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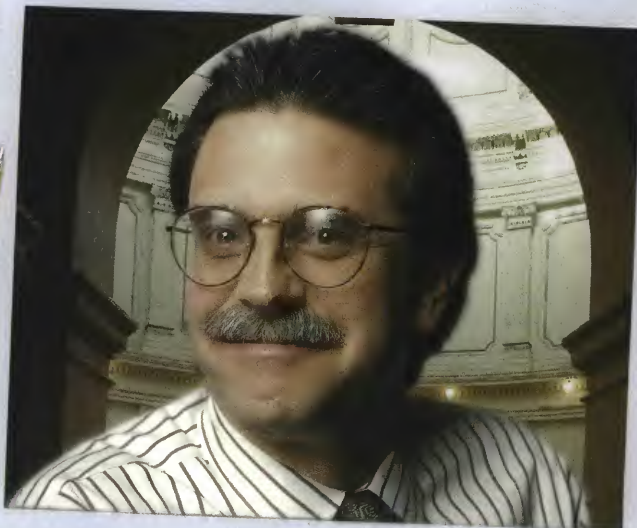
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PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

Protecting Americans Overseas

BY MARSHALL P. ADAIR

On Aug. 7, 1999 we commemorated the first anniversary of the embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam which killed 220 people, including 12 American officials and family members. The ceremony at the Department of State was elegant and touching, but made little mention of protecting people who are still in the field. In spite of strong appeals from the secretary of State, the administration still has not asked for, and the Congress has not provided, the resources necessary to provide that protection.

After the bombings, the secretary of State convened an Accountability Review Board to investigate the bombings and make recommendations for improving essential security for overseas missions. Chaired by former Ambassador and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. William J. Crowe, the ARB reported a "failure by several administrations and Congresses over the past decade to invest adequate efforts and resources to reduce the vulnerability of U.S. diplomatic missions around the world to terrorist attacks." It stated the United States must spend \$1.4 billion per year for the next 10 years to upgrade facilities and training.

However, after requesting and getting \$1.4 billion in emergency supplemental funds for FY 1999, the administration ran out of steam. It responded

Marshall P. Adair is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

*Once again,
Washington is
shortchanging
embassy
security.*



ed to Secretary Albright's FY 2000 request for \$904 million by sending forward to Congress only \$303 million. By June, responding to outrage from many quarters, the administration raised its request to \$568 million, still 59 percent below the ARB recommendation. The appropriation bills sent to conference were limited to \$567 million in the House version and \$409 million from the Senate.

Admittedly, these resources face competition from a huge variety of demands. All too often, however, national interest takes a back seat to special interests, and long-term needs are eclipsed by concerns of the moment. There are certainly times when broader interests of the nation must take priority over the lives of individuals or of groups, but such things as commuter railroads for rural neighborhoods or \$85 million gymnasiums, as worthy as they may be, should not displace the security of those who advance our national interests overseas.

Moreover, we must provide for the national defense, but consider: In just

nine weeks this spring the United States spent over \$2 billion bombing Yugoslavia during the Kosovo conflict. Even a small part of that money, devoted earlier to improving our diplomatic capability, might have prevented the need to bomb.

Logistical support is essential for diplomacy, just as it is for military defense. If we fail to provide adequately for it, over time our diplomacy will fail to measure up. Diplomacy is our first line of defense. When it fails, the nation must fall back to more expensive and more dangerous means of protecting its interests.

Making our embassies as secure as they can be is a most basic logistical necessity. There are currently about 6,000 Foreign Service personnel stationed overseas in places as diverse as Baku, Paris, Lima and Vladivostok. The ARB made clear in its report that the security situation is getting worse, not better: "The emergence of sophisticated and global terrorist networks aimed at U.S. interests abroad have dramatically changed the threat environment. In addition, terrorists may in the future use new methods of attack of even greater destructive capacity, including biological or chemical weapons."

The danger is great, and the amount of resources recommended by the ARB to meet it is relatively small, only 0.08 percent of the national budget. The administration should commit itself now to meeting Adm. Crowe's recommendations, and the Congress should support it. ■

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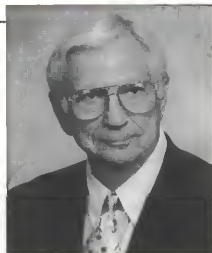
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LETTERS

Kissinger Disingenuous

An example of how leaders' memoirs can distort history appears in Henry Kissinger's recent book *Years of Renewal*. In the chapter on the March 1975 abrupt withdrawal of American support from the Iraqi Kurds in their revolt against the Saddam Hussein-dominated government, Kissinger admits that it was a tragedy for the Kurds, but insists that it was necessitated by the Shah of Iran's decision to cut a deal with Saddam Hussein and by the diversions of Watergate and Vietnam. He goes on to state:

"Those who afterward spoke so righteously about 'cynicism' and 'betrayal' — having remained silent, or worse, ... never put forward an alternative course we could, in fact, have pursued." (page 596)

During the period 1972-75 I was head of the U.S. Interests Section in Baghdad. I was not informed of the covert American support to the Kurds. This was perhaps justified since I had rudimentary security facilities. However, when I returned to Washington later in 1975, the covert financial assistance had become public knowledge. I went to see the assis-

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tant secretary of state for NEA and complained about having been kept in the dark. Much to my surprise, he said he too had only learned of this covert program through the press. Thus, the working levels of the Department of State, which included those best informed and most concerned on a daily basis with Iraq, the Kurds and Iran, were neither consulted nor privy to our own policy.

Having determined policy on his own, Kissinger is being disingenuous to rationalize failure by claiming that others "remained silent" or "never put forward an alternative course."

*Arthur L. Lowrie
FSO, retired
Lutz, Fla.*

Vocation or Avocation?

Having passed the Foreign Service written exam in 1996, I was somewhat disappointed with George Kennan's statement (*FSJ*, May 1999) that he would not recommend the Foreign Service to young people. Kennan states that "the fact that the top ranks of the service are so blocked with White House appointments means that you're apt to be cut off just when you've reached the peak of your usefulness to the government."

While I agree that nominating powerful politicians and party money men as senior diplomatic officials can hurt the nation's foreign interests, I also feel that Kennan's remarks are the classic old-timer's "The Foreign Service is not like it was in the old days" rant.

Kennan ignores the reality that the Foreign Service was largely a

WASP, Ivy League club for at least the pre-World War II period and arguably up through the 1960s. When the famous Cold Warriors of the 1950s and 1960s attended the Ivies (including Kennan's Princeton), there was an admissions quota for Jews, students with ethnic backgrounds from Eastern and Southern Europe were scarce, African-Americans were scarcer, and women were excluded.

While recent issues of the *Foreign Service Journal* have shown that the demographic makeup of the Foreign Service still is not nearly as diverse as it could be, it has become much more inclusive than in Kennan's day. One can even make an argument that political appointees have the potential to add diversity to a State Department lacking it.

If not the Foreign Service, where does a person interested in international affairs and the exercise of diplomacy get to serve his or her government? I would like to believe that one joins the Foreign Service in spite of its many problems to serve one's country. One would think that Kennan would understand the difference between a vocation and an avocation.

*Daniel Ricci
Tokushima, Japan*

Note: The author was a member of the September 1999 A-100 class.

Same-Sex Partnerships

Richard G. Miles asserts in his letter to the editor (*FSJ*, June 99) that Manish Mishra "makes several flawed assumptions" about the nature of

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marriage. I believe that Miles makes some himself.

Miles seems to feel that the point of marriage is family. However, society is recognizing that human relationships do not fit neatly into little boxes. Some states, understanding that the idea of family has changed, are giving more rights to those involved in domestic partnerships, both heterosexual and same-sex. Laws show their age and can be changed when society recognizes a need.

While it may be true that "a majority of Americans still define marriage as a union between a man and a woman," fewer and fewer families actually adhere to the nuclear image. Stepparents and significant live-ins abound, not to mention the growth of same-sex families, legally wed or not. I believe that in recognizing the changing makeup of families, society is discussing the role of marriage.

If marriage were really about providing "for the creation, nurturing, and protection of the next generation," a commitment to having children would be in the vows and marriage would end once the children were independent adults. Marriage is about celebrating a deep-seated commitment between two people.

Society should recognize the substance of a relationship, not the form. In the Foreign Service, with its challenging nomadic lifestyle, helping employees to find the nurturing and stable center the family provides is in the best interests of the service. Should the Department of State recognize domestic partnerships, it would result in better morale and increased productivity among the officers.

*Jennifer Marsh
Spouse, U.S. Consulate
Chennai, India*

An Anachronistic Relic

The bidding season confronts us gay and lesbian Foreign Service employees with unique dilemmas.

LETTERS

Manish Mishra, in his "Speaking Out" piece (*FSJ*, March 1999), explained how the exclusion of our families from the benefits our heterosexual colleagues rely on hampers our careers and the integrity of our families. The exclusion from benefits is an anachronistic relic, out of line with the government's and the department's policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Executive Order 13087 of May 1998 and statements by Secretaries Christopher (1994) and Albright (1997) have made this policy clear.

I need my partner, Nam, to be covered by benefits as an Eligible Family Member for the same reasons my heterosexual colleagues need their families to be covered. I need the department to secure the visa Nam will need to legally stay with me at post and apply for work. I need him to get language, area studies and security training and to have diplomatic immunity, so he can function, work and protect himself wherever we go, especially if I am to bid on hard-to-fill, language-designated or dangerous posts. I am ready to serve in the service's most difficult posts, but not if it will subject Nam to risks from which I am protected.

I need Nam to have a pass to enter the unclassified areas of the embassy or consulate, just like the spouses of my straight colleagues and our local-hire employees. Currently, he may not send a letter, cash a check, shop at the commissary or visit the Community Liaison Office.

I need Nam to be on the embassy personnel list so I know he will be evacuated in an emergency. I need him to be included in the department's medical coverage and medical evacuation program, so I know he'll get the same level of treatment as my colleagues' families. I want Nam to be able to accompany me to and from post on assignment, R&R

LETTERS

and home leave travel, something which has cost us thousands of dollars at our previous posts.

My heterosexual colleagues rely on these and many other benefits to ensure their families' protection and well-being as they move between assignments. The department recognizes that families need these benefits. Without them, for me to take a post abroad represents significant costs, and risks to Nam, that my colleagues would never put up with. But if I rule out working abroad, I cannot pursue a normal career path.

For several years now, every class of new Civil and Foreign Service employees has included openly gay and lesbian employees, some with partners. This trend will continue. They expect to be treated equally with their heterosexual peers. But the current practice puts the department's gay and lesbian employees at a professional and personal disadvantage from their first day on the job, and puts the department at a disadvantage for attracting and retaining the best talent. By contrast, domestic partner benefits are offered by over 2,800 employers that compete with the department for qualified personnel: private companies — including 71 Fortune 500 companies — state and local governments, non-profits, unions and academic institutions.

To stimulate some progress on this issue, Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies (GLIFAA) is submitting a proposal to the director general, outlining steps the department can take to bring practice into line with the policy of non-discrimination. We are looking forward to working with the department to achieve an equitable solution.

*Bryan Dalton
FSO, Bureau of
African Affairs
President, GLIFAA*

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LETTERS

My Partner, My Family

My first reaction in reading the dismissive letters in the July/August edition of the *Journal* in response to Manish Mishra's call for partnership benefits for gay and lesbian employees ("Preposterous Wailing" and "Equal Value, Equal Benefits") was that one must, at least, credit the writers with honesty. It is helpful for gays and lesbians in the department to know which of their colleagues consider them to be second-class citizens.

It is very important to clarify one point, however. When we gay and lesbian employees ask for eligible family member status for our partners, we are not talking about casual "boyfriends" accompanying us overseas for "entertainment privileges."

My partner and I have been together for eight years. In that time, we have established a life, together, in every way: emotional, material, financial. We have created a family.

And, despite the casual denigration expressed by the letter writers, my family, like the families of all gay and lesbian employees, is as important and as valuable to me as the families of my straight colleagues are to them — and deserving of the same respect and benefits.

David DiGiovanna
FSO
Embassy Jakarta

Tours and Hardship Posts

I can see arguments both ways for spending four years in non-hardship posts. The more important issue is how we make service at hardship posts more attractive. Judging by the numbers bidding on such posts, the current set of incentives — shorter tours, R&Rs, and differentials — is not working very well. When 60 bid on Dublin and

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LETTERS

one bids on Bamako, something is out of balance.

If we save money by extending tours to Vienna and Geneva, fair enough. We should use the resulting savings, however, to improve conditions of service in our toughest and most dangerous places. We should offer extra R&Rs, short local leaves, higher differentials, favorable consideration for promotion, and whatever it takes to attract our best and to compensate for the isolation, health and safety risks, and, most recently, terrorist threats at these posts.

A few years ago we lived through a wholesale cut of post differentials in the name of "equity" (i.e., saving a few bucks). Let us not repeat that mistake. Instead let us recognize that those who serve in the Luandas and Monrovia of the service deserve all the support and encouragement we can possibly give them.

John Limbert
Deputy Coordinator for
Counterterrorism
Washington, D.C.

Say It Ain't So

I have just received a copy of "AFSA Reaction to the Alternative Exam Program (AEP)." To say that I reacted with astonishment and disbelief is an understatement.

I passed the very old three-day written and one hour oral exams in 1950, because I was a bookworm and a serious student. As a frequent Foreign Service recruiter, before and after retirement, and as a diplomat in residence I have discussed the FS entrance process frequently with college professors. All agreed that neither a written or oral exam is a good predictor of later success.

As a member of the FS Board of Examiners before retirement and occasionally afterwards, I agree that

both the written and oral examinations could be improved. During my service as an examiner the oral questions were standardized. Anyone who has served in BEX would admit that there is bias in any oral examination. But I, for one, would admit that the oral examination process of the 1980s and 1990s is far more demanding than that of previous decades. (I think I would have failed it as a callow youth in 1980).

But I find the Alternative Exam Program hard to believe. Who designed AEP? With what credentials? Who could verify essays sent in by mail? Or self-evaluations of knowledge and experience?

Say it ain't so, *Foreign Service Journal*.

C. Patrick Quinlan
FSO, retired
Edna, Minn.

Editor's note: Sorry, but it is so. For more information, see "Dumbing Down Entry to the Foreign Service?" FSJ, September 1999.

An All-time Low

While on TDY as a retired annuitant, I accidentally picked up the July-August issue of the *Journal*. I say accidentally because I do not subscribe to the *Journal* and the July-August issue reminded me why.

Never quite the "professional" magazine advertised on its cover, the *Journal* hit an all-time "literary" low with the inclusion of the fictional stories "The Shark Woman" and "He Slept Here." I do believe the *Journal* should honor good fiction by publishing one issue a year with fiction stories. However, those stories, while they may be fiction, are far from good. It seems obvious that the editors that picked those stories out of the many that must have been submitted were raised on "Pulp Fiction" of movie fame. They obviously know very little about the



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LETTERS

quality fiction produced by Dickens, London, Poe, Mark Twain, Maupassant, or O Henry.

In the future if I want to read smut, I can turn to the pages of *Hustler*, *Playboy*, or the fiction issue of the *Foreign Service Journal*. If, however, I want material suitable for a foreign affairs professional, I will continue to buy *Foreign Affairs*, *The Economist*, *IR Quarterly*, or other journals that take foreign affairs seriously.

David Williams
FSO, Retired
Fairfax, Va.

The editor responds: We can only be thankful that David Williams did not read last year's fiction issue, which included stories considerably more risqué than those in the 1999 issue. For the record, the fiction pieces are chosen by ballot of the Editorial Board, almost all of whose members are active and retired Foreign Service employees.

Will China Follow the Rules?

In the review of Chris Patten's *East and West: China, Power, and the Future of Asia* (September *Journal*), Patten is said to believe that "modernization, economic progress and business expansion follow rules that any society can understand, so tying economic progress to the way societies function is a false and misleading debate that only leads to condescending, self-defeating attitudes about the East."

This is what many economists told us about Russia — that markets were the same everywhere, and Russian society would follow the rules. How wrong they were, and perhaps Patten too.

Yale Richmond
FSO, retired
Washington, D.C. ■



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J. KIRBY SIMON FOREIGN SERVICE TRUST

AN INVITATION TO PROPOSE PROJECTS FOR FUNDING BY THE J. KIRBY SIMON FOREIGN SERVICE TRUST IN 2000

The J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust is a charitable fund established in the memory of Kirby Simon, a Foreign Service Officer who died in 1995 while serving in Taiwan. The Trust is committed to expanding the opportunities for professional fulfillment and community service of active Foreign Service Officers and Specialists and their families.

The principal activity of the Trust is to support projects that are initiated and carried out, not in an official capacity and not on official time, by Foreign Service personnel or members of their families, wherever located. The Trust, however, will also consider proposals from other U.S. Government employees or members of their families, regardless of nationality, who are located at American diplomatic posts abroad.

In 1999 the Trust made its third round of grants — 19 in number, ranging in amount from \$300 to \$3070, for a total of \$28,040. These grants supported the following projects (further described in a Trust announcement entitled "Grants Awarded in 1999," available on the Web at www.kirbysimontrust.org):

- **Facilities for the Ill and Disabled:** An occupational therapy and play room for disabled West Bank children; audio-recorded textbooks for blind children in Peruvian schools; a home for HIV-positive women and children in India; a Dominican Republic clinic for poor HIV-positive children.
- **Other Facilities for Children:** Refrigeration and heating for a Chilean shelter for abused children; outdoor play equipment for a Romanian village orphanage.
- **Facilities for the Homeless:** A shelter for Indonesian homeless women and their children; a program to nurture and protect homeless children in Cape Verde.
- **Turkish Earthquake Relief:** Provisioning and fundraising activities conducted by U.S. Embassy and Consulate groups in response to the earthquake devastation.
- **Educational Programs:** Toilets and a library room for a Liberian elementary school; a library for the only women's prison in Swaziland; connection of Russian orphanages to the Internet for educational purposes; educational computing equipment at a Romanian home for street children; books for Nepali schools assisted under a "school adoption" program.
- **Cultural Programs:** Musical scores and tabbards for choral singing and training activities in Uganda; participation in the renovation of the National Museum in Cambodia.
- **"Civil Society" Assistance:** A Moroccan clearing-

house connecting volunteers with charitable groups in need of voluntary services.

- **Programs for Foreign Service Children:** Renovation of a children's playground at the U.S. Embassy in Turkey; a Foreign Service Youth Foundation program to assist Foreign Service family youths to cope with relocation.

The Trust now invites the submission of proposals for support in 2000. It is anticipated that most of the new grants will fall within the same funding range as the 1999 awards and that projects assisted by the Trust will reflect a variety of interests and approaches, some of which are illustrated by the 1999 grants. Other possible projects include, for example, studies of governmental policies affecting the professional achievement and personal well-being of Foreign Service personnel; measures to increase public awareness of the work of the Foreign Service and the lives of its members; or programs to expand knowledge and stimulate thought, on the part of Government personnel, about critical foreign affairs topics (including human rights and environmental issues).

Grants provided by the Trust can be used to defray a wide range of project expenses, such as acquisition of equipment, books and supplies, travel and data collection costs, and dissemination of materials. Grant funds from the Trust, however, cannot be used to pay salaries or other compensation to U.S. Government employees or their family members. Because of the limited resources available to the Trust, it is not in a position to support projects that, in the view of the Trustees, have reasonable prospects of obtaining all the funds they need from other sources, or that propose to conduct activities closely similar to those undertaken by other public or private programs, or that cannot be carried out effectively with Trust-size grants.

A proposal should include a description of the project, what it is intended to achieve, and the role to be played by the applicant(s); a preliminary plan for disseminating the results of the project; a budget; other available funding, if any; and a brief biography of the applicant(s). Proposals should not be longer than five double-spaced pages (exclusive of budget and biographical material).

Proposals for projects to be funded during calendar year 2000 must be received by the Trust no later than February 29, 2000.

Proposals should be sent to the
J. Kirby Simon Foreign Service Trust,
by mail to 82 Edgehill Road, New Haven, CT 06511,
by fax to 203-432-0063 or by e-mail to john.simon@yale.edu.
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Further information can be found on the Web
at www.kirbysimontrust.org.



CLIPPINGS



"What is the world waiting for? An international peacekeeping force is urgently needed to prevent the slaughter from proceeding, and it must arrive in East Timor right now, not in weeks or months, if an even more cataclysmic situation is to be avoided that would be a permanent stain to the world's conscience. ... While diplomats talk, my country is being destroyed."

— CARLOS BELO,
ROMAN CATHOLIC
BISHOP OF DILI, EAST
TIMOR; 1996 NOBEL
PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE,
SEPT. 16, 1999

THE LITTLE BOUTIQUE AGENCY THAT COULD

This past spring was not exactly the most auspicious timing for a new batch of Peace Corps volunteers to head for China, Dick Kirschten observes in the September issue of *Government Executive Magazine*. After all, NATO bombers had struck the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in May, touching off massive anti-American demonstrations throughout China. Soon thereafter, a congressional committee issued a report accusing Beijing of systematic efforts to steal U.S. nuclear secrets.

Yet in June, a new class of 31 China-bound Peace Corps volunteers got a warm send-off from none other than China's ambassador to Washington, Li Zhaoxing. Ambassador Li seized the occasion to contrast the volunteers favorably with American elected officials who, he said, "refuse to go abroad and see things for themselves." (Kirschten notes that this attitude was nicely echoed in a Chinese expression cited by a returned volunteer who taught there: "We must seek common ground while reserving differences.")

China, like a number of other countries, received its first Peace Corps volunteers only in 1993. (The official agreement establishing the program was not signed until President Clinton's 1998 state visit to China). Indeed, so many requests for new or augmented staffing have recently come in from countries formerly considered ideological adversaries that the agency has shifted its geographical orientation away from Western Hemisphere democracies toward destinations in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.

Still, however popular the volunteers are with their overseas clients, a cynic might well wonder how the organization is doing back home. Kirschten's answer: 38 years after its idealistic inception, the Peace Corps — a boutique-sized agency with a headquarters staff of just over 500 — continues to defy the norms of institutional Washington and remains largely immune to the town's political atmospherics.

Volunteer applications are on the rise, and morale appears high both at headquarters and in the field. More tellingly, Congress recently approved an unprecedented four-year authorization that would increase the agency's budget by a dramatic 50 percent from 1998 to 2003 — though it is highly unlikely that the appropriation bill will be anywhere near as generous. Still, whatever the agency's budget, Kirschten concludes that the Peace Corps has become a "bottom-driven, staff-churning, high-growth enterprise that is enjoying broad support at a time of bitter partisan division."

BRADLEY'S BACKUP

In a profile of presidential candidate Bill Bradley, the former NBA basketball star and U.S. senator, reporter Melinda Henneberger in the June 27 *New York Times Magazine* describes a campaign stop in Nashua, N.H.

Bradley was meeting with inner-city kids, "where he told a young man who hopes to play pro ball one day that he needs a backup plan.

"What was your backup plan?" the kid wondered. Bradley was sheepish. "Something called the State Department."



CLIPPINGS

BELT-TIGHTENING, CANADIAN STYLE

Canadian diplomats in South Korea are caught between skyrocketing living costs and penurious bureaucrats back in Ottawa. As Charlie Gillis explains in the July 5 *National Post*, the cost of living and doing business in Korea has always been high. But Canadian taxpayers shelled out \$7.3 million Canadian last year to operate the embassy in Seoul — nearly double the amount it costs to run bigger embassies such as those in Manila and Moscow.

Auditors back in Ottawa responded with a long list of cost-cutting measures for their colleagues in Seoul and Pusan. These included orders to sell one of the mission's six cars and lay off its driver, ban employees from driving official vehicles to and from work, quit importing Canadian household appliances, and move to low-rent sections of town, among many others.

The response from the diplomats was far from enthusiastic, notes Gillis. Trade office staff in Pusan complained that they'd already had to scrounge used tables and chairs from the local consulate to furnish their work space. For their part, officials in Seoul pointed out that a recommendation to switch to natural gas appliances to save power costs was impractical since many of their quarters do not even have gas lines.

As Gillis observes, however, the auditors' hand was strengthened by their finding that the mission suffered from lax accounting and abysmal record-keeping, especially in the area of property management. Some officers had neglected to sign occupancy agreements, while

others had authorized their own claims for hospitality expenses.

Meanwhile, Canada's ambassador to Seoul, Arthur Perron, has a major headache of his own. To preempt a recalcitrant landlord who tried to raise the rent on Perron's official residence in violation of the lease terms, and then threatened to sell the property out from under him, Ottawa bought it outright — even though an independent assessor found that the land was barely supported by a wobbly retaining wall that would cost at least \$250,000 Canadian to repair.

LAND OF THE RISING PRICES, AGAIN

The Economist magazine monitors the cost of living in 122 cities around the world and publishes an annual list of the most — and least — expensive cities. The 1999 survey has few surprises at the top: Tokyo, Osaka, and Hong Kong are the three leaders, just as they were last year. At the other end of the scale, Harare and Quito, both already among the cheapest locales in previous years, are now tied for least expensive.

Travelers looking for bargains should head for Brazil: the collapse of the real has dropped Rio de Janeiro from 28th most expensive last year to 111th in 1999, and São Paulo from 33rd to 105th. But for sheer volatility, Moscow is the pace-setter: it went from third place in 1997 to 88th last year and now ranks 37th overall. Closer to home, New York City is steadily moving up, rising from 16th to 12th most costly; Atlanta was the cheapest U.S. destination surveyed, standing at 69th of 122. ■

50 YEARS AGO

A certain amount of healthy grumbling is always found in any career service and may be discounted. We should be alert, however, for any uneasiness which seems to amount to more than that, or the malaise of a few malcontents. At the present time, for a variety of reasons, of which we believe the chief is merely uncertainty, some members of all branches of the Service seem to be genuinely worried about the future, and the possibility of making an effective contribution to the prosecution of foreign policy as members of the Service.

— EDITORIAL, FSJ,

NOVEMBER 1949



That's right, the *Foreign Service Journal* is jumping on the fin de siècle, Y2K bandwagon with a contest to engage the hearts and minds of Foreign Service officers and like-minded types.

You are requested to submit entries describing the best and/or worst diplomatic move of the 20th Century. The person, organization or government that made the move may be from the United States or another country. Along with your nomination, you must include a statement of 200 words or less, explaining why you think your entry deserves the title:

“Best Diplomatic Move of the 20th Century”

or

“Worst Diplomatic Move of the 20th Century.”*

You may enter the contest for worst move, best move, or both.

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE *JOURNAL* NO LATER THAN **Nov. 30, 1999**. You may submit entries by mail, fax (202) 338-8244, or by e-mail (journal@afsa.org). Our address is **Contest, *Foreign Service Journal*, 2101 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.**



Prizes:

The first prize in each category will be **\$100**; the second prize will be **\$50**. Additional prizes may be added. Winning and other noteworthy entries will be published in the *Journal*. By submitting your entry, you give your consent to publication.

The Editorial Board of the *Journal*, sitting in camera, will determine the winning entries. The results of the contest will be published in the *Journal* early in 2000.

**The judges have already determined that bombing the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was not, strictly speaking, a diplomatic act, and will not be considered as a contest entry.*

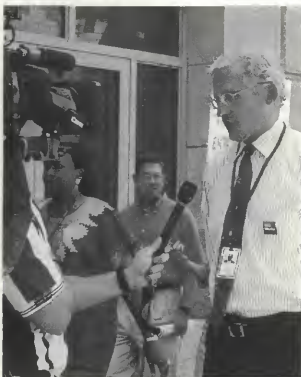
REAGAN BUILDING A SECURITY RISK?

When federal employees worry about threats to their physical safety, places like Nairobi, Beirut and Oklahoma City probably come to mind. But for a number of workers at the U.S. Agency for International Development, the problem is much closer to home.

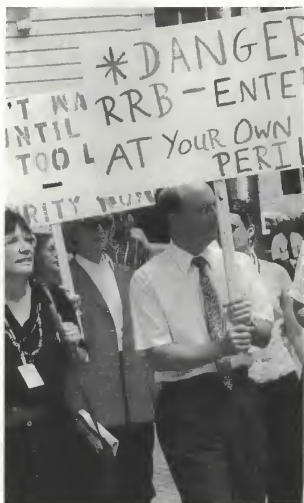
More than 300 USAID employees picketed their own workplace in downtown Washington at lunchtime Aug. 17, to protest what they claim are glaring lapses in security at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. The second largest federal building (after the Pentagon), the Reagan Building is managed by the General Services Administration. It houses 5,400 federal and 100 private employees.

AFSA Vice President for USAID Frank Miller, an organizer of the protest, cited several crucial concerns the association wants GSA to address:

- unscreened pedestrian access to parts of the building 21 hours a day;
- inadequate checking of vehicles parking in the 2,000-space underground garage; and



AFSA Vice President Frank Miller tells local media why Reagan Building procedures make lots of USAID workers nervous.



Lunchtime picket line on building security drew over 300 demonstrators.



- the lack of blast protection on most windows.

According to a March 18 *Washington Post* front-page article, a key problem is that GSA wants to keep the building open to the public for economic reasons. The *Post* cited a report by security experts at Sandia National Laboratory that said the building's open design and unusual

degree of public access created an urgent need for security improvements.

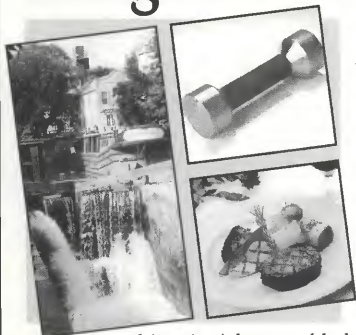
Within the GSA, the report states, there is "a sense that a strong, visible security presence" would discourage the public from visiting shops and other commercial facilities in the building. "Currently, it appears that the need for revenue generation through tenant occupancy, convention space utilization and parking revenues outweighs the need for implementation of basic security measures," the Sandia report states.

Among the other tenants at the Reagan building are the Environmental Protection Agency, the Commerce Department and the U.S. Customs Service, a law enforcement agency that could attract hostile attention. A child-care center is located next to the Customs Service,

which the Sandia report says is "ill-advised."

In a letter to the *Post*, GSA Commissioner Robert Peck rejected the idea of closing the building to the public: "To do so would vitiate the idea of the Reagan Building as an economic stimulus to the city and a symbol of the openness of our government." —Bob Guldin

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SPEAKING OUT

When "Expedited" Naturalization Isn't

By JOHN M. GRONDELSKI

Thanks to a provision of the Immigration & Nationality Act (INA), spouses of U.S. government personnel are automatically eligible for naturalization without having to wait three years and reside in the U.S. at least half that time (a criterion many FSO spouses obviously could not meet). [See sidebar, page 21.]

There's just one problem: The process is falling apart.

Even the State Department knows that. On July 16, 1999 the Department sent a cable (State 134190) admitting as much, saying it could "play only a liaison role" in such cases.

My wife's expedited naturalization took almost eight months from start to finish, and that was with a U.S. senator's office calling INS every day during the last two months. Other officers, especially new ones, can tell similar horror stories. More and more officers are going abroad without their spouses having the benefit of U.S. citizenship.

Various factors have slowed down the pace of "expedited" naturalization; some are legal barriers, but most of the obstacles are bureaucratic:

Fingerprints. INS now uses only fingerprints taken by its own fingerprint agencies. Previously, local police forces or social service agencies could fingerprint immigrants. Now, applicants must wait for INS to schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted (it took 54 days for INS to schedule ours)

John Grondelski is a first-tour FSO serving in London.

*Surely FSOs
should be able
to obtain U.S.
passports for their
entire family
before leaving
for post.*



before action on a naturalization application even begins.

Filing Procedures. The application form for naturalization, the N-400, is now filed at one of four Regional Service Centers (RSC). But local district offices conduct the actual naturalizations. Transferring files between RSCs and district offices is a drawn-out process (in our case, it took 24 days from when RSC Vermont says it sent the file until when INS Arlington officially acknowledged receiving it). In an increasingly mobile country, where an alien's file might be in another district office, just gathering the paperwork prolongs the process (and gives INS more chances to lose things).

No Emergency Protocols. INS appears to lack any mechanism for obtaining files on a priority/emergency basis. One factor which delayed my wife's naturalization was that her permanent residency paperwork was in New Jersey. INS

Newark, however, had discovered asbestos in the roof above its file room and imposed a de facto moratorium on retrieving documents. No one at that office would publicly commit to when files might be obtainable. Thus, INS essentially closed down operations for several months in one of the top five destination states for immigrants.

Attitudes. There are some in INS who do not even seem to know that there is such a thing as expedited naturalization. An even more widespread attitude (found at State as well) is that "expedited" refers only to the waiving of the usual time requirements for citizenship, not an accelerated process for handling such applications.

The absurdity of such a position in the light of State's assignment process is apparent. With the lag on naturalization creeping in some places towards the two-year mark, an officer would finish a normal tour before INS ever acted. If State acquiesces in such an interpretation, it should then simply warn new officers that their foreign-born spouses should not expect to receive U.S. citizenship until some time during the FSO's second tour.

Attitude has a lot to do with these cases. The packet State gave me when I sought to naturalize my wife urges that we have a "courteous and appreciative attitude" to INS for this "unique privilege offered to Foreign Service personnel." Indeed, such a grateful attitude "will insure INS's continuation of this special service to

SPEAKING OUT



Department employees." With all due respect, expedited naturalization is a right federal law gives certain qualified persons: when INS processes the case, it is just doing its job. I would feel respect if INS treated me as a professional federal colleague during the process. But when calls go unanswered, inquiries are ignored, and a local INS deputy director tells me "You have no choice but to wait," — pardon me, but I feel no obligation to express collegial solidarity.

Solutions

Can this process be fixed? It seems that a few adjustments could help speed up the system. If time-consuming criminal background checks are so critical, why can't INS use fingerprints submitted to DS during the security clearance process? Why can't

the overall security clearance process also encompass the criminal background check INS needs? Indeed, since applicants must already be permanent residents, why can't INS simply re-run an FBI check on the fingerprints it received when the initial green card was issued?

Is it in any way beneficial to send N-400 applications first to RSCs rather than the local offices which actually conduct naturalizations? Could that rule be modified in expedited naturalization cases?

At present, naturalization can only occur on U.S. soil. But why should it be limited to the states? Changing the law to allow for diplomatic dependents to be naturalized abroad would also save officers the unreimbursed expense and hardship of a long trip from post.

It may be that the situation is so hopeless that only a truly radical approach will work: suing INS. In some places, where INS has egregiously and unjustifiably drawn out immigration cases without taking action, petitioners have managed to force the agency's hand by threatening to file a writ of mandamus ordering it to act. Might AFSA consider going to bat in federal court for the growing number of junior officers caught in this bind?

But in the final analysis, while we can tinker and threaten, minor repairs around the edges are not going to fix the systemic flaws that now gum up expedited naturalization. INS's procedures have simply created a bureaucratic bottleneck that operates at cross-purposes with the personnel assignment process at

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SPEAKING OUT

State and other foreign affairs agencies. Those agencies can either preserve interagency comity by acquiescing in INS's status quo, or they can make their employees a higher priority and challenge a system that is not working.

I have no illusions: the lead may very well have to come from the 7th Floor, coordinating a common approach with other Cabinet agencies whose people also need this assistance (such as the Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, Federal Aviation Administration, Treasury and Defense, among others), to pressure INS and Justice to devise a process that meets their personnel's needs.

AFSA needs to make this pop up on department principals' radar screen at State. Both AFSA and H might find it useful to let congressional friends know that U.S. diplomats are being forced to take members of their fami-

lies abroad without an American passport solely because INS's procedures make it impossible to carry out the provisions of the law.

There are those who say that, given congressional sentiments on immigration, we must accept the current situation. I disagree. Congress has already repealed some of the most egregious parts of the 1996 Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.

The director general of the Foreign Service recently called attention to the "competition for talent" in which the Foreign Service must engage if it is to continue recruiting the best and the brightest. State already has a tough time offering benefits on a par with those private employers routinely provide. Surely one of the most basic services FSOs going abroad to represent their country should be able to count on is that their entire family will be able to travel on American passports. That shouldn't be too much to ask. ■

HOW THE LAW SUPPOSEDLY WORKS

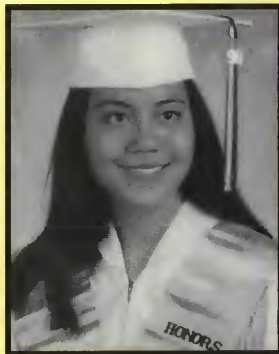
Section 319 of the Immigration and Nationality Act [INA] provides for a process of expedited naturalization for spouses of Foreign Service officers stationed abroad, among other special categories of applicants. Such dependents are eligible for naturalization without having to fulfill the usual physical presence and residency requirements, (which many FSO spouses obviously could not meet). To be eligible, an applicant must have legal permanent resident status and be accompanying a spouse assigned abroad. The assignment must be at least one year long and the couple must plan to leave for post approximately 45 days after the spouse's naturalization.

Under the revised procedures outlined in 99 State 139473 (July 24, 1999) PER/ER will supply an information packet with application forms on request. PER/ER forwards completed applications, fees and photographs to INS, which sends fingerprints to the FBI for clearance.

Upon receiving FBI clearance, the INS District Office where naturalization is planned requests the alien's file from the Regional Service Center (and documents from any other INS offices that have them). Once those are received, that office schedules a naturalization examination and hearing. The process now takes from seven to eight months on the average, although State acknowledges that a significant minority of cases take longer.

The author encourages Foreign Service professionals who have experienced problems with expedited naturalization to contact AFSA about their experiences.

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SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO TRADE: GOING UP IN SMOKE?



Jeff Moores

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS BACKING AWAY FROM ITS SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO EXPORTS, BUT IT'S A HARD HABIT TO BREAK.

BY MAUD S. BEELMAN AND ZOË DAVIDSON

he exquisitely appointed anterooms leading to the secretary of State's office are a mix of 18th century antiques, crystal chandeliers, oil paintings of past envoys and carved moldings in the shape of tobacco leaves, blossoms and seed pods. It gives new meaning to the term tobacco lobby.

The country's major tobacco companies, working as a "tobacco heritage committee," helped finance the transformation of what was a '60s-modern reception area into seven elegant adjoining rooms, known collectively as the Treaty Room. Just inside one of the teal-and-cream colored rooms, a framed commemoration notes appreciatively "the generous contributions" of Philip Morris U.S.A., R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., United States Tobacco Co., Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp., Lorillard Inc., the American Tobacco Co., and Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.

F O C U S

"We find it most appropriate," the tobacco companies said in a 1986 State Department brochure unveiling the Treaty Room suite, "that agreements between the United States and other nations may be signed amidst decorative details and memorabilia of the commodity which has major significance and importance in the diplomatic, commercial and agricultural history of our country. ... Tobacco is intimately and historically associated with American diplomacy," the brochure noted.

Never was that truer than in the mid-'80s and early '90s, when Big Tobacco and the U.S. government joined forces to pry open markets that effectively had been closed to U.S. cigarettes. In that time, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative invoked Section 301 provisions of the Trade Act — which allow the United States to combat unfair foreign trade practices — at least a half-dozen times against Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan, ultimately succeeding in the removal of import restrictions affecting American tobacco.

The close working relationship overseas between Washington and Big Tobacco changed early in the Clinton administration, which snuffed out the aggressive promotion of tobacco by the USTR and formed an inter-agency task force, in late 1993, to formulate a more-coherent tobacco policy.

But five years later — despite some progress on the domestic front — U.S. policy on tobacco overseas is as clouded as ever.

Comprehensive tobacco legislation in Congress failed in the summer of 1998, after a successful lobbying campaign in which the industry spent \$40 million in issue ads, according to a study by the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania. And the November 1998 tobacco settlement with the states placed no restrictions on tobacco's overseas operations, where profits are booming even as sales at home decline.

The only laws prohibiting U.S. government assistance to tobacco overseas come in the form of annual amendments to the Agriculture and Commerce-State-Justice appropriations acts — subject to the will of Congress and whoever controls the White House. Even then, the restrictions allow for government assistance in certain

international trade disputes, and no law prohibits the promotion of tobacco as a cash crop in overseas aid programs, which increase the supply of tobacco bought by the major purchasers — most of whom are American.

"It's hypocritical, to say the least," one economic officer said of the current tobacco policy.

The Agriculture Department has been prohibited since 1993, through appropriations amendments, from promoting the sale or export of tobacco products. Two years ago, as states were negotiating what ultimately became their \$246 billion settlement with the tobacco industry, Congress expanded the ban on U.S. government aid to tobacco abroad through an amendment to the 1998 appropriations bill for the Commerce, State, and Justice departments, authored by Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-Tex.).

"It bothers me that we want to stop American kids from smoking, yet we don't seem to have the same degree of concern about Asian or African kids," Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), a supporter of the measure, said at the time.

The Doggett amendment was originally intended to get the government out of the overseas tobacco business altogether. But the industry — which had contributed more than \$30 million to Capitol Hill lawmakers and their national party committees from 1987 to 1996 — succeeded in getting an exception tagged onto the end.

"None of the funds provided by this Act shall be available to promote the sale or export of tobacco or tobacco products, or to seek the reduction or removal by any foreign country of restrictions on the marketing of tobacco or tobacco products, except for restrictions which are not applied equally to all tobacco or tobacco products of the same type," the Doggett amendment said.

That exception referred to instances where different restrictions on tobacco applied, based on country of origin, and created the opening for U.S. government intervention in cases where countries' policies were deemed discriminatory.

"Equal Access to the World Market"

"Given that tobacco use will be the leading global cause of premature death and preventable illness early in the 21st century, there is a need to distinguish between protectionist policies and legitimate health-based actions, so as not to undermine other countries' efforts to reduce the consumption of tobacco and tobacco products and

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improve the health of their citizens," said subsequent guidelines drawn up by officials from State, Commerce, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Treasury, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

The guidelines, dispatched to all diplomatic missions in February 1998 and again in February 1999, encouraged posts to assist and promote tobacco-control efforts in their host countries and repeated the prohibitions on promoting the sale or export of tobacco or tobacco products or seeking changes in national laws regarding tobacco. But — working from the tobacco industry-inserted exception — they also specified that "discriminatory" national laws, ones deemed protectionist, were fair game for attack.

"The U.S. government will continue to seek elimination of discriminatory trade practices and will strive to ensure that U.S. firms are accorded the same treatment in a foreign country as that country's own firms and firms from other countries," the guidelines said. "The overall objective of this policy is to ensure equal access to a shrinking global market for tobacco."

That conflict between trade and health and the lack of clarity about what constitutes discrimination in a global market that is expanding, not shrinking, are some of the worrying aspects of current U.S. policy for tobacco-control advocates.

"The most important thing about the Doggett amendment is that it tells people in the field that this product is not like other products and this industry is not like other industries and that special rules apply. That message, in and of itself, is very important," said John Bloom, a Washington, D.C.-based lawyer and tobacco policy consultant to health groups.

"The problem is once discrimination is raised, health issues are off the table," Bloom said. "Sometimes a policy that appears discriminatory is justified on health grounds."

The guidelines also permit diplomatic posts to give the same "routine business facilitation services," such as providing country information, to tobacco companies as they do for other U.S. businesses. When in doubt, diplomats are encouraged to check back with Washington.

But in the two years since the Doggett amendment has been in effect, there have been only four queries, from missions in Pakistan, Romania, Peru, and Taiwan, a State Department official said. There is no monitoring of compliance, and it's not even clear how widely known is the

new policy. (The State Department official said he hoped to incorporate the tobacco guidelines into future training sessions for government workers headed overseas.)

"They have been accustomed to a situation where promoting U.S. tobacco was considered a mission not a liability or restriction, so we're trying to turn around a big ship," said Doggett. "I'd be surprised if there weren't some assistance going on somewhere."

AID and the Tobacco Farmer

Malawi is an impoverished country in southern Africa and an example of what fell through the cracks in U.S. tobacco policy abroad.

One of the least economically developed countries in the world, Malawi had a long history of growing tobacco. But for years production of the country's most lucrative export was concentrated in the big estates of the country's elite. The approximately 2 million smallholder farms (less than 2 hectares/5 acres), which account for most of Malawi's agricultural land, were generally barred from growing and selling their own tobacco crops.

Restrictions on smallholder farms growing their own tobacco were lifted in the early 1990s. And after a new government was elected in 1994 — following Malawi's first democratic elections in 30 years — smallholder production of burley, the easiest and relatively cheapest type of tobacco to grow, took off.

But U.S. officials in Malawi were worried that a post-election economic crisis threatened the country's nascent democracy and urged, government documents show, that "significant steps be taken to increase incomes, especially in rural areas."

So in 1995, the U.S. Agency for International Development began implementing a five-year plan, whose "Strategic Objective Number One: Increased agricultural incomes on a per capita basis" included the goal of increasing the share of burley tobacco produced by smallholder farms from zero in 1990 to 40 percent in the year 2000. Other goals included raising real per capita incomes for smallholder tobacco producers from \$153 in 1991 to \$278 by 2000 and increasing the percentage of women smallholder farmers cultivating burley tobacco to 45 percent by 2000.

USAID hired Agricultural Cooperative Development International, a nonprofit association headquartered in Washington, to implement the "Malawi 2000" plan, which it did through its subsidiary in Malawi, the Smallholder

Agribusiness Development Project. SADP's goals were to improve smallholder returns on sales of their crops, to support greater self-sufficiency through improved business know-how, and to promote collective action through commercially sound farmer-owned associations.

In the summer of 1997 — as Doggett was introducing his first legislation to curb tobacco overseas — SADP was helping Malawi's 12 burley tobacco farmer associations and two coffee cooperatives form the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM). The same year, SADP organized the Smallholder Tobacco Transport Program to help farmers get their tobacco leaf from the field to the auction floor.

At the end of the tobacco season in October 1997 — 23 days into the first Doggett ban — the amount of smallholder tobacco sold at auction was 31 percent higher than a year earlier, ACDI's 1997 annual report said. In its 1998 annual report, ACDI said that tobacco earnings for NASFAM members on the auction floor in late 1998 were 56 percent higher than in 1996.

NASFAM is the only organization representing smallholders in Malawi and has nearly 40,000 farmers, who grow burley tobacco and other crops. (In all, according to U.S. agricultural reports, about 150,000 smallholder farmers in Malawi now grow burley tobacco.) The USAID contractor created a "comprehensive data storage-retrieval system for tobacco marketing," according to its 1998 annual report, and most of the field reports and publications generated by SADP/NASFAM have focused on tobacco farming and marketing.

USAID's programs slipped through the Doggett ban on government promotion of tobacco overseas simply because the agency's operations are funded by different legislation. But the contrast between the guidelines' intent and USAID's tobacco programs stirred controversy within the agency in Washington and in Malawi, where tobacco was viewed as a viable cash crop for the country's poor farmers.

Under pressure, USAID issued its own new policy on tobacco last March, saying the agency would halt its support for growing tobacco overseas by the end of 1999. "USAID will not support the growth of tobacco as a cash crop nor will it support agribusiness activities contributing to tobacco production, promotion, and use," said the memo from then-USAID administrator Brian Atwood. (Tobacco-control advocates wonder what would happen to that "policy" under a different White House.)

USAID's Africa bureau, in response to questions, said

the Doggett ban did not "legally apply to USAID," though it had "made every effort to respect the intent of the legislative language related to the Doggett amendment." It added, in its statement, that the USAID mission in Malawi "accelerated its own efforts to disengage from assistance to tobacco production and succeeded in stopping all financial assistance before the end of calendar year 1998."

In February 1999, NASFAM — the USAID-created association of farmers — ran an ad in the Malawi newspaper, *The Nation*, calling for tender offers to transport association members' tobacco to auction.

And Emmet Murphy, Africa project coordinator at ACDI, the USAID contractor, said its Malawi operations are fully funded through October 2000, but that the approximately \$5 million phase one ended in October 1998.

The "Hungry Season" Grows

The legacy of USAID's program in Malawi is mixed. Production of burley, the second most popular type of tobacco, has increased — from 58 percent of all tobacco grown in 1990 to 80 percent by 1996, according to the U.S. Agriculture Department's Foreign Agricultural Service. Real per capita incomes for smallholder tobacco producers have also increased, from \$153 in 1992 to \$255 in 1997, according to AID's 1998 funding request to Congress.

But prices for tobacco, which accounts for more than 70 percent of Malawi's foreign exchange earnings, have fluctuated wildly the last several years. The Malawi kwacha (43 kwacha equal \$1) has been devalued nearly 50 percent since 1997, and the government had a 2 billion kwacha deficit last year, according to local news reports. The "hungry season," which refers to the period when there is not enough food for Malawians, used to be about three months but is now much longer, by some accounts twice as long, forcing the government to pay high import prices for maize, a staple of the country's diet. Malawi's agricultural woes have been exacerbated by drought and farmers defaulting on high-interest loans for agricultural inputs, such as fertilizer.

Frank Giarrizzo, an American who has worked in Malawi for 10 years and runs his own agricultural development program there that USAID has not funded, has been a vocal critic of AID's support for tobacco. He contends that farmers have converted land to tobacco they

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once used for growing maize and diverted precious, and costly, fertilizer from food crops to tobacco.

"The simple message I am trying to put across is that this is a donor-managed famine caused by an unholy alliance of the tobacco industry and the Africa Division of USAID," Giarrizzo said.

USAID insists its programs have helped, not worsened, the plight of Malawians. And, despite the five-year plan that called for a 40 percent increase in the number of smallholder tobacco farmers, an agency official said that AID's program never focused on tobacco, adding, "I don't think we told them to grow that (tobacco). That's what they wanted to grow."

AID spokeswoman Rekha Chalasani vigorously disputes the charge that the "hungry season" was increased, citing sources including the Harvard Institute for International Development and the World Bank. She says production of maize and other basic foodstuffs has actually increased in recent years.

Those involved in USAID's Malawi program say it has begun focusing on other alternative cash crops, such as

coffee, cotton, and chilies and spices — a contention supported by future plans outlined in ACDI's latest annual report. But a 1998 USDA report on Malawi noted: "The dominant crops are only two — maize as the food crop and tobacco as the cash crop."

ACDI received a \$3.5 million, two-year grant extension from USAID through October 2000 to try to make NASFAM sustainable and to persuade farmers to grow other cash crops, Murphy said. But he conceded that it would probably take years to convert tobacco farmers to other crops and that the choice was ultimately theirs.

Rep. Doggett called USAID's support for tobacco "outrageous."

"No directive from Congress should be necessary for AID to promote public health instead of tobacco-related death and disease," he said. "AID should long ago have ceased encouraging the production of any type of tobacco."

The Malawi example illustrates the need for comprehensive tobacco legislation, said Doggett. "This policy should not be dependent on the annual appropriations

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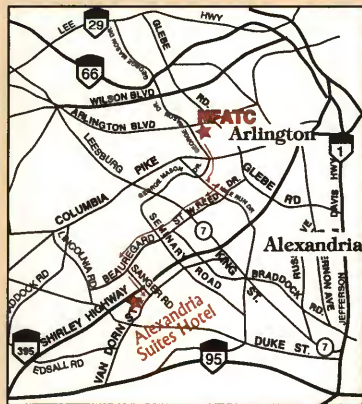
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process and the changing tobacco policies of different administrations," he added.

The Battleground Shifts

Robert Kaplan, director of corporate affairs for Philip Morris International, said the Doggett amendment had had little effect on company operations. "To my knowledge it hasn't put a crimp in things." Philip Morris said in its latest annual report that in 1998 international tobacco income topped \$5 billion for the first time, a 10 percent rise in income over the previous year.

Indeed, U.S. government action may be too little too late. The move toward globalization has put the real power in the hands of international bodies, such as the IMF and World Bank.

"I don't think the (tobacco) companies need U.S. government pressure that much anymore," said Greg Connolly, director of tobacco control at Massachusetts' Health Department, one of the United States' leading tobacco-control advocates and an adviser to the World Health Organization. "The liberalization of world trade

gives them a number of tools. The whole privatization issue is critical."

Thailand is a case in point.

Tobacco-control advocates have long argued that the entry into previously closed domestic markets by multinational tobacco companies, with their aggressive advertising and marketing campaigns and sophisticated denials of the health hazards of smoking, results in increased cigarette consumption.

A 1996 study of 10 Asian countries by a University of Illinois economist and a Thai public health professor is the most often-cited empirical evidence of that. Using a controlled study of country data, Frank Chaloupka of Chicago and Adit Laixuthai of Bangkok showed that cigarette consumption increased nearly 10 percent in those countries — Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and Thailand — where trade sanctions were threatened under Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act in order to abolish import restrictions on American cigarettes. "The opening of once closed Asian cigarette markets to U.S. cigarettes had a positive and significant impact on

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per capita cigarette consumption," the study said.

Of the four, only Thailand took its 301 battle with the United States to GATT, which ruled the import ban violated international trade but upheld the Thai government's right to use high excise taxes and advertising bans to restrict cigarette supplies. Thailand and the United States later agreed to allow U.S. cigarette imports, but subject to the same tough restrictions that applied to the state tobacco monopoly.

Now Thailand's tobacco control is again being challenged, this time by the IMF. As part of the fund's bailout following the Asian financial crisis, Thailand is being required to privatize state-owned monopolies, including tobacco.

In a Dec. 3 letter to Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, 17 members of Congress urged the fund to change its policy on privatizing state-run tobacco operations and keep them out of the hands of multinationals.

"Whatever the merits of privatization of other sectors of the economy, tobacco represents a grave public health

menace that must be treated differently," the letter said. "The experience in opening Asian tobacco markets to foreign imports illustrates what is at stake."

In reply, the acting chief of IMF's public affairs division, Bruno Mauprivez, wrote that the fund did not believe that "privatization of state-owned tobacco companies, per se, is a major cause of increased tobacco consumption."

He said it should be left to individual governments to regulate cigarette consumption through taxes, advertising bans, and educational programs and suggested that "by divesting the government of the ownership of tobacco monopolies, its hands may be far freer to pursue such policies."

That line of reasoning is being considered by some in the World Health Organization, which last year listed eradicating smoking and malaria as its two main global objectives. However, most tobacco opponents scoff at the notion that Big Tobacco's sophisticated marketing engine won't steamroll local attempts at tobacco control.

"It's like riding a streetcar versus a Mercedes-Benz," Connolly said, "Philip Morris being the Mercedes-Benz." ■

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D THE U.S. STILL EXPORTS QUESTIONABLE PESTICIDES, BUT TREATIES ARE STARTING TO PROTECT THOSE AT RISK.

BY CHARLES W. THURSTON

Decades ago, U.S. gardeners nonchalantly sprayed pesticides like DDT on lawns across the country as readily as they used common fertilizers. Today, DDT and a host of other highly toxic pesticides have been banned from use in the United States. However, the U.S. manufacture and export of such dangerous pesticides to most countries is still perfectly legal, albeit uncommon.

One new international convention provides for alerting the importing countries to a potential shipment. But unfortunately, until U.S. legislation catches up with the intent of such international treaties, there is still a strong potential for the U.S. export of these hot-listed materials. As long as that is true, American Foreign Service officers should be aware that there is a potential conflict between U.S. commercial interests and the possible health and environmental

risks posed by the use of restricted pesticides in their host countries.

The ultimate danger of the export of these chemicals is human death and damage to the environment. In one case in Cairo, a U.S. aid worker died of poisoning in 1993 when pesticides were misapplied at her home. In a much more extensive case, some 25,000 workers from 12 developing countries sued several U.S. pesticide makers and fruit companies in 1995 when it was found that dibromochloropropine, or DBCP — allegedly exported from the United States — caused sterility.

While most of the truly hazardous pesticides — “the worst of the worst” — are no longer manufactured in the United States, the strengthening of U.S. law would increase the likelihood that U.S. exports will meet the spirit of international agreements controlling these substances.

PIC and POPs: New Tools

One new tool that should slow the flow of dangerous pesticides from manufacturing countries to user countries is the Rotterdam Convention for Prior Informed Consent for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade. Signed in late 1998 and involving a voluntary scheme with some 150 countries participating, the treaty is commonly referred to as PIC, which stands for the convention's “prior informed consent” mechanism. This agreement requires that exporters of banned or severely restricted pesticides that have been placed on an internationally-designated list — which now stands at 27 pesticides — must notify the importing country. Then, a U.N.-designated authority within the country must approve the import.

Without that required notification requesting prior informed consent, the export of the substance is illegal for exporters in those countries which ratify the agreement. U.S. enabling legislation is expected by the end of this year, says a U.S. EPA spokesperson. More than 80 countries have signed the convention thus far.

Another treaty, still under negotiation, involves the banning of the use of persistent organic pollutants, or POPs. This negotiation, also under the auspices of the U.N., involves some 100 nations and seeks to phase out the use of 12 chlorinated pesticides. The PIC and POPs

lists overlap somewhat; while the POPs list is expected to grow slowly, there is a less complicated mechanism for adding more chemicals to the PIC list, so it should grow more quickly; four more chemicals are currently being considered for addition to the PIC list.

A number of U.S. agencies have been involved in developing these treaties, and will monitor U.S. compliance. The State Department negotiates these treaties for the United States with the support of other agencies, and the EPA provides practical oversight of U.S. exporters' adherence to the rules.

U.S. laws may be tougher than the international treaties require. The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, or FIFRA, requires an export notification filing with the EPA which shows that the importer has been alerted that the chemical is either on the official PIC list or on the U.S. nomination list. No other nation requires such notification, an EPA source says. The Clinton administration has proposed legislation that would make U.S. safeguards even stronger: it would not only require prior informed consent for chemicals on the official list, but also for those that the United States has recommended for PIC controls; the U.S. candidate list of such pesticides stood at 37 as of 1998.

Are Pesticide Exports Rising?

Velsicol, perhaps the last U.S. company to manufacture a pesticide that has been banned for use in the United States, voluntarily ceased production of chlordane at the end of 1997, officials say. The sale of any company's existing stocks is still legal, though, and the potential export traffic of these materials could prove to be surprising to some Foreign Service officers in countries where the pesticides still are being used.

For a pesticide to be used legally in the United States, it must be registered with the EPA for a particular use, for example, a certain crop. In 1998, the EPA determined that out of 2,719 export shipments of chemicals not registered in the United States, 132 were either on the Rotterdam Convention PIC list or on the longer U.S. PIC nomination list, says Cathleen Barnes, an EPA spokeswoman in Washington. While the volumes of these PIC-listed pesticide shipments were not available, the greatest number of shipments — 15 — went to Ecuador, followed by 10 to Costa Rica, six to the Netherlands, and five or less to another 48 countries ranging from Australia to Ghana.

There are also indications that U.S. exports of chemi-

Charles W. Thurston is a Willow, N.Y.-based journalist specializing in international trade affairs.

cals not registered for U.S. use, including restricted pesticides (those which have special U.S. or international rules regulating their use), are increasing. The 1998 total of 2,719 shipments was an increase from 2,576 export shipments the year before, Barnes says. One basic reason that pesticides may not be registered in the United States is that the U.S. market is too small to justify the cost of registration for a specific application — e.g., for bananas as opposed to melons.

U.S. Customs Service export volume data from prior years also suggests that there still may be a continuing, though relatively small, flow of these goods today. In 1996, U.S. exports of "restricted" pesticides increased to 94.6 million pounds from 91.1 million pounds the year before, according to research published in the April issue of the *International Journal of Occupational Environmental Health*, based in Philadelphia. The 1996 statistics show that 5.1 million pounds of these exported pesticides were products that have been banned for use in the United States; another 5.8 million pounds were severely restricted under U.S. law, and 79.1 million pounds carried some U.S. use restrictions, according to Carl Smith, the director of the Pesticide Project of the Foundation For Advancements in Science And Education in Los Angeles.

A FOREIGN SERVICE HAZARD

On Christmas Day, 1993, Nancy Lewis, a 39-year-old executive assistant with the U.S. Agency for International Development, died in Cairo after her apartment was sprayed with a highly toxic pesticide not approved for residential use. Several other people in the building developed symptoms such as headaches, nausea and vomiting within days of the fumigation.

After the incident, the State Department strengthened its pesticide use guidance. Four policy directive cables were issued in 1994. The new guidance mandates the use of an integrated pest management (IPM) approach, and requires that only EPA-registered and/or State-approved pesticides be used.

Despite the stricter rules, about 60 pesticide poisonings occurred at foreign posts between 1994 and 1998, according to Frank Miller, AFSA vice president for USAID. AFSA continues to press for stronger information programs and training and tighter, strictly enforceable guidelines on pesticide use abroad.

While the Rotterdam Convention is a relatively recent achievement of international diplomacy, much of the U.S. industry has been cooperating with the principles of prior informed consent since 1986, says John McCarthy, the vice president for science and regulatory affairs at the American Crop Protection Association, or ACPA, in Washington. Nonetheless, of the 150 active ingredients which ACPA members produce in the United States, about 10 percent are not registered for use in this country, he says. "The United States has 37 or 40 pesticides that have been banned for use here, and the 15 (active ingredients) we are talking about exporting are not on that list," adds Chris Klose, an ACPA spokesperson.

Whether these exported pesticides are on a watch list or not, the export of those non-registered products represents only a small fraction — 4 percent — of the members' export revenues, McCarthy says. ACPA members account for about 95 percent of all pesticides manufactured in the United States.

Strong Laws, Weak Enforcement

The willingness to export these pesticides is matched by the willingness of foreign users — or vendors — to import them, even if legislation in the importing country prohibits the transaction. "The biggest problem is getting something controlled under law in developing countries; it's a political process in which there are really tough issues, but at every stage of the process things have to work," says a U.S. official in Washington, who asked not to be further identified. "You can have a very good (environmental) regulatory structure, but if you have a landowner that doesn't care about his workers and if you don't have good enforcement infrastructure, what can you do about it?" he asks.

Although an importing country may have a special agency responsible for reviewing dangerous pesticide imports, will it necessarily have the staffing to do its job? Some environmentalists say no. "PIC is a powerful tool, but it puts a burden on a developing country to review incoming materials and respond appropriately," says Jack Weinberg, a Greenpeace official in Washington, who is actively consulting with negotiators of the POPs pesticide treaty. "In many countries they have one or two people with responsibilities that would require a staff of 200 to carry out. If the ministry of agriculture is overwhelmed with the task of feeding people, you might question their ability to handle the influx of toxic chemicals," he says.

AFSA NEWS

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FSGB RULES ON POORLY WRITTEN EERS

A recent decision of the Foreign Service Grievance Board (Case No. 99-30, Aug. 9, 1999) sends a message that a carelessly written Employee Evaluation Report (EER) may not be the basis for a selection board low-ranking and may be expunged from a rated employee's record.

The case in question involved a State Department employee who received an EER that, while generally positive, contained very few supporting examples of performance. The next session of the selection boards low-ranked the employee, largely but not wholly on the basis of this EER, saying that her record was "relatively less competitive" and that examples of effective performance in the EER were "sparse."

The employee grieved the EER and the low-ranking, seeking the removal of both from her record. At the initial agency level, she won the nullification of the low-ranking, but the department refused to expunge the EER. Despite

agreeing that the governing precepts require that a low-ranking be based on documented examples of performance inadequacies — thus invalidating this low-ranking — the department said it could not remove an EER "on the basis that it is poorly written." The agency believed an EER must contain specifically false items to warrant its expunction.

However, on appeal to the Grievance Board, the employee achieved the removal of the entire EER as well as the suppression of the low-ranking. The board did not agree with the agency's position. While an EER need not be perfect, the board declared, it can be "entirely accurate, as far as it goes, and yet be so woefully insufficient and uncompetitive in content as to warrant expunction." The board remanded the case to the department to permit it to submit evidence as to whether the employee would have been promoted absent the agency's error. ■

• AFSA Dateline •

• Applications for the AFSA/AAFSW Merit Award Competition and the AFSA Financial Aid Award Program can be downloaded from AFSA's web page at www.afsa.org or through www.fast-web.com, a scholarship search database. These awards are open to Foreign Service high school seniors and college undergraduates. The application deadline is Feb. 6, 2000. To request an application or for more information contact Lori Dec at 202-944-5504 or dec@afsa.org.

• The new fall interns have arrived and are hard at work:

Abigail Job is working in Corporate Relations. A senior at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, Abigail is studying international relations and Spanish. She comes to AFSA from a summer internship at the Foreign Service Institute in the Western Hemisphere Area.

Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (COLEAD) intern, **Edmund Mooney**, is a native of New Jersey and a junior at Rutgers University where he is studying political science.

Sarah Wilson is the intern for the director of Congressional Affairs.

Continued on page 6

V.P. VOICE

• BY PETER FREDERICK •

A Short Honeymoon

When you read this article, I will have been serving as Commercial Service vice president for over two months and hopefully will be much smarter than I am now, a mere two weeks into the job. Tom Kelsey helped me find my way around the AFSA Commercial Service office located at HCHB 2121, which took about five seconds (it is not a big office). He also pointed out the file drawers and in some cases, shoeboxes that hold the files of my predecessors. Learning what is in the files will take much longer than the office tour. I am impressed with how much Charlie, Tom, Keith, Geof, Patrick, Barry and all the other founding fathers were able to accomplish with less than 25 percent of their official time devoted to AFSA activities.

My initial meetings with management were cordial and enlightening. Their stated desire for a good working relationship with AFSA is encouraging; their willingness to allow me as much AFSA time as necessary during the start-up, greatly appreciated.

My "honeymoon" lasted about five hours, until I was presented with official notification of the proposed Commercial Service Interchange Program which is designed to strengthen the relationship between our domestic Civil Service and overseas Foreign Service personnel. This, added to another official notification delivered before my arrival to our AFSA CS representative, Eric Sletten, served to

indicate that this is not a part time job. In both cases I have communicated with the membership asking for comments and at the time of this reading will have provided you a summary of the membership responses and informed you of our actions.

This activity has proven very useful in that we, AFSA and CS management, are getting into the habit of abiding by our Collective Bargaining Agreement. On Dec. 3, 1996, AFSA and the Commercial Service agreed that all actions affecting conditions of employment would be subject to negotiation.

My primary objective is to assure that all parties adhere to this agreement in all cases.

During the early part of my tenure I do hope to engage management in negotiations on assignment policies, selection board precepts and core performance precepts as well as commissioning and tenure precepts. I am impressed with the work done by the Performance Management Task Force and have been pleased to participate in all of their recent meetings. I fully anticipate that the PMTF will present their final proposals to AFSA for the CBA-mandated 20-day review period during which I will seek your collective counsel. If we can establish a procedure to negotiate all changes in conditions of employment, prior to management announcements, there will be far less confusion and, one would hope, far better support for future changes in direction.

"My primary objective is to assure that all parties adhere to the CBA in all cases."

CALL FOR AFSA AWARD NOMINATIONS

In these times of challenge and change for the foreign affairs agencies, recognizing the traditions of excellence and integrity that are the hallmark of the Foreign Service and characterize our contribution to our nation is more important than ever. We all know people who deserve recognition — so nominate them.

All awards include a cash prize of \$2,500, and winners will be honored at a ceremony in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms of the Department of State.

• CHALLENGING THE SYSTEM:

The three awards for Foreign Service officers are aimed at encouraging those who take chances, possibly even put their careers at risk, to advocate a position they think is right even though it may differ from the views of higher levels or conventional wisdom.

These awards go to FSOs "who have exhibited extraordinary accomplishment involving initiative, integrity, intellectual courage and constructive dissent." The **Christian A. Herter Award** is for members of the Senior Foreign Service, while the **William R. Rivkin Award** is conferred on a mid-career officer (FS 1-3), and the **W. Averell Harriman Award** goes to a junior officer (FS 4-6).

• AWARDS FOR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

The **Delavan Award** recognizes a Foreign Service office management specialist "who has made an extraordinary contribution to effectiveness, professionalism and morale."

The **M. Juanita Guess Award** is conferred on a Community Liaison Officer "who has demonstrated outstanding dedication, energy and imagination in assisting the families of Americans serving at an overseas post."

The **Avis Bohlen Award** recognizes the accomplishments of "a

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Inside

THE FOREIGN SERVICE COMMUNITY

• American Citizens Abroad presented its annual Thomas Jefferson award for State Department employees who demonstrate outstanding service to American citizens living overseas to **Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot**. The town-meetings he directed ambassadors to institute with the local American community are credited with improving the visibility of expatriate Americans among Washington policymakers.

Two co-runners up for the award were also named: **MaryKay Carlson** for her efforts to contact Americans living in her consular district in China during the violent protests following the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade; and **Julian L. Bartley**, who perished in the embassy bombing in Nairobi in Aug. 1998, for always trying to "find a way" to reconcile the needs of the local U.S. community with department practice.

• The Aug. 19, *Daytona Beach News Journal* reported on a Foreign Service family reunion for the 85th birthday of **Robert J. Ryan**, former ambassador to Niger. His two retired FSO sons, **Robert Ryan, Jr.** (former ambassador to Mali) and **Tom Ryan** (counselor of administration in Harare before retirement); grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and other family members gathered for the first time in 27 years.

• The Historian's Office at State is soliciting loaned or donated items for the U.S. Diplomatic history exhibit in the Hall of Diplomacy. Flags flown at significant moments, decorative objects, political cartoons, formal wear, tools used in USAID projects would help upgrade the display. Contact Priscilla Linn at 202-663-1279; fax 202-663-1289; linnp@panet.us-state.gov; or by mail: PA/HO, SA-1, Dept. Of State, 2401 E. Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20522.

Do you have news about an AFSA member or of an event of interest to the FS Community?

Fax it to (202) 338-8244.

STATE V.P. VOICE

• BY JOHN NALAND •

The War for Talent

Last April, a study commissioned by the department and done by the consulting firm McKinsey and Company warned that State will find it increasingly difficult in the coming years to attract, develop, motivate, and retain top talent. The reasons given include changing demographics in the job market, increasing mobility of the workforce, and gaps in the department's ability to meet employee expectations.

To meet this challenge, the "War for Talent" report recommended that State focus on numerous issues: improving benefits and compensation; permitting greater employee freedom and autonomy; providing faster career advancement opportunities; dealing more effectively with poor performers; improving dual career opportunities; making senior managers focus on supervision and mentoring; and improving department management.

One is tempted to say, "Well, duh, employees could have told you that for free." But the important fact is that this report appears to have galvanized senior State managers to do something. The problem, as some 90 unimplemented State Department reorganization reports since 1945 have demonstrated, is to translate words into deeds.

Since July, AFSA has participated in the director general's Talent Steering Group which has been searching for concrete ideas with which to address the problems cited in the McKinsey study. The results to date have not been overwhelming, but AFSA has been able to table a number of proposals that we urge management to adopt:

• **Benefits:** Besides three extensive benefits package proposals earlier this year covering allowances, medical benefits, and transportation issues, AFSA has sent management proposals to liberalize usage of home leave and improve tax reciprocity abroad. Further proposals are forthcoming.

• **Staffing:** To eliminate the chronic problem of staffing gaps, AFSA has urged State to immediately seek funding to hire as many people as it has positions. Thereafter, we urge them to seek funding to eventually maintain overseas missions at 110 percent strength (as the military does for front line units) to cover staffing gaps caused by transfers,

home leave, seasonal work surges and other routine factors.

• **Employee Satisfaction Surveying:** AFSA proposed that State emulate the standard practice of successful corporations by polling employees on their attitudes towards their work environment and using that feedback to guide improvement.

• **Upward Feedback:** As also done in the private sector, State should establish a mechanism to allow employees to anonymously rate their raters (separate from the EER system). AFSA is now exploring this proposal with PER's Office of Performance Evaluation.

• **Open Assignments:** At AFSA's urging, the department agreed to begin work on an Intranet bidding site containing bid lists, post reports, position job descriptions, and other bidding tools.

We will keep you posted on how management responds to these opportunities to gain ground in the war for talent.

"This report appears to have galvanized senior managers to do something."

The Coming Year

On Sept. 8, the AFSA Governing Board appointed me the State Representative for integration issues. With the integration of USIA into State, the position of USIA AFSA vice president disappeared. However, the director general of the Foreign Service agreed to the creation of a new position for one year beginning Oct. 1, 1999 so that AFSA can represent employees in relocation and related integration matters. We will also maintain an office in the USIA building for those employees who will not be relocated right away.

I am delighted to continue to serve AFSA in this new position as a State Representative and look forward to responding to concerns of individual employees, as well as being able to work on issues to improve the Foreign Service.

Grievances and personnel issues that occurred prior to consolidation and are based on USIA personnel policies should be submitted to my attention, as in the past. We are more familiar with the USIA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and can see to resolution based on the regulations in place when the problem occurred. State and USIA had very similar practices, but there are enough differences to justify using an office with experience in USIA's procedures. Likewise, our office will continue to represent the F.S. employees of the newly independent International Broadcasting Bureau.

One of my most important tasks is a continuing effort to identify best practices in the area of personnel

policies. AFSA and State management have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreeing that "all best practices may not be identified and incorporated into the collective bargaining agreements between AFSA and DOS prior to October 1, 1999." Therefore, "the parties agree to establish a working group of Department of State

"I will be comparing USIA's MOA and State's FAM to identify best practices."

and AFSA representatives to identify best practices."

In the MOU State management and AFSA agreed "to recognize the right of each Party to propose inclusion of a USIA best practice into an existing collective bargaining agreement

between AFSA and [the Department of State]." If the two parties cannot reach agreement, they may seek the assistance of the Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

During the next ten months I will be comparing USIA's MOA and State's Foreign Affairs Manual to identify best practices in the personnel areas which the above working group will hopefully adopt.

I will continue to work full time in the AFSA office at M-21 in State Annex 44 with the assistance of Jack Mossop, the AFSA Labor Relations Specialist. Our phone, fax and e-mail will remain the same: Tel. (202) 401-6405; fax (202) 401-6410; jrsever@usia.gov and jmossop@usia.gov.

The coming year will be an important period of change and growth for the Foreign Service. We must work together creatively and responsively to deal with the challenges that face us.

FEGLI CHANGES: SOME ATTRACTIVE, SOME NOT

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) changes made the program more attractive to most Foreign Service employees. Pursuant to last year's Public Law 105-311, employees' premiums dropped, family coverage options expanded, and maximums were eliminated for basic and option B categories. Employees also may now elect at retirement to continue unreduced option B and C coverage.

Current retirees saw premiums for basic coverage lowered as of June 1 and election of unreduced option B coverage extended beyond age 65 to include all retirees. The Office of Personnel Management, after considering higher rates, decided to maintain the current premium for option B coverage for those age 60

Continued on page 5

Details of Some FEGLI Changes for Retirees

Figures are per thousand dollars of coverage.

- Premiums for basic coverage reduced from 33.75 cents to 33.58 cents.
- Unreduced option B coverage extended from age 65 through 69.
- 1.517 cent rate for option B premium for retirees 60 and over extended to all retirees who elect not to reduce option B.
- After age 65, premiums for basic coverage with 50 percent reduction increased from .52 cents to .59 cents.
- After age 65, premiums for basic coverage with 0 reduction jumped from \$1.69 to \$2.04.

For more information contact Ward Thompson at 202-338-4045 ext. 528 or thompsonw@afsa.org

FEGLI, *continued from page 4*

and above and extend that rate to all retirees.

However, life insurance choices facing retirees have become more complex. After age 65, when FEGLI coverage normally begins a 75 percent reduction, the premiums turned out to be painfully pricey for those who elected at retirement to provide for only a 50 percent or zero reduction. This makes FEGLI less competitive with private plans.

On the other hand, efforts by Congress to make the program more creative for retirees are not limited to PL 105-311. Other recent laws allow certain terminally ill employees and annuitants to get tax-free cash from their FEGLI basic and options A and B coverage via a viatical settlement or from their basic coverage via a living benefit. Congress is studying an option, already available privately, to allow conversion of FEGLI to long-term care insurance.

One problem for retirees is getting the word. The information flow from Congress to OPM through State's personnel and retirement office to our retirees needs improvement. AFSA will continue to work with the department to improve communication on FEGLI and other retirement programs that affect choices which must be made by many in the Foreign Service community. (See box on page 4 for more details of changes.) ■

Retirement Office Moves to Columbia Plaza

New Address:

Department of State
Office of Retirement
2401 E Street NW
Room H-620 (SA-1)
Washington, DC 20037

Within State:
Tel.: 4-8960
Fax: 4-8988
Outside State:
Tel.: 202-261-8960
Fax: 202-261-8988

USAID V.P. VOICE

• BY FRANK MILLER •

The RRB: Still Unsafe

Last Aug. 18 about 400 federal employees picketed the Ronald Reagan Building to protest lax security.

Since 1995, three independent security assessments of the Ronald Reagan Building concluded the building is unsafe and does not meet Department of Justice standards established after the Oklahoma bombing of the Murrah Federal Building. The Sandia National Laboratory security report states that "the [RRB] is highly vulnerable to an attack employing explosives introduced via vehicles."

Some frightening problems prompted the demonstration:

- Garage Access. The bollards, steel rods meant to block unauthorized access to the garage, have not worked since they were installed. Delivery trucks are checked inside the building instead of safely outside the perimeter. Monthly parking passes, which allow unchecked access to the garage, are sold to the general public without background checks.
- Entry doors. Visitors enter the RRB without being screened. Once inside, they may roam unchallenged to vulnerable locations.
- Windows. Two-thirds of the windows lack bomb blast protection including the food court and the atrium (over an acre of glass).

A truck bomb scare just before the anniversary of the U.S. embassy bombings in Africa reminded employees of how vulnerable we are. The fact that three cabinet secretaries were evacuated from the RRB while 5400 federal employees and 100 children in our

childcare center and hundreds of visitors were left behind increased employee concern about safety.

Repeated attempts to address these vulnerabilities with GSA have been unsuccessful. After the demonstration, GSA issued a statement alleging that the RRB is consistent with the highest federal standards reflected in the Department of Justice security policies.

"Attempts to address these vulnerabilities with GSA have been unsuccessful."

In their statement, GSA compared the RRB to an airport where certain sections are restricted and others are open to the public. How many airports allow the public to park under the tarmac and control towers or allow delivery trucks to enter a building prior to inspecting its cargo? Another GSA spin is that some federal employees at the Reagan Building want to keep the public out. Nonsense. We welcome visitors as long as they are properly screened prior to entry, as they are at the Capitol and other federal buildings. This procedure will protect tourists as well as federal employees.

AFSA's message to GSA is clear. Either meet Department of Justice standards or move us out of the building before more federal workers and tourists are needlessly killed. The State Department told federal employees in Kenya and Tanzania their embassies were low security threats. In today's world the second largest U.S. government building is not a low security threat.

AFSA has asked several members of Congress to request a GAO audit of RRB security. Hopefully, the truth will come out and improved security or a move to a safer building will result.

Dateline

continued from page 1

From Cheshire, Conn., Sarah is a junior at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. where she majors in political science and communications and plays women's rugby.

Silke Grundler is the advertising intern for the *Foreign Service Journal*. A student at the University of Nuremberg in Germany, she is studying marketing, management and communications. She comes to us as an exchange student through the American University Washington Semester Program in Foreign Policy.

The *Foreign Service Journal's* editorial intern, **Lucienne Boyd**, comes from the University of Puget Sound in Takoma, Washington. A junior studying international relations, Lucy is also participating in the American University Washington Semester Program. ■

AFSA AWARDS NOMINATIONS

continued from page 2

member of the family of a Foreign Service employee whose relations with the American and foreign communities at a Foreign Service post have done the most to advance the interests of the United States."

•FORMAT FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

Indicate the award for which the person is being nominated.

Part I: Nominee's name, grade, agency, and position (or family relationship).

Part II: Nominator's name, grade, agency and position, and description of association with the nominee (limit 200 words).

Part III: Justification for the nomination (500-700 words). This narrative should discuss the actions and qualities which qualify the nominee for the award, with specific examples of accomplishments that fulfill the criteria.

Nominations should be returned

by Jan. 31, 2000 by pouch or mail to Awards Committee, AFSA, Room 3644 Main State, or to 2101 E Street NW, Washington DC 20037.

They may also be sent by AFSA channel cable, by fax to 202-338-6820 or e-mail to prof@afsa.org. Any questions should be directed to Richard Thompson, AFSA Coordinator for Professional Issues (Tel: 202-338-4045 Ext. 521, fax and e-mail as stated above). ■

Author's Query

A historian is seeking anecdotes and remembrances about Herbert Feis (1894 - 1972), an economist and Pulitzer Prize-winning diplomatic historian who was economic adviser to the Department of State from 1932 - 1944 and a perennial fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton.

If you have information, contact:

David Walley
62 New Ashford Road
Williamstown, MA 01267-3073
dgwalley@bcn.net

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The "Circle of Poison"

How do U.S. Foreign Commercial Service officers react to the news that their host country is a top market for PIC-listed or PIC-nominated pesticides?

In Ecuador, the country receiving the highest number of such U.S. shipments in 1998, the reaction was one of definite concern. "Ecuador imports a lot of pesticide products because we are the number one exporter of bananas in the world, and probably the number two exporter of shrimp," says Rodrigo Morales, an assistant commercial officer at the U.S. consulate in Guayaquil. "But we have had problems on the shrimp and banana plantations because the rivers have been polluted with fertilizers and other kinds of polluting agents, which has created sicknesses for the shrimp," he says.

"Environmental controls here are not very efficient or are not being [handled] carefully, and I wouldn't be surprised if there weren't a lot of hazardous pesticides used here which are causing problems," he says. "The [Ecuadorian environmental control] legislation is not necessarily respected," he opines. "I would be concerned

because many of these bananas and shrimp are exported to the United States," he adds.

Morales is not alone in his concern about possible hazardous pesticide residues in foods exported to the United States. "Nobody here wants to eat food with pesticides on it that is coming in as imports, especially if that pesticide is banned in the United States," says a senior Foreign Commercial Service official in Washington, who asked not to be named. The use of U.S.-restricted pesticides on food that finds its way back into the United States is referred to by some regulators as the "circle of poison."

In 1989, the seizure of a single imported box of contaminated grapes at Philadelphia brought Chile's fruit export industry to a grinding halt. Today, Chilean produce exporters are extremely vigilant in their use of pesticides, says Jim Foster, the commercial attaché at the U.S. embassy in Santiago. "Everybody here in the industry follows EPA guidelines because the industry is very export-oriented," he says. "There are good (Chilean) regulations, there are good people in the government, and there is a good exporters association, so (the importation of



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questionable pesticides) doesn't seem to be much of an issue."

In Costa Rica, the country with the second-highest incidence of importing U.S.-made pesticides on the PIC list, there was also less concern about food contamination voiced than in Ecuador. "Agricultural products are the main export product for the country, so companies are careful about what is allowed or is not allowed — and at what levels — in the United States," says Victor Gonzalez, an agriculture specialist at the U.S. embassy in San José. "There may be a few cases (of questionable pesticide imports), but it hasn't been a public issue," he says. Noting that the EPA has conducted a series of seminars in Costa Rica, Gonzalez says that it has been several years since his office has received reports about Costa Rican agricultural products that might have been detained in the United States because of pesticide residues. Costa Rica is considered an environmental information hub for the entire Central American region, one Washington source said.

There seems to be even less concern about importing questionable U.S. pesticides in the Netherlands, the country with the third-highest number of U.S.-made PIC-listed pesticide imports in 1998. "Any company that wants to export pesticides to the Netherlands has to comply with regulations here, which means they have to go to the authorities asking for a license ... for it to be used here," says Abraham Groen, a chemicals specialist in the commercial section of the U.S. embassy in The Hague.

**Between 1994 and
1998, about 60
pesticide poisonings
occurred at U.S.
posts abroad.**

"The license registration is a long procedure and costs a lot of money; the government wants to reduce use of pesticides drastically," Groen explains. "We have a very large greenhouse industry here and are using natural enemies of insects in place of pesticides," he says. On the other hand, insofar as the Netherlands is a European hub for trans-Atlantic transshipments, "it may be possible that pesticides which are not

allowed for use here could [enter the country and] go [on] to a country where they are permitted to be used," he notes.

At consulates and embassies in many countries, pesticide exporters typically bypass the commercial office, since the multinational manufacturers long have had direct links to the importing purchasers, several FCS officers say. "I've never had a request for assistance from a U.S. exporter of pesticides in the three years that I've been here," says Julia Rauner, the commercial consul in São Paulo, Brazil, the country which is the largest and fastest-growing importer of pesticides in Latin America.

One Foreign Service officer says that in the only instance of a pesticide company seeking promotion assistance in his country during his tenure, the company went "straight to the ambassador." Several FSOs said that pesticide companies "don't need us," given their strong, direct market connections.

Misapplication — A Constant Danger

If a country's regulating agency determines that a PIC-listed pesticide is acceptable for a specific use, it may still be difficult for that agency or another government entity to follow up on the way in which the chemical is applied. This is where the best intentions of international safeguards can fall flat. "There are pesticide products that may not be banned, but if you know how they really are going to be used, they are worse than things that are banned," says Carl Smith of the Pesticide Project. "For a pesticide with a high acute toxicity, you might wear a full-body moon suit in the United States, but it might be going to areas of the world where people don't wear anything but shorts in the fields," he says.

The terms of the PIC convention require that material safety data sheets — as required in the United States by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration — be sent to the importer for banned and severely restricted chemicals and PIC-listed chemicals. But the

A PROBLEM WORLDWIDE

Are pesticides a health, safety and environmental hazard? Consider these findings:

- Pesticide poisoning and the use of other hazardous chemicals result in an estimated one million deaths per year, according to David Pimentel, a professor of agricultural sciences and ecology at Cornell University.
- At least 300,000 people suffer poisoning from agro-toxics each year in Brazil, according to calculations by the Brazilian Ministry of Health.
- The World Health Organization estimates there are 50 cases of pesticide poisoning for every case reported.

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farmers and field workers applying the pesticides must be capable of understanding the warnings and have access to protective clothing and equipment.

WHO CLEANS UP THE MESS?

The lack of funding for the cleanup of unwanted pesticides in developing countries is a widespread problem, particularly for governments that have a difficult time keeping populations fed. As a result, funding for such cleanups has become an issue of negotiation under the POPs talks.

There are an estimated 100,000 tons of obsolete pesticides — some of which are currently banned for use — stockpiled around the world. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that removing obsolete pesticides from Africa alone will cost as much as \$100 million.

Some private sector manufacturers of pesticides are helping, however. Shell International, for example, which used to make dieldrin — now banned in much of the world — has donated \$300,000 to dispose of the pesticide stockpiled in Mauritania.

The industry agrees that the proper application of pesticides in importing countries is a great challenge. "When it comes down to how to use things properly, there is no amount of information exchange that's really going to do the job," says the ACPA's McCarthy. "Our product stewardship message is that when things leave this country, they've got to be properly labeled so that the customs people know what it is, and that the people who open the package have proper instructions on how to use it," he says. "But it can get complicated in this world. ... You really need on-the-ground training," he explains. "We've been fostering safe-use programs in developing countries including Guatemala, Kenya and Thailand," he notes. "These first pilot programs have spawned progeny of their own in neighboring countries, by governments, NGOs, and farm organizations, in countries like Brazil. ... We're the only industry in the world allowed to release poisons into the environment, so we have a responsibility to the public; we take it as a franchise that we have to renew every day," McCarthy says.

As the PIC list evolves, the United States could find



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itself in a position of disagreeing with particular listings, the U.S. official in Washington notes. "So far the PIC list is focused on the worst of the worst pesticides, which most OECD countries have banned," he says. "But a couple of countries can take a control action (adding a pesticide) and the PIC list could become fairly long. It is not inconceivable that substances will make it onto the list that we think can be safe for a specific application," he points out. "The principles involved in most regulatory decisions made in the United States are not only whether or not the pesticide is dangerous, but also how a person might be exposed or how it might be released into the environment," he says.

Another way that dangerous U.S.-made pesticide exports are limited is through the environmental policies of U.S. bilateral agencies, which preclude the support of projects involving the toxic substances. The Overseas Private Investment Corp., for example, has just decided on such a policy, following the U.S. Export-Import Bank's earlier adoption of a broad environmental policy.


"Our policy is very cut and dried; we won't fund or get

involved in a project involving POPs pesticides," says Jeremy Butler, an OPIC spokesman in Washington. "For PIC chemicals, we have a standard criterion that if an exporter in an OPIC-sponsored project wants to use the pesticide, he has to obtain approval from the importing countries," he adds.

Such policies are a relatively recent phenomenon around the world, says one environmentalist. "Ex-Im and OPIC are the first bilaterals to adopt environmental standards in the United States, and the Europeans and the Japanese don't have them at all," observes Andrea Durbin, an official at Friends Of The Earth, in Washington, which was one of the advisers to OPIC during its environmental policy formation.

With a stronger international monitoring regime, exemplified by the 1998 Rotterdam convention, and growing awareness of potential pesticide problems among government agencies, NGOs and consumers, it may just be that this is one environmental hazard for which increased scrutiny is starting to produce real benefits. ■

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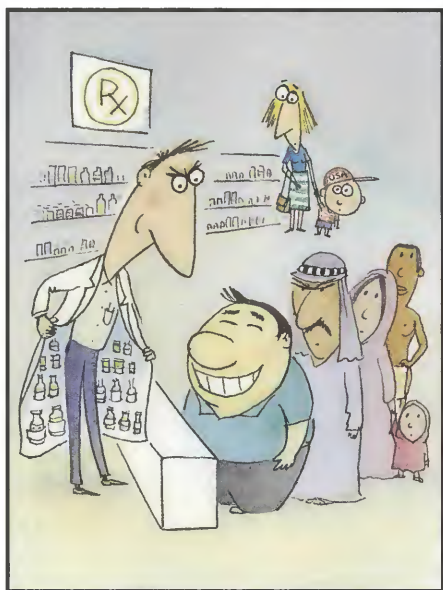
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HEALTH VERSUS WEALTH: LIBERALIZING THE DRUG TRADE



T NEW LEGISLATION MAKES IT EASIER THAN EVER FOR U.S. FIRMS TO EXPORT DRUGS THAT CAN'T BE USED IN THE U.S.

BY LAURA AKGULIAN

Three years have passed since Congress overhauled the nation's pharmaceutical export policy. Yet there is still a trace of surprise in the FDA official's voice.

"The sponsor [in the U.S. House of Representatives] — he was quite frank," the official declares. "He says: 'This is a trade bill.' In fact, he goes on to say: 'If things don't get solved, we'll reform it even more.' If he had his way, he'd do away with all regulation!"

To a U.S. Food and Drug Administration employee — a guardian of the public health — the idea of treating an FDA mandate as an ordinary piece of trade legislation seemed heretical.

The bill — the FDA Export Reform and Enhancement Act of 1996 — was the second major relaxation of export

restrictions on U.S. pharmaceutical products in less than 15 years. A strong move in the direction of loosening export constraints on U.S. manufacturers, it has implications for trade and health abroad, especially in developing countries, that American Foreign Service personnel should be aware of.

The act permits the sale of drugs not approved for use in the U.S. almost anywhere in the world. The 1996 law, therefore, creates a yawning gap between the strict regulation of pharmaceuticals within the United States and a much more lax policy on exports.

The Pro-Trade Perspective

During the 20th century, medications have become more potent and, on occasion, harmful or lethal if they are taken in excessive quantity or produce unwanted side effects — a phenomenon known as medical poisoning. Responding to this risk, most industrialized countries have instituted rigorous clinical testing to determine the potential toxicity, appropriate dosage and use for pharmaceuticals. Developing countries, meanwhile, have usually had very limited resources to devote to these tasks.

Not everyone agrees that regulating drugs is a healthy concept, however. As the FDA official discovered, one's attitude is colored by whether one sees the world primarily in economic terms — as a global marketplace, or in social terms — as an extended community in which everyone deserves to be healthy. ("Welcome to the FDA nightmare," laughs an attorney while discussing a particularly cumbersome section of a recent bill.) Some in the pharmaceuticals industry see the FDA as a roadblock that keeps them from doing their jobs: developing and marketing helpful products and turning a healthy profit.

As Doug Bandow of the libertarian Cato Institute put it in his article, "The FDA Can Be Dangerous to Your Health," published in *Fortune* in 1996, manufacturers find the drug review and approval process "burdensome, costly, and time-consuming" and believe consumers "suffer and die as a consequence of the FDA's dithering."

Bandow points to the life-saving drugs — from beta-blockers to AZT — available outside the U.S. years before the FDA gave them the thumbs-up. Agency meddling deprives the patient of the right to choose an unapproved drug. He suggests that the FDA "continue to review safe-

ty and efficacy, but allow unapproved drugs, clearly labeled as such, to be available by prescription," a view enunciated by Sam Kazman of the Competitive Enterprise Institute. Rather than hold up the sale of a drug while the FDA determines its effectiveness, Bandow would launch it into the market.

And what if a drug, approved or unapproved, causes significant injury? Business proponents tend to be sanguine, since no one can anticipate every outcome. Says Michael Kelly, a trade industry specialist with the Commerce Department, "We've had thalidomide. It didn't affect our trade." Kelly believes the public trust will remain unshaken as long as "we've sounded the alarm and warned [consumers] of the danger" when a product is found defective. "I don't think our credibility suffers when we say we've done something wrong and try to correct it."

Giving the industry greater freedom is viewed as a return to normalcy. "The FDA is, of course, the best regulatory agency in the world in guaranteeing safety," says Jeff Trewhitt, a spokesman for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). "But, having said that, it's not the only agency in the world with a good safety record." Adds Scott Lassman, a Washington lawyer whose firm handles FDA matters, "The [1996 act] is designed to break down what were viewed as very unnecessary barriers to international trade." Many in the business felt "the FDA was acting like the world's police for drugs."

Promoting Health vs. Maximizing Profit

Health advocates look at drug regulation quite differently. They tend to believe that patient protection should take priority over profit, and they are quick to cite instances in which pharmaceuticals caused serious harm.

In fact, it was only after a drug called sulfanilamide, marketed as an "elixir," killed 107 people that Congress enacted the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938 — more than a decade after the FDA itself was established. "The manufacturer accepted no responsibility for [the outcome] whatsoever," says Larry Sasich, a research analyst at Public Citizen Health Group in Washington. "The FDC Act actually sat on the shelf from 1934 on. And it wasn't until these people — largely children — died that the act was passed. ... As usual, we only react after a disaster instead of trying to prevent them."

Removing a drug from the pharmacy shelf doesn't guarantee that it will stay away. Take the return of thalido-

Laura Akgulian is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C.

mide. What Bandow called a "thalidomide scare" was one of the most disturbing chapters in the annals of modern medicine. Thalidomide was sold between 1958 and 1962 to relieve such anxiety conditions as insomnia and morning sickness in pregnant women. Thought to have no harmful side effects, it was said to offer a "safe, sound sleep." But infants of mothers who took it were born with stunted limbs or other disfigurements. By the time it was banned in 1962, some 10,000 to 20,000 children had been injured — 4,000 dying before their first birthday, others permanently scarred by deafness, blindness, missing or partial limbs, or other serious birth defects — across some 46 countries.

Since then, a series of startling discoveries has revealed the drug's potential to treat leprosy, cancer, and, most recently, AIDS. But once again, the use of thalidomide has come at a terrible cost: In Brazil, where pregnant women have taken the drug to prevent leprosy, oblivious of the risks involved, another generation of congenitally malformed babies has emerged.

This infuriates thalidomiders, as earlier survivors call themselves. It means that too little was learned from their truncated limbs and diminished dreams. "It makes me very angry," Kevin Donellan — whose arms and legs are partially formed — told BBC News last year. "It has been allowed to happen yet again when it is so unnecessary."

Sometimes drug disasters have international repercussions. In Canada thalidomide was marketed by American as well as Canadian companies — a fact that Canadian survivor and activist Randy Warren mentions as soon as he learns you're calling him from the U.S. "That's what you did to us," Warren says, not so much fierce as matter-of-fact. "You sent that stuff here and it ruined our lives."

"Dumping" Drugs Around the World

Similar stories abound. A current cause for concern is dipyron, a powerful analgesic and fever-reducer banned in most industrialized countries. The FDA rescinded approval of the drug in 1977 after four people died and several experienced blood-related illness. Yet dipyron is still being sold (or "dumped," in the opinion of many) — often in developing countries with weaker regulatory systems — by U.S. and other companies even though aspirin or acetaminophen gives the same results without the risks.

Another kind of "dumping" occurs in the form of humanitarian contributions. Companies donate drugs and supplies in response to appeals from relief organizations.

Many of the shipments are a godsend: appropriate products, clearly labeled, good for another year or more. Too often, however, the donated drugs are expired, unsorted, mislabeled, unlabeled, opened, or inappropriate:

- In 1993 in Lithuania, 11 women temporarily lost their eyesight when given a veterinary medicine that arrived without product information, forcing doctors to match the name — *closantel* — to names of other drugs to guess what it might be used for.

- Up to 60 percent — 17,000 metric tons — of the medical donations to Bosnia between 1992 and 1996 were useless and had to be destroyed by the Bosnians at considerable cost. Among the items: medical supplies from World War II.

- During the war in Eritrea — in spite of carefully worded appeals — donations included seven truckloads of expired aspirin that had to be incinerated.

USAID is not immune to this sort of donor activity. In one questionable instance back in the 1970s, AID purchased millions of dollars worth of high-dosage estrogen pills at a discount from the Syntex Corp. after the FDA recommended taking the lowest available dosage. Actions of this sort — no matter how well intentioned — leave the agency open to criticism abroad.

According to a new study released by the Harvard School of Public Health, concern about the quality of drug donations sent from the U.S. is warranted. The study, sponsored by a partnership of drug companies and charities, confirms that disposing of useless drugs is a staggering burden for recipients. Abiding by local safety regulations to dispose of the goods is expensive; sometimes recipients even have to pay to transport the donations or pay the government a fee based on the value of the goods. This is all money that could have been spent on emergency drugs and supplies. Relief workers think the "dumping" will continue as long as companies are rewarded with tax breaks and take advantage of the situation to get rid of unwanted inventory.

The Positive Side of Trade

And yet, to conclude that the drug export story is one of unremitting disaster and malfeasance would be unjustified. There have been bright spots as well as causes for concern.

In the 1980s, after studies revealed that companies were selling drugs with deficient labels to developing countries, Congress asked the now-defunct Office of

F O C U S

Technology Assessment to analyze the labeling practices of U.S.-based multinationals selling to Panama, Kenya, Brazil, and Thailand. The OTA submitted its report, *Drug Labeling in Developing Countries*, in 1993. It found that "U.S. companies provide at least as good or better information than do companies elsewhere." Half of the labels evaluated were "entirely appropriate or had relatively small problems." The other half "diverged significantly and seriously from the standard," omitting such crucial information as warnings to patients with chronic diseases or guidance for nursing mothers.

In addition, pharmaceutical companies have learned from previous mistakes. When Celgene, a U.S. firm, was preparing to reintroduce thalidomide, it needed to warn prospective users about the product's dangers. So the company went to the source and sought the advice of the thalidomide survivors themselves. Thus was created a fragile tie between an American manufacturer and the Thalidomide Victims Association of Canada. Randy Warren remembers approaching the meeting with trepidation. "I always saw it as a necessary collaboration conducted for different reasons. They didn't want to see lawsuits, which would cost them money, and we didn't want to see children born with defects and their families devastated." Although he would have worked "with anyone, be they the drug companies, governments, or individuals," Warren says of Celgene: "I respect them for seeking us out."

Tilting Toward Trade?

But has the 1996 Export Reform Act, which attempts to balance health and business concerns, tipped the scale too far toward trade? The act permits the sale of unapproved drugs to a country as long as the product complies with the importing country's laws and meets certain minimal conditions. It assumes that every country can evaluate a drug and arrive at a medically sound opinion about a product's risks and efficacy. Yet this has never been true. While industrialized nations have the staff, equipment, funds, expertise, and access to research to make an informed decision about an unapproved product, developing countries tend to lack these resources. High illiteracy rates coupled with a dearth of medical facilities make their citizens even more vulnerable. It's not surprising that the recent wave of injuries related to thalidomide occurred in Brazil — not in France or Japan.

Lary Sasich of Public Citizen Health Group observed

the drawbacks while working as a pharmacist at a hospital in Riyadh in the early 1990s. In spite of their money, the Saudis were new to the world of drug regulation —and, he adds, they're trusting people. "One of the requirements for selling a pharmaceutical in Saudi Arabia was the company had to establish a scientific office where people could call to get information," he says. "So it made their sales force a legal requirement!"

In *Prescriptions for Death: The Drugging of the Third World* (1982), Dr. Milton Silverman, Dr. Philip Lee, and Mia Lydecker exposed the troubling methods of marketing drugs in developing countries. Problems ranged from bribery and kickbacks to that of dirt-poor laborers spending every cent — even stealing — to buy the wrong medication for their ailing children. With three-quarters of the world's population yet less than one-quarter of its purchased drugs, developing countries can ill afford costly, risky, or unproven medicine.

Before 1986 the U.S. obliged by prohibiting the overseas sale of unapproved drugs. Yet, as industry sources note, what's unapproved in one place is often approved somewhere else. Thus, in 1986, Congress amended the law to allow the limited sale of unapproved drugs — but only with prior FDA approval, and only to 21 countries with regulatory systems deemed as stringent as our own. The 1986 law was the first liberalization of drug export controls.

Philip Lee — co-author with Milton Silverman of *Prescriptions for Death* and currently professor emeritus at the University of California at San Francisco — was asked to help compile the list of countries. "Milt and I both opposed [the 1986 law] because we felt it would provide a significant loophole," he says. But "if you're going to ease up and export drugs not approved in the U.S., ... the 21-country restriction was a good policy." A Dutch expert, Bas van der Heide, even commended it as a model for Europe. "This policy does not seem to have hampered the U.S. pharmaceutical industry, nor harmed the clinical development of relevant drugs," he wrote in a World Health Organization publication.

Yet the industry disagreed, feeling its hands were still unfairly tied despite the 1986 liberalization. Why was no other country forced to abide by the same limitations? Seeking expanded markets, it pushed to remove the restrictions completely. Says Trewitt, the pharmaceutical industry spokesman, "If the regulatory agency in the country in question, despite the risks, still

finds the drug has therapeutic value — has weighed the risks and benefits — that should be appropriate.” Adds another PhRMA spokesman who requested anonymity, “We don’t want to be busybodies. If another country says a drug is okay, then that’s all we need to know.” The old law, he says, had to be made “more workable and flexible.” For instance, although it had a mechanism for expanding the list of 21 countries, “never once was a country added,” he says. “In the real world there’s a certain amount of inertia.”

What Is an “Unapproved” Drug?

Adding countries a few at a time under the previous law might have been a more thoughtful solution than abandoning the list completely, as the 1996 act does. In addition, the Export Reform Act eliminates the need to obtain prior FDA approval in most circumstances before exporting an unapproved drug. Now an unapproved drug may be exported to any country in the world as long as it complies with the laws of the importing country and has valid marketing authorization from the European Union or any so-called “Tier I” country (e.g., Canada, Australia, Japan). Even if the drug has no marketing authorization in a Tier I country, the law offers two additional mechanisms for export to a non-Tier I country. Generally speaking, in the first, the FDA determines that the country has a basic regulatory system; in the second, the manufacturer petitions the FDA with “credible scientific evidence” about the drug’s safety and efficacy, and the importing country must concur.

The new situation poses several challenges that may be difficult for developing countries to meet: Staying informed about a drug’s approval status; gauging whether a drug has been manufactured properly; and resisting pressure to purchase unapproved drugs. “Unapproved” is a term with multiple meanings. Most over-the-counter preparations are “unapproved,” says David Read, the FDA’s acting director for Regulatory Policy Staff. So are drugs awaiting FDA approval. If a drug has several uses and one of them causes a problem, the FDA withdraws approval for that one particular use — the drug is “unapproved” for that indication yet approved for its other uses. (Using a drug for an unintended purpose is called an “off-label” use.)

Companies also drop products, which doesn’t mean that they are unsafe. “It may be that the market dried up,” says Read. And now, with the 1996 legislation, com-

panies are also free to export drugs that are unapproved for any use within the United States. Drug approvals come and go as a product’s reputation waxes and wanes. Dipyron is dropped; thalidomide soars. With Halcion, a controversial sleeping medication, “when the British government withdrew approval, we didn’t,” says an FDA official who asked not to be named. “We looked at their information and decided to keep it on the market.”

When approvals are withdrawn, the regulatory authorities “should be patched in to each other, so they should be aware of them,” says the FDA official. Developing countries, he conceded, might be “less aware” of those decisions. Product labels won’t help, since labels on exports needn’t state that an approval was withdrawn. “That’s called remedial labeling,” says the FDA’s David Read. “We don’t typically require that.”

An even bigger worry is that drugs manufactured for export only aren’t subject to quality control. While FDA inspectors travel overseas to monitor facilities producing U.S. imports, no one is doing the equivalent check for products shipped abroad. Michael Kelly at Commerce thinks it’s no loss, since regulating exports is doomed to fail. “The only way to protect your people is through import control,” he says. “He sounds like an optimist!” says import specialist Mel Lauderdale at the Customs Department. Lauderdale notes that in the U.S. “We probably don’t examine more than 2 percent” of incoming cargo. If even the U.S. can only check a fraction, how will developing countries cope with a deluge of unsuspected drugs?

Countries must also contend with pressure to purchase American products. Twisting arms to sell drugs to reluctant countries dates back to the Opium Wars, when the British and French forced the Chinese government to open its borders to lucrative opium trading. In the 1960s, Sasich recalls, “Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] had established an essential drugs policy. They were going to manufacture them in their own country. ... The State Department stepped in on behalf of the industry and threatened to cut off certain kinds of aid if they went ahead with the program.” Pressure continues to be brought to bear. According to a recent article by Ken Silverstein in the *Nation*, “The USTR [Office of the U.S. Trade Representative] ... has threatened at least seven countries with trade sanctions if they allow generic substitutes of the [American-produced] cancer drug Taxol onto domestic markets.”

F O C U S

What's an FSO to Do?

For American FSOs, dealing with unapproved drugs will require finesse to satisfy three distinct groups — the manufacturer seeking marketing assistance, the host country using the products, and the U.S. citizen in need of safe medication while abroad. While the Foreign Commercial Service handles the specifics of a trade initiative and State handles the policy aspects, both are expected to support U.S. products — yet that doesn't translate into blanket approval if products fall short of the mark. Charles Kestenbaum, who works with both FCS and State as director of the U.S. Commercial Liaison Office to the World Bank, says, "Naturally, we take a pro-American position in most cases. On the other hand, we want to protect America's reputation — its integrity." If a problem with an export arose, he says, "we would immediately communicate those concerns to Washington." Moreover, should inadequately tested goods create problems in foreign markets, the reputation of U.S. products could suffer, causing a backlash against them. Bill Hurt, who handles pharmaceuticals for Trade Development at

Commerce, agrees: "It could take away one of our best selling points: that our products are the best, the most closely inspected, the purest."

According to a spokesman for the Pan American Health Organization, many countries lack the means to track adverse reactions to unapproved drugs, much less compile statistics on illness and mortality. Paying close attention to anecdotal evidence might be the only way to learn that a drug is causing serious injury. USAID field missions may be in a position to gather firsthand information about various drugs' successes or failures.

There's also a chance that Americans traveling or working abroad will use an unapproved product. "When Americans get sick," says Dr. Philip Lee, "they call the embassy for a referral or a doctor or a prescription." They might even mistake an unapproved product for its rigorously tested counterpart back home. "I've had that experience myself," says Bill Hurt of Commerce. "When you're in a foreign country, you go in and you look for an American product, because it has that label, that FDA approval."

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WHO is on the Case

Fortunately, many excellent sources exist for those who want to learn more about the intricacies of pharmaceutical exports. WHO is the main international agency offering support to developing countries on every facet of health care. Its guidelines allow each country to create its own list of "essential drugs" — the basic drugs suited to save lives and improve health, tailored to the needs of a particular locale. The guidelines help promote an unbiased selection process based on the best scientific data.

WHO's Essential Drugs and Other Medicines Department helps countries develop and implement their own national drug policies and essential drug programs. Its ultimate goal is to ensure that all people have access to drugs of acceptable quality and know how to use them effectively. Other valuable tools range from training materials for rural health workers to guidelines on humanitarian drug donations.

USAID also sponsors innovative drug-related programs. The Rational Pharmaceutical Management Program (RPM) comprises two agreements funded by USAID to help developing countries acquire pharmaceutical expertise. One — with the organization Management Sciences for Health (MSH) — focuses on drug registration, procurement, and inventory management tools and techniques. The other — with U.S. Pharmacopeia — seeks to assess and develop pharmaceutical information for regulatory and health workers. RPM develops state-of-the-art tools, methodologies, software, training materials, and other resources, which it then tests in project countries, after which it makes them available to other agencies and organizations. Among its efforts in numerous countries, it has developed a Drug Information Network in Nepal, led national and regional workshops in training and managing drug supply in Mozambique, and supported national health reform in Zambia.

The International Network for Rational Use of Drugs (INRUD), a nonprofit research organization supported primarily by the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) with ad hoc support from WHO, USAID and others, promotes the more rational use of drugs in developing countries. Its research projects in 10 member countries (five each in Asia and Africa) focus on changing behavior to improve drug use. INRUD has teamed up with WHO to sponsor two-week "Promoting

Rational Drug Use" courses throughout Africa and Asia, working with local groups and ministries of health.

Can We Do Better?

To enhance their handling of unapproved pharmaceuticals, State and Commerce Department officers might consider these simple strategies:

- Understand the nature of the product being marketed and its approval status, obtaining guidance from the manufacturer, FDA, WHO, USP, USAID, and others.
- Initiate briefings on products — including their off-label uses — by relevant national and international agencies and health advocacy groups. Dr. Philip Lee suggests having the Office of International Health at the Department of Health and Human Services organize the briefings and inviting pharmaceutical companies "to give proof of the indications they're suggesting." Briefings on overseas drug donations could include WHO, PAHO, and private foundations.
- Support efforts by WHO, INRUD, and USAID to strengthen national drug programs in developing countries. Noteworthy programs are also offered by global NGOs such as the Dutch group WEMOS, the Medical Lobby for Appropriate Marketing, and Health Action International.

It's clear that the 1996 Export Reform Act poses a challenge to U.S. officials dealing with trade and health issues abroad. By permitting the relatively free export of U.S.-manufactured pharmaceuticals that are not approved for domestic use, it calls for additional vigilance by U.S. and international agencies, to make sure that drugs are not misused, especially by patients in less developed countries. One hopes the thalidomide tragedy in Brazil is an anomaly rather than an indication of things to come as the market opens wider.

More generally, it's worth remembering that the conflict between those who espouse freer trade in pharmaceuticals and those who urge caution should not be and does not have to be a bitter either/or proposition. The two sides can learn from each other. The natural eagerness of the manufacturer to sell products and garner profits is balanced by the natural caution of the health and consumer advocate who wants to ensure the prescription is safe and effective. By fostering a constructive dialogue and monitoring its outcome, the U.S. government can help to strengthen both trade and health abroad. ■

TOXIC WASTE, ANYONE?



Jeff Moore

B FOR INDUSTRIES THAT WANT TO SHIP TOXIC SUBSTANCES ABROAD, WASTE IS A TERRIBLE THING TO MIND.

By SOPHIA VAN DER BIJL

Between 1991 and 1994, Borden Chemicals and Plastics, a Louisiana chemical company, exported 300,000 pounds of depleted mercury catalyst to the Thor Chemicals plant in South Africa to be recycled. Instead of being recycled, though, some of the mercury leaked from its storage containers. The Thor plant has been accused of poisoning 28 workers and of polluting nearby water sources that are used for bathing, cooking and washing.

Several years earlier, in 1987, thousands of tons of "soil fertilizer" were unloaded by the Khian Sea barge on a beach in Haiti. It was soon discovered that, far from being harmless fertilizer, the unloaded cargo was in fact toxic incinerator ash, including arsenic and mercury, from the city of Philadelphia. The Khian Sea was forced to stop its unloading and

spent the next two years travelling the globe searching for a dumping ground, a journey described by Vice President Al Gore in his book, *Earth in the Balance*.

The Thor Chemicals and Khian Sea barge incidents are just two cases that demonstrate the abuses that can result from the export of hazardous waste from industrialized to developing countries. Although the international hazardous waste trade occurs mostly between industrialized states, and although the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that less than 1 per cent of hazardous waste generated annually in the United States is exported, the export of hazardous waste from industrialized to developing states has attracted a great deal of international concern.

This international trade exists for reasons of both supply and demand. The industrialized states produce over 90 percent of what the U.N. Environmental Program estimates to be 300 to 500 million tons of hazardous waste generated in the world annually. Cases demonstrating the harmful consequences of unsafe waste disposal, such as the 1978 Love Canal incident in upstate New York, caused a popular "not in my backyard" reaction to the disposal of hazardous waste in industrialized countries.

The costs of disposal in the industrialized world have also risen, in part due to increased regulations. According to a 1998 Royal Institute for International Affairs briefing paper, "In the late 1980s, the average disposal cost for one ton of hazardous waste in Africa was between \$2.50 and \$50, while in the OECD it ranged from \$100 to \$2,000."

A Protest Movement is Born

On the demand side, many developing countries during the 1980s were suffering the effects of a debt crisis, and importing toxic substances was a way for them to earn much-needed foreign exchange. According to one often-quoted anecdote, the trade and tourism minister of Guinea-Bissau, when asked why his country agreed to accept over 15 million tons of toxic waste, said simply, "We need the money."

In 1992, the World Bank's Chief Economist Larry Summers (now U.S. treasury secretary) concluded in an internal report that was leaked to the world press: "The economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic

waste in the lowest-wage country is impeccable."

Unfortunately, once the hazardous wastes from industrialized states reached developing states, they often lack the technological resources to handle them safely.

Environmental non-governmental organizations have predictably had a strong negative reaction to the trade in "dirty" waste and its consequences. Greenpeace is given credit for having prevented certain additional hazardous waste trades from taking place, such as the shipment of petroleum-contaminated soil from Hawaii to the Marshall Islands and the export of toxic Philadelphia incinerator ash to Panama. A new NGO, the Basel Action Network (BAN), has even been created with the specific aim of "putting an end to the export and dumping of hazardous wastes from rich industrialized states to poorer, less-industrialized countries."

NGO activities, such as raising public awareness and lobbying numerous governments, have made a difference. In 1989, 118 nations signed the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste, which was sponsored by the U.N. Environmental Program. The convention aims to regulate the trade in hazardous waste, imposing certain guidelines and encouraging the reduction of waste generation.

A decade later, the United States, the world's largest producer of hazardous wastes, is the only industrialized country that has still not formally ratified the convention. Although the Senate approved the treaty in 1992, new implementing legislation must be passed before the U.S. can become a party to the agreement, and that legislation is stalled.

There are some similarities between principles included in the Basel Convention and existing U.S. hazardous waste export law. The convention, for example, states that "parties shall prohibit the export of hazardous wastes and other wastes if the State of import does not consent in writing to the specific import," a practice known as prior informed consent. Similarly, the 1984 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act in the United States requires that a potential hazardous waste exporter give prior notice to the EPA of the shipment's composition and quantity, and the EPA must also receive written documentation of the proposed recipient country's informed consent.

Moreover, under the Basel Convention, in cases of illegal traffic of hazardous waste where the exporter is at fault, the company must take back the shipment. And in

Sophia van der Bijl was the editorial intern for the Foreign Service Journal during the spring of 1999.

both the Thor Chemicals and Khian Sea cases, the U.S. government has taken action to get the offending waste returned to the United States — though the companies still haven't done so.

Despite these similarities between the convention and U.S. practice, certain changes in domestic law would be required to be consistent with the convention, including adopting a broader definition of hazardous waste and expanding certain powers of the EPA.

From Regulation to Ban

An important amendment to the Basel Convention was adopted in 1995 after certain African states and NGOs such as Greenpeace criticized it for legitimizing rather than eliminating the dumping of hazardous wastes on poor countries. The signatories to this amendment voluntarily agreed to ban the export of wastes from OECD and European Union members to other countries for final disposal and recycling purposes.

The ban is seen by advocates as a significant move toward environmental justice. The ban is not yet legally binding, though, since only a dozen states have ratified and 64 are needed for it to enter into force. Once in effect, the ban will apply only to those countries that have ratified it.

The "Basel Ban" itself has also been subject to criticism within the United States. In 1995 Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Rafe Pomerance told reporters that the ban would discourage recycling. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce also has limited enthusiasm for the ban: "The Chamber position [is that] the Basel Convention must comport with free trade principles, and implementing legislation should permit trade with reasonable controls."

But officials like Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs Barbara Larkin see a downside to U.S. non-ratification. In a 1998 letter to House Commerce Committee Chairman Thomas Bliley (R-Va.), she wrote, "Countries have frequently raised our failure to ratify Basel to question the seriousness of U.S. negotiating positions on other environmental treaties."

Toxic wastes exports are also becoming a more contentious international issue. The Chinese State Bureau of Environmental Protection is reported to have sent a note in May 1996 to the Basel Convention Secretariat, expressing its disapproval of U.S. shipment of hazardous wastes to Beijing, Shanghai and Qingdao.

Activists have also recently protested in front of the American embassy in New Delhi against the use of Indian

beachfronts for scrapping toxic-laden naval ships. According to Associated Press reports, the Secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, P.K. Ganguly said: "We demand that the U.S. government respect the Basel Convention."

The Clinton administration is expected to introduce legislation in Congress to implement the Basel Convention, finally allowing for its formal ratification. However, an official of the EPA admitted that it is today considered totally unrealistic that the United States would simultaneously ratify the Basel Ban along with the convention.

Bill Richardson, while U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in 1998, gave what may be the administration's strongest argument for ratifying the Basel Convention and other environmental treaties: "The United States must be willing to lead the way. When the U.S. fails to act, other nations view our inaction as an excuse for doing nothing. Moreover, we cannot improve imperfect agreements when we're on the outside looking in." ■



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WORKERS OF THE WORLD- GLOBALIZE!

THE WORLD'S TRADE MINISTERS WILL DISCUSS WORKER RIGHTS IN SEATTLE AT THE WTO MEETING IN THIS MONTH. BUT WILL THEY DO ANYTHING ABOUT THEM?

BY ROBERT A. SENSER

Days after a former law school student named Dita Sari walked out of a women's penitentiary near Jakarta on July 5, 1999, she resumed the kind of life that landed her in prison three years earlier. At the convention of a new group that chose her as its president, the Indonesian National Front for Labor Struggles, Dita spoke movingly about her three years behind bars: "It is painful, it hurts to be in prison. But I know there is more pain, more hurt, outside of prison." She pledged to use her new freedom, not to go into politics as some had urged, but to help build a trade union movement that would be a voice for addressing the problems of Indonesia's working men and women.

At the age of 26, diminutive and soft-spoken, Dita Sari does not look like an agitator. Yet she is a vigorous member of a new class of human rights advocates — people in rich and poor countries alike, campaigning against sweatshops and other forms of worker exploitation in the global economy. A diverse group, the ranks of these activists include people like:

- Craig Kielburger, 16, a Canadian high school student who founded and heads Free the Children International, which has chapters of teenagers in 20 countries, all dedicated to the proposition that the world's young children belong in classrooms rather than in factories and mines;

- Wendy Diaz, 18, a garment worker from Honduras whose personal testimony at the age of 15 to members of Congress and others, including TV celebrity Kathie Lee Gifford, led to the founding of an anti-sweatshop group, the Apparel Industry Partnership, with Gifford herself a member; and:

Robert Senser, a former labor attaché in the Foreign Service, writes on human rights issues. He has a Website, Human Rights for Workers, at www.senser.com.

- Thuyen Nguyen, 35, a Vietnamese-American businessman who through a spare-time activity he calls Vietnam Labor Watch has helped turn the media's spotlight on labor abuses in Vietnamese factories making athletic shoes for export.

Fighting Sweatshops

Such activities have surged in the past four or five years. The most surprising of all began two years ago, when students at Duke, Georgetown, and a few other universities protested against the sweatshop origins of the T-shirts, caps, jackets, and other products bearing their schools' names. At latest count, the year-old United Students Against Sweatshops has affiliates at 125 U.S. and Canadian universities, most of which are starting to require factories making those products to follow decent labor standards.

Those activists and their fledgling organizations have strong allies in traditional trade unions, both domestic and foreign. Some leaders of the United Students Against Sweatshops have been interns in the AFL-CIO's Union of Needle Trades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE). Dita Sari insists that her freedom is not a governmental gift but the result of strong international pressure. In a letter thanking AFL-CIO President John Sweeney for his support, she wrote: "This is a sign of the universal character of worker solidarity."

Unions, old hands at combating sweatshops in their home countries, are now actively engaged locally and globally. Take the Brussels-based International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers Federation, with affiliates in 135 countries. During his 11 years as the federation's general secretary, Neil Kearney has inspected factories in 140 countries, and found sweatshops festering in most of them. NGOs like Vietnam Labor Watch are gadflies that expose specific problems, but it is Kearney who has the stature and global experience to agitate for reforms in inter-

national public policy circles, including meetings of United Nations agencies. Kearney's activism is just one facet of a world-wide campaign for worker rights under the aegis of his parent organization — the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), with affiliates in 143 countries and territories embracing 124 million members.

So two sets of kindred people and organizations, one fledgling and the other mature, both struggling against mighty odds, are laying the foundation of something like a global solidarity movement. That emerging movement, aided by media exposures of the downsides of globalization, has succeeded in elevating worker rights to a serious issue among global policy-makers. Even the staid institutions of Bretton Woods lineage have taken notice. Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have begun to integrate some labor concerns into their programs and policies, with advisory help from the U.N.'s International Labor Organization.

Yet so far the movement's success has been highly limited where it counts most — at the ground level of factories, mines, and other workplaces. There uncounted millions of working women and men have yet to benefit from the bounties of the global economy. The ILO's human rights conventions covering the workplace are supposed to set decent labor standards everywhere, but they have done little to prevent illegal practices from taking hold in much of the globalized labor market. Since the ILO's rules have no teeth, it seemed logical to Neil Kearney and other union leaders to seek the involvement of a powerful global agency, the World Trade Organization (WTO), whose top officer once boasted: "We are writing the constitution of a single global economy." Now pressures on the WTO to get involved have reached a new peak, including regular prodding by the Clinton administration.

The Clinton Administration Steps Up

President Clinton will deliver the welcoming address to the trade ministers of about 160 nations who will gather in Seattle from Nov. 30 to Dec. 3, 1999, for the third ministerial conference of the WTO. As he urged in his 1999 State of the Union address to Congress, "We have got to put a human face on the global economy." He has also called for developing a "new vision of trade [for] a modern WTO" in a major address just prior to the WTO's second ministerial conference, held in Geneva last year.

Clinton's most concrete suggestion on labor standards

These activists come from rich and poor countries alike, all campaigning against sweatshops and other forms of worker exploitation.

was to prod the WTO to cooperate with the ILO. The two Geneva-based organizations, he said, "should work together to make certain that open trade lifts living standards and respects the core labor standards that are essential not only to worker rights but to human rights."

The ICFTU, which had a delegation at Geneva, called the address "a remarkable agenda-setting speech." In a May 29, 1998, *Washington Post* column titled "Globalism With A Human Face," E.J. Dionne Jr. wrote that the Geneva address marked "a major shift in America's approach to global economics."

Well, not quite. Actually, trying to get the WTO and its predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), involved in labor matters has been an on-and-off goal of U.S. trade policy since 1953. At the first WTO ministerial, held in Singapore in 1996, the U.S. delegation was under a specific congressional mandate to seek the establishment of a "working party on worker rights," but it failed to achieve anything close to that. Although the ministers endorsed internationally recognized labor standards, they quickly added that the International Labor Organization "is the competent body to set and deal with those standards." Translation: that's none of the WTO's concern. Then in May 1998, despite pressure from the AFL-CIO, the Clinton administration and others to address the issue, the ministers ignored it at their second WTO conference.

Why has this objective been so elusive? First of all, multilateral trade negotiations require whittling down a huge number of objectives proposed by member states. That is especially true now that the WTO has 134 members, each with an equal vote. The United States, which carries on more trade than any other nation in the world, always has its own full agenda, based on input from a dozen or more U.S. agencies with interests in trade policy, as well as from Congress.

The wide compass of current U.S. objectives is evident in an eight-page, single-spaced statement circulated this summer by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the White House agency that took over trade policy coordination from State in 1962.

In it, USTR urged the WTO to launch study programs to help WTO members, including the U.S., "more fully understand the implications of newer topics and to build a consensus for the future." Singled out was the need for a study program to "address trade issues (e.g., abusive child labor, the operation of export processing zones, etc.)

relating to labor standards where members of the WTO would benefit from further information and analysis on this relationship and developments in the ILO."

The ILO's Role

Interestingly, confidence in the ILO has expanded in government and employer circles of late. At its 1998 conference the ILO unanimously adopted a Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, thanks in part to the role that employer delegates played in developing it and mobilizing support for it. Then this past June, for the first time in decades, a U.S. employer delegate voted in favor of an ILO convention, the Convention to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

On its website, the United States Council for International Business explains why it favors speedy U.S. ratification of that convention: "The USCIB believes that strengthening the ILO to deal with egregious violations of labor practices serves as an alternative to pressures on corporations to develop codes of conduct. It also should remove pressure on the U.S. government to use trade agreements (e.g., fast track, WTO) to deal with labor standards."

The ILO's newfound popularity in this arena is linked to the fact that implementing its conventions and declarations is completely voluntary for its members. By contrast, the WTO does not rely solely on a voluntary approach. Violations of WTO principles can have serious consequences, including fines (called compensation).

Take intellectual property rights — meaning the very practical monetary interests of people and firms suffering multi-billion-dollar losses in global markets through piracy of their writings, inventions, computer programs, films, industrial designs, and other works. The basic principles reg-

ulating this (too literally) "free" market are the responsibility of a Geneva-based neighbor of the WTO — the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The WTO works very closely with it, aided by the WTO's own agreement, the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which is backed by sanctions.

Happy TRAILS?

A strong case can be made for adopting some kind of WTO agreement on trade-related aspects of international labor rights (TRAILS). Many worker rights abuses in the global economy are indeed trade-related. To attract foreign investments in manufacturing industries dedicated to exports, governments of developing countries regularly suspend or ignore their labor laws and practices designed to protect their own citizens. In Bangladesh, special legislation deprives 50,000 workers in two export processing zones of rights guaranteed by the country's labor code, including the right to form unions. In China, government labor inspectors go easy on foreign-owned factories that violate China's labor regulations (against a seven-day workweek, for example) out of fear that the Taiwanese and Korean owners will shift their toy, garment and shoe production to Thailand or Vietnam.

Nonetheless, it is clear that the Seattle ministerial won't give the green light to a TRAILS agreement, however strong the case for one might be. Many developing countries oppose even a WTO dialogue with the ILO — a suggestion Clinton made 16 months ago — as the first step down a slippery slope.

Two common arguments against a serious linkage — meaning incentives for compliance with a labor code and penalties for non-compliance — are that it would be a tool for protectionists or an intrusion on national sov-

eignty. The governments of Egypt, India, Malaysia and Singapore are among the leading WTO members voicing both objections. Among economists, nobody airs warnings on both counts more frequently and vigorously than Jagdish Bhagwati, a prominent scholar of international economics at Columbia University. In his defense of free trade, he argues strongly that worker rights is none of the WTO's business, but adds that neither is the protection of investor rights as projected in a possible multilateral agreement on investments.

Richard B. Freeman of Harvard holds a minority view among mainstream economists. He sees merit in a trade/labor linkage of some sort. Union support of labor standards is not motivated by protectionism, he writes. Rather, it "represents a principled commitment to improving the situation for workers around the world, and in particular to strengthening the position of unions in developing countries." He believes that the various groups who have raised the issue "have performed a valuable service in forcing the bankers, finance ministers, trade specialists, and multinationals who dominate rule-setting for world trade to recognize that many citizens have concerns about standards that affect working people."

Three Circles In Seattle

So will the WTO make any progress in Seattle toward addressing concerns about standards that affect working people?

No, says Jerome Levinson, professor of international law at American University and research associate at the Economic Policy Institute. Based on his analysis of U.S. labor initiatives in the past decades of regional and global trade talks, he claims that the U.S. government position on worker rights is mostly rhetorical,

never pressed with the toughness that has won U.S. negotiators concessions in other areas (for example, in opening up foreign markets for American technology firms).

But perhaps the worker rights outcome at Seattle will be different. At a minimum, Seattle's atmospherics will be different — perhaps different enough to make trade history.

Like the WTO's two previous ministerial conferences in Singapore and Geneva, the one in Seattle will attract thousands of people, fitting within one of three concentric circles: 1) an inner ring, composed of trade ministers, other negotiators, advisers and staffers, all belonging to governments or to the WTO; 2) a middle group, composed of WTO-accredited representatives of business, labor, other non-governmental organizations and the media, with some direct contact with liaison people from the inner circle; and 3) a non-governmental outer circle, composed largely of people and groups quite unhappy with the WTO, many of whom are eager to shut it down immediately.

Because of the size of each of these three circles, Seattle will certainly live up to its billing as the biggest trade meeting ever held in the United States. In fact, because of a mass presence in its outer circle, it will probably be the largest trade gathering ever held anywhere — and quite possibly the most tumultuous, at least on the streets.

Make Love, Not Trade

At the 1998 conference, thousands of protesters, a few of them peasants from southern India, disturbed the tranquility of Geneva by waving banners and shouting "Make love, not trade," "Stop the WTO" and "Resist neo-liberalism." Though almost all the demonstrators were peaceful, some torched cars, smashed a U.S. fast-food restaurant's windows and sprayed graf-

fiti on bank walls. A union staff member who was in the conference's middle circle said at the time: "They make us look like sweet reason."

The umbrella group that organized the Geneva protest, People's Global Action, will be at Seattle. So will a newer group, the Ruckus Society, which for months has been openly training hundreds of Seattle-bound activists, Americans and foreigners, in what it calls "advanced" techniques of civil disobedience. A single militant theme — mobilization against globalization — will unite dozens of NGOs with different policy goals, such as prohibiting genetically engineered food, preserving agricultural subsidies, attacking multinational corporations, and preventing the resurrection of the Multinational Agreement on Investment (MAI) that died at the OECD in Paris last year after a worldwide Internet campaign against it. (The City Council has designated Seattle an "MAI-Free Zone.") In addition, Seattle will attract a large contingent of overseas advocacy groups, mostly from Asia.

Another telling difference — very dicey politically — is that the Seattle protest will include hundreds — perhaps thousands — of workers from the ranks of the AFL-CIO, especially from the longshoremens and steelworkers unions. Reactions of U.S. unions during and after the conference may be crucial to congressional restoration of the president's "fast track" authority, which he needs to engage in the new round of trade negotiations set to follow next year. Partly because of union opposition, Congress has already twice — in 1997 and 1998 — turned back proposals to renew that authority, under which Congress commits itself to either pass without amendment a trade agreement presented by the administration or to reject it within a fixed time period.

In contrast to some other events at

Seattle, the agenda of labor's own pre-conference meetings and rallies has a positive thrust: to make both the WTO and the global economy more worker-friendly — not to demonize globalization or agitate for the abolition of the WTO. At the conference itself the official labor representation will number at least 40 people, sent there either by the international confederation in Brussels or by affiliates in more than 20 developing and developed countries around the world. Thus the labor design for Seattle is based on synergy between union representatives in the middle circle and those in the much larger outer circle, on the one hand, and also between key union leaders and inner-circle government members from their home countries.

A Page One Issue?

Ordinarily, trade policy is b-o-r-i-n-g. Its complexity makes it largely incomprehensible, even to some reporters covering it. It does not usually produce graphic TV footage. But if only because of the expected presence of 4,000 media representatives, Seattle packs greater potential for making an impression on the general public. It could well lead off network newscasts and break into the front pages beyond the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. If it does, the impact on public opinion and public policy will depend on how the events come across. Will they be portrayed as dominated by crowds of banner-waving radicals or by people, governmental and non-governmental, groping for ways to put a human face on the global economy?

Whatever the outcome at Seattle and however it is reported, the issue of worker rights in the international marketplace is bound to remain very much alive. Dita Sari and those in solidarity with her across the globe will make sure of it. ■



BOOKS

Remembrances of Démarches Past

BY JAMES E. MILLER

Proud Servant: The Memoirs of an Ambassador

Ellis O. Briggs, Kent State University Press, 1998, \$45.00, hardcover, 430 pages.

Fragments of Our Time: Memoirs of a Diplomat

Martin Hillenbrand, University of Georgia Press, 1998, \$45.00, hardcover, 414 pages.

Bush Hat, Black Tie: Adventures of a Foreign Service Officer

Howard Simpson, Brasseys, Inc., 1998, \$24.95, hardcover, 211 pages, illustrations.

In Those Days: A Diplomat Remembers

James W. Spain, Kent State University Press, 1998, \$28.00, hardcover, 252 pages, illustrations.

“**A**void trivia.” The concise advice that Secretary of State George C. Marshall gave the youthful chief of his policy planning staff, George Kennan, might serve as a motto for all writers of diplomatic memoirs. Certainly, Kennan took Marshall’s advice to heart, becoming one of the most

James Miller teaches history and European studies at Georgetown, Johns Hopkins (SAIS) and FSI. He is the author of four books, none of which is a memoir.

important policy-makers of his era as well as the author of the most influential diplomatic memoir of the 20th century.

Successful memoir-writing, like any other literary effort, requires discipline and careful analysis. What did the prospective author do that is worthy of committing to paper? Which audiences is the memoir intended for? What issues should it cover? For example, should the memoir focus on critiquing U.S. policies? Should it comment on the way in which the Foreign Service operates? Is the author going to try his hand at an analysis of one or more of the societies in which he served? And finally, how personal should the memoir be?

Good memoirs usually contain all the elements listed above, but achieving a balance is very difficult. Temptations abound. The desire to settle scores with individuals or institutions is frequently too strong to resist. Self-justification normally ends up by discrediting the author with his readers. Similarly, spinning tales often produces a disjointed and not very interesting read. Writing for insiders almost always spells doom for the manuscript; since the audience is so restricted, publishers are wary of touching it.

Over the last decade, the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) has promoted memoirs through its oral history project and publications series. The Spain and Simpson books were published

under its auspices. ADST presumably has a prospective audience and goals in mind: influencing policy-makers, training junior diplomats and providing grist for the studies of political scientists and historians, who are memoir writers’ biggest and frequently most skeptical audience.

The ultimate deconstructionists, historians mine memoirs for material to cover gaps in archival documentation while comparing their contents to primary sources to catch errors in fact and expose biases. They also frequently exploit memoirs to reinforce their own ideological biases.

The four memoirs under review cover over 60 years of U.S. diplomacy. Ellis Briggs entered the Foreign Service in the 1920s; Martin Hillenbrand joined in 1939. Howard Simpson became an FSO in 1951, while James Spain, who first did a diplomatic tour in the 1940s, returned to Foggy Bottom through lateral transfer in the 1960s. Spain was the last to call it a career in 1989.

Of the four men, Hillenbrand probably had the greatest influence in shaping American foreign policy. He was intimately associated with German policy from 1945 through 1977, a period when Germany was at the center of American foreign policy concerns. Spain, a refugee from the CIA’s analytical side, may have had the most diverse career. Briggs was a sort of poster boy for the values, virtues and prejudices of the “old Foreign Service.” Simpson, a

USIA officer, had the best time. The other three became ambassadors.

Each of these memoirs takes its own approach to storytelling. Each has distinct strengths and weaknesses. All have something to stay about the internal organization of U.S. diplomacy. Taken together, they provide an interesting if necessarily incomplete picture of policy-making.

"A Tough SOB"

Mention Ellis Briggs to well-educated Greeks of a certain age and the most likely word association will be "proconsul." Briggs was a crusty, self-confident Dartmouth man who embodied a style of imperial diplomacy long since publicly renounced by American political leaders. His apprenticeship took place in Africa and Latin America, where Briggs absorbed a style of dealing with the natives that was distinctly "colonial" in assumptions and approach. This "proud servant" of the American state had no qualms about utilizing U.S. power to achieve its objectives nor about dealing with corrupt elites. When Truman sent Briggs to Czechoslovakia in 1949, he remarked that the new ambassador was "a tough son of a bitch who will stand up to the commies." Briggs was equally tough on U.S. personnel. He ruthlessly reduced staffing at his embassies, carried on a running war with the Defense Department to protect his ambassadorial prerogatives, and had little use for the CIA. (The last, in my view, was his most admirable quality.) As a result, Briggs' ambassadorial postings were frequently brief. He was kicked out of the Dominican Republic. Nor did he last long in Czechoslovakia, Peru or Brazil. His arrogant treatment of Greek moderates contributed to President Kennedy's decision to withdraw him from Athens.

Proud Servant was Briggs' fourth and final essay at memoir-writing. This volume is strong on opinion and accordingly interesting. As diplomat and as author, Briggs' strength was his self-confidence. He had a set of values and was unafraid to express them, either on the job or in retirement. His observations about internal politics in Liberia, Cuba, and other developing nations, his criticisms of American diplomatic practice, and his comments about the various presidents under whom he served are all quite acute.

Rewriting the Rules

Fragments of Our Time is a thoughtful, carefully paced account of a life at the center of America's postwar foreign policy dilemmas. Martin Hillenbrand also brings to his recounting of the recent past a decade and a half's experience inside that other supremely self-enclosed American institution, the university. He has tested his memory against available archival materials (including his own journal) and scholarly writing on the period. Hillenbrand turns the tables on academic critics of American policy by subjecting their work to sensible criticism. This is one of the more entertaining parts of a memoir that starts well, lags a bit in mid-career, and again becomes very interesting as the author reaches the higher levels of the foreign policy establishment.

The wartime and early postwar U.S. Foreign Service creatively dealt with the extraordinary tasks it faced and rewrote the rules of diplomatic behavior handed down by Briggs and the "old Foreign Service." Hillenbrand participated in this effort in places as diverse as Burma, India, Mozambique, and occupied Germany. He tells this part of the story with verve. Perhaps because he

then moved into mid-level positions in Paris, Washington and Berlin, the next part of his story lacks the same vitality. He was not well-positioned to provide real insight into the rationales for policy-making. Moreover, the era and the issues have been treated almost ad nauseum by journalists, historians, and other memoir writers. Hillenbrand's contribution is accordingly less fresh, in large part because the author is less reflective in the section of the memoir dealing with the 1950s. Once the account reaches the Kennedy administration, when Hillenbrand wielded greater influence, his reflections become more pointed and the memoir again engages the reader's attention.

A Highly Personal Account

The Foreign Service officers of Hillenbrand's and subsequent eras have all seemed more restrained than the individualists of the Briggs era. Perhaps, for this reason, James Spain's extremely personal memoir, *In Those Days*, comes as something of a shock. Like Briggs, Spain has traveled down the memoir road before. He offered an extremely well-written account of service in Turkey during one of the nation's most dramatic periods, *American Diplomacy in Turkey*. Alternately sad and tongue in cheek, *In Those Days* is as much about one man's family tragedies as about his career in diplomacy. Spain might argue, with justice, that they are simply two sides of the same coin. I found myself discomfited entering so far into highly personal emotions and experiences.

More disturbing was the book's lack of content and organization. The author avoids any real comments about his years with the CIA, runs rapidly through his diplomatic experiences, and effectively ends his

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BOOKS

story about three-fifths of the way through this short memoir. Spain then doubles back to recount a series of anecdotes that offer him the chance to provide thumbnail sketches of various foreign leaders and criticize a variety of villains from Richard Nixon to Jesse Helms. The criticisms are well-aimed, but a bit more organization would have balanced the diplomatic observations and the personal reflections.

Bush Hat, Black Tie is the unpretentious autobiographical sketch of a U.S. Information Agency officer who eventually rose to be an unpretentious consul general in Southern France. Simpson had the good sense to quit when his agency decided to assign him to one last hardship post. As befits the work of an ex-journalist and practicing novelist, this memoir is a pleasure to read. It is full of entertaining vignettes and clever asides. The historian's problem arises precisely because of its novelistic quality. The quotes have the look of invention; the descriptions are too polished, the details too exact. The author cheerfully admits to faking it a bit and displays only the most limited interest in doing research.

Nevertheless, *Bush Hat, Black Tie* would be a serious contender for required reading in any course on the history of U.S. diplomacy I might offer. It is a nice mix of personal revelation and description of what Foreign Service officers actually do. It is particularly good on the often difficult conditions in which U.S. diplomats operate and on the way they frequently run around their own bureaucracies in the effort to carry out policy. Moreover, it provides a running, sometimes funny, critique of basic U.S. Cold War policies as seen from the operational level. ■



IN MEMORY

Edith (Betty) C. Cain, 87, a retired Foreign Service employee, died of cancer July 18 at St. Mary's Hospital Hospice Unit in Tucson, Ariz.

A native of Mt. Vernon, Ohio, Mrs. Cain joined the State Department in 1944 and transferred to the Foreign Service in 1971. Upon her retirement in 1973, she received a Superior Honor Award.

She was a member of the Potomac Chapter of the Professional Women's Club in the District of Columbia, serving as president in 1969. After retiring to Arizona, she was active in civic and volunteer organizations including the Southern Arizona Chapter of Foreign Service Retirees.

She is survived by her husband, Bruce C. Cain of Green Valley, Ariz.

Terrence Catherman, 73, a retired FSO, died June 23 of liver cancer at his home in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Catherman, who was born in Michigan in 1925, earned his B.A. and M.A. in international relations and Russian studies from the University of Michigan. From 1944 to 1946 he served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific.

Joining the State Department in 1950, he was assigned to the Federal Republic of Germany. He served with USIA for almost 40 years in posts including Heidelberg, Bonn, Vienna, Moscow, Tel Aviv, Berlin,

Belgrade and Paris. He also attended the National War College and was deputy director of the Voice of America. He returned to Bonn in 1985 as minister counselor for public affairs and retired in 1990.

During his career, Mr. Catherman received the Presidential Meritorious Service Award, USIA's Distinguished Honor Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy and Germany's Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit.

Survivors include his wife, Dorothy Call Catherman of Washington, D.C., and a sister, JoAnn Brown of Memphis, Tenn.

Philip T. Cox, a retired FSO, died of lung cancer April 4 at his home in Alexandria, Va.

Born in Minneapolis, Mr. Cox was raised in Fort Worth, Texas. During the Korean War he served in Korea and Japan. In 1959 he received his B.A. from Mexico City College.

He joined AID in 1962 as a program officer. His posts included the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama. He also worked in the AID Personnel Office in Washington, D.C. After his retirement in 1984 he became an active bird watcher.

Survivors include his wife, Nancy of Alexandria, Va.; two sons, Steven of Egan, Minn. and Daniel of

Alexandria, Va.; and a sister, Carol Covington of San Antonio, Texas.

Patrick Hoover Griffin, 75, a retired FSO, died peacefully at home in Sun Lakes, Ariz., June 21.

Mr. Griffin was born in Payette, Idaho and grew up in Vancouver, Wash. He was a lieutenant in the Army Air Corps and graduated in 1950 from the University of Washington. For the next 11 years he worked as an accountant/auditor in the lumber industry.

Joining the U.S. Agency for International Development in 1961, he was posted to Libya, Kenya, India, Pakistan, Turkey and the Philippines. As a senior member of the Office of the Inspector General, he reviewed AID programs in 31 countries. USAID presented him with its Outstanding Career Achievement Award in 1985.

After retirement, Mr. Griffin worked for Chandler-Gilbert Community College in Chandler, Ariz., and Food for the Hungry International.

Survivors include his wife, Betty Louise of Sun Lakes; a son, Michael of Phoenix, Ariz.; a daughter, Pamela Brown; and two grandchildren, all of Redwood City, Calif.

John Joseph Ingersoll, 79, a retired FSO, died May 7 in

IN MEMORY

Potomac, Md., where he was a resident of Arden Court Assisted Living facility. He suffered from Alzheimer's disease.

Born in Philadelphia, he graduated from Temple University and earned his M.A. in economics from the University of Michigan. After serving in the Army in Europe during World War II, he joined the Foreign Service.

Mr. Ingersoll's foreign posts included Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Argentina and England. He was recognized as an authority on the international coffee trade and served as the U.S. representative to multilateral commodity councils from 1965 to 1971. He retired as director of the Office of International Commodities in 1971.

He was a member of the Cosmos Club, Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR), and the Society of Descendants of Signers of the Constitution.

Survivors include a daughter, Laura A. Ingersoll of Washington, D.C.; a son, Navy Cmdr. John D. Ingersoll (ret.) of Arlington, Va.; and a brother, Charles J. Ingersoll of Philadelphia.

Leslie A. Klieforth, 75, a retired FSO, died July 23 at St. Petersburg General Hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Mr. Klieforth was born in Washington, D.C. in 1923. He served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946 and earned a B.A. from the University of Michigan in 1948.

During his 25 years in the Foreign Service, his posts included Hamburg, Johannesburg, Wellington, Auckland, Tehran, Antwerp, and Casablanca. After retirement he lived in Silver Spring, Md., and moved to St.

Petersburg, Fla., in 1997 and to Largo, Fla., in 1998.

Survivors include his wife, Ingeborg; a son, Leslie A.H., both of Largo; six daughters, Yvonne M. Klieforth of St. Petersburg, Lanrette C. Klieforth of Washington, D.C., Cecelia J. Mangini of Mechanicsville, Md., Annette Klieforth of Bellevue, Wash., Barbara I. Klieforth of Cottage City, Md., and Lily M. Adair of Hampton, Va.; a brother; and six grandchildren.

Peter A. Monti, 63, a retired Foreign Service employee, died June 19 in Weston, Fla.

After serving in the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Monti joined the Foreign Service in communications. His posts included Conakry, Santiago, Tunis, Lahore and Oslo. In addition, he spent many years as a diplomatic courier based in Frankfurt and Washington, D.C. Mr. Monti retired in 1988 after 30 years with the government.

Survivors include his wife, Laura; his son, Henrik; and his daughter, Ariana.

David B. Ortman, 76, a retired FSO, died of lung cancer July 31 at his home in Boyds, Md.

Mr. Ortman began his career with the State Department in 1951 and joined the Foreign Service in 1955. He served overseas in Birmingham, England, and Brussels. He retired in 1973 after a tour as acting chief of the Office of Aviation Policy and Planning in the department.

After retirement, he entered private law practice, retiring in 1997.

Survivors include his wife, Elizabeth H. Farquhar of Boyds; a daughter, Amie Rose; two sons, Jonathan Ortman and Ethan Ortman;

a stepson, James Farquhar; and five grandchildren.

Roxanne Hansen Snyder, 75, wife of retired FSO Byron Bridges Snyder, died of cardiopulmonary failure May 16, 1999 in her home in Modesto, Calif.

Mrs. Snyder was born in Minnesota and attended Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill., and Northwestern University. She met her husband in the church choir and they were married in 1988. She traveled abroad with him on several occasions and worked in her community as a volunteer with the elderly, the infirm and persons with cancer.

In addition to her husband, survivors include three children from a previous marriage, Mark Alexander of Tulsa, Okla., Allyce Mullenbach of Torrance, Calif., and Pamela Patchin of Eagle, Idaho; and five grandchildren.

Thomas Robert Tift, 64, a retired FSO, died of an apparent heart attack in Cairo, Egypt, Feb. 10 while on a consulting assignment.

Mr. Tift was born in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1934. He earned an A.B. at Princeton University in 1956, an M.A. from Georgetown University in 1963, and an M.B.A. from New York University in 1975. From 1956 to 1958 he served as a newspaper correspondent in the Marine Corps on Okinawa and in Japan. He worked as a foreign trade business analyst for the Department of Commerce from 1960 to 1963 and worked briefly for *Time Magazine* before joining the Agency for International Development in 1963.

He began his AID career as an operations officer for the Near East.

IN MEMORY



After tours in Ankara and Pakistan, he worked as a corporate loan officer for Bank of America in New York from 1970 to 1976. He then returned to AID as a private sector officer in Cairo. He also served in Dacca and Washington, D.C., before being assigned as chief of the Office of Program and Project Development in Kingston in 1987. He retired in 1990.

During his career, Mr. Tiftt was awarded a Meritorious Honor Award for his work in Cairo, and another for his work during Hurricane Gilbert in Jamaica; and a Superior Unit Citation for his work in Jamaica.

After retirement he joined the International Science and Technology Institute, working primarily in Sri Lanka. In 1996 he became a certified financial planner and an international development consultant.

Survivors include his wife, Dorothy J. Black, a retired FSO; two sons, John Tiftt of London, and Robert Tiftt of Camp Pendleton, Calif.; a daughter, Isabel Tiftt; and one grandson.



Patricia Corwin Warnecki, 74, wife of retired FSO Aloysius John Warnecki, died April 1 of liver cancer at her home in Great Falls, Va.

Mrs. Warnecki was born in Peru, Ill., and moved to Harrisburg, Pa., when she was 10. She graduated with a B.A. in political science from Duke University and later attended the National Law Center at George Washington University. She worked with veterans at the American Red Cross and then as an executive with Allied Stores Corp. in Harrisburg.

After her marriage to Mr. Warnecki in 1960, they were posted to Washington, D.C., where she served as the first elected treasurer of the Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW). She accompanied her husband to posts in Prague, Libreville, Antananarivo and Montevideo. After Mr. Warnecki's retirement in 1979, they lived in McLean and then Great Falls, Va.

Mrs. Warnecki worked with the Department of State Fine Arts Committee and participated in the restoration of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms. She was active in St. Luke's Catholic Church in McLean and the Junior League of Washington.

In addition to her husband, survivors include a son, Mark C. Warnecki and a granddaughter, both of Potomac Falls, Va. ■

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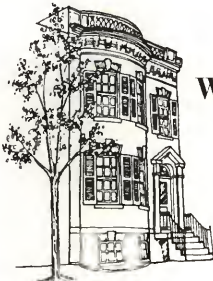
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POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

Working Together in Honduras

BY WESLEY ANN GODARD

Standing amid the chaos, I struggled against rising frustration. Along with nine other members of my parish, I had come to Honduras to paint a school. The devastation of Central America by Hurricane Mitch in the fall of 1998 had touched ordinary Americans. Months after the television coverage had ended, groups like ours from all sorts of U.S. non-governmental organizations were still looking for ways to contribute to the relief effort.

Mario Cubrero Elementary School, a public school in Pimienta just outside San Pedro Sula, had been used as a refugee shelter when Mitch raged through. The Honduran government had asked the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras to administer the shelter, and the church had asked us to repaint it as part of our mission.

The welcoming ceremony of speeches, songs and prayers had taken half the morning. Now the tropical sun was blazing, the humidity had already turned our clothes sticky, and the only water spigot serving 700 students had slowed to a trickle. Not only did the seven-room school we had planned for actually have 12 rooms, but the director of the morning session thought we should paint the outside, while the director of the afternoon session wanted us to start on the inside.

Checking the supplies on hand, we found half the required paint, a few

Wesley Ann Godard is the Journal's AFSA News Editor and a Foreign Service spouse.

Classes were dismissed, but instead of going home, the curious children grabbed brushes and eagerly set to work.



brushes, eight extension poles, five rollers that didn't fit the extension poles, a dozen roller pads (but no roller pans), a couple of scrapers, two plastic drop cloths and some masking tape. Dispatching a delegation to buy more supplies, the rest of us determined to soldier on with what we had.

Classes were dismissed, but instead of going home, the curious children milled around us. When the paint cans were opened, small hands grabbed brushes and eagerly set to work. Our neatly taped drop cloths mocked us as paint splattered well beyond their reach.

Most of us were amateurs. One teammate had never used a roller; another spilled paint trying to pour from a five-gallon can into a small bucket. A shabbily uniformed policeman who wandered up raised

the bucket waist-high and deftly poured a stream without losing a drop. Declaring himself a professional painter, he took up a brush and quickly proved his credentials.

Without the proper tools, our American know-how deferred to the Honduran ability to make do. Several young volunteers sporting "Soy Episcopal" T-shirts came to our aid. A powerhouse woman named Vilma patiently showed us how to thin the oil-based paint, there being no instructions for us literal-minded Americans to follow. She taped a brush to an extension pole to reach the upper corners. Jesús, our driver, used a machete to trim the extension poles to fit the rollers. We soon abandoned our OSHA-inspired caution and clambered up on desks piled on top of one another in lieu of a ladder.

Although most of the children lost interest, several stuck with us through three days of painting. Edgardo surprised us by sneaking in after we had left one afternoon and painting a room on his own. Alex entertained a team member nursing an injured leg by reading to her in Spanish from a Honduran history book. When Carmen streamed paint along the floor, I resisted the urge to shout and instead showed her how to hold the brush with the bristles up so it wouldn't drip. She was thrilled to have the attention. As we all developed a rhythm of working together, I realized that the personal contacts we made with Hondurans would endure far longer than the fresh paint at Mario Cubrero Elementary School. ■

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