the FSJ cares to make the case that homosexuality is strictly a matter of conscious choice, a body of contrary scientific opinion notwithstanding, then it should say so less elliptically.

Why not adopt the more neutral and non-judgmental term "sexual orientation" rather than gratuitously offending minority members of the Foreign Service community?

Alan Berlind

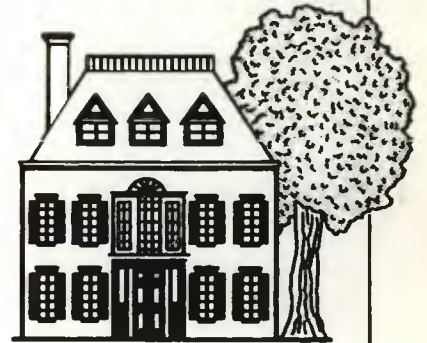
Retired FSO

Couleuvre, France

The Journal was not commenting on the morality of homosexuality, but trying to remain neutral in the debate. However, in response to letters from readers and spirited staff debate, the Journal has revised its stylebook to adopt the usage of "sexual orientation" over "sexual preference" in reference to homosexuality. Thanks to all who wrote. — The editors. ■

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—THOMAS L.

FRIEDMAN, REPORTER,

THE NEW YORK

TIMES, JULY 5

SENATE PANEL FINDS INFLUENCE PEDDLING

Tennessee Republican Fred Thompson's panel investigating campaign-finance abuses has found that China plotted to influence U.S. policy with illegal political contributions, according to *The Washington Times*.

"The committee believes that high-level Chinese government officials crafted a plan to increase China's influence over the U.S. political process," Thompson was quoted by reporter Mary Ann Akers in a July 9 piece. He also said that the Chinese government violated U.S. law by enlisting people to "pour money into national and state campaigns to influence U.S. policy toward Beijing," she reported.

Sen. Arlen Specter, a Pennsylvania Republican and former prosecutor who is a committee member, claims former Democratic fund-raiser John Huang may have been conducting espionage, the *Times* said. After Huang attended CIA briefings and reviewed classified documents, he made faxes, calls and visits to the Chinese embassy, which has "all the earmarks of a disclosure of highly sensitive governmental information, which is espionage and carries a life sentence, and in some cases it could carry the death penalty," Specter said.

\$10 MILLION US AID PROMISED FOR CONGO

The Clinton administration plans \$10 million in economic aid to Congo, formerly Zaire, to bail out one of Africa's most important countries after the May 17 ouster of longtime dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, *The Washington Post* reported on July 9.

Despite Washington's concerns about the regime of self-named President Laurent Kabila, the funds will be funneled through private organizations for public health programs, according to Richard McCall, chief of staff of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"The Congo is at a turning point," McCall told reporter Thomas W. Lippman. "To not engage is to risk losing the opportunity to make a difference."

U.S. officials know little about Kabila, who rose "from obscurity to the presidency ... as the leader of a rebellion that swept across the country in just seven months," the *Post* said. Throughout the Cold War, the United States supported Mobutu with economic aid in an effort to contain communism on the continent. But after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1989, Zaire was no longer a strategic asset to the West, and U.S. aid was halted in 1990. Still, Congress would need to approve a waiver to release the aid, illegal since Mobutu defaulted on U.S. loans, and McCall assured a Senate subcommittee that "no funds will be committed without thorough consultations with the Congress."

Acting Assistant Secretary of State William H. Twaddell, a strong advocate of U.S. aid to Congo, affirmed the U.S. plan to "encourage political and economic reform leading to legitimate elections" in Congo.

Sen. John D. Ashcroft (R - Mo.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa, criticized the State Department for what he called "a record of missed opportunities and indecisive policies throughout Kabila's campaign of insurgency. ... Our nation's foreign policy has been incoherent at best, and exacerbated destabilizing trends at worst."



CLIPPINGS

CAMBODIA WELCOMES 'FAMILY FROM HELL'

Kenneth Quinn, U.S. ambassador to Cambodia, has been shot at, wounded or blown up in the course of postings from the Middle East to the Philippines, so the blast that sent him scrambling with his family to the floor of his new residence in Phnom Penh on June 17 didn't come as a total surprise. The Quinn family was celebrating the ambassador's birthday and had just settled down to opening presents and watching a video of "The Thin Man," when a rocket-propelled grenade sent them scrambling to the floor, Quinn told Richard Ehrlich of *The Washington Times*.

The family is used to such brushes with danger. "Each year my family has a life-threatening experience. My family is now known as, 'The Family from Hell,'" quipped Quinn to the *Times*. Prior to the grenade attack, anti-American feelings had been high in Cambodia, following rumors that former communist Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot was being held under house arrest by his own troops.

The Quinns were caught in a fire-fight at the ambassadorial residence between Cambodian national police and bodyguards of First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh; no one was injured in the attack. After making sure that his family was safe, Ambassador Quinn went to the phone to call Washington with the first bulletins. He's also had experience at managing crises. From 1991 to 1994, he taught the training course for ambassadors on how to prepare for a crisis at the Foreign Service Institute.

DO ELEPHANT LOVERS VOTE REPUBLICAN?

Politicians love to dump on foreign aid, writes Guy Gugliotta in the June 17 *Washington Post*, but that isn't the same as fiddling in other countries' internal affairs. "Americans love to meddle in other countries' affairs," he wrote, which explains why Reps. Jim Saxton (R-N.J.) and Neil Abercrombie (D-Hawaii) are sure to shepherd legislation through Congress setting up a \$25 million Asian Elephant Conservation Fund.

"Luckily for the elephants, the fund wasn't part of the \$21 billion foreign aid bill that failed to pass the House last week for the 12th consecutive year," Gugliotta pointed out.

Indeed, the elephants are popular enough to warrant their own legislation, he says. But just to make sure, the legislative sponsors set up a photo opportunity on Capitol grounds with Asia, a 26-year-old, carrot-and-apple-eating, female elephant from the Ringling Brothers Circus.

Still, since elephants can't vote, how is it that they warrant their own foreign aid bill? "Unlike Irish Americans and Cuban Americans, Asian elephants don't vote," concludes Gugliotta. "But elephant lovers do."

HARVARD INTEGRITY BLASTED OVER FUNDS

U.S. policy toward economic assistance in the former Soviet Union invited the abuse of funds the led the U.S. Agency for International Development to suspend a \$14 million grant to the Harvard University's Institute for International Development, according

50 YEARS AGO

"It was generally believed that at long last the Department of State had a permanent home and in a fireproof structure, said at the time to be the largest and finest office building in the world," wrote retired FSO James B. Stewart in the August 1947 *Foreign Service Journal*, referring to its new home at the State, War and Navy Building at 17th and Pennsylvania.

After the Department of State was inaugurated in 1781, it was frequently moved to New York, Philadelphia and Trenton, N.J., Stewart said in the piece, "From Pillar to Post." In addition, inadequate space forced select bureaus to be separated from headquarters. "It is hoped, for the sake of more efficient administration, that ... the department's entire organization will [soon] be brought together under one roof," he wrote.

CLIPPINGS

"To rely on the efficacy of diplomacy ... may lead to disaster, but to rely on power with insufficient means is suicide."

- FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER

to an opinion piece by Janine R. Wedel, a professor at The George Washington University, in the June 1 *Boston Globe*.

In suspending funds to HIID, which between 1992 and 1996 was awarded more than \$40 million in non-competitive grants, USAID said institute directors had used their positions for private profit.

"The United States delegated foreign policy to HIID in significant areas that involved complicated and controversial choices," wrote Wedel. "And, despite reports of abuse by HIID and the Russian reformer group with which it works, U.S. officials consistently defended and supported HIID projects in Russia and Ukraine. In short, U.S. policy invited the abuse."

HIID had received grants to administer U.S. economic assistance, and was in a position to recommend policies for

market reform, privatization and other crucial aid-related issues, writes Wedel. In deciding who should receive grants, HIID formed an "old-boys" network and collaborated with just one of Russia's political-economic clans ... a group of longstanding associates under the direction of Anatoly Chubais, currently Russian first deputy prime minister." Wedel claims the Russian good old boys used their Harvard connections to fund organizations that advanced their political purposes.

"The most troubling question raised by the Harvard story is the accountability of Harvard and its contractors and connections to our government processes," concluded Wedel. "We need to know that there are controls and procedures in place to assure the integrity of the decision-making process." ■

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SPEAKING OUT

End Bidding War Politics

BY LEWIS K. ELBINGER

Every two or three years, FSOs compete for new assignments, a process called "bidding" that is supposed to be equitable and transparent. In reality, bidding on new assignments in the Foreign Service is often arbitrary and subjective and sometimes highly politicized, allowing the most desirable assignments to go to FSOs with the most powerful mentors. Since Foreign Service salaries are based on personal rank, not on the rank of the job performed, FSOs are not bidding on higher-ranked jobs to increase their salaries. What's involved is career-enhancement — appointment to highly visible supervisory positions. When senior management interferes in the assignments process, the system becomes clouded with cronyism.

For example, of the 16 bidders on a certain principal officer position in the recent bidding cycle, 11 were at-grade (ranked FS-02), four were above-grade (ranked FS-01) and one was below-grade (ranked FS-03). Guess who got the job? You get the prize if you said "below-grade," or the one ranked FS-03.

Colleagues have related similar cases. One told me about an "inside deal," in which a below-grade officer was allowed to break an assignment and move into a job two grades higher than his own rank, after the bureau

Lewis K. Elbinger is the administrative officer at U.S. Consulate Lahore. His other assignments have included Ashgabat; Nairobi; Bonn; Khartoum; Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; and Muscat.

The notion that a qualified candidate of the appropriate grade should be given preference for a particular position is not radical.



made only cursory attempts to find an at-rank officer for the job. Another knew about a mid-level officer assigned to a job normally reserved for a senior FSO, a deal that can be cut if the person requesting the assignment "is important enough," this person said.

"Stretching," the practice of assigning an FSO to a job above or below his personal rank, can be abused. A former career development officer who worked on ambassadorial assignments in the Personnel Bureau told me that stretch assignments such as those described above appear to be motivated by patronage, and that if an assignment appears to be patronage, that will be viewed as fact. "It is the smelliest part of the personnel assignment system," he said.

State's Bureau of Personnel reports that 147 FSOs were allowed to "stretch" into jobs higher than their ranks from July 1994 to June 1995; 164 FSOs were allowed to do so from July 1995 to June 1996. By far the highest number of upward stretches were allowed in the FS-3 to FS-1 range: 114 from July 1994 to June 1995 and 153 from July 1995 to June 1996. At the same time, about half as many officers were allowed to take jobs below rank. From July 1995 to June 1996, 52 officers were assigned to "down" stretches; 48 were assigned to such stretches from July 1994 to June 1995. Statistics for the period of July 1996 to June 1997 are not available yet.

It is not hard to believe that one factor in the assignments described was patronage. The below-grade candidate who got the principal officer's job had worked for and was favorably known by his bureau's assistant secretary and was, therefore, the bureau's choice for this assignment. Both the Deputy Chief of Mission Committee, the personnel committee that approves assignments for DCMs and principal officers, and the Office of the Director General of the Foreign Service approved the selection. Such a situation raises an unanswerable question: Was the below-grade bidder the "best," the "best connected" or both?

Furthermore, what message does placing a well-connected, below-grade bidder in an attractive slot provide to the unsuccessful at-grade bidders? It seems to undervalue the achievements of at-grade officers and to overvalue the

SPEAKING OUT



experience of the below-grade officer. It is reasonable to conclude from this case that fair competition for key positions in the Foreign Service may depend more on an officer's favorable exposure to decision-makers, his "connections," that is, rather than on hard work and experience. Such a situation unnecessarily politicizes the assignment process and introduces dissonance into an organization that is already filled with stress.

How is this possible? It is possible because the bidding guidelines have enough wriggle room for a bevy of belly dancers. To quote the State Department cable of July 20, 1996, informing all FSOs about bidding procedures: "While assignments to positions above and below an employee's grade ('stretch assignments') will continue to be made on an exceptional basis, a qualified candidate of the appropriate grade will normally be given preference."

People talk about "the assignments system," but the term "system" is sometimes misused in this case. A system is orderly, logical and rational. What is in place can be subjective, arbitrary and political. One can only conclude, after failing to obtain a desired assignment, that one did not lobby hard enough. This creates a situation where officers, especially political cone officers, have an opportunity to display their political skills by playing politics in the department. We all know this, many of us deplore this and, like the weather, we all do nothing about it.

However, there are two modifications that can be made for a more equitable and transparent system. First, tighten up the assignments guidelines so the belly dancers cannot wriggle quite so freely. The following rule would accomplish this: "If there

are seven or more at-grade bidders on a job, the job must go to an at-grade bidder." The number "seven" in this case is an arbitrary figure: it could be higher or lower. The point is that when a sufficiently large pool of at-grade bidders exists, selection should be from that pool. The idea that jobs should go to at-grade bidders is not a radical one. It simply puts teeth into the notion that "a qualified candidate of the appropriate grade will normally be given preference."

Another approach to this problem is to require the director general to provide a written justification for stretch assignments on heavily bid positions and to make that justification available to interested parties, especially to at-grade candidates for the job. Such a requirement would provide an incentive to avoid unnecessary stretch assignments and would ensure that when they do occur, they

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SPEAKING OUT

conform to the guideline that such assignments will "be made on an exceptional basis." Some may consider this suggestion superior to the first because it gives wider latitude to make stretch assignments; others may dislike it for precisely that reason.

Selecting an FSO who is at-grade is important. While it's not necessarily true that a below-grade officer is incapable of doing the job, there will be gaps in that person's knowledge and experience that can cause problems for those with whom they work. For example, insecure officers might try to compensate by bullying or bluffing their way through situations that a more experienced officer would handle with ease. Being at-grade means that an officer has worked to achieve the level of expertise required for the position. It does not mean that an FSO has learned all the lessons entailed by the position, but if that is

true for an at-grade officer, it must be even more true for a below-grade officer. An at-grade officer commands respect whereas a below-grade officer in a heavily bid position inspires the suspicion that merit was not the sole factor in obtaining the assignment.

One of the most important reasons that officers in key positions, such as principal officers, heads or deputy heads of missions, or office directors at the State Department, should be at-grade is because they are supervisors. It is difficult to believe an officer at or below one's own grade has the knowledge and experience to rate another's performance adequately. Officers naturally prefer to be supervised by those who can teach and guide; a below-grade supervisor does not inspire confidence.

There is a place for upward stretches in the current system and that place is well established: hard-to-

fill assignments. When the pool of at-grade bidders is insufficient, it makes sense to reach outside of grade to fill the position. Most experienced FSOs can cite examples of successful upward stretches into hard-to-fill assignments. A problem with stretch assignments only arises when the authority to make such assignments is abused, hence the need for the suggested revised guidelines.

Good management should strive to achieve an assignments process perceived as objective, equitable and transparent. One way to do that is to make stretch assignments easy to obtain when the job is hard-to-fill and hard to obtain when the job is easy-to-fill. That notion will surely be resisted by those who prefer to pick their protégés for plum positions, but it is, nevertheless, a superior way to ration the scarce commodity of key officer assignments. ■

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CASTA DIVA

BY MICHAEL CANNING

THE legato passage was perfectly sustained into a silken thread of pure tone, the voice of La Gabrielli caressing "*Dove sono i bei momenti*" made Huesman's eyes close in a search for rapture.

The Mozart was a balm, as was his now-watery Dimple scotch, just what he needed after a nasty morning at USIS Rome. His no-nonsense public affairs officer, Stedlitz, had hinted at a reprimand after Huesman's unannounced trip to Spoleto. He'd gone to the city's annual music festival to catch the soprano Jeannine Gabrielli in Handel's *Rinaldo*, and he had missed the Monday meeting discussing a reception at the ambassador's next month, the second such meeting he had blown. He topped up his Dimple to a golden amber.

Stedlitz had sat firmly behind his big desk in the high-ceilinged PAO's office, the sumptuous embassy palazzo framed in its window. The double doors had been ostentatiously closed. Huesman had felt cramped into a springy aluminum chair and could only surreptitiously look up at his boss.

"Don," Stedlitz had began, "You really put me — us — on the spot when you didn't show up yesterday. The ambassador wondered where you were, and I couldn't tell him. Can you imagine how he took that? Maggie tried to reach you everywhere and couldn't

run you down. You were, yeah, it's fair to say, AWOL, or close to it. And you went to Spoleto for an opera. For Chrissake, why couldn't you just tell me?"

He had had no response. Instead, the long, arching sarabande of "*Lascia, ch'io pianga*," as delivered by Gabrielli on Sunday in a gorgeous green velvet number, had curled through his brain, her exquisite, aching lament being the only apt expression for what he felt.

"Or is it, uh, are you drinking a lot, too much? You can get help for that, you know. There has to be a reason, man," Stedlitz had offered.

But Huesman was still back in Spoleto. He had sprinted to the Green Room at the Teatro Nuovo. He had waved to Gabrielli, and had kissed her hand when she came up to greet him. Complimenting her effusively, he had abruptly invited her to breakfast. Thank heavens he had the cachet of being the American cultural attaché; she had said she would come — with Rodney.

Somewhere behind his daydream, Stedlitz's words echoed. "Look, you have to face up to it, Don. I'm going to set up another

appointment for this afternoon, just you and me and the ambassador. God knows why, but Mrs. Talbot trusts your judgment and wants your opinion on whom to include from the ministry."

At breakfast, Jeannine had looked, as always, radiant, well-serubbed rather than powdered. However,



LOEL BARR

F O C U S

Huesman's passion for the soprano Gabrielli was that of a stalker — an ever so benign stalker. He had followed her career to where it was today, just below the level of the reigning divas.

husband Rodney, he of almost military mien, had done almost all the talking, while Huesman studied how she worked her fingers on a water goblet. Rodney, with his wife nodding, had said they were assaying another Haydn opera, this time *L'infedeltà Dehusa*, with a recording for EMI and a possible production the year after in Edinburgh. Huesman had brightened within, knowing he had first suggested that Gabrielli investigate this overlooked repertoire.

The PAO's voice droned on. "... just may have to call you on it. So please, be back here at two-thirty for the three o'clock. You might make some calls in the meantime; I'd suggest Petrinelli in North American Affairs first, and maybe Ludovisi also. Your call on those. OK? OK, Don?" Stedlitz pressed.

Huesman nodded quickly and stood up. Trying to make a dignified exit, he stumbled out of the PAO's office. Maggie, Stedlitz's secretary, looked at him blank-faced, knowing that her usual ever-present smile wouldn't do. He left a message for Petrinelli at the Ministry of Culture before he exited the USIS office and caught a taxi on the Via Veneto to his apartment near the Campo dei Fiori.

He thought he probably should eat something with the Dimple, just to be safe. Huesman was no drunk, of course, but he had to be semi-alert for his meeting that afternoon.

He reminded himself that he was a cultural officer, after all, that he had been — was still — a cultured man. He ruminated on a famous case of per-

Michael Canning is a retired FSO who served with the U.S. Information Agency in Rome, Buenos Aires and Brasilia. During the Rome assignment in 1982-1986, he was converted to an Italiophile and confirmed as an opera lover. This piece and the three that follow were the top choices of the 59 short stories submitted this year to the Editorial Board.

sonal abasement in literature, that of George Hurstwood, the saloon manager in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. A figure of some promise in turn-of-the-century Chicago, Hurstwood becomes enamored of the ambitious Carrie, and his infatuation with her leads him into nine levels of degradation. Didn't a supremely poignant Laurence Olivier play him in a 1950s movie?

Huesman was a dumpy 52, doggedly dressing badly in a city known for sartorial style, stagnating in a career that had held early promise. His last evaluation report was bland and, thus, within the hearty grade inflation of the genre, terrible. This year's would be worse, perhaps bad enough to get his Rome tour curtailed (he must do something about that). He had lost his wife and his house in Bethesda (part of an uncontested settlement) and was losing his health. He had no progeny, no real friends, no money, no future. Even pasta was losing its flavor. He did have 2,000 records, cassettes, and CDs, many of them featuring the ineffable phrasing of Miss Jeannine Gabrielli.

He had become aware of the soprano in the early 1980s, when she was debuting in European opera houses, and he was a branch CAO in Milan. He had become truly taken with her after her Germany and Washington appearances, and he followed her burgeoning career to where it was today, just below the level of the reigning divas. He had become obsessed with her in Rome, angling to get the job so he could more easily follow her as she toured the great Italian houses.

His passion was that of a stalker — an ever so benign stalker. He had collected everything he could find written about Gabrielli; he had run down her entire recorded history, including bootlegged rehearsal tapes; he had even made himself Internet-

F O C U S

competent so he could exchange paeans and brickbats with other opera fans on her career and life. He had his own web page — www.jeangab.com — littered with biographic bits, performance schedules, his own testy record reviews.

Jeannine Gabrielli, he told anyone who would listen or log on, was one Jean Holmseth from Flint, Michigan, daughter of a labor lawyer and a housewife, nee Gabrielli (whence her stage name), who broke out of her church choir to study music at Indiana University. Like many before her, she had fallen in love with opera through hearing Maria Callas recordings, though she later discovered that her lighter timbre was not suited to the heavy, dramatic roles like Norma and Tosca in which Callas excelled. From college, it was on to the Curtis Institute, Met competitions, and regional opera companies around the United States — a prototypical pattern for recent American opera singers.

Jean became Jeannine after being “discovered” at the Houston Opera by a hot young Czech conductor, who engaged her as a regular with his opera company in Düsseldorf. It was out of Düsseldorf that she obtained her first Italian engagements, including secondary roles at La Scala, where Huesman first saw her perform.

Her continental career thrived, and she had made her Met debut by 1988 as Gilda in *Rigoletto*. Eventually she settled in London as a compromise for engagements between the United States and Europe. London was where she met Rodney MacLean, an English accountant, who became her manager and husband, in that order. They had no children; there just wasn’t time in a diva’s life.

Huesman had developed a correspondence with Gabrielli, an exchange more muted and official than he would have liked and too often borne on the stilted letters of Rodney rather than by the singer’s rare, breathless handwritten notes. She never responded to his elaborate analyses of her performances but would dash off a brief thank-you note without considering his earnest, studied remarks on a tempo she should try or a role she might consider. No matter, really: She was an instinctive artist, he knew; her voice was a gift — *un dono*, the Italians said — and she was its proud and unselfconscious bearer.

“Passion in a man of Hurstwood’s nature takes a vigorous form,” Dreiser had written in *Sister Carrie*. “It is no musing, dreamy thing.” That was how Huesman felt. Still, as attractive a woman as Gabrielli was, it was the voice that possessed him. Silver-bright, with a platinum sheen it was, ethereal on high notes; it never had to belt or push. And so heart-wrenching was her piano, that sweet soft float that stopped his heart.

The meeting with the ambassador had been desultory. Stedlitz had done most of the talking, committing Huesman to corralling just the right cultural types for the reception so that they, in turn, would agree to booking a major artist for a charity fund-raiser the ambassador’s wife wanted to put on in the fall. The Old Man had grunted his way through the meeting, while an aide kept flitting in to remind him of a subsequent interview with a *diputado*. He didn’t much care about the reception himself; he only wanted his wife to preside over a classy evening.

Huesman was to supply the class, but he felt little capable of it, masking several acid belches of revisited scotch during the meeting. His mind easily wandered off to contemplate Gabrielli’s upcoming schedule as discussed at breakfast in Spoleto, when he realized that the Talbot’s soiree was the same night as a long-anticipated Gabrielli recital in the Teatro Regio in Parma.

She was including some new repertoire — Schubert songs and Rossini arias which she had been working on for months — which he had to hear. He was going to be sick. No, he had to be sick.

He left the office early, feigning a headache. He found one for real by hitting three fingers of Dimple again at his apartment. The throbbing was mitigated by a CD ripe with the delicate flow of Gabrielli’s version of Canteloube’s tender “Chants d’Auvergne.”

Huesman’s wife had tried to understand for a time but had given up. Helen liked music well enough, was a decent piano player, in fact. She had appreciated the soprano early, too, and was rather flattered when, as his attentions to Gabrielli grew, she garnered some of the glancing luster of an operatic life. She was proud hosting the budding prima donna when they lived in Cologne and Gabrielli sang with the opera there. But Don became captive to her career, became little interested in anything else, especially after they were assigned to

F O C U S

"Passion in a man of Hurstwood's nature takes a vigorous form," Dreiser had written in Sister Carrie. "It is no musing, dreamy thing." That was how Huesman felt.

Washington, and he was forever sneaking off to the Met to hear her complete run in a role.

Helen had had enough when he angled for the Rome assignment. They did not have to go overseas again; she had qualified as a CPA, an accomplishment she thought Don should be more proud of. She had landed a job with a solid D.C. firm with real chances to grow. They did not have to go overseas. Worst of all, he had barely objected when she asked for the divorce.

The bright return of a crimson zero on the CD player brought Huesman back to Rome from Canteloube's Auvergne. He would get his ducks in a row and commit Petrinelli to engage a performer for Mrs. Talbot's fund-raiser. He would practice a hacking cough the last week and hint to his assistant CAO that he wasn't feeling well. He'd make the train reservations to Parma himself, bypassing his secretary. A ticket to the recital would be no problem: He knew Trucha in the mayor's office.

Over the next two weeks, Huesman strived to look busy. He even paid a call on Mrs. Talbot to go over details of the reception. The train reservations were clandestinely made; the concert ticket would be waiting. He also sent a telegram to Gabriella in London, proclaiming how excited he was about attending her Parma recital and asking whether he might call on her there. There was no response.

The day of the reception, he called Stedlitz early at home, hacking liberally and claiming a temperature of 102. Huesman waved off the PAO's suggestion of a doctor, insisting he only needed some bed rest. The boss was sympathetic.

Huesman next checked in with his assistant CAO, going over with her the details of the evening and urging ample care and feeding of Petrinelli and Mrs. Talbot. He then informed his secretary of his malady, rearranging and putting off some appointments. The

final touch was a poignant, wheezing call to Mrs. Talbot herself, wherein he apologized profusely for his so untimely indisposition.

Before leaving Rome's Termini Station, he sent another, quite fawning, telegram to Gabrielli via her hotel in Parma.

The rapido train took seven hours, so he was in Parma by five, ample time for a drink and light snack before going to the theater. Trucha was a smarmy huckster: He kept hinting to Huesman about a trip to the United States, but he came through: a seventh-row, left-side, aisle seat with a perfect view of the accompanist's hands and Gabrielli's radiant right cheek.

"Where 'er You Walk" from Handel's *Semele* captured Huesman from the first notes. Yes, yes, he would follow her where 'er she walked. The Rossini selections were slight, but lovely, and delivered superbly. The Schubert set was stunning — a revelation, made so principally because of Jeannine's unsurpassed diction. She was the best in the world at expressing text cleanly — in German, Italian, French, Czech, whatever — and the lines of Goethe via Schubert were crystalline: perfectly rounded umlauts and meticulous diphthongs. A set of American art songs — Barber, Rorem — closed the circle on his ecstasy. He could not bring himself to applaud at the interval or at the end of the concert: It would have been like clapping in church.

Although the Teatro Regio crowd had been raucously demanding in its response, there were no encores. Huesman immediately assumed the worst: She was ill, and he hurried backstage, stomping on some Parmigiani footwear to get there. The Green Room was closed, and the dressing rooms off limits.

Pressing the theater's *intendente*, whom he knew slightly, he was informed that Gabrielli had been sent to her hotel straight after the concert and was "indisposed."

Poor, benighted Hurstwood had stolen for his adored Carrie, had spirited her off to New York, and

F O C U S

had seen his own life disintegrate just as her career as an actress soared. The balance of his life was "sagging to the grave side." Huesman, too, was past that middle age sag that Dreiser portrayed so pitilessly, but, unlike Hurstwood, his focus was not on a flighty actress but rather on a timeless talent.

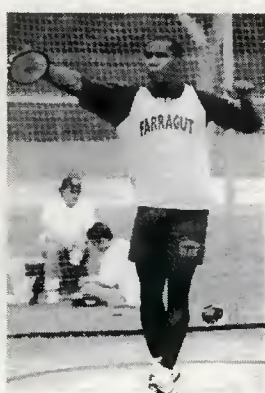
He had contemplated returning to Rome on an overnight train but now thought better of it. He found a room at the *Pensione Vitali*, where he'd been before, and was able — near midnight — to get the front desk to order a bouquet to send to the singer's hotel room with his hurried note of sympathy. To help him sleep, he roused some scotch from the *pensione's* bar — an execrable Four Roses. He would see her tomorrow.

Huesman tried to reach her at the hotel the next morning but was told she and MacLean had already left for London. Gabrielli had, indeed,

been ill, though her voice had not betrayed her.

The train ride back was morose. Though in a fog worrying about her, he periodically broke out of it to confect his alibi. He had been urged by all to get rest, so his stirring by late afternoon would be accepted. He would be sure to call Stedlitz — and Mrs. Talbot — as soon as he got back, to ask plaintively about the reception, to bemoan his own absence, to assure them both of follow-up. As he walked past the *portiere* of his building, he tried to remember if the man had seen him leave for Parma. He thought he hadn't, so he was puzzled by the fellow's snide look.

Huesman had forgotten how disheveled the apartment was. The calls could wait while he checked out Jeannine gracing some light Puccini, arias from *La Rondine*, *Turandot*, and others, on an old 33 1/3 disc, one of her first recordings. The total familiarity of the material did not diminish its impact: The voice was purest gossamer, youthful, angelic, no one — not



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F O C U S

Price, not Tebaldi, not Te Kanawa — had emitted such indescribable beauty.

Hc had been slightly mesmerized by the jumping vermilion columns on the amplifier when he noticed the blinking of another vermilion light from the answering machine: "3—3—3—3—3."

The first was from Stedlitz, last night. "Uh, Don, where are you? I wanted to report on the reception. Everything really went well, I thought. But I hope you're all right; please call back right away if you're hearing this. Oh, it's about 10:30."

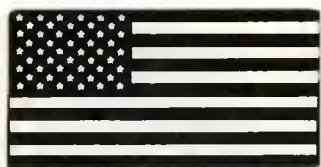
The second was from the PAO again, that morning. "Don, Ralph again. Are you OK? If you can hear me, please answer the phone. We need to know if you're all right."

Hc moved to turn the record off; it was annoying now. Why hadn't he thought of the answering machine? He punched up the third message:

"Huesman, I hope there's an explanation. I am

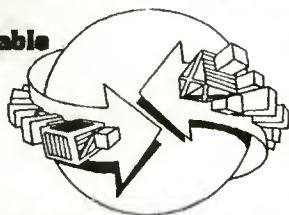
making this call from the lobby phone. I was concerned about your not answering my calls, so I came to your place to see what was wrong. I explained my concern to the *portiere*, and he let me in your apartment. Only after not finding you did he tell me he saw you leave yesterday morning. Don, where are you and what the hell do you think you're doing? This is completely unacceptable. I've told the ambassador about your absence, and I'm going to call the agency today about your case. I don't give a damn that it's the weekend. You, sir, have some explaining ..." The machine clicked off.

Hurstwood came to mind once more, but Huesman had forgotten what had happened to him. He finished the last of the Dimple. There was no point. He placed the tone arm back on the Puccini record. There was only the passport and the overnight bag needed. He could still get a flight to London tonight. ■



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HONEY TRAPPED

By DIANA DEVERELL

I was so angry with the Marine corporal standing on my doorstep, I could have slapped him. "You think I care that the cops accused your *new* girl of being a spy?" I asked in a furious whisper.

Matt inhaled a ragged breath and said, "Casey—"

I cut him off. "I can't believe you brought her here."

He glanced across the street where the girl huddled in a doorway. The March sun had dropped below the apartment blocks but even in shadow her face glowed with that Titian-haired beauty men kill for. Maybe women, too. I'd wanted to kill her minutes after she started putting the moves on my boyfriend, Matt. Now my ex-boyfriend.

He turned back to me, a plea in his voice. "She can't go home."

"That's her problem." I pushed on the door.

Matt stopped it with his hand. "Please, Casey," he said.

I glanced at the girl again. So she wasn't a Western *au pair* who lived with the Swedish consul, as she'd claimed. Forget that lie. She lived with her parents. Her Polish parents. And forget that her name sounded like "Ava." She'd spell it the Slavic way: E-W-A. My eyes flickered over the cream-colored walls inside the vestibule. I couldn't see the wires, but they were there. It was Easter Sunday of 1986 and U.S. Embassy Warsaw rented the converted townhouse from the communist government of the Polish Peoples' Republic. Even the entry hall had to be bugged.

I nudged Matt until he backed off the step. I followed him outside. The air was chilly on my bare arms and I hugged myself as we crossed to the other side of the driveway, 10 feet from the building.

I leaned close and whispered into Matt's ear. "Tell me exactly what the cops did when they came to Ewa's house."

"Showed her photos of us." Red blotches spread over Matt's cheeks. "First they said she was a prostitute. Then they made her admit I was an American soldier. That's when they called her a spy." His last words came out in a panicky rush. "They're going to arrest her."

"Tough for Ewa." I folded my arms. "What do you expect me to do?"

"Maybe she could stay at your place —"

I cut him off. "No way."

"You've got diplomatic immunity. The cops can't follow her in there."

"Why should I get in the middle of this?"

"But you said —"

"I never said I'd do a thing for her."

The red mark on Matt's cheek was shaped like a hand, as if I *had* slapped him. "I can't believe you're that hard." He stared at me for a moment. Then he started toward Ewa.

She came across the street to meet him, averting her eyes from me as though I were a leper.

I watched them clutch each other. "What'll you do now?" I asked.



JOEL BARR

F O C U S

I glanced at the girl again. So she wasn't a Western au pair who lived with the Swedish consul, as she'd claimed.

Forget that lie. Ewa. What was her game, anyway?

Over the top of Ewa's red head, Matt said, "I'll go find my real friends." He headed down the sidewalk, one arm around Ewa, half-dragging her toward the tram stop.

After they turned the corner I went back through the vestibule and into my apartment, slamming the door.

I was 27 years old, I'd been dating for half my life, and I'd never had trouble holding onto my men. But less than a week after Ewa'd shown up at the Marines' Friday night happy hour, Matt had dumped me without a goodbye.

I didn't have a drop of pity for him.

My heart was aching for him.

I wanted to cut off his manhood with a dull knife.

I yearned to pull his head onto my shoulder and whisper that Casey would make everything all right.

Who'd have guessed that fooling around with a younger man would leave me feeling so maternal? I yanked open the refrigerator and grabbed a Tuborg.

Damn Ewa. She'd dragged Matt off before I was ready to let him go. She deserved trouble. I twisted the cap off my beer.

Ewa. What was her game, anyway? She'd lied about being Polish. Probably told other lies. Maybe she was a prostitute. Maybe even a spy.

I set the bottle on the counter and rubbed the moist heel of my hand across my forehead. Matt'd said that the cops came to Ewa's house. But they hadn't taken her to jail. They'd shown her compromising photos. But why? The *milicja* didn't need evidence to arrest a Pole.

I'd been too mad to see it. But snapshots of Matt and Ewa in bed? Not easy to arrange. Poland's security service, the *Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa*, the SB, must have staged the whole scene.

Diana Deverell is a former FSO now living in Eugene, Ore. She served in San Salvador, Warsaw and Washington, D.C. Her first novel, Twelve Drummers Drumming, will be published by Avon Books next summer.

The SB wouldn't go to that much trouble to catch a Pole. But they'd do it to catch an American. And the East Bloc security services were expert at trapping lonely singles.

I went into the foyer and picked up the phone. The SB's scheme was up and running. At any moment, one of their agents would move in on Matt to close the deal. I had to get to him first. But where had he gone?

Not to the embassy, I discovered when I reached Post One. No one there had seen Matt, but they did know where I could find the rest of the off-duty Marines. A major drinking bout was under way and was likely to continue on through the Easter Monday holiday.

I ripped off the sweatsuit I'd been living in for the past two days and hurried through the shower. It was eight o'clock when I got my Rabbit onto Raszynska Street, headed north. The walled filtration plant bulked on my right, the blood-red brick structure dark and mysterious with its strange towers and smokestacks. Filtration of what? Nobody seemed to know.

The feeble glow from my headlights disappeared into the smoggy darkness. I squinted at the road, empty except for a pair of pedestrians scurrying towards the tram stop in front of the fish vendor's. The glow from the lone street light reflected off the glass front of the darkened store, outlining the worn picture of a huge carp so that it seemed to beckon from the window's blackness like oversize bait.

Road sand spattered against the underside of my car as I crossed the General Zygmunt Berling Bridge over the Vistula River. On the far side, I put on my high beams to negotiate the labyrinth of streets around the stadium. The twisting roadways on the east side of the river were a sharp contrast to the modern thoroughfares in Warsaw's city center. In 1944, the Russian Army had stopped its westward advance at the Vistula. They'd waited on this side while Hitler's forces in downtown Warsaw destroyed 90 percent of the build-

F O C U S

ings and slaughtered those Poles still alive. The well-preserved eastside suburbs were a permanent memorial to the quality of the Soviet-Polish friendship.

I finally located the address. A good minute after I rang the bell of the townhouse, a short woman with a wildly disheveled blond Afro yanked the door open. Her husband was on the Australian embassy guard force and they were both regulars on the Marines' party circuit.

"Casey, love," my hostess yelled over the loud music. "Get your bum in here."

I followed her inside. "Matt here?" I asked.

"Not yet," she said. "But he's on his way."

I made my way to the kitchen and helped myself to a Foster's from the refrigerator. Then I headed back toward the front door to wait for Matt. As I passed through the living room, a cuckoo clock began to signal the hour. Then another chimed in, plus a third beside it, then yet another at the far end of the room. Carved wooden clocks covered the four walls, and from the distant sound of bird calls, there were more in the rest of the house.

"Aren't they great?" My hostess was back beside me. "A little Polish man gets them for me." She lowered her voice. "Pay him in dollars, get our change in *zloties*. End up costing us nothing."

It was a convoluted form of currency exchange, illegal under Polish law and forbidden by the security regulations. Some Westerners couldn't resist getting something for nothing. But the smart ones didn't advertise it.

I wanted to cover my ears as nine o'clock sounded, over and over. It'd been three hours since I'd seen Matt. Had the SB already intercepted him? I stood beside the front door. The bell rang six times over the next hour. Each time I opened the door and didn't see Matt, I got more worried. When he appeared at ten o'clock, I jumped onto the top step and grabbed his coat collar.

"I've got to talk to you," I said to him.

He brushed off my hand. "So talk," he said, pulling Ewa closer.

"She can wait inside," I said. "This is personal."

"Go on," Matt said to her. "I'll handle this."

She raised her chin and stepped regally through the doorway, her silky red mane swaying behind her.

I led Matt far enough away from the building and the cars so no transmitters would pick up our words.

His eyes were brighter, his voice hopeful. "You change

your mind about Ewa staying with you?"

"No," I said. "But you'd better. This thing is an SB trap."

"What do you mean?"

"They threaten Ewa. You get worried. Then someone gives you a chance to save her. He guarantees that Ewa'll be cleared. Only first, you have to do a little favor for him."

"Ewa's not in trouble?" he asked.

"Those men at her house weren't cops," I said. "They were SB agents. And they're after you. Ewa's part of it."

"No —"

I cut him off. "She set you up for the camera."

The boyish softness of his face seemed to thin, the planes to become more angular. As though he were aging in front of me. "Why'd they want pictures?"

"You know why. Proof you violated the cardinal rule of service in the East Bloc. You got involved with a local." I moved my lips closer to his ear. "You have to report this."

"Turn myself in?" His voice was a low moan.

"If the SB can't buy your cooperation, then they'll blackmail you. They'll threaten to send those pictures to the Commandant."

"You've got to help me."

"What can I do? I'm only the budget officer."

"You're up for that big job. You must know somebody who can fix this."

Matt knew I wanted to work for the secretary's coordinator for counterterrorism. I said, "I'm only short-listed for the S/CT slot. Maybe if I were already working in the department, I'd have those kind of connections. But now, there's nothing I can do."

"Nothing?" His voice was getting louder.

I lowered mine. "The Poles aren't going to leave you alone. The only way out of this is to tell everything to the security officer."

"I won't," he said, backing away. "You're wrong. Ewa's not in on it." He turned and ran back toward the apartment. The door opened before he touched it and in the shaft of light I saw Ewa's face. She pulled Matt inside and the door thumped shut.

I stared at it. Impenetrable. Like Matt's head.

A match rasped against a matchbook. I looked toward the sound. A male figure stood in a recess between two buildings on the far side of the street, 30 feet away from me. He held the flame to the end of a cigarette and I got the impression of a bony face and deep-set eyes. Then the

A F S A NEWS

American Foreign Service Association



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Retired FSO Leads Voting Rights Fight

By Ken Nakamura,
Congressional Affairs Director and
Jackie Landells, Intern

Have you had trouble voting in your state and local elections recently? Have you been denied absentee ballots? If this describes your situation, you are probably a Foreign Service employee who has a home in Virginia and is serving abroad. Virginia cannot seem to get that "taxation" and "representation" relationship right. For the last three years, retired FSO Jay Katzen – now a delegate to the Virginia House of Delegates – is leading the fight to gain full voting rights for Foreign Service employees and other Americans posted overseas.

The Constitution of Virginia requires that residents have both a "domicile and a place of abode" in order to vote in state and local elections. While military personnel are exempted, other Virginians living abroad have no voice in voting

Continued on page 2

La Porta Heads New Governing Board

By Richard Thompson
Professional Issues Coordinator

Alphonse F. La Porta, State vice president for the past two years and head of the largely uncontested Leadership slate, was elected president of AFSA. His winning slate included Dan Geisler as State vice president and Natalie Brown, Marilyn Bruna, Steve Romera, Christopher Sandralini and Gregory Stanton as State representatives, all newcomers to the Governing Board. Incumbents reelected – all Leadership slate members – were treasurer Tom Boyatt, Retiree vice president Ed Rowell, and Retiree representatives Garber Davidson, Willard DePree, William Harrop and Clyde Taylor. In the slate's only competition, incumbent secretary Aury Fernandez was defeated by outgoing AFSA president Tex Harris.

Continued on page 5

• AFSA Dateline •

Note from the Incoming President

In this first edition of **AFSA News** since the election, I want to thank all the members who supported the Leadership Slate and to congratulate those who were elected. All members and supporters of AFSA can be assured that the new Governing Board will approach the professional interests of the Foreign Service and our nation's diplomacy with the same dedication, vitality and integrity that have characterized AFSA's past performance.

On behalf of all AFSA members, I wish to salute the leadership and collaboration of retiring Director General Anthony C.E.

Quinton. A career-long AFSA member, Tony has articulated with dignity, courage, finesse and good humor the professional challenges that unite Foreign Service personnel of all agencies, levels and skill groups.

We welcome as the new Director General Edward "Skip" Gnehm, an employee activist in his early career. Take note, Skip: During your tenure, AFSA expects substantial achievements for the United States Foreign Service across the broad front of labor-management relations. – A.F. La Porta

Continued on page 5

STATE DEPARTMENT V.P. VOICE • BY DAN GEISLER •

Wanted: Volunteers for AFSA

The AFSA election this year certainly stirred up a lot of ophathy, even for an uncontested election. Our "Meet the Condidotes" events were attended mainly by the condidotes themselves. Only a quarter of our 4,000 State Department members bothered to vote. Why the low rate of porticipation and why such trouble ottracting members to stand for office?

I think these problems stem from two general beliefs that I heard voiced frequently over the past few months: (1) We can't change the way things are done at State; and (2) AFSA doesn't do anything. Neither is true.

In the past year, individual FSOs showed how they can and do effect positive change at State and how they can and do prevent negative change.

Exomples? Toke JO reconing. We now have an oppeals system because a few members, many of whom had no stoke in the process, volunteered their time to help Al Lo Porto push PER to establish one. That was a positive result that came from personal effort.

Or take PER's praposal to eliminate the language incentive program. Did you get extro within-grade steps because you entered A-100 with a foreign language? Are you getting a solory increase because you were willing to learn a hord language? There's a proposal to toke that oway. In a bid to prevent this negative change, FSOs are volunteering their time to counter the proposol.

Other exomples abound. Look in last month's *AFSA News* to learn about your entitlements when you bring a boby into the bureoucrocy. The guidance was compiled by our AFSA colleogues at Embassy Monoguo who volunteered their

time to clorify the issue. And guess who is supplying virtually all of the FSO porticipation in the consolidation task forces? Not the central system in an effort to ensure brood porticipation from the chief stokeholders. Instead, it is

individual AFSA members who volunteer their time and who make a real difference.

If AFSA accomplishes anything, it is only because individuals take on interest and volunteer. It is easy to get involved. If you are assigned to Washington, you can attend the State Standing Committee which meets for one hour every

*"Participation
is not just
permitted.
It is
encouraged."*

Tuesday at noon in Main State, Room 7835.

We are an open organization. Porticipation is not just permitted. It is encouraged. We have a fox list of people who have volunteered to serve on the committee and we send out an agenda in advance. You are welcome to odd your nome to the list, to come to any or all meetings and to get involved in any issue that interests you.

Our aim is to have at least two representatives from each bureau or similar organizational unit. We are not asking you to make it your life's central mission. We just want a bit of your time and broinpower.

If you are assigned abroad, you will receive regular reports of our activities. Let us know what you think about the issues before us and bring to our attention any issues we may be neglecting. Since comments from the field are scarce, they are particularly welcome.

We are easy to contact. I am on the classified and unclassified State e-mail systems. My commercial e-mail address is geisler@ms4313wpoo.us-state.gov and foxes come via (202) 647-0265.

The lines are open.

Ret. FSO Leads Fight

Continued from page 1

in school and county board elections or on issues such as the sale of bonds, zoning and, most importantly, taxes.

In 1995, several overseas AFSA members wrote AFSA to express their outrage at this situation. While these individuals were not then living in Virginia, they had lived in the state previously, their children had attended Virginia schools and they had continued to pay Virginia taxes while overseas. In all likelihood, these Foreign Service employees would return to make their homes in Virginia.

Following discussions with then AFSA President F.A. "Tex" Horris, Kotzen began work on this issue in the Virginia House of Delegates. An FSO with State for 23 years and with assignments in Congo, Mali, Romania, Zaire, Burundi, Australia and at the United Nations, Kotzen realized the injustice of this law for Virginians serving abroad.

Kotzen has since had stints as vice chairman of the board of the African Development Foundation (1988-90)

and chairman of the Funding Committee of Virginia Gov. George Allen's Commission on Champion Schools (1994). He is currently serving his second term as delegate from the



Jay Katzen

31st District, which includes Rappahannock County and parts of Fauquier and Warren counties.

Kotzen's bill initially failed to gain the necessary support to move through the Virginia Legislature. In the 1996 session of the House of Delegates, Horris testified on behalf of AFSA, demanding the fundamental right to vote for Foreign Service employees. However, interest in the bill was lacking and the 1996 session closed with no action on the legislation.

Not to be outdone, Kotzen reintroduced his bill, House Joint Resolution 512, last January with different results. Within weeks the resolution began to

move. The tenacity of Kotzen and his staff assistant, Michelle Legg, along with the skilled advocacy of retired FSO Ralph Groner, a Richmond area resident who was called in to represent AFSA before the Rules Committee with only 24-hour lead time, resulted in the resolution's receiving a favorable report out of the Rules Committee on Jan. 28. House Joint Resolution 512 was unanimously passed by the House of Delegates on Feb. 4.

On Feb. 11, the Virginia Senate Privileges and Election Committee voted unanimously in favor of granting full voting privileges to those employed overseas by the governments of the United States and the Virginia Commonwealth, including their spouses and dependents. Again, retired FSOs Kotzen and Groner were present to represent AFSA interests to the committee. The next day the bill was passed by the Senate, 39-0.

Constitutional amendments must pass in identical form in two consecutive legislative sessions with an election in between, a process usually taking from three to five years. This amendment will be voted on again in the 1998 session and, should it pass, will go to referendum in fall 1998. Although this bill has a long way to go until passage, it has overcome major hurdles. Kotzen was encouraged that, after considerable struggle to introduce the bill, it ultimately received a great deal of support, including that of House Majority Leader Richard Cranwell. AFSA is most appreciative of the hard work of Kotzen and Groner. Because of their tireless effort, by fall 1998, Foreign Service employees domiciled in Virginia who want a voice in their state and local elections will have one.

"Inside a U.S. Embassy

should be read by every American who wonders what their Foreign Service does for them and their country abroad."

-- Jim Lehrer

To order your copy, call AFSA Communications Coordinator Kristina Kremer at (202) 944-5506.

RETIREES **V.P. VOICE** **• BY ED ROWELL •**

You Can Take It With You

Since becoming Vice President for Retirees two years ago, I have represented AFSA at the quarterly State Department Retirement Planning Seminar (RPS). The RPS is an excellent program that provides guidance so useful to participants that they often wish it had been available at the beginning of their Foreign Service careers rather than at the end.

I regularly make a presentation in the session on "Retiree Interest Groups," sharing the podium with representatives from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the American Foreign Service Protective Association (AFSPA), Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired (DACOR) and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE). AARP is concerned with broad issues affecting seniors. AFSPA, in addition to providing health, life and other insurance, operates the Senior Living Foundation, a resource center to which elderly members of the Foreign Service community can turn for assistance. DACOR promotes the welfare and unity of retired Foreign Service officers and supports publications and scholarships. NARFE works to protect the retirement benefits of all federal annuitants. AFSA works closely with NARFE on Capitol Hill to preserve cost of living adjustments and health benefits for our members.

Many AFSA members belong to several of these groups, while a few belong to all of them. I stress to the RPS participants that AFSA membership remains relevant in retirement for three reasons: (1) We act as ambassador for annuitants with the State Department offices on which Foreign Service retirees must depend for benefits and service.

(2) AFSA is our voice on Capitol Hill, ensuring that Congress understands the special concerns of the professional Foreign Service and our unique retirement system. (3) AFSA provides a network for keeping up with colleagues

and friends from the foreign affairs community after we leave our agencies. AFSA facilitates formation of retiree groups and activities around the country and helps members stay in touch with each other and with developments in the Foreign Service family.

As I tell those attending the Retirement Planning Seminar, there are many

sharp transitions in leaving the Foreign Service, but leaving AFSA is not one of them. I believe that one of AFSA's greatest strengths is the opportunity it affords members to maintain their connections to the Foreign Service as they move into a wide range of post-career activities.

A Medicare Note

As I prepare this article, the House and Senate are getting ready to go to conference on their respective tax cut and budget bills and a White House alternative. The Senate would "means test" Medicare-B premiums, while the House and White House would not. The Senate's means test, an administrative monstrosity, would sharply increase enrollee costs - from \$45.80 per month per enrollee in 1998 to \$65.10 per month in 2002 for those making less than \$50,000 per year; \$104.20 per month for those making \$60,000 per year; and \$260.40 per month for individuals making \$100,000 per year. AARP vigorously opposes the Senate plan. The White House also dislikes it.

"... AFSA membership remains relevant in retirement for three reasons ..."

OUTGOING USIA V.P. V.P. VOICE

• BY JESS BAILEY •

Moving Forward

The integration of USIA into the State Department has dominated much of the last two years for USIA's Foreign Service professionals. We have debated and discussed our concerns about the need to maintain a vigorous structure for public diplomacy and our anxieties about our own careers within the large State Department. While the discussion will become increasingly detailed, the concerns and anxiety are likely to continue.

So far, the task forces have reached a general consensus about creating a fifth cone for USIA generalists and specialists, establishing offices for public diplomacy within

regional bureaus and leaving E and IBB mostly intact. But as of early July, the reorganization process had not determined the fate of the I Bureau, the role of Smith-Mundt, the funding mechanisms for public diplomacy and the authorities of under secretaries – all issues which affect organizational relationships. Finally, any plan will have to pass muster in a Congress with competing interests.

While such uncertainty feeds our angst, USIA's Foreign Service officers must move forward. We must discard our parochialisms, accept that we all work for the same organization (and president) and maintain our professionalism. As one colleague counseled me, we must remember that "we are they."

We must also take advantage of the enormous opportunities that the integration can offer. Closer coordination in Washington may allow us to approach the synergy between State and USIS operations at missions abroad. Opening of multi-functional jobs at the mid and senior levels will expand the career horizons of many individual officers. This, combined with greater opportunities for current State officers to gain experience with public diplomacy, will perhaps lead

to deeper, cultural, if you will, changes in the new State Department.

AFSA must continue to play an active role in this transition. First, it must counter dangerous ideas that will weaken our effectiveness, such as deep budget cuts,

politically expedient but unworkable "reforms" or harmful personnel practices. Second, it must help shape the new career path for public diplomacy officers. A fifth cone is but the first step in the process. Third, it must work constructively with management to harmonize the personnel practices – from tenuring criteria to TIC rules and LCEs – guided by the principles

of fairness to individuals and best practices for the system. Finally, AFSA must educate USIA officers about the system they are about to enter. Reality dictates that, at least initially, USIA officers will do most of the adjusting.

AFSA representatives cannot do this alone. Riley Sever and Susan Hovanec, the new leadership team for AFSA USIA, bring tremendous experience to the association. AFSA has a talented staff to support them. But they will need your ideas, involvement and activism to make this transition work for us all. AFSA succeeds when you are vigilant and work actively with the association.

I have been most fortunate to represent USIA within AFSA for the past two years. Rarely does one have such opportunity to be engaged in shaping our careers. More notably, few positions offer a better view of the extraordinary people in USIA. So many of you have helped me with your time, ideas, experience and commitment – whether on task forces, through the e-mail or in Standing Committee meetings. So, as I step down I'd just like to say thanks for the opportunity and all your help.

"We must also take advantage of the enormous opportunities that the integration can offer."

Outgoing USIA Vice President Jess Bailey has an onward assignment as cultural affairs officer to Ankara, Turkey. Incoming Vice President J. Riley Sever's column will appear in the September AFSA News.

AFSA Blocks Assaults on FSGB Authority

By Julie Ann Ginocchio
Foreign Service Journal Intern

After a three-month battle, AFSA's labor management and congressional affairs staff members successfully blocked a State Department effort that would have severely eroded grievance rights for Foreign Service employees.

Specifically, the amendments would have eliminated the authority of the Foreign Service Grievance Board (FSGB) to award damages, negated employees' rights to mandatory FSGB hearings in cases involving discipline and prohibited the FSGB from ordering discovery of Inspector General records in grievance cases.

The amendments to the Foreign Service Act, dropped after an intensive lobbying campaign spearheaded by Ken Nakamura, AFSA congressional affairs director, had been proposed for both the House and Senate authorization bills for the State Department, the U.S. Information Agency and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The bills, which passed in their respective chambers in mid-June, are expected to be unified in conference, with the final bill passed to Pres. Clinton for signing before the end of summer.

"It would've been extremely damaging to Foreign Service employees if the provisions had been enacted," warned Sharon Papp, AFSA's general counsel, who played a key role in explaining to Congress the amendments' potential legal consequences.

One of the amendments aimed to deprive Foreign Service employees of remedies available to Civil Service employees, such as double damages in overtime cases and compensatory damages for pain and suffering in discrimination cases.

"This would have been very unfair to Foreign Service employees," Papp said, noting that, if passed, the amendment would have reduced by 100 percent the amount of damages the FSGB could award in the estimated 400 overtime grievances pending before the board.

"Any time you are up against the [State] Department, it's tough, but AFSA had a great deal of support from key legislators and staff," Nakamura noted.

Aiding in the battle to eliminate the amendments were Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-Md.), Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.).

Dateline

Continued from page 1

- The foreign affairs agencies are seeking to shorten the time limit for filing grievances from 3 years to eighteen months over all matters except disciplinary actions and monetary claims, which they plan to shorten from 3 years to 6 months. AFSA received substantial input from its members, which stressed the need for the 3-year limit. This limit gives employees time to judge if an EER has been career-damaging, time to prepare their cases and freedom from the fear of retaliation if the employee is still subject to the same rater. Negotiations are currently under way.

- In the first decision of its kind, the Foreign Service Grievance Board (FSGB) declared June 16 that it does not have jurisdiction to hear a grievance over an improper skill code designation. The grievant, a USAID employee separated during the Sept. 1996 RIF, had contested her separation on the grounds that it was the result of her assignment to the wrong skill code. The FSGB's decision (Case No. 97-27) is important to all FS employees, as it means certain cases must be filed with the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), an unfamiliar organization with a 30-day filing deadline. USAID had specifically instructed employees that they had the choice of appealing their separation to the FSGB or the MSPB. The FSGB's RIF jurisdiction is limited, based on a 1994 amendment to the Foreign Service Act, to "... cases of reprisal, interference in the conduct of an employee's official duties, or similarly inappropriate use of the authority of this section." Unfortunately, there is no legislative history to define what Congress meant by this phrase. In the decision at issue, the Board stated that "[t]here have been legitimate differences of opinion among all parties as to what is properly meant by the legislative phrase 'similarly inappropriate use of the authority of this section.' The meaning of the legislation required interpretation, and it is only now that we have given it." While stating it did not have jurisdiction over improper skill code designations, the FSGB did suggest it might have jurisdiction in cases where an "independent statutory basis" provides for jurisdiction and where there were "other agency errors which anteceded, and were distinct from, the RIF."

New Governing Board Elected

Continued from page 1

The principal contest was at USIA, where J. Riley Sever won the vice presidency over Howard Shapiro and Susan Hovanec was elected representative over Victoria Rase. Frank Miller was reelected USAID vice president unopposed and the mandate of Janina Jaruzelski as USAID representative was likewise renewed. The CS incumbents, vice president Tam Kelsey and representative Keith Curtis, won unopposed. Maggie Dawling won the FAS vice presidency, while Bill Westman became the FAS representative on the basis of a write-in vote.

Detailed results are found in the table below. With few positions contested, members cast a total of 3,460 ballots this year compared with 4,150 two years ago when two slates vied actively for

votes. The votes were counted July 1 and the results approved by the Elections Committee and announced July 2. The new Governing Board took office July 15.

Neither of the two bylaws amendments proposed by the Governing Board was approved. The proposal to give the Governing Board authority to raise dues by CPI plus 4 percent was defeated with 1,476 votes in favor and 1,813 against. (The bylaws permit the Board to increase dues up to the level of the CPI.) The proposal to provide one constituency representative for each 750 members or fraction thereof, instead of the current 1,000 or fraction thereof, received a majority of votes cast (1,797 for, 1,478 against) but not the required two-thirds, therefore failing of adoption.

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USIA	191	53	158	178	Shapiro 85	Sever 143	Hovanec 126	Rose 93			

Since the FSGB has ruled it does not have jurisdiction to hear the merits of the grievant's case, she must now prove to the MSPB that she had "good cause" for filing beyond the 30-day deadline. The FSGB has urged USAID not to oppose the grievant's waiver request. The FSGB has also indicated that the filing instructions provided to the grievant were confusing and that grievant "could not have known that we would refuse jurisdiction in [her] case." AFSA has submitted a brief to the MSPB, offering reasons why a waiver should be granted, including the ambiguity of the language which limits jurisdiction.

- The Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) is now collecting books, artwork, collectibles, stamps and foreign coins to be sold at the 1997 BookFair Oct. 16 through 26. This is a great time of year to weed out all those excess books and collectibles

items. All donations to AAFSW are tax deductible. BookFair proceeds benefit a scholarship program and local charities. Donations will be accepted through Aug. 31. For more information call Robin Jones at (202) 223-5796.

- Are you aware that your dues are paying for free legal aid and union representation for many of your colleagues? That's right. Thirty-five percent of your peers are not members of AFSA, yet according to the law, we must represent them. The same is true for retirees. We fight for everyone's benefits, COLAs, health care, etc. Don't let your colleagues ride on your coat-tails. Encourage them to help support the professional association and union that support the Foreign Service. For a member application, contact Yolanda Odunsi, Membership Representative, at (202) 338-4045, ext. 525, or via e-mail at member@afsa.org



Eve-Lotta Jansson

Former President George Bush making informal remarks June 26 after receiving AFSA's award for lifetime contributions to American diplomacy. Bush spoke highly of the support he had received from the Foreign Service in his many foreign affairs assignments. Former Special Assistant to the President Richard Haass, former Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney and former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft reviewed Bush's diplomatic methods and achievements and Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering presented the award. This and other AFSA awards were presented in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room, followed by a luncheon at the Foreign Service Club honoring the winners. The award winners were featured in the June-July issue of the Foreign Service Journal.



Eve-Lotta Jansson

Former President George Bush at lunch at the Foreign Service Club June 26 after receiving AFSA's award for lifetime contributions to American diplomacy. Left to right: Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering, President Bush, Club Maitre d' Orsson Vargos, AFSA President Tex Horris, former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger.

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F O C U S

*I rubbed the moist heel of my hand across my forehead.
Matt'd said the cops had showed her compromising
photos, but they hadn't taken her to jail. Why not?*

match waved out. The cigarette end glowed in the darkness.

I hurried to my car and unlocked it without looking back. I got an acrid whiff of French tobacco before I pulled the door shut.

I didn't sleep that night, but I couldn't think of a way to help Matt. I had to report his security violation. If I didn't, I'd risk my own future. By eight o'clock the next morning, I was on my way to find the embassy's regional security officer. I pulled on my parka and unbolted my apartment door. Mentally rehearsing what I'd say about Matt, I stepped into the vestibule.

I nearly collided with the tall man poised there, his hand raised as though to knock on my door. My Polish instructor.

I stepped back and muttered, "*przepraszam*." The Polish word for pardon can't be said without spitting on your listener.

My instructor said, "*bardzo dobrze*." Very good.

But it wasn't very good. What was a Pole doing here inside my building? I smelled French tobacco. I took a step back and stared.

Stefan Krajewski wore the uniform of the down-at-the-heels European intelligentsia — faded corduroy pants and a cracked leather jacket. But this close, I saw superb muscle definition under his tight turtleneck. He was in better shape than most language teachers. During our duller lessons I'd done the usual bored student thing, diverting myself by imagining him naked.

But never imagining him doing this. I felt sweat forming along my hairline. I suddenly had an explanation for both his physical fitness and his entry through the locked front door. My voice harsh, I said, "Get out of my house."

He didn't move. "I'm here to help you."

"What are you talking about?"

He said, "I have some photos that will interest you." *They don't want Ewa, I'd said to Matt. They want you. Someone will give you a chance to save her.*

And now it was my turn.

Krajewski'd been watching Matt. He'd followed him to the party. He'd probably been ready to move in and complete the entrapment when I'd intervened. I'd given the SB a golden opportunity. A chance to trade up from a Marine to a career diplomat. Krajewski had dropped Matt and come after me. He wasn't whispering to avoid the hidden microphones. He was speaking right to them.

I said, "And I suppose you want something from me in return for the pictures."

"Not at all," he said. "I will give them to you."

Winter lingered in the vestibule's tiled floor and the chill reached my feet even through my shoes. Under the fluorescent light the creamy walls glimmered like ice. I shivered and asked, "Why would you give me anything?"

He said, "One of my less experienced colleagues showed the photos to me. I knew the young man pictured was a friend of yours. I told my colleague that you and I would resolve the matter."

"What do you mean, 'resolve'?"

"You assure me that the soldier has no intention of forcing the girl to commit treason. I give you the pictures. Case closed." The fluid unaccented European English from the muscular body made me think of a panther with brains — of animal power controlled by a superior intellect. If I let him get one step closer, I'd be his *drugie sniadanie*. His second breakfast.

"Not interested," I said, patting my pocket to make sure my car keys were still there.

Krajewski's fingers circled my wrist. With his other hand he pressed a pasteboard rectangle into my palm. "Read it," he said.

The words were handwritten in the distinctive Polish left-leaning slant, but the language was English: Stefan Krajewski, Consultant. And below that: SAS FOREIGN TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMPANY.

A shudder rippled down my spine, as if someone had spoken aloud the name of the world's most notorious terrorist. The Warsaw-based SAS Foreign Trade and

F O C U S

Investment Co. handled arms trading and money laundering for Abu Nidal.

Three months earlier, the Abu Nidal Organization had staged simultaneous assaults at airports in Rome and Vienna. Twenty Christmas travelers died in the bloody attacks. Five of them were American — including 11-year-old Natasha Simpson. And Abu Nidal had promised to strike again. If Krajewski had a source among the radical Palestinian terrorists, he could give me reliable information about the organization. Tempting bait.

"Nice try." I raised my voice to make sure the microphones picked up every word. "I'm going to the embassy right now to report this."

Krajewski didn't seem to notice that I'd just gone on the record rejecting his deal. He said, "I'm going to collect the photos. I will bring them to the observation deck of the Palace of Culture and Science. Meet me there at nine."

I threw Krajewski's card on the floor. "Get out," I said again.

Krajewski scooped up the card and dropped it into my coat pocket. "I will see you at nine o'clock." In three strides, he was out of sight.

I slammed the door and leaned against it. I wanted to help Matt. I wanted any information I could get about Abu Nidal's next move. But I couldn't make a deal with Krajewski. He was slime — all spies were slime, no matter what side they claimed to work for.

A leather sole scraped on the cement staircase. The man who lived in the apartment above mine spoke to me from the stair landing. "Casey," he said, walking down the last flight of steps, "Could I see you for a minute?" His diffident tone matched his unassuming appearance.

I kept my hand on the doorknob. "Sorry, Warren," I said, "but I've got a date with the RSO."

He stepped closer and whispered into my ear. "Talk to us first."

Us. Warren Smythe was the junior CIA man at post. Behind the metal-rimmed glasses, his blue eyes glowed with a spooky, now-I'm-onto-something fever. Did the CIA know something about Krajewski that might help Matt?

I looked down at my sneaker-clad feet. I'd crossed the velcro fasteners to make X's. Supposed to bring good luck. I looked up at Warren and nodded.

Twenty minutes later, I was at the embassy, seated with Warren inside the CIA's acoustically secure conference room, a six-foot-square cubicle that included a wooden table and four battered chairs.

Randall Abington, the CIA's station chief, arrived right after us. He wore a gray sweatsuit that matched his stringy hair. His usual jowly expression of disapproval soured further when he saw me. "Good work," he said to Warren.

Gerald Davis, the station chief's deputy, levered the door closed. He wore his black hair slicked back in a pompadour and his cheeks were stubbled as though he'd last shaved the night before — a look he managed to achieve around the clock. He said to me, "Tell us what Krajewski wanted."

"How's that any business of yours?" I asked.

"We're asking the questions here," Davis said. "What'd Krajewski say?"

My chair thumped against the wall behind me as I tried to stand. "Been charging up your cattle prod, just in case?" I leaned across the table, close enough to Davis to spit on him. "You people cleared Stefan Krajewski to give Polish lessons to me and 20 other Americans. A little late for you to start worrying about what he's telling us."

Abington had an unlit cigar in his mouth. He took it out and waved it at me. "We'd appreciate your assistance here. Allowing Krajewski in the embassy was part of a careful plan to establish contact."

I sat down. "A careful plan? For all you know, Krajewski's got half the embassy passing secrets to him." I shook my head. "When the RSO finds out you guys are letting the SB run loose in here —"

Abington cut me off. "We minimized the risk. But it was a risk we had to take it. He's got essential data."

"What's so vital you'd allow him to pose as a local employee and jeopardize the security of the entire embassy?"

For 15 seconds, the only sound was the squeak of the air circulation system, filtering the inside air until it smelled like ice cubes that had gone through the defrost cycle too many times. Then, Abington said, "We have reason to believe Krajewski is ready to give us information on planned terrorist acts in Europe."

I touched Krajewski's business card, now in my jeans pocket. I said, "Why would he know anything about terrorists?"

F O C U S

*I was boxed in. One soft-spoken fellow on my right,
mournfully considering my plight. One on my left,
studying the ceiling as if it were a map of the high road.*

Abington harrumphed. "He's the liaison between the SB and the PLO representative, the Libyan People's Bureau, and the Abu Nidal Organization. He's got access to all the thugs holed up on this side of the Iron Curtain."

"How's that relevant?" I asked. "He's trying to recruit me. He wants my secrets. He's not going to give me anything useful."

Warren cleared his throat. "You may be able to extract something."

"That's your job, not mine."

"We're making it yours," Davis said sharply. "National security is at stake. You can't refuse."

"Let me see if I'm getting this right," I said. "The CIA is supposed to be infiltrating politically motivated terrorist organizations. But you can't manage that. So you're trying to recruit a Polish intelligence agent to do it for you. And you want to use me to get to him." I shook my head. "Why would I want to risk my career in such a hare-brained scheme?"

"Listen, smart-mouth," Gerry began. "I don't want to work with you —"

Warren interrupted, his voice soothing. "But you've got Krajewski's attention. After you suddenly popped up last night, he homed right in on you."

"What, you were watching me?"

"Watching Krajewski." Warren leaned toward me. "We can't let him work in the embassy much longer. If we can't turn him into an asset, we'll cancel the operation. We'll have to expose his activities to date. And I'm afraid Cpl. Barnes will be the one to suffer."

"What do you mean?"

Davis snorted. "Krajewski owns that jarhead. Barnes may already have passed him sensitive information about employees. We think he might have let Krajewski into the embassy after hours to ransack the commo room."

"Matt wouldn't do that. You're making that up."

Warren shook his head dolefully. "We'll have to let the Naval Investigative Service determine that. Based on the evidence, of course."

I said, "Evidence you provide?"

"Unless you've got something better," Davis said.

Abington pulled the cigar from his mouth again. "Our evidence is a little ambiguous. It's possible to infer that Barnes had an accomplice."

"Most likely, a low-level State Department employee," Davis said. "The NIS will take months to sort it out. Your pal will spend that time in the pokey. You'll have to answer a lot of questions about your relationship."

"Is that a threat?"

"Of course not," Abington said. "We're all loyal Americans here. We all want the same thing."

I was boxed in. Warren on my right, soft-spoken and bespectacled, mournfully considering my plight. Abington on my left, chewing on the wet end of his cigar, studying the ceiling as if it were a map of the high road. And Gerry Davis, his oiled hair shining like snakeskin, waiting and glowering. Each in his assigned role. All three of them quietly snug. They knew they had me.

I faced Abington. "I'll talk to Krajewski once more and see what I get from him. But busting Matt won't do a thing for national security."

The station chief didn't blink. "If he's guilty, he'll be spending the next 30 years in Leavenworth."

"If he's guilty," I said.

"Go see Krajewski," Abington said. "Then we'll decide what to do next."

Warren glanced at his watch. "We'd better get started if we're going to meet Krajewski's deadline. Doesn't leave much time to get her ready."

Get her ready. As though he were going to wire me with explosives and send me on a suicide mission. Maybe it amounted to the same thing. ■

MY FATHER'S TOP HAT

BY BARBARA CURRY MULCAHY

How I loved my father's top hat. It was taut and made a pleasant rich thrum when I tapped it. It was smooth inside and out. The lining was a soft tanned yellow with a green label inside which announced the manufacturer's name in ridiculously undemocratic terms, something like:

George Brown Bros.

Hatters

By Appointment To The Queen

Since 1774

I could place this hat on my head and leave behind my life as a child of American parentage, born in Trinidad, raised in India and Greece, and because of my father's job, exiled to Fairfax, Va. I could place this hat on my head and traitorously enter a world so scandalously un-American, so pompous, so impractical and unfair, and yet, so comforting.

When I stroked the hat, it was like petting a dog. The fibers were smooth, but, if you stroked them backward, they rose up like hackles. I could run my finger around the rim and make glossy tracks in the blackness. However, this made me feel guilty, and, afterward, I always smoothed down the fibers with the palm of my hand.

The hat had its own box, a big stiff cream-colored box, like a wedding cake — except that it was oval. Its lid fit snugly on the box. It was wonderful to tug it open, especially when I was lonely. The hat was familiar to me, and strange.

It had always been on a top shelf wherever we had lived. After we had moved “back” to the country I had never lived in, after we had moved, as my parents said, “home,” and I could not understand the heavy southern accents of the people speaking “my” language, it was comforting to come back to the top hat. I would hold it, smoothing the fibers with the palm of my hand, sometimes putting the hat on and letting it slide down over my eyes and settle on the end of my nose. How enclosed in it I felt, the way it must feel when it was tucked inside its box.

In Virginia, everything was different. No bottle man

came to the door to buy our old bottles and put them in a sack that he carried over his shoulder. In Virginia, we piled our bottles with the garbage at the edge of the lawn. We drove out of our development, past the cheery “Apple Tree Village” sign, to go to the liquor store in Washington, D.C., where taxes on alcohol were lower.

Everything in Virginia was incomprehensible. At school none of my classmates laughed when my teacher, an Alabaman, drawled out her gibberish. Instead, like a school of fish flashing in some new direction without any signal or any visible agreement, my classmates turned at an instant and started some new activity.

When I worked away at the wrong exercise, my teacher singled me out and, in the most patient manner, repeated her gibberish slowly, over and over, while my classmates put down their pencils and stared at me.

How I did not like the kindness of my people as they waited for me to “adjust.” How I did not like the way my



LOREL BARR

F O C U S

The top hat reminded me of happier times. On a humid Virginia day I could go down into our cool basement, open the hat box, and troll for memories.

teacher was so good to me, as if I had grown up among heathens and she must be patient with me. How I raged at her finally, roaring at her in Greek.

The top hat reminded me of happier times, times with our Greek maid, my co-conspirator. One night, after my parents had gone to a party, our maid had awakened me, and urged me into her narrow, pink room with its unevenly plastered walls, bare light bulb and narrow iron bed, telling me she had a wonderful surprise for me. She had sat me up on her windowsill. (Oh that was a wonderful dangerous place to be perched, her smell like safety all around me, her pungent body odor mixed with the smell of her harsh Greek soap.) And here she had taught me how to jeer and hoot at the teenage couple kissing in our garden. It was so much fun to make such a racket, and I felt so successful when the couple glared up at us and left, and yet, also, so disappointed that they were gone.

My mother said our maid was half-witted and fired her for incompetence almost every week. But, at the start of the next day, the maid returned to work, and both she and my mother pretended that whatever had happened had happened in a language neither of them could comprehend.

My mother did not understand Greek, but, in Virginia, a world of laundromats and dishwashers, it was no longer necessary for me to translate for her. My mother was quite capable in Virginia, and I was useless.

On a humid Virginia day I could go down into our cool basement, open the hat box, and troll for memories. How I had cut my thigh on my metal

doll house, and the wound was not stitched, but was closed with a metal clamp, because the doctor said I might grow up to be a can-can dancer, and would need perfect legs. And how, when I dressed up in my brother's rough jeans, the clamp pulled out, and the scar that formed on my thigh had saved me from such a possibility.

I had to wear it at an angle if I did not want the hat to slide down to my nose. With my head tipped back to hold it aloft, I could remember the bright sea and the great boatyard with its smell of caulking, tar and salt and its fisherman with his missing fingers. How I loved the huge steel plates and the ribs of the ships being welded together, and how I tried so hard not to look at the beautiful flare of the welder's torch.

In one corner, the fishermen repaired their small wooden boats. Their nets were hung out to dry and repair, and the smell of seaweed and salt was fresh and strong. The fisherman with the missing fingers showed me how he was fixing his boat, but all I could see were his three missing fingers.

In Virginia, there was no one to tell me the story of how each missing finger was lost: this one pulling up the nets, that one in a saw, this one caught in tackle at sea.

In Virginia, the bread was soft and tasteless. People bought it in plastic bags at the store. They did not carry the towel-covered dough on platters down to the bakery to rise and then be put, loaf by loaf, on a long-handled wooden paddle and be pushed deep into the vault of the oven. There was no fire to see in Virginia, no crust on the bread, no stone oven. When I sat in the school lunchroom in Virginia, before I ate, I mashed my sandwiches down to give them substance.

I grew up, but the top hat remained too big for me. The age into which I had grown had outgrown top hats. Grand occasions had lost their grandeur. I had, in fact, become a woman. Women don't wear top hats. Unless they are can-can dancers — and I had been saved from that. ■

Barbara Curry Mulcahy is the daughter of retired FSO John M. Curry and Elizabeth J. Curry. The Curry family was posted in Ireland, Trinidad, India, Greece, Israel, Norway and Portugal. Her book of poetry, The Man With the Dancing Monkey, was published this summer by Wolsak & Wynn Publishers Ltd.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

BY ROBERT HILTON

He drank a whole bottle of cognac?"

"Well, yes. The French foreign minister gave it to him at the airport, and despite what he said at his confirmation hearings, he does have a problem with the sauce."

Chargé d'Affaires Richard Marral groaned as he surveyed the inert body of the new secretary of State. A failed run at the Senate had left the representative from the president's party without a job. Although his three terms on the House Foreign Affairs Committee had been marked only by a penchant for junketing and rumors of overindulgence, the president apparently considered party loyalty the most important qualification. Hence, former Rep. Bill Packard of Iowa had become secretary of State. And here he was, dead drunk on his plane, with the Ranistani foreign minister waiting at the bottom of the steps.

Marral ran through the options. One, cancel the trip. Say the secretary was indisposed, a bad snail or something, and fly the plane right back out again. No good. That would upset the French, for one thing, but more importantly, there was the oil concession to be signed. Marral had brokered an agreement between an American oil consortium and the Ranistani government that would give the Americans exploration rights in the desert south of the capital. If that fell through, Marral

could kiss goodbye his hopes of making ambassador. Packard had to sign that agreement.

Two, sober him up and put him through the motions. Marral hesitantly poked Packard on the arm. He got a low groan in return. Quick sobriety was out of the question.

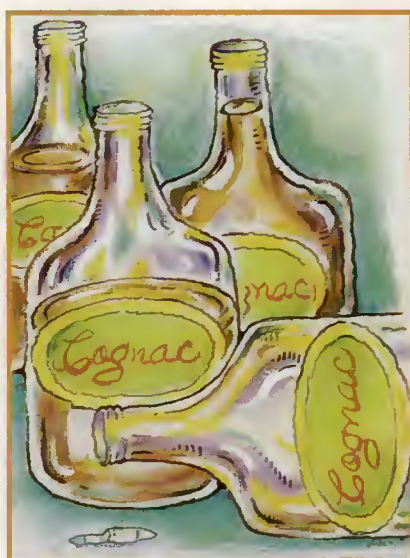
Three. He couldn't think of a three. He scanned the faces of the others in the cabin, hoping to find a solution written on someone's forehead. The assembly included the head of the Secretariat staff, the department spokesman, a couple of flunkies, and a Diplomatic Security agent, tall and corn-fed, who looked to Marral like a former football player.

Corn-fed. Corn, Iowa. Iowa, Packard.

"You!" Marral screamed at the DS agent. "Lose the gun and the lapel pin. You are now the secretary of State." It could work, just maybe. The resemblance was only passing — height, hair color, build — but Packard had been a nobody, and the Ranistanis weren't likely to have watched his confirmation hearings on C-SPAN. If Marral and everyone else pretended the agent was the secretary, how would they know otherwise? Audacious, improbable, but not entirely impossible.

"But ...," the agent stammered.

"Look, think of this as taking a bullet for the president. Duty calls, your country needs you. Just shake the right hands and smile a lot. We'll take care of the details. Mess up your hair a little, and switch ties with the stiff. His is uglier, but it catches his style. What's your name?"



LOREL BARR

F O C U S

"You!" Marral screamed at the DS agent. "Lose the gun and the lapel. You are now the secretary of State." It could work, just maybe.

"Robinson, Jeremy Robinson," stammered the agent, tugging at his tie and ruffling his hand through his hair.

"Jeremy, congratulations on your promotion. Now, we're going to walk down the stairs and you'll shake every hand offered to you. If anyone says anything, just tell them you're happy to be here. I'll be right beside you."

Marral poked his head out of the door and smiled and waved in a reassuring manner. "OK, here we go. You first."

Robinson walked down the steps. At the bottom, a Ranistani girl thrust a bouquet of flowers into his hands. Marral came smoothly up behind him, grabbed the flowers and passed them back to the spokesman, who was trailing him down the gangway.

"Mr. Foreign Minister, allow me to present the secretary of State. Mr. Secretary, Foreign Minister Ragib."

Robinson dutifully gripped and grinned. He even remarked on the pleasant weather. The ceremony was blessedly brief, and as they moved toward the limousines, Marral looked around for reactions. No one seemed to have seen anything unusual. But the other agents! Of course, they knew who Robinson was, and they were no doubt wondering why he was pretending to be the secretary of State. They got into the limousine, and as it pulled out, Marral grabbed Robinson's arm.

"Attention, DS agents. This is the chargé. You did not, repeat did not, see what you thought you saw." He shouted into Robinson's sleeve, fiddling around the man's wrist for the switch to turn the radio onto broadcast. Marral next leaned over the front seat to grab the car phone. He punched the information officer's cell phone number.

"Orlin Richards," came the IO's voice, from the press bus somewhere up ahead.

Robert Hilton is an FSO with the U.S. Information Service at U.S. Embassy Moscow. Between his current posting and his previous one at U.S. Embassy Riyadh during the Gulf War, he estimates he has worked on at least 10 secretary of State visits. None remotely resembles that described in this story. As far as he knows.

"Marral here. Listen, we've just been told of a change in venue. The meet with the president will be at his residence, not the palace. I don't know what you'll find when you get there, but that's where it will be, so insist they let you in to pre-position the press for statements. You got that?"

"Got it. Just like the Ranistanis to screw up weeks of planning. We'll get there."

Marral reflected that if the Ranistani security force didn't kill Richards when he tried to crash the gates of the president's house, the journalists would when they found out they had missed their event.

The motorcade, now without journalists, pulled up at the Presidential Palace. "The drill here," Marral had time to say, "is to read what we give you and sign where we show you." Then they were out, and moving into the building.

The president was waiting. He eagerly pumped Robinson's hand, then Marral's, and for good measure, the spokesman's. Marral cued the spokesman, who handed Robinson a thin folder. The president and the pseudo-secretary stepped up to two microphones. As the Ranistani state-run TV cameras whirled, the president gushed over the secretary, the import of the visit, the meeting of "two great nations, one in love of freedom, democracy and capitalism."

Robinson lacked the secretary's touch with the cameras, but considering he was seeing the text for the first time, he pulled it off well enough. His statement was less effusive, touching on common interests (oil, ran the subtext in Marral's head) and "a desire to resolve our differences in the spirit of friendship and cooperation," which meant roughly that there was a way to go before the State Department Human Rights Report for Ranistan would be welcomed in the capital.

The two men then sat down. Pens were placed in their hands, documents moved around, and signatures given. Marral practiced in his head "Ambassador Marral. Ambassador Richard D. Marral." Yes, it sounded good.

The plan called for no questions at this point, and with no bothersome American reporters present, there were

F O C U S

none. Instead, the president presented the secretary with a large fur hat, a traditional Ranistani present. Robinson gamely pulled it on. It slipped down to cover his eyes, which Marral noted would make it even harder to discern his identity.

A stir in the back of the room caught Marral's eye. Ranistani security forces were converging on the entrance, and Marral saw Orlin Richards arguing with them. The American journalists behind him were pushing forward, trying to get around the guards, who were not giving way. In half a minute there would be either bloodshed or, if they talked their way in, a journalistic coup that would cost Marral his job, and, incidentally, create a diplomatic incident of the highest order.

"Mr. Secretary," Marral stepped up to Robinson. "Time to go. Why don't you wave at the press corps on your way out?" And he indicated the red-faced scribes doing their best to overpower the president's security detail.

Robinson waved and allowed himself to be led out the side door. Perfect, thought Marral. With the hat, there's no way the journalists will know that they were seeing an imposter. Instead, they think they saw the secretary blow them off. Not a desirable situation, but better than the alternative.

The afternoon's down time was 90 minutes during which Marral told Robinson a little about Ranistan and a lot about acting. They practiced for the evening's dinner with the foreign minister, not table manners, but topics of conversation. Marral ran through a week's worth of the *International Herald Tribune*, scanning the articles and giving Robinson the gist. "Floods in China. Result of overdevelopment along the rivers, too many trees cut down. Pro-democracy protests quashed in Lagos. Don't worry about it. The Ranistanis stopped caring about Africa at the same time we did. European Community unable to resolve differences over tariffs for cheese and wine. If the foreign minister serves cheese, you can mention this one."

Robinson told him later that the cramming exercise had been a waste of time. The foreign minister didn't let him get a word in edgewise. When Robinson did get a chance to mention the French cheese, the FM just looked blankly at him and said, "This is indigenous. Don't you like it?" So Robinson had felt compelled to eat two more slices.

After tucking in Robinson back at the hotel with some

briefing books as bedtime reading, Marral engaged in damage control. He sought out the spokesman.

"Tom, I had a chance to talk to the secretary before he retired. I know there wasn't supposed to be a briefing tonight, but why don't I do a backgrounder for the traveling press? I'm sure they're pretty angry about missing the photo op with the president." Which was how Marral found himself facing the hostile press.

"Let me begin by saying how sorry we are about the screw-up with the venue for the meeting with the president. I know you're angry and I don't blame you. We were given the wrong information, and you're the ones who suffered. The secretary feels badly about it too, so he asked me to tell you a little about his dinner with the foreign minister.

"Basically, they hit it off very well. Talked about the demonstrations in Lagos, which are of course a great concern to both our countries. The FM brought up the floods in China. You know that the secretary is very concerned about environmental devastation, so they discussed the consequences of overdevelopment in riparian regions. Finally, it turns out that the Ranistanis make a cheese which the secretary just loves! So really, this was a good event, a great start to what will surely be one of the secretary's most important bilateral working relationships."

The questions were predictable, about the oil agreement, about human rights problems in Ranistan. Marral and the spokesman slid through them with non-answers, fudging and obfuscating.

"So tomorrow," said Marral, getting up to leave, "there's just the breakfast with the intellectuals, with a photo op but no questions or statements, and then you're off. I understand there will be no photos at the airport." He breezed out, leaving the spokesman to handle complaints that the secretary wasn't going to make a single on-camera remark during the entire trip.

The breakfast was the brainchild of the USIS folks, of course, tea and coffee and dry Danish with a dozen or so "thinkers." Marral didn't know or care what they thought, but he supposed it was vaguely anti-American in a leftist way.

A table was set in the library. When Marral arrived the photo pool was already setting up, aiming at the door through which he had entered.

F O C U S

The questions were predictable: the oil agreement, human rights problems in Ranistan. Marral and the spokesman slid through them with non-answers, fudging and obfuscating.

"Where is the secretary supposed to sit?" he asked the site officer.

"At the head, nearest the doors. The idea is the guests arrive first, get seated, and then he comes in that door and sits down. Breakfast will be served as they chat."

"No it won't," countered Marral, eying the cameras. "Have the staff set up for a buffet. Put everything on those two corner tables, drinks on one and eggs and whatever on the other. Have the guests sit when they come in. When the secretary arrives, everyone goes up and gets a plate of food. We're aiming for an informal, relaxed discussion. No need to have waiters hovering around." Plus, he thought, we can get Robinson into the middle of the crowd around the food, and they'll have their backs to the cameras.

When the motorcade arrived, Marral grabbed Robinson. "As soon as you go in, say something about how hungry you are and then turn to the side. Keep your back to the camera, and take your time getting your coffee. We'll get rid of the press before you sit down."

Robinson, who was beginning to emulate the real secretary's self-important strut, bounded into the room and called, "Boy, do I need a cup of coffee." He wheeled to the right and grabbed the pot and started pouring. The guests, sycophants all, pushed up behind him, effectively screening all but the top of Robinson's head from the clicking cameras. Marral heard Robinson offering to pour coffee for the others. A perfect stall.

Marral sweated through 15 seconds and dozens of flashbulbs, then motioned to the information officer to get the nabobs out. The guests sat down, and Marral grabbed a cup of coffee for himself. Almost home, he thought. There would be no incriminating photos from this event.

From breakfast to the motorcade and on to the airport. Marral dared to relax for the first time in 12 hours. They were going to pull it off. Only the official Ranistani press at the airport, just like the arrival. Not even the foreign minister, just a protocol official.

At the bottom of the gangway stairs there was a flurry of handshakes. Then the expected deputy assistant to the foreign minister brought out a huge box and, with a grin, thrust it toward Robinson. "A special present from the foreign minister. Enjoy!" he said.

Robinson lifted the top of the box. Inside was a 12-inch wheel of Ranistani cheese. Even Marral was momentarily speechless, and in that moment, a voice wavered down from the airplane hatch. "Are we there yet?"

Marral squinted up. A shaky figure, unshaven and without a necktie, was trying to navigate the gangway stairs. The secretary of State, awake, unsteady, but walking and talking, was finally ready to begin his official visit to Ranistan.

Marral and Robinson exchanged panicked glances. Neither one of them could get up the stairs before Packard opened his mouth again.

Marral saw movement at the periphery of his vision, something in the air, and Packard was suddenly sitting on the steps, gasping for breath.

Robinson grinned. "Don't worry, folks. That's just my security agent. He'll check that cheese for bombs before I dig into it. Good throw, huh? I'll bet you didn't know I was backup quarterback for the Cornhuskers before I got into politics."

Robinson waved, turned, and headed up the stairs with Marral right behind him. They pulled Packard to his feet and pushed him inside.

The engines were starting. "Jeremy, your country thanks you." Marral shook Robinson's hand. "Give him back his tie and he won't be any wiser. Everyone will tell him he did just fine and he'll believe it."

Marral made it down the stairs as the plane started moving. He shook a few more hands and then strode across the tarmac toward his car. Above the sound of the engines he thought he could hear, faintly, "Ambassador Marral, Ambassador Marral, ambassador, ambassador." He intended to go straight home and have a swig of cognac. With, perhaps, a bit of cheese. ■



FROM COLONY TO NATION

REVIEWING AMERICA'S ROLE IN INDIA'S BIRTH,
ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INDEPENDENCE

By ROBERT K. OLSON

For me, India's 50th anniversary of independence on Aug. 15 conjures vivid images of the end of the 200-year British Raj, a glittering event the British tried to swath in victory, not loss. But the end of the Raj also brings to mind the bloody birth of the independent state of India, as well as Pakistan, amid year-long massacres that left a half million dead and 15 million uprooted, as Muslims fled to Pakistan and Hindus fled to India. It was at once a painful and glorious event that seared itself into the memory and imagination of the world.

Suddenly, in the game of diplomatic musical chairs, the United Kingdom was out and the United States was in. India and Pakistan became members of the Commonwealth of British Nations, but for the first time these states were independent players on the world stage. They established separate relationships with the United States, the most powerful military and dynamic economic force of the post-war world, armed with a global mission announced by President Harry Truman in March 1947 as the

Truman Doctrine, which promised American assistance to nations threatened by communists.

Henry Grady, the first American ambassador to independent India, arrived in New Delhi in May 1947, armed with a strong mandate for carrying the Truman Doctrine to India. His mission was to align India against the communist world, to help develop the Indian economy, and, of course, to promote American business and political interests. As the new boy on the block, he had to be very careful neither to defer to the British nor pressure the Indians.

Grady's appearance on the Indian scene may have been a diplomatic first, but it was just the latest development in the strained British-American relationship over India, a relationship that had become even more dicey during World War II. As the "Jewel in the Crown" of the British Empire, India had been all but off-limits to the United States before the war. Not that America was indifferent to Indian affairs; far from it. Washington maintained consulates in major cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, and watched Indian affairs closely.

India fascinated with its rich tapestry of religion, history and culture. On the one hand, Americans sympathized with and admired Mohandas Gandhi, Indian poet Rabindranath Tagor and Jawaharlal Nehru, leaders of the struggle for Indian independence. On the other

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hand, they were enthralled by the world of Rudyard Kipling, the romance of British India and tales of derring-do on the northwest frontier. Rubber and tin from Burma, jute, Indian textiles and handicrafts were U.S. import staples. Still, U.S. exports to India before the war only amounted to 1 percent of total U.S. exports and 6 percent of Indian imports.

Actually, Americans' principal concern toward India and Asia had always been self-determination of the Asian peoples. Americans were long since resentful of European domination of the Afro-Asian world and wanted the opportunity for equal political and economic influence. Nevertheless, until the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the United States was no more than an interested bystander on the Indian scene.

World War II changed everything. Japan's military drive through Southeast Asia all the way to the Indian frontier, culminated in the loss of Singapore and the Philippines and shattered Western power. For the United States, it raised the stakes in India from distant interest to an immediate national security threat. The questions of Indian independence and British relations with the East were brought into high relief. Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle, author Christopher Thorn wrote in *Allies of a Kind*, expressed the feeling shared by Congress and Americans themselves: "Why should India defend a freedom she hasn't got?" According to Thorn, Secretary of State Sumner Welles warned President Franklin Roosevelt, that India was "a question of vital concern to our own military and naval interests in the Far East." Other officials were wary of the United States becoming too closely identified with the British position in that part of the world.

Americans felt that the time had come, therefore, to urge Britain toward Indian independence. The lives of U.S. servicemen were now at stake. By 1942 India, as a U.S. ally, was receiving both industrial and military aid from America under the lend-lease program. Archibald Wavell, commander-in-chief of the British forces in Southeast Asia, appealed directly to the United States for planes to help defend against an invasion. America was suddenly so deeply involved that it felt entitled to a voice in Indian affairs, British Empire or no British Empire.

The new activist policy started at the very top at the White House. President Roosevelt, a long-time critic of European colonialism, had already unsuccessfully pressed Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill to include India in the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter (August 1941), which guaranteed self-determination for all nations. There was no equivocation by Churchill: India was off-limits. But, with the Japanese advancing under the slogan of "Asia for the Asians," the United States had little choice but to offer the colonized peoples the same promise of self-determination. In 1942 Roosevelt told writer Edgar Snow, "It almost seems that the [Japanese] were a necessary evil in order to break down the old colonial system."

The French and British did not agree, which led to clashes among the Allies as bitter as anything between them and the Axis powers. According to the British, the United States was merely trying to replace the Pax Britannica with a new Pax Americana.

These suspicions were largely confirmed by statements from magazine magnate Henry Luce, who predicted that American-led world leadership would supplant the old European order and from GOP presidential candidate Wendell Wilkie, who made similar claims in his best-seller, *One World*.

Thus, the president, his Cabinet, various military and diplomatic leaders, Congress and the American people, all agreed that U.S. policy on India was to promote independence immediately after, if not during, the war. The British responded to this threat and other demands by Indian nationalists by holding 20,000 members of the Indian Congress Party under house arrest for the war's duration.

In early 1942, President Roosevelt sent a personal representative, former assistant secretary of War, Col. Louis Johnson, to India just at the time of the ill-fated (some charged bogus) Cripps mission. British Labour leader Sir Stafford Cripps was sent to India to work out an agreement with the Indian National Congress in regard to Indian independence. Johnson, who was virulently anti-colonial and anti-British, made common cause with Cripps in trying to persuade the Indians to accept

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an offer of post-war independence in exchange for war-time cooperation.

Johnson reported back to Roosevelt that Indians loved Americans citing British incompetence and duplicity, and the need for a new American policy. Henry Grady, then the future American ambassador to India, clashed with Johnson during his 1942 trip to India and on his return reported to Roosevelt that Johnson was "a big bull in the china shop." It was about this time that Churchill uttered his famous comment that he "had not become the king's first minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire." Churchill also correctly predicted a blood bath in India when the British left.

These differences were exacerbated by differences over the running of the war. The U.S. priority was supporting China through an airlift over "the hump" from bases in Assam, stopping the Japanese at Burma, and defeating Japan militarily. However, British Supreme Commander Lord Louis Mountbatten's strategy was to reoccupy the colonial countries of Southeast Asia after Japan was defeated by the United States and China, according to John Patton Davies, an FSO and political adviser to Gen. Joseph Stilwell, commander of the U.S. forces in China, India and Burma.

Roosevelt eventually replaced Johnson at the end of the year by the seemingly more suitable career diplomat, William Phillips, a scion of the East Coast establishment, with a distinguished career and the reputation of being more British than the British. British Viceroy Lord Linlithgow was delighted; Phillips would surely understand and sympathize with Britain's wartime imperial

problems. But Phillips was no patsy. On the contrary, he was, much to Linlithgow's dismay, as ardently anticolonial and critical of the British as Johnson had been.

Phillips wrote to Roosevelt, "It is hard to discover any pronounced war spirit [in India and we] cannot count on more than token assistance from the British." He recommended that the United States try "to make the Indians feel that America is with them and in a position to go beyond mere public assurances of friendship." Phillips was himself recalled after four months, never to return.

The high water mark of Roosevelt's anticolonial campaign came at the November 1943 Teheran Conference, where he made colonialism, especially by the French in Indochina, a main topic of conversation with Stalin. After that he seemed to back off in favor of maintaining British-American solidarity. Nevertheless, the conflict was there and surfaced in a multitude of ways great and small during the war and after, particularly in negotiating the trusteeship provisions of the U.N. Charter.

Paralleling the American political commitment to self-determination was the American drive for access to the protected Indian market. Indeed, much of the drive behind U.S. anticolonialism derived from long-standing resentment against European mercantilism that put America at competitive disadvantage throughout most of Africa and Asia. Henry Luce, for example, challenged the United States to prove that free economic enterprise could create a "vital international economy."

The U.S.-British Mutual Aid Agreement, signed in 1942, committed Britain to abandon imperial preference after the war. Many on

both sides foresaw an emerging era of American imperialism. According to *Allies of a Kind*, State Department Economic Adviser Herbert Feis warned the Dutch foreign minister that never again would "the great American nation allow the British and Dutch to dictate the price at which it buys its tin and rubber."

In 1944, *Amerasia* magazine called India America's "new frontier." By the end of the war, U.S. exports to India had increased from 1 percent to 5 percent of total exports. Interestingly, the British-American rivalry in India continued after independence on the commercial level, as Grady discovered. And, much to his surprise and chagrin, the Indians themselves, following the British socialist tradition, seemed to fear American "dollar imperialism" and, incredibly, to trust the Soviets more than the Americans.

In the end, it was not American policy at all, but British politics that brought independence to India. In a stunning reversal, the British dumped Churchill and the Conservative Party in July 1945 in favor of the pro-Indian independence Labour Party with anti-colonial MP and Labour Party leader Clement Attlee as the new prime minister. In the words of Robin Edmonds, former British Foreign Office official and author of *Setting The Mold*, "The fact that the U.S. had long supported Indian independence is largely irrelevant; the British transferred power to the subcontinent in 1947 for other reasons."

In the complex matrix of interests and events, the U.S.-British rivalry in India may be seen as part of the wider mid-century struggle for the mastery of East and Southeast Asia.

Japan had tried and failed to exert its dominance over the area. In the wake of war, the Netherlands lost all of its colonial possessions and France lingered only for a few more tragic years in Vietnam. Britain, though it retained possession of Hong Kong, Bermuda and other colonial outposts, was finished as a colonial power. The big winners were the United States and the new countries of Asia, which won their independence.

Henceforth, all should have been smooth sailing except for the Cold War, which prolonged the struggle for another 50 years. By 1950, the Cold War had spread from Europe, through the southern arc of Asia to Korea, where the United States and its Allies found themselves once again at war.

The specter of communism suddenly overwhelmed and distorted the politics of the post-war era everywhere, including India. The United States, with its Truman Doctrine, had its hands full everywhere, it seemed, in places that would soon become known, collectively, as the Third World, as the witting or unwitting guardian of Western interests and the liberal international system, and ironically, as heir to the empire.

Nevertheless, the India forged a half century ago developed beyond the wildest dreams of the leaders of Indian independence. In spite of Grady's disappointments as U.S. ambassador under independence, India today is a vibrant democracy, industrial giant, South Asia's political center of gravity, self-sufficient agricultural society, and home to a middle class as large as the total population of the United States. On India's 50th anniversary, it is appropriate to remember the role of U.S. diplomacy in the country's evolution from colony to independent nation. ■

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FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

CHAOS IN CAIRO

FS SPOUSE REMEMBERS 1967 EVACUATION OF EMBASSY DEPENDENTS BEFORE 6-DAY WAR

BY MARIA BAUER

Anyone who has lived in Egypt realizes that political enmities never interfere with personal relationships. In spite of serious conflicts in the U.S.-Egyptian relationship in the year preceding the 1967 war, the Egyptian people continued to show great interest in all aspects of American life: The American library was crowded, American films and theater performances always sold out, and friendships between Americans and Egyptians remained cordial.

President Gamal Abdel Nasser's increasingly vituperative, anti-American oratory in no way diminished the government's delight at the growing number of Americans flooding into Egypt to observe the crisis. Senators, reporters and a 30-member congressional "fact-finding" delegation arrived in Cairo that spring on the eve of the Six-Day War, expecting and receiving full VIP treatment.

What was to become an international crisis had been heating up in Egypt since January, fueled by the Soviets and by anti-Americanism in the Egyptian media. By May, the Soviets had the Egyptians — Nasser, in particular — believing that the Israelis were massing troops at the Syrian bor-

Maria Bauer is a freelance writer and the spouse of retired FSO Robert Bauer, who served in New Delhi, Cairo, Paris and Teheran. She is also the author of Beyond the Chestnut Trees, a memoir.

der in preparation for a war backed by their American allies.

Despite the crisis, Egyptians continued to visit the United States. The most important part of the State Department's Educational and Exchange Program, known as the Visitor's Program, was the "Leader Grant," which provided travel funds for potential leaders to visit the United States. In the fall of 1966, the grantee was Anwar El Sadat, president of the Egyptian National Assembly, then a position more ceremonial than influential.

After saying goodbye to Sadat at the airport, my husband, Robert Bauer, the embassy's public affairs officer, and I attended a reception at the British embassy. We were dismayed when we heard British Deputy Chief of Mission John Maitland, a renowned Arabist, say to U.S. Ambassador Lucius D. Battle: "Why did you pick Sadat, of all people, to go to the States? You should know as well as we do that this man will never amount to anything."

In March 1967, the popular Ambassador Battle was called back to Washington to become assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, and the incoming ambassador, Richard Nolte, a political appointee with a background in Middle East policy, arrived in May. To the Egyptians this was another slap in the face; they believed they deserved a more senior career diplomat or more influential political appointee.

It is often through trivialities that one can detect a change of atmosphere. In May, we at the American embassy noticed that attitudes towards Americans had shifted. The car watchers and beggars who always crowded the entrance of embassies during receptions, greeted the arriving guests by enthusiastic shouts of "Viva!" followed by the name of whichever country was represented on the diplomatic license plate of the incoming car. But suddenly there was silence when the Americans arrived at receptions, the first sign that anti-American propaganda had reached the grass-roots level.

From then on events developed with frightening speed. On May 14, traffic on the corniche, the main roadway connecting Cairo's outskirts with its center, was unusual. An uninterrupted column of military vehicles lumbered toward town: armored cars, tanks and buses filled with armed soldiers. My husband's Egyptian assistant arrived at work one morning complaining of lack of sleep, because, he said, in the middle of the night, his brother and three cousins — all reserve military officers — had come to his house to say goodbye. There was, however, no official government announcement.

A few days later President Nasser asked the U.N. secretary general, U Thant, to withdraw the U.N. peacekeeping force from its position in the Sinai, where it had been guarding the border between Egypt and Israel since the 1956 war. To everyone's surprise, probably also Nasser's — whose previous demands had been seen as bluffs — U Thant promptly complied. Then Nasser ordered the closing of the Gulf of Aqaba, which was controlled by the Egyptians, thus closing a major Israeli port. The Israelis had made clear this would be viewed as provocation for war.

The situation in Cairo worsened daily. Loudspeakers in the streets blasted anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans; large banners were hung with sentiments such as "Death to Israel" and "Death to America." The following Thursday, the ambassador, along with the embassy's country team, decided to evacuate 250 American embassy dependents to Athens over the weekend. Officially this was to be a temporary evacuation until the crisis subsided, but the embassy was convinced that war was imminent and that Egyptian emotions could be whipped up to such hatred that no American would be safe.

I had 24 hours to wind up the last four years of my life. I shall always remember the bewildered expression in my 13-year-old son's eyes when I told him that he would not return to school the next day — or ever.

In Athens, a group of American army wives greeted us and ushered us into buses. When ours lurched forward, a lady addressed us as though speaking to children, told us we were being taken to hotels in the suburb of Kifissia and offered each of us a rose. Suddenly I was aware of the ludicrousness of our situation: We were in limbo, like children, without responsibilities or control over our lives.

We stayed glued to the radio trying to determine what was happening in Egypt. One day we were elated to hear that Egyptian Prime Minister Zakaria Mohadin was traveling to the United States for talks on defusing the crisis, but the next morning, June 5, the third Arab-Israeli war broke out.

The following day the Egyptian government charged that American and British planes had supported the Israeli attack, and severed diplomatic relations with the United States. On June 11 my husband, having survived a harrowing evacuation of his own, arrived on a chartered Greek boat along with other U.S. embassy employees.

It was a long, hot summer in Athens while we waited for Washington to decide where we would go from there. To me this was more than the loss of yet another home. All the good will we had so carefully nurtured throughout the years had been ruined overnight. All that remained for us was a feeling of waste, of utter senselessness.

In those days, none of us could have foreseen that U.S.-Egyptian relations would be reestablished only seven years later and that all U.S. programs would be rebuilt. Nor could we have foreseen that only 10 years after the debacle, Gen. Ezer Weizman, whose air force decided the war on its first day and who is now Israel's president, would present Nasser's successor with a clock bearing the inscription: "To Anwar El Sadat, the leader who moved the clock forward." ■

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INTEGRATING ACDA

AS FIRST OF 3 AGENCIES TO GO UNDER KNIFE,
ARMS CONTROL UNIT SHOULD RETAIN LEGAL ADVISER

BY WILLIAM SETH SHEPARD

Nuclear nonproliferation has been named by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as a top priority in her foreign policy agenda, so she no doubt has a large stake in the smooth integration of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency into the State Department.

ACDA, which is expected to be fully absorbed by State by fall of 1998, will be the first of the three foreign affairs agencies to be reorganized under the White House's April 18 plan. Reorganization of the U.S. Agency for International Development and absorption of the U.S. Information Agency into State will follow soon thereafter, and may well benefit from some of the precedent-setting issues raised by the experience with ACDA. A blueprint for all three agencies is due this month, with White House approval expected by Labor Day and full implementation by September 1998.

The ACDA director will be double-hatted as the new under secretary for arms control and interna-

tional security. With the full integration of ACDA and State's Political-Military Bureau, the new under secretary will become senior adviser to the president and secretary of State on arms control, nonproliferation and disarmament issues, and will attend National Security Council meetings.

For good and sufficient reasons involving national security, State's absorption of ACDA should preserve policy differences between the two agencies, retain ACDA's expertise, and maintain State's primacy. It should be apparent that arms control issues, and their lore and history, are a professional specialty. How to resolve policy differences, in fact, is the critical issue being debated by the teams and core groups now studying the reorganization. The teams are considering how to fold into State ACDA's four bureaus — Multilateral Affairs, Intelligence, Strategic and Eurasian Affairs, and Non-Proliferation and Regional Arms Control.

The two most controversial issues for ACDA are whether the under secretary will retain the authority to differ with the secretary of State on national security issues, and which office will offer legal advice on arms control.

Should the secretary of State adviser retain the authority, in the interest of national security, to explain as forcefully as possible a differing point of view from the secretary of State? The most controversial and substantive area is that of verification and compliance, which ACDA officials prefer to keep as an indepen-

William S. Shepard is a retired FSO who, after retirement, served as director of Congressional Affairs at ACDA from 1987-1990. In the Foreign Service, he served in Singapore, Saigon, Athens, Budapest and Bordeaux, France.

dent, integral office, but State representatives want to fold into one of the modified new bureaus created under reorganization.

I am not a neutral observer of this issue. When I was at ACDA in 1988 and was presenting the landmark INF Treaty before the Senate, the Soviet Union appeared to be backtracking on several key verification issues. Sensing that bipartisan conservative Senate concern on these issues could unravel the treaty, I approached State Department officials, who played down the threat. I was, therefore, obliged to contact the ACDA director, who was attending a summit meeting in Geneva with the Soviet Union with Secretary of State George Shultz. When the American delegation returned several days later, Shultz, having secured assurances that certain verification issues would be strictly implemented, testified in open session. With resistance to the INF Treaty now dissolved, it passed by a wide margin in a landmark vote. Where would the United States be now if those concerns had not been expressed?

The contrary argument, that the Soviets were beset with problems of their own, and that in the interests of the bilateral relationship the United States should yield around the edges on verification problems, will be heard again, and in new contexts. But can anyone now say that the national security would have been well-served without the INF Treaty, or the landmark arms control events that followed it? There must be an integral capacity for verification and compliance, which should not be subordinated within a new bureau. The national security can benefit from honest, open disagreement.

The second contentious issue facing the reorganization panels concerns legal advice to the new under secretary, and the relationship of what is the current General Counsel's Office in ACDA to the Office of the Legal Adviser at State. The reorganization panel had rejected the initial ACDA request to preserve the General Counsel's Office as separate and distinct in its new State setting. That is not, after all, the point of reorganization. But the question remains of structure and function, within the Office of the Legal Adviser.

It's difficult to believe the generalist lawyer would be on top of arms control issues without many years of study, precedent and, perhaps, participation as a member or adviser to an arms control negotiating team. One way to assure high-level, competent legal advice would be to give the ACDA general counsel the rank of a deputy legal advisor, say for nonproliferation and disarmament, with the status and staff that the title implies.

What if there is a disagreement between the under secretary and the secretary on an arms control issue?

Should the deputy legal adviser be able to advise the under secretary accordingly? Without verification and compliance expertise, the under secretary would be cut off from the facts necessary to present a convincing point of view. Without legal expertise, the under secretary would be unable to present compelling issues of precedent and international law. Both capabilities are necessary, so the new deputy legal adviser should have the formally acknowledged right to give appropriate legal advice in these circumstances.

The reorganization plan announced last spring, designed to streamline the policymaking process, was spearheaded by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) during a two-year crusade. Until President Clinton agreed to the reorganization, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee simply held up approval of the Chemical Weapons Convention, new ambassadorial appointments and treaties. Reorganization's timing, and its effects, will differ with each agency.

USAID will remain a separate agency, with a partial integration of functions over a two-year period. Initially, USAID will be placed under the direct authority of the secretary of State, while remaining a distinct agency with a separate appropriation. During the partial integration, a number of USAID's administrative functions will be integrated with those of State. By contrast, USIA will be fully integrated with State over the same period with the initial integration of its legislative and public affairs staffs.

The director of USIA will be double-hatted as the new under secretary for public diplomacy, and a new bureau eventually will be created for cultural and exchange issues. During the second year, the integration process will consider USIA's overseas presence, although the editorial integrity of Voice of America and the other broadcast agencies is expected to be maintained.

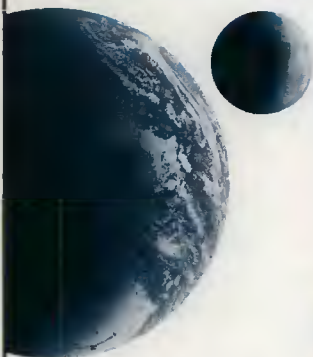
Incidentally, the initial reorganization teams missed an opportunity to avoid duplication by failing to consider State's regional bureaus in the reorganization. They were therefore subject to the procedural objection that having excluded the regional bureaus from the reorganization process, they could not fairly mandate cuts in the regional bureaus, despite any duplication of efforts. That argument prevailed.

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A strong arms control policy presence will certainly be necessary. But how is it to be implemented? What is the current arms control policy agenda, and what resources are available to carry out these responsibilities?

President Clinton's second term features a sizable component of arms control measures. The landmark Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty that he signed at the United Nations last Sept. 24, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, passed through the Senate after semiprivate negotiation between the White House and the legislative branch, are just two well-known examples of important commitments whose monitoring must be constant.

Other important measures are being negotiated with Russia, including third-party arms sales notifications, a variety of compliance issues related to existing arms control agreements, and how theater antimissile defenses will be dealt with in the Antiballistic Missile Treaty. Also to be watched is whether the Duma will approve START II, which further reduces strategic nuclear missiles to an agreed ceiling of 3,500 per signatory, including nuclear bombs, which had not been included in the numerical limitations of START I.

That does not exhaust the list. Should the International Atomic Energy Agency and its compliance mandate be strengthened? The U.S. agreement with North Korea, which would transform its nuclear energy capacity to reduce its ability to produce weapons-grade plutonium, needs unambiguous funding. And other matters such as notification of sales to third parties, and the implementation of existing agreements, also need to be hammered out with Russia. Nonproliferation issues remain a major national security concern.

Another major arms control issue is the direct product of previous successes. That is the control of nuclear

material that comes from the disassembled or destroyed weapons themselves, as mandated by current agreements. The United States must somehow prevent smuggling of this material to rogue governments, or to terrorist groups. ACDA is now working with the Russian government to strengthen its controls over such material, and the Nunn-Lugar program is aiding Russian officials to dismantle and destroy their own weapons. The program should be expanded beyond Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan to other states that were constituent parts of the former Soviet Union.

Nunn-Lugar, of course, concerns existing weaponry and the disposal of special nuclear material that had been used for that purpose. But the production of the nuclear material that goes into nuclear weapons is a serious proliferation problem, whether it is bought from other governments or manufactured. If terrorists are precluded from buying somebody else's special nuclear material ready made, then the United States must also be vigilant in detecting homemade proliferation by rogue nations or terrorists.

ACDA has undergone precisely the same budget-cutting process as the State Department over the past decade, but it has proceeded from a far lower base, even becoming something of a caretaker agency, forced to choose between equally compelling national security interests to the neglect of others.

ACDA's grand total of \$41.5 million for fiscal 1997 (an amount less than "other" in the enumeration of the purposes of the international affairs budget) is just one-quarter of 1 percent of that 150 budget, which is itself just 1.5 percent of the federal budget. The same \$41.5 million would be appropriated, should Senate and House conferees split the difference for the fiscal 1998 alloca-

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tion between the \$44 million offered by the House and the \$39 million approved by the Senate.

If the \$41.5 million is again appropriated, it would, of course, be a decrease in net terms, given normal annual cost and salary increases, of at least 3 percent. However, that would amount to a net decrease, in constant dollars, of 20 percent over the five-year budget average of the agency during the first five fiscal years of the decade.

To use a different standard of comparison, ACDA's entire budget roughly equals the current budget of Montgomery County, Md., for a week and a half. The United States should be able to afford at least that sum for arms control expertise vital to the Nation's security.

Reorganization is not going to be easy. It will certainly not satisfy

those who believe that the point of reorganization is either to stifle unruly contrary policy opinions, or lay hands on the budget resources of other agencies.

Other issues involved in reorganization are falling into place. Duplication of effort can be avoided. Administrative offices can be combined. Legislative affairs and public affairs functions can be consolidated. Most of the horrors anticipated by the process will simply not happen.

As a major plus, the suspicions now felt mutually by the professionals of ACDA and State will tend to disappear as each understands more clearly the real national-security problems addressed by the other.

And as one ironic result, the State Department may find itself presenting a case for large increases in the arms control portion of its budget, after it more clearly understands ACDA's traditional functions.

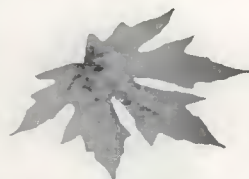
How the ACDA and State Department reorganization is handled will set in great measure the benchmark for the longer reorganizations affecting State, USIA and to a lesser extent, USAID. Given the greater substantive detail with which the White House's April announcement treated the ACDA reorganization, however, it is clear the White House will carefully monitor the role and tools of its senior arms control adviser.

ACDA's ability to fulfill its responsibilities in the nonproliferation area, and to assist in the verification and monitoring of existing arms control agreements, are essential to America's national security. Differences of opinion are always to be expected; if the current reorganization proceeds in a manner that allows their positive expression, the national interest will be well served. ■



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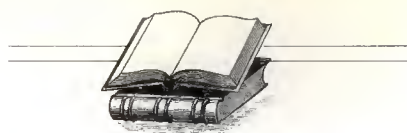
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BOOKS

A DISPATCH TROVE FROM THE FIELD

Emperor Dead and Other Historic Diplomatic Dispatches

Peter D. Eicher, Ed., Congressional Quarterly, 1996, hardcover, \$80, 471 pages.

BY EDWARD L. KILLHAM

This meaty survey of diplomatic reporting from the birth of the republic to 1964 takes its succinct title from the shortest diplomatic dispatch ever drafted. Peter D. Eicher, an FSO at the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, spent a year compiling the book as an Una Chapman Foundation fellow. The volume, published in association with DACOR and the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, is a valuable history of the modern world through the penned dispatches of hundreds of American diplomats.

"Emperor Dead," cabled John W. Foster, the U.S. minister to Russia, on March 13, 1881. Foster's equivalent of a modern "flash" message was preceded by a somewhat longer telegram informing State that Emperor Alexander II had been assassinated in a bombing attack. In a model example of follow-up reporting, the minister cabled the next day that the Tsarevich, his son, had ascended the throne as Alexander III, and added a detailed account of the assassination.

Memorable dispatches from the

early days of the republic include messages from Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the latter of whom reports on the storming of the Bastille in 1789. Also included are John Quincy Adams's report from St. Petersburg on Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, as well as dispatches from American literary figures serving in diplomatic posts, such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving, James Russell Lowell and Bret Harte. Some dispatches read as though they could have been written today, with references to "unrest in the Balkans" and "strife in Africa."

Familiar are comments that Washington was too preoccupied with domestic developments to pay much attention to even the most insightful reports. A prime example is Joseph Grew's Tokyo telegram of Jan. 27, 1941, which reported on indications that the Japanese planned a surprise mass attack on Pearl Harbor. This message was sent almost a year before the actual attack.

Eicher's collection tracks the development of American foreign policy through the Civil War and after, as well as the emergence of the United States as a world power in the 20th century.

It ends with a variety of dispatches reflecting high and low points of the Cold War. For this period, especially, one often longs for a peek at the personalities of those whose words shaped the messages. The volume's last dispatches are several 1963-1964 cables from the U.S. embassy in Vietnam, including three from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge,

summarizing U.S. official involvement in the coup in which Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown.

Regrettably, the book ends without including more recent dispatches. The editor argues persuasively, however, that continued classification of later messages made it impossible to do full justice to the events of the past three decades, including only later declassified dispatches might distort the collection's overall balance.

Edward L. Killham, a retired FSO, served in London, Moscow, Brussels, Copenhagen and on the NATO International Staff, as well as on various U.S. delegations.

UNDER DEEP COVER WITH A CIA SPOOK

A Spy for All Seasons: My Life in the CIA

Duane R. Clarridge with Digby Diehl, Scribner, 1997, hardcover, \$27.50, 430 pages.

BY JACK R. BINNS

A Spy for All Seasons provides an insightful glimpse of the attitudes of CIA agents operating under cover at U.S. embassies around the world. In this account of his life in the clandestine service, Dewey Clarridge particularly focuses on his belief that the CIA should operate outside the law.

Claridge's rise within the service, if not meteoric, was rapid; his highest position was as director for Latin American operations. There is no doubt that he accomplished a great deal, some of which was clearly good, some of which was clearly problematic. He was considered a good recruiter and credited himself with successful counterterrorism efforts, but perhaps his largest error was as the mastermind behind the *contras* affair, a fiasco that severely damaged the credibility of the Reagan administration.

Indeed, it is in chronicling this covert U.S. war against Nicaragua that Claridge's contempt for the law — both domestic and international — is clear. Claridge makes the startling suggestion that "loyalty up and loyalty down" in the clandestine service should take precedence over law. The author criticizes former CIA Director William Webster because "his training as a lawyer and as a judge was that you didn't do illegal things. He could never accept that this is exactly what the CIA does when it operates abroad."

As a personal account based almost solely on Claridge's sometimes mistaken recall of events, the value of this memoir as historical reference is suspect. Also, the book is not sourced and contains no bibliography. His details about Nicaragua, including descriptions about agency ethos during the Reagan administration, are often at odds with others' accounts, including former Secretary of State George Shultz's *Turmoil and Triumph*.

In addition, Claridge makes exaggerated claims of internal support for the *contra* cause and of the *contras'* paramilitary successes, sticking tenaciously to the spurious claim that the administration's aim was to force the Sandinistas to the bargaining table, rather than to overthrow them. Shultz, who exploded that pretense in his book, supports his account with specifics, such

as the administration's rejection of Assistant Secretary Thomas O. Enders's 1981 framework agreement with the Sandinistas. According to Shultz, that tentative accord earned Enders the enmity of administration hard-liners and contributed to his eventual removal. While Shultz indicates that Enders was forced out by those who opposed any diplomatic approach to the Sandinistas, Claridge says Enders resigned. Whom should be believed?

Jack R. Binns is a retired FSO in Tucson, Ariz. He served in Latin America and Europe, and is now writing a book about Honduras, where he served as ambassador from 1980-1981.

DETAILING KOREA'S MAGIC & MYSTERY

Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History

Bruce Cumings, W.W.Norton, 1997, hardcover, \$35.00, 527 pages.

BY CAROL SPARHAWK

The foreign ministers of North Korea and South Korea have recently shaken hands in New York for the first time in 50 years, but events in the two countries are occurring so rapidly that books become outdated quickly. However, Bruce Cumings' most recent book, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, is an excellent starting point for those interested in sorting out the history. In addition to a broad survey of Korean history, this work offers a flavor of recent developments and modern life in both Koreas.

A scholar and former Peace Corps volunteer to Korea, Cumings is now director of the Center for International and Comparative Studies at Northwestern University. Cumings'

modern history is the only one to include material on aspects of Korean background often ignored by other Korean specialists, such as ancient history, modern Korean history, Koreans in America, the Korean War and the rapid industrialization and democracy in South Korea. In 40 years, South Korea has progressed from a dictatorship guilty of the most flagrant human rights violations to a popular democracy — at the price of two military coups and several popular rebellions. Few nations have sustained such radical change in so short a time.

In South Korea, the family continues to be an important building block in society. The two kinds of oligarchies common to modern Korean life, for example, began as family enterprises: small businesses and the *chaebol* — financial cliques similar to Japanese *zaibatsu* — that has built the steel, shipping and transport infrastructure of modern South Korea. Each family member assumes a role and works with legendary *chongshin* — diligent concentration — for the ultimate enrichment of the family unit. Cumings also describes Korean society's built-in hierarchies and inequalities.

A vivid storyteller, Cumings uses colorful legends that suggest the rich character of the Korean people. Tracing the development of the Silla, Koguryo and Paekche kingdoms, Cumings examines Japan's involvement in Korea, and is one of the few writers to note that Japanese invasions also contributed to Korea's culture.

The two chapters, "America's Koreans" and "Korea's Place in the World," make the book worth its price. With lively histories of individuals, he penetrates the cultural experience of Koreans making a life in America. ■

Carol Sparhawk, a former FSO who served in Seoul, Moscow and Israel, is an instructor at the Foreign Service Institute.

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D&M Auto Parts/23
D.B. Volvo/AFSA NEWS 6
Ford/BRC 18/19
General Motors/2
Martens Volvo/8
Stateside AutoSupply/22

Exports

Embassy Exports/23

Finance

MCG Financial/51
State Dept. Federal
Credit Union/4

Housing

Avalon at Ballston/IFC
Chase at Bethesda/6
Columbia Plaza Apts/45
Crystal Quarters/44
Executive Club Suites/4
Executive Housing/11
Executive Lodging/50
Exclusive Interim/38
FARA/8
George Washington
University Inn/46
Oakwood/16
The Remington/14
The Virginian Suites/9

Insurance

Clements/1
Hirshorn/IBC
UNIRISC/6

International Shipping

Laurel Van Lines/44

Miscellaneous

Advertising & Subscriptions/39
Classifieds/AFSA NEWS 7-8
Cort Furniture/17
Foreign Service Club
Catering/45

Real Estate & Property Management

Avery Hess/51
Coldwell Banker/49
J.P. Properties/50
J.P. Properties/51
McGrath Real Estate/49
MGM Inc. Realtors/50
No. Virginia Homes/49
Professional Prop. Mgmt./9
Property Specialist/49
Remax Central/AFSA NEWS 6
Stuart & Maury/50

Schools

Admiral Farragut Academy/22



POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

In St. Petersburg, A Message for Masha

BY LOUISE BELANGER

We saw her only once, but every time we think of St. Petersburg, we remember Masha. When we first glimpsed her, she was standing on a sidewalk about 400 feet from Kresty Prison, waving furiously and throwing kisses to her lover behind the prison walls. Her dark beauty was striking: In her early 20s, she was heavily made up and stylishly dressed in a short, tight miniskirt.

Since arriving in Moscow in 1995, my husband, Joe Hook, a contractor for the U.S. Agency for International Development, and I have twice visited St. Petersburg, the jewel of Russia. After touring all the museums the city had to offer, we searched our guidebook for places that would allow us to meet real Russians. Our eyes fell on a notation about a prison near the Finland Train Station, where Lenin had arrived upon his triumphant return from exile in 1917.

The jail, a dilapidated five-story, red-bricked building blackened by soot, was topped by a dented, metal roof and had small cell windows that resembled vents. Its three wings branched out a full city block from its central, windowed turret. Appearing too tired to stand, the prison reminded us of a foreboding dungeon.

It was about 7 on a Saturday evening when we first saw Masha, as

Louise Belanger is the spouse of USAID contractor Joe Hook, who works for U.S. Embassy Moscow. The stamp is courtesy of the AAFSW Bookfair "Stamp Corner."

*We watched as
Masha, her
huddled body
facing the Neva
River, silently read
her lover's words.*

we watched discreetly from a distance. Standing on the sidewalk crowded with other inmates' family and friends, she waited her turn in line to wave to her lover, who was waiting his turn to wave his hands through the slots of the small windows. Separated from her lover by six lanes of traffic and a thick prison wall, she was clearly desperate for a glimpse of him, one of the facility's 5,000 inmates.

We later learned that 2 percent of adult male Russians, or about 1.3 million men, is housed in the country's jails. The system is overcrowded, rampant with infectious diseases like tuberculosis, and so notoriously miserable that the *Moscow Times* recently reported cases of prisoners who have taken to begging their cellmates to kill them. No doubt these grisly facts were on the minds of loved ones waving outside.

Prisoners and their families appeared to have a well-developed communications code. We soon real-

ized that family members were spelling out messages in Russian, using their arms, hands and fingers to recreate the letters of the Cyrillic alphabet. We watched as one kerchiefed woman in her late 50s, whose wrinkles told of a hard life, spelled out Z-A-F-T-R-A, which means "tomorrow."

We watched as pieces of cloth and hands appeared through the prison windows' slats, signalling to visitors who knew exactly where to look. An up-and-down motion, we learned, meant "I understand," while a left-to-right motion meant, "I don't understand, repeat."

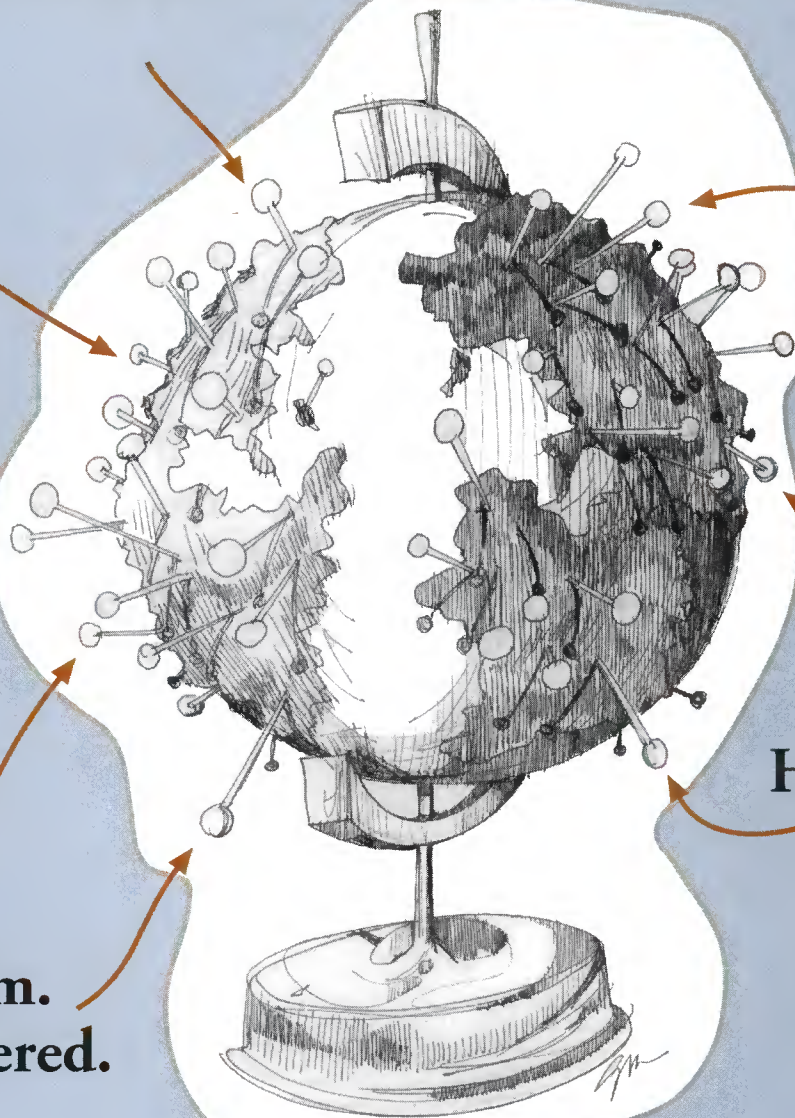
Then we saw a paper arrow made of newspaper — twisted and weighted with bread paste — come sailing from one of the window vents, over the wall to land in the middle of the busy thoroughfare. When traffic slowed, one woman scooped up the missile, and, turning her back to the prison, tore off the end to retrieve the message wedged inside. But the message was not for her. "Are you Masha?" the woman asked me in Russian. As I shook my head no, the real Masha — the slim, dark beauty in the miniskirt — dashed over to claim her prize.

We watched as Masha, her huddled body facing the Neva River, silently read her lover's words. After she finished, she faced the prison, nodded and crossed her arms over her chest, signifying a long-distance hug. Several moments later, another aerogram for Masha sailed across the wall. This time, as she read the words, she wiped tears from her eyes. ■

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