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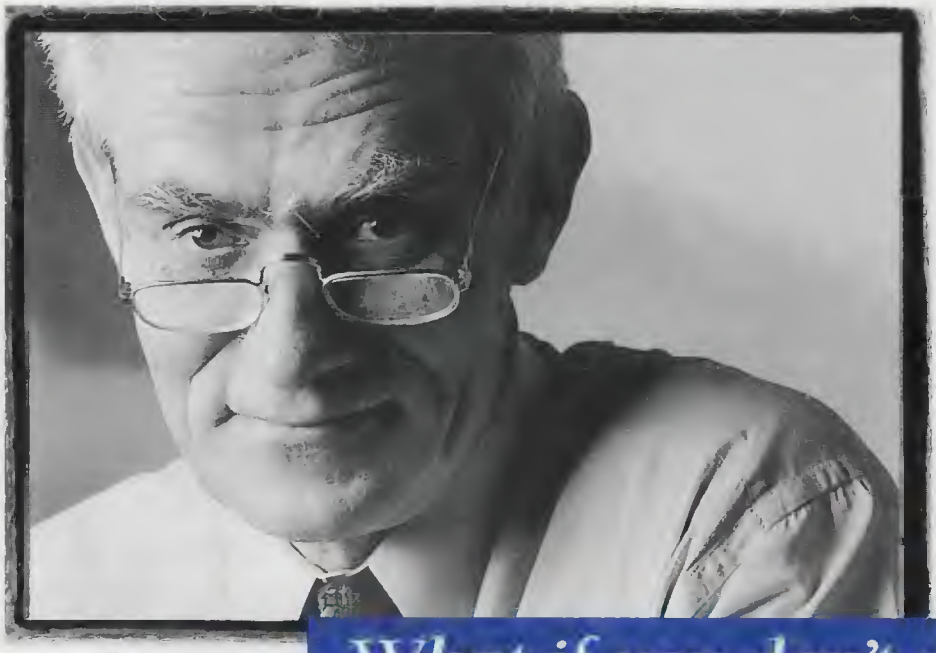

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[1] *HEALTH Magazine*, OCTOBER 1993
[2] *Business Week*, MARCH 7, 1994
[3] AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION, "QUALITY CARE FOR LIFE," MAY 1993

President's Views

Reorganization: Is the Best Yet to Come?

By Alphonse F. La Porta

As this column is written, the Clinton administration's final plan for the integration of the foreign affairs agencies has yet to be revealed and submitted to Congress. AFSA participated in the task forces but, since basie planning ended in mid-July, an opaque screen has been drawn over the decision-making process.

Nevertheless, Seeretary of State Madeleine K. Albright has provided a preview of things to come. She envisions a more decentralized system, devolving greater authority on both the functional and geographic bureaus; forming a "corporate board" of under secretaries for decision-making on priorities and budgets; reversing former Secretary Warren Christopher's decisions to require assistant secretaries to report through the under secretaries; and developing less bureaueratically eumbersome organizational models

There will be a gaggle of new bureaus — too many, in my view — a new under secretary for public diplomacy, expanded public affairs and press operations, and a political-military policy structure laden with expertise acquired in the integration of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The State Department's administrative infrastructure will be bulkier, but there do not seem to be plans for significant reform and streamlining of support functions.

Yet what of the people involved? In mid-August, AFSA adopted preliminary views on the reorganization. The first principle is to integrate the U.S. Information Agency and other personnel on an equitable and humane basis. Above all, State's leadership must ensure that staffing of all functions is maintained at levels needed to sustain effective diplomacy.

> *Team America needs its best to head embassies in this very tough, complicated and competitive world.*

We expect that USIA Foreign Service personnel, in particular, will continue doing their jobs, especially overseas. The chain of command and some organizations may change, but officers and speeialists of USIA - already having suffered substantial staff cuts — will needed to staff a more integrated and muscular public diplomacy function. But there is also a more promising vision:

- USIA officers are expected to be competitive for senior policy and executive positions at the Class 1 and Senior Foreign Service levels because of their program management experience.
- New opportunities will open for mid-level State and USIA officers through the multifunetional assignments program, now under negotiation between AFSA and the Director General's Office.
- Increased transparency in the Open Assignments system and improvements in the Senior Foreign Service assignments system, which AFSA has proposed, can offer fair consideration for officers of all agencies, including colleagues in Commerce and Agrieulture.
- At last there is the prospeet of real progress toward a single Foreign Service as envisioned under the 1980 Act, as USIA, State and other personnel rules are harmonized and uniform standards of administrative support are developed through greater integration.

We are cautioned that the enlarged and inproved organization cannot be built in a day and that Albright's reorganization plans will evolve further. For AFSA's part, it will continue to insist on equity for all Foreign Service personnel, ineluding local national employees, and to urge "New State" to draw upon USIA's best practiees in personnel operations and labor-management relations, for it ean hardly be assumed that State has a monopoly on wisdom and sound management.

The ink is barely dry on the first chapter of reorganization, but Secretary Albright, other State Department leaders and AFSA - the representative of all Foreign Service employees - must work vigorously and with candor and openness to fulfill the vision of a more coherent and integrated foreign affairs structure. ■

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

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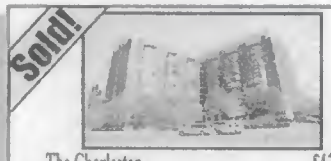

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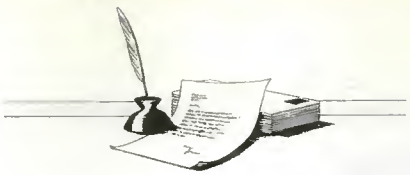

LETTERS

To the Editor:

I would like to see the FSJ devote more attention to political-military issues. For the past two years, as detailed faculty at the Naval War College, I have been part of the U.S. military's ambitious "Joint Professional Military Education," an effort designed to help phase operational officers into broader command and staff responsibilities.

There is no better place than a senior war college to absorb the mindset, doctrine and mores that define individual military services. But at least as regards the NWC, there are few places where information on the Department of State is so sparse — or so needed.

The NWC is proud of its tradition of academic rigor. Its almost 600 students — mostly Navy, but drawn also from the other services, U.S. civilian agencies and foreign navies — undergo a demanding set of academic courses. These mid-level officers generally share their generation's skepticism about U.S. involvement abroad. They are politically conservative and see the U.S. government as too prone to use military rather than diplomatic means in foreign affairs.

There is wry resentment towards a White House and State Department which, in the minds of many, appear all too ready to fritter away U.S. military strength on peripheral foreign adventures — whether peacekeeping, humanitarian, drug-interdiction or other "operations other than war." I left Newport convinced that the United States can only effectively deal with future foreign crises such as Haiti, Somalia or Rwanda to the degree that it is able to face this skepticism.

One way to do so is to increase the department's engagement with the various war colleges. For one thing, my students perceived, correctly I think, that few FSOs are prepared to have a dialogue on their military functions and culture. They note the almost total lack of military experience among younger civilian officers. There could be real value in helping our military colleagues to appreciate State's geopolitical focus as well as better understanding when and how to deal with department officers at home and with embassies abroad. By the same token, FSOs will become immeasurably more effective in working with the U.S. military, particularly in the field, if they can absorb more of its emphasis on strategic uses of force and logistical planning as well as show more awareness of its general corporative attitudes, mores and constraints.

More FSOs should have the opportunity to reflect, even if briefly, on effective national uses of both force and coercive diplomacy, from Thucydides to the Gulf War. With so much focus on both the "reinvention" of American diplomacy and new roles for U.S. military beyond conventional wars, a closer approximation of the joint State-Pentagon program seems worth a try.

Mark Lore
FSO
Outgoing Instructor
U.S. Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

To the Editor:

The death of David Anderson in Berlin on July 4 took away from us one of the best diplomats of our time and an unforgettable friend and companion ("Obits," September *Journal*).

His passing at the sadly young age of 60 brings tears not only because of his diplomatic talents, as much as I admire them, but also because of his inimitable personal charm.

David and I were Foreign Service classmates in the entering A-100 class of September 1959. At 22, David was our youngest member. David, Steve Ledogar, Joe Twinam and I were sent to the basement of Arlington Towers to work on French for four months. Steve then went off to Canada, but David, Joe and I got assignments at the State Department. Over the next couple of years we saw a lot of each other, sharing wonderment at the strange world of foreign policy erupting all around us.

From his first assignment, David showed his impressive capacity to grasp the high-level interplay of policy and politics in a way I have known few others to do. Born and reared in Scotland, he became a consummate American diplomat and could have been, I venture

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to say, just as impressive had he been a British or German diplomat, something to be said about very few people. In my own 24 Foreign Service years, I was fortunate to know and work with a number of superlative diplomatists from Chip Bohlen on down. I weigh my words when I say David belonged to the top half-dozen of this shining group.

I cherish the remembered days when we were all new to Washington and after an exciting day in Foggy Bottom we would get together, David and his wife, Ellen, and I and my wife, Betsy, and drink the best Scotch our penurious condition would allow. Sometimes in those early years, if the Scotch made him mellow enough, David would consent to read some Robert Burns to us, with just the right intonation, just the right touch of the burr. For me, no one else since has been able to do justice to the magical lines of that Scottish poet. I can hear David now: "And there's a hand, my trusty fiere! And gies a hand o' thine! And we'll take a right good-willie waught, for auld lang syne."

Jack Perry
Ret. FSO
Davidson, N.C.

To the Editor:

Marlen Eldredge Neumann, who died in July, will always be remembered by those of us who knew and worked with her as a kind, considerate, extremely bright, loyal and capable individual, totally reliable and full of *joie de vivre* ("Obits," September Journal).

Marlen was certainly a leader. She served on the Board of Directors of the Association of American Foreign Service Women and was a very effective chairman of its annual BookFair. The work she did was conducted with fairness, firmness, organization and with a fine esprit which made all who knew her love her.

There are numerous stories of her concern for others and her infectious humor. Marlen, with her usual indomitable spirit and in spite of health concerns, volunteered to chair the 1997 BookFair, and her offer was accepted with alacrity and joy. The 1997 BookFair is dedicated to Marlen. Her memory will remain alive in our hearts.

Lesley Dorman
Public Relations Chairman
AAFSW
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor:

Of course many FSOs share [Lewis K.] Elbinger's frustrations with the bidding process ("End Bidding War Politics," "Speaking Out," August *Journal*). It is incredibly opaque, occasionally capricious, and fundamentally mysterious to anyone who has never worked in the Personnel Office. On the other hand, one of the few areas where it does make sense is in its occasional flexibility with "stretch" assignments.

The rigidity of the Foreign Service system of rank-in-person, a very flawed employee evaluation system and a coning system that doesn't reward out-of-cone service, conspires to ensure that for many jobs in each bidding cycle, there are very good contenders who don't happen to have the requisite grade. I can think of a number of very good political officers, coned as administrative officers, who are stuck in grades below that merited by their length of service and ability because they focused on political affairs and not administrative ones. Should such individuals be penalized for a personnel system that does not promote them because they are locked in cones that don't match their aptitudes and abilities?

A flexible personnel system should take these individual abilities into account, and not arbitrarily assign numerical targets to block the best qualified person from taking a job.

I agree that the personnel system needs a major overhaul. It is inflexible, bureaucratic and imperfectly responsive to the needs of the Foreign Service. Let's not try to fix it in one of the few areas where it works, however: flexibility with an occasional stretch assignment.

Andrew Erickson
Political Officer
U.S. Embassy Luxembourg

To the Editor:

The *Journal* has carried criticisms of the way the United States issues, or doesn't issue, visas around the world ("U.S. Visa Policy Hurting Tourism," "Clippings," October *Journal*.) 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 the citizens of other countries is through the visa process must wish it could be different. A system that disheartens young FSOs, turns foreigners against the United States, feeds a worldwide visa-fraud industry, encourages immoral behavior by some U.S. lawyers, and consumes so much of scarce U.S. foreign affairs resources on what is often a losing cause should be a larger target of the Journal's breast-beating about foreign affairs reforms and adaptation to a changing world.

Now that I got that off my chest, I should admit that it has been 40 years since I issued a visa, and almost 20 years since I sought to influence a visa decision in the interest of developing useful contacts as a political officer. So what have I to offer now that is relevant? Perhaps my recent experience dealing with the visa sections of nearby embassies as a private citizen.

I have for some years been engaged in helping young people 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 day's trip to the U.S. embassy in their capital, followed by a morning of standing in line and a hasty interview by an FSN, who all too often, my charges report, is curt, even imperious. Some have been rejected because of typos on their applications. If all goes well, it's a wait until the afternoon before returning to the embassy to collect the visa ed passport. Then the long trip home. Other friends return with similar

tales of woe: of rudeness, of refusal to consider supporting documentation that may not be exactly what the visa clerks wanted, of consternation that their fate was in the hands of their own citizens — this in a culture accustomed to bribes — rather than U.S. officials.

A couple of years ago, my own cousin, a young citizen of an adjoining country, applied for a visitor's visa in response to my invitation (and financing) of a summer visit to my brother's home on Cape Cod. The FSN she saw refused to look at my letter guaranteeing the legitimacy of the visa request, and refused the visa when my cousin couldn't be specific as to how long she would be in Massachusetts. A subsequent attempt by her father to explain things at the embassy was coldly rebuffed, as were my own appeals. It took congressional intervention to get the refusal reconsidered.

Then there are the cases like that of a friend who has several times gone to the States to work illegally, overstaying the time allotted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. On the last occasion, he bragged to me that he again would have no problem since he had friends at the U.S. embassy. He was right. It's now going on a year since he left, and he hasn't returned yet. But, let's face it — most non-immigrant visa applications in this country are probably fraudulent, in the sense that applicants intend to work in the States. However, most stay no more than a year and do return home, it seems. And the U.S. jobs they take are generally low-paid and not very attractive to Americans anyway.

The *Journal* reported on a *Wall Street Journal* story that quoted 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." 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.

Name Withheld
at Author's Request
Retired FSO
Bardejov, The Slovak Republic

CORRECTION

Thomas R. Hutson's employment status was listed incorrectly in "Letters" (June/July *Journal*). Hutson, who recently completed several temporary assignments in the former Yugoslavia, is an active FSO based in Barbados.

CLIPPINGS

"[America's] foreign assistance program is a vital element of our ability to increase our visibility and market share [abroad.] Our competition understands this."

- JUDY MANN, IN A SEPT. 5 COLUMN, "FOREIGN AID? TO U.S., IT'S A FOREIGN CONCEPT." THE WASHINGTON POST

FROM GEOPOLITICS TO GEO-ECONOMICS

Some argue that ambassadors are a thing of the past, resembling a messenger dove trying to compete in a cellular-phone world. However, there are those who still stand by traditional diplomacy.

"You need someone [posted in the country] over time developing long-term relationships, not just with the head of state or government, but throughout the country — and not just the ambassador, but the rank and file of the embassy," noted Bruce Laingen, president of the American Academy of Diplomacy, in Washington, D.C., in an Aug. 27 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* by Ruth Wallace.

He noted recent summits involving world leaders, particularly the G-7 summit in Denver this summer, when President Clinton gave his foreign guests a piece of America: a pair of leather cowboy boots. Surprisingly, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl refused to wear the footwear in public. Clinton later learned, after a tactful explanation by the German ambassador, that boots of such kind are associated with the lower social classes in Germany. Karl-Heinz Kamp of the Adenauer Foundation in St. Augustin, near Bonn, says that there are certain things diplomats "can't do over the Internet, or through a conference call."

According to Franz-Josef Meiers, a research fellow at the Bonn-based German Society for Foreign Affairs, diplomacy is changing for a number of reasons. For the U.S. in particular, the focus has shifted from geopolitics to geo-economics. "They talk about BEMs — big emerging markets — especially in Asia. That means an adjustment in the importance of Europe," says Meiers.

With the growing importance of organizations such as NATO and the European Union, international issues are becoming multilateral rather than bilateral. "I can't think of a single [fundamental] issue between the U.S. and Germany," adds Meiers.

The technology age has made the role traditionally enjoyed by diplomats obsolete. "In crises, decisions are going to be made by the government back home," he says.

Also, the United States is not alone in observing the trend of domestication of foreign policy. "Foreign policy is driven largely by domestic concerns," concludes Meiers.

Even with all these changes, ambassadors are an important symbol of bilateral confidence between countries. Their mere presence means, "We take your country seriously," explains Kamp. "The psychology of it is very important."

U.S., RUSSIA COMPETE OVER TRAFFIC ISSUES

If American diplomats in Russia think they can set a record for traffic accidents and parking tickets in one year, they better think twice. Their Russian counterparts in the United States are turning out to be stiff competitors.

In New York City alone in 1996, Russian diplomats racked up an average of 85 tickets per day, while U.S. diplomats in Russia were charged with a total of 141 traffic violations in the first half of this year, reported *The Washington Times* on Aug. 25. Apparently, the problem is not so much the exorbitant number of tickets issued, but rather the failure of Russian diplomats to pay up. New York City has yet to see one dollar of the $1.4 million in fines owed by Russian diplomats.

American diplomats in Russia are also receiving their share of the spotlight on diplomatic immunity issues in traffic accidents after an Aug. 18 crash involving U.S. Embassy Moscow political officer Matthew Bryza, which left a woman critically injured.

CLIPPINGS

When Russian officials launched a criminal investigation on Aug. 21, the State Department recalled Bryza to Washington.

This latest incident is being compared to the Jan. 3 five-car accident near Dupont Circle involving Georgian diplomat Geuorgui Makharadze, in which a 16-year-old girl was killed. The government of Georgia revoked Makharadze's diplomatic immunity.

WELD STILL FIGHTS THE GOOD FIGHT

With his nomination for ambassador to Mexico stuck in a political swamp, former Massachusetts Gov. William Weld may be reaching a degree of desperation, according to an editorial in the Sept. 8 issue of *The Weekly Standard*. Due to the apparent cold shoulder he has received from GOP leaders, Weld has even suggested a "recess" appointment. This would allow him to become ambassador without confirmation hearings opposed by Jesse Helms, Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman, though he would have to give up the post at the end of 1998. The White House has already said it will not pursue this route.

After four months of battling, Weld may be claiming fewer allies. Those opposing his nomination occupy key spots that would make a successful confirmation a fantasy, including Paul Coverdell, chairman of the Foreign Relations subcommittee that oversees Mexico. Coverdell has cited Weld's inexperience in diplomacy, but Helms is fervently opposing Weld because of his "soft" stand on drugs and his pro-choice beliefs. Another stumbling block for Weld is Senate GOP leader Trent Lott, who has refused to change his position regarding the nomination.

Weld's got one good thing going for him, though, says the *Standard*. Now that he's been taking Spanish lessons, the next time he eats out at a Mexican restaurant, he won't need someone to translate the menu.

IS UNCLE SAM A BOLSHEVIK?

Owning private property 40 years ago in Poland was like any other Communist country; there was no such thing because the government owned it all. But with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Poland turned once more to democracy and capitalism. Many pieces of property were returned to their former owners, but not all. In the middle of Warsaw lies a patch of property still in dispute. The landlord isn't a renegade communist, but the U.S. government, according to an Aug. 28 article in *The New York Times* by Jane Perlez.

During the apogee of communism, the U.S. government wanted an anchor in the middle of Poland. The State Department in the early 1950s, headed by the anti-communist John Foster Dulles, paid $1 million to the Polish government in return for the 80-year lease of a 19-century villa for the U.S. embassy. The villa had belonged to Stanislaw Czetwertynski, a member of a prominent aristocratic family, who had struggled to survive with his children under the new communist government. Charged in 1954 with spying for the United States, Czetwertynski was thrown in jail until 1956. Upon his release he noticed the American flag flying above his villa, she reported.

To add insult to his injury, in the early 1960s the United States razed the structure and built a larger complex for its larger staff. However, instead of creating an eye-pleasing embassy, it became an architectural nightmare known locally as "the tin can."

50 YEARS AGO

"A frequent question which the FSO is asked in the field is why American foreign policy is not conducted on more expedient terms," noted an unsigned editorial in the *Foreign Service Journal* of October 1947.

"Why, so to speak, [is] fire is not fought with fire, and the low punch met with another blow under the belt? The answer is an old one in American diplomacy, and it is a simple one: Policy founded upon principle and buttressed by truth is, in the long run, unassailable."

The editorial entitled, "Principles in Practice," was referring to the United Nations and the role of Secretary of State George C. Marshall. Noted Marshall, "America's faith in the U.N. has its roots in the basic moral values and spiritual aspirations of the American people."

"In critical situations, let women run things."

— *CHARLES-MAURICE DE TALLEYRAND-PERIGORD, LATE 18TH- AND EARLY 19TH-CENTURY FRENCH DIPLOMAT AND STATESMAN*

"I love American people, but everyone I tell this story to is flabbergasted," said Albert Czetwertynski, the son of Stanislaw Czetwertynski. "They can't believe their government has acted like, well, like Bolsheviks."

Aecording to documents, the Polish government intended to transform the villa into an "historical monument," however the United States eonvinced it otherwise. More than 70 members of the Czetwertynski family are seeking compensation. However, the matter is made more eomplicated by a laek of restitution laws now common elsewhere in East Europe. "My case is not with the Polish government," said Albert Czetwertynski. "The Commnists ignored human rights. The Amerieans took advantage of that. I want to hear what the Americans have to say."

WOULD SEA BY OTHER NAME SMELL AS SALTY?

If nations aren't fighting for a piece of land or sea, they're doing so for the name it should earry. The latest incident involves South Korea, Japan and the sea that divides them, reported *The Washington Times* on Aug. 28.

South Korean diplomat Yim Kil-yang recently contacted mapmaker Rand MeNally about whether sea should be called the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Korea or the East Sea.

The controversy has been raging since the 1700s. Koreans claim the sea has been known as the East Sea or the Sea of Korea since that century. Until the controversy is resolved, Rand McNally agreed to use both "Sea of Japan" and "East Sea" on all new maps. ■

SPEAKING OUT

Why I Left the Foreign Service

BY LIISA ECOLA

I resigned from the Foreign Service on Aug. 15, exactly six years to the pay period since I first joined. But the reasons I canceled my diplomatic passport had little to do with the standard ones that prompt most FSOs to leave prematurely.

Colleagues who know I had been assigned to the Foreign Service's administrative specialty will believe that I was frustrated in not being chosen for the more prestigious political or economic specialties. Acquaintances who know I am a single woman under 30 will think I left for a man. People who don't know me at all will think I left to make more money in a private-sector job. But they would all be wrong.

In fact, I really liked my last job as general services officer in the Washington-based Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. I had an excellent supervisor, a high level of responsibility, flexibility, regular hours, and projects I could see through to completion. But because of the way the Foreign Service is organized, I would not have been allowed to remain in this job indefinitely.

Liisa Ecola, who left the Foreign Service in August, served in Warsaw, Taipei and Washington, D.C. She is enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley as a master's degree candidate in city planning.

> *According to the old cliché, FSOs leave for love or money. According to the new one, junior officers leave when they don't like their assigned cone.*

I know I'm not alone in my decision to leave: I am the 10th of 45 FSOs in my 1991 entering class to resign before retirement — a 22 percent attrition rate. Of the more than 40 junior officers with whom I served during two overseas tours, seven have resigned, all citing reasons similar to mine. When I told other junior officers that I was leaving, I had the distinct impression that most would leave for the right job or graduate program. Even more telling was the reaction of mid- and senior-level officers who, without exception, did not offer the vaguest hope that things would improve if I stuck it out.

According to an old cliché, FSOs leave the Service for love or money. According to the new one, junior officers leave when they don't like their assignment to one of the four divisions, or cones: political, economic, consular and administrative. When I joined the FS, junior officers were assigned to a cone only after being tenured, perhaps three or four years after joining. The prevailing wisdom was that officers assigned to the consular or administrative cones, presumably the least attractive, would be quickly disappointed and leave too soon. Now that the Foreign Service is immediately assigning entering officers to cones, the resignation rate is expected to drop. But I don't think it will until the Foreign Service addresses issues in six areas.

First, due to budget constraints, fewer JOs overseas and a growing consular workload at most embassies, the work of JOs has grown more tedious. Having issued visas in two "visa mills," or embassy consular sections, where visa interviewing absorbs more time than other work, I have seen what was once considered a one- or two-year FSO rite-of-passage become three or four years of demanding, fruitless labor.

Second, despite the fabled *esprit de corps* attitude of the Foreign Service, I found a distressing lack of support in the field from the State Department. In my six years as an FSO, differentials were cut at over-

seas posts, locality pay for Washington jobs was increased, and now State is mulling whether to cut pay incentives for learning hard languages.

Meanwhile, working and living conditions overseas are worsening: Computers remain outdated or incompatible with standard systems; building renovations are being delayed; and housing units are not being properly maintained. An FSO colleague in Taipei died of carbon monoxide poisoning in 1995 in his embassy-maintained apartment because the gas-fired water heater had not been properly maintained.

Third, many FS managers don't believe they have to learn how to manage. The old saw that professionals rise to their appropriate level of incompetence is a FS truism most evident in deputy chiefs of mission, who are more often promoted for their ability to report and write good cables, even if they lack basic budget and personnel experience.

A related problem is the Foreign Service's tendency to retain poor performers. The attitude seems to be that, since most tours are only two or three years, and since either supervisor or employee will be rotating soon, why bother dealing with unsatisfactory workers? Indeed, many supervisors are judged on their ability to get their subordinates promoted. This leads to grossly-inflated performance reviews, and a reluctance to offer employees constructive criticism. The Foreign Service has become like many Japanese universities, where gaining admission is a great deal tougher than graduating.

Fourth, the State Department's bureaucracy and inherent conservatism spawn an incredible reluctance to make decisions. For example, few FSOs can put words to paper, be it a simple cable or a highly sensitive report, without obtaining approvals from several others. This process, called "clearing," dulls any writer's sharp-edged opinion to a matted finish. If FSOs in the trenches want to be heard, they must maneuver their memos through several layers of middle management.

Fifth, the amount of time FSOs spend on minutiae is wearing. It's ridiculous to select the "best and brightest" for the Foreign Service, train them in languages, and assign them in jobs that require clerical skills and the ability to follow petty instructions. For example, I was recently assigned to the night shift of a 24-hour task force on a Cambodian crisis that had long since been resolved. In the middle of the eight-hour shift, I was assigned to write a situation report, which I did, using my most obfuscating, FSO lingo to report that nothing had happened since the last report, which also reported that nothing had happened. An Operations Center staffer spent 10 minutes arguing with a subordinate about whether my report should be declassified on July 14, 2007, or July 15, 2007. Most FSOs spend inane amounts of time redoing memos because some front office prefers the white letterhead over the original blue letterhead, or lining up 5-by-8 index cards in office printers so they will be perfect when they reach the secretary of State's office.

Sixth, the Foreign Service's reluctance to acknowledge that FSOs no longer fit the model of male officers with dependent, female spouses is also frustrating. Today's Foreign Service can be very inhospitable to the large number of single officers, tandem couples, female officers with dependent male spouses, and gays and lesbians in its ranks. The Service could change this by providing adequate post housing for all family sizes and types; by allowing flexibility in tandem assignments; by negotiating reciprocal work agreements with foreign governments for non-embassy jobs for overseas spouses; by extending the spousal benefits to same-sex couples; and by allowing FSOs to extend tours beyond the four-year limit.

There is a growing preponderance of two groups at U.S. embassies overseas: FSO husbands with foreign-born wives and single women over 35. I'll never fall into the first category, and I'd prefer not to find myself in the second. Many eligible candidates for marriage are other FSOs, who may prefer women who don't want their own careers. While I realize love can strike anyplace, at some point there's wisdom in bettering the odds, and the odds of meeting a man who values women with equal education and career ambitions are higher within U.S. borders — and outside those of the State Department.

I certainly experienced frustration in my lack of control over my world overseas. A person satisfied by Foreign Service life would no doubt spout the clichés about trade-offs: the ability to make your own decisions pitted against the security and savings of free government housing and medical care, and paid rest-and-relaxation time. However, I prefer to make my own decisions about where to live, how long to live there, when to vacation, and which doctors to see. With its unique combination of paternalism and incompetence, the Foreign Service had been difficult for me to trust. True, other large public or private organizations may be as bureaucratic as State, but they can only screw up my job, not my whole life.

I grew tired of being a 24-hour-a-day representative of the U.S. government, tired of being hounded for visas in nightclubs, tired of living in the fishbowl of overseas life. Even large posts resemble a combination of small town, college dorm and colony, incorporating all the worst features of each. It was liberating to return to Washington, D.C., where I didn't see my colleagues on the bus home, in my apartment building or at the market.

Maybe I was never cut out to be an FSO. I don't like to move, don't like toiling in a large bureaucracy, and don't like working on projects that won't be brought to fruition in my working lifetime. I'd like to work decent hours, have time for a personal life, be recognized for my accomplishments rather than my networking ability, and work for a competent supervisor and with colleagues who care about more than their next promotion, not unrealistic expectations in any line of work. So, when I look for employment the next time, I'll be seeking an employer who offers me simply a job. I can handle the rest of my life. ■

U.S. EMBASSY ANKARA

THE MILITARY ALLIANCE SUPERCEDED ALL ISSUES IN U.S.-TURK RELATIONS

BY DANIEL O. NEWBERRY

Alexander Haig, then a four-star U.S. general from NATO headquarters, was my temporary guest in the VIP lounge at the Istanbul airport. The commander of SHAPE, the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe, was immensely popular in Turkey, often referred to by the endearing term, "Haig Pasha." On this visit in the early 1980s, the general's Turkish military hosts had thoughtfully left us alone so that he and the U.S. consul general might have any confidential chat that the occasion might demand. I made the conventional offer, "Can I bring you up to the moment on the U.S.-Turkish agenda?"

"Thanks, but the agenda between Turkey and the United States is always the same," he responded. Maybe for you, Pasha, I thought, but not for those of us who work here day-in, day-out, year-in, year-out, trying to maintain, even to improve, a climate in which U.S.-Turkish relations can flourish.

My personal involvement in that effort stretched back to early 1952, when the Department of State had first sent me to Istanbul as a very junior vice consul. Those were halcyon days for the U.S.-Turkish alliance. Turkey, along with Greece, had just entered NATO. The new American ambassador in Ankara, George McGhee, was widely credited with personally engineering Turkey's admission to the alliance the year before, when he had been Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs. Turkey was not yet included in the State Department's European Bureau.

1952

MARIO TORRISI

1995

ALAN ODDIE

Ambassador McGhee was still held in high regard among American emissaries and the history-minded Turkish public, and in 1982 Turkey's association with Europe and the United States still held a central place on the U.S. foreign affairs agenda. The military alliance with the U.S., which had long been taken for granted, remained the bedrock of bilateral relations. It was in the details that we continued to find the grist for an unending round of frictions, irritations and misunderstandings. The in-house maxim, for those of us working on U.S.-Turkish relations, had come to this: "Maintaining the Turkish-American alliance is a lot of trouble, but it's worth the trouble."

At the beginning, in the '50s, the trouble was not evident. Those were indeed "halcyon days" and the word "halcyon" was more apt than we could have known. In classical mythology, the halcyon bird was allowed only 14 days for undis-

The U.S.-Turkish military alliance, long taken for granted, is still the bedrock of bilateral relations. Maintaining it was always a lot of trouble, but it was worth it.

turbed brooding before her eggs hatched. After that, wintry storms made new breeding impossible. In the 1950s, the American eggs that would hatch in the Turkish nest would indeed bring the United States a lot of trouble, but not many of us gave the prospect much thought.

My first tour of Foreign Service duty in Turkey, from 1952-1956, kept me on the periphery of the major concerns of State. The atmosphere in which we Americans were working thrived on the proverbial hospitality of the Turkish people. It yielded relatively trouble-free dealings with the Turkish bureaucracy on the local level, but trouble was brewing. A rising crescendo of extravagant expectations gripped the Turks in all walks of life as they basked in their newly acclaimed standing as Uncle Sam's "staunchest ally."

Turkey earned this acclaim in large part by the extraordinary performance of the Turkish brigade in the Korean War. The reputation of the Turkish soldier on the battlefield served Turkey well on Capitol Hill for at least a decade before other events began to dilute the spirit of intimacy and resolve that had yielded and would, despite all, continue to yield enduring benefits for the NATO alliance as well as for the United States. One of the most intractable issues that arose during my first tour in Turkey during the '50s was known as the "Cyprus question." There had been the 1953 state visit to Turkey by King Paul and Queen Frederika of Greece, with attendant throngs of Turkish citizens waving Greek and Turkish flags in welcome. Turkish newspapers carried banner headlines heralding "Dost Yunanistan," or "Greece, Our Friend." In retrospect, it seems a surreal memory. Hardly two years after that visit, in September 1955, our ethnic-Greek Foreign Service nationals at U.S. Consulate General Istanbul, who had waved both national flags for the king and queen along with the rest of the city, were now cowering in terror as the so-called Cyprus riots erupted in Istanbul and Izmir. Incredibly there was no loss of life during those riots, but Greek residents of Istanbul never felt at ease again. Many of them would emigrate.

On the international plane the issue of Cyprus took a while to move onto the agenda of U.S.-Turkish relations, because Cyprus was initially a matter for British diplomacy. That was not to last. Thanks in important measure to the Greek lobby in the U.S. Congress, Cyprus was soon on the agenda.

Now, more than 40 years later, Cyprus remains an irritant, from the Turkish point of view, and, for the Greeks, a tool with which to snipe at the particulars in the Turkish-American program of cooperation. U.S. cooperation with the Turks still went on and the friends of Greece in Congress were not able to hobble the program entirely, even during its short-lived arms embargo after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. Today, crisis-weary diplomats in Foggy Bottom and at the United Nations sigh audibly when they consider once again the "Cyprus question." After nearly a quarter of a century, the partition of the island endures, but American diplomats and the White House periodically go through the motions of urging the disputing parties to find a solution. I heard a Turkish diplomat recently compare the matter to the "Kashmir question," which has been on the U.N. agenda since 1948.

Daniel O. Newberry, a retired FSO, served two tours in Istanbul, one in Adana and one in Ankara; he was also posted to Iran, Israel, Laos, Morocco and Bangladesh.

American diplomacy can be faulted for not finding a solution for Cyprus, but not for having created the problem. There have been, however, other unrelated difficulties in dealing with Turkey that Americans have brought on themselves. In the honeymoon years of the 1950s, American officials — particularly military planners — thought of Turkey as sort of an unsinkable aircraft carrier onto whose deck they could load a limitless array of airfighters, listening stations, weapons storage and — most fraught with peril as it turned out — thousands of U.S. soldiers and airmen.

The Turkish prime minister, Adnan Menderes, and his ruling Democrat Party were eager to keep the United States in this frame of mind. He OK'd hundreds of military facility requests without consulting staff in his own government beyond the prime minister's inner circle. Menderes assiduously cultivated the perception in Turkey that he was the chosen instrument of Washington. In the process Americans were blamed for condoning, if not downright encouraging, Menderes's political excesses imposed on the Turkish body politic during the late 1950s. The opposition and the Turkish armed forces took matters into their own hands and overthrew the Menderes regime in May 1960.

In the atmosphere of retribution that followed this 1960 "revolution," the slapdash arrangements for American access to the Turkish "aircraft carrier" were called into question and led to a comprehensive renegotiation of the whole gamut of defense-cooperation arrangements. To this day, the agreements are subject to periodic review and renewal, and a good thing too. Even so, these recurring negotiations always bring back to the table irritants in the relationship that are somehow finessed. The irritants are regularly swept under the table or postponed because the Turkish military's General Staff holds fast to the doctrine that the NATO alliance and the American connection are the keystone of Turkey's strategic defense. Not even the Muslim fundamentalist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, who came to power at the head of a coalition government in 1996, has dared to tamper with that doctrine.

That is not to say that today's Turkish military are disposed to rubber-stamp U.S. desiderata. Beginning with the Gulf War and its aftermath, there has been a distinct lack of unanimity in the Turkish military about the wisdom of continuing Operation Provide Comfort across Turkey's southeastern border with the Kurdish area of northern Iraq. So far, successive Turkish parliaments have acquiesced in the renewals, but it is always an issue that requires strenuous exertions by U.S. Embassy Ankara.

Operation Provide Comfort has transformed the outlook and workload of the small U.S. Consulate in Adana. When I went to that post in 1969, I understood that my chief job was to see that the U.S. Air Force personnel at the Incirlik airbase outside the city remained attuned to the need for good relations with the Turkish community. The task was not onerous and the consulate staff met the requirement, but then we lucked out. During my two-year stint as principal officer at Adana, there was only one U.S. citizen imprisoned in the consular district. He was a hapless romantic who wandered across the border from Syria into the Kurdish-speaking area of Urfa, even then under martial law. He was charged by the Turkish martial law court with espionage. Acquitted after a few weeks' detention, expelled from Turkey and escorted to the border by a Turkish FSN, this lone American was our only "protection" case. My successor, Bill Hallman, was not so lucky as passels of drug traffickers landed on his doorstep, harbingers of a phenomenon that would be a feature of the U.S.-Turkish agenda for the next decade.

Drug-trafficking by Americans in Turkey was an ironic byproduct of a major diplomatic effort ordered by President Richard Nixon to get the Turkish government to put an end to illicit poppy cultivation. It was the lot of the U.S. ambassador, William J. Handley, to have the subject of opium on his agenda every day for the three years that he was chief of mission in Ankara, from 1969-1972. Eventually Turkey instituted an effective system of control, but as an earnest of its commitment to the cause, its public prosecutors sought maximum penalties for U.S. citizens arrested for transporting

Today's consular officers in Turkey have a different kind of workload. A flood of visa applicants afflicts offices in Ankara and Istanbul, but the burden is not unique to Turkey.

or selling narcotics through Turkey. The Hollywood movie "Midnight Express," although blatantly anti-Turkish in tone, was helpful in spreading the word among potential drug traffickers that dealing drugs in Turkey was not such a hot idea. By the time I returned for my third tour of duty in Turkey in 1980, the consulates in Turkey had a much diminished workload on the drug scene. In 1982 our two governments concluded a "treaty for the enforcement of penal judgments" whereby U.S. citizens sentenced to imprisonment in Turkey could be repatriated and serve their sentences in U.S. prisons.

Today's consular officers in Turkey have a different kind of workload. A flood of visa applicants afflicts offices in Ankara and Istanbul, but the burden is not unique to Turkey.

What is peculiar to Turkey, at least among NATO countries, is the pattern of military interventions — in 1960, 1971 and 1980 and the diligence with which the military have assiduously arranged for the restoration of democratic government. The 1980 intervention came soon after my return to Turkey in 1980.

The proximate cause — or pretext, depending on your point of view — for the 1980 coup d'etat was the parliamentary deadlock that prevented effective action to stem the tide of political assassinations by leftist and rightist extremists. It was a period the Turks refer to as "the anarchy." Naturally the American community in Turkey had to hunker down and stay out of harm's way throughout the late 1970s and in 1980, until the military took over. Security became a major preoccupation for the embassy and the consulates and remains so today. Nowadays the concern for physical security is a local manifestation of a global threat that besets all Foreign Service people, even in countries where official relations with the U.S. are devoid of frictions.

What made the military regime the Turks lived under from 1980 to 1983 distinctive — apart from its methodical preparation of the nation for a return to democracy — is the retention in the government of Turgut Ozal, an economic planner who became deputy prime minister. Ozal pursued a vigorous program of free-enterprise capitalism that brushed aside much of the etatist controls that had accumulated during the first 60 years of the Turkish republic. Ozal became prime minister in the general election of 1983. Before he moved up to become president of the republic in 1990, Ozal had brought to Turkey a dazzling flood of new foreign investment, consumer goods, and — most importantly for the economy — a virtually fully convertible currency.

It made a dramatic difference for American officials living in Turkey as it did, of course, for most of the Turkish people. In the 1950s, U.S. officialdom had had to occupy itself with the internal policing of currency conversion, the auditing of post exchange and commissary purchases, and regulating the disposal of personally-owned automobiles. Black markets were a constant source of temptation for privileged Americans. Throughout the '50s and '60s the difference between the official rate of exchange for the Turkish lira against the dollar and the black-market rate was so wide that even senior U.S. officials often yielded to the temptation to acquire Turkish currency on the "free market."

By the mid-'80s, the economic boom and the removal of import restrictions made the good things of life available to all the Turks who could afford them at inflation-driven prices. Americans in Turkey were no longer a privileged caste. Commissary and PX facilities devolved into perquisites instead of a disguised form of smuggling, as the Turks saw it.

Personal security in the 1980s was a preoccupation for many Americans — and still is today. Terrorism abounds in Turkey but terrorists have changed targets, today victimizing fellow Turks more often than foreigners.

U.S. aid levels to Turkey have taken on more political and symbolic significance than economic. Indeed, by the early '90s it was widely asserted that Turkey would be better off abjuring economic assistance from Washington rather than court further insulting Congressional restrictions imposed by the Greek and Armenian lobbies.

The former U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Ankara, once employing hundreds of Americans and FSNs, closed in 1975. By 1995 the most visible USAID-financed programs in Turkey were construction loans for American schools and hospitals and programs of the International Executive Service Corps, retired executives fondly known as the "Paunch Corps." Even in this realm, USAID's large-scale budget support for Robert College in Istanbul had passed into history. Robert's higher education arm had been Turkified into the University of the Bosphorus, one of whose professors — Tansu Ciller — became the first woman prime minister of Turkey.

This old Turkey hand had the luck to be setting out on a lecture tour in Turkey in late 1995 when a parliamentary split precipitated early general elections. Not a situation a career FSO would have chosen, not even one who had gone into retirement 10 years earlier. I was braced for the perennial anti-Washington gripes — Cyprus, textile quotas, unfair human rights evaluations, etc., etc. The 1995 audiences displayed little interest. To be sure, there were efforts to elicit comments on the Turkish political scene, but all the audiences received was a predictable affirmation that the U.S. government would work with whomever the Turkish people chose to lead their government.

The overriding preoccupation of those lecture audiences was the pending vote on Turkey's candidacy for the European Customs Union, popularly considered the penultimate hurdle on the way to full membership in the Common Market. The undisguised dread was that those Europeans who did not want a Muslim state in the European Community would carry the day, thereby deeply offending the Turks' national pride and strengthening the hand of fundamentalists' rejection of the West. The fact that the U.S. government was conducting an all-out lobbying campaign with the Europeans to assure Turkey's admission into the Customs Union was widely known and appreciated in Turkey.

Turkey did make it into the Customs Union, but it is by no means a foregone conclusion that Turkey will also pass the final obstacle into the European Union itself. The Turks will be looking to Washington again to provide the final boost when the time comes.

And that brings us back to 1951 and the halcyon days when Turkey was admitted into NATO at the insistence of the U.S. government, led by McGhee, an assistant secretary of State who, as the Turks saw it, left his seat of power in Washington because he wanted to be ambassador to Turkey.

During the Cold War many Turkish journalists and political science-fiction writers ascribed all manner of sinister motives to American sponsorship of Turkey. Nowadays, with the U.S. Department of Commerce's listing of Turkey as one of the 10 "big emerging markets," commentators come up with a n added dollop of cynicism. Today there is a wry acceptance, even among them, that American commitment to keeping Turkey strong has essentially a military, strategic foundation. In that sense, Gen. Haig was right: The U.S.-Turkish agenda has not changed. ■

USAID NEW DELHI

U.S. AID HELPED INDIA GROW TO BECOME ASIA'S TOP AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER

BY HAROLD M. JONES

In the last few years, thoughts of India had grown to preoccupy me, and I knew that I would have no peace until I made a pilgrimage back to this enchanting and mysterious land. I spent almost eight years on the Indian subcontinent, where I struggled with some of the toughest but most rewarding professional and personal challenges of my life.

As a 38-year-old agricultural adviser with the Technical Cooperation Mission — the precursor agency to the U.S. Agency for International Development — in 1956, I was assigned to a remote training center in Budni, in the central province of Madhya of Pradesh state. On the weekends I visited my wife, Loretta, and daughters in Bhopal, the provincial capital 60 miles north, where they enjoyed the running water and electricity not yet available in Budni. The family was reunited later in the more comfortable national capital of New Delhi, where I worked an administrative job as technical liaison with the Ford Foundation.

In February 1996, almost 36 years later to the month I first arrived in India, I was flying to New Delhi on a personal mission of rediscovery. Over the years, the media had titillated my interest with features projecting the country as an awakening giant and I was heading back to satisfy my urge to witness the new India. I wanted to visit my former homes and other stomping grounds; to learn about the development of the Budni agricultural center; and to meet my old colleagues, including former chief instructor of the agricultural training center, Mohan Taneja, and its former director, P. John Zachariah. I was also keen to discover what had happened to my driver and friend, Abdul Rafiq Khan.

The trip had been minimally planned. I had sent Taneja a letter with only a vague reference to a possible visit. I was going to play it by ear and hope for the best. Christina, my second-eldest daughter in Germany, would join me in New Delhi, and together we would rely on our collective memories — and a little luck.

1956

MARIO TORRISI

1996

ALAN ODDIE

When I arrived at Indira Gandhi Airport, I noticed the first major change. The spacious facility handled passengers with a remarkable efficiency and hospitality unknown 30 years earlier. During the four-mile taxi drive to New Delhi, I didn't recognize a square inch of landscape.

Dramatic changes in and around New Delhi had obliterated the details that were second nature in my memory. The monuments remained true to my recall, but their surroundings had become drastically different. Chris remembered the address of the two-story house we had rented in New Delhi in the early '60s, and we stopped by, where we learned that our former landlord, Capt. Balwant Singh, had died 10 years earlier. However, members of

I was impressed by the progress agricultural engineering had made in wide-ranging areas of India's farming, storage and processing methods, which has made India the No. 1 agricultural producer in Asia today.

his extended family still lived in the house, and we spent the afternoon visiting. These encounters underscored for me how Indian family values had endured over the decades: of supporting one another financially, of providing employment for each other, and of maintaining each person's religious tradition, whether Muslim, Hindu or Sikh. These impromptu encounters set the tone for our good fortune throughout the trip, as everyone welcomed us with warmth and delight.

The next day, I registered my trip plans at U.S. Embassy New Dehli, still located at the same building on Shanti Path in the suburb of Chanakyapuri. The embassy grounds and adjoining compound of staff quarters, once inviting to visitors, were now surrounded by walls and almost entirely obscured by shrubbery. At the embassy, I found no Marines, not a single American. Local citizens handled my entire business, and it seemed there were many more Foreign Service nationals in charge of areas that had once been run by FSOs. The only American faces hung on walls in the photographic likenesses of William Clinton and Al Gore.

Later, Taneja drove us to a national arts and craft show outside the city, in Haryana state, where we saw such a wide variety and quantity of traditional ivory sculpture, wood carvings, woven silk, cotton and wool and paintings, that it was clear the industry had grown substantially in the last four decades. On our return, we stopped by a supermarket, which carried a wealth of fresh and packaged local foodstuffs — but few imported foods. No dependence on foreign trade here.

Traffic was more congested and difficult than I remembered. The highways, all paved now, used to be packed with an assortment of small cars, bicycles, scooters and bullock-drawn carts, a popular means of transporting everything, even jet fuel. Now motor vehicles dominated the roads, all paved, in a much denser stream. It used to take two hours to drive from New Delhi to Agra, where the Taj Majal is, but now it takes four. Everyone, everything was moving — but in slow motion.

In the 1950s, India was a nation teeming with millions. Now the population had tripled to nearly a billion souls. Poverty continues to be a large problem, with more than 80 percent of the population still living in villages, but there is evidence of a growing middle class in the towns and cities, estimated at between 150 million and 200 million people.

The next leg of our trip took us to Madhya Pradesh in central India. The two-hour plane ride — a far cry from the 10-hour drive we used to make — was a delight, presenting an excellent view of the great growth of the city. I recognized the remains of a tattered windsock and tinny hangar that had housed the five private airplanes of the nawab, the region's Muslim ruler. A travel book told me a hotel now occupied the grounds of our former home, Pavilion No. 1, on the nawab's estate. Formerly one of the guest houses of the nawab, our house was designed in a neo-classical style with marble floors, commodious rooms and a central open courtyard.

At the gate a large polished sign announced, "Welcome to the Hotel Saber Imperial." Beyond the gate we were rewarded with the sight of our old home facing Pavilion No. 2 on the east side of the roundabout.

The premises had received a fantastic facelift with a renovated landscape and exterior lighting creating an inviting garden atmosphere. Our south wing suite once served as rooms in the home of an American couple, Velma and George Puckett, the latter of whom had been a USAID agricultural adviser to the Madhya Pradesh state government. After tea, we poked around both pavilions. The open central courts had been roofed. We ascended to the flat rooftop where the family had set up bedding to spend nights for relief against the scorching summers. Now empty, the concrete space brought back a flood of memories for us.

Close by, a decaying catwalk once afforded a view of a manmade lake at the foot of a long slope, but now the elegant architecture, including wrought iron rails and a marble

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Harold M. Jones is a retired FSO whose 31-year Foreign Service career with the U.S. Agency for International Development took him to Nairobi, Kaduna, New Delhi and Bhopal, India.

promenade, had been fully restored to its former glory and romance. Small bistro-type tables and soft lights lined the walkway. At one end, a large English-language sign, "Hamburgers Available," seemed incongruous, given the lingering sacredness of the cow in India. But the sign signaled yet another new order in India.

The next day, we found the late Nawab's palace had so badly deteriorated that it had been abandoned to weeds, though a college had been built and another hotel was under construction at the site. The mosque, whose daily calls to prayer had helped us keep time, was still being used. The villages dotting the landscape down to the lake now all enjoyed running water and electricity.

My inquiries about Rafiq came to naught. But I happened to strike up a conversation with a retired major, who seemed delighted to find a companion with whom to reminisce. He responded to my questions about Rafiq by reciting his current job, address and contact numbers in New Delhi.

The day we visited the Central Tractor Training and Testing Centre was one of the most rewarding of our trip. R.S. Dass, the center's 16th director, sent a driver to take us to Budni. The old partially-paved road to Budni had blossomed into Nagpur State Highway No. 23, a broad, busy thoroughfare that passed small factories and rice and wheat fields, instead of the wild countryside of my day. My warm welcome at the center reminded me immediately that my name had become popularly identified with its creation in 1956. During my four years years' affiliation with the center, nearly 500 students attended, only a small portion of the 23,000 people trained to date.

The 300-acre, government-owned center trains farm operators and tests farm machinery and equipment. When the center was built on the original site – then only 200 acres – it had been my job to help develop a curriculum, train teaching staff and arrange for the import of U.S.-donated farm equipment. The two major wings for instruction, training and testing, were well-equipped and operating professionally. Dormitories and dining facilities were clean and neat. A well-equipped library provided reference material. Virtually nothing struck a chord in my memory, until I spied a familiar single-story, tin-roofed barracks. I realized it had been used as a living quarters for staff when the center had first been converted from a World War II jungle warfare training camp. Now it was a commissary. The only other features I recognized from the past were the hills and surrounding forest.

I remembered the difficulties of working through the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Agriculture in New Delhi, which initially had resisted recommendations for opening, maintaining and developing a center of this size and quality. If my story seemed doubtful, I had some photographs for proof, and the students marveled over a shot of the first tree being felled to clear ground. I also repeated the account of the huge Bengal tiger that Indians had told me was resting undisturbed in front of my house just before my arrival. Sightings of tigers, leopards and bears were common on the farmland in my time, though the only fauna that threatened the crops were deer and wild boars. Now 300 acres of the farmland is fenced in, preventing entry of most animals, save boars and monkeys.

Around dusk, Dass drove us across the river to see Hoshangabad, where I had frequently traveled to purchase fresh vegetables from street vendors. I had often made the trip by jeep, crossing the river on a flat wooden boat propelled by several men using poles. This time, we crossed the river on a well-maintained, two-lane bridge. I recognized nothing in Hoshangabad except the railroad. The town had become thickly settled with various businesses crowded next to each other, vehicles jamming the streets, and pedestrians vying for walking space. Broad concrete stairs led directly to the river bank.

After dinner, the director, staff members and I talked about their interest in training students in two new subjects: exhaust analysis of farm equipment, especially tractors, and strengthening driver-safety devices. I promised I would look into these subjects when I returned to the United States. I also suggested their trainers use more problem-solving methods to teach machinery repair, maintenance and operation. I thought to myself, "Here I am, back in technical assistance, but this time on my own with no mission backup support."

As I walked the farm perimeter, I ruminated on the history of the center and a thread of memory caught on an anecdotal event — the 1956 visit of Louisiana Sen. Allen J. Ellender, accompanied by Howard Houston, the only USAID official to visit the center. The senator complained bitterly about U.S. funds being spent on a $122 wheatland disc plow, considered totally unsuitable for Indian land conditions. Nothing I said could ease his dissatisfaction. Finally, the pilot of the chartered DC-3 aircraft leaned toward me to say, "Forget it. Keeping this old son-of-a-gun in the air for one hour costs more than that plow. He needs to have something to complain about."

My warm welcome at the center reminded me that my name had become popularly identified with its creation in 1956. In the ensuing 31 years, the center has trained 23,000 people.

On our return trip to Bhopal, we stopped by the Central Institute of Agriculture Engineering, a national institute established in 1976 in Bhopal under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. I had not before heard of the institute, which conducts a wide range of agriculture engineering research. The annual meeting of the agricultural engineers had just began and we were introduced to the director, Gajendra Singh, who recognized my name. I was highly impressed by the inroads agricultural engineering had made in wide-ranging areas in production, storage and processing of farm produce, which has made India the No. 1 agricultural producer in Asia today.

Between 1956 and 1970, USAID financed the building of five agricultural colleges and much of the progress has been due to these schools. Since 1970, another 15 schools have been added. In the early part of the century, Indian farmers were still using ancient implements powered by oxen, a very inefficient method still employed by many farmers. Today, the country manufactures more than 180,000 tractors a year and has gone from being a grain importer to a grain exporter.

I also met with P.N. Baijal, a former agricultural engineer with whom I had collaborated to encourage increased use of USAID-donated farm equipment for community development. I was distressed to find that he was ailing with respiratory problems from the 1984 methyl isocyanide gas spill, which had killed more than 2,500 and injured another 500,000. Baijal was my first personal contact with the impact of the Union Carbide disaster, which had required the building of 12 hospitals. I left feeling disheartened by a clear case of development gone astray.

Back in New Delhi, we were happy to finally locate Rafiq. He paused to overcome his shock and incredulity, and the first words he uttered were, "How is *memsahib*?" referring to the title given Loretta as mistress of the house. Rafiq immediately requested that on Sunday we join him and his family in Pataudi, about 60 miles north of Delhi.

During the drive we caught up on the last 35 years. Collecting his USAID retirement in a lump sum allowed Rafiq to buy and operate a taxi service in Nanitol, a resort town in the foothills of the Himalayas. With this business income, he sent to school his four children — three sons and a daughter — inspired by the example of my wife's interest in educating our children. Two of Rafiq's sons had completed technical school and his third was attending a military academy. His daughter, Nusrat, having obtained a bachelor's degree in physics and computers, was teaching those subjects to 7th- and 8th-grade children. Her life was in deep contrast to the generation of her mother, Siddiga Johan, who had never attended school. Fear of heightening crime forced Rafiq out of the taxi business in 1991. He was now caretaker of the palatial estate of the nawab of Pataudi, the grandson of the late nawab of Bhopal, with its impressive palace and gardens.

The return drive to Delhi with Rafiq and his two sons found us competing for road space with hundreds of families out for a Sunday drive. Rafiq remarked that Indians seemed to be earning much more money since the 1970s. Cars, kitchen appliances, radios, televisions and other modern consumer items have become common in Indian households. "I have found that if you keep on working, treating people right and doing the right thing, you will come out well in life," he philosophized. "I took my example from how you used to treat everybody, no matter who they were or what they did in life. I am convinced that is good."

Col. Randhawa Singh also invited us to his home in Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab State, the Sikh homeland. Designed in the mid-'60s by the French architect Edouard Corbusier, Chandigarh boasted broad, tree-lined avenues, an attractive business district, and lavish gardens designed by Shah Jehan, the builder of the Taj Mahal. We toured the city, lunched on Indian cuisine in the gardens, and rode the great Indian railway. Now hauling more than 11 million passengers a day, the train was more punctual and capable then four decades ago.

On our last day in India, we toured the agricultural engineering section of ICAR, the national research station in New Delhi, where my work had taken me a number of times to visit the many Rockefeller and Ford Foundation scientists conducting research. Later, Taneja and I found our way to Connaught Place, the heart of New Delhi's shopping district. The area seemed better organized, more concentrated and much more tidy than I remembered. Billboards almost completely enclosed the place. Taneja finally accepted one of my repeated offers to buy him lunch. Usually, he would reply, "You are in my country, I am your host. Keep your money in your pocket." After lunch, we strolled back to his car. I thanked him and wished him all the best. We embraced, successfully restraining tears in that emotional moment.

Back in Washington, I set about executing my promises to the staff at Budni. I contacted several manufacturers of exhaust analysis equipment and driver safety structures, then called the tractor-testing station at the University of Nebraska to learn about developments in tractor safety, heavy-equipment tracks and surfacing material. Fortunately, I was put in contact with Louis Leviticus, who had coincidentally visited Budni a few years earlier. Some of the information had to be sought from a German firm, so Chris made the contacts and mailed the information. I, too, mailed off my data, enclosing my resume and old photos of the center, as Dass had requested, in the hope of some day founding a museum.

My technical assistance was a fait accompli, probably my last effort in the field. The Budni center had left a small but significant legacy as an agent of change in India's economy. The development, application and extension of mechanical technology to agricultural production and processing has contributed substantially to closing economic gaps that had forced India's dependency on grain imports. Indian farmers were now farming more productively, aided by tractors, fertilizer and hydroelectric power. Philosophically, the center helped diminish the deeply-held Indian notion of

education as an intellectual, not practical, pursuit, an attitude that limited the direct approach required in a hands-on science like agriculture. Shortly after returning, I received a letter from M.M. Mehta, an advisor to the Indian government whom I met during my visit. "Your self and many fellow countrymen from the U.S.A. are remembered by agricultural engineers for their contributions which have formed the basis of growth that we see today," he wrote, " ... The major momentum to the profession was provided when the first agricultural university was created with the guidance and support of the University of Illinois in 1959-60 through USAID. Once I am able to pool up necessary resources, I would like to publish an account of the American role of leadership in the establishment and growth of agricultural and engineering in India."

As a family, we might have left a small diplomatic legacy. In the mid-1950s, India's middle class was only burgeoning, and the material possessions we considered basic to our lifestyle were regarded as trappings of wealth. Our nine-passenger station wagon, household conveniences, full closets, and our home on the Nawab's estate earned us the title of "new kind of rajah." We treated members of the highest caste the same as those of the lowest caste, respecting each alike. Loretta and I had given high priority to educating our seven daughters, one of the reasons I received sympathy despite my "wealthy" status as an American. *Sign*, an international magazine and *Trend*, a Bombay-based magazine, carried the story of our Foreign Service life in Bhopal and Budni, including the home-study teaching Loretta had vigorously pursued.

At home in Washington, D.C., I felt better both physically and mentally, now that I had fulfilled my dream to return to India. Whenever I sample Taneja's souvenir gift of garlic and pepper paste, I am reminded of my visit: A small taste packs a wallop, as rich, concentrated, explosive and resonant as the amalgamation of the tastes and textures that make up India. ■

USIA JOHANNESBURG

WITNESSING APARTHEID'S END WAS BALM FOR AMERICA'S OWN DEEP RACIAL WOUNDS

BY HARVEY I. LEIFERT

The great South African jurist, Richard Goldstone, once identified a virus that attacked many American diplomats who served in his country. The principal effect of this unnamed virus, he said, is that one stays involved in South African affairs long after leaving the post. Goldstone made his observation upon receiving an award from Medical Education for South African Blacks, or MESAB, the organization I headed upon my retirement from the U.S. Information Agency, and he correctly cited me as one of the "victims" of this virus.

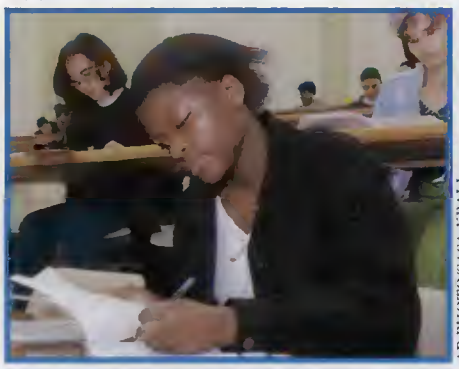
This viral infection, it should be noted, is quite different from the dread disease, clientitis, about which all FSOs are solemnly warned from Day One of junior officer training. That curiously-named affliction (logically, an inflammation of the client) transforms a diplomat from an advocate for his own government's policies to a booster of those of the host government. That was hardly a danger in the old South Africa. Rather, many of us sought to push the envelope to, and occasionally perhaps a bit beyond, the accepted limits of diplomacy in thwarting the host government's fundamental policy of apartheid, which was certainly also the goal of U.S. policy. The infectious part of this exercise, the part that keeps so many of us interested years later, was the epic struggle for freedom of people we came to know well: journalists, teachers, community activists, artists, labor leaders, small-scale entrepreneurs, and our mission colleagues, the Foreign Service nationals.

But why did South Africa so deeply affect us? Citizens of other countries where FSOs serve also suffer under cruel regimes of one sort or another, and South Africa was not, in some respects, the worst of them. But the difference was, I think, that Americans saw a kind of mirror image of ourselves in South Africa. Apartheid created a distorted image to be sure, grotesquely magnifying America's own inadequacies in race relations. But despite differing circumstances in the two countries and our own continuing large-scale challenges, Americans did have some positive experiences to share.

1985

GREG ENGLISH

1997



AP PHOTO/SASA KRALJ

Apartheid began, as a named, official policy, in 1948 when the Afrikaner-led National Party swept to power in elections that excluded blacks. But separate and decidedly unequal racial segregation started when the first Europeans from Holland settled in 1652 near the Cape of Good Hope. Three centuries later, the "Nats" provided a philosophical underpinning to, and greatly expanded, what had long been normal practice. In its purest form, apartheid decreed that only whites were South African citizens and that all blacks belonged to one of 10 mythical "homelands" invented by the government.

AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association

Internet Addresses:
afsa@afsa.org (Assaciatian)
pres@afsa.arg (President)
journal@afsa.arg (FSJ)

AFSA Headquarters: (202) 338-4045
FAX: (202) 338-6820

Labor Monagement: (202) 647-8160
FAX: (202) 647-0265

USIA Headquarters: (202) 401-6405
FAX: (202) 401-6410

AFSA News Editor: Polly Gilbert

FSGB Rules in Grievant's Favor

AFSA Labor Management provides assistance to employees with problems relating to performance evaluations, benefits, medical and other employment-related issues. In an effort to focus attention on the substantive work of Labor Management, AFSA News will provide occasional articles an significant decisions regarding foreign affairs agencies labor-management relations. The following report describes how one USAID grievant fought the system and won.

By Audrey Chynn
AFSA Grievance Attarney

A Fareign Service emplayee has recently won an important case befare the Fareign Service Grievance Board (FSGB) relating to USAID Senior Fareign Service (SFS) assignments and the evaluation pracess. The FSGB has directed the agency ta assign the grievant ta an appropriate pasitian at his grade level, cancel the employee's separatian and extend his time in class. These challenges ta USAID's assignment system have not anly benefitted the individual grievant but have alsa resulted in pasitive changes in the manner in which USAID advertises and fills Senior Management Graup positians. Presently, all SMG pasitians are advertised and qualified bidders can interview with relevant bureau heads far consideration.

In the past, the SMG assignments system was a "closed-daar" process whereby all qualified bidders were not given an appartunity ta bid on a list of openings. This lack af transparency, in cambination with the reduced number af SMG pasitions caused by the agency's recent dawnsizing, has deprived emplayees of an appartunity ta obtain an SMG assignment. In the case

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• AFSA Dateline •

Message from the President

President Clinton has nominated me to be ambassador to Mongolia, an appointment that was unforeseen when I decided to run for the AFSA presidency last February. In accordance with the bylaws, the Governing Board will elect a new president and ensure a smooth transition. I have valued my service to you, my Foreign Service colleagues.

With sincere best wishes for the future in labor-management relations,

A. F. La Parta

• The Governing Baard has chasen Edward Dillery ta replace Edward Rawell as Retiree Vice President. AFSA cangratulates farmer secretary F.A. "Tex" Harris on his appointment as Consul General to Melbourne, Australia. Aurelius Fernandez has been tapped to replace Harris as secretary.

• AFSA welcames Geri Verble as Labar Management Office Manager. During the past five years, Verble worked in State personnel in Frankfurt and Budapest. Before going abraad, she taught drama and speech far 18 years at T.C. Williams High

Continued on page 5

STATE

V.P. VOICE

• BY DAN GEISLER •

Creating a Working Partnership

At a September luncheon for incoming Diplomatic Security specialists, I was asked how AFSA compares to private sector unions. Although we're the same in many respects, we differ in one key aspect. In the corporate sector, management and labor have different goals. Management responds to shareholder interests and labor to worker interests. In labor-management relations at State, we share a common goal: Ensuring a professional Foreign Service with a transparent, equitable and effective personnel system. With that in mind, we met with Director General Edward W. Gnehm Jr. in the first days of his term in office to discuss AFSA's concerns for the coming year.

> *"Management is as interested as we are in what you think."*

If you read last month's column, you know what many of these concerns are. We reached closure on one of them: Mainstreaming officers in the science, labor and narcotics subcones. Linked closely to that is the need to redefine multifunctionality. AFSA has been promoting this for two years. We now have a commitment from management to return to the table this month, with a view toward completing our work before the end of the year.

We told the DG that in our ongoing efforts to provide AFSA input on reorganization, we are focusing on developing an agenda and a timetable for integrating the State and USIA FS personnel systems for cross-bidding in the 1998 summer cycle. The choice is clear: Either plan thoughtfully to maintain public diplomacy's integral role and structure a career path for USIA officers, or let nuts-and-bolts administrative concerns, such as skill code designations and position numbers, drive the process. With this in mind, we have already started a cooperative process between AFSA's State and USIA Standing Committees.

The outcome matters to you. Upcoming decisions on multifunctionality and State-USIA integration will have a palpable impact on how you manage your career. And we have reached the point where we can no longer avoid making some difficult decisions.

We also told the DG of our ongoing interest in the senior assignments process, including defining the senior position base and strengthening egress from the bottom as an alternative to the blind operation of TIC. Related to this issue is the need for a forward-looking work force planning system. We now have a system that is static and historical, based on the current work force composition and historical rates of flow-through. We can't plan for tomorrow only by looking at yesterday.

There's more. We have made no real progress on modernizing the role of FS secretaries. We in AFSA have to define our own priorities in the Family-Friendly Initiative. We have concerns about working conditions for information specialists and about the erosion of medical benefits for our people serving abroad.

Guess what question we got from the DG's side? The big interest was in what we hear from our members on these issues. Management is as interested as we are in what you think. I know I've said this before, but it bears repeating: Use AFSA to get your views aired.

We look forward to establishing a working partnership with the new DG and his team as we set to work on an ambitious agenda.

Inside
THE FOREIGN SERVICE COMMUNITY

AFSA Members in Action

• "The foundation of American diplomacy is the relationships our ambassadors cultivate," notes **George F. Kennan,** career FSO, former ambassador and professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study. His article, "Diplomacy without Diplomats?" appeared in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept.-Oct., Vol. 76, No. 5).

• "Gaps in Our National Security," a piece by **Bruce Laingen,** president of the American Academy of Diplomacy in Washington, D.C., appeared in The *Christian Science Monitor* on Aug. 8. Laingen decried the pattern of long delays in ambassadorial confirmation and called on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to act expeditiously to ensure thorough and critical hearings on nominees.

• Appearing in a July 28 piece on ambassadorial appointments on "NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw," former AFSA president and secretary **F.A. "Tex" Harris** emphasized that the present system, based in part on money and connections, "does not best serve the interests of this country."

• **Michael R. Gannett** of West Cornwall, Conn., donated six stamp albums to the AAFSW Stamp Corner for its ***BookFair*** this month. Gannett's collection, dating to the '30s, contributed to his interest in international affairs and, ultimately, a career in the Foreign Service.

Affiliated Organization Activities

• **The J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust,** established by **Mr. and Mrs. John G. Simon** in memory of their son, supports community projects undertaken by FS personnel. Grants of $500 to $4,000 were awarded to FS community members in Caracas, Djibouti, Guatemala City, Krakow, St. Petersburg, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Washington, D.C.

Do you have news about a recent accomplishment of an AFSA member or news of an event of interest to the Foreign Service community? Fax it to (202) 338-8244.

COMMERCIAL SERVICE

V.P. VOICE

• BY TOM KELSEY •

Fall Musings

This Labor Day, as I pull my column together, I pause not only to salute my hard working Foreign Service colleagues around the globe, but also to wonder: Why do I always end up working [I am painting my back porch] on this holiday that marks the end of summer and presages the return to school?

Paintbrush in hand, I continue to muse and, while reading the newspaper, which serves as my drop cloth, I happen upon an article about the decline of some of Washington's long-established business institutions. The reasons cited for their demise are "rapid expansion, loss of focus, bad investments and aggressive competition." We in the Commercial Service are not immune to the same problems that bedevil the private sector and I am pleased to see that our Acting Director General is advancing on a number of fronts as we gear up for the next fiscal year.

> *"We ... are not immune to the same problems that bedevil the private sector ..."*

The integration discussion hos taken on renewed vigor and the Director General and AFSA look forward to finalizing the framework agreed upon in Baltimore by the end of October. We all ogree that the business community will be best served by a work force that has skills and experience based on work both at home and abroad. Against this backdrop are the nearly completed precepts and performance standards which will detail how our work and careers will proceed, progress and, importantly, be measured. And for those of you who have not yet been involved with the Results Act, hold on to your hat or, should I say, keyboard, lest we go the way of Hechinger.

E-commerce initiatives are shaping up, as well as strategic plans for information technology, both of which encompass new client management systems and performance measures. Forget output. Well, not really. But do focus on results. Ask if what we are doing is really the best means of serving our clients. While initiotives rise and fall with the elections, the Government Performance and Results Act is one that's here to stay and it will affect our activities more profoundly than any reorganization.

Speaking of which ... I look forward to a merger of strengths within the International Trade Administration and not, as we earlier feared, a hostile takeover. The Commercial Service has already accomplished a good deal of needed reinvention and is well-poised for a leadership role in a new organization. As for timing, I will hazard a guess that we will be working on this before the end of the calendar year.

Let me end this ramble with the exhortation to return to our desks, to our clients and continue to do what we do best – focus on export promotion. Before someone suggests a different color of paint.

SINCLAIRE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

AFSA congratulates the 1997 winners of the Matilda W. Sinclaire Awards, given for distinguished achievement in the study of a "hard" language and its associated culture. The winners are: *Doron D. Bard (State), Hebrew; Paul Brennan Daley (State), Nepali; David J. Firestein (USIA), Chinese.*

Former Interior Official Cohen Finds New Home at State

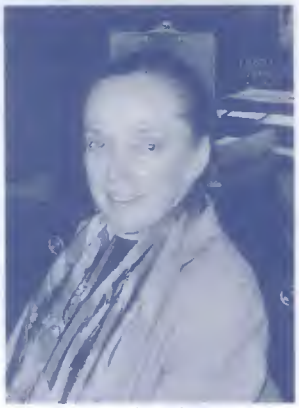
New Under Secretary of State for Management Brings Private and Public Sector Expertise

Bannie Cahen was swarn in as Under Secretary far Monogement an Aug. 20. Farmerly assistant secretary far policy, management and budget at the Department af the Interiar, Cahen comes to State with a farmidable background in the private and public sectors and in educatianal institutions. She has been a consultant far severol firms ond ta the treasurer of Stanford University. In 1972 Cahen became assistant vice superintendent af the Washingtan, D.C., public schaal system. Fram 1976 to 1980, she was treasurer and chief financial afficer af the United Mine Warkers. As senior vice president af the Natianal Trust far Histaric Preservatian 1989-1993, she managed the largest nationa! nonprofit devoted to historic and culturol preservation.

Ms. Cahen's prafessianal activities and affiliatians include baard membership at the Enviranmentol Defense Fund, the American Red Cross Pensian Funds, the District af Calumbia Retirement Board and the Center for Marine Canservatian. She is a faunding member af the Cauncil af Institutianal Investars and is active in a number af groups supporting a larger role for minarities and wamen in the investment community.

Cahen earned o bachelar's degree fram Smith College, a master's degree in education from Harvard ond was one af the first wamen graduates of the Harvard Business Schaal. She is married to Lauis Richard Cahen and they have twa children. A native af Brockton, Mass., Cahen has lived in the Washingtan, D.C., area for 29 yeors.

Under Secretory Cohen sat dawn with AFSA News Editor Polly Gilbert on Sept. 11 to discuss her views on issues of concern for AFSA members and the FS cammunity at large.



Under Secretary of State for Management Bannie R. Cohen

Q: I noticed thot you hold degrees in business ond educotion. How does such o background prepare you for monogement at the Stote Deportment?

A: I think that along with my educotion, it is my experience that hos prepored me. I've hod lots of experience in monogement in the federol government. I've been closely involved in making decisions in a context of limited resources which seems to be the situotion here at State.

Q: What draws you to govemment service?

A: Very simply, what's drown me to government service is my being o U.S. citizen. If you have a chance to contribute through governmentol service, you ore fortunote. I first hod this opportunity ot the Department of the Interior with Bruce Bobbitt ond now here with Secretory Albright.

Q: What proctices ond principles do you hope to import to the Stote Deportment from your previous experience?

A: I hope to continue the efforts thot people here are making to fully loy out the alternatives ossocioted with decisions. Resources ore limited. When people moke decisions, they ore reolly moking choices – choosing particulor octivities, initiotives ond services ot the expense of others.

I olso hope thot working with Skip Gnehm, the new DG, I con oddress personnel issues thot ore of concern. We'll olso be looking at the relotionship between the Civil Service ond the Foreign Service ond the diversity of the work force. One oreo I'll focus on is troining – determining the troining people feel they wont ond need. We need to provide the State employees with the tools to do their jobs. And this includes outomation, of course.

Q: What will be your opprooch to the reform of Monogement in the context of Secretary Albright's reorgonizotion plon?

A: My approoch will be to listen to the vorious stokeholders who hove worked in this orea for yeors ond hove done o greot deal of thinking obout reform – thot includes Congress, Stote employees ond the interest groups thot interoct with Stote. I've been reoding speciol management studies of Stote from the lost ten yeors, and I hope to move toword the implementotion of some of the most promising recommendotions.

Q: AFSA hos recently worked on employee- ond fomily-friendly initiotives. Whot successes did you have in this regard at the Department of the Interior and in other positions you have held?

A: A work force with high morole is a highly productive work force. "Employee-friendly" means communicoting to people thot you value the work they do. My primory interest should be the quolity of the work occomplished, not personnel rules thot moy inhibit the employees' porticipotion in the work itself.

I think thot the government shutdown [winter '95–'96] wos o benchmork. It wos the peok of government employee boshing. But ultimotely it wos o voluoble lessonence for those who thought government workers didn't moke o difference. At the Deportment of the Interior, notionol porks were closed. Here ot Stote, possports were not issued. Across oll ogencies citizens sow thot government workers were performing valuoble services thot suddenly were absent.

So, to have high morole, you need to listen to the employees' needs. During o reorgonization like the one we're in now, we need to share informotion openly ond honestly with employees when decisions are mode. This olone is probobly the most employee-friendly initiative we could hove.

But independent of thot, we hove to recognize thot most employees have working portners. This must be token into considerotion. At the Deportment of the Interior, we hod severol initiotives thot contributed to o fomily-friendly environment. Job shoring was one proctice. In oddition to o nursery school progrom with the GSA, we hod o boby-sitting area for sick children so thot the children could come in to work with their porents to be checked on periodicolly.

Q: The biggest complaints within the FS community are overseas housing, travel and medical care. Where do you wont to lead the State Department in order to improve these ospects of FS life?

A: These, of course, ore elements of that some attention to the employees' needs. Housing is on area affected by the problem of limited resources. Right now we hove people looking ot trovel issues. I've just been here three weeks, so I don't hove immediote solutions, but I hope – ond expect – to moke o positive difference here.

I'm hoving o great time. I've met with AFSA leodership ond I hope to continue the diolog we've begun on the concerns ond issues they roised with me. While I don't hove background in State issues, people here hove been generous in shoring their expertise. And I look forword to getting out to meet employees ond AFSA members.

Dateline

Continued from poge 1

Schoal in Alexandrio, Vo. Her husbond, J. Lorry Verble, is a security engineering officer with Diplamatic Security.

• AFSA recently completed some long overdue maintenance and renovotions of the Heodquorters building. The windows were reploced, os were the heoting ond oir conditioning systems. This refurbishment will sove on utility expenses ond will increose the volue af the property which AFSA praudly awns autright.

• AFSA members con enjoy substontiol discounts on subscriptions to the following mogozines: *Eurape-Asia Studies, Far Eastern Ecanamic Review, The Washington Quarterly, Fareign Palicy, The Washingtan Past National Weekly, Foreign Affairs,* ond *Mediterronean Quarterly.* If yau wauld like to subscribe to ony of these, contoct membership representative Yalanda Odunsi by e-moil ot member@afsa.arg ar by phone ot (202) 338-4045 ext. 525.

• Volunteers ore currently needed on the AFSA Membership ond Public Affoirs committees. Service opportunities regulorly orise on oll ogency standing cammittees ond these committees: Awards/Plaque, Editoriol Boord, Educotion, Elections, Finonce, Insuronce, Legislotive Affoirs and Prafessionalism. Members interested in committee porticipotian may call Kristino Kreomer, Communicotians Caardinatar, at (202) 944-5506, for more informatian.

• AFSA is pleased ta have a number of interns working this foll. Joimee Zins, o senior ot Stockton Stote College, Pomono, N.J., will ossist in communicotions. Goil Moleski, o senior ot Americon University in Woshington, D.C., will work with the Internotionol Associotes progrom. Heorly Moyr, a senior at Calumbia Unian College, Takomo Park, Md., and Arijona Somsoniene, a Lithuanion national who recently received o moster's degree from Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, will provide editoriol, morketing ond circulation suppart to the *Foreign Service Journal.*

• The AFSA Scholorship Progrom in conjunction with AAFSW ond DACOR will oword finonciol oid scholorships to 68 Foreign Service children, totoling $105,250 for the 1997/98 ocodemic yeor.

• AFSA Post Representotives ore needed in Adono, Algiers, Almoty, Ashgobat, Asmoro, Athens, Aucklond, Boku, Bangkok, Bangui, Barcelana, Beirut, Belfost, Belgrode, Bilboo, Bogota, Brazzaville, Bridgetawn, Bucharest, Budopest, Bujumburo, Colcutto, Colgory, Cape Tawn, Chengdu, Chennai, Chiang Mai, Chisinou, Ciudod Juorez, Cotonou, Curocoo, Djibouti, Doho, Durbon, Dushanbe, Edinburgh, Florence, Freetawn, Guoyoquil, Holifox, Homburg, Homiltan, Honoi, Hovono, Hermosillo, Khortoum, Kiev, Kolonio, Koror, Lo Poz, Leipzig, Libreville, Ljubljano, Lome, Mojuro, Maseru, Merida, Minsk, Montreol, Moscow, Niomey, Nauakchatt, Nueva Loredo, Osoko-Kobe, Poromoribo, Perth, Peshowor, Ponto Delgada, Port Lauis, Port-au-Prince, Port-af-Spain, Parto Alegre, Proio, Puson, Quebec, Recife, Reykjovik, Rigo, Rio de Joneiro, Rome, St. George's, Soo Poulo, Sopporo, Shonghoi, Shenyong, Skopje, Sofio, Strosbaurg, Surayaba, Suvo, Toshkent, Tbilisi, Thessalaniki, Tijuano, Tirono, Toronto, Tunis, Volleto, Vaticon City, Vilnius, Worrenton Troining Center, Windhoek, Yoounde, Yekaterinburg ond Yerevan. Cantoct Yolondo Odunsi, Membership Representotive, ot member@afsa.arg or by phone ot (202) 338-4045 ext. 525.

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The Foreign Service Club lunch service hos been discontinued due ta the service provider's inobility to meet its contractuol obligotions. The Club ond meeting rooms, however, will continue to be ovoiloble to members far meetings, parties, receptions ond other gatherings, with food service provided by outside caterers.

The Gaverning Baard is evaluating options for the operotion of the club ond is seeking members' input through o survey mailed ond e-mailed to members. Let the Gaverning Boord know whot you think by returning your survey todoy.

To request o copy of the survey, e-moil club@ofso.org or coll (202) 944-5500.

FSGB decision

Continued from poge 1

at hand, Na. 96-007, the grievant, represented by a private attarney, asserted that becouse the ogency foiled to ploce him in on ossignment oppropriate to his SFS rank, he was unable to exhibit proficiency in policy making ond senior monogement functions; consequently, the Selection Boord ronked him "C".

The FSGB rejected USAID's orgument that the grievont foiled to prove ony violotion of law ar regulation ond thot his ossignment was at the discretian af the ogency ond, thus, non-grievoble. (Ordinorily, one connot grieve an assignment decisian.) Relying an priar decisions (Nos. 92-078, 95-63 and 94-18), the FSGB occepted jurisdiction, finding thot the cumulative and cambined effect of the grievont's ossignments meets the requirements of sections 1101 ond 1104 af the FS Act of 1980 which provide both the definition of ond time limits far a grievonce.

To remedy the agency's errors, the FSGB directed USAID to onnul a grievont's "C" ronking, ploce the grievont into an oppraprioate pasition ot his grade level and extend his time in class by one yeor. Additianally, the FSGB directed USAID not to terminate the grievant from the Service for expiratian af time in closs until his Officiol Performonce File cantoins performonce evaluatians far at leost ane full rating cycle covering performonce in an apprapriote position ot least at his grade level ond until his OPF hos been reviewed by the oppropriote selectian baord.

Special Events in Midwest

Foreign Service retirees in Wiscansin, Illinais, Minnesoto ond surraunding states ore benefiting from o series of excellent foreign offoirs gotherings this foll. In September, a State Department-sponsored "town meeting" in Milwaukee featured speakers on NATO enlargement, Africa ond Chino.

On Oct. 17 the AFS Retirees Association af Greater Chicaga will hald a special dinner meeting featuring retired FSO ond former ambossodor John Kordek, o respected Eastern Europe ond South Africon expert. Coll Wesley Kriebel ot (847) 866-6421, for detoils..

The AFSA Upper Midwest group will hold o luncheon meeting on Nov. 10 in St. Poul. Former Vice President ond former ombossodor to Jopon Wolter Mondole will be the guest speoker. Call Chuck Gendreau at (612) 560-6215.

All Fareign Service retirees ond octive employees residing in or visiting the Midwest are invited to ottend.

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But why did South Africa so deeply affect us? Apartheid created a distorted image to be sure, magnifying America's own inadequacies in race relations.

Both the philosophy and the practice of apartheid involved too many internal contradictions to work in this pure form, leading to exploitable compromises. The system was tragic for millions, yet it also provided moments of absurdity, such as the 1985 annual report to Parliament on how many people had officially changed their race: 249 Africans became Colored; three Africans became Malay; 11 Coloreds became Chinese; and 19 Whites became Colored.

Many Europeans and Americans believed that among the 16 percent of whites in the 1985 South African population of 30 million, the majority Afrikaners were all racists, while English speakers were simply outvoted liberals with little choice but to go along. The truth, I found, was more nuanced. I met many courageous and outspoken anti-apartheid Afrikaners, such as Rev. Beyers Naudé and journalist Max du Preez. I also found many English-speaking whites who comfortably rationalized the practical advantages accruing to them by the suppression of blacks; they were quite content for apartheid's stigma to fall upon the Afrikaners. For every activist like Helen Suzman and Nadine Gordimer, there were thousands who remained silent.

In 1993, I began a series of continuing visits to newly evolving South Africa to monitor MESAB programs. The issues being debated now were vastly different from the one topic conversations of a decade ago, but they remain a kind of mirror image of those faced by Americans. Racial issues now focus on the proper role of affirmative action. The agenda includes the death penalty and abortion rights, the one prohibited and the other guaranteed by the new constitution. Government policy on health care and higher-education funding are also critical matters, but the hottest issue confronting the government in South Africa today is ordinary, nonpolitical crime and violence, which have reached epidemic proportions, particularly in Johannesburg.

Overall, however, there is a new upbeat spirit, starting with near universal reverence for President Nelson Mandela, who became president in 1994. The 10 fictional homelands have been erased from the map. Everything is desegregated now: the Johannesburg park benches where blacks once could not relax, the Durban beaches where they could not dip a toe into the ocean, the Pretoria libraries where they could not consult a book, the many universities they simply could not attend – the list is endless. South Africans today share a spirit of "we," in marked contrast to the old "we and they."

Can USIS South Africa claim any of the credit for so much positive change? With all the necessary caveats regarding cause and effect in large scale social upheavals, I think it can.

I began my four-year tour as branch public affairs officer in Johannesburg in March 1985. I am tempted to say this was a critical moment in U.S.-South African relations, but in truth, every moment seemed critical during the apartheid era. Foreign correspondents abounded and provided Americans daily coverage of apartheid's horrors. Both PBS reporter Charlayne Hunter-Gault and ABC's Ted Koppel traveled to South Africa and produced dramatic and informative program series around the time of my arrival. Back home, American campuses sprouted "Mandela villages," clusters of shacks representing

Harvey I. Leifert, a retired FSO for the U.S. Information Agency, served at USIS Johannesburg from 1985 to 1989. During his 26-year career, he also served in Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Denmark, France and Namibia. He was most recently president of Medical Education for South African Blacks, Inc., in Rockville, Md.

South African townships and squatter camps. American multinationals in South Africa dropped from 300 in 1985 to an eventual low of 100 in 1991, under intense pressure from their shareholders and customers, especially state and local governments.

I quickly learned that paradoxes abounded, both within South African society and in U.S.-South African relations. My wife, Claudine, and I were overwhelmed by the openness and friendliness of everyone to us and amused that each new acquaintance, black and white, insisted on knowing in some detail how well we liked their country. We pondered why South Africans of different colors could relate so warmly to Americans, but not to each other.

On the official level, however, suspicion was the norm. Black activists condemned the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement," which they saw as legitimizing and strengthening the white-minority government. But white right-wingers were equally convinced that the embassy and, in particular, USIS and the U.S. Agency for International Development, were bent on undermining the government and apartheid itself, in order to placate black American opinion.

Despite their reservations, it was to the Americans that almost all South Africans looked for help in solving their apparently intractable problems. It had long been true that virtually alone among diplomatic missions in the country, Americans actively reached out to all South Africans and conducted programs that physically brought them together. During my four years at post, this took many forms. For example, Bonnie Brown, wife of Consul General Kenneth Brown in Johannesburg, hosted regular gatherings with black and white professional women. For most participants, these were their first serious conversations with women of another race.

U.S. embassy employees were, of course, supportive of "constructive engagement," though we were less certain that this described a substantive policy than were its vociferous anti-apartheid opponents. Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker, who had coined the phrase in 1980, always spoke of America's influence over South African events being "at the margins." The United States could, and should, push things along in the direction of greater democracy, he felt, but could not cause fundamental change to occur.

No one, neither American nor South African, with whom I worked during my tour predicted that President F.W. de Klerk would free Nelson Mandela in 1990 and that democratic elections would take place in 1994. The end of apartheid was always "at least 20 years away," no matter when, or to whom, one posed the question. So, what were consulate general personnel trying to accomplish at USIS Johannesburg and sister posts in Cape Town, Durban, and Pretoria?

Perhaps most of all, USIS sought to set a good, visible example and demonstrate that a multicultural society can work, even if at a level short of perfection. The FSN staff in Johannesburg included Africans of several language groups, which, apartheid apologists assumed, could not tolerate one another. They worked alongside whites of English and Afrikaans background, Indians and Coloreds. Nor were black USIS FSNs concentrated at the low end of the pay scale. They included librarians, administrators and cultural and information specialists.

Based in the media capital of the country, USIS Johannesburg strove to keep the U.S. record straight through contact with a variety of publications, ranging from moderately liberal to far right. The most crusading of the lot, the *Rand Daily Mail*, folded soon after my arrival, a victim of neglect by its perhaps overly timid corporate owners. It was eventually succeeded by the *Weekly Mail*, founded by several alumni of the daily, soon establishing itself as the media's most courageous and effective anti-apartheid voice, successfully challenging a whole series of laws and regulations that other media had docilely allowed to muzzle them.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation of that day simply ignored apartheid issues, treating incidents of "unrest" as manifestations of terrorism and communism, mainly directed from abroad. SABC was simply not taken seriously, handing USIS a wonderful opportunity. In those pre-CNN, pre-satellite dish days, one of our most popular programs was USIS's weekly screening of ABC's "World News Tonight." This was a one-hour video that was compiled at USIA and, incredible as it may seem now, sent by pouch to USIS sites all over the world. Although we showed it at least two to three weeks late, "World News Tonight" packed USIS South Africa's auditoriums, week after week, year after year. There, and there alone, South Africans saw independent coverage of

Perhaps most of all, USIS sought to set a good, visible example and demonstrate that a multicultural society can work, even if at a level short of perfection.

anti-apartheid leaders and of the violent strife in their own communities. Inevitably, these viewers absorbed lessons about the workings of a free press, as well.

USIS exchange programs afforded another window on the outside world for South Africans who were, partly by government design and partly by worldwide boycotts and sanctions, isolated from professional colleagues abroad. One of the first international visitors whose trip I helped organize was Dr. Nthato Motlana, a Soweto community leader. Almost alone among high-profile activists, Motlana urged black children to go to school, not burn them down, despite their grossly inferior education. Nor did he equate free enterprise with apartheid, as did most socialist-oriented opponents of the regime; Motlana saw business as the engine for black economic upliftment.

Such views might have earned Motlana the enmity of those he was leading, but his anti-apartheid credentials were impeccable: He had done jail time for his activism and had been Mandela's personal physician, a role he resumed upon Mandela's release from prison. Motlana had never been out of South Africa before, and I recall cabling Washington to treat this grantee with extreme sensitivity. Having used his U.S. visit effectively to make and develop contacts, Motlana became an even more central figure in the ensuing years. He led a national campaign on behalf of higher-quality education for blacks, and even entered the business world himself. Today, he heads several major companies, and he works tirelessly on behalf of disadvantaged blacks through his Get Ahead Foundation and MESAB.

Scores of other South African International Visitors expanded their horizons through the IV program in the late 1980s. One was Harald Pakendorf, then editor of an Afrikaans daily newspaper, a man proud of his Afrikaner heritage but increasingly outraged both by the suffering caused by apartheid and the opprobrium it engendered. Another grantee was Tony Leon, then a young Johannesburg City Council member and now head of the opposition Democratic Party in Parliament.

Then there was Saths Cooper, leader of the stridently anti-American Azanian Peoples Organization, a frank black-power group that considered the African National Congress too timid and conservative. Cooper had quietly attended several lecture and film programs at USIS, but we were startled indeed when one day he came in to apply for a Fulbright Scholarship. So were most of AZAPO's members. Cooper won his Fulbright and studied psychology at Boston University. He is now back in South Africa, teaching and producing TV programs as an expert on gang violence.

Since 1976, USIS had maintained a branch library in Soweto, housed in a small room at the YMCA. It evolved from a thinly-disguised music appreciation club, the subterfuge by which permission to open it had been won from the reluctant government. Nine years later, I found the library's space had become seriously inadequate, but there was simply no additional room at the YMCA. Our FSN librarian discovered that a site was available at a newly-opened community center called Ipelegeng, built by the Anglican Church in the heart of Soweto. A large vacant room had in fact been conceived as a library, but no one had funds for books or staff.

Rev. David Nkwe, director of the center and pastor of the adjacent church, eagerly accepted our offer to create a new and larger USIS library at Ipelegeng. I assigned the task to Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer Susan Wagner Crystal. The Soweto library, her pet project, was a hit from the start. It now sports its own satellite dish and has been the venue for Worldnet interactive dialogues. No longer a slightly surreptitous activity, USIS Soweto is a community amenity.

Some of USIS Johannesburg's most effective programs were unofficial. One involved the USIS library in Johannesburg itself, which had opened in the 1940s and was widely acknowledged as the first nonracial library in South Africa, meaning it was open to all races. I was often told by older blacks that they were grateful to the United States for having provided that library when they were young. It was where they received their education, they said, and a place where they were treated with dignity.

And in the 1980s, with political violence wracking black townships and, in particular, black schools, high school pupils needed a place to study. Many found it at USIS. Like all USIS libraries, ours were intended for university students and adults consulting or borrowing materials for research purposes; the policy was quite clear. Still, when we opened to the public at 10 a.m. daily, long lines of patiently waiting youths quietly filed in. They had not come, in most cases, to consult our books and periodicals, except, perhaps, *Ebony*, a perennial favorite. They just needed a safe, well-lighted place to study, and we were happy to provide it.

USIS was also the gathering place for black organizations that could not find a legal meeting room in downtown Johannesburg. One of our regular guests was the nascent Black Management Forum, at whose meetings the pathetically small number of blacks then employed in white-collar positions at local corporations could meet, discuss problems and work to improve their status and increase their numbers.

Another successful project came to be known informally as the East Rand Initiative. It began when we invited residents from several black townships east of Johannesburg to see Hunter-Gault's PBS series, "Apartheid's People," in which some of them featured. Obviously, it was not going to be shown on the SABC. Over tea and cookies following the screening, leaders of the various communities remarked that it was easier for them to meet one another in Johannesburg than in East Rand, due to the routing of public transportation lines. They asked for regular programs, and for at least two years, one Saturday morning per month was organized as East Rand day at USIS. Following the formal presentation, generally a lecture or video, the USIS staff withdrew while township residents discussed issues affecting their communities.

Now when I visit South Africa, I can scarcely believe the changes that have occurred in a few short years. Previously all-white universities are becoming majority black, though not yet the 80 percent black that would reflect national demographics. Black capital now controls 9 percent of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, up from virtually zero just two years ago. American business is streaming back, with over 280 firms now on the scene and investment already matching the pre-disinvestment 1985 level.

The media are unfettered. Private broadcasters are taking on the new, but still controversial, SABC. *The Weekly Mail*, the upstart alternative weekly, is now the mainstream *Mail & Guardian*, bought out by the British newspaper. Black and white South African academics, business leaders, performers, and government officials roam the world, welcomed everywhere. Blacks who can afford it — and their numbers are rising fast — live in the posh, once-white suburbs. White South Africans feel as good about these changes as do blacks; their own psychological chains have come off, and they are no longer viewed — or view themselves — as oppressors and pariahs. Of course, true economic and social equality, especially in rural areas, remains a long- term goal and one of the government's greatest challenges.

Reflecting upon these epic developments, I have tried to place the 1980s-era activities of USIS Johannesburg and its sister posts into perspective. Whatever one may think of constructive engagement as a government-to-government policy, I believe USIS was indeed engaged constructively in combating apartheid and thereby upholding the highest American principles. What we accomplished was indeed at the margins of a dramatic struggle carried on by the South Africans themselves. But I took immense pride in playing even a minor role in the long process that eventually achieved liberation for the now-estimated 30 million black South Africans, while helping solidify the position of the United States as their friend.

Did I enjoy my work? Unquestionably. I relished the incremental victories over the apartheid system, and I felt privileged to meet some of the most interesting and committed people anywhere. As foreign diplomats, we could safely take the small risks we did on behalf of freedom in South Africa. But when I became eligible for a rest-and-relaxation tour outside South Africa a year after my arrival,

I seriously weighed whether I wanted to leave the excitement and vitality of Johannesburg for a whole month of vacationing in Europe. The Goldstone virus had already struck.

In sum, U.S. embassy personnel helped, first of all, just by being there. Some anti-apartheid Americans were urging USIS to leave South Africa, as an additional sanction against the apartheid regime. This was one "sanction" the South African government would have loved to see implemented, for officials knew that simply by behaving as Americans, we were undermining apartheid.

Skeptical South African activists reached the same conclusion, time after time. They might condemn the Reagan administration, but the Americans they met through USIS were their friends. We were lauded for visiting black townships, not just once ceremonially, but often, to attend cultural events, political funerals and parties. Our FSNs were respected in the community for the positions they held at USIS. When Congressional delegations came calling, as they frequently did, it was most often USIS that arranged their obligatory visits to Soweto, including meetings with anti-apartheid leaders.

It has always been difficult to demonstrate evidence of effectiveness, proving that a particular USIS program was worth the money in terms of hearts and minds won for democracy. As Edward R. Murrow once observed, the cash register does not ring every time we score a point. This was true, of course, in apartheid South Africa. Still, I am convinced that USIS's highly visible and long-sustained programs made an important impact, encouraging those who were fighting the good, but seemingly unwinnable, fight. They knew they had friends.

There remains much to be done in South Africa, and those who invested time and money in the fight against apartheid should heed the words of Vice President Al Gore, who said it will take as long to rebuild South Africa as it did to overcome apartheid. I expect to stay involved. Yes, the virus is still active. ■

U.S. CONSULATE SALVADOR

'DIPLOBRAT' MARVELS AT TOURISM GROWTH, POVERTY DROP IN CITY

BY RICHARD HARTLEY

It must have been quite a spectacle for Brazilians in 1861. Two ships from opposing sides of a civil war raging some 4,000 miles to the north found themselves berthed in the Bay of All Saints, the port that serves the city of Salvador, capital of Brazil's northeastern state of Bahia. The American consul, on hearing about the presence of an enemy ship close by, boarded the Union ship and ordered an attack on the Confederate ship, and the two vessels exchanged fire. It was thus that Salvador da Bahia won the murky distinction of being the only South American backdrop for a short act of the American Civil War.

As U.S. consul in the city from 1979 to 1982, my father, Douglas Hartley, witnessed considerably less drama, though he did see his moments of intrigue. After four years in London, he was given a choice of posts: Salvador or Dar-es-Salaam. A boss who had fond recollections of Brazil prodded him to choose South America over East Africa. And so, newly remarried, he settled into the splendid government-provided house on a tranquil lane, replete with armed guards, legions of servants and a garden that I, in my teenage naivete, thought rivaled Eden, with its mango, banana and passion fruit trees.

My sister Virginia, then 22, stayed in England. I, then 16, followed. My father had given me a choice of finishing high school in England, where I was ensconced in one of those misnomered British public schools, or joining my family in Salvador. I don't remember hesitating: I swapped the tweed jacket and tie I had worn for six years for a T-shirt and jeans, the uniform of the Pan American school.

Today the five-room yellow house, with its high ceilings, marble floors and large windows, is a headquarters for a construction company, and a secretary's office is in my old room on the second floor. The gates that dotted the surrounding wall, topped with sharp metal spikes to deter intruders, have been boarded up, eliminating any glimpse into the house. When we lived there, we kept the gates open, lulled by the luxury of the 24-hour guard patrols.

1980

AP/WORLD WIDE PHOTOS

1995

EMBASSY OF BRAZIL

The only bad thing about the house was the dangerous corner lot on which it was perched. Returning to the city last February, at the request of a high school friend who needed help starting a foundation, I discovered the corner is even more treacherous than when I was learning to drive in 1981. From one side, cars screech around a blind curve. From the other, buses barrel down a hill. The city's increased population and traffic have turned this peaceful neighborhood into a navigating adventure that frays the nerves of both drivers and pedestrians.

I had loved our middle-class, residential neighborhood, where we knew all our neighbors and attended each other's social events. My father felt that this hands-on relationship was very important to Brazilians, who often regarded North Americans as cold,

Salvador has grown enormously in 16 years. Where favelas *and houses once stood are now the sites of high-rise apartments. Tourism has become a huge industry, with the spruced-up colonial section, Pelourinho.*

uncaring and puritanical. We learned later that the residence had been moved to, as my father recalled, a typical "rich man's villa in a well-guarded and isolated neighborhood."

Little has changed on the main street, Avenida D. Joao VI, named after the Portuguese king, which ran in front of our former home. In the pink-walled hospital next door, patients lean out the windows, smoking cigarettes. Still lining the streets are kiosks, overflowing with magazines, fruit, candy, and a few imported goods. The kiosks, family businesses passed on from father to son, have duplicated exponentially in the 14 years since my family and I lived here.

A massive sign next to a cafe advertises, "English For You," announcing a language school that promises instruction in an idiom that now permeates every aspect of Salvador's culture. From dialogue in the country's famed sizzling soap operas to skyline billboards, English mixes easily with Portuguese. "Diet," "coffee break," "light" and countless other English words reel off Brazilians' tongues with an uncanny naturalness. Parking attendants on the street shout, "Brother, brother!" which they pronounce "Broade, broade!" as they try to lure cars into their lots.

Salvador has grown enormously in the last decade and a half from a city of 1 million when I was living there to a population of 3 million today. Where slums — *favelas* — and houses once stood are now the sites of high-rise apartments and the Golden Arches of McDonalds. Indeed, fast food has made fast inroads in Salvador, now home to four McDonalds, a Pizza Hut and a Bob's Big Boy. The lines to purchase Big Macs and McFritas (fries) have been known to cause traffic jams on weekends.

Despite deep pockets of poverty and soaring crime rates, Salvador, like Brazil in general, is bustling economically. Although the city still is still the poorest in the state, the number of favelas has dropped dramatically since 1980, as the city's attempts to turn them into neighborhoods have blossomed. Salvador officials are now offering property titles to residents who once had no equity, helping them obtain home improvement loans to turn their wooden shacks into brick houses and extending them basic city services — like potable water, electricity, paved roads, street lights and trash collection. Recent statistics available indicate the number of Brazilians below the poverty line has dropped markedly in the last 15 years, from 41 percent in 1980 to 21 percent in 1995, although the worst year in recent history was in 1991, when inflation stood at 2,500 percent a year — of 80 percent a month.

Tourism has become a huge industry and the city has sprueed up its colonial section, Pelourinho. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has declared this neighborhood, the world's oldest example of Portuguese architeeture since Lisbon's center was destroyed in a 1755 earthquake, a "natural heritage site." Though few American tourists venture here, the neighborhood's streets are teeming with Europeans and other South Americans.

When my family and I arrived in 1980, the economy was reeling from its second oil erisis in seven years, and the country was shackled with an enormous foreign debt and an inflation rate galloping out of eontrol. Indeed, the years between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s are often referred to as Latin America's "lost decade," when most countries' economies badly weathered the global recession. This contrasted sharply with the decade before the 1973 oil crisis, when the economy was booming at rates of up to 10 percent a year.

Today, with the economy running smoothly under President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, general optimism is palpable. Thanks in part to his 1994 decision to link the Brazilian currency — the real — to the U.S. dollar, hyperinflation has ceased, bringing easier-to-obtain eredit, higher salaries, lower inflation, greater foreign investment and expanded industrial production. Some sections of the southern cities of Sao Paulo and Santa Catarina seem more European than Brazil. Even in Salvador, some areas have

Riehard Hartley, a Foreign Service son, lived with his family in Salvador, Brazil, from 1980 to 1983.

become so luxurious that only the occasional malnourished beggar reminds tourists that this is still the "developing" world.

Still, no city is devoid of the infamous favelas, those bastions of urban misery that only appear to propagate with the passing of time. But it is the horrendous distribution of the country's vast wealth that astounds Brazilians and foreigners alike. While Brazil is among the world's largest economies, it ranks alongside countries like Bangladesh and Cameroon in terms of value of life indicators, including infant mortality and educational achievement.

The building that served as the U.S. consulate until 1986 budget cuts replaced it with a one-person consular agency at another location, was an unimposing three-story brick edifice, six miles from our house, with a view of the Atlantic's turquoise waters. Until recently, it housed offices for a computer firm, though it is at the moment vacant. The staff included, in addition to my father, a vice-consul, an FSO of the U.S. Information Agency and four Foreign Service nationals. As is the case in small posts, a good deal of social life is spent with professional colleagues, and children never really have a concrete notion of their parents' work. I fell into that category.

What I did know was that every autumn, the South Atlantic Fleet would berth in Salvador and we would host a huge bash at the residence. American sailors with short cropped hair brought huge slabs of roast beef, American beer, soft drinks and exotic treats like cupcakes and brownies, all desperately craved by an adolescent deprived of junk food. A band would play, dignitaries would arrive and great speeches of eternal Brazilian-American solidarity would be greeted by raucous cheers, which became louder as the night lengthened.

I have since learned more about what my father actually did. Salvador, which was Brazil's first capital until 1763, hosted one of the world's oldest American consulates — certainly the oldest in South America, having been opened in 1808. In 1980 there were an estimated 3,000 Americans in the area. Dow Chemical and Union Carbide, which both have plants in the city, were staffed almost entirely by Americans then.

Investigating fraudulent land disputes was a common task for my father. Some Americans had purchased huge plots in Bahia's interior, which had been bought and sold by a Brazilian deputy. My father once also visited the backwaters to investigate the case of an American who became a fugitive when a Brazilian was killed in another land dispute. Sometimes we would host nuns from a remote Brazilian Catholic mission, who showed a healthy affection for our sherry. My father's reporting of the role of the Roman Catholic Church in encouraging social community programs as an antidote to the alarming rise of Protestantism, were appreciated by the leftist military government in Brasilia.

Protestant evangelism in Brazil, as in the rest of Latin America, was growing considerably in the late '70s. Dressed in white shirts and ties, young Mormon missionaries escorted their Brazilian cohorts through rural areas and urban slums in search of converts, with a good deal of success. Mormonism, whose strict rules for living are anathema to Brazilians' easygoing lifestyle, has become the continent's fastest-growing religion.

My parents were a sought-after commodity on the Salvadoran social scene. Their photos would often appear in the social pages of the Brazilian newspapers whose columnists, perhaps in an attempt to ingratiate themselves with us, would exaggerate the facts to a laughable degree. It was thus that my 22-year-old sister Virginia, a professional dancer in Britain who had landed a small part in a tremendously bad film, was transformed into the woman who had taught Prince Charles to dance. The family got a kick out of that.

The then-governor of the state of Bahia (and now Senate president), Antonio Carlos Magalhães, showed up every year at the consulate-hosted July 4 bash, where servants dressed up in Uncle Sam hats and members of Salvador's elite and small American community would wander about eating hot dogs and hamburgers. When Magalhães entered a room, he greeted the guests, most of whom were falling over themselves to get to him, with a limp handshake and a permanent smile. Everyone except me. He took one look at this hirsute teenager with leather chains around his neck and a scowl of disdain for authority on his face — and withdrew his hand. Feeling slighted, I informed my father, who beckoned over the governor. Having been told that I was *o filho do consul* or "the consul's son," Magalhães drew me toward him and embraced me in a bear hug from which it was difficult to extricate myself. Such were the perks of being a diplomatic brat.

My father ran slightly afoul of this governor when he lunched with a member of the opposition, which he considered part of his job in gathering information

to assess the country's political situation. This liaison with the opposition, which operated under limits imposed by the military government, was treated as a personal slight by the governor, who thereafter kept his distance from my father.

Brazil returned to civilian rule in 1985. President Cardoso, who himself had been exiled by a military government that regarded book lovers as subversives, is a world-renowned sociologist who has taught at Berkeley and the Sorbonne. Whatever people may feel about his policies, few deny his commitment to maintaining democracy and diversity of opinion. My father's view that dialogue with the political opposition is natural and healthy is now firmly etched onto the Brazilian political landscape.

Every Saturday would find my family, like most Salvadoran residents, at the beach. My parents adored the crabs, beer and *acaraje*, a distinctly Bahian delicacy made from peeled brown beans mashed in salt and onions and cooked in *dendê*, or palm oil. Beaches were a hub of economic activity, with vendors selling sugar cane juice, coconut water, melted cheese, quail eggs (considered an aphrodisiac), cigarettes, kites and jewelry. Gypsies preyed on the vulnerable, extracting exorbitant prices for fortune telling.

The makeshift shacks of dried palm-tree branches where fish and beer were sold were so flimsy that they were in constant danger of catching fire or being swept away in fierce windstorms. Today those ramshackle shacks have been replaced by bright red and yellow wood buildings, all neatly built and uniformly shaped. The ocean waters are not as clear as they were 15 years ago, although some beaches in Salvador are less polluted than others.

What has not changed, however, is the series of unending soccer games that spread over the beach as the tide goes out in the mornings and afternoons. Soccer is such an essential element of Brazilian life

that cynics say Brazilians would start a revolution if they could not depend on playing *football* and celebrating carnival. It is in the game of *football* where elements of the marvelous Brazilian spirit manifest themselves. Passion, flair, flamboyance, risk — and a large emphasis on aesthetics — are all parts of the soccer game, and of most Brazilians themselves.

The school I attended during my senior year in high school was in an isolated area of sand dunes and coconut trees, terrain we explored extensively when we should have been in social studies. Today, the student playing hookey would have a hard time jumping the ominous wall that surrounds the school — built in an effort to placate parents' fears of kidnapping. It would also be hard to find a vacant beach to wander: The area is teaming with condominiums, various businesses and at least two new schools.

In 1980, my school's student body was decidedly international. While Brazilians and Americans formed the core, nationals were present from France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Colombia, Chile, Canada, Japan, China, England and Sweden, all offspring of diplomats, businesspeople and missionaries. While English was the language of instruction, Portuguese dominated outside the classroom. Today, the student body is almost entirely Brazilian, since most foreign companies have handed over local operations to Brazilian employees.

I have been in touch with some of my former classmates who, despite a few extra pounds, are essentially unchanged. Our friendships were easily rekindled. Without exception they all married in their early 20s and became parents. Unmarried and childless, I am regarded with a mixture of envy and pity.

The residence's former cook, whom we called Dona Lourdes, was a formidable woman who ruled the kitchen with an iron fist. While sifting through pictures of all the consuls under whom she worked, she lament-

ed the passing of the American consulate. Other Brazilians admit feeling slighted that the U.S. government closed its consulate, complaining that the small consular agency — staffed by a Brazilian who deals with minor consular matters — is not enough. There is little doubt that a reopened U.S. consulate would be most welcome in Salvador.

My father believed consulates were a cost-effective use of U.S. dollars, much more valuable than embassies in terms of real output per employee. The consulate's presence, which reinforced America's bilateral relationship with Brazil, was a strong thread in Salvador's fabric of life. Its presence reminded Brazilians and resident Americans alike of their countries' similarities. Both are immigrant nations of European and African cultures, with large indigenous populations. Both countries had strong identification with their motherlands. In the last century, Brazil's *latifundistas* rivaled the southern plantations of America's South, and both were dependent on slave labor.

Many visitors are put off by the chaos, poverty, garbage and funky smells of Salvador. But Salvador's charm transcends these superficial limitations, for its intoxicating spirit produced such cultural icons as Jorge Amado, Gilberto Gil, Gaetano Veloso and Gal Costa. African influences contributed the dance-fight (*capoeira*) and black magic (*candomble*). Bumper stickers are not big in Salvador, but I saw one recently which succinctly summarized for me the charm of this place: "Happiness is a state called Bahia."

And in general, my family and I were happy there. While the consulate may be gone, the memories of the land and its people remain with us. A small legacy, perhaps, but one we value. ■

Where've the Arabists Gone?

As State Quietly Replaces 'Sand-Mad' Idealists With Israelists, Will Mideast Policy Change?

By Jim Anderson

The State Department Arabists are the natural successors of Lawrence of Arabia, the spiritual descendants of those high-minded missionaries who established the American University of Beirut. They took over the U.S. burden of directing Middle East policy and gave it their stamp. The stereotype is of high-minded, elitist diplomats who were intensely romantic about their speciality ("sand mad"), but who always kept in mind the supreme American national interest. Unjustly or not, they also had the reputation of being anti-Israel, since the words of caution about the formation and early U.S. recognition of an Israeli state came from the Arabists. It is a short jump to accusations that the Arabists are anti-Jewish.

Along with the Sovietologists and the "old China hands," the Arabists were the cream of the Foreign Service, a small, tight band of hard-eyed idealists who had emerged from the pack by learning a difficult language and by honing an ability to decipher an otherwise inaccessible, exotic, sometimes baffling culture.

Now in a quiet upheaval at State, the Arabists have been edged away from influencing Middle East policy and have been supplanted by what might be termed "Israelists." For the first time in history, a political appointee has taken over NEA — the Near East Bureau — as assistant secretary. State's point man on Middle East affairs, Martin Indyk, is closely associated with the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, Washington's powerful pro-Israel lobby. Indyk had to change his Australian citizenship to American when President Clinton appointed him to a senior National Security Council position before naming him ambassador to Israel in 1995. Middle East Special Envoy Dennis Ross, in charge of guiding the Arab-Israeli peace process, came from the same think tank where Indyk had been executive director, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which is closely associated with AIPAC. Aaron Miller, Ross's deputy, once lived on an Israeli kibbutz.

Indyk replaces Robert Pelletreau, an Arabist, who had already had the Arab-Israeli negotiating portfolio taken from him. The previous occupant of that office, Edward Djerejian, another Arabist, held down both the NEA bureau as well as the Arab-Israeli mediation job. The closest analogy to this shift might be if former employees of the Taiwan lobby were named to supervise the State Department's East Asian bureau, or if an employee of the Turkish lobbying firm were to be named the special envoy for Cyprus issues.

Jim Anderson, a correspondent for DPA, the German Press Agency, and formerly, for UPI, has covered the State Department under 11 secretaries of State.

Some State Department loyalists deny that the Arabists are being run out of the Foreign Service. They point out that two Arabists are being named ambassadors at two important Middle East embassies: Ned Walker in Israel and Dan Kurtzer in Egypt. But skeptical Arabists see that as just another example of important speeialists on the Arab world being removed from the inner circle of power in Washington.

Another quirk of the Foreign Service system is working against the Arabists. The classes that entered in the late '60s and '70s were typically bright and ambitious and were rewarded with early promotions. Now that they're at what should be the peak of their careers, they are finding key Middle East posts taken over by non-Arabists. Under the State Department's "up or out" principle, some of these fast starters find themselves being squeezed out of the Foreign Service before they've had a ehance at the high level jobs for which they've been trained. Are the Arabists being displaced because of the unspoken belief that they are pro-Arab and, therefore, anti-Israel or even anti-Semitic? Or are they anachronistic, part of a general degradation of area specialists, doomed to go the way of the Sovietologists and the old China hands, the losers in a Darwinian struggle beeause they were insufficiently sensitive or relevant to the shifting political powers?

The answer to those questions lies partly in the definition of "Arabist." William Rugh, former ambassador to Yemen, is now president of Amideast, a Middle East educational and training program once known as the American Friends Service Committee. An Arabist, he says, is "one who speaks Arabic well and is an expert on the region." Another Arabist not in the Foreign Service, preferring not to be identified by name, says there is another definition: "One who speaks Arabic well, is an expert on the region and is anti-Israel, perhaps even anti-Jewish."

The most recent NEA assistant secretary, Robert Pelletreau, himself an Arabist, disputes that last meaning and says it is spurious as a reason for undercutting Arabists. "It's a bum rap," he says. "I think at one time there were people who met that definition but I think the old eoncept of the old-line Arabist as bearer of the anti-Israeli torch was never valid and certainly has no validity today."

Rob Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute on Near East Policy (and Indyk's successor in that job), eonceding that the traditional Arabists are losing influence, says, "Lots of things are changing because of the basie change in the American approach. It used to be that the United States tried to keep Israel on one side and the Arab world on the other. There has been an evolutionary change. The new U.S. policy recognized that the peace process is a meehanism to reconcile. The peace process became the future of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East as a result of other things happening, including the end of the Cold War. It is trying to ereate a common interest."

But Arab diplomats and American Arabists fear that the "common interest" that Satloff talks about has more to do with Israeli security and Israel's influence on U.S. foreign policy than it does with taking into account the Arab point of view.

Are the Arabists being displaced because of the unspoken belief that they are anti-Semitic? Or are they anachronistic, losers in a Darwinian struggle lost to shifting political powers?

Edmund Ghareeb, an author, journalist and diplomat in the Arab world, says he believes Arabists are losing influence in the State Department, and those who remain are "turning into funetionaries" whose cables do not make it through the filters to the desks of the top policy makers, including the secretary of State. In the past, he says, "The Arabists had been very influential in such things as Jerusalem and land rights for the Palestinians. Now that argument is not present."

Edward Djerejian, unique in the Foreign Service for having served as NEA assistant secretary as well as ambassador to both Israel and Syria, says, "To the extent that the Israeli lobby has beeome a permanent feature of U.S. foreign policy, you pay a high price in losing experts on the Arab world."

James Akins, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, famous for his poliey elashes

with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, is characteristieally outspoken on whether the Arabists have lost influence on U.S. policy. "I would call it elimination, or co-opting, a process where they recognize what the line is and conform to it if they expect to keep their jobs," he says. "The Arabists have essentially no role in policy, even in Saudi Arabia. The policy has been to advance the interests of Israel because of President Clinton's unthinking backing of Israel."

He compares the situation to the Sovietologists, who had to be "super anti-communist" out of fear of being aecused of sympathy for Moscow.

One State Department offieial who is not an Arabist but who has served as ambassador to a Gulf nation thinks the struetural change is not specifically aimed at Arabists. He believes there has been a general downgrading of all area specialists in the State Department, with the preference being given to generalists and management people. "We've lost something," he says. "NEA has suffered a particular degradation because of the influence of outsiders," referring to Congress's recent tendency to micromanage foreign policy.

Pelletreau says the constant demand for reports by Congress has turned all NEA hands, including valued Arabist speeialists, into paper shufflers who produce mountains of meaningless reports for Capitol Hill.

The pereeived anti-Semitism in NEA, true or not, will have to be dealt with by U.S. policymakers, another twist in an already eomplicated part of the world that Indyk will have watch over when he takes over Near East Affairs. "There is a taboo," said Rugh. "If any other group had taken over, there would have been a big storm, but with the Jewish-American takeover, nobody has the eourage to speak out. It is hard to prove that the policy has been distorted in the process. But to Arabs, it appears that the Jews have taken over."

Anthony C.E. Quainton, recently retired as direetor-general of the Foreign Service, calls the perception "something more profound. There is a devaluing of Foreign Service experienee in general." He listed a number of people who have been given ambassadorial status and the exalted position of "special coordinator," a process that tends to diminish the role of career diplomats: Ross, for the Arab-Israeli peace process; Richard Holbrooke, first for Bosnia, then for Cyprus; Riehard Sklar, for Bosnia; and former Sen. George Mitchell for Northern Ireland.

Frank Wisner, former under seeretary of Defenseand former ambassador to Egypt and India, agrees. "There is a much higher volume of political appointees and there is a reduced value of foreign language ability. That is a fact of life. It is also a signal to [career] employees: Those with management skills will be given preeedenee." The translation of all of these changes is that if you're a potential high-flyer who wants to make waves and retire as ambassador, don't be an Arabist.

Beyond that series of changes working against the Arab specialist, is another, suggested by Andrea Rugh, an Arabist who has written seholarly studies on the place of women in the Arab world, and the wife of William Rugh. She notes that State's Arabists, mostly white males, have missed out on several key ambassadorial appointments in the Arab world in the current round of appointments because the State Department, under White House orders, had to find embassies for women, some of whom were less qualified than those Arabist men who had been penciled in for those jobs. And State's "up-or-out" policy means many of these senior men expecting ambassadorial rank will be "out."

The shift in U.S. Middle East policy and policymakers has gone largely unmarked in the American press. But it has already created shock waves across the Arab world. Khalil Jahshan, president of the National Association of Arab-Americans, says, "This administration has aligned itself unashamedly with the pro-Israeli side. The key appointments, which previously were reserved for professionals, have been turned over to political appointees. When Dennis Ross became the special coordinator, he became a politieal czar and NEA lost its value as a policy factor."

Jahshan recently took a group of Arab-Americans on a tour of seven Arab countries, meeting 42 senior Arab government officials. "I was stunned at the uniformity of the complaints, by the bitterness and the frustration," he says. "The Arabs feel that they are being taken for granted. We came back from our trip with an impression that we are losing touch with the Arab world. The United States has no credibility left in the Arab world."

Does that really make a difference, apart from some bruised egos? One past example would be the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo and price increase following the open intervention of the United States on the side of Israel in the 1973 war. King Faisal of Saudi Arabia threatened to retaliate, a threat that was accurately transmitted to Secretary Kissinger by Arabists such as Akins and area specialists whom Kissinger derisively described to journalists aboard his plane as "sixth-floor Boy Scouts."

The predicted Arab embargo on oil deliveries to the United States and Europe and the subsequent price increases resulted in the largest transfer of wealth and capital dislocation in world history. If you now drive a four-cylinder car instead of your former V-8, you are experiencing one of the unintended consequences of the U.S. government ignoring Arabist views in the 1970s.

Believes Akins, "The value of the Arabists is that you have diplomats who know the people and the culture. I was able to get the oil embargo removed by the Saudis sooner than they intended because I had a personal relationship with the king. Personal relationships are extremely important in the Arab world."

For a future scenario, consider the possibility that Iraq or Iran should run amok, perhaps striking at Kuwait or even Saudi Arabia. Would the United States be able to quickly cobble together another 30-nation coalition, largely Arab nations, as easily as the Bush administration did in 1991, given the current loss of U.S. credibility in the Arab world? Probably not, is the consensus of Arabists interviewed.

However, some Arabists take a contrarian view on the impact of the changes at State. Roscoe (Rocky) Suddarth, a retired career envoy to Jordan who now heads the Middle East Institute, a Washington think tank, believes the Arabists' role may be less important now because the Arab-Israeli peace process has become the central pillar of U.S. Middle East policy. "The Arabists were never that important in the peace process," he says. "All the major decisions were made in the White House and the seventh floor of the State Department. The key decisions in the peace process are political and this administration has become totally focused on the peace process."

Arabists expressed deep reservations about a foreign policy in which America has no relations with countries that take up half the land area of the Middle East - Iraq, Iran, Libya and Afghanistan.

Suddarth can see some logic in turning over U.S. Middle East policy to people who have come to the top through the pro-Israel lobby. In effect, it is a recognition by one respected Arabist that the battle for influence over that policy has been lost by Arab specialists such as himself. "I believe that only the American Jewish community can move the peace process. The American Jewish community cares passionately about Israel."

Ironically, some of the hardline pro-Israeli wrath has now been deflected from the Arabists to Indyk and Ross and the other Jewish Americans who have become prominent in Middle East policy. The Zionist Organization of America opposed Indyk's nomination as NEA assistant secretary. He is regarded by the ZOA as an enemy of Israel because of his attempt to push the peace process while ambassador in Israel. Pickets at a recent Washington Institute conference on the 100th anniversary of Zionism were poisonous in their insults about Ross as a danger to the Israeli state. A *New York Daily News* columnist, Sydney Zion, described Sara Ehrman, former White House liaison for Jewish affairs, as a "self-hating Jew" because she was reported to have suggested that the U.S. Jewish leadership bring pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to be more flexible in negotiations with the Palestinians.

This administration's single-minded focus on the Arab-Israeli peace process has its perils: The Arabists interviewed for this article uniformly expressed deep reservations about a foreign policy in which the United States has no relations with countries that take up half the land area of the Middle East - Iraq, Iran, Libya and Afghanistan. In addition, the Israeli lobby is now pushing Congress to impose tough trade and economic sanctions on Syria. Although the administration publicly opposes the Syrian sanctions, Akins says that he has found no member of Congress who has heard from the administration on the issue.

Indyk is the principal author and defender of "dual containment" in which Iran and Iraq are treated equally by the United

States as international pariahs. It is a policy that is questioned - if not opposed - by Arabists, key players in the American business community and principal members of the European Community, who all see significant differences between Iraq, a gangster state, and Iran, which is going through complex and difficult changes and may be moving slowly toward moderation.

Included in the opponents of dual containment is Pelletreau, now a partner in the law firm Afridi & Angell, which does extensive work for firms doing business in the Gulf region. In a recent speech to the 7th Annual International Petroleum Forum in Washington, Pelletreau said the dual containment process "has not persuaded Iran to reconsider its policies of opposition to peace between Israel and the Arabs ... or its support for extremist reductionist groups, or its nuclear policies or to become a good neighbor rather than a threatening one in the Gulf." But, he argued, it has alienated the United States from its European partners, stifling the central Asian state and increasing anti-American attitudes in Iran. (Iran, although not an Arab state, is generally considered part of an Arabist's universe.)

Indyk, closely identified with dual containment when he was Middle East advisor on the National Security Council staff, may have a civil war within his own bureau over that issue. In line with the Israeli government policy, AIPAC and the associated Washington Institute for Near East Policy pushed hard for the economic and political isolation of Iran.

Another major problem with the disappearance of the Arabists' role is part perception, part reality. But perception on the part of the Arab side in negotiations becomes part of the reality that must be dealt with. For example, says Rugh, "In negotiations, Ross has told the Arab sides when they put forward a proposal, 'That's unrealistic. That won't fly. The Israelis will reject it.' Ross did it as part of his honest broker role, using his knowledge of the Israelis, saving time in the negotiations. The Arabs see it as Ross being an extension, a surrogate of the Israeli side in the process."

Rugh says another American policy decision - to stand aside after the excruciatingly protracted Hebron negotiations because it was thought the two sides relied excessively on the Americans - is, in effect, an intervention on the side of the stronger side in the negotiations, the Israelis. Such a view is

backed up by the IMF desk officer for the West Bank, Oussama Bakaan, who deseribes the Palestinian Authority as an entity in distress, crippled by border elosures, faced with an unsustainable economic situation where time is not on the side of the Palestinians.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, perceiving the cost of standing aside and seeing the collapse of the peace process, has reversed that earlier decision and will beeome directly involved in the attempt to revive and speed up the negotiations. But the long pause meant a free fall of the Palestinian economy and the continued expansion of Israeli settlements, all working to the disadvantage of the Palestinians.

And what does the future look like for the Arabists and, to that extent, U.S. relations with the Arab world? Although such things are difficult to quantify, there is some evidence that the State Department Arabists are, as Jahshan puts it, "an endangered species." The Foreign Service Institute was not willing to respond to questions about the Arabic program at FSI, but a FSI veteran teacher of Arabic, who spoke on the basis of no further identification, said there has been a steady decline in the number of Arabic teachers and students.

"Five years ago there were 15 teachers of Arabic, each of whom taught two or three students," the teacher said. "Now there are only eight. ... The reason we are given is that it has to do with the shrinking budget. But the number of classes for the 'stans' [Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and other central Asian republics] is increasing."

A more significant indicator of the Arabists' status is their feelings about whether they had made a critical career mistake. If they were to start their careers over again, would these Arabists take the time and effort to learn a difficult language - a minimum two years - and become experts in the Arab world? Two who were interviewed for this article said no. Some, like Wisner, would go for the management track, but the most frequent answer in this small and unscientific poll was that the veteran Arabists would study Chinese if they had it to do all over again. China has some of the allure that brought the Arabists to the Middle East: a difficult, challenging language, a complex and exotic culture and the feeling that this is where a diplomat could help change the world. ■

What's In a Name?

According to the Fogg Theory, FSOs With Names Like Philander and Nicholas Advance More Quickly

By Michael Canning

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mitch K. Grackle
DATE: Sept. 23, 1997
FROM: Ambassador B. Prescott Fogg, Assistant Secretary of State
SUBJECT: The Fogg Theory

Knowing you are anxiously awaiting the promotion lists, as well as possible future submission of your name to the White House for a chief of mission slot, I wanted to pass along a suggestion to you which may seem audacious at first, but which I feel — as your sometime mentor — I must advance.

Your career record is, indeed, a stellar one, characterized by timely and advantageous assignments (remember that astonishing Yemen sojourn) and sprinkled with evaluations that have you walking above water rather than on it. You are destined to get your own embassy, Mitch, but there is still one piece missing. Your name.

I don't recall if, lingering over brandies somewhere (was it Kampala?), we ever discussed my "Fogg Theory of Ambassadorial Names." I feel the application of this theory to your case is all that remains for you to achieve ambassadorial status. The theory has its origin in the landmark — if too little known — 1960 sociological study, *What Not To Name The Baby*, carried out by the dogged researchers Roger Price and Leonard Stern.

Price and Stern's seminal work of name analysis codified once and for all the intuitively obvious but little-researched fact that until you give a child a Name, it has no real personality. Only when you name a child does "society begin to treat it as if it had the type of personality the name implies and the child ... responds consciously and unconsciously and grows up to fit the name," the authors say. Nomenclature precedes Nature.

Thus, Price and Stern define Mel as a fellow who "never apologizes for burping," and who, when he drops ashes on the rug, says, "It'll keep the moths out," while one named Chuck "has a crew cut and wears a T-shirt topped by a jacket with only the bottom button buttoned." Needless to say, neither of these types has much future in the top ranks of the Foreign Service. Yet the authors also recognize names with real diplomatic potential, such as Brooke, who "is charcoal gray," and Elliott, who "quotes Winston Churchill and wears suspenders but calls them 'braces' and gets very peeved if you write his name leaving off the last t."

Numerous other examples of names defining one's intrinsic nature are offered in the Price-Stern study, many of them pertinent to the Foreign Service. Just muse about these examples for a minute, Mitch, for a secure future in the diplomatic ranks, which would you rather be — an Ozzie, who "takes the dog out for a walk as an excuse to get a last drink," or a Nicholas, who, "when he speaks to the waiter in French and orders a special wine, he's not showing off?"

Michael Canning is a retired FSO of the U.S. Information Agency. His last post was as deputy public affairs officer in Brasilia from 1991 to 1993.

Although the historical dearth of ranking women in the Foreign Service makes it difficult to extend my own theory to female names, that doesn't mean that the crack Name Analysis researchers need entirely ignore the distaff side. Some female handles can also carry connotations of leadership in international affairs — or its lack. For specimens of the latter, Price-Stern remind us of the existential nature of an Elsie, who "always looks like she's on the way to the dentist's," or a Wilma, who "is usually pregnant ... and goes downtown in her eighth month wearing slacks." As to the former, there are Madeleines, persons who "become executives in women's clubs and organize charity drives" and "own 14 pairs of white gloves." The case is self-evident: You are what you're named.

Following up on this pioneering work, I have likewise found that, to become an American ambassador, an FSO should first sport an ambassadorial name, one instantly recognizable as exuding class and status and breeding. Not having been adorned with an obvious ambassadorial name does not mean that one then has no chance to achieve this high ranking. In the argot of today, there is room for reinventing oneself, using a few basic rules, including:

■ Possess both first and last names with potential to be last names, with, ideally, the first name longer than the second, as in, say, Washington Irving (one of our classic envoys). Simple fictive examples might be Marlborough Mann or Benson Hedges or Chesterfield Paque. U.S. secretaries of State, though typically politicians rather than career diplomats, have provided any number of names which would well befit a chief of mission — such as J. Quincy Adams, Elihu Root, Christian Herter, Cordell Hull, J. Foster Dulles and, especially, Taft's secretary of State, the wonderfully euphonious Philander Knox.

■ Avoid the ethnic and accentuate the anglo. Surely, a Polish, Italian or other national surname can slip into an ambassadorship, but your plenipotentiary odds are much greater if you can present something WASPish. Even baroque WASP — as in, for example, Outerbridge Horsey or Ellsworth Bunker — can't hurt.

■ Eliminate or elongate all nicknames, familiar names and cute handles. No plain Toms, Dicks or Harrys and, even less, any Buzzes, Macs or Stinkos. On the other hand, scrutinize carefully those sometimes odd and obscure — but potentially fruitful — middle names, especially ones honoring a forgotten or dated ancestor, such as Armistead, Throckmorton or Pinkerton.

■ Since ambassadorships are all about exuding class, add a tincture of prestige to your name with a first name initial. Scavenge your middle name if you must, but put something up front to proffer panache, as in J. Moulsworth Hooper.

With these simple rules in mind, a nominally challenged FSO can come to sound fully ambassadorial with a minor shuffling of names. Take the case of a one-time DCM of mine. Known to his contemporaries as Johnny Jones, he began moving up once he learned to stress his long dormant middle name — given by a father to honor tennis legend Bill Tilden — and bury his pedestrian first name in an initial. As J. Tilden Jones, he capped his career as U.S. ambassador in Kabul and Quito.

According to the study: Madeleines are persons who "become executives in women's clubs" and "own 14 pairs of white gloves." The case is self-evident: You are what you're named.

Which leads me to your own case. Start by losing the surname — too coarse — and just preserve the G. Your weak first name, which Price and Stern rightly identified as the kind of guy who "has a couple of drinks and he wants to fight," can be easily extended to the more elegant "Mitchell." It's your middle name that offers the kicker, though, and it is a beauty: Kenilworth — I looked it up in your personnel file. Wherever you got that handle does not matter; it works beautifully for you.

So with just a little shifting — and no real violence done to your real name — that homely caterpillar of an FSO "Mitch K. Grackle" can break out of his chrysalis and spread his wings as "Ambassador G. Kenilworth Mitchell." So, get with it, G., all you have to lose is your surname. ■

THE FUTURE OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE

An Occasional Series

Training Tomorrow's Diplomats

From Environment to Economics, From Managing To Computing: FSOs Require Constant Learning

By Teresita C. Schaeffer

In 1826, the State Department assigned a handful of "pupil interpreters" to study Arabic, Berber and Turkish, but it would take nearly another century — 1907, to be exact — for the creation of a 30-day consular course to systematically train American diplomats. Forty years later, as the United States refocused its role in the post-World War II world, the Foreign Service Institute opened its doors to train FSOs as well as those from other U.S. agencies with overseas staff.

The world of tomorrow will be much different than the one for which the Foreign Service Institute prepared diplomats in 1947. Tomorrow's diplomats can expect fewer global-threatening crises like the Cuban Missile crisis and more localized ones, such as those that erupted in recent years in Rwanda, Somalia and Haiti. On the State Department agenda, creating formal military alliances has moved down in priority, while trade and investment issues have risen higher.

Moreover, the United States' long-term economic health will depend on how it manages issues like population growth and environmental degradation, long-term challenges especially difficult to deal with in a political climate driven by the crisis of the moment. Revolutions in communications, transportation and information have brought new threats to the American heartland: international crime, drug smuggling, terrorism. Technological advances have facilitated the growth of global networks, unmediated by governments, that have brought non-government organizations and multinational corporations to the forefront of international affairs. They offer powerful new diplomatic tools, but also raise profound questions about the future of embassies and diplomacy.

The basic function of U.S. diplomats remains what it always has been: to influence events to fit America's interests. To do this, diplomats need to understand the foreigners they deal with, to know what makes them tick and what affects their decisions.

Communicating can be done from a distance, but cultivating relationships works better at close range. Relationships — not fact-gathering — become the key rationale for maintaining U.S. diplomatic missions overseas. Reporting will still be important, though chiefly only in analyzing why developments matter to the United States. For the Washington-based diplomat, the key "value added" information will be analysis of facts and integration of the various interests that affect America's relationship with a region, country or organization.

State's agenda thus needs to focus on training diplomats to understand their contacts in foreign countries, the highly specialized elements of U.S. foreign policy, and the interests of Americans whose lives are increasingly intertwined with the outside world.

Teresita C. Schaffer, who retired in April after 30 years in the Foreign Service, served as director of the Foreign Service Institute, as U.S. ambassador to Sri Lanka and at posts in Tel Aviv, Islamabad, New Delhi and Dhaka.

The Foreign Service's training agenda for the next century should begin by strengthening core diplomatic skills:

■ **Languages and cultures.** At FSI, the U.S. government has perhaps the best language-teaching apparatus in the world. Languages are also the department's largest training cost — some $20 million of the institute's $40 million-plus annual budget. No other diplomatic service in the world comes as close as the U.S. Department of State in posting at least one American diplomat at each mission whose language capability is high enough to allow the conduct of some diplomatic business without a translator.

But State is falling short on training diplomats at an advanced level in languages, especially for a handful of strategic languages that are difficult to learn and expensive to teach. Cadres of officers are needed who can conduct sophisticated diplomatic and business negotiations in fluent Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Korean. In technical terms, the Foreign Service needs a small group of officers who are well beyond level 3 — level 5 being equivalent to a native speaker's proficiency and 0 to someone with no knowledge of the language. Teaching these languages is relatively easy to arrange, but the biggest challenge is to implant a personnel policy that supports the early training and repeat postings of these diplomats.

■ **Economics.** The decision 30 years ago to train nearly all economic officers in a nine-month economics course has been enormously successful in producing a group of officers who can deal intelligently with economic issues. More recently, beefed up export-promotion training has raised the State Department's consciousness. Tomorrow's challenge will be to achieve basic economic literacy for all FSOs, not just economic specialists. Anyone serving as ambassador, deputy chief of mission or country director should be conversant with basic economic concepts and with the main U.S. economic policy concerns in their respective countries.

■ **Management and accountability.** The Foreign Service should be meeting an increasingly exacting standard of accountability. Management training has been talked about for years, but implementation has badly lagged. If overseas posts focus chiefly on maintaining and nurturing relationships with key foreign contacts, other kinds of functions — predominantly administrative — should be moved back to Washington, where they can be performed less expensively. Therefore, the task of ensuring that resources are well-spent on policy objectives will become even more important. First-time supervisors, especially those overseas, will need intensive, systematic training in resource management. Moreover, the team-building techniques now being taught will need to encompass concepts about teams whose members are geographically separated.

For example, the State Department would be well-advised to study the World Bank's recent reorganization of its geographic offices. The Bank's Washington desk officer now reports to the country director, who is concurrently the resident representative stationed overseas.

■ **Consular services.** ConGen Rosslyn, the basic training course for consular officers, was a path-breaking innovation in the early 1970s. Changes in the law have made regular updates in the course necessary, and the increasing importance of global population movements will be ever more important in future consular training. The increasing need for management is nowhere more apparent than in the consular field, where the consequences of a mistaken visa or sloppy cash management can trigger devastating consequences.

■ **Public diplomacy.** The proposed merger of the State Department and the U.S. Information Agency is a golden opportunity to provide a badly-needed boost to public diplomacy skills. The training effort should deal with the mechanics (public speaking, interview techniques, speechwriting) and concepts of crafting a campaign of persuasion in the public domain. With the exception of the ambassadorial seminar, public speaking courses are not yet required for jobs with a high public affairs content — but they should be.

America's diplomats need to learn how to develop long-term policy goals. This is a cultural shift of epic proportions for a profession uncomfortable defining clear and measurable goals.

Beyond this agenda, five key items head what could be a much longer list of training needs for future FSOs: environment, negotiations, multilateral diplomacy, computer literacy and long-term policy planning.

Environmental issues today require the kind of training focus given to economics in the 1960s and 1970s. All economic officers need to understand the framework of international environmental agreements and how they work, just as they are expected to understand the functioning of the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund.

Negotiating, as a classic diplomatic function, should be a Foreign Service strength. The dirty little secret, however, is that while FSOs spend much of their careers

negotiating within the U.S. government, relatively few devote significant amounts of time to real negotiations with other countries. In a world of frequent local brush fires and increased emphasis on economic issues, State urgently needs to focus on formal, informal, third-party negotiations, and the role of non-official parties in "Track II Diplomacy."

Negotiation training already exists at FSI, but more Foreign Service professionals need to attend sessions. It should be mandatory for assignments involving active negotiating, such as in the Aviation Division, an office in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs; in political-military jobs that deal with a U.S. military presence on foreign soil; in economic sections in countries where U.S. investment agreements are being sought; and in political sections in countries with active insurgencies.

The merger of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency into State will bring a cadre of officers with strong skills in both negotiation and multilateral work. Indeed, ACDA has been one of the most aggressive foreign affairs agencies in seeking negotiations training from FSI. The new, larger Department of State needs to make the most of this talent pool.

Multilateral diplomacy is a specialty of relatively few officers with experience in three State functional bureaus — International Organizational Affairs; Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs; and Economic and Business Affairs. More FSOs should be encouraged to train and follow a career path with a logical sequence of multilateral assignments.

The Internet has placed an astonishing array of information at the world's fingertips; computer literacy is now required for any FSO assignment. All Foreign Service professionals need basic computer tools and training in word processing, spreadsheets, CDs, and audiovisual presentation software.

In addition, information literacy needs to be a requirement. Not just the mechanics of using the World Wide Web, but some tradecraft advice in sorting the wheat from the chaff on useful sites. As with computer literacy, the goal here needs to be not classroom training but helping people to train themselves.

Perhaps most difficult of all, America's diplomats need to learn how to formulate long-term policy goals. This is a cultural shift of epic proportions for a profession that has never been comfortable defining clear and measurable goals. But it is also a training challenge. Management, strategic planning and performance-measurement tools can help relate broad, discursive foreign policy goals, such as security, prosperity and peace, to increasingly limited financial and personnel resources. Proper planning — a process that allows revision when the facts change — can sharpen diplomats' thinking about how to achieve their goals.

Not all the department's skill needs can be met through training. A number of specialized subjects are important elements in U.S. foreign relations, such as international science and technology and labor relations. The Foreign Service has tried to create a cadre of specialists from within, with results that have satisfied no one. Rather than continue to do a mediocre job on training a small number of required specialists, it is better to import non-FSO specialists into the Foreign Service.

As long as the Foreign Service recruits solely through the written and oral examinations, enough people with strong economics and management backgrounds are unlikely to be drawn in.

The department will need to expand its concept of training. The four-year-old campus at FSI is a wonderful place, and its training has a great deal to recommend it, but the information revolution has put a world of resources at trainers' disposal. FSI's early efforts in distance learning have produced user-friendly, CD-ROM based courses in cashiering and passport documentation. FSI's Language School home page can be downloaded from Infolearn disks.

FSI needs to develop more materials, including Web-based courses and instruction that includes near-real-time interaction between FSI students and teachers. The department is scrambling to provide the training needed for bureaus and embassies converting from Wang systems to other computer systems. The solution has to include much greater reliance on network-based training, on manuals, and on teaching people to train themselves. If ever there was a field that cried out for an e-mail or internal web-based training approach, this is it.

The Internet is a passport to a world of learning and training outside the State Department. At U.S. Embassy Ankara, one agency made about $3,000 worth of computer and modem equipment available for employees who wanted to take Internet-based courses at their own expense. This may be one way future FSOs are educated.

FSI is well-positioned to adapt to diplomacy's future training needs. Additional funds will be needed to update the department's information infrastructure and increase the degree of interactivity between embassies and Washington. With that exception, the binding constraint is not money but people. Diplomats apparently don't like to go to school, and FSI's counterpart organizations in other countries report the same difficulty in separating FSOs from their in-baskets.

Tomorrow's diplomats must keep their knowledge and skills fresh. The Service prizes experience, which is often seen as the only education necessary. But in a changing world, and with an increasingly complex policy agenda and diverse policy team, that experience needs the nourishment of a periodic "study break" and skills-refresher courses. The State Department likes to say that people are its most important asset: For the future, it needs to start acting that way. ■

BOOKS

SPILLING VIETNAM'S LAST AWFUL SECRET

Spite House: The Last Secret of the War in Vietnam
Monika Jensen-Stevenson, W.W. Norton, 1997, hardcover, $25, 371 pages.

BY SEAN KELLY

The story had been floating around Vietnam for years. It went something like this: A young American Marine had defected to the Viet Cong and had been seen leading its attacks against U.S. troops. He was described as tall, blond, dressed in Vietnamese clothing and carrying an AK-47 assault rifle. He was said to be Robert R. Garwood, a Marine Corps private, who had been reported missing from duty near Danang in September 1965. Since Garwood had not been released with other American POWs in 1973, he was believed to have remained behind.

It was a weird tale. The Garwood legend of a phantom warrior leading guerrilla attacks against his former comrades long remained one of the war's many unresolved mysteries. Vilified as the "White Cong" or worse, "The White Gook," Garwood was the only Marine believed to have defected to Vietnam and his legend frustrated the U.S. Marine Corps.

Suddenly one night in 1979, more than four years after American soldiers left Vietnam, Garwood was on the CBS evening news, speaking broken English with a Vietnamese accent. He was in Hanoi and wanted to come home. Garwood was returned to the United States, charged with deserting the Marines during wartime, aiding the enemy and soliciting American forces to refuse to fight and to defect.

Spite House is the story of his court martial, largely from Garwood's point of view as told to Monika Jensen-Stevenson, a reporter for "*60 Minutes*." It is also the story of another Marine, Lt. Col. Tom C. McKenney, who says he directed an official mission to assassinate Garwood behind enemy lines. In McKenney's view, "Bobby Garwood was a traitor, a blot on the honor of the nation and the Marine Corps, and that he was to be killed, not captured, and buried where he fell."

Eventually McKinney would change his views, but not before launching a Marine manhunt to murder Garwood. The mission went astray: The team got the wrong man. McKinney then turned to more shadowy killers in the CIA-run Phoenix program, a group that also got it wrong, killing instead a Cuban adviser to the North Vietnamese Army.

Spite House is written well, but not balanced. It offers intriguing details of a number of previously unreported events. One of these is the account of a Marine sharpshooter who claims his assignment was "the elimination of former American servicemen who had turned against the United States or engaged in activities — like drug running — harmful to their country."

He says he killed 32 such Americans during a 90-day assignment along the Vietnamese-Cambodian border in 1973. If true, these killings, as revealed in *Spite House*, could well be the last, and worst, secret of America's war in Vietnam.

A retired FSO of the U.S. Information Agency, Sean Kelly covered Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia for the Voice of America, for which he followed the Robert Garwood story. He now lives in Cape Town, South Africa.

ENVOY'S MUSINGS ON ASIA, DIPLOMACY

Pacific Encounters: Recollections and Humor
Marshall Green, DACOR Press, 1997, softcover, $15, 205 pages.

BY DAVID E. REUTHER

Anti-American sentiment, represented most vividly by Coca Cola bottles — the very symbol of U.S. imperialism — flying through embassy windows, defined many an East Asian diplomatic tour in the first decades after World War II. Today's focus on intellectual property rights, trade issues and human rights reports is a measure of how much progress East Asia has made toward politieal and economic stability. Marshall Green's book reminds Foreign Service professionals of those first, hectie deeades, in his adventuresome jaunt through a pundit's diplomatic life.

As famous for lis humor as he is for his consummate professionalism, Green's book includes a contemporary

introduction and is spiced throughout with ambassadorial witticisms. Those who know Green would agree with his wife Lisa, who says his language and limericks reflect "a busy mind ever probing beyond the banalities."

The cover, illustrated with flags from New Zealand, Australia, Philippines, Japan, Korea, China, Thailand, Cambodia and Indonesia, represents Green's 34-year Foreign Service career in those countries, which culminated in ambassadorships in Indonesia and Australia.

Green began his career as aide to Ambassador Joseph Grew in Tokyo. Of pre-war Japan, he wrote home that he doubted that U.S. threats of boycotts would gain Japan's compliance to American wishes, and might push Tokyo to war. Keen to the ironies of diplomacy, Green recalls the fall of Korean President Syngman Rhee in 1960. Resisting advice to lecture Rhee on U.S. viewpoints, Ambassador Walter P. McConaughy quietly sat through long Rhee-dominated audiences. After civil disturbances broke out, McConaughy persuaded Rhee not to fire on the crowds but to resign instead. Diplomacy influences decision-making and Green concludes this story with the moral that "success in diplomacy, as in other professions, often relates to listening, rather than talking, because the more you listen the wiser you are seen by those to whom you talk." Nine months later, a military coup against the elected government drew the embassy into policy-making without clear Washington direction. And so, he concludes, those were the "days that tried Seoul's men."

Always the keen observer, Green admires Asian solutions to Asian problems. He speculates that the West could hardly have devised the face-saving odd and even days of propaganda shellings that ended the 1958 Quemoy crisis.

The chapter on Indonesia is a must-read on diplomatic tact, timing and

tenacity. Green believes nationalism can be a bulwark against communism. The Indonesian nationalist blunting of the communist movement suggested to some that the domino theory underpinning U.S. policy in Vietnam was seriously flawed.

However, all challenges aren't foreign and Green provides a somber chapter on working with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and President Richard Nixon under the subtitle, "Not Easy for Loyal Professionals in the State Department." As assistant secretary for East Asian Affairs, Green was still out of the loop when Nixon's breakthrough with China was being planned. On the other hand, he was part of the historic first trip to China, even though he and Ambassador John Holdridge drew the strenuous followup assignment to brief 14 Asian capitals on the Nixon trip.

Like a good after-dinner speech, the last chapters carry a warranted seriousness. Green speaks with conviction on the problem of global overpopulation. As the State Department's first population coordinator, he sought support for effective, humane programs for reducing the global birthrate.

Finally, Green treats readers to his musings on the art and science of diplomacy. For those impatient to solve the world's problems, he theorizes that "diplomatic problems are much like medical problems. Some diplomatic problems have to be taken to the hospital in an ambulance with sirens screaming. There are other problems that respond best to medications and therapy; and there are still other problems which, like acne, can best be treated by no handling at all." ■

David E. Reuther is a retired FSO with more than 20 years' experience in East Asia and the Middle East, having served in Beijing, Taipei and Bangkok.

MARKETPLACE

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POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

On the Road to Laos

BY NANCY JOHNSON

The road stretched ahead of us, rutted and worn, with an occasional paved patch testifying to the influence of the French, who left in 1954 when the Geneva Accords ended their colonial rule on the Indochinese Peninsula. Highway 13, the road that runs the entire north-south length of Laos, has become a sort of metaphor for the many shifts of government in this country of nearly 5 million people, which except for Japan's World War II occupation, remained a French colony from 1893 to 1954. In the years that followed, Laos was ruled by a monarchy from 1954 to 1962, which was followed by an uneasy coalition government of leftists, rightists and moderates that held on to power until 1975, when a government led by the Pathet Lao, established what is known today as the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Together with my husband, Charles, a retired FSO for the U.S. Agency for International Development, I toured southern Laos this spring. After a day-long trip in a 40-foot-long boat down the Mekong River, we reached Khong Island, a popular spot for backpackers. In the open-air dining pavilion of the rustic two-story, 12-room guest house where we stayed, the only food served was whatever could be found at the 5 a.m. market nearby, which sold rice, beans, greens, fish and frogs, and the occasional chicken.

Nancy Johnson is a Foreign Service spouse who lives in Virginia.

Highway 13 is a symbol of the future of this beautiful country.

Water buffalo wallowed in the muddy ponds aside the rice fields and chickens and children wandered among the foliage. Trees hung heavy with ripe mangos and the shouts of swimming children echoed across the river.

With more than 4.9 million inhabitants, Laos is a sparsely populated country whose annual per-capita income of $300 qualifies it as one of the world's poorest, just ahead of Cambodia and after India and Bhutan. Since 1989, however, growing privatization of the economy has helped stabilize the country's growth rate at 7.5 percent annually. The healthier economy has stimulated more foreign aid from the Asian Development Bank, various U.N. agencies and more wealthy Asian neighbors.

This fact is most apparent in Vientiane, the country's capital. Sprawling along the curves of the Mekong River, this tranquil capital now houses a few handicraft shops and restaurants aimed at the slow trickle of tourists. Popular sites are the ubiquitous Buddhist wats — active temples — now being refurbished, monuments of the liberating religious and economic attitudes of the Communist government.

The French influence remains in the older generation's command of the language, the baguettes sold in every town, and the rusting railroad locomotive that lays dormant in the overgrown jungle near the Cambodian border. At the turn of the century the French had built a narrow-gauge train to circumvent the rapids in the southern Mekong, hoping to transport goods from China to the sea by this route.

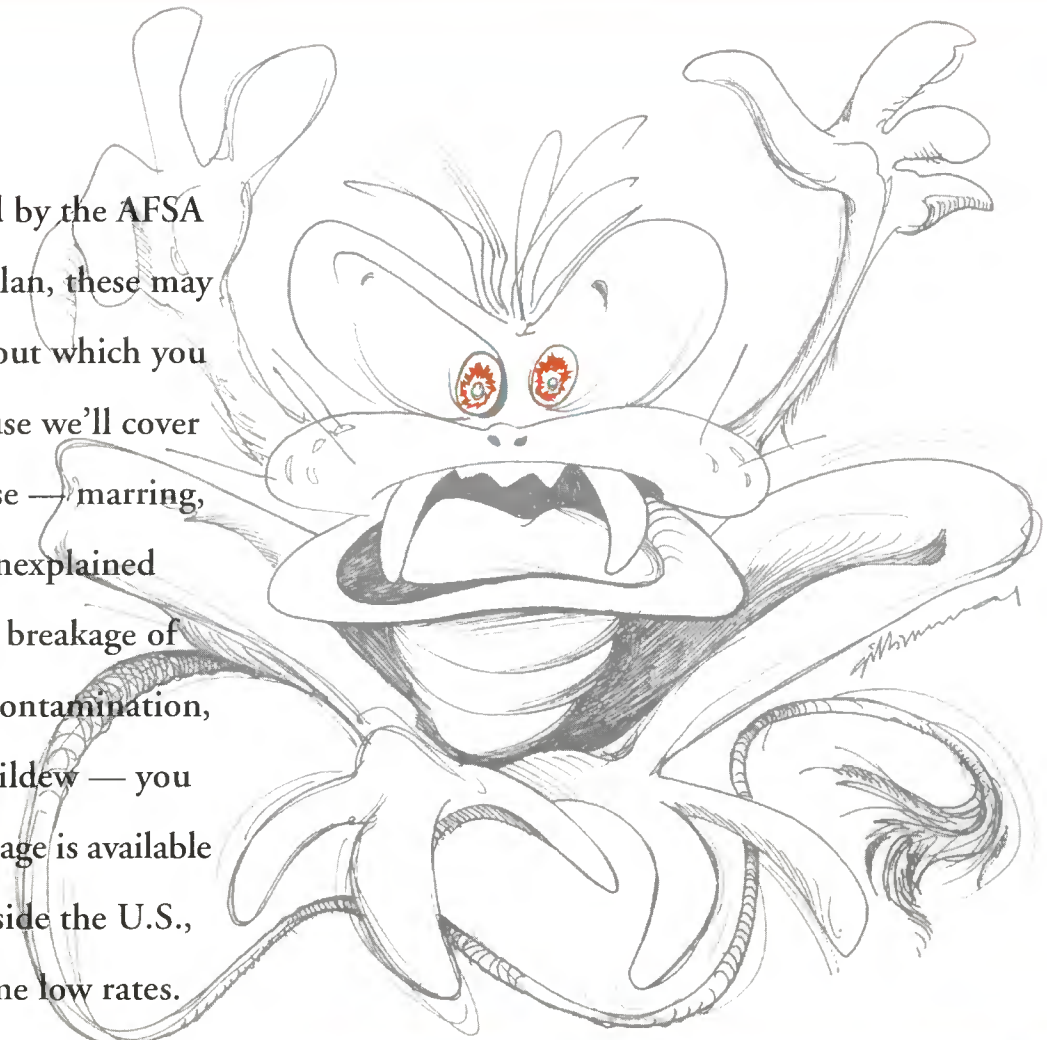
The United States has been involved with Laos, too. Between 1965 and 1974, U.S. economic and military aid reached its peak, ranging from $100 million to $342 million a year. We were told that top Communist officials now live in the villas that formerly housed USAID officials. The United States closed its USAID mission in Laos in 1975, however, the Voice of America still broadcasts the daily news at 8 p.m. in the Laotian language.

Meanwhile, other foreign influences are visible. As we bumped along Highway 13 in southern Laos, about 200 local villagers were helping to pave a section of the road, thanks to aid from China. Korean and Vietnamese monies are funding other improvements to other sections of the highway, a symbol of the future of this beautiful but struggling country. ■

Rampaging monsters; War, expropriation, nuclear reaction;

Wear, tear, mechanical breakdown;

In some cases, breakage of fragile articles.



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Come to think of it, rampaging monsters aren't specifically excluded, so we'd probably cover any damage caused by one of them, as well.

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