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PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2021



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# We're All in This Together

BY ERIC RUBIN

**W**e are facing a once-in-a-generation challenge to get the U.S. Foreign Service out of its current crisis of morale and to address the many challenges before us. Those of us on active duty know that it has gotten harder and harder to serve our country and to do our jobs well, while also preserving our personal lives as well as our health and emotional well-being.

With the inexorable sidelining of professional career expertise over the past few decades, we now face constant practical and bureaucratic difficulties that are driving many of our colleagues to reconsider their commitment to a full career of service. According to recent surveys, about one-third of our colleagues have considered leaving the Service this year. That is a frightening number.

We are seeing a welcome uptick in the nomination of senior career officers to chief of mission and assistant secretary positions, after a painful, traumatic period under the previous administration in which professional career expertise was downgraded, mistrusted and excluded. We appear to be on track to see roughly two-thirds of chief-of-mission positions go to active-duty

officers. A solid portion of assistant secretary of State nominations has also gone to active-duty officers, with one under secretary

nomination for an active-duty officer and two for recently retired FSOs.

While this progress is welcome, it is uneven, and not necessarily reflected in the other Foreign Service agencies that AFSA represents. At USAID, AFSA's second-largest component agency, there has not been a single career FSO nominated for a Senate-approved position, and it appears there may not be any during this administration's term. As USAID turns 60 this month, we urge agency leadership to value and rely on the expertise that career FSOs bring to the table.

COVID-19 has hit everyone hard. But members of the Service, who must pick up and move themselves and their families to every corner of the globe, some of them quite dangerous and unhealthy, have special concerns.

From the mysterious illnesses that have hit dozens of colleagues—"unidentified health incidents," known as Havana Syndrome—leading many FS members to fear for their health and safety when they go overseas, to the summer Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "dog ban" import restrictions that have threatened to separate so many colleagues from their beloved pets, it keeps getting harder to serve.

Members of the Service who face disciplinary charges or security clearance suspensions are left hanging for years, often with little transparency or explanation. Our lack of diversity is woeful and getting worse in many respects, so far without any concrete plan to address the fundamental problem.

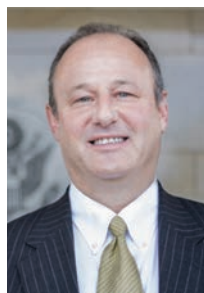
Applications for the State Department Foreign Service are down sharply since 2010. Too many of our overseas posts remain badly understaffed and unable to do their work properly. How can we compete in a multipolar world if we leave nearly half our ambassadorships vacant, many for years at a time?

While there is widespread agreement on the need for comprehensive reform and modernization—from recruitment and hiring to assignments, and from evaluations to promotion—we so far have not seen any significant progress or movement to begin the process of change.

This month marks the one-year anniversary of President Biden's election, and we still have not been able to begin the intensive dialogue needed to fix what is broken and get the Foreign Service back on a healthy and hopeful footing.

We need your help to turn things around. Please join AFSA in a concerted effort to press for the resources, staffing and participation that the Foreign Service needs to fulfill its mission. Write. Speak. Post. Advocate on the Hill. We will be pressing on all fronts: with the administration, with Congress and with the American people.

AFSA intends to fight, hard, to bring the U.S. Foreign Service back to the role, influence and impact it needs to have in advancing our country's essential interests. This is not just about our small corps of dedicated professionals; it is about our country's future and the world's future. ■



*Ambassador Eric Rubin is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*

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# The Foreign Service Is Writing

BY SHAWN DORMAN

**T**his month we're all about reading and writing (and USAID, but more on that in a minute), as we present the annual roundup of books by members of the Foreign Service community. We hit a new record this year, featuring 100 books published by FS authors. That's almost four times more than when we first started this fall tradition back in 2000. It's more than double our number (49) from 2010. But it's the past two years that have seen the most explosive growth in Foreign Service publishing.

We all know the Foreign Service is a community of readers, and we see it increasingly as one of writers, too. The pandemic may explain some of the new inspiration to write, to finally get that story down or that unique perspective out. The temporary but long periods of quarantine and stalled travel may have sent many to their personal archives, to the attic or the cloud for the collections of memories from lives of service and adventure. Nineteen of the books are memoirs.

A majority of the books are "independently published," by which we also mean author-published aka self-published, a trend that keeps growing as it becomes easier and more affordable to do, and as it becomes easier to reach

audiences through social media. Self-publishing is potentially more lucrative for authors, as it provides a chance to

keep some 50 to 70 percent of royalties as opposed to the 5 to 15 percent that a university or commercial press will offer.

If only authors and publishers could get hold of paper and fix other issues plaguing the publishing industry today. Supply chain woes worldwide have meant major delays in book (and magazine) production in recent months, delays that will likely carry on for the foreseeable future. When you find books in this collection that would make good holiday gifts, buy them right away!

While celebrating the wealth of FS writing talent, we are also commemorating the 60th anniversary of the U.S. Agency for International Development this month. USAID Administrator Samantha Power graciously responded to a set of questions from us, reflecting on both global and internal agency priorities.

In "USAID at 60: An Enduring Purpose, a Complex Legacy," author and development expert John Norris reviews the agency's history from the founding on Nov. 3, 1961, to today. And USAID AFSA Vice President Jason Singer offers thoughts on the anniversary in his extended column in AFSA News.

Following last month's focus on climate change diplomacy, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) presents a Message from the Hill on "The Climate Change Challenge."

FSOs Ana Escrogima, Lia Miller and Christina Tilghman speak out with recommendations for "A Paradigm Shift for Diversity."

## Editorial Calendar 2022

**JAN-FEB:** Subnational Diplomacy  
**MARCH:** Health and the Foreign Service  
**APRIL:** Life After the Foreign Service; APHIS at 50  
**MAY:** Early Soft Power: American Exhibit Guides USSR  
**JUNE:** Pandemic Diplomacy  
**JULY-AUG:** Foreign Service Transitions  
**SEPTEMBER:** Iraq and Afghanistan: Diplomacy After War  
**OCTOBER:** Third-Country Kids  
**NOVEMBER:** Foreign Service Authors – In Their Own Write  
**DECEMBER:** AFSA Awards: Honoring Foreign Service Excellence and Dissent

In the Feature, Commander Jonathan Ahlstrom, U.S. Navy, lays out how to build "A Partnership-Centered Approach to the Indo-Pacific." And in this month's FS Know-How, child behavior specialist and FS family member Karem Ensley gives tips for "Supporting Special Needs Families Abroad."

The Reflection by retired FSO Robert Service, "Forestalling a Democracy Crisis in Paraguay," is being published posthumously. His obituary will run in an upcoming *FSJ*.

While supply chain problems have delayed *FSJ* production and shipping by a few days these last couple months, we hope your hard copy of the *FSJ* has arrived in good time. Please remember that we also post the entire edition online by the first of the month at [www.afsa.org/fsj](http://www.afsa.org/fsj).

Please consider writing for the *Journal* in the new year. You can write on one of the focus topics (see our draft 2022 schedule) or write on any subject of current or enduring interest or concern to the Foreign Service. Write to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org) with inquiries and submissions.

We look forward to hearing from you! ■



*Shawn Dorman is the editor of The Foreign Service Journal.*

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## Required Reading

Ronald Neumann's article in the September *FSJ*, "Intervention: Unlearned Lessons, or the Gripes of a Professional," is the most incisive and useful argument I have seen in a *Journal* article.

It should be required reading for senior Foreign Service officers and others involved in foreign policy decision-making, including congressional staffers.

*Michael Michaud*

*FSO, retired*

*Lawrence, Kansas*

## Relations with Mongolia

You published our article, "Diplomats Make a Difference: The U.S. and Mongolia, 1986-1990," in the September edition of the *FSJ*. In less than a month, it generated a new lead that gave us a better understanding for our research. As a result of the article, we have more information about what happened in Havana in January 1986. These events were among the first steps toward diplomatic recognition of Mongolia and building the relationship our two countries enjoy today.

In our article, we talked about the confusion over what happened when the head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, Curt Kamman (later ambassador to Chile and Bolivia), met with an official from the Mongolian embassy there. After the article was published online, a Mongolian acquaintance from 30 years ago reached out to me and said, "My father worked at the Mongolian embassy in Havana at that time. Do you want me to ask him?"

It turned out that her father was the Mongolian diplomat with whom Kamman spoke. Now we have both sides of the story, a better understanding of how



our two countries accidentally interacted, and the resolution to a 35-year-old mystery. The conversation was literally an example of diplomats doing their job and making a difference.

Without the platform the *Journal* provided, we might never have uncovered

that integral part of the story. These answers will enable us to ask further questions and uncover even more about a pivotal event in diplomatic history that remains poorly documented. Thank you!

*Michael Allen Lake*

*Alexandria, Virginia*

## Caregiving for Parents from Afar

The findings of AFSA's retention survey in the July-August *FSJ* spotlighted that "family concerns" were the most-cited reason members left the Foreign Service prior to retirement. The most pressing family concerns—such as family member employment and the lack of telework and remote work flexibility for Foreign Service members—were addressed in AFSA's thoughtful recommendations. As a second-tour eligible family member (EFM), I was inspired by this vision of reform for the Foreign Service.

However, to prepare the Foreign Service community for the changing landscape of the United States, I suggest one more advocacy item. We require greater understanding of how Foreign Service personnel will oversee the well-being of their parents (i.e., engage in parent caregiving, from a distance).

Over the next 10 years, the ratio of middle-aged to older adults will narrow as the number of adults over 80 grows by 79 percent and the number of middle-aged adults increases by only 1 percent.

How are we preparing for such drastic population shifts? Fortunately, programs such as WorkLife4You and the Senior Living Foundation Foreign Service Parent Program have played a critical role in linking Foreign Service families to caregiving resources and helping to close the gap in their efforts.

Still, we need research to explain the burden of parent caregivers and to help us plan ahead and limit the strains of this rewarding, yet challenging, time of our lives. As a clinical social worker, I am pursuing doctoral research to

develop our knowledge of the parent caregiving burden in the Foreign Service, so that we can operate from a foundation of understanding and improve the quality of support to our aging parents.

If you, or other Foreign Service personnel, have provided unpaid care to a parent in the past year due

to an illness or other condition limiting their ability to self-care (e.g., aging), you may be eligible to contribute by participating in an anonymous survey for my dissertation on the long-distance caregiving burden of U.S. Foreign Service and military personnel. Participation is voluntary. Visit this link to learn more: [tinyurl.com/USGParentCare](https://tinyurl.com/USGParentCare).

*Christine D. Holmes*

*Doctoral Candidate in*

*Clinical Social Work*

*University of Pennsylvania*

*FS Family Member*

*Embassy Jakarta*





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## Remembering Johnny Young

I am not a writer, except for penning sterile medical notes. This, however, is a letter I cannot not write.

I just heard of Ambassador Johnny Young's death.

As the State Department's regional medical officer posted in Riyadh, I first met Ambassador Young in 1998 as I visited to serve his mission, U.S. Embassy Manama in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Immediately, I was blown away by the high morale and productivity of his diplomatic team, from the deputy chief of mission all the way down the mission axis. The positive air in the embassy made my clinical demands smaller but also drew me in closer, over the years, to know this skilled leader and diplomat bathed in humility.

One evening at my home in Riyadh, I received an urgent call from Manama that Ambassador Young had been hospitalized at the Defense Force Hospital. I scrambled to get on a flight.

I found his hospital room on the top floor. It was a VIP suite. However, as I stood at the door, I could not see my ambassador nor his bed. It was strangely quiet. There was no nurse, not even the sound of a medical monitor.

I felt like I had walked into an Arabian Gulf version of Longwood Gardens. He was hidden there, festooned in floral foliage and lying peacefully with his eyes closed.

I drew near and touched him on his arm. He opened his eyes and smiled. His first words to me, typically selfless and humorous, "Doc, I feel like I am at a wake!"

This demonstration of "suffocating" love I saw as a reflection of an outpour-



ing from his mission personnel, the Arabs and diverse population of expatriates on the archipelago, and heads of state and senior diplomats in the Arabian Gulf region.

To Johnny Young and his beautiful wife, Angie, I say this: We do not leave anything behind,

we carry both of you with us. You have given freely to all. We have witnessed the story of your biography: the true story of a diplomat's unlikely journey from the bottom to the top.

Immeasurably blessed and enriched we are. ■

*Scott Kennedy*  
Regional Medical Officer, retired  
Culpeper, Virginia



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this month's issue.**

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to the editor:  
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## Turmoil Over “Havana Syndrome”

**A**mbassador (ret.) Pamela Spratlen, the head of the State Department’s Health Incidents Response Task Force, has left after six months in the position, CBS News reported on Sept. 23.

Amb. Spratlen had returned to State to take the lead of the task force looking into the mysterious illnesses suffered by diplomats, intelligence and other U.S. officials, known popularly as “Havana syndrome” and referred to as “unexplained health incidents” by the department.

State said that Spratlen left the post because she had “reached the threshold of hours of labor” allowed under her status as a retired ambassador. A spokesperson said a replacement would be named soon.

*The Washington Post* reported that some of those affected by the mysterious illnesses had called for Spratlen’s resignation following a meeting with victims during which Spratlen declined to say whether she believed an FBI study that said staffers in Havana were most likely suffering from mass psychogenic illness, or mass hysteria, and not from direct attacks.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken joined a Sept. 10 call with members of the affected cohort of State employees, his first meeting with them, and listened to their concerns over “continuing stigma and disbelief within the government about their injuries,” NBC News reported.

Blinken’s message, per NBC, was that “those suffering must be believed, and that the administration is doing all it can to investigate and provide care.”

But affected diplomats say they face “profound challenges” in receiving medical care and benefits, and that skepticism about their injuries “is pervasive even among some high-level officials.”

Cases have been reported in Colombia, Austria, Germany, Kyrgyz Republic,

## Contemporary Quote

**“** I want to give a shout-out to the Foreign Service writ large, because they had more than enough volunteers for this mission. All around the world, people raised their hand and said, send me. **”**

—FSO Alan Eaton, speaking on the *American Diplomat* podcast Sept. 16 edition. Eaton volunteered, from Johannesburg, for temporary duty in Kabul to help with the evacuation in the days after the Taliban took over Afghanistan. He was the last consular officer at the Abbey Gate.

Uzbekistan, Serbia, India, Vietnam and other countries, and in Washington, D.C.

*The Washington Post* on Sept. 23 reported that dozens of U.S. personnel in Vienna, including some children of U.S. employees, have been affected by the mysterious illnesses. The CIA station chief in Vienna was removed from his post in September due to a perceived lack of concern about the issue.

CIA Director William Burns, a Career Ambassador and former Deputy Secretary of State, who has made countering what the CIA calls “abnormal health incidents” a major focus, was left “fuming” with anger after a member of his team reported experiencing symptoms consistent with the mysterious illnesses during a trip with Burns to India, CNN reported on Sept. 20.

On Oct. 8, President Biden signed into law the HAVANA Act to improve support for those who have suffered from the syndrome. It authorizes State, CIA and other agencies to provide payments to personnel and their families who incur brain injuries “from hostilities while on assignment” both domestically and abroad.

The bill was passed unanimously by Congress. It applies to injuries incurred both before and after the bill’s enactment.

In a statement, the White House said, “Protecting Americans and all those who serve our country is our first duty, and we will do everything we can to care for our personnel and their families.”

## Special Envoy Resigns Over Haiti Deportations

**A**fter just two months on the job, the U.S. Special Envoy for Haiti, career FSO Ambassador Daniel Foote, resigned on Sept. 23 amid mass deportations of Haitians from the U.S. border, which he described as an “inhumane, counterproductive decision” in a resignation letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Foote also alleged that his policy recommendations were “ignored and dismissed.”

The letter, first obtained by PBS, states that the U.S. policy approach to Haiti is deeply flawed, and that Haitians should not be sent back to “a country where American officials are confined to secure compounds because of the danger posed by armed gangs in control of daily life.”

The crisis-engulfed nation is still reeling from the July assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and a magnitude 7.2 earthquake that struck in August.

The deportations come amid deteriorating conditions in migrant camps on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. authorities released some migrants in southern Texas while deporting others on flights to Port-au-Prince, according to Reuters.

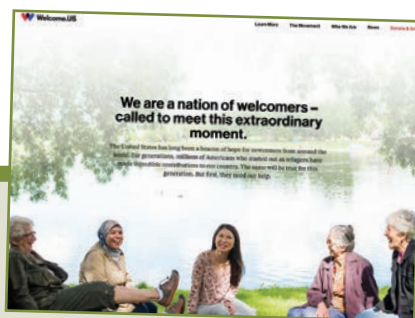
In a statement to NPR, a State Department spokesperson responded: “The United States is working with the International Organization on Migration

## Site of the Month: Welcome.US

**T**hree former presidents—Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama—and their first ladies are honorary co-chairs of Welcome.US, a new effort to welcome thousands of Afghan refugees to the United States.

Welcome.US offers its visitors the chance to donate to frontline organizations assisting Afghan refugees and host or sponsor arriving families.

“We know that doing the work of making our new neighbors welcome is the starting point for the many ways in which their presence will enrich us all,” Cecilia Muñoz, co-chair of the



initiative, said during a Sept. 15 news conference announcing the website. “This is what we do when we’re at our best, and we’re proud to have developed an approach to help Americans do this work together.”

The former presidents and first ladies said they want “to lift up everyone else involved and remind us that this is our opportunity, in a time of all too much division, for common purpose.”

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*The appearance of a particular site or podcast is for information only and does not constitute an endorsement.*

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to ensure that returning Haitian migrants are met at the airport and provided with immediate assistance.”

After the resignation letter became public, the Biden administration pushed back hard with criticism of Foote, including some that was personal. State Department Spokesman Ned Price said in a statement that the idea that Foote’s proposals were ignored “is simply false.”

Price added: “No ideas are ignored, but not all ideas are good ideas.” Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman also criticized Foote, as did White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, who said that Foote had “never once” raised migration concerns.

In an Oct. 2 internal legal memo, senior State Department legal adviser and veteran human rights lawyer Harold Koh criticized the use of Title 42, a CDC public health authority, as the basis for the expulsions, calling them “illegal and inhumane” and “not worthy of this administration I so strongly support.”

## Blinken Defends Afghanistan Exit to Congress

**S**ecretary of State Antony Blinken faced tough questioning from House and Senate committees on Sept. 13 and 14 over the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. But he insisted it was “time to end America’s longest war” and described the evacuation from Kabul as “extraordinary.”

During his testimony, Blinken said the United States would engage with the new Taliban-led Afghan government “on the basis of whether or not it advances our interests.” He acknowledged that a cast of tough characters leads the Taliban government, including interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, the leader of the Haqqani Network who is wanted by the FBI in connection with a 2008 attack on a hotel in Kabul that killed six people.

Blinken said there were areas in

which the United States must cooperate with the Taliban, such as getting people out of the country. But formal recognition is a long way off, and it depends on what the Taliban’s leaders do, he said.

“We expect the Taliban to ensure freedom of travel; to make good on its counterterrorism commitments; to uphold the basic rights of the Afghan people, including women, girls, minorities; to name a broadly representative permanent government; to forswear reprisals,” Blinken said. “The legitimacy and support that it seeks from the international community will depend entirely on its conduct.”

Secretary Blinken said the United States would provide an additional \$64 million in new humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan via independent organizations. He said he plans to appoint a senior State Department official to promote women’s and girls’ interests in Afghanistan.

Republicans on the House Foreign Affairs Committee called on Blinken to resign during a Sept. 13 hearing. On Sept. 14, Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) said he planned to use procedural tactics to try to hold up President Joe Biden’s foreign policy nominees from being confirmed unless Blinken, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan resign.

*The Washington Post* called Hawley’s threat “mostly symbolic.”

## Kabul Evacuation

**O**n Sept. 6 the State Department released a fact sheet, “The United States Conducts Unprecedented Relocation Effort” ([bit.ly/State-fact-sheet](https://bit.ly/State-fact-sheet)), detailing the U.S. mobilization to evacuate American citizens, personnel from partner nations and at-risk Afghans from Kabul.





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The U.S. evacuation team leaders, including Ambassador Ross Wilson (holding flag) and, to his right, Ambassador John Bass, in Kabul in August.

The United States and its partners relocated more than 124,000 people, including 6,000 U.S. citizens.

“The worldwide effort has been just extraordinary,” Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman told the *Daily Beast*. “There was transparency. There was consultation. We were in this together. We produced remarkable results under very difficult conditions.”

The State Department began sending alerts urging Americans to leave Afghanistan last April, and sent 19 alerts in all, the *Daily Beast* reported.

“We inherited a backlog of thousands [of Special Immigrant Visas for Afghan nationals],” a senior State Department official told the *Daily Beast*. “There is a statutorily defined 14-step process for approving the visas. We dramatically accelerated the process. We did this even after a COVID outbreak had effectively closed the embassy. We did this in the face of a rapidly accelerating security problem.”

The *Washington Post* reported that U.S. diplomats worked 20-hour days trying to get people out, while sleeping at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul.

“Nobody ever complained about working 20-hour days, and nobody com-

plained about sleeping on the floor and eating MREs,” FSO John Johnson told the *Post*. “The dedication and commitment really is impressive.”

FSOs felt such a strong sense of duty, FSO Evan Davis said, “there was still this lingering sense of hope among everyone who was there that we would somehow be able to go back to the embassy, that we wouldn’t actually have to leave the country.”

Johnson said he was “up close” to the “desperation and human misery” of the many people who wanted to flee Afghanistan but couldn’t. Those he “couldn’t get out,” he said, “will haunt me for many years.”

Numerous staff members from other posts volunteered to assist with the Afghan relocation in the United States and other countries.

## U.S., France Strive to Overcome Rift

The United States and France strived to repair relations after the U.S. entered a deal in September with the U.K. to share sensitive submarine nuclear propulsion technology with Australia and support its push to acquire nuclear-powered submarines. This effectively canceled a \$66 billion deal France had

made with Canberra to deliver 12 diesel-powered submarines.

French President Emmanuel Macron was so incensed by the U.S.-U.K.-Australia trilateral deal, known as AUKUS, that he recalled the French ambassador to the United States for several days. The French embassy canceled a Washington, D.C., gala in anger. Major media called it the most serious rift in U.S.-French relations in decades. Macron also recalled France’s ambassador to Australia.

“This brutal, unilateral and unpredictable decision reminds me a lot of what Mr. Trump used to do,” Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told franceinfo radio. “I am angry and bitter. This isn’t done between allies.”

Macron and President Joe Biden discussed the matter in a Sept. 22 phone call. The White House indicated regret in a joint statement afterward: “The two leaders agreed that the situation would have benefited from open consultations among allies on matters of strategic interest to France and our European partners,” the statement said. “President Biden conveyed his ongoing commitment in that regard.”

The joint statement added that the French ambassador would “have intense work with senior U.S. officials” on returning to Washington.

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson called the deal “fundamentally a great step forward for global security. It’s three very like-minded allies standing shoulder-to-shoulder, creating a new partnership for the sharing of technology. It’s not exclusive. It’s not trying to shoulder anybody out.”

On Sept. 22, Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell in New York to repair damage to the U.S.-E.U. relationship, the Associated Press reported.

## Biden Signs Federal Vaccine Mandate

As part of the administration's "Path Out of the Pandemic" plan, President Biden issued an executive order on Sept. 9 mandating COVID-19 vaccines for all federal employees. These requirements became effective on Oct. 15 and apply to all executive branch employees, including those who are currently teleworking.

A second executive order signed the same day described the process the Biden administration will take to make federal vaccine mandates a contractual requirement for doing business with the government.

The Safer Federal Workforce Task Force subsequently issued guidelines with further details for federal employ-



The United States delivers 100,620 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Namibia on Sept. 27.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ees. The executive order applies to federal contractors and certain subcontractors as well, except in "limited circumstances where an employee is legally entitled to an accommodation," the administration said.

The deadline for compliance is Dec. 8, according to a second round of guidance issued by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force.

## U.S. Donates Millions More Vaccine Doses

President Biden announced on Sept. 22 that the United States will buy 500 million more doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine that it will donate to countries in need, for delivery by September 2022.

The U.S. is doubling its purchase of the vaccine to more than 1.1 billion doses to help vaccinate 70 percent of the global population by next year. So far, the U.S. has shipped almost 160 million doses to 100 countries around the world, a figure that exceeds donations from all other countries combined.

Nevertheless, to reach the 70 percent goal, about 5 billion more doses need to be donated to low- and middle-income countries.

The U.S. move reflects the Biden administration's effort to encourage prosperous nations to do more for global health security, a call the president issued at the global vaccination summit he convened on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in September.

More than 5.9 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered around the world over the past year, representing about 43 percent of the global population. But there are vast disparities in distribution, with many lower-income countries struggling to vaccinate the most vulnerable members of their populations.

### HEARD ON THE HILL



### After Afghanistan

From your standpoint, at the Department of State, you have to be a little worried about morale of those people who have dedicated the better part of 20 years to this effort. What can we do on behalf of the Foreign Service—not what can we say, but what can we do, on behalf of the Foreign Service—especially at a time when we need to be building back our diplomatic corps?

—Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), to Secretary Antony Blinken, at the SFRC hearing, "Examining the U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan," Sept. 14.

### Support for "Havana Syndrome" Victims

Far too many "Havana Syndrome" victims have had to battle the bureaucracy to receive care for their debilitating injuries. I have spoken personally with some of the victims of these heinous attacks who were harmed while representing our interests. For those victims, the HAVANA Act will ensure that they receive the financial and medical support that they deserve. It also affirms our commitment to making sure that our government finds out who is responsible.

—Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine), co-sponsor with Senator Mark Warner (D-Va.) of the Helping American Victims Afflicted by Neurological Attacks (HAVANA) Act, in a Sept. 21 press release.



## CDC: Vaccinations Required for IV Applicants

**E**ffective Oct. 1, COVID-19 vaccinations are required for all age-appropriate applicants for U.S. immigrant visas. The new instructions come from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and apply to persons who are seeking to adjust their immigration status from within the United States, as well as those applying for an immigrant visa at U.S. consulates worldwide.

According to the CDC guidance, immigrant visa applicants must present evidence of completing the entire vaccine series. Approved versions of the vaccine include those manufactured by Janssen (Johnson & Johnson), Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech.

Specific blanket waivers exist for various circumstances. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services determines whether the waiver will be granted.

The CDC is responsible for ensuring that noncitizens entering the U.S. do not have health conditions that would pose a threat to public health.

## Some Stalled Nominees Move Forward

**W**hile the sluggish pace of Senate confirmations for critical diplomatic positions has raised concerns over the Biden administration's ability to conduct foreign policy, there are signs that the logjam may break.

Senate majority leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) moved on Sept. 23 to advance seven of the senior State Department nominees on hold, compelling the legislative body to hold roll call votes late into the evening. Although none were considered controversial, some senators had vowed to block nominees to make a point over disagreements with the White House.

## 50 Years Ago

### On Understanding Congress—The View from the Hill



**R**elations have rarely been smooth between Congress and the State Department and various reasons have been advanced to explain this difficulty. ... What may be the most important single cause of friction has, to my knowledge, been overlooked. It is the simple fact that politicians and diplomats are quite different human beings. In training, background and professional temperament, one could say they are almost exact opposites.

Politicians seek public exposure. It's their natural element—the source of their existence. They are also activists and seem to relish the tug and pull of argument and debate. ...

By contrast, a diplomat is schooled in the advantages of anonymity, taught to curb his passion and to maintain his reserve. While there are many exceptions to the “diplomatic” style, the natural bias of the profession encourages a kind of “poker face” syndrome. One's utterances should always be understated and one's movements ever cautious. ...

The success of a diplomat is measured by his ability to work quietly, patiently, behind the scenes, seeking to reconcile differences and resolve conflicts. Political misfires are easily forgotten. In diplomacy they can be fatal.

Is it any wonder then that we have problems understanding each other?

—FSO William Shinn Jr., from his article by the same title in the FSJ, November 1971.

“An alarming number of posts essential for our national security remain vacant because a handful of Republicans have decided to hijack the confirmation process and put a hold on not just a few but on many critical nominees,” Schumer stated, promising more such moves.

By a 72-14 vote, the Senate confirmed Daniel Kritenbrink's nomination to serve as assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Progress was also made on the nominations of five other assistant secretaries of State for Europe and Eurasia, Africa, political-military affairs, international narcotics and law enforcement, and oceans and international environmental affairs.

By early October, there were close to 100 diplomatic and development nominations before the Senate, 24 of which were ready for a floor vote.

For a complete list of ambassadorial nominations, visit [afsa.org/list-ambassadorial-appointments](https://afsa.org/list-ambassadorial-appointments), and track appointments of senior-level officials at the various foreign affairs agencies at [afsa.org/tracker-senior-official-appointments](https://afsa.org/tracker-senior-official-appointments).

AFSA continues to call for an expeditious nomination and confirmation process for key diplomatic posts. ■

*This edition of Talking Points was compiled by Cameron Woodworth and Julia Wohlers.*

# The Climate Change Challenge

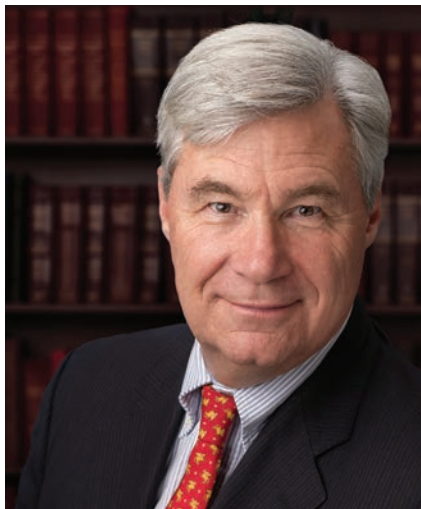
BY SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE

For nearly a decade, I have co-  
led the U.S. Senate delegation  
to the annual Munich Security  
Conference, first with the late  
Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.)  
and now with Senator Lindsey Graham  
(R-S.C.). Each year, I have elevated two  
closely linked issues that will shape our  
foreign policy for generations: climate  
change and international corruption.  
Both demand urgent action.

It will take time and persistence to  
rebuild American credibility on these  
issues, but a pair of important interna-  
tional meetings could jump-start that  
process. The first is the United Nations’  
26th Climate Change Conference of the  
Parties (COP) this month in Glasgow;  
the second is President Joe Biden’s  
Summit for Democracy, which will  
bring together international partners to  
address global corruption. Success at  
both will set a promising course for U.S.  
foreign policy in the decades ahead,  
and both will rely heavily on the skill  
and experience of our Foreign Service.  
Our hopes rest with you.

## Our Last Chance on Climate

America enters Glasgow with  
depleted credibility on climate change.  
We are emerging from four years under



an American president who spouted cli-  
mate denial, populated his administra-  
tion with polluter lobbyists and lawyers,  
and advanced the fossil fuel industry’s  
corrupting work against climate protec-  
tions. Trump pulled the United States  
out of the global climate accord that we,  
ourselves, helped negotiate. Worst of all,  
he cost us four years as climate destruc-  
tion accelerated around the globe.

Blame doesn’t fall solely on Trump,  
however. A Democratic president with  
a Democratic Party-controlled Senate  
refused to push forward the compre-  
hensive climate bill passed through the  
House by Speaker Nancy Pelosi in 2009.  
The Supreme Court’s decisions loosed

an avalanche of political money into our  
politics that cost the U.S. more than a  
decade of climate progress. America’s fos-  
sil fuel industry deployed a massive dark-  
money apparatus to control our politics  
and stymie significant climate action.

Glasgow is our last chance to lead  
the world in the race against climate  
catastrophe. The U.N.’s latest Intergov-  
ernmental Panel on Climate Change  
report—the gold-standard climate  
assessment—warns of as much as  
4 degrees Celsius of warming from  
pre-industrial levels by the end of the  
century. We must act swiftly or risk  
runaway sea level rise, searing heat  
waves, cataclysmic storms and other  
calamities, with grave consequences to  
national security and world order.

The U.S. will come to this COP as  
substantial climate legislation is in the  
works. If the budget bill remains an  
ambitious one—in keeping with the  
1.5 degrees Celsius threshold for safety  
set by scientists—the United States will  
be credible to lead again, to achieve  
an effective international climate  
accord. In the hands of Special Envoy  
John Kerry and the State Department’s  
climate team, a meaningful, enduring  
agreement will be within reach.

The last century was the American  
Century because of American leader-  
ship, and humanity is safer and more  
prosperous as a result. The fossil fuel  
industry’s malign manipulation of our  
democratic process is an aberration.  
The world needs America, and I am  
confident that you, the members of the  
Foreign Service, can guide us back to  
our traditional position of leadership.

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*Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), a lawyer and politician, has served since 2007 in the U.S. Senate. He serves on the Budget Committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, the Judiciary Committee, the Finance Committee and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Both his father, Charles S. Whitehouse, and grandfather, Edwin Sheldon Whitehouse, were career members of the U.S. Foreign Service and ambassadors; the former was president of AFSA from 1981 to 1982. Growing up in a Foreign Service family, Sheldon Whitehouse lived in Vietnam, Cambodia, South Africa, Congo, Guinea, Laos and Thailand.*



## Fighting Corruption

Following Glasgow, President Biden will convene fellow democracies to address the scourge of international corruption. The president's "Summit for Democracy," set for Dec. 9-10, will focus on corruption's ties to authoritarianism and related threats to human rights. The United States and our partners will forge new anti-kleptocracy principles and commitments, then meet again in a year to gauge progress toward those goals.

Biden is wise to focus on international corruption. America is now in a

To our shame, the United States has become one of the principal shelters for corrupt assets. Secrecy is key in this dark economy, and our system allows billionaire oligarchs or corrupt state-sponsored enterprises to hide illicit wealth behind webs of American shell corporations, complex real estate transactions and other schemes.

According to one study of 60 countries, found in the 2014 book *Global Shell Games*, only Kenya makes it easier than the United States to set up anonymous shell companies. The United States is

and for too long we have failed to join in common cause against the dark economy's servants in other countries. It is in our national security interest to help rid the world of the dark economy. We can, and must, do better.

## Where Climate and Corruption Meet

The fights against climate change and corruption intertwine. Fossil fuel money has been a persistent source of corruption around the world. The doctrine of the "resource curse" arises from this phenomenon. As Senator Graham and I recently wrote, the world will be a safer place without fossil fuels, if only for reducing the ability of Russia, Iran and Saudi Arabia to work murderous fossil-fueled mischief. Our corrupt adversaries in the clash of civilizations will threaten faithful implementation of ambitious climate policy. The sooner and more forcefully we act on these twin problems, the better our chances of success on both.

A particularly dangerous crucible of conflict is Kashmir, which faces water security challenges driven by climate change. Even at the 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming scientists say could be safe, research suggests temperatures across most of the Himalayas will rise an average of 2.1 degrees Celsius. This will cut the Himalayan glacier mass by more than a third by 2100, reducing annual ice melt correspondingly. Reduced river flow will take its own toll; the U.S. Institute of Peace warns of the prospect of rampant sickness, hunger and economic calamity, which could, "in turn, open the door to conflict."

## We must act swiftly or risk runaway sea level rise, searing heat waves, cataclysmic storms and other calamities, with grave consequences to national security and world order.

clash of civilizations between rule-of-law democracies and nations corrupted by autocrats, kleptocrats and international criminals. These foes of democracy nurture a dark realm of international theft, brutality and criminality that the rule of law would thwart.

The summit's first objective should be to understand our adversaries' mixed motivations. Kleptocrats and criminals want to degrade our rule of law, and dim the beacon of hope we offer the people they rob and oppress. But their greed drives them to seek rule-of-law protection in countries where their pelf is safe from the next crook or strongman who might come after them. The result has been an explosion of illicit investments hiding in rule-of-law jurisdictions.

one of the best places to find professionals—lawyers, accountants, realtors and others—who will help hide dirty money. While we have begun to address some of this mischief—such as the shell corporation transparency requirements I helped to pass last year—we still aid and abet dangerous adversaries by helping them hide their loot.

This shouldn't be the case. American laws, such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, are model safeguards against corruption. And our law enforcement agencies, from the Treasury Department's Financial Center to the FBI, are among the most effective cops on the global anti-corruption beat. But for too long we have tolerated those who service kleptocrats and criminals in our country,

# MOVING?



**TAKE AFSA  
— AND THE FSJ —  
WITH YOU!**

Send your address  
updates to  
[member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org)

## The twin fights against climate change and corruption have intertwined to test our American example.

Worse yet, Kashmir is already a flashpoint between two nuclear-armed adversaries, India and Pakistan, who have a history of riparian conflict. An Indian parliamentary panel has spotlighted climate change as a challenge to distributing scarce Himalayan water among Indian and Pakistani downstream regions. India plans to build new dams on the Chenab River in Kashmir; Pakistan fears that India will pinch the Chenab's flow into the Indus through Pakistan, perhaps as a lever on Islamabad in times of conflict. Suspicions of riparian mischief run high, and memories of conflict linger. Food security, power generation and public safety are all at stake, giving the nuclear-armed adversaries a lot to fight over.

Corruption in the region makes matters worse. The Observer Research Foundation notes "widespread and deep-rooted corruption in [Kashmir] has restricted the growth potential of the state" and "pose[s] national security threats." Corruption linked to shoddy construction of Indian dams adds a public safety and security threat in a region with frequent seismic activity. Were a dam to fail, a flood would descend on Pakistanis downriver—what has been called a "water bomb"—on the Indus. Climate change, water scarcity, regional hostilities, festering strife, riparian competition and nuclear weapons make a dangerous cocktail; crooked

deals and shoddy dams risk an added provocation in an already unstable situation.

As Senator McCain once wrote, kleptocrats like Putin don't "believe that human nature at liberty can rise above its weaknesses." They don't trust the rule of law or the will of the people; instead, they rule by "corruption, repression and violence." To prevail against the likes of Putin, we must remember that the world is, as President Bill Clinton said, "more impressed by the power of our example than by the example of our power," and that leadership on the biggest challenges before us is the example we must set.

The twin fights against climate change and corruption have intertwined to test our American example. American

diplomats and domestic policymakers alike must form a plan to meet these challenges in the days and months ahead. Human safety, in the form of a livable planet led by honest democracies, is at stake.

In the face of these immense diplomatic challenges, I take comfort that our Foreign Service has proven equal to immense challenges before. I witnessed firsthand the often unglamorous, but exceedingly effective work that my father and fellow Foreign Service members performed under trying conditions. Their devotion to country and mission helped set the American example we need so dearly in this moment, a devotion I know you share. ■





# A Paradigm Shift for Diversity

BY LIA MILLER, ANA ESCROGIMA AND CHRISTINA TILGHMAN

When we contributed to the September 2020 *FSJ* focus on diversity, the State Department was in the midst of an awakening. This included the proliferation of discussion fora and diversity and inclusion councils, the rise in stature of employee affinity groups (EAGs) as partners in departmental efforts, and the doubling in size of the Pickering and Rangel fellowships.

In that article, we posed a series of questions to keep ourselves and the institution honest about the efforts it decided to implement in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder. We welcome the adoption of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as a State Department priority, and we urge our colleagues and department leaders to ensure that we do not content ourselves with a rhetorical, formulaic or performative commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Following on the heels of the Secretary's April 2021 remarks, and the appointment of Ambassador Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley as chief diversity and inclusion officer (CDIO), we have an opportunity to make progress. We offer the following ideas for consideration and action.

## Get Comfortable with Discomfort

The past year has offered no shortage of incidents that are uncomfortable for us as a department to talk about. We were completely unprepared for the terrifying Capitol riots in January, the discovery of a swastika carved into a State Department elevator, and the disturbing revelation of white nationalist views promoted on social media by department colleagues. State employees have had uneven experiences as posts and offices reacted in sharply divergent ways to these moments, ranging from

complete silence to meaningful opportunities to engage and confront these issues with colleagues.

The past year demonstrated we cannot wait for these discussions to get easier. We need to normalize and reward leadership practices that foster difficult but necessary conversations about equity in our organizations. When employees are courageous enough to put themselves out there, these discussions should culminate in actions that institutionalize reform efforts and support for DEI. Selection processes for leadership positions should reflect an ability or an interest in guiding teams through such difficult moments to concrete outcomes appropriate to that particular post or office.

## Attract and Retain Diverse Personnel

We are beginning to see an increase in senior appointments of career officers who reflect the diversity of America, mostly accomplished through the political appointment process. This is a start, but we cannot declare victory yet. Strong representation and advancement from within is crucial for the long-term development of the Foreign Service and Civil Service ranks throughout the career pipeline.

As the State Department focuses its energy on creating a new midlevel hiring stream, we should develop a baseline understanding of why many diverse officers in the pipeline today are choosing to leave. Affinity groups and



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*Christina Tilghman joined the State Department as a Foreign Service officer in 2010. She is an ardent DEI advocate and most recently staffed the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources as an adviser to advance DEI at State.*

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several bureaus have done a phenomenal job of conducting climate surveys, exit interviews, and mentorship and sponsorship initiatives. The department should standardize and execute these best practices.

### Improve Accountability at the Top

We continue to call for the institutionalization of accountability measures to put a stop to toxic leadership styles and work environments. There needs to be a re-evaluation of conduct and suitability mechanisms of the deputy chief of mission, principal officer (DCM/PO) and ambassadorial vetting processes. The inclusion of the CDIO on the D Committee (which reviews candidates for high-level positions) is an important structural reform.

Our institutional culture, however, still disincentivizes the reporting of toxic leadership or channels such reporting into HR processes that historically have failed to hold perpetrators to meaningful account. A failure at the DCM/PO selection stage to incorporate accountability would deal a major blow to the morale of midlevel officers. Without improved leadership, we will continue to perpetuate old models and thus hemorrhage the very talent we aspire to recruit in greater numbers.

### Identify Resources

Diversity and inclusion councils have sprung up around the world to improve our work environments and tackle complex societal issues that seep into the workplace. These councils are doing important work; yet they are led by often overburdened volunteers passionate about our institution and inspired by optimism of what it could be.

Unfortunately, many councils have

lost their steam. In some cases, officers of underrepresented groups find themselves carrying this torch in addition to their regular work responsibilities, concerned that if they were to stop working on these issues, efforts would cease. Mission and bureau front offices should champion their efforts and meet with councils regularly if they are not yet doing so.

We also need professional outside help to examine our blind spots and identify resources to support volunteers in this important work. One way to address these personnel questions is stepped-up efforts by State's Global Talent Management and the Foreign Service Institute to train employees in the skills needed to hold these crucial and difficult conversations and develop preferred leadership practices.

### Promote DEI in National and Foreign Policy

On his first day in office Jan. 20, President Joe Biden signed Executive Order 13985 to advance racial equity and support for underrepresented communities across the federal government. Later, in June, President Biden issued Executive Order 14035 to further advance equity within the federal government by cultivating a workforce that draws from the full diversity of our nation.

Integrating DEI into our internal operations and overall foreign affairs mission requires a paradigm shift within our organization. How are we developing our leadership pipeline to manage organizational change and tackle 21st-century foreign policy challenges? How are we engaging with other countries to promote equity and support for underserved communities in our foreign affairs policy work?

Speaking Out is the *Journal's* opinion forum, a place for lively discussion of issues affecting the U.S. Foreign Service and American diplomacy. The views expressed are those of the author; their publication here does not imply endorsement by the American Foreign Service Association. Responses are welcome; send them to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org).

## Honor a Legacy

We, the authors, are proud to count our careers as part of the legacy of the late Ambassador Edward Perkins, a legacy that the department honored through a touching memorial ceremony and creation of a departmentwide award this year. [AFSA honored Amb. Perkins with the 2020 award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy shortly before his death; see interview in the December 2020 *FSJ*.] Any success we have achieved in diversifying State is thanks to advocacy and reform that he and a number of his trailblazing generation pursued despite the risks to their careers.

When taking stock of DEI, it is tempting to congratulate ourselves on how far we have come. We would like to take his legacy as a challenge to do even more. Diversity, equity and inclusion are not just management principles to deploy to address workforce challenges; they are about people. These values should permeate every aspect of our mission, including our outward-facing efforts.

Responsibility for the success of this work does not fall squarely on the shoulders of State leadership, especially the newly appointed chief diversity and inclusion officer and her office. Rather, it rests with each and every one of us. We can only succeed as a department if every person is accountable—as individuals, colleagues, supervisors and citizens. If we get this right, it will have an impact on many generations to come. ■



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# Q&A WITH USAID ADMINISTRATOR SAMANTHA POWER

## On the 60th Anniversary of USAID

**S**amantha Power was sworn into office as the 19th Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development on May 3. She leads USAID as it reaches the 60th anniversary of its founding this month. Priorities today for Administrator Power and the agency include enhancing USAID's long-standing leadership in areas including food security, education, women's empowerment and global health.

Power is the first USAID Administrator to also be a member of the National Security Council, where she aims to ensure that development plays a critical role in America's responses to a range of economic, humanitarian and geopolitical issues.

Prior to joining the Biden-Harris administration, Samantha Power was the Anna Lindh Professor of the Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School and the William D. Zabel Professor of Practice in Human Rights at Harvard Law School. From 2013 to 2017, Power served in the Obama-Biden administration as the 28th U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations. During her time at the U.N., Power rallied countries to combat the Ebola epidemic in West Africa and to ratify the Paris climate agreement.



From 2009 to 2013, Power served on the National Security Council staff as special assistant to the president and senior director for multilateral affairs and human rights. At the NSC, she advised the Obama-Biden administration on issues such as democracy promotion, United Nations reform, LGBTQ+ and women's rights, atrocity prevention, and the combat against human trafficking and global corruption.

An immigrant from Ireland, Power began her career as a war correspondent in Bosnia, and went on to report from places such as Kosovo, Rwanda, Sudan and Zimbabwe. She was the founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, and has been recognized as one of *Time* magazine's "100 Most Influential People" and one of *Foreign Policy*'s "Top 100 Global Thinkers." Power is author and editor of multiple books, and the recipient of the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Non-fiction. She earned a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Administrator Power responded to questions from *The Foreign Service Journal* in mid-September in conjunction with USAID's 60th anniversary this month.



USAID

**Administrator Power surveys damage in southwestern Haiti after the Aug. 14 earthquake, before touching down to speak with survivors in Maniche.**

**FSJ: On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of USAID, what should Americans know about the work of USAID and why it matters?**

**Power:** USAID is America's best-kept secret. This is an agency full of thousands of dedicated, competent experts who take on the toughest challenges in the world—COVID-19, climate change, the latest natural disaster. When you see news of a crisis somewhere in the world—like the recent earthquake in Haiti—it's USAID who the president sends to help those in need.

This is the agency that has helped beat back Ebola in West Africa, backed democratic transitions or supported elections in almost 90 countries since the end of the Cold War, mobilized companies to invest nearly \$200 billion in clean energy in poor countries, opened classroom doors to 40 million students who weren't getting an education, and turned the tide against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Over the past 60 years, we've responded to nearly 3,000 disasters covering more than 80 percent of the planet. We've reached billions of people with lifesaving food and medicine. And we've helped countries transform themselves into prosperous, peaceful economies. We used to give aid to South Korea, Chile, Thailand and Costa Rica. Now, Americans book vacations there.

We sell American-made goods and services there. And all of this is because taxpayers spend less than 1 percent of our annual budget on foreign assistance.

**FSJ: What are your top three global priorities?**

**Power:** Honestly, given the life-and-death challenges before us, you might say that the priorities are choosing us. COVID-19 has killed more than 4.5 million people, sickened tens of millions more and battered economies around the globe, driving nearly 100 million people into extreme poverty—the first rise in 20 years. I liken it to a meteorite hitting the planet; it's made every development problem we face harder. So ending the pandemic by vaccinating the world, caring for the sick and strengthening health systems to prevent the next pandemic is absolutely crucial.

At the same time, climate change is wreaking unprecedented havoc. Hurricanes swing from New Orleans to New York, wildfires darken the sun on nearly every continent, floods turn our streets to rivers, and droughts turn our soil into sand. We have to help countries grow their economies without growing their carbon emissions, and we have to build resilient infrastructure and agriculture, so they have the ability to weather the worst effects of climate change.



**Administrator Power with Rifqa Abdelrahman, the young activist from Sudan known as the “tear gas hunter” for her courage in throwing back tear gas canisters fired by the military during the popular revolution in 2019. Administrator Power visited Sudan in August to support the civilian-led transition before the recent military takeover.**

Finally, after a post-Cold War explosion of freedom and self-government, the world is getting less free. Indeed, we have seen a 15-year decline in democracy. Authoritarians are growing bolder, using new technologies to suppress their own people at home and spread misinformation abroad. We must counter these malign actions; shine a spotlight on corrupt practices so people know how their governments really function; and, above all, come together to show democracies can deliver for their people.

**FSJ: What are your plans to strengthen and institutionalize the career Foreign Service at USAID and rationalize approaches to Foreign Service “talent management”?**

**Power:** I shared some of our global priorities. Strengthening a long-depleted workforce, including our Foreign Service, is one of my top agency priorities.

For too long, we’ve asked too much from too few. Our Foreign Service officers work in some of the most difficult places in the world, often at great risk and at great distance from their homes and loved ones. They are beyond committed; but commitment can only get you so far. Over the next three years, I’m seeking to significantly increase our Foreign Service staff so we can meet the complex challenges we face.

We’re also working to create a new humanitarian assistance position with career paths for Foreign Service officers in humanitarian programs—a growing need. Twenty years ago, there were 16 complex emergencies a year, on average. Today there are 44, and crisis, conflict and pandemic response make up half of our programming.

But we can’t staff up without staffing equitably. For too long, this agency has not been intentional about recruiting and in

retaining a workforce that looks like America. Like so many institutions, public and private, we often self-select from the same traditional talent pools, without building pathways for diverse candidates to apply. Thankfully, that is beginning to change.

In September, we hosted our first-ever historically Black colleges and universities [HBCU] development conference with more than a thousand participants. We expanded our paid internship program, because we know that unpaid internships can actually be a barrier to entry for candidates from marginalized communities, not a stepping-stone. And in partnership with Howard University, we plan to double the number of Donald M. Payne Fellowships, which help fellows pay for two years of graduate school

before receiving Foreign Service appointments at USAID. Our most recent class of Foreign Service officers is our most diverse class, and I hope that is a record we break year after year.

**FSJ: What are the main challenges in development work today?**

**Power:** In a world rocked by a pandemic and dozens of complex emergencies, the needs outweigh the resources available. When USAID was founded, development assistance represented 80 percent of the capital flows going to developing countries; today it’s 10 percent, with 90 percent coming from the private sector. We are no longer the only game in town. So, we need to leverage that other 90 percent so it’s helping achieve development objectives and helping people prosper.

But securing private-sector investment runs headlong into another challenge: Even though capital seeks a higher return, it tends to stay away from corruption, bad policies or instability. When governments are accountable to their people and embrace the rule of law, however, investment tends to follow. So we need to address governance issues and fight corruption, even as we focus on traditional development investments in, for example, food security and global health.

It’s not an original analogy, but I do really believe development depends on three legs of a stool: *security*, without which a state cannot function or develop; *economic growth*, fueled by the private sector, which expands opportunity and boosts livelihoods; and *democratic, accountable governance*, which underpins them all. It attracts greater private-sector investment, solidifies security and regional stability, and fundamentally reflects the desires and the dignity of a country’s people. ■



## COVER STORY



# An Enduring Purpose, a Complex Legacy

**Here is an anniversary review of the agency's founding and evolution, as well as its shortcomings and accomplishments.**

BY JOHN NORRIS

**A**s the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, marks its 60th anniversary this month, the moment is ripe to reflect on both its accomplishments and shortcomings. Working in well more than 100 countries during this period, both sides of the ledger are striking.

USAID and its many partners in development have helped achieve what by any reasonable accounting must be considered unprecedented advances in the

human condition since the agency's founding. Smallpox—in an unusual collaboration between USAID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization and the Soviet Union—was eradicated after an innovative vaccination campaign. This was the first time a disease had ever been eradicated on a global basis; that fact was made still more impressive given that smallpox killed more than 300 million people worldwide in the 20th century alone.

USAID spearheaded child survival campaigns with its partners, saving millions of lives with a simple intervention of oral rehydration therapy that costs only pennies per packet to produce. The Green Revolution, championed by the Johnson administration and advanced through research funded by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, staved off what many feared would be an era of global famine while boosting incomes for poor farmers. Countries such as Taiwan and South Korea, once dismissed as economic backwaters, were transformed into economic powerhouses (and, ultimately, donors themselves), in no small part because of large U.S. investments through USAID, particularly in building the technocratic expertise within their planning and finance ministries.



*John Norris is the author of *The Enduring Struggle: The History of the U.S. Agency for International Development and America's Uneasy Transformation of the World* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021). He served at both USAID and the State Department during the 1990s, working as a speechwriter and field disaster expert at USAID and as director of communication for Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott while at the State Department.*



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**On June 8, 1962, President John F. Kennedy delivers remarks at the White House to a group of USAID mission directors shortly after the agency was established. “There will not be farewell parades to you as you leave or parades when you come back,” he told them.**

But for the critics of foreign aid, of whom there has always been a seemingly inexhaustible supply, USAID’s shortcomings have at times been glaring. From the fall of Vietnam to recent events in Afghanistan, some of the agency’s largest and most expensive programs collapsed upon themselves with shifting political and military tides. Over the years, money has flowed to dictatorial regimes, first because of their Cold War bona fides, and later to sway erstwhile allies in the global war on terror. Perhaps no federal agency has been scrutinized more closely by Congress or a longer series of blue-ribbon panels eager to surface meaningful reforms.

USAID’s legacy is complex, deserving of neither hagiography nor damnation as is too often the case. And the world in which the agency operates has been almost utterly transformed over those six decades. But the *raison d’être* for USAID and its work remains surprisingly constant. As William Gaud, one of the agency’s early leaders, argued, there are two basic reasons for the United States to provide foreign assistance: It is in our self-interest, and it is the right thing to do.

So let us look back to the agency’s founding to better understand some of the debates that continue to follow the agency to this day and then explore how the agency has evolved over time.

## Kennedy’s Vision

To better understand USAID, it is helpful to understand the worldview of the man who created it: President John F. Kennedy. As a young congressman, Kennedy was not a supporter of U.S. foreign assistance. However, his views on the developing world began to change rather drastically during a seven-week, 25,000-mile congressional trip in 1951, when he traveled to Israel, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Korea, Japan—and what was known then as French Indochina, and later as Vietnam. He came away with a newfound affinity for those in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America fighting to establish their own nation and identity. He argued that communism could not be combated solely through the force of arms and pushed for expanding economic aid. His support for independence movements was frequently cited at the time as an example of his lack of maturity on foreign policy, although those views seem far sounder in retrospect.

Kennedy’s views of foreign aid were also shaped to a remarkable degree by a piece of fiction: the 1958 novel *The Ugly American* by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick. The book detailed the bumbling exploits of Americans in a fictional Asian country, outflanked at every turn by shrewd communists, and scorched its way up the bestseller list, where it remained for a 76-week run. Kennedy, who had become a senator in 1953, was so enthusiastic about the book that he not only purchased copies for all his Senate colleagues; he also took out a full-page ad in *The New York Times* praising its depiction of Americans working overseas.

It was not just *The Ugly American* that raised concerns about foreign aid. No fewer than six different major studies of the U.S. aid program were conducted during the late 1950s, many of them highly critical. Responsibilities for the program were diffuse, scattered across multiple competing agencies that operated under overlapping and sometimes contradictory mandates. Public support for aid was waning, and the U.S. government was beginning to realize that implementing foreign assistance programs in the developing world—the new front line against communism—was much more difficult than implied by the triumphs of the Marshall Plan. The early optimism was exemplified by Henry Bennett, who oversaw much of the aid program during the early 1950s and boldly predicted that hunger, poverty and ignorance would end around the globe for all practical purposes within 50 years.

With Cuba falling to Fidel Castro on New Year’s Day 1959, the debate about America’s relationship with the developing world reached a crescendo. There was no real practical theory on how best to help the largely subsistence agrarian societies of Asia,

## Once elected, Kennedy quickly turned to plans to overhaul the foreign assistance program.

Latin America and Africa make the leap into modernity. “The gap between the developed and underdeveloped worlds,” Kennedy argued, was a “challenge to which we have responded most sporadically, most timidly, and most inadequately.”

Once elected, Kennedy quickly turned to plans to overhaul the foreign assistance program. In his first meeting with the National Security Council in 1961, he directed the Bureau of the Budget to develop recommendations on foreign aid, and this effort was combined with the work of a task force already developing recommendations for the president that included Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs George Ball, Budget Director David Bell and Henry Labouisse (who was in charge of much of the existing aid program at the time).

Kennedy was also deeply influenced by the thinking of two MIT academics who were making a splash with new theories on foreign assistance: Walt Rostow and Max Millikan. Their prime recommendation: “The United States should launch at the earliest possible moment a long-term program for sustained economic growth in the free world.” Rostow and Millikan’s notion of directing assistance based on economic prospects rather than on geostrategic priorities was radical for the time.

### Reorganizing Foreign Assistance

George Ball delivered his memo on reorganizing foreign assistance to the president on March 4, 1961. The working group was in clear agreement that almost all foreign aid functions should be housed within a single new government agency, and that instead of a series of disconnected projects, development strategies should approach the challenges in recipient countries holistically.

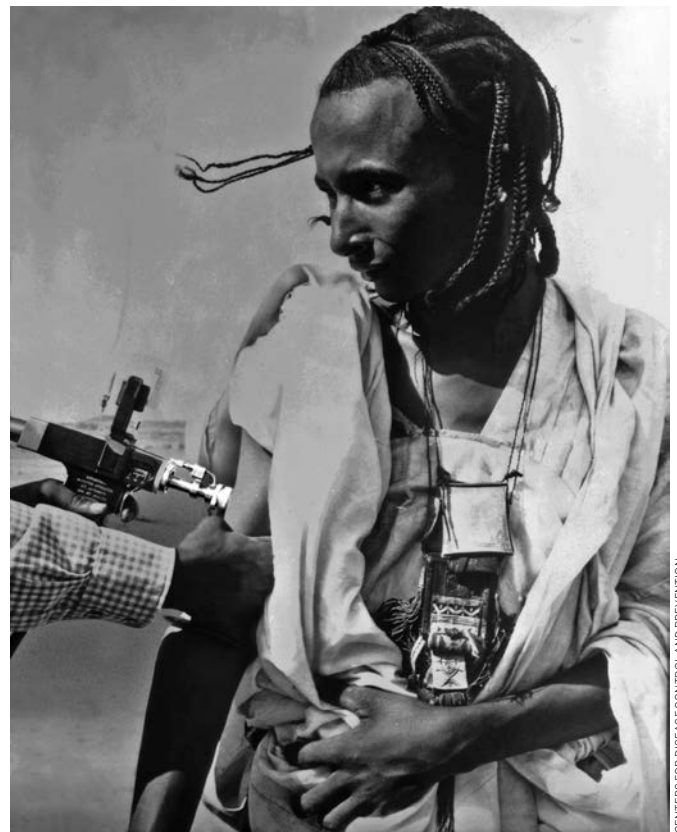
They felt that the new agency had to be field-driven, carrying out its responsibilities through the establishment of country “missions” staffed by a mix of U.S. and local personnel. Kennedy’s advisers further argued that the new agency should direct programs on a multiyear basis, which would permit developing countries, as David Bell put it, “to undertake the kind of difficult political measures, such as raising taxes or accomplishing a land reform program, which needed to be undertaken.”

There was also general concurrence that international economic assistance should be divorced from military aid and that aid should not be conditioned on support for U.S. policies.

As Arthur Schlesinger recalled Kennedy arguing, “If we undertake this effort in the wrong spirit, or for the wrong reasons, or in the wrong way, then any and all financial measures will be in vain.”

Major disagreements remained, however, including on the issue of food aid. Food aid, which shipped American food surpluses overseas for use in foreign aid programs, was very important to U.S. farmers at the time. In 1956 food aid purchases by the U.S. government accounted for 27 percent of all wheat exports—a huge market share.

Kennedy and others were starting to see the central goal of food aid as addressing global hunger, rather than just dumping America’s surpluses. They wanted to give the new agency control



**A Nigerien man receives a vaccination by way of a Ped-O-Jet jet injector. This image was captured in Niger in 1969, during the worldwide Smallpox Eradication and Measles Control Program.**

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WHITE HOUSE

**USAID Administrator Peter McPherson presents information on the Ethiopian famine to President Ronald Reagan in the Oval Office. Also pictured, from left: Counselor Ed Meese, Vice President George H.W. Bush, Chief of Staff James Baker and NSC Director Bud McFarland.**

of food aid, but the Department of Agriculture was reluctant to relinquish the program. In the end, the Department of Agriculture was left in charge of most international food aid because the administration feared any alternative would lead to cuts in the budget.

One more important question to be resolved was the relationship of the new aid agency to the Secretary of State and the State Department. “There was a strong feeling,” David Bell explained, “that aid decisions had been improperly subordinated in the

with new personnel,” drawn from both existing staff and the best people across the country. Aid would be delivered on the basis of clear and carefully-thought-through country plans tailored to meet local needs. It would be distinct from military aid because “development must be seen on its own merits.” Kennedy urged a special focus on countries that were willing to mobilize their own resources and embrace reform.

Less than a month later, President Kennedy lurched into the botched Bay of Pigs invasion. Yet, paradoxically, this also lent

## USAID spearheaded child survival campaigns with its partners, saving millions of lives with a simple intervention.

previous arrangement to the views and judgments of the State Department’s assistant secretaries and office chiefs.” It was ultimately decided that the head of the new agency should report to the Secretary of State, but not through any intervening layer of State Department officials. Many at State bristled at not having a closer hold on assistance programs.

On March 22, 1961, Kennedy’s foreign aid message was delivered to Congress. The president wanted a single agency in charge of foreign aid in Washington and in the field, a “new agency

momentum to his calls for an expanded and overhauled aid program. On May 26, Democratic Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas introduced the Act for International Development, the key vehicle for creating the new agency.

But if Congress was willing to accept foreign aid as part of the price of facing global communism, it was not going to give the White House carte blanche in its design. Sam Rayburn, the immensely powerful Democratic Speaker of the House, insisted that support for foreign aid would evaporate if the security and

economic dimensions were presented to Congress separately. To secure support on the Hill, Treasury Secretary C. Douglas Dillon informed Congress that 80 percent of economic aid would be spent on American goods and services. Eighty-three members of the House protested the proposal that the agency would get multiyear appropriations. William Gaud, who ran one of USAID's regional bureaus at the time, saw it as a grievous setback. "An aid program should be a long-term proposition if it is to achieve its ends," he argued, but instead, "we spend the whole bloody year fighting before the Congress."

President Kennedy was deeply irritated with the loss of long-term authority. As David Bell explained: "He saw that attitude as limiting the office of the president and the powers of the president in dealing with a turbulent, complicated, dynamic world."

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 was signed by President Kennedy on Labor Day, and Congress required the merger of the preexisting assistance agencies into the new agency within 60 days.

Among the debates during the creation of USAID that have continued to play out over the years, none has been more frequent or fraught than that over the agency's relationship with the State Department. For most of the agency's existence, State and USAID have sorted out mutual accommodations. From the beginning, however, the State Department disliked the agency's independence. It continues to fight periodic rearguard efforts to have USAID folded into State. "The aid program is too intimately involved in our foreign relations to allow for the fiction that it is a technical operation which State can delegate to an operating agency," wrote a State Department official in 1962. Periodically, those efforts to assume greater control over USAID have erupted into messy open conflict, including a merger battle in the 1990s during the Clinton administration and creation of the "F" Bureau in the subsequent Bush administration.

Fueling this persistent debate are sharply diver-



**Former President George W. Bush visits the Kasisi Children's Home in Lusaka, Zambia, on July 4, 2012.**

SHEALAN CRAIGHEAD / THE BUSH CENTER

gent views of aid. When he formed USAID, President Kennedy saw its central mission as expanding the number of free-market democracies over the long run, which, in turn, he believed, would make the U.S. more secure and prosperous. The alternative view has been to use aid to gain short-term leverage and influence in countries willing to oppose communism (or terrorism), with commitments to democracy and free markets a second-order consideration.

In short, is foreign aid an instrument of U.S. foreign policy, or is development in and of itself an important aim of U.S. policy? The tension between these two approaches has never been fully reconciled, but the track record of aid when used for instrumental purposes is not a promising one.

## **A Changing World, A Changing Agency**

USAID's evolution can be followed over the course of the administrations from Kennedy through Obama. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations saw USAID heavily focused on



REUTERS/GLEB GARANICH

**Henrietta Fore, the first woman USAID Administrator, is shown here inspecting a humanitarian aid delivery at an Army base outside Tbilisi on August 22, 2008.**





**USAID led the international effort to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014.**

top-down macro-economic reforms and public administration in key partner countries. The United States was virtually alone as a major bilateral donor, and private capital flows to the developing world were quite low, giving Washington disproportionate influence and impact as developing countries found themselves sometimes squeezed by the harsh realities of Cold War geopolitics. The Green Revolution and the advent of international family planning programs stand as some of the most important legacies of the era. Unfortunately, much of the agency's good work during this period was overshadowed by the specter of Vietnam and mounting public frustration that U.S. blood and treasure seemed to be wasted in Southeast Asia.

During the Nixon administration, USAID veered on a sharply different course. Discontent with the aid program was high, because of both Vietnam and the rise of a series of U.S.-backed military governments in Latin America. Congress passed the "New Directions" legislation that pushed USAID to focus much more on the needs of the poorest of the poor and rural development. The agency took on a sector-driven approach to producing results in health, education and livelihoods at the village level through a panoply of U.S.

NGOs and contractors. New Directions helped stave off those who advocated eliminating the agency, but without a focus on economic reforms, USAID would have a difficult time replicating the early successes of Taiwan and South Korea.

The Reagan administration marked the next important watershed. The foreign aid budget climbed sharply, again driven by Cold War politics, and the agency made a huge push on the health front, becoming the global leader in child survival programs. These programs have always been popular on the Hill and with the public, and health and humanitarian assistance programs over time have come to dominate the agency's budget and worldview.

By the first Bush administration, USAID had entered into a period of considerable scandal and low morale. The fall of the Berlin Wall triggered a major push by the agency into Central and Eastern Europe.

The Clinton administration brought a knockdown fight with both Congress and the State Department as Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) led the fight to fold the agency into the State Department. The protracted battle brought steep budget cuts, even as the agency pursued ambitious reforms, and increasingly focused on such issues as women and the environment that had in the past often been an afterthought.

By the beginning of the George W. Bush administration, USAID was a shadow of its former self, deeply wounded by the fights of the previous decade. The aftermath of September 11 brought huge infusions of resources and personnel, new turf battles with the State Department, and complicated missions in Iraq and Afghanistan that often echoed the Vietnam experi-



**USAID staff welcome another shipment of U.S.-donated COVID-19 vaccine deliveries to Uganda in the summer of 2021.**



## From climate change to fragile states, USAID's case load will not disappear any time soon.

ence. In both of these settings, there was very little willingness to question how, or even if, development would be successful under such conditions. As James Kunder of USAID put it, "The hard lesson from both Afghanistan and Iraq was that development programs are not a good substitute for an effective diplomatic and military strategy."

The Obama years brought a renewed emphasis on agriculture and innovation, but with a level of ambition often constrained by the continued fallout of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis.

### USAID Today

So where does the agency stand after 60 years? Clearly, the need for an effective aid agency has not diminished as the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying economic crisis have

shown. From climate change to fragile states, USAID's case load will not disappear anytime soon. And while foreign aid always remains a lightning rod, it has done enormous good over the years, and the international community has made historic progress in combating extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and despair. While the United States was one of just a handful of donors in 1961, 2019 saw more than 40 countries offering bilateral aid—and virtually all of them were former recipients of U.S. assistance.

Perhaps there is no better reflection of how America engages with the world than its foreign aid program. The spirit of the United States has always deeply imbued this endeavor: a restless, entrepreneurial, sometime arrogant conviction that the face of the world can be transformed by assisting like-minded nations and encouraging them to embrace free markets and free ideas. ■



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## We are pleased to present this year's collection of books by Foreign Service authors and their families.

**T**he *Foreign Service Journal* is pleased to present our 20th annual Foreign Service authors roundup in time for holiday orders.

Our primary purpose in compiling “In Their Own Write” for publication is to celebrate the wealth of literary talent within the Foreign Service community, and to give our readers the opportunity to support colleagues by sampling their wares. Each entry contains full publication details along with a short commentary.

This year our annotated list of books written, edited or translated by Foreign Service personnel and their family members stands at 100, up roughly 25 percent from last year—when, at 78 titles, it had nearly doubled from the year before. With the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns, we wonder, has the trend now gotten an additional boost from the ease and ubiquity of online communications?

This list of books published between 2019 and 2021 is not a comprehensive or definitive record of works by FS

authors; as always, we rely on the authors themselves to bring their books to our attention.

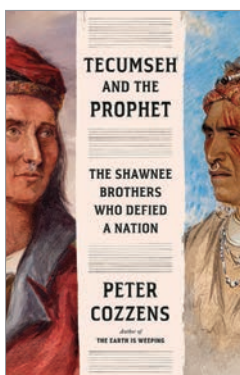
This year we’re featuring 19 works of biography and history, 10 books on policy and issues, 19 memoirs, 31 novels and 10 books for children and young adults. Our “potpourri” section sports 11 books that range from tales about food in Peru to a user’s guide to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Please note that, unfortunately, because of the sheer volume of volumes, we have had to limit series of more than two books to a single entry.

As usual, we also include in this month’s focus a selection of recent books “of related interest” to diplomats and their families that were not written by FS authors.

This year’s roundup was assembled with the vital assistance of Publications Coordinator Dmitry Filipoff, Managing Editor Kathryn Owens and Contributing Editor Steven Alan Honley, who wrote the entries for this edition.

—Susan Brady Maitra, Senior Editor

## BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY



### **Tecumseh and the Prophet: The Shawnee Brothers Who Defied a Nation**

Peter Cozzens, Knopf, 2020,  
\$35/hardcover, e-book available,  
560 pages.

In the first biography of Tecumseh to appear in more than two decades, award-winning historian Peter Cozzens plumbs the historical record to tell the untold story of the great Shawnee leader and his brother, Tenskwatawa, who co-authored the largest and most powerful pan-Indian alliance to challenge the white man’s takeover of America.

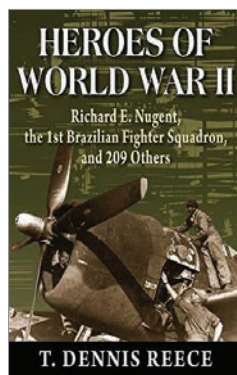
While Tecumseh was a brilliant diplomat and war leader, Cozzens writes, it was Tenskwatawa, heretofore dismissed as a charlatan and a drunk, who created a vital doctrine of religious and cultural revitalization that unified the disparate tribes of the Old Northwest. As the author states in the preface: “I have sought to redress these and other imbalances in the historical perception of the Shawnee brothers.”

The story of the two most significant siblings in Native American history takes us into the chaos and violence that characterized the young republic, when settlers spilled across the Appalachians to bloody effect in their haste to exploit

lands won from the British in the War of Independence, and disregarding their rightful Indian owners.

“Cozzens’ nuanced portrait stands as one of the best pieces of Native American history I have read,” says journalist and historian S.C. Gwynne, author of the bestsellers *Empire of the Summer Moon* and *Rebel Yell*.

Peter Cozzens is the author or editor of 17 acclaimed books on the American Civil War and the Indian Wars of the American West. A former Foreign Service officer, he served in Panama, Tijuana, Lima and Washington, D.C. In 2002 he received AFSA’s William R. Rivkin Award for creative dissent by a midlevel FSO.



### **Heroes of World War II: Richard E. Nugent, the 1st Brazilian Fighter Squadron, and 209 Others**

T. Dennis Reece, Hellgate Press, 2019,  
\$17.95/paperback, e-book available,  
414 pages.

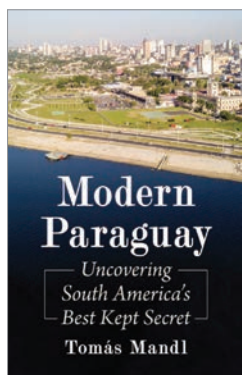
Why yet another book about World War II? The short answer is to pay tribute to some of the uniformed personnel who helped win the war but have not received proper recognition for their accomplishments. In the case of the 1st Brazilian Fighter Squadron, that statement needs one qualification. The unit has garnered considerable publicity, but most of the material is available only in Portuguese and therefore not accessible to most native English speakers.



Richard E. Nugent commanded the XXIX Tactical Air Command as it gave air support to the Ninth Army from the Siegfried Line to within 53 miles of Berlin. The squadron won the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation (formerly the Distinguished Unit Citation), while 209 individuals, serving in various land or air units, who took part in the campaign won at least one award for heroism, ranging from the Distinguished Service Cross to the Soldier's Medal.

Using official and unofficial sources, T. Dennis Reece presents these accomplishments, largely forgotten about since 1945, for the gratitude and inspiration of future generations.

T. Dennis Reece is a retired Department of State Foreign Service officer who served in Brazil, the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, the Dominican Republic, Cabo Verde, Guyana and Washington, D.C. He previously published works on bomb disposal from 1942 to 1946 and the Ohio River flood of 1884.



**Modern Paraguay: Uncovering South America's Best Kept Secret**

Tomás Mandl, McFarland, 2021, \$39.95/paperback, e-book available, 255 pages.

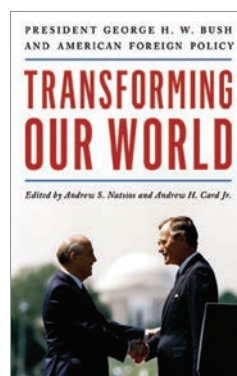
To the limited extent people have thought about Paraguay, they have called it variously the “least-known country in Latin America,” “an island surrounded by land” and “the South American Tibet.” For many years, foreign writers and journalists who ventured there described it as an enigmatic land where a peculiar people endured calamities and Nazis sought refuge.

While working for Embassy Asunción from 2016 to 2020, Tomás Mandl traveled through the country, meeting leading minds and sifting through data. But it was not until March 2017, when political unrest led to the burning of the Paraguayan Congress and a lockdown, that he realized no authoritative history of the country existed, either in English or Spanish. So he decided to write one himself.

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Drawing on more than 40 interviews with historians, political scientists, economists, journalists and diplomats, this book provides a timely assessment of Paraguay's strengths, challenges and developmental outlook, and their implications for the world. Among other things, Mandl demolishes the myth that Paraguay was ever run by Nazi-imitators, noting that its authoritarian tendencies are homegrown and existed long before World War II.

Tomás Mandl was born in Virginia and raised in Uruguay. Currently a program officer with the Center for International Private Enterprise, he previously worked for the Department of State as a political specialist in Ecuador, Vietnam and Paraguay, accompanying his wife, Laura, a USAID Foreign Service officer. His articles in English and Spanish have appeared in *World Politics Review* and *Revista Perspectiva*, among other periodicals. He lives in Falls Church, Virginia.



**Transforming Our World: President George H. W. Bush and American Foreign Policy**

Edited by Andrew S. Natsios and Andrew H. Card Jr., Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, \$38/hardcover, e-book available, 288 pages.

In his introduction to this compilation of 19 essays, editor Andrew S. Natsios notes that we are now three decades into the post-Cold War era. This book

reflects on that transition, which took place during George Herbert Walker Bush's presidency. The fact that both President Bush and several of the figures he chose to carry out his foreign policy have died, and others are advanced in years, underscores the need to capture their irreplaceable memories of events for the historical record before they are lost.

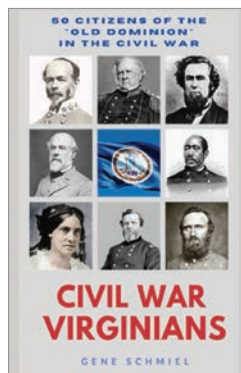
Most of the contributors will be familiar to *Foreign Service Journal* readers: former Secretaries of State James A. Baker III and Condoleezza Rice, Dennis Ross, Carla Hills and Philip Zelikow, to name but a few. Two distinguished retired ambassadors, both career Foreign Service officers, wrote chapters, as well: Thomas Pickering (“President George H. W. Bush and the United Nations”) and Edward D. Djerejian (“Constructing the Alliance to Liberate Kuwait”).

Collectively, the authors shed new light on Bush's role in world events, his style of diplomacy, and the organization and functioning of his foreign policy team.

Andrew S. Natsios was director of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance during the George H.W. Bush administration and USAID Administrator during the George W. Bush administration. Currently, he is an executive professor at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University and director of the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs.

Andrew H. Card Jr. held numerous positions at senior levels

of government under three presidents, including service as President George H.W. Bush's deputy chief of staff.



**Civil War Virginians:  
50 Characters from the  
“Old Dominion” in the Civil War**

Gene Schmiel, independently published, 2021, \$14.99/paperback, e-book available, 227 pages.

From America's founding, Virginians looked upon themselves as a unifying link between North and South, even as sectionalism grew in the mid-19th century. Ironically, as Gene Schmiel

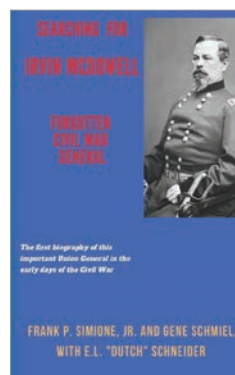
explains in this book, the state's reluctance to leave the Union led to the secession and admission to the Union in 1863 of what would become the new state of West Virginia.

*Civil War Virginians* is the eighth and last of the author's series, *Civil War Personalities: 50 at a Time*. This volume profiles 50 Virginians who played critical roles in various fields during the war. Like the other books in the *Civil War Personalities* series, it offers readers unique insight into this pivotal American event and the era in which it occurred through the eyes of a wide range of participants.

Four other volumes in the series were also released this year. They are: *Civil War Women—Underestimated and Indispensable: 50 Women Who Made a Difference in the “American Iliad”*; *Civil War Unsung Heroes and Other Key Actors “Behind the Scenes”: 50 Forgotten, but Influential, Civil War Men and Women*; *Civil War Ohioans: 50 Buckeyes Who Made a Difference in the “American Iliad”*; and, *The Civil War in Statuary Hall: Who Should Be Memorialized in the U.S. Capitol?*

Gene Schmiel retired from the Foreign Service in 2002 after a 24-year career that included tours as chargé d'affaires in Djibouti, Bissau and Reykjavík, among many other assignments. Before joining the Service, he was an assistant professor of history at St. Francis University in Pennsylvania, and has taught at Marymount, Shenandoah and Penn State universities. Currently, he lectures at Civil War Round Tables and is also a speaker on cruises for American Cruise Lines on the Mississippi River and on the Southeast Coast.

Schmiel has specialized in the Civil War since the publication of his award-winning book, *Citizen-General: Jacob Dolson Cox and the Civil War Era* (2014). See his website for details: <https://civilwarhistory-geneschmiel.com>.



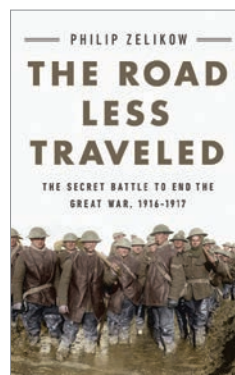
**Searching for Irvin McDowell:  
Forgotten Civil War General**

Frank P. Simone Jr. and Gene Schmiel, independently published, 2021, \$19.99/paperback, 295 pages.

Gene Schmiel and co-author Frank Simone Jr. deem U.S. General Irvin McDowell a major actor in the Civil War for a short but critical period in the war's early days, and say his life story deserves to be told and remem-

bered. That task is severely hampered by the fact that McDowell did not write a memoir, and left few papers behind other than his official reports, a few letters and orders to and from others.

Nonetheless, Schmiel and his collaborator do a masterful job of giving the general his due via this book, the first biography devoted to him. A dutiful but limited officer, McDowell was chosen to lead the largest army in American history at the Battle of First Bull Run. The book covers his entire life, but focuses mainly on his military service in northern Virginia, including his lament on “what might have been.”



**The Road Less Traveled:  
The Secret Battle to End  
the Great War, 1916-1917**

Philip Zelikow, PublicAffairs, 2021, \$30/hardcover, e-book available, 352 pages.

“Clear judgments and waffle-free language, as well as the novelty and importance of the subject, are what make this book such a fascinating read,” says former FSO Harry Kopp

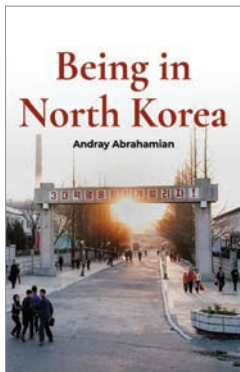
in his review of *The Road Less Traveled* in this issue (see review, p. 101). “Lessons for the statesman leap from these pages.”

In 1916, two years into the most terrible conflict the world had ever known, there was a chance to end it, saving millions of lives and changing the course of history. The German chancellor secretly sought President Woodrow Wilson's mediation to end the war, just as British ministers and France's president also concluded that the time was right. “Peace is on the floor waiting to be picked up!” the German ambassador to the United States said. That chance did not, however, materialize.

In *The Road Less Traveled*, Philip Zelikow explores this seldom-remembered moment, what he terms “the most

consequential diplomatic failure in the history of the United States.” He does so in thrilling detail, documenting the misunderstandings, confusions, betrayals, egotism and cowardice that led to this failure with the help of memoirs, diaries, letters and other source materials left by the principals on both sides of the Atlantic.

A former career Foreign Service officer, Philip Zelikow worked on international policy in each of the five administrations from Ronald Reagan through Barack Obama. Currently, he is the White Burkett Miller Professor of History and J. Wilson Newman Professor of Governance at the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia.



### **Being in North Korea**

Andray Abrahamian, Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2020, \$19.95/paperback, e-book available, 200 pages.

If you’ve ever wondered what it’s *really* like to live and work in the Hermit Kingdom, then this is the book, and the author, for you. Andray Abrahamian, who speaks fluent Korean (“sometimes with a Pyongyang accent,” he notes),

has read or written something about North Korea nearly every day for the past 15 years.

As its title indicates, *Being in North Korea* is full of stories he gathered during more than 30 trips to Pyongyang, where he and a buddy set up and ran Chosun Exchange, a nongovernmental organization that trains North Koreans in economic policy and entrepreneurship.

But that’s just the tip of the iceberg. During his decade of direct involvement with North Korea, Abrahamian also assisted an NGO start-up focused on tuberculosis prevention and ran sports tournaments. He seamlessly weaves together his own experiences with history lessons and analysis of the country’s politics, society and foreign relations. Yet he never loses sight of the humanity of his interlocutors, even the ones most devoted to the regime.

Andray Abrahamian joined the Foreign Service as a tandem with his wife, Victoria Cook, in 2020. He has published extensively on Asia issues; his first book, *North Korea and Myanmar: Divergent Paths* (McFarland, 2018), compares Asia’s pariah states. He is a nonresident fellow at the Korea Economic Institute, a visiting scholar at George Mason University Korea and a senior adjunct fellow at Pacific Forum. During the 2018-

2019 academic year, he was the Koret Fellow in Korean Studies at Stanford University’s Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center.



### **Keepers of the Sheep: Knitting in Morocco's High Atlas and Beyond**

Irene Waggener, 106 Meters from the Road, 2021, \$40/paperback, 150 pages.

Readers of this fascinating book will learn about a knitting tradition that stretches back in time through many generations—possibly to the very origins of the craft. The collection of seven

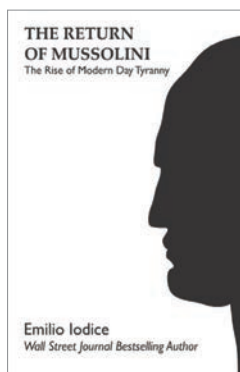
essays and 13 patterns will also give readers glimpses of life in a Moroccan village where knitting once played a critical role in helping the community survive harsh, snowy winters.

The patterns in this book include traditional designs by shepherds who want to share their knowledge with other knitters and future generations. In addition, Waggener’s research examines the history of knitting not just in Morocco, but across North Africa. Through historical accounts, linguistic clues and museum artifacts, some of which have not been available to the general public until now, she presents a holistic view of the craft in this region.

As requested by the shepherds who contributed their expertise to the book, the author will donate a portion of the proceeds from its sale to a women’s cooperative based in Ait Bouli, Morocco. Cooperative Ibilou will use the funds for community development projects benefiting everyone in the village.

Irene Waggener enjoys researching and writing about knitting traditions around the world. Her work draws on participant observation and interviews, as well as historical, linguistic and archaeological evidence to situate the craft within the broader themes of economy, society and politics. She has lived in Japan, Niger, Jerusalem and Morocco, and currently lives in Armenia with her husband, Foreign Service Officer Josh Waggener.





### **The Return of Mussolini: The Rise of Modern Day Tyranny**

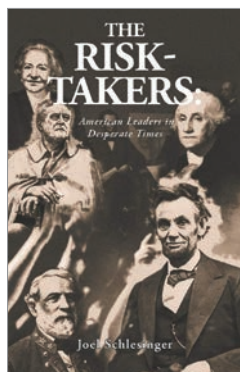
Emilio Iodice, independently published, 2021, \$18/paperback, e-book available, 206 pages.

Precisely a century after fascist Benito Mussolini was first elected to the Italian parliament, presaging the ascent of Adolf Hitler just a few years later, Emilio Iodice declares that grim history appears to be repeating itself today in countries around the world. He singles out the Chinese Communist Party as the chief threat to global democracy and urges the West to do all it can to counter Beijing's malign influence across the globe.

To make his case, Iodice painstakingly traces Mussolini's rise to power in the 1920s, then draws direct parallels to our world: "Nationalist influences are rising. Once again, the forces of communication are spreading the words and ideas of totalitarianism. Instead of speeches on balconies, we now have social media, which actively circulate and intensify rumors and falsehoods."

Emilio Iodice, a retired Foreign Service officer, is vice president at Loyola University in Chicago and director of the school's John Felice Rome Center. As an FSO, he served in France, Brazil, Mexico and Spain. He is the author of seven previous books, including *Profiles in Leadership: From Caesar to Modern Times* (2013), *When Courage Was the Essence of Leadership: Lessons from History* (2019) and *The Commander in Chief: The Qualities Needed of Leaders of Freedom-Loving Nations in the 21st Century* (2020).

Visit <http://www.iodicebooks.com/> for more information.



### **The Risk-Takers: American Leaders in Desperate Times**

Joel Schlesinger, Newman Springs Publishing, 2020, \$18.95/paperback, e-book available, 186 pages.

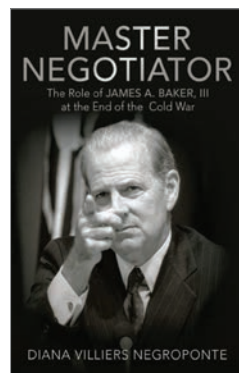
The five essays in this book assess the organizational leadership skills that Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Robert E. Lee, Katharine Graham and Franklin D. Roosevelt each exhibited at pivotal moments in American history.

Joel Schlesinger approaches leadership as an interactive process in which leaders and followers work together in difficult

situations or complex environments to accomplish common goals. As he sums it up in his introduction, "One way to define leaders may be to say that we may never understand exactly why followers follow leaders, but in the end, leaders *resonate*; they find a way, in whatever circumstance, to connect with followers and leverage their contributions." (italics in the original)

These essays suggest that there is a holistic unity to leadership, and that the four attributes of status, esteem, technical competence and organizational leadership skills—always present in some measure—help leaders connect with followers. Of course, the proper mix of these four qualities depends on the nature of the followers and the demands of the crisis.

Joel Schlesinger is a retired Senior Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development. During his tour as USAID mission director in Mali, Vice President Al Gore recognized the mission for the most innovative strategic planning and managerial reengineering anywhere in the agency. Schlesinger later served as deputy assistant administrator for legislative and public affairs. He holds a doctorate in organizational leadership and is currently a full professor at the Jack Welch Management Institute on Leadership.



### **Master Negotiator: The Role of James A. Baker, III at the End of the Cold War**

Diana Villiers Negroponte, Archway, 2020, \$20.99/paperback, e-book available, 418 pages.

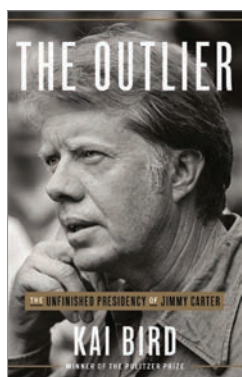
Diana Villiers Negroponte zeroes in on the 61st Secretary of State's diplomacy in this book, aptly titled *Master Negotiator: The Role of James A. Baker, III at the End of the Cold War*.

Although *The Man Who Ran Washington* by Peter Baker and Susan Glasser (see the June FSJ review) devotes several chapters to James A. Baker III's three years as Secretary of State (1989-1992), the authors' goal of surveying Baker's entire, sprawling career keeps them from doing full justice to his diplomatic achievements—and that is what Negroponte accomplishes here.

Reviewing *Master Negotiator* in this edition (see p. 102), Joseph L. Novak says it "returns repeatedly to the point that Baker's close relationship with George H.W. Bush, the 41st president who died in 2018, served as the bedrock of his empowerment as Secretary of State." Further, in explaining Baker's effectiveness as America's top diplomat, says Novak,

“Negroponte emphasizes that he was ‘tough, determined and competitive,’ and highlights his laser-like focus on pivotal issues.”

Diana Villiers Negroponte, a Global Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center, has lectured on international politics at several universities. She is also the author of *Seeking Peace in El Salvador: The Struggle to Reconstruct a Nation at the End of the Cold War* (2012). She dedicates this book to her husband, retired Ambassador John D. Negroponte—this year’s recipient of AFSA’s Lifetime Contributions to Diplomacy Award—with whom she ably partnered at postings around the world for many years.



### **The Outlier: The Unfinished Presidency of Jimmy Carter**

Kai Bird, Crown, 2021.  
\$38/hardcover, e-book available,  
784 pages.

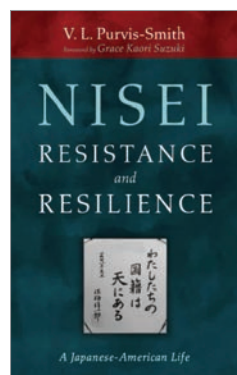
For decades after his defeat in 1980, Jimmy Carter’s one-term presidency was often unfairly labeled a failure. This was in part because he was not just an outsider in Washington but, as Kai Bird’s biography rightly labels him,

an *outlier*. Not only was Carter the first president in a century to grow up in the heart of the Deep South, but his born-again Christianity made him the most openly religious president in memory.

Carter was also an outlier for his unshakable belief in doing the right thing, an approach that ultimately cost him reelection but also produced diplomatic triumphs such as the Panama Canal Treaty and the Camp David Accords. Bird traces the arc of his administration, from his aggressive domestic agenda to his controversial foreign policy record, and shows us how he tackled issues still hotly debated today—from national health care and growing inequality and racism to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Drawing on interviews with Carter and members of his administration, and recently declassified documents, Bird delivers a profound, clear-eyed evaluation of a leader whose legacy has arguably been deeply misunderstood.

The son of the late FSO Eugene Bird, Kai Bird is an award-winning historian and journalist. In addition to serving as executive director of the Leon Levy Center for Biography, he is an acclaimed author who won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography for *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (co-authored with Martin J. Sherwin, 2005).



### **Nisei Resistance and Resilience: A Japanese-American Life**

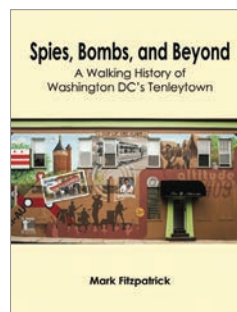
V.L. Purvis-Smith, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2021, \$39/paperback,  
398 pages.

Although born almost two decades apart, Ginny Purvis-Smith, the author of this biography, and Allen Maruyama, its subject, are both members of the “Silent Generation.” They also both grew up on the high plains of south-

eastern Colorado, are descendants of immigrants, attended the same elementary school in their early years, were members of the same small-town church, attended the same seminary and were ordained as ministers in the Presbyterian Church.

Not until her friendship with Maruyama began in 2007, though, did Purvis-Smith begin to understand how differently the two occupied the shared layers of their respective histories. Even though the Maruyamas escaped the mass relocation and internment so many of their fellow Japanese Americans endured during World War II, they still suffered abuse and discrimination. The author emphasizes that this book is Allen’s story, primarily as he told it in more than 30 interviews she recorded with him and Rose, his wife of 63 years, and then transcribed.

V.L. Purvis-Smith (Ginny) is the spouse of Terry Purvis-Smith, who entered the Foreign Service in 1999 and retired in 2006. She directed the American English Language program in Dakar while they were posted in Senegal (1999-2001), worked in crisis management support at Main State (2001-2003), and then taught at the University of the Bahamas when they were posted to Nassau (2003-2006). She is also the author of *Greenwood River* (2016), a historical novel based on the life of Allen Maruyama.



### **Spies, Bombs, and Beyond: A Walking History of Washington DC's Tenleytown**

Mark Fitzpatrick, independently published, 2020, \$19/paperback,  
e-book available, 146 pages.

Those who know retired Foreign Service Officer Mark Fitzpatrick for his expertise on nuclear diplomacy may be surprised by the subject matter of

his latest book: his neighborhood.

When the pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, he began setting out each day on a different walk from his home in

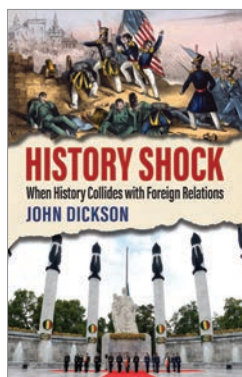
the Tenleytown–American University Park area of Northwest Washington, D.C. For seven weeks, he posted daily narratives on Facebook about those excursions, and friends encouraged him to compile and publish those postings as a book.

Fitzpatrick notes that Tenleytown has many more places of local interest worthy of narration, but in general, he sought to tell stories that also would appeal to larger audiences. He revised many of the original tales and added a score more for publication.

Part IV, “Diplomacy and Espionage,” will likely be of particular interest for Foreign Service readers, for it is full of the spies and bombs the book’s title promises. But the whole collection of historical vignettes is worth reading. Fitzpatrick says: “As a concerned citizen, I am keen to understand the roots of disparities and racial cleavages in our society. The national awakening to Black Lives Matter took place while I was writing my stories ... [and is also] reflected in my selection of sites to write about.”

During 26 years of service as an American diplomat, Mark Fitzpatrick served in Seoul, Tokyo, Wellington, Vienna and Washington, D.C. After retiring from the Foreign Service, he joined the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, producing 10 books about nuclear dangers and appearing frequently on international media outlets.

## POLICY AND ISSUES



**History Shock: When History Collides with Foreign Relations**  
John Dickson, University Press of Kansas, 2021, \$34.95/hardcover, e-book available, 256 pages.

Although John Dickson never quotes William Faulkner, the novelist’s rueful observation that “The past is never dead; it’s not even past” suffuses *History Shock: When History Collides with Foreign Relations*. (His title is a

riff on Alvin Toffler’s *Future Shock*, which addresses the opposite challenge: helping humanity prepare for profound change as it unfolds.)

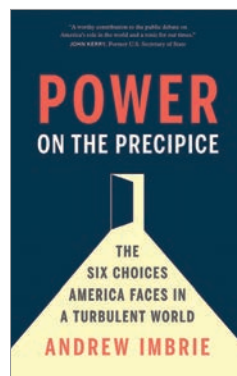
Drawing on a quarter-century of experience as a public diplomacy officer, principally in Latin America and Africa,

Dickson cites chapter and verse on how important historical events can be viewed differently in the United States and in other countries.

As Dickson admits, part of the problem is that until they take up their postings, even highly educated, cosmopolitan Foreign Service personnel sometimes have not heard of historic events that continue to shape, or warp, other nations decades and centuries later. As a result, they have no capacity to assess their impact on relations with the United States, let alone offer helpful recommendations to Washington policymakers on taking them into account in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy.

Dickson does not mince words in urging the Foreign Service to improve its training, by producing a playbook or operating manual with systematic case studies for its officers. *History Shock* not only offers a model for such case studies, but sets forth an interpretive framework for remedying this information deficit, including recommendations for strengthening historical literacy within the Foreign Service.

John Dickson was a public diplomacy officer with the U.S. Information Agency (1984-1999) and Department of State (1999-2010), whose postings included Mexico, Cuba, Canada, Nigeria and South Africa. He lives in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.



**Power on the Precipice: The Six Choices America Faces in a Turbulent World**

Andrew Imbrie, Yale University Press, 2020, \$27.50/hardcover, e-book available, 272 pages.

Andrew Imbrie poses a series of existential questions about America’s identity and future in this thoughtful book. He begins with the premise that U.S. power and influence are in

decline, for reasons that are structural as much as they are contingent on any particular administration or set of policies.

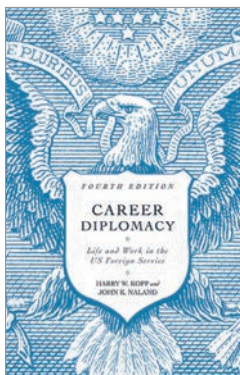
That, in turn, means this discouraging trend could reverse itself later in the century if, for instance, demographic pressures, debt and diminishing resources constrain China’s economic growth and ability to assert its will globally. Whatever the future holds, however, Imbrie emphasizes that national decline is not an abstract phenomenon: It is something lived and felt by people who make real choices every day.

To frame the stakes and bring them to life, he introduces



six conscientious leaders in the United States who have wrestled with these choices firsthand: a soldier, an innovator, a diplomat, a negotiator, a scholar and a statesman. His hope is that readers will come to see a part of their story in the stories they find in these pages, and perhaps ask similar questions about the choices facing America today.

Andrew Imbrie, the son of a U.S. Foreign Service officer, is a senior fellow at Georgetown's Center for Security and Emerging Technology, where he teaches foreign policy speechwriting and rhetoric to graduate and undergraduate students. He previously served as a member of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, where he was a speechwriter to Secretary of State John Kerry. Imbrie has lived in Amman, Paris, London, Brussels, Rome and Washington, D.C.



**Career Diplomacy:  
Life and Work in the  
US Foreign Service,  
Fourth Edition**

Harry W. Kopp and John K. Naland,  
Georgetown University Press, 2021,  
\$29.95/hardcover, e-book available,  
280 pages.

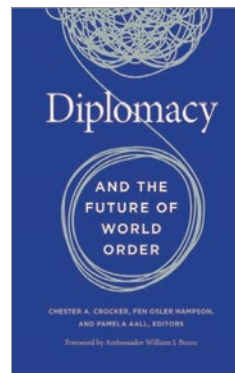
It is a sign of just how successful, and necessary, this book is that it has gone through four editions in just 13 years.

Soon after the last revision in 2017, President Donald Trump's administration delivered shocks to the traditional norms and standards of American diplomatic practice that continue to reverberate today, calling into question assumptions about the nature of Foreign Service work that had long been taken for granted.

This edition helps tell that story of reinvention, capturing recent changes in the Foreign Service ranging from how to get in to what to expect throughout the course of a career. And as previous editions have done, *Career Diplomacy* describes the Foreign Service as an institution, a profession and a career. It provides a full picture of the organization, including its history and its role in American foreign affairs. Most of all, though, it is a guide to the Foreign Service, written by two insiders who speak frankly about its weaknesses, as well as its strengths.

Harry W. Kopp, a former Foreign Service officer, served as deputy assistant secretary of State for international trade policy in the Carter and Reagan administrations. He is a frequent contributor to *The Foreign Service Journal* and a member of its editorial board.

John K. Naland's 29-year Foreign Service career included a stint as director of the Office of Retirement. A two-time former president of the American Foreign Service Association and the current AFSA retiree vice president, he is now a part-time lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute.



**Diplomacy and the  
Future of World Order**

Edited by Chester A. Crocker,  
Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall,  
Georgetown University Press, 2021,  
\$36.95/paperback, e-book available,  
376 pages.

In his foreword to what he calls "a timely and important book about the diplomacy of conflict management," retired Ambassador William J. Burns

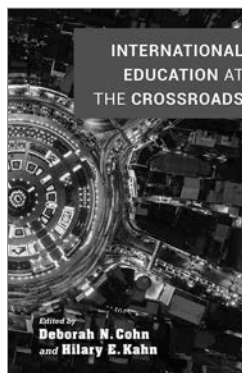
(a former Deputy Secretary of State who is currently director of the Central Intelligence Agency) notes that the 19 contributors to this volume do not always agree on how diplomacy can best cope with great-power competition and threats to the state system itself.

But they share a broad consensus on two points: the centrality of human agency, and the role of major states in determining which scenario is realized. These factors will determine the "space" available for the important contributions to peacemaking by international and regional bodies and medium-sized to small states, as well as by civil society and nongovernmental organizations.

Besides Ambassador Burns, the other Foreign Service contributor is retired Ambassador Chas W. Freeman, a familiar name to *Foreign Service Journal* readers. Ambassador Freeman's bracing chapter delves into "Sino-U.S. Interactions, Past and Future," and finds little ground for optimism.

Chester A. Crocker is the James R. Schlesinger Professor of Strategic Studies at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, where his teaching focuses on international conflict management and mediation. His many senior government positions include eight years as assistant secretary of State for African affairs (1981-1989).

Fen Osler Hampson is Chancellor's Professor at Carleton University in Ottawa and president of the World Refugee & Migration Council. Pamela Aall is senior adviser for conflict prevention and management at the U.S. Institute of Peace and an adjunct professor at American University.



### International Education at the Crossroads

Edited by Deborah N. Cohn and Hilary E. Kahn, Indiana University Press, 2021, \$30/hardcover, e-book available, 296 pages.

A reflection on the past, present and future of international education, this collection of 26 essays grew out of Indiana University's bicentennial symposium, "International Education at the Crossroads," in 2018. Experts in language, area and global studies; policymakers; international education leaders and others gathered there to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the National Defense Education Act and the U.S. Department of Education's Title VI programs. The latter have expanded language and area studies at all levels of education across the United States, programs in which Indiana University has long been a leader.

The authors bring a variety of viewpoints to show how international education is an imperative for the future of learning. They also call for a stock-taking of the entire field given the broad sociopolitical changes underway in the country and the world.

Deborah N. Cohn is provost professor of Spanish and Portuguese and interim director of the College Arts and Humanities Institute at Indiana University. She is the author of *The Latin American Literary Boom and U.S. Nationalism during the Cold War* (2012) and *History and Memory in the Two Souths: Recent Southern and Spanish American Fiction* (1999). Her late father, Dave S. Cohn, served with USAID as a health and population Foreign Service officer from 1980 to 1999.

Hilary E. Kahn is associate vice chancellor for international affairs and associate professor of anthropology at Indiana University–Purdue University Indiana, as well as Indiana University's associate vice president of international affairs. She is also editor for the Framing the Global book series with IU Press and past president of the Association of International Education Administrators.

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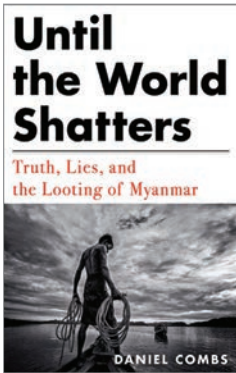


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### Until the World Shatters: Truth, Lies, and the Looting of Myanmar

Daniel Combs, Melville House, 2021, \$28.99/hardcover, e-book available, 400 pages.

In *Until the World Shatters*, author Daniel Combs takes us deep into one of the most enigmatic places in the world. Without cell phones and ATMs until at least 2012, when the country began emerging from isolation, Myanmar

holds enormous wealth in the form of jade, gold, teak forests and other natural resources. It is also the scene of the longest-lasting armed conflict in the world, a now 70-year-long civil war between the central government and its fringes involving complex and deep-seated ethnic, religious, ideological and economic divides, as well as shadowy private international actors and many secrets.

To bring Myanmar's history, politics and people into focus, Combs chronicles the lives of two individuals he met in 2017 and stayed in touch with through Myanmar's three seasons—cold, hot and rain. One, Phoe Wa, a young photojournalist in the bustling city of Yangon, is pursuing his dream even as the government is jailing reporters and nationalist voices are on the rise. The other, Bum Tsit, a 30-year-old jade businessman in Myanmar's far northern Kachin state, is caught between the insurgent army his family supports and the business and military leaders his career depends on.

Daniel Combs is an award-winning author and international security professional who joined the Foreign Service in 2018. Earlier, he studied Myanmar's ethnic conflicts. He has also lived in and reported from Ethiopia, the Congo, Vietnam and Israel. The former editor of the *Asia Pacific Affairs Journal*, he has appeared on NPR and written for *The Diplomat* and *Asia Times*, among other publications.



### America in the World 2020

Edited by Noel V. Lateef and Michael R. Auslin, Foreign Policy Association, 2020, \$30/paperback, 128 pages.

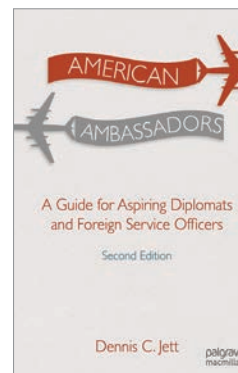
In conjunction with the 2020 presidential election, the Hoover Institution and the Foreign Policy Association collaborated to put together this special edition of the publication that is the basis for the FPA's annual Great

Decisions program series to stimulate debate and discussion of U.S. foreign policy nationwide.

This collection of essays is meant to spark informed debate on the path forward for America in a world struggling with the urgency of the COVID-19 pandemic and profound geopolitical and technological shifts. Many of the contributors' names will be familiar to *FSJ* readers: Ambassadors (ret.) Nick Burns and William J. Burns (no relation), as well as Larry Diamond, Niall Ferguson, Michael McFaul, Victor Davis Hanson, H.R. McMaster and Joseph S. Nye Jr., to name but a few.

Born into a Foreign Service family, Noel V. Lateef graduated from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in 1978 and from Yale Law School in 1982. After a distinguished legal career, Mr. Lateef joined the Foreign Policy Association, where he is currently president and CEO. He is the editor of *In Pursuit of Peace: Conflict Prevention and World Order* (2016) and *The Future of Higher Education in the Age of Globalization* (2016).

Michael R. Auslin is the Payson J. Treat Distinguished Research Fellow in Contemporary Asia at the Hoover Institution of Stanford University. He is the author of *Asia's New Geopolitics: Essays on Reshaping the Indo-Pacific* (2020).



### American Ambassadors: A Guide for Aspiring Diplomats and Foreign Service Officers

Dennis C. Jett, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, \$34.99/paperback, e-book available, 321 pages.

The original 2015 edition of this book had a slightly different title: *American Ambassadors: The Past, Present, and Future of America's Diplomats*.

It focused on the nitty-gritty of the selection process, describing how Foreign Service officers become ambassadors by rising through the ranks, and why they typically make up about 70 percent of the total number of ambassadors. It also covered the other 30 percent: the political appointees who get the job because they helped elect the president by supporting him as a campaign contributor, a political ally or a personal friend.

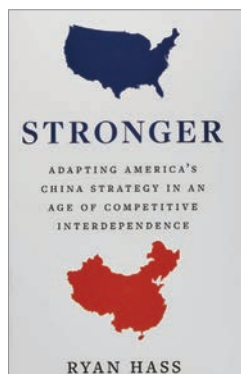
In his preface to the second edition, Ambassador Dennis Jett makes no bones about his chief motivation for returning to the subject: former President Donald J. Trump.

"No, I'm not a fan of his. And one reason for this second edition is to discuss his impact on the appointment of



ambassadors and how it varied sharply from past practice,” Jett says. “When it came to ambassadorial appointments, Trump’s approach was much the same story: doing what was best for him rather than the country. He appointed the highest percentage of political appointee ambassadors of any president since World War II.”

During Dennis C. Jett’s 28-year career as a State Department Foreign Service officer, he served as ambassador to Peru and Mozambique, among many other assignments. He is currently a professor of international relations and founding faculty member of the School of International Affairs at Penn State University. He is also the author of *Why Peacekeeping Fails* (2019) and *Why American Foreign Policy Fails* (2016).



### **Stronger: Adapting America's China Strategy in an Age of Competitive Interdependence**

Ryan Hass, Yale University Press, 2021, \$27.50/hardcover, e-book available, 240 pages.

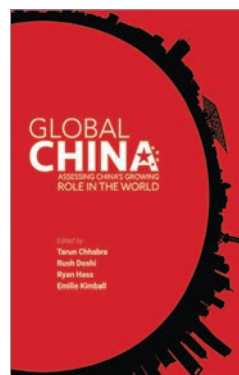
Ryan Hass harbors no illusions about Beijing’s revisionist ambitions, particularly those directed at coercing Taiwan’s 23 million residents to abandon their democratic principles

and accept unification with the mainland. As a former political reporting officer for Xinjiang, he calls out the regime’s repression there, as well as its campaign to dilute the universal reach of values that he promoted as an American diplomat. He also sees plainly the unfair nature of China’s state-led mercantilist economic model and its effects on hardworking Americans.

Yet, as Hass observes, outrage is an ineffective emotion for managing relations among great powers. Instead, he advocates *competitive interdependence* as the framework for understanding the nature of U.S.-China relations. And he is refreshingly optimistic that relations can improve, observing that “no immutable diplomatic laws of gravity determine that intensifying competition between a rising power and an established power will lead to conflict.” Even with China’s ongoing surge in strength, he says, the United States still holds a stronger hand. But it must play its cards well.

Ryan Hass was a Foreign Service officer from 2003 to 2017, serving in Beijing (where he earned the State Department Director General’s award for impact and originality in reporting), Seoul, Ulaanbaatar and Washington, D.C. He is now a senior fellow and the Michael H. Armacost Chair in

Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, where he holds a joint appointment to the John L. Thornton China Center and the Center for East Asia Policy Studies. He is also the Chen-Fu and Cecilia Yen Koo Chair in Taiwan Studies.



### **Global China: Assessing China's Growing Role in the World**

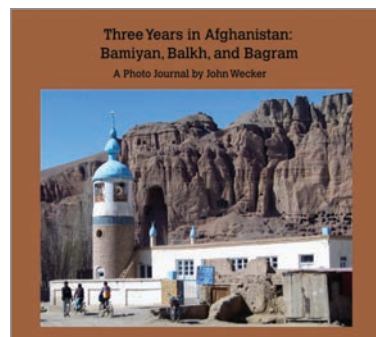
Edited by Tarun Chhabra, Rush Doshi, Ryan Hass, and Emilie Kimball, Brookings Institution Press, 2021, \$37.99/paperback, e-book available, 428 pages.

Whatever one thinks about Beijing’s rise, there can be no dispute that it has emerged as a truly global actor, both economically and militarily. With that

trend in mind, Brookings Institution scholars conducted research over the past two years, culminating in *Global China: Assessing China's Growing Role in the World*. The project is intended to furnish policymakers and the public with hard facts and deep insights for understanding China’s regional and global ambitions.

Former FSO Ryan Hass is one of the four editors of this compilation.

## MEMOIRS



### **Three Years in Afghanistan: Bamiyan, Balkh, and Bagram: A Photo Journal**

John Wecker, independently published, 2021, \$9/Kindle, 100 pages.

John Wecker’s three one-year Foreign Service tours in Afghanistan were all clearly very meaningful for him, both personally and professionally, as this handsome photo book attests.

From 2008 to 2009, Wecker was the sole American FSO assigned to serve with the New Zealand Defence Force’s provincial reconstruction team (PRT) in Bamiyan—among the earliest coalition troops to enter the province. It was, by all accounts, a perfect match between the Kiwis and the Hazara,

the ethnic and religious minority that makes up the largest segment of the population in the province.

By 2012, when Wecker did his second Afghanistan tour—this one at Camp Marmal in Balkh province—all PRTs had been shut down, and travel was greatly restricted. And by 2018, when he served there for the third time—at Bagram Air Base, as political adviser to the NATO Special Forces Combined Command—Afghanistan—Wecker was the only FSO in Afghanistan living outside the heavily fortified embassy compound in Kabul. He never left the base except by air.

Most of the photos in this all-too-timely book are from Bamiyan, a reflection of Wecker's ability to travel and take photos there wherever he wanted. He still considers Bamiyan the most wonderful place he has ever seen, for its people and landscape alike. He notes that Balkh province and Bagram were unique in their own ways, as well, but travel and photography there were much more severely restricted.

John Wecker recently completed a 31-year Foreign Service career, which also included assignments to Kingston, Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, Tokyo, Beirut and Washington, D.C.



**From Timbuktu to Duck and Cover: Improbable Tales from a Career in Foreign Service**  
Lewis Lucke, Open Books, 2020,  
\$19.95/paperback, e-book available,  
191 pages.

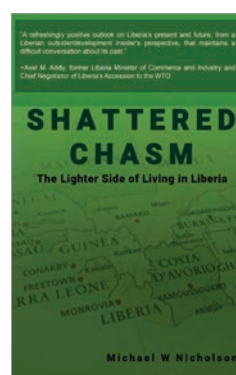
"It was never boring," Lewis Lucke said of his 30-year career in the U.S. Foreign Service. Even by FS standards, Lucke packed a remarkable number of adventures into his 1978-

2008 diplomatic career with the U.S. Agency for International Development. As he recounts in the pages of this fascinating memoir, Lucke's work took him to Timbuktu (twice) and to the jungles of Bolivia and Lake Titicaca; he also witnessed the fall of communism in former Czechoslovakia, toured biblical sites in Jerusalem and interacted with several U.S. presidents.

Lucke was in the Middle East in the scary run-up to the first Persian Gulf War. And he was deployed to the war zone of Iraq following the 2003 U.S. invasion as the first USAID Mission Director for Iraq, where he managed a \$4 billion reconstruction program, the largest funded by the United States since the Marshall Plan. After Iraq, Lucke was named U.S. ambassador to the last absolute monarchy in Africa, Swaziland, from 2004 to 2006, when he retired for a second time.

He was called back by USAID in 2008 to serve as acting mission director in Brazil, then as team lead of a joint State/USAID study of economic governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, finally, as U.S. government lead on the Haiti earthquake relief in 2010.

Ambassador (ret.) Lewis Lucke received USAID's two highest awards, the Administrator's Distinguished Career Award in 2001 and the agency's Award for Heroism in 2004. He is the author of *Waiting for Rain: Life and Development in Mali, West Africa* (1998). He now lives in Austin, Texas, where he runs an international consulting business.



**Shattered Chasm:  
The Lighter Side  
of Living in Liberia**  
Michael W. Nicholson,  
independently published,  
2021, \$12.99/paperback,  
e-book available, 83 pages.

At first blush, there is something incongruous about the title of this book. After all, chasms generally do not suggest associations that fit the

category of "the lighter side." For that matter, many readers—including some Foreign Service members—may be skeptical that there is anything humorous about a country as poor and strife-ridden as Liberia.

Enter Michael Nicholson, a USAID Foreign Service officer, who plainly believes there is. To make his case, the author cites the professional and personal experiences he acquired during his two-year assignment to Monrovia, from 2012 to 2014. What his title refers to, he explains, is the concept of the "chasm" of culture, politics and history between citizens of Western countries and the poorest of the poor.

The stories Nicholson has collected here truly capture the lifestyle of an expatriate aid worker, while raging against the culture of charity, steeped in pity, that often feeds the machine of development work that makes that lifestyle a cliché. Perhaps Nicholson's most important point in this book is a deceptively simple one: Pity demoralizes and dehumanizes. Don't pity other people, ever.

Michael Nicholson joined the Foreign Service in 2010 as an economist with the U.S. Agency for International Development. He has served in Liberia, Pakistan, Kenya and is now serving in Ghana. Prior to joining the FS, he was a USAID contractor in Armenia and Egypt. Nicholson's background is in academia,

and he has published more than a dozen peer-reviewed articles on issues related to economic policy and development.



**In the Typhoon's Eye:  
A Story of Childhood  
and Leaving Home**

Bles Chavez-Bernstein, Outskirt Press, 2020, \$18.95/paperback, 300 pages.

As its title suggests, this memoir follows Bles Chavez-Bernstein's personal development from her childhood to her coming of age in the Philippines and her departure for the

United States. In high school, Chavez-Bernstein had told her father that she wanted to be an art major and a writer, but he angrily said: "You're going to have an empty stomach if you do that! Those courses are only for the rich."

The author duly became a nurse and migrated to Florida

for work to help send her siblings to college. She successfully pursued careers in two clinical specialties—mental health and addictions nursing—putting her artistic aspirations aside for 25 years as she worked, married and raised three children.

Bles Chavez-Bernstein is a Foreign Service family member who has accompanied her husband, Diplomatic Courier Steven Charles Bernstein, to several overseas posts during the last 16 years. While working as a consultant to UNESCO from 2006 to 2007, she authored a 100-page health manual on *Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health in the Pan-Pacific Region*.

Also a trained classical vocalist, Chavez-Bernstein performed in a concert honoring spouses of Foreign Service employees at Consulate General Frankfurt in 2017, and the proceeds from her performances have supported women's and children's causes worldwide.

In 2018 she rediscovered her path as a writer, publishing her first poetry collection, *Without Rhyme: A Poet's Story*. Chavez-Bernstein is currently working on her second collection of poetry, *Sensuous Healing*.

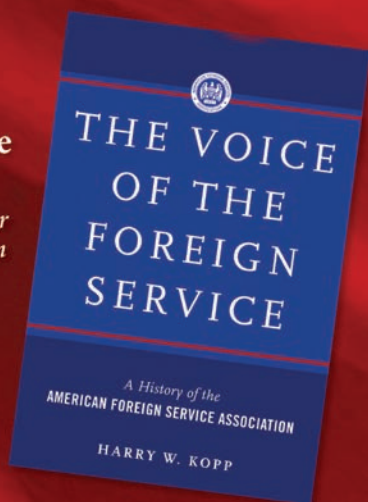
## FOREIGN SERVICE BOOKS

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### A History of the American Foreign Service Association

By Harry W. Kopp for  
the American Foreign  
Service Association

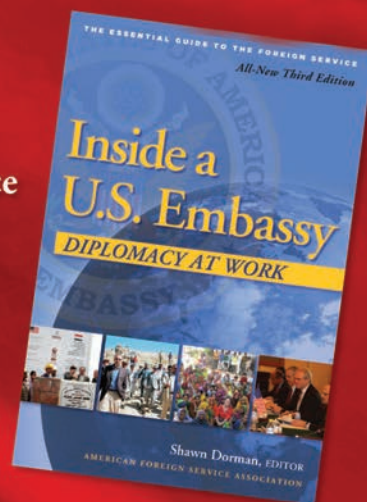
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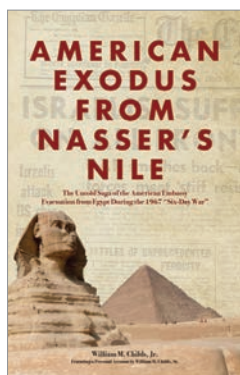
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**American Exodus from Nasser's Nile: The Untold Saga of the American Embassy Evacuation from Egypt During the 1967 "Six-Day War"**

William M. Childs Jr., Palmetto Publishing, 2021, \$12.99/paperback, e-book available, 110 pages.

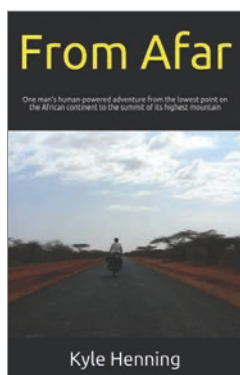
In June 1967, when the Six-Day War, or Third Arab-Israeli War, erupted, the author was a 10-year-old Foreign

Service kid living with his family in a suburb of Cairo. He recalls vividly the day his father, career FSO William Childs, waved him, his sister and mother off on the last TWA flight to Athens with other dependents. Childs Sr. would stay to help close down the embassy and ensure the safe departure of embassy staff.

The Cold War was going strong, and as Egyptian President Gamel Abdel Nasser's nationalism led him to challenge Israel, the U.S. government was not about to directly intervene, risking confrontation with the Soviet Union. So American diplomats had to rely on Egyptian police and sympathizers to complete the evacuation, traveling by train and bus at night. One American died in the process.

Childs Sr. recorded a detailed account of the evacuation, but then mothballed it for unknown reasons. Fifty-four years later, his son decided to resurrect that story to honor his father and share a unique slice of diplomatic history with a wider audience. The inclusion of maps, photographs and factual historical context makes this an informative and engrossing read.

William Childs Jr. is a retired business executive whose 30-year career in the medical device industry included international living assignments covering Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. He lives with his wife on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.



**From Afar: One Man's Human-Powered Adventure from the Lowest Point on the African Continent to the Summit of Its Highest Mountain**

Kyle Henning, independently published, 2021, \$17.99/paperback, e-book available, 253 pages.

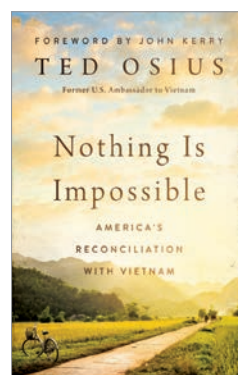
In January 2011, Kyle Henning left the shores of Lake Assal in Djibouti on a mission. For 68 days, he traveled by

bicycle and on foot to connect the lowest point on the African continent to the summit of its highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. His route followed the Great Rift Valley from the Afar Depression through the Horn of Africa.

Traveling alone after finishing his Peace Corps service in Ethiopia, Henning faced the physical demands of cycling through four countries, growing uncertainty as the Arab Spring gripped the continent, and the effects of his own post-traumatic stress.

As Henning explains in his prologue: "I wanted to discover my personal limits as I abandoned the safety nets of the service programs that defined my young adulthood, venturing out through unfamiliar countries with only my physical strength and mental grit. I hoped to mimic my heroes who had cycled the world and climbed its highest mountains. Like many of them, I aspired to do something that I wasn't sure I was capable of doing, simply to see if I could."

Kyle Henning is on his second Foreign Service assignment, as a vice consul in Bogotá; his first posting was Addis Ababa, where he was a Peace Corps volunteer. In his spare time, he is an amateur adventure enthusiast, musician and writer.



**Nothing Is Impossible: America's Reconciliation with Vietnam**

Ted Osius, Rutgers University Press, 2021, \$29.95/hardcover, e-book available, 356 pages.

While in Vietnam for his first tour as a political officer (1996-1998), Ted Osius encountered a local proverb that stuck with him long afterward: "When you go on a journey, you come back with wisdom." This memoir confirms

that throughout his Foreign Service career, Osius traveled both widely and wisely.

Just 16 years later, he returned to Vietnam as U.S. ambassador in 2014. Had he merely recounted his eventful three-year tenure in this book, it would be well worth reading. But as the foreword by former Secretary of State John Kerry declares, *Nothing Is Impossible* has a broader message; it tells an inspiring story of how international diplomacy can create a better world.

Osius concludes his memoir by observing: "My time in Vietnam had come full circle. Together with my colleagues in Hanoi, we had shown respect for Vietnam's history, language and mythology. We had pushed to the limit the possibilities for chronicling the truths of the 'American War.' Together with my embassy team and the people and leaders of Vietnam, we had progressed further down the road toward reconciliation."

Ted Osius, a Foreign Service officer for 30 years, served from 2014 to 2017 as U.S. ambassador to Vietnam, among many other assignments. Only the second openly gay career diplomat in U.S. history to achieve the rank of ambassador, Osius is a founding member of *glifaa* and went to Vietnam with his husband (former FSO Clayton Bond) and children. Currently, he is the vice president of Fulbright University Vietnam.



**When Echoes Speak: A Memoir**

Dag Scheer, Tipaza, 2021,  
\$16/paperback, e-book available,  
386 pages.

Growing up in an immigrant family that had found its way from Europe to Cleveland, Ohio, Dag Scheer was caught in a painful tug of war between her Latvian roots and her new life in America. Determined to find her own path, she left home to teach, first in England,

then in Libya. There, she met a young, charismatic doctor.

After they married, her husband's work as a Foreign Service medical officer led the couple to live in eight different countries between 1967 and 1995: Brazil, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Thailand, Germany, Austria, Kenya and Barbados. Paradoxically, the experience of being perpetually out of place all over the world helped Dag Scheer finally find a sense of self.

*When Echoes Speak* not only offers tantalizing glimpses into exotic worlds, but shares insights she gained, as a doctor's wife, into the health problems Americans face in their Foreign Service assignments overseas. But this memoir has an even larger purpose: to use her family's eventful history to examine the way lives are shaped by memory and collective history, and the challenges of adapting to diverse cultures. In looking back, Scheer discovers intricate and rich patterns in her life, and weaves together the connecting threads.

An educator and writer, Dag Scheer was born in Riga, Latvia, in 1939. Five years later, her family fled Latvia to escape Soviet occupation, and eventually settled in Cleveland, Ohio.



244pp. w/ color photos • 2021  
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Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

“This extraordinary firsthand account is  
indispensable reading.”

—**JON HUNTSMAN,**  
former Governor of Utah and  
former U.S. Ambassador to China, Russia, and Singapore

After graduating from Miami University, she left home to live and work around the world. She is the wife of retired Foreign Service medical officer Stuart Scheer.



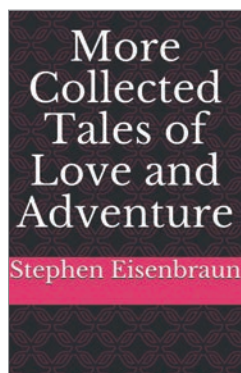
### **Collected Tales of Love and Adventure**

Stephen Eisenbraun, independently published, 2020, \$18.95/paperback, e-book available, 134 pages.

Stephen E. Eisenbraun shares memorable and exciting moments from assignments in South Asia and Africa, including an Air Force mutiny in Bangladesh and the burning of the U.S. embassy in Pakistan. Yet he maintains a refreshing sense of perspective and humility about his role in those situations.

A surprising number of the episodes covered in these short chapters take place in the United States (including three in South Dakota alone). But what mainly sets this volume apart from other FS memoirs is its emphasis on romance and, yes, sex. That said, family life also plays a large role in *Collected Tales of Love and Adventure*. Also noteworthy is the good writing. The author has a fine sense of prosody, and the narrative rolls along fluidly, with each chapter, or experience, written as a short story.

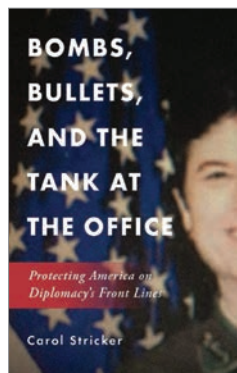
Stephen E. Eisenbraun is a retired Foreign Service officer whose overseas assignments included Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sierra Leone (where he was deputy chief of mission) and Kenya (where he was principal officer/consul in Mombasa). In retirement, Eisenbraun continues to work as a consultant to the Department of State as the editor in chief of the department's annual Country Reports on Human Rights. He is also a past member and chair of the Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board (1984-1988).



### **More Collected Tales of Love and Adventure**

Stephen Eisenbraun, independently published, 2021, \$18.95/paperback, 118 pages.

In this follow-up volume, Stephen Eisenbraun shares impressions of Calcutta, Paris and Bangkok, among other overseas locales. But many of the chapters are set stateside, either in the Washington, D.C., area or Iowa. Whatever the location, these stories are evocative and either wry or heartfelt.



### **Bombs, Bullets, and the Tank at the Office: Protecting America on Diplomacy's Front Lines**

Carol Stricker, independently published, 2020, \$14.95/paperback, e-book available, 258 pages.

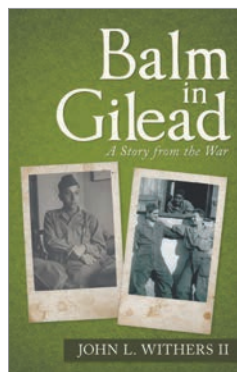
What does a diplomat do? To answer that common question, Carol Stricker shares stories from her distinguished 25-year career with the U.S. Department of State. As a management officer

in Angola, Canada, Georgia, Germany, Mali, Niger, Ukraine and Zimbabwe (and back in Washington, D.C.), she was often in harm's way as she kept diplomatic missions running, and even ran an embassy herself as chargé d'affaires. She also helped facilitate progress on such diverse issues as eliminating thousands of nuclear weapons in Ukraine and working to stop genocide in Burundi.

This is a superb introduction to the U.S. Foreign Service. With verve and humor, Stricker recounts her adventures as a Foreign Service officer protecting America's strategic interests and American citizens abroad. By showing the great variety of day-to-day work, she dispels the myth that diplomacy is all about cocktail parties and makes a solid case for keeping foreign affairs agencies well funded.

Her memoir is a celebration of the high ideals, service and sacrifice of America's diplomats, and she concludes with a call to action to all Americans to support and defend democracy and diplomacy, and to honor those diplomats who have died in service to their country.

You can hear the author discuss her career and the value of diplomacy at <https://bit.ly/Stricker-AFSA>.



### **Balm in Gilead: A Story from the War**

John L. Withers II, Lulu Publishing Services, 2019, \$24.60/paperback, e-book available, 490 pages.

In this unusual and compelling work, FSO John L. Withers II recounts his father's stories of a defining World War II friendship with two young Jews, former Dachau inmates. In May 1945 an all-black U.S. Army truck company, including Lieutenant John L. Withers of Greensboro, North Carolina, rushed emergency supplies to an unknown German



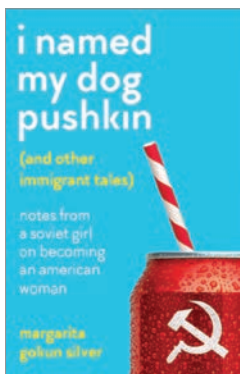
town. Longtime victims of harsh racial abuse themselves, the American soldiers were nonetheless shocked at the horrors they witnessed when the “town” turned out to be the Dachau concentration camp.

When two destitute young former inmates appeared at their encampment days later pleading for help, the soldiers, with their lieutenant’s support, sheltered the boys for a year in defiance of military rules. Withers became their surrogate parent as the boys worked alongside his soldiers, guiding them toward the understanding that, however horrid the past, the future held hope. When Withers left in 1947, the boys—fondly named Pee Wee and Solomon by the troops—were ready to start anew.

Though they lost touch, Withers never forgot the experience or the boys, often sharing the stories with his own family and wondering what had become of them.

In recounting his father’s stories, the author relies on painstaking research to fill in gaps and verify details. A final section describes his prolonged search for the roots of the stories and the circumstances that led to the old friends finding each other again before his father’s death.

John L. Withers II joined the Foreign Service in 1984. His first posting was as a political officer at The Hague, and he later served in Nigeria, Russia and Ireland, among other assignments. He was the U.S. ambassador to Albania from 2007 to 2010.



**I Named My Dog Pushkin (And Other Immigrant Tales): Notes from a Soviet Girl on Becoming an American Woman**  
Margarita Gokun Silver, Thread Books, 2021, \$9.99/paperback, e-book available, 268 pages.

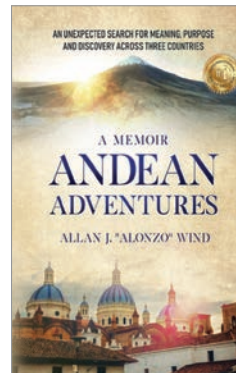
Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union have contributed immeasurably to American literature—and to our humor. But nearly all the Russian comedians and writers who have made it big here during the past few decades have been male.

It is therefore truly refreshing to get the distaff perspective on the culture shock these migrants have experienced, courtesy of Margarita Gokun Silver. Although she deploys humor effectively in this debut essay collection, Silver pulls no punches in describing the anti-Semitism she and her family encountered in the Soviet Union. But she insists that her main motivation

for leaving Mother Russia while in college was something more basic. Yes, “Amerika” was forbidden and evil—but, along with milk and honey, it had Levi’s jeans.

Though the narrative is intense and lively, lurching and rollicking to present the dilemmas, decisions and, later, reflections on the immigrant experience in America, the author wrote this work at a very grim moment in October 2020. The end of the COVID-19 lockdowns was not in sight and her husband had just received a diagnosis of cancer. “I was desperate to see this collection out in the world,” she says, “and so I thought—what if accessing my funny could actually help me stay sane?”

Margarita Gokun Silver is a freelance journalist, essayist and novelist. Her articles and essays have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Atlantic*, and she has appeared on the BBC and National Public Radio. She and her husband, Foreign Commercial Service Officer Keith Silver, are currently in the U.S. for language training.



**Andean Adventures: An Unexpected Search for Meaning, Purpose and Discovery Across Three Countries**

Allan J. “Alonzo” Wind, independently published, 2020, \$14.77/paperback, e-book available, 281 pages.

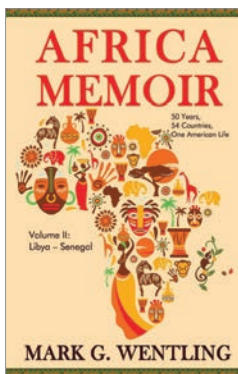
Although its author spent more than 20 years in the Foreign Service with USAID, *Andean Adventures* is not a conventional FS memoir. Rather, it is a prequel to the author’s diplomatic career, focusing on the draw and fascination with service to higher ideals that led him there.

After four years at the University of Chicago, Wind left an unfinished degree to spend two years in the U.S. Peace Corps in Ecuador (1980-1982), where he was widely known as Doctor Alonzo. (That nickname stuck and followed him through his work in Latin America, Africa and Asia.) He then worked for PLAN, a private voluntary organization in Guayaquil, and was still only 25 when he moved to Bolivia in 1985 to take the job of country director for Esperança, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in the health care field. Then, in Lima, he not only met his wife and became a father, but worked as a USAID personal services contractor for two years—all before joining the Foreign Service.

“I certainly don’t recommend to anyone that they follow the exact sort of life choices I ended up facing,” Wind writes in the

epilogue. “But I would hope that there may be extracts here that can power and resonate your own search for meaning, purpose and discovery.”

Allan J. “Alonzo” Wind is a retired Senior FSO. With USAID from 1990 to 1992 and from 1999 to 2019, he served in Peru, Nicaragua, Angola, Nigeria, Iraq, Afghanistan and South Africa. He and his wife reside in Fairfax County, Virginia, while their adult daughter is in Africa on her own adventures.



**Africa Memoir: 50 Years, 54 Countries, One American Life (Volume 2: Libya–Senegal)**

Mark G. Wentling, Open Books, 2020, \$21.95/paperback, e-book available, 248 pages.

Fun fact: Retired USAID Senior Foreign Service Officer Mark G. Wentling has worked in or visited all 54 African countries over the course of a half-century. The first vol-

ume of his *Africa Memoir* (published last year), commemorating those travels, covered precisely half of those nations, from Algeria through Liberia. Continuing his alphabetical survey of the continent, Volume II covers another 14 countries: Libya to Senegal.

As the author notes in the opening chapter, he never *intended* to visit every nation on the continent. But in 1998 or so, after 28 years in Africa, “I was asked how many African countries I had visited. It was at that moment that I realized that there were only 10 countries left in Africa that I had not visited.” From then on, Wentling began trying to land jobs in those spots, and began taking vacations in island African nations to fill out his dance card.

His 54th and final destination was the one he least wanted to set foot in: “I never wanted to go to Libya. It was not a country that interested me.” But as with the other 13 countries he tells us about in this volume, Wentling finds fascinating details to share.

A Peace Corps volunteer in Togo (1970-1973) and, later, director in Gabon and Niger, Mark Wentling joined the USAID Foreign Service in 1977 and served in Niger, Guinea, Togo, Benin, Angola, Somalia and Tanzania. After retiring in 1996, he worked under contract as USAID’s senior adviser for the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa and as a consultant in Malawi, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia.



**Africa Memoir: 50 Years, 54 Countries, One American Life (Volume 3: Seychelles–Zimbabwe)**

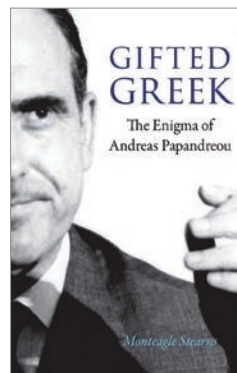
Mark G. Wentling, Open Books, 2020, \$21.95/paperback, e-book available, 315 pages.

Retired FSO Mark G. Wentling concludes his three-volume memoir by recounting his time in 13 of the 54 African countries he has visited:

Seychelles to Zimbabwe.

Doing justice to each of these societies is easier in some cases than others; thanks to the vagaries of the alphabet, Volume III includes Somalia and Zimbabwe. But it also includes the very first African country the author set foot in, Togo—about which he cites a tourist poster he saw when he arrived as a Peace Corps volunteer in 1970: “If you don’t know Togo, you don’t know Africa.”

Based on this memoir, there is no doubt that Mark Wentling knows Africa.



**Gifted Greek: The Enigma of Andreas Papandreou**

Montea Stearns, Potomac Books, 2021, \$29.95/hardcover, 176 pages. (An ADST-DACOR Diplomats and Diplomacy Book)

In her introduction to this posthumously published book by her late husband, which she completed at his request, Antonia Stearns describes it as a combination of memoir and character

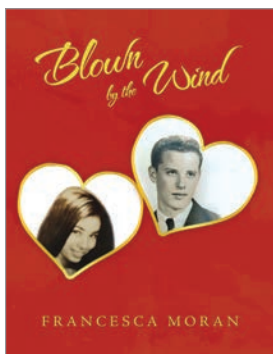
study. The work centers on Greece’s first socialist prime minister, Andreas Papandreou, whom the couple first met in 1959, and explores his “transformation from affable American economist to fiery, anti-American Greek politician Monty witnessed at close hand during three assignments to Athens, the last as U.S. ambassador.” As the author ruefully remarks in the beginning pages, “Few Greeks in recent memory have aroused more exasperation in our foreign policy establishment than Andreas Papandreou.”

*Gifted Greek* is the 71st volume in the ADST-DACOR Diplomats and Diplomacy book series.

Montea Stearns was an information specialist at the State Department early in his career, and then served with the U.S. Information Agency from 1953 to 1955 before joining the State

Department Foreign Service in 1955. Prior to his retirement in 1987, Mr. Stearns served as U.S. ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire (1976-1979) and Greece (1981-1985). Other overseas postings included Turkey, Zaire, the United Kingdom and Laos.

In addition to numerous articles on U.S. foreign policy, Ambassador Stearns published two books under the aegis of the Council on Foreign Relations and Princeton University: *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy toward Greece, Turkey and Cyprus* (1992) and *Talking to Strangers: Improving American Diplomacy at Home and Abroad* (1999). He died in 2016.



### Blown by the Wind

Francesca Moran, AuthorHouse, 2019, \$40.95/paperback, e-book available, 314 pages.

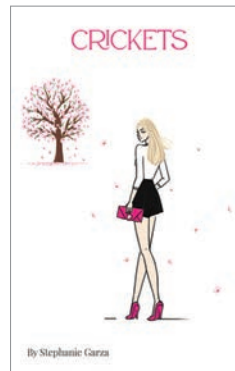
*Blown by The Wind* would be fascinating even if it weren't a true story, tracing the histories and eventual intersection of two families over four centuries: one of Irish and English descent, the other of Vietnamese, Chinese and French heritage.

The memoir is Francesca Moran's captivating account of meeting, falling in love with and marrying her husband, David, who entered the State Department Foreign Service in 1969. Assigned to Vietnam as part of the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support pacification program, he met Nhung (as she was known then) while in language training before going to CORDS.

The first of three sections describes Nhung's childhood and family in Vietnam, her journey to the United States, meeting Dave, and their long-distance engagement while he served in Vietnam and she remained in Washington, D.C. Throughout the book, Francesca quotes love letters from David, many of which describe his activities in Vietnam. That is followed by a travelogue recounting their various postings.

The final section is heartbreaking: Francesca's account of David's slow descent into vascular dementia from 2013 until his death in December 2017. Referring to David in June 2016, one sentence leaps off the page and hits the reader in the gut: "Nothing hurts more than losing your loved one when the person is still alive."

Francesca Moran was born in Saigon in 1943. While attending The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in 1969, she met and eventually married David Moran, an FSO, and traveled with him all over the world until his retirement.



### Crickets

Stephanie Garza, Do a Uye, 2021, \$9.99/paperback, e-book available, 113 pages.

It is relatively rare for someone in the Foreign Service to publish a memoir barely a decade into their career. And it is even more uncommon for an FS specialist to do so.

But perhaps the most distinctive aspect of Stephanie Garza's *Crickets* is

her unflinching candor about her lifelong struggle to overcome the fears and self-doubts her abusive mother and dysfunctional family saddled her with. (The title refers to the silence she keeps encountering whenever she reaches out to loved ones and peers for support and affirmation.)

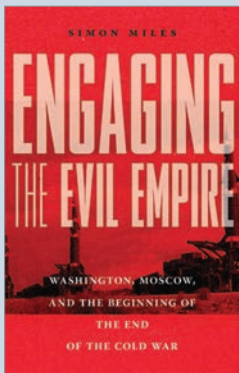
Raised in Munster, Indiana, Garza earned a degree in human resources management from Purdue University. Her quest to join the Foreign Service began in 2002, when she took the Foreign Service generalist exam several times without success, before switching gears and applying to be a human resources officer. She successfully completed the specialist application process in 2010, but achieving her dream continues to bring new challenges, personally and professionally.

Stephanie Garza has been a State Department human resources officer since 2010, serving in Venezuela, Pakistan, Russia and Mexico. She is now posted in Haiti.

To accompany this book, Garza developed an app, also called *Crickets*, to support teens and young adults as they navigate life's challenges.



## OF RELATED INTEREST



### **Engaging the Evil Empire: Washington, Moscow, and the Beginning of the End of the Cold War**

Simon Miles, Cornell University Press, 2020, \$34.95/hardcover, e-book available, 248 pages.

Referencing newly available archives on both sides of the Iron Curtain, Simon Miles concludes that it was President Ronald Reagan's *first* term

(1981-1985) that paved the way for the end of the Cold War and the Soviet Union's demise, more than his second. He credits Reagan with a grand strategy that made deft use of carrots ("quiet diplomacy" and diplomatic agreements) and sticks ("peace through strength," i.e., a massive arms buildup) to gain the upper hand over Moscow.

Whatever credence readers give to that argument, they will be fascinated by the other story Miles tells: how the four Soviet leaders Reagan dealt with during his first term played an increasingly weak strategic hand.

Simon Miles, an assistant professor in the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, has published research articles in the *Journal of Cold War Studies* (2020), *Diplomatic History* (2016) and *Diplomacy and Statecraft* (2013).



### **Negotiating the New START Treaty**

Rose Gottemoeller, Cambria Press, 2021, \$39.99/paperback, e-book available, 244 pages.

Veteran arms control negotiator Rose Gottemoeller wryly concludes her prologue by declaring that "Negotiating a nuclear treaty is not rocket science." Indeed, this inside account of how she and her team overcame a

host of obstacles to conclude the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, and gain Senate ratification, makes clear just how much more the job requires.

Reviewing this book in the July-August *Foreign Service Journal*, Ambassador (ret.) Laura Kennedy says: "Gottemoeller gives us a unique window on the only bilateral U.S.-Russian arms control agreement still in force. Whether one is an arms control specialist, a generalist diplomat or an international relations scholar, *Negotiating the New START Treaty* is an invaluable case study in the art of negotiation with relevance for the years ahead."

Rose Gottemoeller served as assistant secretary of State for arms control, verification and compliance from 2009 to 2010, followed by five years as under secretary for arms control and international security. She was Deputy Secretary General of NATO from 2016 to 2019. She currently teaches at Stanford University and is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

This book received the American Academy of Diplomacy's Douglas Dillon Award this year.



### **China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy**

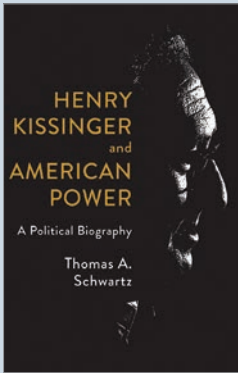
Peter Martin, Oxford University Press, 2021, \$27.95/hardcover, e-book available, 320 pages.

Even *FSJ* readers who do not follow Chinese diplomacy closely have almost certainly heard of "wolf warriors" — officials infamous for their combative approach to asserting national

interests. The March meeting between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi was a prime example of this phenomenon, but journalist Peter Martin cites many others in *China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy*.

Despite broad multilateral efforts such as the Belt and Road Initiative, wolf warrior diplomacy is increasingly generating pushback from other governments, particularly in Asia. As Beijing decides whether to recalibrate its approach accordingly, Martin's interviews with dozens of Chinese officials offer a rare perspective on the tactic.

Peter Martin is a political reporter for Bloomberg News who has written extensively on escalating tensions in the U.S.-China relationship, and reported from China's border with North Korea and its far-western region of Xinjiang.



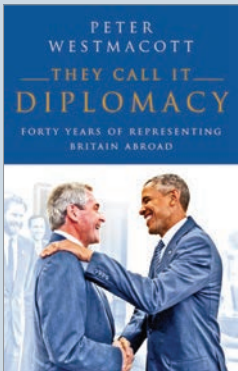
### Henry Kissinger and American Power: A Political Biography

Thomas A. Schwartz, Hill and Wang, 2020, \$35/hardcover, e-book available, 560 pages.

Though he has been out of government for more than 40 years, former National Security Adviser and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger remains the most prominent diplomat of the postwar era for most Americans. To

fully understand Kissinger and his legacy, Thomas A. Schwartz maintains, one must see him as a political actor, a politician and a man who understood that American foreign policy is fundamentally shaped and determined by the struggles and battles of American domestic politics.

Thomas A. Schwartz is Distinguished Professor of History at Vanderbilt University, where he specializes in the foreign relations of the United States. He has served on the U.S. State Department's Historical Advisory Committee and as president of the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations. *Henry Kissinger and American Power* is his third book.



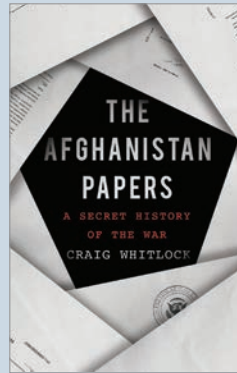
### They Call It Diplomacy: Forty Years of Representing Britain Abroad

Peter Westmacott, Apollo, 2021, \$39.95/hardcover, e-book available, 368 pages.

If Peter Westmacott had done nothing else in this memoir but regale readers with tales of a four-decade diplomatic career, it would be fascinating enough. But on top of that, *They Call*

*It Diplomacy* explains what diplomats actually do; mounts a vigorous defense of the continuing relevance of the diplomat in an age of instant communication, social media and special envoys; and details what Westmacott sees as some of the successes of recent British diplomacy.

Peter Westmacott was a British diplomat for more than 40 years. He began his career in pre-revolutionary Iran and rose to become ambassador to Turkey, France and finally the United States, where he represented the United Kingdom during the second term of President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden between 2012 and 2016.



### The Afghanistan Papers: A Secret History of the War

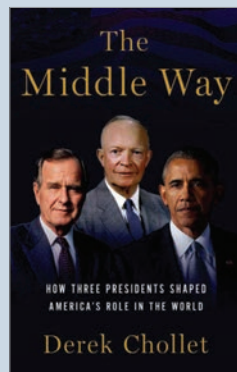
Craig Whitlock, Simon & Schuster, 2021, \$30/hardcover, e-book available, 368 pages.

Arriving exactly 50 years after the original “Pentagon Papers” were published, this volume is our generation’s version of that bombshell. Yet, surely, even journalist Craig Whitlock could not have anticipated just how timely

his survey of the past two decades of American involvement in Afghanistan would turn out to be.

Reviewing the book in the October *Foreign Service Journal*, retired FSO Edmund McWilliams calls it “a timely, dispassionate contribution to our understanding of America’s nearly 20-year engagement in Afghanistan, a failed adventure that cost thousands of American and NATO partner lives. ... It is an essential resource.”

Craig Whitlock, an investigative reporter for *The Washington Post*, has covered the global war on terrorism since 2001. In 2019, his coverage of the war in Afghanistan won the George Polk Award for Military Reporting, among many other honors.



### The Middle Way: How Three Presidents Shaped America's Role in the World

Derek Chollet, Oxford University Press, 2021, \$29.95/hardcover, e-book available, 256 pages.

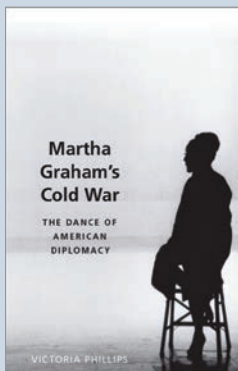
Presidents Dwight Eisenhower, George H.W. Bush and Barack Obama—two Republicans and a Democrat—may not seem to have a lot in common. But *The Middle Way* makes a compelling

case that by taking a centrist approach to international affairs, all three leaders rose above partisanship and surmounted historical amnesia to make lasting diplomatic gains.

Former Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns calls this book “an important, timely, elegant and provocative work of diplomatic history from one of the finest thinkers and practitioners of his generation. If Americans are ever to find their way again in the world, this book is an essential starting point.”

Derek Chollet served the Obama administration in senior positions at the White House, State Department and Pentagon. He was also executive vice president of the German Marshall

Fund of the United States, and a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently the Counselor of the State Department.



### **Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy**

Victoria Phillips, Oxford University Press, 2020, \$47.95/hardcover, e-book available, 472 pages.

During the Cold War, modern dance (like jazz and avant-garde painting) was seen as an art form embodying American values of individualism and freedom. Accepting the State Depart-

ment's repeated invitations, dancer Martha Graham and her troupes enthusiastically represented the United States all over the world for some 30 years, under every president from Dwight D. Eisenhower through Ronald Reagan.

Victoria Phillips analyzes the aesthetic and political philosophy underpinning Graham's choreography, and discusses her performances. As the book's title indicates, she concludes that Graham truly multiplied the power of American cultural diplomacy through the unfettered language of movement and dance.

Victoria Phillips specializes in Cold War history, cultural diplomacy and international relations. Her articles have appeared in publications ranging from *The New York Times* and *American Communist History* to *Dance Chronicle* and *Dance Research Journal*, and she has curated exhibits on dance and politics in Europe and Washington, D.C.



### **Sam Nunn: Statesman of the Nuclear Age**

Frank Leith Jones, University Press of Kansas, 2021, \$29.95/hardcover, e-book available, 448 pages.

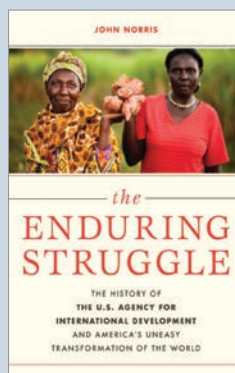
In 2009, AFSA conferred its Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award on Sam Nunn, who had just stepped down from the Senate after four terms representing Georgia. This biography underscores just how emi-

nently worthy he is of such recognition.

In this first full account of Nunn's senatorial career, Frank Leith Jones reveals how, as a congressional leader and "shadow

secretary of defense," he helped win the Cold War, constructing the foundation for the defense and foreign policies of the 1970s and 1980s that secured the United States and its allies from the Soviet threat.

Frank Leith Jones is professor of security studies and the General C. Marshall Chair of Military Studies in the Department of National Security and Strategy at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. His published work includes *Blowtorch: Robert Komer, Vietnam and American Cold War Strategy* (2013).



### **The Enduring Struggle: The History of the U.S. Agency for International Development and America's Uneasy Transformation of the World**

John Norris, Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, \$40/hardcover, e-book available, 338 pages.

This year, the U.S. Agency for International Development marks its 60th anniversary. As journalist and foreign

policy expert John Norris details in this unofficial but thorough history, the agency can fairly lay claim to triumphs including the eradication of smallpox, the Green Revolution and family planning programs. Yet it has also experienced failures in places such as Vietnam and Iraq. Whatever the balance of successes and setbacks, USAID continues to improve millions of lives all over the world.

John Norris has served in a variety of senior roles in government, international institutions and nonprofits. In 2014, President Barack Obama appointed him to the President's Global Development Council, a body charged with advising the administration on effective development practices. Norris currently works at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (See his article on p. 27.)



### **The Second Cold War: Carter, Reagan, and the Politics of Foreign Policy**

Aaron Donaghy, Cambridge University Press, 2021, \$59.99/hardcover, e-book available, 288 pages.

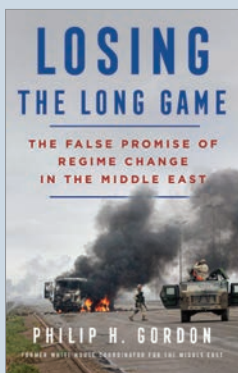
Focusing on the critical period between 1977 and 1985, Aaron Donaghy examines the complex history of America's largest peacetime military buildup—which was, in turn,



challenged by the largest-ever peacetime antiwar movement. He explains how domestic politics shaped dramatic foreign policy reversals by Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, and analyzes both why the Cold War intensified so quickly during this period, and how, against all odds, Washington and Moscow repaired their relationship.

Drawing on recently declassified archival material, *The Second Cold War* challenges conventional wisdom on how and when the end stage of the Cold War began.

Aaron Donaghy teaches American history and international history at University College Dublin. He has previously taught at Harvard University and held research fellowships at Cornell University and the University of Cambridge (Churchill College).



### **Losing the Long Game: The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East**

Philip H. Gordon, St. Martin's Press, 2020, \$29.99/hardcover, e-book available, 368 pages.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has set out to oust governments in the Middle East at least once a decade. Philip H. Gordon's in-depth assessment of those episodes gives readers an insider's view on U.S. policymaking at the highest levels. It is the story of repeated U.S. interventions in the region that always start out with high hopes, and often the best of intentions, but never turn out well.

Philip H. Gordon is the Mary and David Boies Senior Fellow in U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. He served as a special assistant to President Barack Obama and as White House coordinator for the Middle East from 2013 to 2015, and as assistant secretary of State for European and Eurasian affairs from 2009 to 2013.



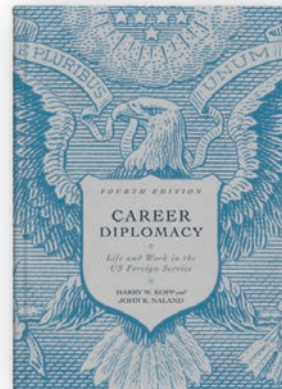
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS

## **Career Diplomacy**

### **Life and Work in the US Foreign Service Fourth Edition**

Harry W. Kopp and  
John K. Naland

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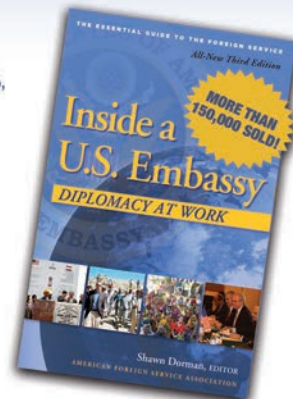
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## FICTION AND POETRY



### Radioflash

Mark J. Hipp, Black Rose Writing, 2020, \$21.95/paperback, e-book available, 348 pages.

Matt James, the hero of this fast-paced thriller, is a State Department diplomatic security agent who thrives on danger. After Embassy Jerusalem reports an assassination plot against the Secretary of State during sensitive peace negotiations, he volunteers to

lead a protective detail on the West Bank.

During a terrorist attack, James and his team save the Secretary, but lose a close friend in the process. Risking an international incident, they then conduct a daring raid that uncovers a plot to kill millions of Americans with a “radioflash”—an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) that damages or destroys all electrical devices for hundreds of miles around. Defying his director’s orders, James tenaciously hunts Moussa Rahman, the Chechen mastermind behind the conspiracy, with Russian Federal Security Service agent Svetlana Andropov.

James and Andropov must battle interagency wrangling, foreign governments, betrayal and internal strife to stop Rahman before he reaches outer space and detonates the nuke that will create the EMP—knocking the superpower back into the Dark Ages and triggering World War III between Russia and America.

Mark J. Hipp, a 29-year veteran with the State Department’s Diplomatic Security Service, served as chief of security in London, Baghdad, Tel Aviv, Lima and Tirana. As a former deputy chief and team leader of the bureau’s Mobile Security Division, the author spent eight years responding to exigent situations in more than 70 countries on five continents. He has written numerous manuals on protective tactics and emergency response, and has been featured in three documentaries, including the Discovery Channel’s “MSD: The Unknown Protectors.” He has also been interviewed on ABC, CBS and CNN.



### Barren Grace

Nikolina Kulidzan, independently published, 2020, \$9.99/paperback, e-book available, 245 pages.

Even though some estimates say 10 percent of women across the globe will grapple with infertility at some point in their lives, a novel about the phenomenon might seem destined for a niche readership. But *Barren Grace* has a message for all of us: “We cope

and grieve quietly, each alone in the barren desert of our loss, terrified that we will never find a way out. But the trek through the desert will end, and life can still be bountiful.”

In her author’s note, Nikolina Kulidzan says this: “While trying to come to terms with the fact that I would never have biological children, I longed to find solace in a novel that would make me feel less alone while giving me hope for a way forward. Unable to find such a book, I decided to write it. But don’t worry; it’s not all sorrow and gloom. *Barren Grace* is an entertaining story of two strong women—one right at the threshold of adulthood, another of middle age—negotiating passion, family and career, and discovering a few things along the way—most notably, themselves.”

Nikolina Kulidzan is a public diplomacy-coned State Department Foreign Service officer who has served in Singapore and Beijing; she is currently a watch officer in the Operations Center. Born in Bosnia, she came to the United States at the age of 18, stating: “‘Bosnian refugee-cum-U.S. diplomat’ is my version of the rags-to-riches tale.” Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Sun Magazine* and other publications, and has twice been nominated for a Pushcart Award.



### Rossio Square N.º59

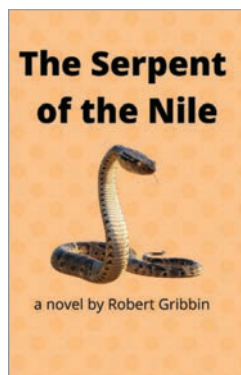
Jeannine Johnson Maia, independently published, 2020, \$8.99/paperback, e-book available, 238 pages.

Novels about World War II tend to take place either in the countries where the fighting occurred, or back on the home front. So it is refreshing to have this compelling story, set in the suspenseful and dangerous world of Portugal in 1941, when that country

served as an escape route for Jews and other people fleeing the Nazis.

*Rossio Square N.º59*, the author's debut novel, transports us back 70 years to a Lisbon in turmoil, full of spies for the fascist powers and the beleaguered Western democracies. The formerly sleepy capital suddenly finds itself harboring tens of thousands of refugees, who look to America as a new promised land. There may be few rooms available in Lisbon, but it does have space for two young people to fall in love.

Jeannine Maia is fond of keys, diaries and anything that leads to unexpected journeys. Before moving to Porto, Portugal, where she now lives, she worked for more than 13 years in Brussels as a Foreign Service National in the public affairs section of the United States Mission to the European Union. Prior to that, she did stints as a journalist in Belgium and Washington, D.C., studied international relations in the United States and Italy (at the University of Virginia and SAIS Johns Hopkins, respectively), taught English in France, earned a creative writing master's degree and lived in Cabo Verde. This book was originally published in Portuguese by LeYa/Casa das Letras as *Praça do Rossio, N.º59*.



### The Serpent of the Nile

Robert Gribbin, independently published, 2021, \$13.99/paperback, e-book available, 165 pages.

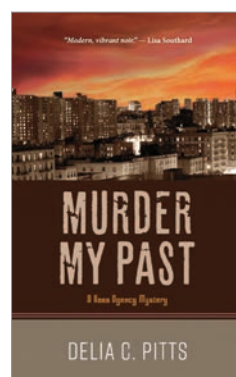
This taut thriller opens with Paul Simmons, a former Peace Corps volunteer who is now a Nairobi-based freelance journalist, being freed from captivity in South Sudan. Surprise: Someone doesn't appreciate his dogged pursuit of stories of corruption, arms smuggling and human trafficking in that wartorn nation, the newest in Africa. But who? And who, or what, is the novel's titular snake?

As Simmons gets caught up in the violence and intrigue that plague one of the world's most desperate nations, Robert Gribbin introduces us to a kaleidoscopic cast that includes figures from the notorious Lord's Resistance Army and some of their local victims, as well as government employees, British and American expatriates, missionaries and (fictional!) Embassy Juba personnel.

Set against the grim reality and history of the region, and drawing on the author's decades of diplomacy in Africa, this novel accurately portrays the despair, hope and aspirations of South Sudan's beleaguered people.

Ambassador (ret.) Robert Gribbin spent 35 years in East and Central Africa, first as a Peace Corps volunteer and then

as a Foreign Service officer. He was posted to 15 African countries and served on delegations to the United Nations General Assembly and U.N. Human Rights Commission. He served as U.S. ambassador to Rwanda (1996-1999) and to the Central African Republic and occasionally takes on short-term assignments for the Department of State. He is the author of *In the Aftermath of Genocide: The U.S. Role in Rwanda* (2005), *State of Decay* (2012) and a novel set in the Congo, *The Last Rhino* (2020).



### Murder My Past: A Ross Agency Mystery

Delia C. Pitts, BookBaby, 2021, \$15.38/paperback, e-book available, 316 pages.

As this fifth book in the Ross Agency Mystery series opens, Harlem private eye SJ Rook is in a good place in his life. He's building a new life at a neighborhood detective agency, and in a solid relationship with his crime-

fighting partner, Sabrina Ross. Then, for the first time in years, SJ hears from his ex-wife, Annie, who is visiting the Big Apple for a convention.

Shortly after they meet, possibly rekindling their romance, Annie is murdered, forcing Rook to return to a place he never wanted to visit again: his past. There's no shortage of suspects, but his suspicions focus on a group of university professors in Annie's circle. His quest for justice leads him to dig up campus secrets, past and present, while coping with violence.

Rook's investigation also uncovers clues to another mystery from the past, a case that strikes even closer to home. His boss's wife was talented, volatile and troubled, vanishing without a trace 25 years ago. If Rook solves this ice-cold missing persons case, perhaps he can finally give his boss closure. Can he figure out the connection and bring the killers to justice before the past fades forever?

Delia C. Pitts, a former Foreign Service officer, university administrator and journalist, is the author of the Ross Agency Mystery series, featuring private investigator SJ Rook. Previous installments include *Lost and Found in Harlem* (2017), *Practice the Jealous Arts* (2018), *Black and Blue in Harlem* (2019) and *Pauper and Prince in Harlem* (2020). She lives in central New Jersey with her husband.





### **Where Eagles Never Flew: A Battle of Britain Novel**

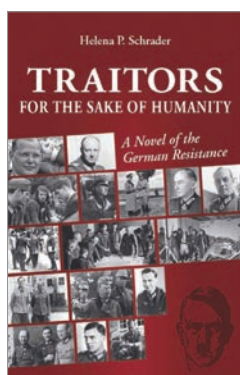
Helena P. Schrader, Cross Seas Press, 2020, \$23.95/paperback, e-book available, 594 pages.

Long fascinated by the Battle of Britain, in 2007 Helena Schrader published a novel about it titled *Chasing the Wind*. Wing Commander Bob Doe, one of the few surviving Royal Air Force aces who participated in that epic conflict,

wrote Schrader then to say: “This is the best book on the life of us fighter pilots in the Battle of Britain that I have ever seen. ... I couldn’t put it down.”

In honor of the 80th anniversary of the battle, the author has now updated and reissued that novel under a new title.

Helena P. Schrader is a retired economic-coned Foreign Service officer who served predominantly in Europe and Africa. She holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Hamburg, which she earned with a groundbreaking dissertation on a leading member of the German Resistance to Hitler. She is the author of more than 20 books, and the winner of several literary awards, including the Pinnacle Award for Best Biographical Fiction in 2016 and the Feathered Quill Book Award for Best Historical Fiction in 2020. To learn more about her work, visit <http://helenapschrader.com>.



### **Traitors for the Sake of Humanity: A Novel of the German Resistance to Hitler**

Helena P. Schrader, Cross Seas Press, 2021, \$9.99/Kindle, 567 pages.

Many books, both fiction and non-fiction, have been written about the unsuccessful July 20, 1944, plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler and bring the German war effort to an end. But few

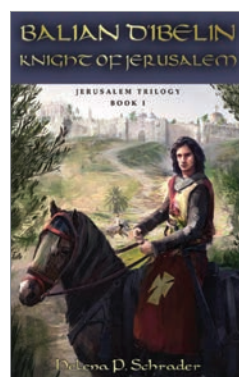
of them are as extensively researched or sweeping in their coverage as this novel.

As Helena Schrader details in her introduction, *Traitors for the Sake of Humanity* evolved over three decades, combining extensive primary and secondary research with the author’s intimate personal knowledge of the people and places of the period. Schrader was the first Westerner to obtain access to the East German military archives and receive selected materials

from sources in East Germany. She also interviewed more than 100 survivors of Nazi Germany, as well as several high-ranking military officials who had opposed the July 20 coup attempt.

The author includes a cast of characters and several glossaries to assist readers in keeping track of dozens of characters, both historical and fictional, over six years (1938-1944).

This is a new Kindle edition. First published as *An Obsolete Honor* in 2008, the second edition was released in 2012 as *Hitler’s Demons*.



### **Balian d'Ibelin: Knight of Jerusalem**

Helena P. Schrader, Wheatmark, 2020, \$19.95/paperback, e-book available, 370 pages.

The subject of this novel may already be familiar to some readers because Orlando Bloom played this colorful character from the Crusades in the 2005 Ridley Scott film, “Kingdom of Heaven.” However, as Helena

Schrader explains in her introduction, “the life of the historical Balian was not only different from, but arguably more fascinating and certainly more significant than that of the Hollywood hero.”

Schrader published the first edition of this novel in 2014, but has updated and reworked it to reflect additional research. The first volume in a biographical novel series about Balian, the work throws surprising light on life in the Holy Land during the late 12th century.



### **Rebels Against Tyranny: The Sixth Crusade and the Barons of Jerusalem**

Helena P. Schrader, Cross Seas Press, 2020, \$20.95/paperback, e-book available, 456 pages.

While Frederick II’s struggle with Pope Gregory is legendary, his defeat at the hands of his own barons in the crusader kingdoms of Jerusalem and Cyprus is quite obscure. Yet both

clashes have all the ingredients of first-rate historical fiction, and Helena Schrader takes full advantage of them here. On the one side, there is the legendary and colorful emperor, who called himself “the Wonder of the World.” On the other: a cast

of rebels, who were also scholars and intellectuals, poets and patrons of the arts, known for outstanding contributions to medieval jurisprudence.

This is the first volume in the Rebels of Outremer series.



### **The Emperor Strikes Back: Frederick II's War against His Vassals**

Helena P. Schrader, Cross Seas Press, 2020, \$20.95/paperback, e-book available, 433 pages.

*The Emperor Strikes Back* picks up where *Rebels Against Tyranny* leaves off. It continues the story of the “old” Lord of Beirut and his five sons:

Novare’s “compeer” Balian (named

after Balian d’Ibelin) and his brothers, the “wolflings,” as well as the story of Lady Eschiva de Montbéliard and Bella d’Ibelin. It also continues the stories of a large supporting cast of fictional characters, such as the Genoese widow Cecilia, the Templar priest Ernesius and the Ethiopian stable master Eskinder.

This is the second volume in the Rebels of Outremer series.



### **Messianic Reveal: A Clayton Haley Novel**

Ethan T. Burroughs, Morgan James Fiction, 2020, \$16.95/paperback, e-book available, 280 pages.

This debut novel, a work of historical fiction that reads like a thriller, offers readers an understanding of Middle Eastern developments beyond the sensational and often misleading daily news headlines.

The protagonist, Foreign Service Officer Clayton Haley, is assigned for his first tour to Paris where he soon finds himself enmeshed in a web of conspiracies. In the prologue, the author sets as the backdrop to his story the rise of al-Qaida and other terrorist groups and movements. He describes events and actors in 1979 in Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and in 1980 and 1981 in Iraq and the United States, respectively.

The action then ricochets back and forth between Paris, Amman, Minnesota, Baghdad, Jeddah and Mecca, among other locales. While we are taken behind the scenes of the government’s bureaucratic and policy machinations as the West attempts to grapple with militant Islam, we are also taken

into the politics, ideologies and theologies of the Middle East, including discussions of Islam from both Sunni and Shia points of view.

*Messianic Reveal* ends with a bang, but Clayton Haley’s journey is not over. Its sequel, *Writ Reveal*, will be coming soon.

Ethan T. Burroughs is the pen name for a member of the Foreign Service, a U.S. Army veteran, teacher, consultant and aspiring storyteller, who has dedicated much of the last two decades to exploring the Middle East and slowly unraveling its mysteries. His work has taken him to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Israel and the Palestinian Territories, where he has studied in detail the local history, faith, cuisine, language and culture.



### **The Maple Conspiracy**

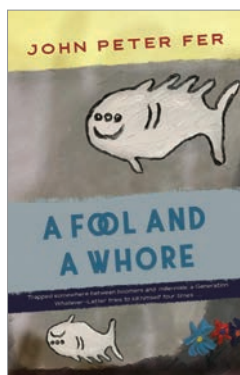
William Begley, Wheatmark, 2019, \$23.95/paperback, e-book available, 442 pages.

Canada in the mid-1930s may not sound like a prime setting for a novel combining espionage, aviation and international intrigue. But it works brilliantly in William Begley’s *The Maple Conspiracy*, in which Evan Macroy, a Royal Canadian Air Force

pilot and intelligence adviser to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, heads up a large cast of characters spanning the globe.

As the novel opens in the winter of 1935, the PM dispatches squadron leader Macroy to an air show in Miami to purchase new fighter aircraft, part of an ongoing project to modernize the RCAF. But as an ascendant Germany begins to threaten Canada and the rest of the world, that mission quickly spirals into a desperate journey of survival and discovery that includes adventures in civil wars in China and Spain, a German-engineered plot against the ruling Liberal Party, a high-speed chase in Miami, encounters with the German military intelligence service, a Japanese airborne rescue of his kidnapped wife, and a trans-Atlantic pursuit by British submarines.

William Begley is a Foreign Service spouse currently serving in Vienna alongside his wife, Public Affairs Officer Teta Moehs. Since 2005, the couple have lived in Seoul, Berlin, Beijing, Leipzig and Conakry. A former U.S. Air Force intelligence officer who received two national awards from the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Begley later worked in the U.S. Civil Service and in the commercial sector in China, Japan and Germany.



### **A Fool and a Whore**

John Peter Fer, independently published, 2021, \$15/paperback, 368 pages.

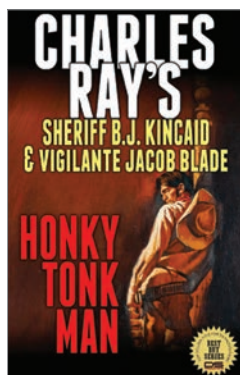
The action in this novel unfolds over most of a decade: from Desert Shield (2003) through most of President Barack Obama's first term (2011). Stuck somewhere between boomers and millennials, Trey Ciuri—a Generation-Whatever—tries to kill himself

four times in various ways. Readers experience each suicide attempt from Trey's perspective, and then witness his recovery via conversations with best friends. As the author observes, most people don't get such second and third chances.

Fer notes in his afterword that he wrote the story about a decade after its fictional setting, between the deaths of Freddie Gray (2015) and George Floyd (2020). When Gray was killed, the author was living in Baltimore and commuting to Foggy Bottom; his wife taught at a public high school not far from the CVS that burned in the subsequent riots.

Five years later, Fer was working in Embassy Riga when Floyd was killed. As a public diplomacy officer, he notes, it was tough to witness such traumatic events, and even harder to explain them to foreign audiences. But in the final analysis, this book is primarily targeted to American readers—particularly those of us who, as Fer puts it, “have little or no skin in the game.”

John Peter Fer is currently the information officer for Embassy Tbilisi. Since joining the State Department Foreign Service in 2009 as a public diplomacy officer, he has served in New Delhi, Managua, Moscow, Riga and Washington, D.C. An Air Force veteran and returned Peace Corps volunteer, he worked as a firefighter/EMT prior to joining the Foreign Service.



### **Sheriff B.J. Kincaid: Honky Tonk Man: A Western Adventure**

Charles Ray, independently published, 2021, \$5.99/paperback, e-book available, 76 pages.

The latest in a series of Western novellas for young people, *Sheriff B.J. Kincaid: Honky Tonk Man* features an unforgettable protagonist: Bobbie Jo Kincaid, a classic tomboy who wants

to be known simply as B.J. Despite her parents' opposition, B.J. sticks to her guns (literally and figuratively) and eventually convinces the mayor of Calabash Crossing to hire her to replace the sheriff who was gunned down, by promising him that she would find the old sheriff's killer.

Even after fulfilling that pledge in the first volume, Sheriff Kincaid wages a never-ending struggle to get the men of the town to take her seriously as a woman and respect her legal authority. Fortunately, over the course of the series she makes valuable allies, such as Mazie Carter, a former showgirl who ends up owning a saloon; bounty hunter Jacob Blade (who may just be more than a friend to B.J.); and her two deputies.

Five other volumes in the series were also published in 2020 and 2021. They are: *Draw Fast ...Or Die!*, *Cry of the Raven*, *Gunsmoke and Glory*, *Gunfight at the Silver Dollar Saloon* and *Thirteen Steps to the Gallows: A Western Adventure*.

Though each of these novellas is concise, Charles Ray packs a whole lot of action, intrigue, romance and humor into every book. Each one will leave you hungry for more!

A prolific writer with nearly 200 titles to his name, and a regular contributor to *The Foreign Service Journal*, Charles Ray is a retired FSO and former ambassador to Cambodia and Zimbabwe. Before beginning his Foreign Service career, Ambassador Ray was in the U.S. Army for 20 years, retiring in 1982 as a major. This year, in addition to this series, he has completed another series and begun a new one. They are described below.



### **Caleb Johnson: Mountain Man: Showdown at Shiloh: A Frontier Western Adventure**

Charles Ray, independently published, 2021, \$6.99/paperback, e-book available, 74 pages.

*Showdown at Shiloh* is the twelfth and latest volume in author Charles Ray's frontier adventure series featuring the life of Caleb Johnson, a Black mountain man who saves former

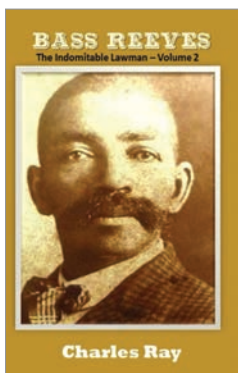
Confederate officer Ben Winthrop from a lynch mob and then guides him from Colorado to Oregon. Caleb then lets himself be talked into spending two years there, helping Ben get his ranch started, before saddling his horse (named Horse), and returning to Bear Creek, Colorado, with his dog (Dog).

There Caleb and his Shoshone wife, Flora, add a third member to the menagerie: Snuffy, a bear cub whose mother



was killed by wolves. Snuffy and Dog become inseparable, and play an important role in warding off attackers—of which there are many in the 13 books that compose this series.

The action-packed series is distinctive for the characters portrayed and for the larger issues the author explores. In *Showdown at Shiloh* Caleb helps the new owner of Bear Creek's hardware store track down a shipment of merchandise that went missing. The tenth and eleventh volumes of the Caleb Johnson series were also published this year: *Murder and Mayhem in the Mountains*, in which Johnson attends a convention of mountain men from across the West and Canada who want to organize to protect their way of life from the encroachment of city folks, and *This Land Is Mine*, in which Caleb and Flora return home to Bear Creek to find that a shady newcomer is bent on amassing the largest spread in the area.



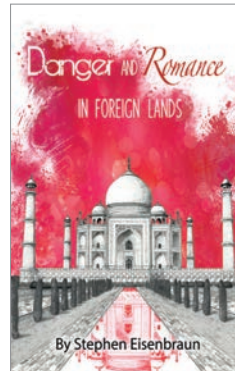
#### **Bass Reeves: The Indomitable Lawman—Volume 2**

Charles Ray, independently published, 2021, \$10.99/paperback, e-book available, 352 pages.

*The Indomitable Lawman* is the second volume in Charles Ray's series offering a richly textured, fictionalized account of the life of Bass Reeves (1838-1910), a deputy U.S. marshal who worked in Arkansas, Texas

and the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) for 30 years. In his introduction, the author reminds us that Reeves, born a slave, could neither read nor write English—but he spoke six Native American languages and could recall everything someone read to him. The book's dedication truly says it all: "To the men like Bass Reeves, who served the country even as it often failed to serve them. May they always be remembered."

Volume 1 contains three stories: "Bass and the Preacher," "The Marshal and the Madam" and "Renegade Roundup." The second installment has four tales: "The Red River Queen," "The Shaman's Curse," "Fatal Encounter" and "Ma Barker's Boy."



#### **Danger and Romance in Foreign Lands**

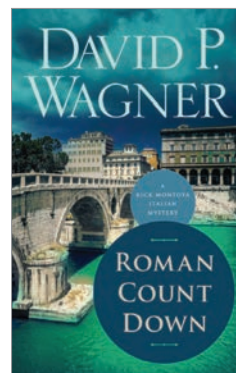
Stephen Eisenbraun, Dorrance Publishing, 2021, \$38/paperback, 212 pages.

The narrator of these fictional adventures is a retired *New York Times* foreign correspondent named Scott Higgins, now in his mid-70s and looking back over his life before his memories fade. (Any resemblance to

the author is purely intentional, of course.)

Higgins now teaches history at Sweetbriar College, but before that, he was shot at while covering a story in Bangladesh, was almost burned alive by a furious mob in Pakistan, fell deeply in love with the most exquisite woman in New Delhi, and had dozens of other memorable experiences, mostly in South Asia.

Stephen E. Eisenbraun is a retired FSO (see also memoirs on p. 50).



#### **Roman Count Down: A Rick Montoya Italian Mystery**

David P. Wagner, Poisoned Pen Press, 2019, \$15.99/paperback, e-book available, 232 pages.

Although this novel is the sixth installment in the Rick Montoya series, it is actually a prequel, in which the title character comes to Rome to launch a translation business. While Rick is exploring

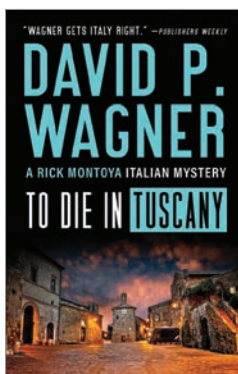
the Eternal City, eager to soak up more of his Italian mother's culture, his maternal uncle, a Roman cop, pulls him into an investigation of the murder of Count Umberto Zimbardi. Note the pun in the book's title.)

It seems that the wealthy count enjoyed indulging a circle of convivial friends and collecting oral histories by interviewing residents of the city's historic center. After heading home from the latter pursuit one afternoon, Zimbardi is found dead on a bridge over the Tiber.

As a newcomer and an investigator, Rick makes rookie mistakes. After all, he's not only learning the ropes as an amateur sleuth, but discovering that living in Rome is different from visiting. It doesn't help that a woman keeps pressing him into service as a tour guide, and he must also handle the

arrival of a college friend on a mission to sell Argentine wine to the Vatican. Despite all those distractions, Rick works with his uncle to solve the case before more bodies turn up.

David P. Wagner is a retired Foreign Service officer who spent nine years in Italy, where he learned to love all things Italian. Other diplomatic assignments included Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay and Washington, D.C. He and his wife, Mary, live in Pueblo, Colorado.



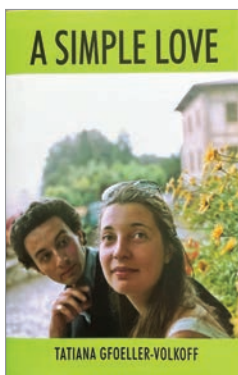
### To Die in Tuscany:

#### A Rick Montoya Italian Mystery

David P. Wagner, Poisoned Pen Press, 2021, \$15.99/paperback, e-book available, 272 pages.

In Book 7 of this series, Rick Montoya is looking forward to a quiet weekend getaway with his girlfriend, Betta, an art fraud investigator for the Italian Culture Ministry. Their destination: the beautiful village of Urbino, where Betta is to

collect a priceless drawing from a wealthy Spanish collector on the ministry's behalf. But when the Spaniard is found murdered and the drawing stolen, Betta must shift back into art cop mode, and Rick's official services are required, after all. The chase takes the couple from Urbino's cobbled streets to eastern Tuscany and back, as the list of suspects grows longer and more dangerous.



### A Simple Love

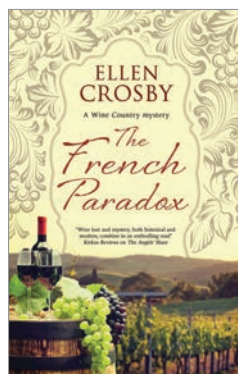
Tatiana Gfoeller-Volkoff, Outskirts Press, 2021, \$36.95/hardcover, e-book available, 180 pages.

Each reader will have to decide whether the title of this novel is ironic. After all, love between two people is rarely simple. So the quest for love among a group of three would seem doomed to be complex and messy, if it can succeed at all.

In the 1980s, bisexual American student Marielle Laurenceay arrives at the University of Florence. There she meets Allè Della Tararne and Enrico Della Ferrea, two male Italian students who are also bisexual, and who both fall in love with her. Complicating matters further, Enrico is in love with Allè, but not vice versa.

For her part, Marielle loves both men for different reasons, but marries Allè—a well-intentioned choice that carries profound consequences for all three friends.

Tatiana Gfoeller-Volkoff is a retired Senior Foreign Service officer and tandem with Ambassador Michael Gfoeller (see p. 70 for his book). She spent most of her career in the former Soviet Union and the Middle East, including assignments as deputy chief of mission and consul general, before serving as ambassador to Kyrgyzstan from 2008 to 2011. She then served as a political adviser to two members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff before retiring from the Service.



### The French Paradox

Ellen Crosby, Severn House Publishers, 2021, \$17.95/paperback, e-book available, 256 pages.

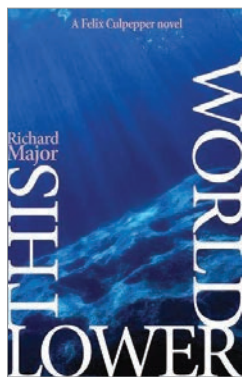
This new installment in Ellen Crosby's Wine Country Mysteries series takes us back to 1949, when Jacqueline Bouvier (later Kennedy) was spending her junior year abroad in Paris. There, she purchased several inexpensive portraits of Queen Marie Antoinette

that a female artist had painted before falling into obscurity for two centuries. The future first lady also had a romantic relationship with Virginia vineyard owner Lucie Montgomery's French grandfather—until recently, a well-kept secret.

More than 70 years later, Cricket Delacroix, Lucie's neighbor and Jackie's schoolfriend, is donating the now-priceless paintings to a Washington, D.C., museum. Meanwhile, Lucie's grandfather is flying to Virginia for Cricket's 90th-birthday party, hosted by her daughter Harriet—who is rewriting a manuscript Jackie left behind about Marie Antoinette and her portraitist. She's also adding tell-all details about Jackie she's sure will make the book a bestseller.

On the eve of the party, a world-famous landscape designer who also knew Jackie is found dead in Lucie's vineyard. Did someone make good on the death threats he'd received because of his controversial book on climate change? Or was his murder tied to Jackie, the paintings and Lucie's beloved grandfather?

Ellen Crosby, the wife of FSO André de Nesnera, a Voice of America broadcaster, began writing mysteries under her maiden name when her husband was posted to Geneva. In addition to this series, now totaling 11 books, she has published *Moscow Nights*, a standalone mystery based loosely on her time as Moscow correspondent for ABC Radio News in the late 1980s, and two mysteries about international photojournalist Sophie Medina. You can visit her website at [www.ellencrosby.com](http://www.ellencrosby.com).



**This Lower World:  
A Felix Culpepper Novel**

Richard Major, IndieBooks, 2020,  
\$9.99/paperback, 144 pages.

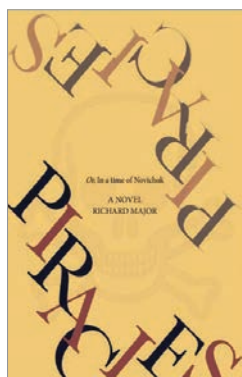
“More Misdemeanours by Dr. Felix Culpepper” is the subtitle of this new installment in the 16-book cycle, Wygefertis, a gothic fairy tale for adults that recounts what the author describes as the “epic misdeeds” of Felix Culpepper and his sidekick, lover

and nemesis Margot Fontaines-Laigh.

When he isn’t teaching classics at St Wygefertis’ College, Cambridge, Dr. Culpepper is one of the world’s most in-demand assassins-for-hire. It is safe to say that few other Cambridge fellows have Felix’s experience of life—or of death. But now he takes a break from his unofficial role as assassin of choice to the British establishment to right some wrongs, and eliminate some rival killers, on his own account.

From New York to Venice, Culpepper cheerfully takes on the international aristocracy of murder. But then, amid the fragrant mellowness of England’s heartwoods, he faces a more disturbing—and violent—moral dilemma than ever before. Has he finally met his match?

Richard Major is a teacher, academic and journalist, as well as a novelist. He was educated at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar and has degrees in history, literature and theology. The spouse of FSO Kristen Fresonke, a political officer in the Palestinian Affairs Unit, he is currently posted in Jerusalem, where he does public diplomacy work. The couple have two teenage children and have previously served in South Africa, Hungary, Slovenia and India.



**Piracies: Or, in a  
Time of Novichok**

Richard Major, IndieBooks, 2019,  
\$14.85/paperback, 256 pages.

Pepyeses Island appears on no map, is hidden from satellite surveillance and has even slipped outside the Earth’s 24 time zones. Yet Dr. Felix Culpepper is standing on this imaginary land, while the governor-general, in plumed helmet, welcomes him in the

name of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. For what purpose has the British establishment hidden this fragment of empire for 200 years? Does it hold the key to a terrorist plot of unpar-

alleled malevolence? Will Felix be allowed to leave with this knowledge—or his life?

*Piracies* is the tenth installment in the Wygefertis series, following *This Lower World*.



**Democracy at the Brink**

George Kennedy and Yvonne Merrill,  
SETAF Publishing, 2021, \$20/  
paperback, e-book available,  
348 pages.

This novel, the sixth in George Alfred Kennedy’s Crosshairs series, focuses on the rise of former vice president and acting Secretary of State Alfred Turner to become the second African American president of the United States.

Following a lengthy and bitter presidential campaign, the much younger Turner defeats the 76-year-old, one-term Republican President Edward Stanton, and is sworn in as the 47th president on Jan. 20, 2021.

Alarmed by the dramatic and unexpected reversal of their political fortunes, congressional Republicans and their alt-right allies around the country vow to topple the new Turner administration in league with the former president. Will they succeed?

George Kennedy is a retired Senior Foreign Service officer whose diplomatic career took him to seven countries and culminated in his appointment as consul general in Toronto. He serves on the advisory boards of the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona and the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Arizona, and is active in his community as an independent business owner. His memoir, *Cotton Fields to Summits: The View from Contested Ground*, was published in 2018 by SETAF Publishing.

Yvonne Merrill, a citizen and environmental advocate, has served as a writing consultant and editor for numerous authors.



## CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS



### **The Ambassador's Dog**

Scott H. DeLisi (with Jane Lillian Vance, illustrator), Vajra Books, 2020, \$39.95/hardcover, 40 pages.

"I know all really good stories begin, 'Once upon a time...'"

"But can you still begin a story that way if it is true? Because this story is. Just ask Lo Khyi. He will tell you his tale.

"You just have to know how to listen.

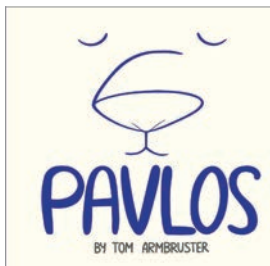
"Or ask the man who met Lo Khyi one day, and whose life was never the same."

So begins *The Ambassador's Dog*, a story of the power of serendipitous meetings, the power of dreams, and the power of hope that is set in the high Himalayas of Nepal. Written by retired career U.S. diplomat and three-time ambassador Scott H. DeLisi, it tells the tale of a puppy, abandoned and alone, who waited on a trail in what once was the ancient kingdom of Lo on the Tibetan Plateau, and the man who was meant to cross his path.

This variation on the classic story of man's best friend is steeped in the magical lyricism of Nepali culture, which is captured powerfully by award-winning artist Jane Lillian Vance in the rich illustrations that enliven every page.

Published by Vajra Books in Kathmandu, this slim volume is a treat for children of all ages. It is printed on textured fox fine paper with museum-quality ink and has a raw, silken-wrapped hardcover, a golden bookmark and a laminated jacket.

Ambassador (ret.) Scott H. DeLisi served as chief of mission in Eritrea (2004-2007), Nepal (2010-2012) and Uganda (2012-2015), among many other Foreign Service assignments. He is currently the executive director of Engage Nepal, a nonprofit serving the people of Nepal.



### **Pavlos**

Tom Armbruster (with Martina Tervi, illustrator), BookBaby, 2021, \$24.53/hardcover, 42 pages.

As this charming children's book begins, Pavlos the polar bear has just been swept aboard a trawler

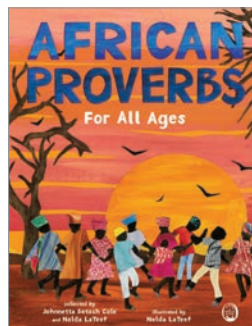
and taken far away from Ice Glacier, his home. But through pluck and resourcefulness, Pavlos escapes captivity and, with the help of human and animal friends, eventually makes his way back to the top of the world.

The author ends the story with an invitation for readers to find out more about "the land, people and animals who live above 66 degrees, 30 minutes, latitude: the Arctic Circle."

Tom Armbruster was U.S. ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands from 2012 to 2016, his last assignment before retiring from a 28-year diplomatic career. He joined the State Department Foreign Service in 1988 and served overseas in Russia (where he was the only U.S. diplomat ever to arrive by kayak), Tajikistan, Mexico, Cuba and Finland. He received career achievement, meritorious and superior honor awards from the State Department, as well as an award from President Hilda Heine of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

He has published pieces in many periodicals, including *The Foreign Service Journal* and *State Magazine*, and contributed a story to *Inside a U.S. Embassy* (FS Books, 2011). His first book, *How to Become an Ambassador*, was published in 2020.

Martina Tervi is an Italian freelance illustrator.



### **African Proverbs for All Ages**

Johnnetta Betsch Cole and Nelda LaTeef, Roaring Brook Press, 2021, \$19.99/hardcover, 40 pages.

In her prologue to this collection of folk sayings, which has already been named a Junior Library Guild gold standard book, Johnnetta Betsch Cole observes: "It has been said that a proverb is a short sentence based on long

experience. Whether you are young or old, proverbs can open your mind to a whole new way of seeing the world."

That is certainly the case with *African Proverbs for All Ages*, which features 64 adages drawn from the wisdom of cultures across that continent. Cole selected the proverbs in collaboration with Nelda LaTeef, who then illustrated them.

Wherever possible, the authors have attributed each proverb to its country of origin. In instances where the same saying has multiple variations in different countries, they have selected what they consider the most compelling version.

Nelda LaTeef is an award-winning author and illustrator who grew up in a Foreign Service family, and attended schools in Europe, Africa and Asia. She holds a degree in social anthropology from Harvard University. In addition to several children's books,

she is the author of two nonfiction works: *Working Women for the 21st Century: Fifty Women Reveal Their Pathways to Success* and *Women of Lebanon Interviews with Champions for Peace*.

Johnnetta Betsch Cole, a renowned anthropologist and educator, was director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art from 2009 to 2016. She is the only person to have served as president of both Spelman College and Bennett College, two private, historically Black liberal arts schools for women.



**Do You Dare Eat That? Porfa!**  
Mikki Thompson, Blurb, 2020,  
\$25.25/paperback, 20 pages.

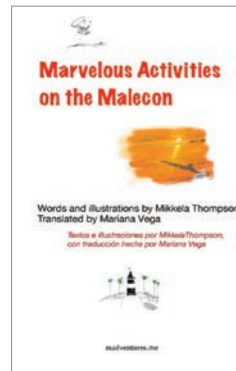
For this slender but tasty volume geared to young ones, Foreign Service Office Management Specialist Mikkela Thompson teams up with translator Mariana Vega, a close

Peruvian friend, to share her photographs and drawings of various foods she enjoyed during her posting in Lima. Each dish is named in English and Spanish, along with the name and address of the restaurant where she tried it.

These range from standard Latin American foods, such as ceviche and papa rellena, to less familiar fare, such as chili ice cream and tiger's milk. Children will enjoy the excellent illustrations and drawings. ¡Buen provecho!

Mikkela V. Thompson, who currently serves in Rome, joined the Foreign Service in 2011 as an office management specialist, and has served in Dhaka, Bogotá, Caracas, Vancouver, Nassau, Port of Spain, Santo Domingo and Lima. A former *Foreign Service Journal* business manager, she worked for AFSA and the State Department prior to becoming an OMS. She creates books, podcasts and videos about her food and travel adventures. See p. 71 for her latest books on various cuisines.

At the suggestion of her FSO (ret.) father, Ward Thompson, she started her blog, M's Adventures (madventures.me) in 2011.



## Marvelous Activities on the Malecon

Mikkela Thompson, Blurb, 2021,  
\$20.21/paperback, 34 pages.

OMS Mikkela Thompson again collaborates with Mariana Vega, this time describing fun activities children might engage in, or watch others do, on the promenade in Lima. These include site-specific pursuits, like enjoying a picnic in Parque Maria

Reiche and watching fireworks from the lighthouse, as well as the kind of fun kids have almost anywhere: playing soccer and riding a scooter.

The author's whimsical illustrations only enhance the fun of the book.



## CiCi, Pocholo, and the Consul Lot

K. Wilder (with Leslie Rennolds, illustrator), independently published, 2021, \$8/paperback, 20 pages.

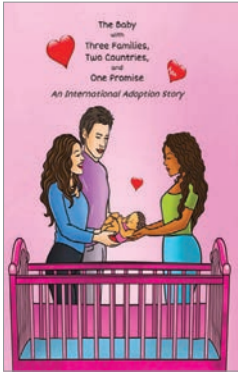
This charming and beautifully illustrated book tells the story of CiCi and Pocholo, two scrappy street dogs in Hermosillo. Their precarious existence is suddenly upended by construction of a new American

consulate in place of the abandoned building where they've been sleeping.

Will the construction crew evict the canines? Or will they find a way to keep them around?

K. Wilder is the pen name for a State Department Diplomatic Security Service special agent currently assigned to Hermosillo as the site security manager. Her previous overseas assignments include Baghdad, Kampala, San Salvador and Kabul. Domestically, she has served in the Washington field office, St. Louis resident office and the Office of Special Investigations in Rosslyn.

Leslie Rennolds is a professional illustrator in Richmond, Virginia.



**The Baby with Three Families, Two Countries, and One Promise: An International Adoption Story**

Julie Gianelloni Connor, Bayou City Press, 2021, \$9.99/paperback, e-book available, 40 pages.

A picture book for parents to read to their internationally adopted children as toddlers, *The Baby with Three Families, Two Countries and One*

*Promise* is a story of international adoption. Having grown in recent decades, it is an increasingly viable option for childless couples. The United States is the main receiving country, with requirements and procedures varying depending on the child's country of origin.

As a U.S. diplomat, Julie Gianelloni Connor observed international adoptions in the countries where she served. She saw how some governments strive to protect the rights of children and biological mothers, while others allow unfettered and unregulated adoptions that result in crime and family tragedies. Urged to consider adoption by an American adoptive family she aided, Connor began to think seriously about helping a child, and eventually did so.

She wrote the original version of this story years ago to read to her adopted toddler, later adapting it as a generalized version of her own experience. The book emphasizes that although each family's adoption journey is unique, many of those journeys share the same steps along the adoption path. The author urges parents to adjust and personalize the story to their family's experience.

In her 33-year career with the U.S. Information Agency and the State Department, Julie Gianelloni Connor rose to the Senior Foreign Service. After retiring, she founded Bayou City Press in Houston, which focuses on Houston, travel and international affairs. She is a former member of the FSJ Editorial Board.



**Tangled Up**

Jamie Edelbrock (with Nidhom, illustrator), Mascot Books, 2021, \$16.95/hardcover, e-book available, 38 pages.

Studies show that one in six kids between the ages of 2 and 8 have a mental, behavioral or developmental disorder. Navigating this world as a

parent can be scary, but experiencing it as a young child can be even scarier. *Tangled Up* is intended to lessen the fear of the unknown and shine a positive, peaceful light on mental health and therapy. It shows how the beautiful threads of us can become tangled, and how therapists and counselors are here to help us twirl bravely through life.

Jamie Edelbrock and her husband, Eric, who joined the Foreign Service in 2015, serve in Jakarta, where she works as the embassy's public engagement assistant (press and media). It is the first family posting for the couple and their three daughters. In addition to her work at the embassy, Jamie has been a homeschool mom, preschool director, family ministry director, speaker, author and world traveler.

Nidhom is an Indonesian freelance illustrator.



**Death Can't Stop Me**

Elizabeth Carleton, independently published, 2021, \$12.99/paperback, e-book available, 335 pages.

How would you celebrate your 16th birthday if you knew for a fact that it would be your last? On top of that, you even know exactly *how* you'll exit this life: in a "magnicar" crash, just like the fatal accidents your cousins all had after each of them turned

16. That's the situation that faces Jo Miller, the heroine of this intriguing dystopian science fiction novel.

What Jo *doesn't* know yet, however, is that her cousins aren't dead at all, but are working with her grandmother to rebel against a corrupt government. After a tearful family reunion, she joins the Future Assassins Training Center and goes on a deep undercover mission. Yet her role at the FATC only stirs up more troubling questions, even as she gains a greater understanding of her own strength—and the true nature of the regime that had been training her for its own sinister purposes.

Elizabeth Carleton currently attends high school in Prague, where her mother, FSO Jennifer Bachus, is chargé d'affaires. Born in Kansas, she has spent most of her life overseas, working in summer hire programs at embassies and experiencing the uniqueness of the Foreign Service as a way of life.





### Curse of the Forgotten

Elizabeth A. Drysdale, Cedar Fort, 2020, \$16.99/paperback, e-book available, 236 pages.

This debut young adult novel is a page-turner with solid characters and just the right mix of fantasy and fairy tale. An ingenious and surprising take on the classic *Beauty and the Beast* is at the heart of the story told by the teenage Wren. She has been living in New York

with her aunt ever since her mother left her behind to live with her boyfriend. Despite a fierce rebellious streak, she's on track to graduate from high school early. But when her mother suddenly sends for her, Wren is forced to move to the middle of nowhere to live with her mother's new family.

Desperate to get back to New York, Wren gets lost in an enormous cave where she is drawn into an ancient rivalry and learns she must break a curse if she ever wishes to leave.

Elizabeth A. Drysdale won her first writing award at the age of 7. She developed a fascination with travel early on, and her characters often end up far from where they start. The daughter of State Department FSO Clay Allen, an Air Force veteran, she spent time with her father on tours in the Philippines and Singapore, as well as when he was stationed in Okinawa with the Air Force. Originally from the back woods of Massachusetts, she now lives in a small town in northern Utah with her husband, three sons, one dog and eight chickens. Her second novel, *Out of Time*, is due to be published in November.

## POTPOURRI



### What in the Baby?!?: The Modern Mama's Guide to Confidently Caring for Your Baby and Surviving the Postpartum Period

Mercedes Thomas, independently published, 2021, \$12.99/paperback, e-book available, 126 pages.

Mercedes Thomas notes in her introduction to *What in the Baby?!?: The Modern Mama's Guide to Confidently Caring for Your Baby and Surviving*

*the Postpartum Period* that she has been gathering material for

this manual throughout her nursing career. But it wasn't until she became a mother herself in 2018 that she felt a compelling need to publish it.

The book's goal is to help "modern mamas" prepare for their babies' arrival by empowering themselves with reputable information that is easy to understand, without a bunch of fluff. It covers such topics as baby care, infant safety, the fourth trimester, postpartum depression, breastfeeding, bottle feeding, developmental milestones and sleep.

Also known as Mercedes the NP, Mercedes Thomas is a health content writer, advanced practice nurse and maternal-child health consultant. She is the wife of AnJuan Thomas, a Foreign Service facility manager, and mother to their spirited and sweet 3-year-old son. They are on their first overseas assignment in Bogotá.

Thomas has been in the pediatric nursing field for more than a decade. She completed her undergraduate nursing studies at Emory University and went on to earn her Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner degree from the University of South Alabama. During her nursing career, she has worked with families and children in the neonatal intensive care unit, and both inpatient and primary care pediatrics.

Now, as the founder of Thomas Health Education and Consulting, she creates engaging digital health content that focuses on educating families and organizations about pediatrics, lactation, parenting and wellness.



### Growing Up Poor in Ripley

Justin List, independently published, 2020, \$7.75/paperback, e-book available, 77 pages.

Did you know that sleeveless shirts were invented in Ripley, Ohio, by the parents of Paul Brian Roberts, who "narrates" the tales crafted by Justin List for this volume?

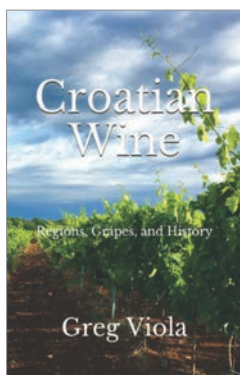
As Mr. Roberts explains, back in the 1980s his resourceful, albeit perpetually cash-strapped, family also invented hot dog cigars, bologna Chapstick, baby straitjackets, baby handcuffs, baby shackles, baby tasers, walking urinals and beer candles, among other unique products.

Readers must decide for themselves whether any of those historical nuggets are true. But fair warning: You will probably be laughing *way* too hard at the exploits of the Roberts clan to weigh the evidence impartially. *Growing Up Poor in Ripley*

certainly proves Mr. Roberts correct when he tells us: “Poverty is the mother of invention.” It also makes crystal clear that author Justin List is rich in imagination and a roguish sense of humor.

Justin List has been with the Foreign Service since 2013, serving in Myanmar, Iraq, Chicago and Greensboro, and has been trying to replace “Weird Al” Yankovic in the music universe since 2002. His tunes are available on iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, etc., under the alias Van Pimpenstein.

*WTF—World Tobacco Festival: A Hillbilly’s Rise to Glory* (2017) was his first book.



### **Croatian Wine: Regions, Grapes, and History**

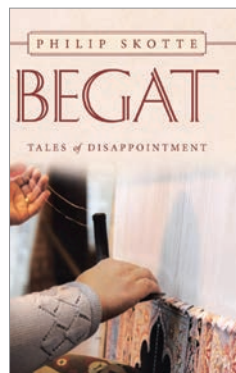
Greg Viola, independently published, 2021, \$14.99/paperback, e-book available, 192 pages.

Even among oenophiles, the wines of Croatia are one of Europe’s best-kept secrets. Fortunately, Greg Viola is here to unlock that mystery for readers. Whether you’re a tourist planning a trip or an armchair traveler

who loves to read about vineyards, this book lays out the country’s impressive array of native grape varietals, many of which can’t be found anywhere else in the world. As a bonus, Viola describes the traditions behind each of Croatia’s diverse regions.

With beginner-friendly tips on choosing your wine, regional maps, an easy pronunciation guide and descriptions of the country’s best wineries, this book contains everything you’ll need to dive into the world of Croatian vino.

Greg Viola joined the Foreign Service in 2015. After serving in the consular section of Embassy Tegucigalpa, he now works in the economic section of Embassy Zagreb. Prior to joining the State Department, he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Lesotho and later worked at Canada’s Mission to the United Nations in New York City. He was also a bartender on Manhattan’s Lower East Side for many years, a job that laid the groundwork for his love of fine wines. He and his wife, Lorian, and son, Georgie, look forward to their next posting, in Kosovo in 2022.



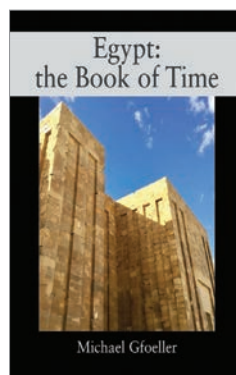
### **Begat: Tales of Disappointment**

Philip Skotte, Liferich Publishing, 2020, \$11.99/paperback, e-book available, 124 pages.

Why do we endure suffering and death? Why do pandemics, unjust killings and economic turmoil befall us? In *Begat*, Philip Skotte looks at these problems through the ancient wisdom of our ancestors.

At the center of the story is John Malcom, an American of Swedish extraction who carries a burden of anger over the loss of his beloved daughter early in life. He has to come to terms with the pain and bitterness before he can meet her again, and this is a task he accomplishes not by examining his own life but by seeing the lives of others before him: his ancestors.

Philip Skotte has served as a U.S. Foreign Service officer for 28 years, serving in Manila, Vatican City, Hong Kong, Budapest, Moscow, Shanghai and Washington, D.C. Before joining the Foreign Service, he worked as a schoolteacher, ship’s carpenter and commercial fisherman. He is also the author of *Why Jesus Won’t Go Away: A Diplomat Reflects on Faith* (2014) and *Twenty Things to Do after You Die* (2020).



### **Egypt: The Book of Time**

Michael Gfoeller, Outskirts Press, 2021, \$57.95/paperback, e-book available, 206 pages.

Michael Gfoeller first set foot in Egypt back in 1979 as an international student. In his introduction to this book of photographs, he calls that first sojourn in Cairo “a life-changing shock, a jolt of consciousness-raising cultural electricity.”

He has returned to Egypt often over the years, waging “a lifelong struggle with its ancient language, which is of maddening difficulty and entrancing richness.” In these pages, he offers the reader a selection of his photographs of Egyptian temples and monuments, each accompanied by translations of the hieroglyphic texts that adorn them. Unlike modern writing, the hieroglyphic script was intended to be both visual art and writing, both image and text, simultaneously. Indeed, their aesthetic quality reinforces the message of each inscription, indissolubly combining meaning and beauty.

Ambassador (ret.) Michael Gfoeller is an independent consultant on international politics and security matters. Beginning in 1984, his 26-year State Department Foreign Service career took him and his FSO spouse, Tatiana, a tandem (see p. 64 for her book), to Riyadh, Manama, Baghdad, Moscow, Yerevan, Chisinau, Warsaw and Brussels. Fittingly, in 2004 he concluded his diplomatic career where it had begun: in Riyadh. After spending four years there as deputy chief of mission and chargé d'affaires, he served two more years as senior political adviser to the U.S. Central Command, with the rank of ambassador, before retiring from the Foreign Service in 2010.

Ambassador Gfoeller is also the author of *The Eccentric Traveler* (2020), as well as three books offering photographic surveys of Armenia, Myanmar and Constantinople.



**Big Know: What I Wish I Knew About Italian Food, Vol. I, The Green Volume**

Mikkela Thompson, Blurb, 2020, \$20.20/paperback, 182 pages.

In preparation for her 2020 Foreign Service assignment to Rome, OMS Mikkela Thompson made a decision. She would “write what I *think* I know about Italian food, and then I will look it up.” She had absolutely no firsthand

information about Italy, so she collected the stories and information in this book from friends, both Italians and Italophiles, consulted Google and Wikipedia, and read such books as *Sex in History* and *Food in History*, both by Reay Tannahill. (She thoughtfully appends the sources her research tapped in the references section.)

At the suggestion of a friend, Mikkela envisions this work as the first of three volumes named “Green,” “White” and “Red,” in honor of “il Tricolore,” the Italian flag. She explains that the official symbolism of that flag has several layers of meaning. Since green is the color of naivety and envy, it makes sense for that to kick off the series—both because this first book discusses what the author does not yet know and expresses the jealousy we all feel for those who already do know.

See p. 67 for her latest books for children about food and fun activities in Peru.



**Tales, Tall and Short, About Food in Peru**

Mikkela Thompson, Blurb, 2020, \$20.20/paperback, 158 pages.

After spending three years in Peru, Mikkela Thompson found herself on what she euphemistically describes as “a creative retreat in the Commonwealth of Virginia” during the COVID-19 pandemic in August 2020. After finishing several of the titles included

in this compilation, she decided to write another book—“like the ones I like to read.”

While each of these 35 short chapters discusses a particular Peruvian delicacy she recalls fondly, the author also manages to work in a lot of useful information about the country’s past and present along the way. But she gives fair warning in her introduction: “So here goes, my tales, some tall (as in, could that be true? I will not be adding references, so you will have to go look for yourself).”

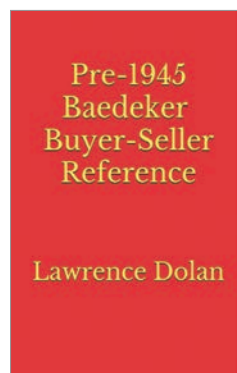


**M's Adventures in Peru**

Mikkela Thompson, Blurb, 2020, \$51.93/hardcover, 28 pages.

As Mikkela Thompson concluded her OMS tour in Lima in 2020, she took time to reflect on the experiences and people who had made her three years there so

pleasurable and memorable. She had already documented many of those through her blog of the same name, so there is some overlap between this book and the others previously discussed. But the sheer range of shoutouts—including some not found on most tourists’ itineraries—and hundreds of her striking photographs, make this slim volume invaluable for anyone who wants



**Pre-1945 Baedeker Buyer-Seller Reference**

Lawrence Dolan, independently published, 2019, \$9.95/paperback, e-book available, 198 pages.

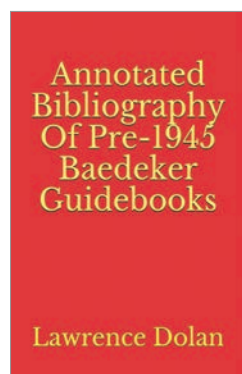
Verlag Karl Baedeker, founded by Karel Baedeker in 1827, was a German publisher and pioneer in the business of worldwide travel guides. These guidebooks, often referred to simply as Baedekers, contain, among other



things, maps and introductions; information about routes and travel facilities; and descriptions of noteworthy buildings, sights, attractions and museums, written by specialists.

Lawrence Dolan became interested in Baedekers while he was pursuing a Ph.D. in urban and regional planning. He began collecting the guides at that time and continued after he joined the Foreign Service and moved overseas. Over the years, he acquired more than 900 Baedekers, mostly through online purchases. He also came to appreciate the need to help buyers and sellers accurately assess the condition, completeness and rarity of these individual guides. This book provides a description of every Baedeker edition, summarizes prices that have been realized for the edition at eBay auctions, and then lists material in the front and back of each edition that is particularly susceptible to being lost.

Lawrence Dolan worked for USAID for nearly 25 years, first as a personal services contractor program officer (1992-2001). He joined the Foreign Service in 2001, serving as a program and education officer in Bangladesh, Ghana, Pakistan and Indonesia. In addition, he served as the USAID Pakistan desk officer in 2009 and 2010. He retired from USAID in 2016. Currently a graduate student in education technology at Northern Vermont University, he has created a website to demonstrate how Baedeker guides can be used as teaching tools in primary and secondary schools. He lives in Saint Jonesbury, Vermont.

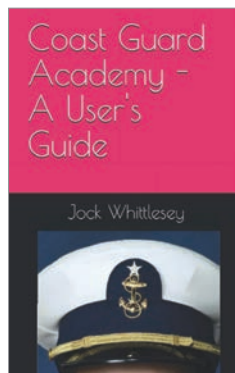


### **Annotated Bibliography of Pre-1945 Baedeker Guidebooks**

Lawrence Dolan, independently published, 2019, \$9.95/paperback, e-book available, 202 pages.

In this book, Lawrence Dolan profiles all pre-1945 Baedeker guidebooks. For every edition in English, French and German, the author supplies the following information: the name of the edition, the year of publication,

the number of pages of introduction and text, and the number of maps and plans included. In addition, he offers commentary on many editions related to their contents and history. This information is likely to be of value to all who have an interest in old Baedekers, whether collectors or sellers.



### **Coast Guard Academy—A User's Guide**

Jock Whittlesey, independently published, 2021, \$27/paperback, e-book available, 197 pages.

While FSO Jock Whittlesey was serving in Beijing, his son Philip entered the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in the summer of 2016 and graduated in May 2020 as an ensign. This book, based on Jock's experience as the parent of an academy cadet, seeks to describe and explain a unique and somewhat obscure institution to potential applicants and their families.

Its 11 chapters, illustrated with handsome photographs of the campus, cover pretty much anything and everything readers could want to know about the Coast Guard Academy: its history, admissions process, daily activities (both before and after COVID-19, which changed many aspects of campus life), traditions (such as "Swab Summer," the school's mandatory boot camp for young men and women who have been selected to enter the academy, conducted prior to their first semester) and values.

The book concludes with a helpful glossary and a bibliography that encompasses both printed and digital resources. All in all, *Coast Guard Academy—A User's Guide* is an invaluable reference to help applicants, cadets and families understand, navigate and thrive in the special world of America's smallest, most distinctive military academy.

Jock Whittlesey served six overseas tours as a Foreign Service officer, focusing on environmental and science issues. He retired in 2018 and now works part-time in the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Bureau as an editor for the annual Country Reports on Human Rights. He and his wife, Monique Wong, live in Jupiter, Florida. ■

# A Partnership-Centered Approach TO THE INDO-PACIFIC

**To maintain peace and prosperity in the trans-Pacific and beyond, the United States should rely on a proven strength.**

BY JONATHAN AHLSTROM

**N**estled in a corner of the joint Naval and Air Force base on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, a small restaurant overlooks the turquoise channel of water as it makes its final push from Pearl Harbor to the Pacific Ocean. From there, one often sees the silhouette of a submarine gliding peacefully through the water—a small intrusion on the calm surface. One day, on one submarine, however, the flag flying proudly on the sail does not show the stars and stripes, but instead a single red circle resting on a white backdrop—a rising sun.

The gravity of the moment might initially escape an observer as the submarine sails past the memorialized site of the battleship USS *Arizona*, whose sailors remain forever entombed in their watery grave following the devastating Japanese attack

on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. An observer might not understand the significance of the submarine sailing on past the looming silhouette of the battleship USS *Missouri*, whose decks served as a backdrop to Japan's unconditional surrender after the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

Looking closer, one would see the single most powerful aspect of the entire event: An American and a Japanese naval officer, once mortal enemies, sit beside each other on the submarine's sail, smiling, talking and exchanging stories as they head out for regular joint undersea operations to ensure peace and prosperity in the western Pacific.

The Japanese American story captures the essence of one of the United States' greatest strategic advantages: the ability to build enduring partnerships with other countries. This ability is extremely important today in the context of rivalry with China, a growing great power that is capable of shifting the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region in its favor.

Though we are far from the days of the Chinese emperors, China's approach to partnership-building maintains an element of cultivating vassals, not partners. This approach misses the connective tissue that forms between nations working toward shared common interests, and often employs leverage rather than



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U.S. NAVY/RONALD D GUTTRIDGE

**Japanese submarine JS *Mochishio* arrives at Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam in October 2011 to support a multinational naval exercise designed to strengthen regional partnerships and improve multinational interoperability.**

constructing relationships of mutual respect that celebrate religious, cultural and institutional differences.

To capitalize on its advantages in building enduring partnerships, the United States must intensify efforts to bring allies together to maintain global peace and prosperity in the trans-Pacific region and beyond. Genuine partnerships are a force multiplier and can directly serve American strategic interests and initiatives at home and abroad.

## Understanding the U.S.-China Rivalry

For the United States to engage in serious conversations with international partners on the challenges of the Sino-American relationship in the trans-Pacific region, it is important to enumerate a set of initial suppositions, some of which might be hard for Americans to accept at first.

*First, rivalry with China is not all bad.* The United States' response to the rivalry is what matters. Historically, rivalry has brought out America's competitive spirit. A rivalry forces Americans to be better, not repose in complacency and, above all, do what America does best—innovate. A rivalry today must see American innovation increase to the pace necessary to face tomorrow's global challenges.

*Second, the rise of China reveals weaknesses in U.S. foreign policy, foreign development efforts and the military.* American efforts abroad have real weaknesses and inconsistencies. Failing

to identify these weaknesses can have serious consequences. It is how the United States responds to these challenges that matters.

*Third, the Sino-American relationship is complex.* Although ideological differences exist, the Sino-American rivalry is a very different competition from the Cold War. China is integrated into the world economy and has a different demographic profile, geography and culture, and a much larger economy relative to ours than did Soviet Russia. In addition to the deep economic ties between the United States and China, more than 350,000 Chinese students were studying at American institutions during the 2019-2020 academic year. The United States must assume and appreciate that similar complexities exist between other nations and China. American policymakers need to make tough choices, but posing binary choices in many instances will prove insufficient to ensure a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

*Fourth, how the United States conducts itself in this era of great power rivalry matters.* Although taking the high road is that much harder when the competitor takes the low road, it is still the right thing to do. China's treatment of the minority Muslim population of Uighurs in the Xinjiang region, where millions are imprisoned and mosques are systematically destroyed, is an example of taking the low road. The United States' employment of "enhanced interrogation" techniques, a euphemism for torture, following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks is another—and it has proved costly in light of America's professed interest in promot-



ing democratic society, human rights, freedom from oppression and economic prosperity. The concession of values inevitably yields a much deeper negative consequence than the perceived immediate gains.

*Finally, this is not a war, a competition or a rivalry that America can “win” in the traditional sense. History shows that declaring victory in a competition that one can never truly win achieves only short-term gain, proving detrimental over time. If U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region is solely driven by the need to “win,” then we have chosen a path that assures defeat.*

### Three Additional Domains for Partnership-Building

In light of the challenges China poses to the United States today, the conversation tends to concentrate overmuch on the military component of partnerships. Military capabilities represent an indispensable factor in the trans-Pacific equation; however, a partnership is much more than security assistance or military spending. To build cohesive partnerships that effectively balance the challenges posed by China to the liberal world order, the United States should, at a minimum, address three additional domains.

**Energy.** First, as the world rallies around the need to respond to the real challenges of climate change, the United States must focus on energy sector development with partner countries. Governments and international providers are putting in place strategies to lead away from carbon-based fuels. China's Belt and Road Initiative, a global infrastructure development strategy, brings the promise of energy, but often with significant costs to a country's autonomy and independence. The United States is well positioned to be a leader in the energy development field, and the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development are already leading international energy initiatives. The United States can bring to bear a holistic government approach to partnership-building that capitalizes on the expertise of the Development Finance Cooperation, Export-Import Bank, Department of Energy, and so on. Partners should establish a focused agenda to cover



**In October 2019, PetroVietnam Gas began construction on the Thi Vai LNG terminal, Vietnam's first large-scale liquefied natural gas facility and an important strategic step toward energy security in Vietnam. The facility is projected to come online in late 2022.**

energy sector diversification, private-sector investment, sustainable energy development and energy security.

The Japan-U.S. Strategic Energy Partnership (JUSEP) is a model of effective collaboration in this area. A joint effort committed to growing sustainable and secure energy markets across the globe, this interagency program facilitates close coordination between the development and finance arms of each government to offer workable solutions to countries in need. Most recently, under the umbrella of JUSEP, new levels of cooperation in liquefied natural gas (LNG) and renewable energy development in Vietnam have been achieved. These efforts are in line with the ongoing commitment from both countries to collaborate on developing the energy sector of the lower Mekong River.

**The digital economy.** Second, although the United States recognizes the digital economy is growing rapidly around the world, it should employ a tailored approach to partnership-building in this domain. China today represents more than 40 percent of the global digital and e-commerce transactions and continues to expand its share. Beijing expends significant effort and treasure in extending its digital influence through key positions on international governance boards, fast-paced roll-out of 5G infrastructure and technology, and initiatives under the umbrella of the Digital Silk Road. China employs extreme cross-border data flow restrictions, and valid international concerns exist over fair competition and access to intellectual property rights for companies operating in the Chinese sector or through Digital Silk Road projects.

As in the energy sector, it is important to recognize that countries are at different stages of digital sophistication. It is imperative for the United States to work with partners to advocate an open and transparent digital economy in developed

and developing countries. A comprehensive strategy must seek to grow infrastructure and guide regulation development. The Standards Alliance, a public-private partnership between the U.S. Agency for International Development and the American Standards Institute, is an effective existing platform to engage partners further on this. The partnership focuses on capacity-building assistance in developing countries and allows for joint work with international partners to this end. Through this approach, partner countries are more likely to reject state control, invasive monitoring and direct interference in the development of their digital economies.

**Exchanges.** Third, the United States must seriously commit to the need for cultural, educational and people-to-people exchanges called for in its National Security Strategy. The United States is globally recognized as a leader in education, leadership development and youth exchanges. However, resting on one's laurels is not sufficient in today's challenging environment. As China's Confucius Institutes multiply and promote youth education and cultural exchange programs, it is time for the United States to re-recognize the long-term strategic benefits of such programs. Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's strong connection to the United States undoubtedly has its roots in his time as a student at the University of Southern California. However, today Japanese students more often search for opportunities to study in China than they do in the United States.

Understanding the culture and motivations of our partners is as important as understanding those of our potential adversaries. Few historical examples of failed understanding are more tragic than the lessons of the Vietnam War—two, in particular. First, the United States underestimated the nationalism that primarily motivated the North Vietnamese. Second, as former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara acknowledged in his 1996 memoir, *In Retrospect*, the United States failed to understand South Vietnamese leaders because we viewed the problem only through the lens of American experience.

## Opportunities, Not Burdens

The United States cannot afford to view alliances as burdens, but rather as opportunities in which to invest. In the

world of finance, the traditional mutual fund finds its greatest value through diversification—creating resilience to the swings of the market. A coalition of partners, each contributing unique value to the greater cause, operates similarly. As with an investment, the quality of the portfolio matters: Capable and reliable allies are the bedrock of the mutual fund.

Along the same lines, good partnerships are also force multipliers. For example, a strong bilateral relationship with Japan helps improve U.S. relations with Vietnam, providing new avenues of approach to growing this less-robust partnership.

Because Japan is one of Vietnam's most significant foreign aid donors, a strong U.S.-Japan relationship opens doors for joint endeavors in critical areas such as energy infrastructure development or rare earth metal cultivation. In the face of Beijing's encroachment and territorial claims in the South China Sea, Japan and Vietnam operate together under a bilateral defense arrangement. This, in turn, offers the opportunity for improved defense arrangements with the United States.

Finally, the United States should view the challenges presented by

China as more than a trans-Pacific matter. The United States must reinvest in renewing strained relationships with our trans-Atlantic allies and partners, as well. As a new generation of leaders ascend to senior positions in American government, none wear the scars of total world war, few have grappled with the faraway horrors of the Vietnam War and only a minority grasp the depth of tensions of the Cold War. This is not to say that today's generations are without scars. However, the lessons of the past that formed the foundations of our existing democracy, international organizations and the liberal world order are fading from memory.

Although burden-sharing is an important element of traditional defense agreements, the discord surrounding defense spending must not overshadow the importance of growing, and in some cases renewing, cross-domain cooperation with both new and long-standing allies. To gain momentum in the Indo-Pacific region, the United States must build on its record of success and engage in a whole-of-government approach to partnership-building with other responsible members of the international community. ■



**In September 2019, delegates of the U.S.-Japan Leadership Program gathered in Tokyo in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the program's founding. The program annually selects young leaders from both countries to collaborate, learn from each other, and establish a lasting network of friendship and understanding.**

# Supporting Special Needs Families Abroad

**Special needs families have a lot on their plate. Learning to connect with them will help the whole Foreign Service community thrive.**

BY KAREM R. ENSLEY

Parents of children with special needs have an especially bumpy path when trying to find their next job. When bidding for a post, they have to jump through hoops to get medical clearances for their children, find a school that can provide the services the child needs, apply for extra funding to cover these costly services that would otherwise be free in the United States, and so on. In some instances, they may find themselves moving into a society that views their child as “less than,” or they may even feel that they are an unwelcome addition to the U.S. embassy community.



*Karem R. Ensley is a child behavior specialist, international educational consultant and certified special education teacher. She has worked with families and schools worldwide to find the right educational placement and resources for special*

*needs children, as well as providing specialized instruction to supplement each student's needs. Karem is an advocate for a more inclusive environment for children with disabilities in international schools, as well as a Foreign Service family member. She can be contacted at [KaremEnsley@gmail.com](mailto:KaremEnsley@gmail.com).*

These families have a lot on their plate. They have no family support close at hand, and most are still trying to figure out the best way to understand and help their child. Raising a special needs child is an ongoing process of discovery, regardless of where you live. The types of difficulties that each child must navigate range greatly—a speech impediment, an autism diagnosis, medical device needs, physical disabilities, inattentiveness, emotional struggles—and every child with special needs is different. Even if they have the same diagnosis, their needs, their personality and their interests can be worlds apart, just like any other child.

Chances are there is a family going through this at your post right now. Many of us want to help and connect, but do not know how. Below are some thoughts and observations from Foreign Service parents of special needs kids that might help us better appreciate their journey. With a little understanding, we might be able to connect and become an ally to our fellow officers—enabling them, ourselves and our community to thrive together as we carry out our vital mission.

**1. Please keep inviting us to social events. We might not always say yes, but we still want to be included.** Being parents of special needs kids can be a lonely journey. Without immediate family and other special education parents to rely on, or relate to, they can feel very isolated when reaching a





## Extending social invitations is a powerful signal to parents of special needs children that they are truly part of a community.

new post. Having a sense of community and a support system are among the most critical assets a family with a special needs child can have. They desire deeply to be plugged into their broader community of fellow parents, but must ask for a measure of patience.

For example, sometimes it is just not possible to get out of the house for an event. Everyone might be excited to go, all dressed and ready, but something might trigger a behavior in their child, and by the time everyone calms down, the event is half over. Sometimes, they can't arrange childcare; in some cases, any prospective sitter must have special qualifications or training. When trying to chat with other parents, they may be continuously interrupted because they cannot leave their children, who are needing parental guidance and support for social interactions, unattended.

Nonetheless, extending social invitations is a powerful signal to parents of special needs children that they are truly part of a community that genuinely wants to understand their situation and is there to support them.

**2. We appreciate your help.** It is tough knowing how to help a parent who you see might be struggling because you

might not want to intrude or be rude. However, people can always be helpful in the smallest ways. The most useful assistance is very specific, like offering to hold their bag or watch one kid while the other is taken to the bathroom; or, on a higher level, offering to take the other siblings out for the day, babysit or cook meals.

"How can I help you?" is a great question to ask because it offers presence and a willingness to help right away. More vague questions and comments like "Let me know if you need help" or "I don't know how you do it" have a connotation of separation or exclusion and do not translate to real help.

Genuine empathy is greatly appreciated as these families navigate their series of daily hurdles. Combining compassion with a little help can make a world of difference.

### **3. We'd love you to teach your children about differences.**

Parents of special needs children harbor the hope that their child's peers will see their child beyond the superficial profile of being "different," and allow them the dignity of being seen and heard as a unique individual just as worthy as any other child in the room.

By talking to our kids about the differences among others, and how these attributes can be strengths that add to our community's diversity, we can plant a seed of curiosity that might make our kids want to take the time to get to know their special needs peers. This will lead to comfortable questions when they see others with different ways of speaking, hearing aids or leg braces, a different face structure or different behavior patterns.

Most important, it can minimize the unfortunate pointing and staring, which leave the child with special needs feeling

**“How can I help you?” is a great question to ask because it offers presence and a willingness to help right away.**

sad, uncomfortable and isolated. These parents don’t want us to pretend that there is no disability, but instead to see beyond it, and acknowledge their child’s own unique passions, qualities, strengths and skills. In time, having a better understanding of diversity in all its forms will lead to enriching social interactions for all children involved.

**4. Our kids also want to be accepted and included.** One of the most heartbreaking experiences for any parent is witnessing their child being excluded in a social setting. Some parents of special needs children endure this pain frequently. Often children with special needs don’t have the social or physical skills to jump in and play, interact and converse with others. Some children may need a little time to join the group, but this does not mean they do not want to be a part of it. Please keep giving them a chance and ask them to join again.

Some special needs children might get overwhelmed or tired while in a group, and they might need a break; but this doesn’t mean that they want to stop interacting altogether. Welcoming them after they have a break will allow them to keep having fun and keep practicing their skills. Including them in the choice of game or topic of conversation is another way to make sure they can take part in the activity.

When our kids learn how to include others, especially those with special needs, and develop the skills of empathy and understanding, it will be a meaningful and proud milestone in their own development, as well.

**5. Getting my child the help they need overseas is not easy.** Parents with special needs kids often find themselves pushing boulders up hills to get their child the resources they need at post. Some parents struggle with medical services or gear that might not be readily available. Some even struggle with getting the right foods for their child at post, which is why you might see some strange DPO/Pouch orders; please be understanding that these items might be among the few foods a child is able to eat. Some schools around the world are great; but, unfortunately, most international schools do not offer the services (or the quality of services) and trained staff necessary to educate special needs children effectively.



# The Gow School


Gow is a coed college prep boarding school for students, grades 6-12, with dyslexia and similar language based learning disabilities.

Come explore Gow.



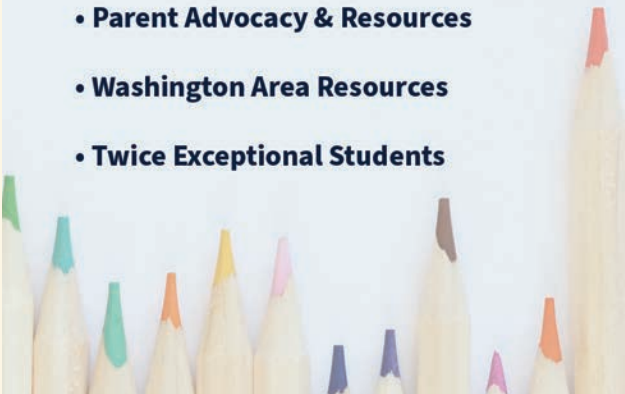
[www.gow.org](http://www.gow.org)

## Need Help Navigating Special Needs Questions?



The Global Community Liaison Office (GCLO) can guide you. Visit GCLO’s **Special Needs and the Foreign Service Child** webpage on [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) to learn more about:

- Parent Advocacy & Resources
- Washington Area Resources
- Twice Exceptional Students



Some children may need a little time to join the group, but this does not mean they do not want to be a part of it.

If you are in a place of power—school board representative, member of a parent teacher organization, community liaison officer, regional security officer, management officer or parents of school children—please become allies of the families with special needs children.

Our special needs community members need allies to start asking the officials at these schools—who benefit enormously from U.S. government dollars—the following direct questions: “Do you accept special needs students at your school?” And, if the answer is no, then the follow-up questions would be “Why not?” and “How do we change that?”

**6. My child is not bad.** One of the most commonly recurring comments that parents of special needs kids share with me is their desire for other parents to understand that their children are not “bad” children because they “misbehave.” They want you to know that they are working hard, usually with numerous specialists, to teach their child how to better control their body, their emotions and their impulsivity, as well as how to better cope with different noises, places and people.

If you see a child “misbehaving,” ask yourself if there might be a reason for the behavior other than bad parenting or not enough discipline. Instead of staring or rolling our eyes, a reassuring smile, a “How can I help you?” or at least carrying on as normal gives these families the social breathing space they need to attend to the occasional turbulence in a public setting.

**7. We are sometimes targeted within our own community.** A surprising and unfortunate realization I had while researching this article is that some parents of special needs children have been targeted from within our community. They described unfriendly actions by other members of our community toward them because of their special needs child’s behavior, such as leveraging community resources against them or sending judgmental text messages about their parenting. This sort of phenomenon reflects a lack of understanding of what families with special needs children go through, and it could be ameliorated by some of the efforts outlined above. If you see such unwarranted harassment, please speak up on

behalf of the family with special needs, letting that parent know that what you observed is not acceptable and does not reflect how their broader community views them.

No one is better at forming and sustaining meaningful relationships than the U.S. Foreign Service community—it’s what we do. The Foreign Service is a world-renowned institution that seeks to promote dignity and compassion for people all over

the world. It endeavors to provide assistance to those in need while seeking to uphold core values of equality and inclusiveness. Honoring these values, and putting them into practice, is no less important in our very own community of FS families and associated government agency families at post.

Our fellow FS families who have answered the call to support the department’s mission abroad, and are trying to do so while grappling with the challenges of raising a child with special needs, deserve our empathy and patience. Let’s extend our hands and let them know they are not alone, that they are valued members of this community, and that we are here to support them whenever they need. It’s what we do. ■



ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/YACOBCHUK



# The Best Diplomat I Ever Knew

George Vest  
1918–2021

BY MARK TOKOLA

It did not come as a surprise, but it was nevertheless a shock to see that George S. Vest had passed away on Aug. 24, 2021, at the age of 102. It was a shock akin to seeing the obituary of a Hollywood star or a beloved artist. Even for a reader of advanced years, learning of the passing of a role model creates the feeling of being a bit orphaned.

I use the term “role model” because I cannot claim George Vest as a mentor. I did not know him well enough to say that. I did, however, work for him twice, once as his staff assistant in 1980 when he was assistant secretary for European affairs, and again in Brussels while he

was U.S. ambassador to the European Union (or European Community, as it was known then). I valued my other brief, subsequent encounters with him. He was the best diplomat I ever knew.

George Vest was never a famous diplomatic name along the lines of a Chip Bohlen, Averell Harriman or Richard Holbrooke. Maybe it was because the positions he held didn’t draw that kind of attention; but I never got the impression he was interested in fame or acclaim. He does, however, appear in the index of Kenneth Weisbrode’s 2009 book, *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats Who Forged America’s Vital Alliance with Europe*, which shows that although Vest worked quietly, he could not go unnoticed.

Among his contributions was coining the term “baskets” in regard to the sections of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Helsinki Accords. He was the lead negotiator in preparations for the CSCE, conducted talks with the Soviet Union on arms control, and was one of the few



*Mark Tokola is a retired Senior Foreign Service officer now serving as vice president of the Korea Economic Institute. He joined the Foreign Service in 1976 and retired in 2014.*

## But it was not George Vest's diplomatic achievements that had such an impact on me; it was his management skill and basic humanity.

American diplomats to work intensively with both NATO and the European Union. He reached the pinnacle of the Service with the rank of Career Ambassador and the position of Director General of the Foreign Service.

But it was not George Vest's diplomatic achievements that had such an impact on me; it was his management skill and basic humanity. He proved that one can be decent and good-humored while also being skillful and effective.

The year I was one of George Vest's staff assistants, 1980, was a terrible year. The Soviet Union had just invaded Afghanistan; the Iranian hostage crisis loomed over everything; and Josip Tito was dying in Yugoslavia, with the terrible aftereffects for the Balkans that some State Department officials foresaw. The Bureau of European Affairs (EUR) staff meetings often had a crisis atmosphere. Yet, George Vest chaired those meetings with calming authority and control. On one of the tensest mornings, he settled the keyed-up atmosphere of the meeting by opening it with a report on a new barbecue recipe. Then he said: "Now, let's get to work."

It was apparent to me that Vest had enormous respect throughout the State Department. Working up through the various levels of classification of communications, they became increasingly elaborate until we got to the very top of the chain, which were the handwritten notes that George Vest would give me, simply folded over, and tell me to give directly to Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher. I never unfolded them to read them—I had no "need to know"—but when I handed them over, they were read immediately. He earned similar confidence among European officials in Brussels. As one of my locally hired Belgian colleagues later told me: "When Ambassador Vest was here, all of the telephone calls were incoming; now they are all outgoing."

George Vest was as thoughtful regarding his subordinates as he was toward the State Department leadership. He had a habit

of whistling in the hallway, which I found disarming, but which I later realized he did to give EUR staff warning that he was coming. He often visited staff in their offices rather than asking that they come to his, but did not want to surprise them by suddenly showing up in their doorways. He was peripatetic at the U.S.

Mission in Brussels, as well, often putting his head into the staff's offices to tell them to go home at the end of the day. "Whatever you're doing, I'm sure it will keep until tomorrow. Go home."

One of George Vest's chief characteristics was his easy, good humor. I cannot vouch for accounts that early in his career he used to roller skate in the Old Executive Office Building, but I can recount firsthand that he opened an EUR ambassadors' gathering by asking for a show of hands of all who watched the television soap "Dynasty," which he told them he enjoyed. While I was bag-carrying for him in London, I heard a footman asked Vest how he should be announced at a grand reception. He thought for a moment and then said: "Call me the Baron of Virginia." He was not a football fan, but put on his over-the-neck

serving tray to deliver drinks and snacks to people who gathered at the residence to watch

Super Bowls. He had dignity without being stuffy.

Others will have their own recollections of George Vest's style. The last one I have is from his tenure as Director General. An upset officer asked to see Vest. The officer was aggrieved that he hadn't received the promotion he was sure he deserved. Vest heard him out patiently and then told him: "You know you should have been promoted. I agree. So promote yourself in your own mind, and wait for the system to catch up."

I'm not going to say, "They don't make them like that anymore." I worked for other terrific ambassadors, both career and political appointees, during my 38 years at State, and have met very impressive new ones since I retired. I just hope they can inspire in the same way that George Vest did for me and others who worked for him. ■



STILL PICTURES BRANCH, NATIONAL ARCHIVES

George Vest, circa 1974.

## View from Washington

## AFSA President Outlines Challenges Facing the Foreign Service

The Foreign Service, facing a host of serious issues, is at a crucial crossroads, AFSA President Eric Rubin said in a Sept. 9 virtual “View from Washington” meeting with Foreign Service retirees.

“We have been desperately underfunded for decades—since the end of the Cold War. We’ve cut our engagement in half since then,” he said. “We have many



AFSA President Eric Rubin.

embassies around the world that are continuing to have a very difficult time getting all their work done because they are understaffed.”

Compared to a decade ago, only about a quarter as many people today are applying to become Foreign Service officers, Ambassador Rubin said. “We still have superb officers coming in,

*Continued on p. 91*

## AFSA Calls for Improved Confirmation Process

You may have noticed that some of AFSA’s social media messages over the past few months related to delays in both the nomination and confirmation processes for senior positions in foreign affairs agencies, including ambassadorships.

With this messaging, we hoped to highlight the obstacles facing our members who could fill these positions and to raise broader concerns of national interest. As Congress came back for its September legislative session, AFSA ramped up calls to address the over-politicization of these processes.

Many of the pending Foreign Service promotion lists saw passage in the Senate just before the August recess or earlier this summer. AFSA thanks the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senate leadership for confirming these lists and recognizing a key element of retention in the Foreign Service: the ability to have one’s promotion confirmed in a reasonable time frame.

The following are key themes we are communicating on social media these days. If you don’t already, please follow AFSA on

Facebook ([facebook.com/afsapage](https://facebook.com/afsapage)) and Twitter (@[@afsatweets](https://twitter.com/afsatweets)) and help amplify our social media campaign by sharing AFSA’s posts and tweets.

- The State Department has more Senate-confirmed political appointees than any other federal agency. Thus, there are simply more appointments to be made and more confirmations to devote time to in the Senate. The workload is substantial and, while it is understandable that it would take some time for the executive and legislative branches to act, they must be prepared to do so promptly.

- At USAID, only the Administrator has been confirmed. Of real concern, there are no career Foreign Service officers nominated to any Senate-confirmed positions, including assistant administrator. The absence of seasoned career FSOs in senior Washington positions denies the Administrator, USAID staff and the interagency the perspective, leadership and lessons that come from proven field experience.

- Despite many bipartisan confirmation

*Continued on p. 92*

## CALENDAR

Please check [www.afsa.org](https://www.afsa.org) for the most up-to-date information.

November 3  
9-10 a.m.

**AFSA Global Town Hall  
(SCA, NEA)**

November 4  
12-1 p.m.

**Webinar: 2022 FEHB  
Insurance and Benefits,  
including Medicare  
coordination**

November 4  
4-5 p.m.

**AFSA Global Town Hall  
(WHA)**

November 5  
12-1 p.m.

**AFSA Global Town Hall  
(CONUS)**

November 9 – December 13  
**Federal Health Benefits  
Open Season**

November 9  
10-11 a.m.

**AFSA Global Town Hall  
(AF, EUR)**

November 10  
Time TBD

**Happy Hour Honoring the  
60th Anniversary of USAID  
at The Hamilton**

November 11  
**Veterans Day:  
AFSA Offices Closed**

November 17  
12-2 p.m.  
**AFSA Governing  
Board Meeting**

November 25-26  
**Thanksgiving Holiday:  
AFSA Offices Closed**

December 8  
12-2 p.m.  
**AFSA Governing  
Board Meeting**





## Update on Priority Issues for Members

Here's a snapshot of some significant issues we are working on for our members. AFSA remains hopeful that by the time of publication, any of these issues that are not fully resolved will have at least received a response so that AFSA, if necessary, can take further action.

**Payroll problems.** This continues to be the issue generating the most comments and inquiries (and complaints) from members. Since the new payroll system was introduced in February, nearly every employee has been affected. Active-duty employees, contractors and retirees have reported issues ranging from not getting paychecks at all to not receiving hardship or differential payments. They've also reported missing leave hours and deduction issues, including some affecting their Thrift Savings Plan.

AFSA, itself, has not been immune. Some new members, fresh out of orientation, have seen their AFSA dues deducted from paychecks, but AFSA isn't receiving the funds.

As we reported in August, the leadership at Charleston Global Financial Services told us that the number of cases, while high, had stabilized, and that by the end of September (pay period 19) retroactive payments were to be completed.

That deadline is very near

as of this writing. And while we hope it will be met, we're prepared to take further action as needed.

AFSA will in any case advocate for interest to be included in these payments. If payments are not completed by the deadline, AFSA will demand that State Department leadership provide the people and resources needed to fix this problem immediately.

**TICing out at FS-2.** It used to be that during a normal career span, FSOs could expect to reach the FS-1 level. That certainly is not as true today as it was when I joined in 1991.

Indeed, in 2014 and earlier, the number of FS-2 generalists promoted to FS-1 exceeded 15 percent. In 2017 and 2018 the rate fell below 10 percent. In 2019 it improved slightly to 10.1 percent, and in 2020 it rose to 11.9 percent.

A big part of the problem is the feast-or-famine way new hires are brought into the Service; that has made the FS-2 to FS-1 jump hyper-competitive at this moment. In any event, we have heard from members who are in danger of TICing out at the FS-2 level.

As a result, I have written to the Bureau of Global Talent Management asking for data on the number of generalist FS-2s who could potentially reach their TIC dates in 2022 and 2023; the

number of FS-2s who were separated for expiration of TIC in 2017-2020; and, for comparison purposes, the number of FS-2s who were separated for expiration of their TIC in 2014 and 2010.

**Investment accounts closing for overseas members.** Several of our overseas members have told us that their investment accounts are in danger of being abruptly closed due to conditions of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act that prevent investment firms from providing certain financial services to anyone who is located outside the United States.

But our members are not expatriates who permanently reside abroad and pay taxes to host governments. FS members pay taxes only to the U.S. government, and the FATCA should not apply.

We have written letters to individual account managers, but with varying degrees of success; we are working with the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs and the Treasury Department to arrive at a global solution for all our members.

**DETO tandems with military members.** In a recent letter to GTM, I took up another issue important to members: AFSA supports an effort by several State and USAID employees who are military or Department of Defense spouses and

domestic employees teleworking overseas (DETOs) to be able to work while at post.

The problem is that these DETOs are not being approved for overseas work if they cannot meet chief of mission (COM) security standards or if obtaining approval would require significant regional security office resources—even when they are living in military base housing with their spouses. This is particularly common in countries with large U.S. military bases, such as Germany.

It seems to AFSA that a memorandum of understanding could be developed that would transfer COM authority to DoD for security and other potential responsibilities that might arise. This arrangement is already in place for POLAD positions; why shouldn't DETOs be included, as well?

If the State Department is interested in keeping families together, promoting employment for tandems and ensuring workplace flexibility, this is a prime example of where it can make a difference. We will continue to raise the issue and keep you informed.

Please write us at [member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org). We only know of problems, concerns and ideas when our members inform us.

Wishing you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving! ■



## Reflections on an Anniversary: USAID at 60

Scottish theologian William Barclay said, “There are two great days in a person’s life—the day we are born and the day we discover why.”

That November day in 1961 when President John F. Kennedy signed the Foreign Assistance Act into law and created the United States Agency for International Development by executive order was indeed a great day. USAID and its mission, codified in the act, embody American goodness—American drive, leadership, acumen and strategic foresight.

Sixty years on, USAID has strong and broad bipartisan support in Congress. We are present in more than 80 countries, with programs in more than 100. The people of the world—including the American people—are better for it.

USAID has proven its resilience, value and—yes, some may scoff—nimbleness across administrations, budgets, Administrators, natural and other disasters, fragmentation of foreign assistance, earmarks, mixed public sentiment, interagency tussles, ever-changing priorities and global dynamics.

USAID’s Foreign Service officers have been at the forefront of the agency’s global engagement and perseverance. So, yes, on our 60th anniversary, it is fitting to reflect on USAID’s creation and its accomplishments, and to raise a glass in celebration.

But what about the “why” of USAID? That answer is both complex and simple.

Administrations and Administrators have their own priorities, passions and peeves regarding development, leading to new policies, plans and people for the agency.

To complicate matters, congressional committees, representatives and staffers advocate for and represent their—and their constituents’—interests and concerns. Regional, national and local political economies, security contexts and stakeholders frequently change.



Last but not least are our actual beneficiaries and their needs (remember them?). USAID is a development institution, but also part of the U.S. national security apparatus.

All of these circumstances, entities, individuals and institutions have some influence on the “why” of USAID. Depending on whom you ask the “why” question, you may receive a variety of answers. Here are mine:

Does USAID exist to help others across the world? Yes.

Does USAID exist to help the American people? Yes.

Are these incompatible? Not in the least. In fact, this confluence is what makes being a Foreign Service officer at USAID such a privilege and joy.

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 captures the concept clearly:

*The Congress declares that the individual liberties, economic prosperity, and security of the people of the United States are best sustained and enhanced in a community of nations which respect individual civil and economic rights and*

*encouragement and sustained support of the people of developing countries in their efforts to acquire the knowledge and resources essential to development and to build the economic, political, and social institutions which will improve the quality of their lives.*

Though the world has changed in many ways since then, this rationale holds true, and continues to motivate so many of us. The tougher questions for USAID over the years have not been “why,” but rather “what” and “how.” (Actually, even “where” is a tricky question, but I’m going to punt on that one.)

The “what,” to be blunt, is “everything.” There have been many Sisyphean efforts to try to rationalize USAID’s scope and mission. Indeed, the first (and I believe only) Presidential Policy Directive on Development, signed in 2010, called for the United States to “be more selective about where and in which sectors it works,” noting that “the United States cannot do all things, do them well, and do them everywhere.”

As far as I know, that PPD is still in effect. But the reality is that even as USAID undertakes lofty “game changing innovations” to advance countries’ “journeys to self-reliance” and to “end extreme poverty,” we are on the ground trying to improve basic sanitary conditions in schools so kids can have the educations they need and deserve.

*freedoms and which work together to use wisely the world’s limited resources in an open and equitable international economic system. Furthermore, the Congress reaffirms the traditional humanitarian ideals of the American people and renews its commitment to assist people in developing countries to eliminate hunger, poverty, illness, and ignorance.*

*Therefore, the Congress declares that a principal objective of the foreign policy of the United States is the*

## **USAID and its mission, codified in the Foreign Assistance Act, embody American goodness—American drive, leadership, acumen and strategic foresight.**

We are there trying to encourage good governance and develop financial management capacity. We are there supporting elections and civic discourse.

We are there combating climate change, bolstering the rights of women, youth and other disadvantaged groups, enhancing maternal and child health, countering violent extremism, protecting endangered species, strengthening labor capacity, building farming skills, partnering with the private sector, saving lives amid disasters, fighting tuberculosis/Ebola/malaria/COVID-19, etc., enhancing trade and financial capacities, combating corruption, advancing peace dialogues—and the list goes on.

In doing these things, we are advancing the security of the United States even as we are bolstering partnerships and goodwill as we represent our country.

As to “how,” there is a consensus that development should be country-led, and that USAID should partner with more local institutions, individuals and stakeholders.

Indeed, FSOs and Foreign Service Nationals are among the biggest proponents of localization. If the agency provided them the necessary tools, human capital and legal and regulatory flexibilities, we would have greater impact.

Local institutions understandably don’t have the capacity to apply for, manage or report on large, bureaucratic USAID projects, and we don’t want them becoming dependent on USAID as part of their business models.

Smart USAID professionals have developed creative and useful partnering structures to build local capacity, but this takes time. Meanwhile, mis-sives from headquarters or other agencies “suggesting” specific partners complicate matters, as do blunt and often questionable recommendations from locally connected individuals.

FSOs and FSNs often find themselves pressured to make specific awards, undermining transparency and competition, and at times raising interagency tensions.

And then there’s the reporting; we want local, nontraditional partners to report based on complex U.S. government standard indicators and produce success stories. These are not straightforward processes, and require FSOs and FSNs to invest in capacity building and language lessons in “bureaucratese.” We risk alienating—or at least frustrating—local partners, but we are bound by mandates and are ever mindful that we are stewards of American taxpayer funds.

Factor in hard and soft earmarks, expiring funds, pipeline management pressures and lack of sufficient numbers of career FSOs in all backstops to manage more labor-intensive, locally led solutions, and you can see why the sensible and simple-sounding principle of localization is so elusive as a goal.

One straightforward step for USAID to strengthen its local perspective and field-informed policy would be for the Administrator to appoint career Foreign Service officers to leadership positions in Washington, akin to the State Department’s appointment of career FSOs to under secretary, assistant secretary and Director General positions.

Unfortunately, as of this writing, no USAID FSOs have been nominated for Senate-confirmed positions. Indeed, none of the named heads of key bureaus and offices—including those related to management, policy, conflict prevention and the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management—are FSOs.

To be clear, these are dedicated and thoughtful colleagues, but none has the extended experience, perspective and insights gained through a field-driven Foreign Service career over years across USAID missions and embassies.

I have also heard from field colleagues that USAID’s recent (and ongoing) “Reorganization” seems to have centralized decision-making in some Washington bureaus and offices, further removing

the mission’s locally informed perspective from critical policy and resource decisions.

Hopefully these situations can be addressed before USAID reaches 61!

In the future, while I am confident that American generosity and strategic vision will endure, I am less sanguine about USAID as an institution.

You can read my previous columns in this space on the institutional challenges plaguing the agency. These seem to worsen each year, as the powers-that-be focus on using USAID for short-term responses through employment workarounds at the expense of long-term development and building the career service.

With apologies to the Beatles, “Will you still need AID? Will you still Feed me the Future... when I’m 64?” I hope so but this will take true vision and strong, focused leadership.

In any event, the world is a better place thanks to USAID. Americans—and FSOs—should be proud that after 60 years we remain steadfastly committed to our mission in all its forms.

Working for USAID in any capacity is a privilege, and a field-focused career as a Foreign Service officer is extraordinarily rewarding.

None of us knows what the future will bring, particularly at USAID—where change is not just the only constant but is constant. For the moment, I’ll simply end with, “Happy anniversary, USAID.” ■





# Steps to Manage Your Retirement

As we approach the end of the year, now is a good time to assess your plans for the future. Here are eight steps that I encourage you to take to manage your retirement:

## 1. Review your FEHB

**Plan.** This year's open season for Federal Employee Health Benefits plans runs from Nov. 9 to Dec. 14. Even if you are satisfied with your current coverage, reviewing other plans could potentially save you money. For example, several plans currently reimburse you \$800 per year if you have Medicare Part B coverage.

AFSA helps you weigh your options by giving you access to The Checkbook, a great tool for comparing FEHB plans. Members will receive an email providing online access in mid-November.

## 2. Read the official State Department Annual Annuitant Newsletter.

Each November, coinciding with the start of FEHB open season, the Department of State's Office of Retirement posts an updated Annual Annuitant Newsletter on <https://RNet.state.gov> under the "What's New?" tab. You must access that newsletter if you need the form to change your health insurance or to file an earnings statement in January if you receive the annuity supplement.

All retirees should at least skim through the updated newsletter each year to remind themselves of key

policies governing their federal benefits.

## 3. Brief your survivors.

Because our family members are often unfamiliar with offices and functions in the foreign affairs agencies, AFSA has created a list of steps to take in the event of the death of a Foreign Service retiree, spouse or ex-spouse.

That list is posted in the Retirement Services section of the AFSA website ([afsa.org/retirement-services](https://afsa.org/retirement-services)) under "Reporting Deaths of Foreign Service Retirees or Survivors." The list is also included in the 2021 AFSA Directory of Retired Members.

Make a copy of the list, show it to your next-of-kin, and file it with your will.

## 4. Reassess your Thrift Savings Plan.

If your retirement income derives in part from the Thrift Savings Plan, an individual retirement account (IRA) or other financial investments, you should review the risk-versus-reward balance in your investment allocations periodically to make sure that it is still appropriate to your specific situation.

Investing in stock funds with relatively high average rates of return will increase the chances that your investments will generate gains in the coming decades that outpace inflation, but they also put you at risk of short-term losses during stock market downturns.

## The Retirement Services section of the AFSA website has nearly 100 documents, videos and links to information on retirement benefits.

You may wish to consult a professional financial adviser to determine what is best for your individual needs. A list of financial planners, tax advisers and estate planners is linked to the Retirement Services page of the AFSA website.

**5. Check for age milestones.** Are you approaching age 62 and needing to decide when to file for Social Security? Are you approaching 65 and considering whether to sign up for Medicare Part B? Are you approaching 72 and wondering what to do about required minimum distributions (RMD) from your investments?

The Retirement Services page of the AFSA website has information on these topics, including videos of presentations by experts on Social Security, Medicare Part B and TSP withdrawals.

## 6. Be aware of deadlines.

Post-retirement divorce, marriage or death of spouse must be reported promptly to the State Department. Failure to do so could delay, or in some cases permanently prevent, the benefits adjustment.

Likewise, beneficiary designations for retirement benefits, life insurance and TSP must be updated after

marriage, divorce or other relationship changes. Failure to do so will preclude the current next-of-kin from receiving those benefits.

**7. Get questions answered.** The Retirement Services section of the AFSA website has nearly 100 documents, videos and links to information on retirement benefits. AFSA's annual retiree directory includes 20 pages of guidance on retiree issues. If those sources do not resolve your question or concern, please contact AFSA's Counselor for Retirees Dolores Brown at [brown@afsa.org](mailto:brown@afsa.org) or (202) 944-5510.

**8. Keep supporting AFSA.** Help AFSA defend both the active-duty Foreign Service and the earned retirement benefits of Foreign Service annuitants by maintaining your AFSA membership.

If your membership depends on your writing a check each year, please consider switching from annual billing to paying dues via annuity deduction. Switching will save AFSA money and ensure that your membership does not inadvertently lapse due to lost or unnoticed mail. Email [member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org) for more information. ■



## Turns Out, the Government Does Spy on You

Back in May, *The Washington Post* broke a story on what it called a rogue unit within the Commerce Department.

This unit, officially known as the Investigations and Threat Management Service, was alleged to have been conducting “counterintelligence-like” activities against Commerce employees.

Upon learning of the situation, the Biden administration suspended all ITMS activities and promised a full accounting.

I have to admit that even after 20 years with Commerce, I'd never heard of this unit and neither had most of my colleagues. Nevertheless, there it was, covertly looking into employees it somehow

deemed disloyal or that it felt were working against the (previous) administration's objectives.

Never mind that it had no legal authority to do this. The department's Office of Security initially created what would morph into ITMS back in 2006. The unit was mainly charged with assessing threats to and protecting Commerce Department assets including the Secretary of Commerce and other officials. Its actions clearly constitute a huge breach of trust, and are frankly disturbing and disheartening.

On Sept. 3, Commerce released its long-awaited report on the matter. In short, the report recommends

eliminating ITMS, and transferring remaining essential functions to other units.

It also includes recommendations to enhance oversight of security and risk management functions and, above all, to ensure that no information collected by ITMS informs future decisions without “prior legal review and independent factual corroboration.”

Accordingly, ITMS will be wound down within 90 days, and the additional recommendations from the report will be implemented within 180 days. We'll be watching this very carefully.

The Commerce Department's full press release can be viewed at [bit.ly/afsa-commerce](https://bit.ly/afsa-commerce).

### In Other News

#### Congressional Outreach:

AFSA continues to press for Senate confirmation of new officers, newly tenured officers and Senior Foreign Service officers. We also continue to engage our committees of jurisdiction on budget recommendations to bolster our domestic and overseas fields, which continue to feel the long-term effects of attrition.

#### Alumni Engagement:

At AFSA's urging, FCS has reached out to its alumni to explore various engagement initiatives. A survey was recently sent to all alumni and the feedback will be used to develop plans to utilize this untapped resource. ■

## AFSA Supports Federal Vaccination Mandate

AFSA strongly supports President Joe Biden's executive order mandating COVID-19 vaccination for all federal employees, with exceptions for medical and religious reasons as provided for by federal law.

It is now more urgent than ever for all federal employees to be vaccinated if they do not have valid reasons for an exemption. This is critical to enabling the federal workforce, including the Foreign Service, to return to the workplace as soon as circumstances permit.

We are facing a real crisis in our services to the public, including visa and passport issuance as well as American citizen services, and employees rightly expect to be protected to the fullest extent from possible infection at work.

AFSA will strongly support and advocate for members who have medical or religious reasons for exemption. Everyone else who is not yet vaccinated should get vaccinated now. ■

## Foreign Service Grievance Board Appointments

Congratulations to the retired Foreign Service members appointed by Secretary of State Antony Blinken to the Foreign Service Grievance Board for two-year terms starting Oct. 1, 2021.

As required by the Foreign Service Act of 1980, the candidates were jointly nominated by AFSA and the five agencies utilizing the Foreign Service personnel system.

Reappointed members: Ambassador (ret.) Bernadette M. Allen (State), Nace B. Crawford (State-Diplomatic Security), Gregory Loose (Foreign Commercial Service), Lawrence C. Mandel (State; reappointed as FSGB chair), Wendela Moore (State) and Ambassador Luis G. Moreno (State).

New members: Ambassador Jess L. Bailly (State) and Pat R. Shapiro (USAID). ■

## FSJ Coverage: We Asked, You Answered

In July, at the start of the 2021-2023 AFSA Governing Board, AFSA surveyed members to find out what types of AFSA programs members prefer. (See results in the October FSJ, p. 70.)

In addition, members were asked the following question: What kinds of topics or issues would you like to see covered more extensively in *The Foreign Service Journal*?

Of the 513 people who answered, 294 said they would like to see more coverage of topics *internal* to the Foreign Service, such as retirement and pension issues, promotion, retention, disciplinary issues and trends, how FSOs can improve their management skills, structural reform, support for tandem couples, singles and FS families, and more on the other foreign affairs agencies.

Another 114 people said they would like to see more coverage of *external* foreign policy issues, including diplomatic history.

Thirty-nine people answered that they would like to see increased coverage of diversity, equity and inclusion issues, while two said they would like to see less.

Following are some of the comments from readers about what they would like to see more of in the FSJ:

- “More op-eds from FSOs about their experiences to highlight the diversity across our ranks, interviews or joint

articles about successful cross-agency tandems and DETO [domestic employees teleworking overseas], and dissent channel best practices.”

- “1) AFSA advocacy issues 2) Health and safety - what is the government doing to improve our health and safety while living/working in areas with poor health care and severe pollution.”

- “How ‘diplomacy’ and the implementation of U.S. foreign policy goals and programs increasingly involve the whole of the federal government, in particular the non-foreign affairs agencies.”

- “You’re way WAY too heavily skewed toward only talking about State Foreign Service. You need to also have a balanced approach with talking about USAID Foreign Service as well. There is not sufficient parity between the two organizations despite there being only one Foreign Service!”

- “Historical ‘case studies’ of diplomatic/foreign service challenges/resolutions.”

- “Lived experiences of minority Foreign Service officers, more articles from non-State officers, more on accountability, grievance board outcomes and legal case files. Also of interest is parity with the military and pet shipment issues.”

- “The FSJ is generally excellent. Given high interest in promotion rates in recent years, I suggest asking GTM/

OTA to do an article explaining why promotion rates are slower now than they were in the 90’s (pig in the python effect, hiring surges, budget issues, etc.).”

- “More on retirement issues. This impacts us all and good retirement advice early can be life changing.”

- “Very happy with the current mix.”

- “I would like to see more stories about Foreign Service specialists. Security Engineers, Technicians, IT, FMOs, etc., do an incredible amount of work every day.”

- “Taxes, MOH employment, foreign contact reporting, issues that might have an impact on security clearance, employment for foreign born EFM’s.”

- “More frequent discussion of U.S. Commercial Service. Still amazed how many State FSOs still don’t understand what we do.”

- “Leadership accountability, especially examination of how department leaders in Washington and the field did or did not take care of our people during the COVID crisis.”

- “Policy issues and foreign relations by country and issues of national security. Leave the social problems and diversity perceptions out of the *Journal* and concentrate on the profession of diplomacy and international affairs.”

- “The *Journal* is too academic, would like it to

be more focused on work-force issues. An ‘AFSA in Action’ column on what AFSA is doing on behalf of its members: advocacy on the Hill and with the department (readouts), trends on complaints received or interesting cases on which it is providing assistance (leaving out details that would identify individuals).”

- “Keep doing what you are doing!”

- “How to make diplomacy more relevant to American citizens as it continues to be something that only matters to them when they have a problem when traveling, or when an issue becomes the subject of political debates.”

- “Issues that prevent FSOs and/or their families from serving overseas: MED clearance of children related to special needs, MED clearances generally, how to push back on overly restrictive DS decisions and actions, how to identify schools and other educational options for special needs students, etc.”

- “Hard to say, since I think editors do great job. And sometimes I go back to catch an article, e.g. ‘Dante in Syria,’ that I would have missed if not for letters to editor.”

Thank you to all who responded. We will take your feedback into account as we plan future issues of *The Foreign Service Journal*. Please keep sending ideas to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org). ■



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## AFSA NEWS

# The Foreign Service Journal Welcomes New Associate Editor

AFSA is pleased to welcome Julia Wohlers to *The Foreign Service Journal* and the AFSA publications team as associate editor.

Julia's professional experience began with an internship in the public affairs section at Embassy Skopje. She then worked as an office management specialist in the front office of the State Department's Bureau for International Organization Affairs from 2010 to 2011 before relocating to Milan, Italy, to explore her creative interests.

Over the next decade, she worked in a variety of roles, traversing Italy to write for a travel guidebook and developing digital marketing strategies and content for luxury brands. Julia also served as editor and creative director for a fashion industry magazine publisher, where she launched a new title targeting an untapped market.

She recently returned from a two-year adventure in Bogotá, Colombia.



Growing up in a Foreign Service household, Julia was raised in Moscow, Nicosia, Skopje and Springfield, Virginia. She holds a bachelor's degree in English and French from Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Ga., and a master's degree in visual design and digital communications from Scuola Politecnica di Design in Milan.

An avid traveler and photographer, Julia lives in Virginia with her husband and son. She can be reached at [wohlers@afsa.org](mailto:wohlers@afsa.org). ■

*View from Washington*  
Continued from p. 83

though. It's a truly impressive group of people. Still, it's a concern."

Part of the problem in both hiring officers and retaining existing ones is that FSOs play less of a role today than in the past in foreign policy decision-making and implementation. AFSA will continue to push for enlarging the role of FSOs in foreign policy, he said.

Amb. Rubin noted that China now has a larger diplomatic presence around the world than the United States, with more embassies and diplomats, and more spending on overseas development.

This is "disturbing and unacceptable," he said, adding that the answer is to push for significantly more resources for American diplomacy. That includes a need for additional funding for training diplomats, he said.

The pandemic has had a major impact on the work of the Foreign Service, Rubin said. The processing of visas came to a standstill, for example, hurting the higher education, tourism and recreation sectors. American citizen services (ACS) around the globe have been severely degraded, with many prison visits stopped. Domestically, the State Department faces a backlog of 2 million passport applications to process.

Amb. Rubin said that while the foreign affairs agencies should have more flexible telework policies going for-

ward, much diplomatic work, particularly overseas, needs to be done in person.

He expressed concern over the slow pace of confirmations of ambassadors and other high-level positions in the foreign affairs agencies.

AFSA has launched an outreach campaign with Foreign Service employee affinity groups and other interested organizations to push for speedier confirmations. While the Biden administration "has said the right things" in terms of making improvements to the Foreign Service, high-level officials must be in place to help make these changes happen, he said.

Promoting diversity in the Foreign Service is another area in urgent need of action, Rubin said.

AFSA is making progress with the Biden administration in fighting assignment restrictions, in which diplomats are sometimes told that because of their ethnic background they will not be assigned to certain countries. Rubin said he expects the administration to roll out a set of helpful changes to assignment restrictions.

He praised the "truly remarkable work of our Foreign Service, Civil Service and military colleagues" in getting Americans and Afghan allies out of Afghanistan.

He called the collapse of Afghanistan a "wrenching situation," and noted that many AFSA members who worked in Afghanistan over the years are distraught by

what is happening there.

"We have literally hundreds of members who have volunteered" in Washington and at service centers welcoming Afghan refugees across the country. "Our colleagues have not only risen to the situation; they have gone far beyond," he said.

Retirees also had the chance to ask Amb. Rubin several questions during the session.

One member asked about unexplained health incidents (UHI)—referred to as "Havana syndrome" in major media—and asked if "we are taking care of our people."

Rubin said AFSA has been "very engaged" on the issue for the past several years, assisting members who have experienced UHIs. AFSA is pushing to get access to Walter Reed Army Medical Center for its members,

because they have some of the best evaluation facilities in the country for brain conditions, he said.

AFSA members who have been affected by UHIs aren't satisfied with the government's efforts so far, he added. "Nothing is more important than the safety and health of our people, so we'll continue pushing publicly and privately on the issue."

In answer to another question, Rubin said that AFSA is making some progress on promoting paid instead of unpaid internships in the foreign affairs agencies, in an attempt to increase opportunities for people from more diverse backgrounds.

AFSA hosts "View from Washington" sessions with Foreign Service retirees every quarter. ■



## AFSA Governing Board Meeting Sept. 15, 2021

The board met by videoconference on Sept. 15 due to concerns over the COVID-19 delta variant. Any decisions by the Governing Board made virtually must ultimately be passed when the board meets again in person, according to AFSA bylaws.

**Foreign Service Labor Relations Board:** The Governing Board approved the reappointment of Ambassadors (ret.) Dennis K. Hays and Thomas J. Miller to the Foreign Service Labor Relations Board for three-year terms. ■

*Improved Confirmation Process • Continued from p. 83*

votes or affirmative voice votes for the few foreign affairs nominees who have made it to the Senate floor, these delays persist. Once finally nominated for a Senate-confirmed position, most wait several months or sometimes much longer for confirmation. As of this writing, just two ambassadors have been confirmed since Jan. 20.

- The delays that now happen with regularity are no longer sustainable. They have moved beyond an inconvenience and are becoming a serious threat to our national security.

- Members of the U.S. military and senior officials at the Department of Defense do not undergo the same delays due to partisan politics that foreign affairs officials experience. Despite having only about 60 political appointees at the Department of Defense, compared to State's more than 200 appointees, more DoD appointees have been confirmed during the 117th Congress thus far.

- Not having Senate-confirmed senior officials and ambassadors in posts overseas jeopardizes America's global leadership. Our diplomats are missing out on opportunities to build productive relationships with foreign governments and civil society; to shape the agendas and outcomes of U.S. presidential and Sec-

retary of State visits, which help to cement those relationships; and, as the personal representatives of the president, to call on Washington's resources in crises and emergency situations. Our colleagues overseas and in Washington are missing the chance to be led by qualified, experienced senior leaders who have the approval of both the executive and legislative branches.

- While we encourage expeditious nomination and confirmation processes regardless of the nominee, AFSA will continue to look for career members of the Foreign Service to be nominated for key senior and ambassador positions. We hope to see our country revert to the historic ratio of two-thirds career and one-third political nominations for ambassadors, with at least half of assistant secretary and equivalent USAID nominations going to career professionals as well.

AFSA's website features comprehensive and frequently updated lists of ambassadorial nominations at [afsa.org/list-ambassadorial-appointments](https://afsa.org/list-ambassadorial-appointments), and appointments of senior level officials at the various foreign affairs agencies at [afsa.org/tracker-senior-official-appointments](https://afsa.org/tracker-senior-official-appointments).

As always, please let us know how we are doing and what we might do better at [member@afsa.org](mailto:member@afsa.org). ■

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■ **Joy-Lyn Blake**, also known as Lynn Susan Valley, 63, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died on April 13 in Washington state after a brief illness.

Ms. Blake, the daughter of Ann Cilley (St. Sauveur) and Norman Russell Valley, was born on Dec. 18, 1957, in Honolulu. She grew up in Gardner, Mass., graduating from Gardner High School in 1975.

Ms. Blake was a quick study and held a variety of jobs, enjoying the challenge of learning new things, acquiring new skills and exploring new places. These interests culminated in her joining the State Department Foreign Service, where she thrived as an office management specialist while traveling the world. She touched many lives as she traveled through life, and will be sorely missed by her family, friends and colleagues.

She is survived by her mother, Ann Cilley St. Sauveur; her sisters, Carol Kinloch and Judith Rede; her brother, Daniel J. St. Sauveur; her nephew, Ian Kinloch; and her niece, Abigail Kinloch, all of Gardner; and by her aunt and uncle, Susan and Richard Arnold, of Portsmouth, N.H.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Ms. Blake's name to the American Cancer Society.

■ **Carol A. Colloton**, 83, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 22 in Silver Spring, Md.

Ms. Colloton was born in Newark, N.J., on Oct. 28, 1937. She earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Rutgers University in 1964, and a master's degree in political science from McGill University in 1968.

She joined the Foreign Service in 1976. Her overseas assignments included Vienna, Austria (1980-1988); Nouakchott, Mauritania (1993-1995 and 1998-2000); and Kampala, Uganda (1995-1998). She held several posts in Washington, D.C.,

and was posted to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York in 2001 before retiring in 2002. In retirement, Ms. Colloton continued working for the State Department until 2017, first assisting with refugee resettlement in the United States for the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, and then declassifying documents for the Bureau of Administration.

Ms. Colloton is survived by daughter Meghan and granddaughters Aislin and Keira, of Charlottesville, Va.

■ **Lola Sybil Cooper**, 96, a former Foreign Service officer, passed away peacefully on Aug. 3 at home in Fairfax, Va.

Ms. Cooper was born in Frame, W.Va., on March 3, 1925, to James Anderson Cooper and Alda Elizabeth Given Cooper.

Ms. Cooper was valedictorian of her senior class and attended courses at Morris Harvey College in Charleston, W.Va. She was two years out of high school when she took the Civil Service exam. She passed with flying colors and was on her way to Washington, D.C., the following week, where she continued to reside until her passing. She was a State Department secretary for 25 years, serving some 20 of those years in the Foreign Service.

Her U.S. government career began with the Postal Department. She eventually moved to the State Department and then on to the Foreign Service, where she served until her retirement in 1982.

She served as secretary and staff aide to Ambassador William Leonhart in U.S. embassies in Denmark (1955-1958), the Philippines (1958-1960), Japan (1960-1962), Tanzania (1962-1965) and Yugoslavia (1969-1972). She also served in Washington at the White House (1966-1969) and in the State Department (1973-1975).

Her assignment to Tanganyika—the East African state that in 1964 merged with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, and was later renamed the United Republic of Tanzania—took place during a turbulent and dangerous time for the newly formed country. She later served in Yugoslavia during its communist rule under President Josip Broz Tito.

Ms. Cooper was a trailblazer for women in the Foreign Service, working on highly classified and top-secret government documents including the Marshall Plan, also known as the European Recovery Program, which provided aid to Western Europe following the devastation of World War II.

After her retirement from the Foreign Service, Ms. Cooper worked for three years as a volunteer for Dr. Richard Halverson, chaplain of the U.S. Senate, from 1982 to 1985. And from 1985 to 1987, she served as personal secretary to Clare Boothe Luce, an American author, politician, U.S. ambassador and public conservative figure.

Ms. Cooper also worked as an usher, primarily in the formerly titled Golden Circles Lounge of the Kennedy Center (on the Opera House side), for more than 20 years, until 2014. There, she had the opportunity to meet and greet many famous people and make lifelong friends. She had a special friendship with world-renowned opera singer Plácido Domingo, given his role as director of the Washington National Opera during her tenure there.

Ms. Cooper was a devout Christian and a member of the National Presbyterian Church, where she was actively involved for many years serving on the Business and Professional Women's Guild, and the Washington-Tokyo Women's Club. Her family would like to

acknowledge and thank the staff for the excellent care Ms. Cooper received at the Virginian Senior Living Community, where she resided since 2014, and for the staff of VITAS Healthcare for their assistance in her final months.

Preceding Ms. Cooper in death were her parents and family members: Hubert Cooper, Versha Reed, Bernard Cooper, Jewel Medley, Mattie Patrick, Drema Kay Cooper, Gladys Guthrie, Mary Louise Cooper, Mamie Venable, Luverna Cooper, Tressie Preston and James Cooper.

She is survived by her sister, Hilda Lorene Reedy, of Pueblo, Colo.; many nieces and nephews, and great nieces and great nephews; and her grandniece, Jamie Cooper Moales, of Hillsborough, N.C., who provided care and companionship to Ms. Cooper for more than a decade.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to National Presbyterian Church or Hospice in Ms. Cooper's memory.

■ **James Colin "Jim" Curran**, 92, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on May 1 at Pheasant Wood (Nursing) Center in Peterborough, N.H., after six months of complications from circulatory disease, neuropathy, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and COVID-19.

Born in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, Mass., in April 1929, he was the youngest of three sons of Louis Frederick Curran, a cardiologist and physician-in-chief at Carney Hospital, staff physician at Boston City Hospital and a professor of clinical procedure at Tufts Medical School, and of Anastasia Eleanor "Ann" (Zollo) Curran, a head nurse and homemaker. At age 14, he lost both his father (heart attack) and oldest brother, Louis Jr. (Battle of Anzio, World War II), and was then raised by his mother and older brother Robert.

Mr. Curran finished Boston English

High School in 1946 and attended Notre Dame University in South Bend, Ind., on a Navy ROTC scholarship, graduating cum laude with a bachelor's degree in English in 1950. He then served for 35 months as a gunnery officer on a destroyer escort, followed by 18 years in the Navy Reserve. He was discharged in 1971 with the rank of lieutenant.

On Oct. 12, 1953, he married his high school dance class partner, Mary Greenish "Polly" Emery, one of three sisters from the West Roxbury neighborhood of Boston.

A year of further study at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., earned Mr. Curran a bachelor's degree in Foreign Service studies in 1954. He entered and remained with the Foreign Service for the next 24 years, from 1955 to 1979, serving initially as a personnel assistant with the Board of Examiners in Washington before being posted to Tehran, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Lomé and Melbourne. He specialized in economics. His service included an academic year each at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University (earning a master's degree in international economics in 1966) and at the U.S. Army War College.

In 1967 Mr. Curran received a Superior Honor Award related to his successful negotiations with the Tanzanian government in settling claims arising from expropriated property, including a 7,000-acre farm. In 1971 his research report on China and its construction of the Tanzania-Zambia (Tan-Zam) Railway was cited for distinction by the Commandant's Board at the U.S. Army War College.

Upon his retirement, following a tour of China, the Currans purchased a summer guest house, "Birch Ridge," from retired Ambassador Cecil B. and Elsie (Grew) Lyon in Hancock, N.H., and retrofitted it for year-round living.

A man of many passions, in retirement Mr. Curran indulged himself in reading and writing, photography, theater, art, music, politics, world history, public schools and continuing education, all matters Irish, home maintenance and improvement, and African carvings and wildlife. He was active in several local groups: Hancock Depot Association, Monadnock Music, Grand Monadnock Arts Council, Granite State Opera, Monadnock Summer Lyceum and the Monadnock United Way.

Blessed with self-confidence and the gift of gab, Mr. Curran led his children in singalongs on family road trips and safaris, participated in community theater, and enjoyed traveling frequently with and hosting visits by his many friends and extended family.

Mr. Curran acted on his strong interest in domestic politics, thrice running as a Democrat for state representative for Hillsborough District 3 and serving one term before declining to seek reelection, exhausted by the inefficacy of the 400-seat body. He remained active to the end with the Hancock Town Democratic Committee.

He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Polly, now in Peterborough, N.H., and seven of their children: daughters Bonnie (and Gary) Bokenkamp of Cape Cod, Moira Ellen (and Willy) Suter of Manassas, Va., and Sarah Roberta Butler Annecone of Boulder, Colo.; sons Louis B. (and Jolie Susan) of Baltimore and San Diego, Benjamin (and Haregewoin/"Mimi") of Washington, D.C., Edmund of Rosebank, Australia, and Sean Emmett of Manchester, N.H.; 17 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; 14 nieces and nephews; and a sister-in-law, Nancy E. Meanix of Honey Brook, Pa. He was predeceased in 1990 by son Matthew Padraic.

■ **George Anthony Gowen**, 76, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of atherosclerotic coronary disease on July 19 in Austin, Texas.

Born on Aug. 17, 1944, in Hackensack, N.J., to Captain George A. Gowen (U.S. Navy) and Sue Ernest Gowen, Mr. Gowen had the roving upbringing of a typical Navy brat, particularly cherishing his time at the Punahou School in Honolulu.

He graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from Colgate University, class of 1966, and received a master's degree in public policy from the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs at Princeton University. Later joining the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Service officer, Mr. Gowen served in Vietnam, Argentina, Singapore and France. His work in the State Department's Office of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls highlighted his special expertise in international trade relations.

For more than a decade, Mr. Gowen volunteered at Austin Pets Alive, the area's premier no-kill animal shelter, which provided one of the most rewarding experiences of his retirement. He was an avid music lover with a particular fondness for Ian & Sylvia, Tom Russell, Dave Stamey and Sibelius. Friends appreciated him for his wit, sense of humor, compassion and integrity.

Mr. Gowen is survived by his wife of 51 years, Anita (Nina); daughter Anne Elizabeth (a New Jersey attorney); brother Lt. Comm. Charles T. Gowen, USN (ret.), of Virginia Beach, Va.; sister Sue Williford Ruscoe of Taos, N.M.; and their children and grandchildren.

■ **Ernest Barnwell Johnston Jr.**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died suddenly on Aug. 16 of cardiac arrest while out on errands with his wife, Joan, in Shepherdstown, W.Va.

Born on June 26, 1930, in Selma, Ala., he was the son of the late Ernest Barnwell Johnston and Emma Julia Thomas. After leaving Alabama to attend college, study abroad and serve two years in the U.S. Army, he joined the Foreign Service in 1956.

From 1956 to 1958, he served in the International Exchange Service in Washington. In January 1958 he married Joan Lord of Boxford, Mass., and within a few months, the couple took up residence in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where Mr. Johnston served as vice consul until 1960 and their first daughter was born.

From there, the family moved to Madrid, where he was the economic-commercial officer and then the assistant commercial attaché at the embassy from 1960 to 1965, and two more daughters were born.

Over an academic year in Berkeley, Calif., Mr. Johnston earned a master's degree in economics.

In 1966 he and his family returned to Washington where he worked at the State Department until 1969 as an economist and then assistant chief of the Trade Agreements Division, and their fourth daughter was born.

From 1961 to 1971, he was a staff member at the National Security Council. The family did one more academic year in California while Mr. Johnston was a Sloan Fellow at Stanford University.

From 1972 to 1977, the family lived in Brussels where Mr. Johnston was first a trade policy officer, then economic counselor at the U.S. Mission to the European Community.

Mr. Johnston's last term of government service took place in Washington from 1977 to 1982, first as executive assistant to the under secretary of State for economic affairs, and then principal deputy to the assistant secretary of State for economic

affairs. After a short stint in the private sector, he retired in 1986.

In December 1989, Mr. and Mrs. Johnston moved to Shepherdstown to a brick house built in 1860, where they finally were able to live in one place for longer than five years. In retirement, Mr. Johnston took up genealogy, creating an extensive electronic record and self-publishing several books and booklets. He planted trees and narcissus, tended grapes and asparagus, worked with his tractor and cut wood, while his wife set up a small pottery and a garden.

The couple traveled extensively after their last government post, including trips to see the structures of ancient civilizations that were of particular fascination to them. Mr. Johnston maintained fluency in several languages. He loved spending the last 32 years of his life in Shepherdstown, where he and his wife made many close friends. He found enjoyment in most days, right up to his last.

He is survived by his wife, Joan, four daughters, one sister, six grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and friends. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother.

■ **Kenneth Adolf Kurze**, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, passed away on Feb. 24 in Middletown, R.I.

Mr. Kurze was born on July 6, 1936, in Providence, R.I., to Adolf O. Kurze and Louise A. Suter of Cranston, R.I. He graduated from Cranston High School in 1954, Brown University in 1958, and the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in 1959. That year, he fulfilled his childhood dream of becoming a Foreign Service officer when he joined the State Department.

Fluent in German, French and Hindi, Mr. Kurze served overseas for 30 years, including in New Delhi, Bombay



(now Mumbai), Kathmandu, Rabat, Strasbourg, Bridgetown and Vienna.

He received the State Department's Meritorious Honor Award for his handling of political affairs at the U.S. consulate in Bombay during the 1971-1972 Bangladesh War, and the Superior Honor Award for his actions on Grenada to assess the political situation there and to ensure the safety of Americans on the eve of the 1983 U.S. invasion.

Highlights of his years abroad include shaking hands with Indira Gandhi and Helmut Schmidt, and hosting visiting American dignitaries such as musical ambassador Lionel Hampton and civil rights icon Coretta Scott King.

In 1978 Mr. Kurze demonstrated diplomatic tact and restraint by allowing distraught French fans to hold an impromptu memorial on the first anniversary of Elvis' death in the U.S. consulate in Strasbourg, as this simply had to occur on American "soil."

At each posting, Mr. Kurze promoted U.S. interests and shared his American values, both as a diplomat and as a friend, and developed many lifelong friendships.

Mr. Kurze met Ingrid Sonja Fischer in 1957 on the Zugspitze, the highest peak in Germany, during his 1956-1957 Wayne State University Junior Year Abroad program in Munich, Germany. They married in Cranston on March 26, 1960, and would have four children whom they raised on four continents.

Traveling to and from assignments involved 29-hour flights, the penultimate Atlantic crossing of the USS *United States*, cruises through the Suez Canal or around the Cape of Good Hope, and navigating the lagoons of Venice in a gondola laden with 29 pieces of luggage.

In 1989 Mr. and Mrs. Kurze retired to Middletown, R.I., which became their permanent home base. Mr. Kurze enjoyed

time at Sachuest Beach and many family and friend reunions.

Mr. and Mrs. Kurze continued to travel abroad extensively, visited missed continents and crossed the international date line. From 1992 to 1993, he and Mrs. Kurze spent a semester abroad in Sweden where he taught at Johnson & Wales University/IHM Business School.

They maintained their old friendships and gained many new ones, at bridge and poker tables, through the Edward King House Senior Center, the Newport Council for International Visitors (CIV), the Naval War College, the Rhode Island Philatelic Society and North Kingstown Stamp Club. Mr. Kurze served on the board of the Japan-America Society and Black Ships Festival, Newport CIV, and assisted the Middletown Personnel Board and Board of Elections.

He was an accomplished pianist, an occasional painter and an avid philatelist.

Mr. Kurze was married for 59 years to the late Ingrid S. Kurze and is survived by his four children and three grandchildren: daughter Barbara Kurze of Dorchester, Mass.; son Thomas of Cranston and granddaughter Gemmia Lompa Kurze of Boca Raton, Fla.; son Peter Kurze of Cranston; and son Derek Kurze with wife Kellie Walton and granddaughters Natalie and Eliza Walton Kurze of Mendon, Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Norman Bird Sanctuary, 583 Third Beach Rd, Middletown RI 02842, or the Edward King House Senior Center, 35 King St., Newport RI 02840.

■ **Robert "Bob" Edward Mitchell**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, passed away peacefully on July 27 at his home in Brookline, Mass. He had been under hospice care for congestive heart failure.

Born in Detroit in 1930, he earned a bachelor's degree from the University of

Michigan in 1952, a master's in Harvard's China Area Program in 1955, and a Ph.D. in sociology from Columbia in 1962.

In 1962 he was named to head the Survey Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1965 he accepted a position in Her Majesty's Colonial Service to establish a survey research center in Hong Kong, where his major project was the Southeast Asian Family Life Study. Breaking with sociological tradition at the time, he studied individuals not as solo actors, but in the context of families. His team of field researchers provided a year's warning of the mainland's plans for major disruptions in Hong Kong at the onset of the Cultural Revolution, a warning that colonial authorities ignored.

In the early 1970s, Mr. Mitchell taught and headed a survey research center at Florida State University and contributed to the Florida Task Force on Marriage and the Family.

Midcareer, he joined the Foreign Service and was posted in Egypt, Yemen and Guinea-Bissau. In Egypt, he played a leading role in the Neighborhood Urban Services Project. In Yemen, his Arabic skills allowed him access to broad sectors of society and earned him the nickname "The Sheik of Taiz." In retirement, he continued to be a prolific scholar and writer, with 10 books to his name.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Sylvia Ann Mitchell (née Sheppard, married in 1950, died in 1998). He is survived by his three children, Anthony, Maude and Adam; daughter-in-law Gwen Ossensfort; and grandchildren Tucker and Tate. He is to be interred in his mother's family cemetery in Midland County, Mich.

■ **Richard "Keith" Rutherford**, 80, of Corrales, N.M., husband of retired Foreign Service Officer Sharon Rutherford, passed away peacefully on July 23.

Mr. Rutherford was born in West Virginia in 1941 to Chester Rutherford and Edna Harvey. He joined the U.S. Army and served with distinction. During his service, he earned the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and numerous other medals. He served in Japan, Vietnam and Texas, and later with the Defense Attaché Office in Afghanistan and Belgium. Master Sergeant Rutherford completed his military career in Albuquerque at Kirtland AFB Nuclear Weapons Complex.

After retirement from the U.S. military, Mr. Rutherford served in a variety of support roles at embassies in Africa and Mexico while posted with his wife.

Mr. Rutherford loved New Mexico where he was raised, and often referred to it as “God’s country.” He enjoyed Southwestern cuisine, science fiction novels and films, and had a passion for UFOs. He was fond of animals, especially his dogs, and was concerned about the needs of others. Described as warm, friendly and compassionate, he enjoyed good company, lively conversation and a good margarita with friends.

Mr. Rutherford is survived by his wife, Sharon Lavorel-Rutherford; daughter Robin Rutherford; son Ric (Kriston) Rutherford; stepsons Michael (Jennifer) Lavorel and Daniel Lavorel; grandchildren Morgan Byrd, Jack and Nicolas Lavorel; and his sister, Vicki (Paul) Christensen.

■ **Roger J. Simmons**, 81, a retired Foreign Service officer with USAID, passed away on Aug. 18 of complications associated with dementia.

Mr. Simmons was born in Boston and grew up in the suburb of Malden. He graduated from Tufts University, having spent a few gap years working on farms and rural resettlement in Kenya, and the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh.

Over the course of his life, he developed and pursued deep commitments to racial equality and international development. He worked with USAID, both as a contractor (addressing issues of public administration in Nigeria, Liberia, Tanzania and Swaziland) and as a Foreign Service officer (as program officer in Mali and as deputy mission director in Kenya and Russia, as well as tours in Washington).

His wife, Emmy Simmons, also served as a Foreign Service officer, and they served as a tandem couple in Mali (the Sahel Development Planning Team), Kenya (the Regional Office for East and Central Africa) and Russia.

Mr. Simmons retired from USAID in 2000, although he continued to participate in training new staff until 2004. Ms. Simmons retired from USAID in 2005. In December 2020, the couple moved into the Vinson Hall Retirement Community in McLean, less than two miles away from their first house (purchased in 1978) in the Chesterbrook Woods community.

■ **Virginia Stave**, 100, wife of the late retired Foreign Service Officer Tom Stave, died on June 26.

Born in Seattle on April 2, 1921, she lived her early years in Laurelhurst and West Seattle, and spent summers on Bainbridge Island where she was hired as the first usherette at the Lynwood Theatre. Her high school years were at both Roosevelt and West Seattle; she attended the University of Washington, where she met her husband, Tom Stave.

Together with Mr. Stave, she felt privileged to have served 30 years in the diplomatic service. Soon after the end of World War II, the couple was sent to Germany. While there, Ms. Stave heard one German citizen declare, “I hate all Englishmen except the ones I know.”

This influenced her to believe that the only way to achieve peace in the world is by getting to know other cultures and people. As she put it, “It is very difficult to hate someone you know.”

Ms. Stave remained true to her philosophy at posts in Germany, France, Iran, Japan, Thailand and Korea. Each time the Staves were transferred to another country, she maintained a positive attitude, which she imparted to her five children.

As a diplomat’s spouse, she often escorted and entertained Mr. Stave’s professional visitors and made the most of each new adventure. In Marseille she cooked with chef Julia Child. In Iran she participated in archaeological digs and skied in the Elburz Mountains. In Japan she was inspired by Ikebana masters, and continued to study flower arranging in Thailand and Korea. For the rest of her life, she was known for her exquisite arrangements at her church and retirement center.

The Staves retired to Bainbridge Island where she joined the Garden Club, the Camera Club, the Bloedel Reserve and the Kubota Garden in Seattle. Every year during tax season, she led a team of volunteers at Helpline House, as she preferred figures to crossword puzzles. Hobbies included photography, kayaking and snorkeling.

When she moved to her retirement home, she surrounded herself with her treasures acquired overseas. She is remembered by family and friends for her love and her stories.

Ms. Stave was preceded in death by her sister, brother and husband. She is survived by her children: Lorraine, Alan, Peggy, Tom and Juanita, and their respective spouses, Pat, Michela, Chrissy and Gilbert; grandchildren Reid, Allison, Perry, Christopher, Kenji and Rikio; step-granddaughter Beth; great-grand-

children Lila and Chloe; and numerous nieces and nephews.

An inurnment was held both at Washelli Cemetery and Acacia Memorial Park. Remembrances may be sent to Habitat for Humanity or the Helpline House on Bainbridge Island.

■ **Paul D. Taylor**, 82, a retired Foreign Service officer, died unexpectedly on July 18 at Linden Ponds Senior Living in Hingham, Mass.

Mr. Taylor was born on May 16, 1939, in Warren's Corners, N.Y. His academic achievements included earning a bachelor's degree from Princeton University, where as a member of the American Whig-Cliosophic Society he helped to organize a 1959 visit by the new Cuban leader, Fidel Castro. He earned a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Taylor served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy.

Mr. Taylor had a distinguished career as a Foreign Service officer. After early diplomatic assignments in Quito, Bangkok, São Paulo and Madrid, he served as chargé d'affaires in Guatemala in the early 1980s.

From 1985 to 1988, he served as deputy assistant secretary of State for Inter-American affairs. On April 11, 1988, President Ronald Reagan nominated Mr. Taylor to be the U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic, where he served until January 1992.

His final post in the Foreign Service was as State Department adviser to the president of the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., from 1992 to 1994. He continued at the Naval War College, from which he retired as professor emeritus.

Mr. Taylor lived in Newport with his wife, Dorcas Billings Taylor, for 23 years. They moved to Massachusetts in 2017.

Mr. Taylor had an intense passion for Latin America and the Caribbean, and an abiding interest in U.S. foreign policy. At the time of his death, he was enthusiastically writing a paper about newly released data on the actual peril facing America during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Mr. Taylor was an avid sailor. He also had a penchant for fine woodworking and leaves behind numerous handmade wooden items, including dining tables built for each of his three children and their spouses.

In Newport, he was a member of the vestry and building committee of Trinity Church Newport, on the race committee at the Ida Lewis Yacht Club, and a member of many book groups over the years. At Linden Ponds, he participated actively in the Great Decisions Series and Lifelong Learning. Mr. Taylor will be remembered for his consideration of others, inquisitive mind, jolly nature and endless wit.

Survivors include his wife, Dorcas Taylor (née Billings); son Jonathan Taylor and his wife, Rev. Andrea Suess Taylor, of South Dennis, Mass.; daughter Katherine Taylor Haynes and her husband, Anthony C. Haynes, of Nashville, Tenn.; and son Matthew Taylor and his wife, Nácia Pupo Taylor, of Kensington, Md.; and grandchildren Capt. Noah Taylor and his wife, Lt. Chantal Durgana, Jacob Taylor, Alexander Haynes, Teodoro Pupo Taylor, Christopher Haynes and Benjamin Pupo Taylor.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to a charity of your choice in the name of Paul D. Taylor.

■ **Peter H. Thormann**, 83, an economist and retired Foreign Service officer, died on Aug. 16 at Galloway Ridge at Fearington in Pittsboro, N.C.

Born in 1938 in Munich, Germany, Mr. Thormann was 9 months old when he

and his parents fled the Nazi regime and arrived as refugees in the United States.

Mr. Thormann spent his childhood in the Boston area. He attended the Boston Latin School for three years until his family moved to the suburb of Newton, where he graduated from Newton High School in 1955. Mr. Thormann earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Brandeis University in 1959, followed by an MBA in industrial relations at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1961.

While completing doctoral work in economics at the University of Minnesota, he met and married his wife, Mary. In 1966 he accepted a permanent position in his field at the International Labor Organization in Geneva.

In 1973 he was recruited to USAID and posted to Washington, D.C. He served as an adviser to the Program and Policy Coordination Bureau on employment policy and science and technology programs, then as principal adviser for technical resources for the Asia bureau.

Mr. Thormann joined the Foreign Service in 1983. He was posted twice to New Delhi for a total of nine years, first as program economist and then as director of the Office of Program Development and Economic Growth.

Mr. Thormann was recognized for his leadership and innovation in developing the Program for Advancement of Commercial Technology in India, helping to establish the Indian stock exchange, and creating the roadmap for restarting the economic growth program suspended by sanctions due to the nuclear test in 1998.

In Thailand, where he was posted from 1988 to 1992, Mr. Thormann served as program economist and later director of the USAID Program Office. He helped design and manage the financial markets development program and the launch of a vibrant venture capital industry.



From 1992 to 1996 in Washington, D.C., he was supervisory program economist and supervisory country development officer for the Horn of Africa's East Africa desk, and then chief of the Strategic Analysis Division with the Africa bureau.

His career included stints as acting USAID mission director to Sri Lanka, Somalia (based in Nairobi) and India, and short-term assignments in more than 25 countries.

Following his retirement in 2001 as chief economist for USAID's Africa bureau, based out of Washington, D.C., he provided services as a consultant to USAID overseas missions and firms working with the agency, such as the Mitchell Group.

In addition to his wife of 55 years, Mary, and their son, Mark (Beth Thormann), and daughter Monique (Marcus Courtney), Mr. Thormann is survived by daughter Gabrielle, from his first marriage, as well as his brother, Michael, and sister Joan.

A celebration of life will be announced later. Donations in his memory can be made to the Diversity Scholarships fund at Brandeis University via [giving.brandeis.edu/diversity](http://giving.brandeis.edu/diversity).

■ **Thomas (Tom) J. Wallis**, 58, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 1 in Miami, Fla.

Mr. Wallis was born in Landstuhl, Germany, to Thomas and Jeanne Wallis on July 10, 1962. Raised in Fairfax, Va., he attended Robinson Secondary School, Virginia Tech, and the National Defense Intelligence College where he received a degree in strategic intelligence.

He joined the Foreign Service in 2001 as a consular officer, and served in Jamaica, Germany, Belize, Malawi and Peru over the course of his 20-year career. Mr. Wallis was also a U.S. Army veteran, obtaining the rank of staff sergeant. He

served in Kuwait, Kosovo and Iraq, where he received the Bronze Star.

He is survived by his wife, Monica, his parents and three brothers. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that any donations go to the Fisher House Foundation in his memory.

■ **James Alan Weiner**, 85, a retired Foreign Service officer, died suddenly on June 22 in Palm Beach, Fla., after a lingering illness.

Born in Lynn, Mass., on January 16, 1936, Mr. Weiner grew up in Swampscott, which was his home until he left to attend Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.

After graduating and serving in the military, he worked briefly at the Baltimore Social Security Administration before he joined the Foreign Service, working at U.S. missions in Quito, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Brasília and Bogotá. He also assisted in opening the U.S. Embassy to the German Democratic Republic (also known as East Germany) after diplomatic relations were established in 1974, serving as embassy counselor in Berlin under Ambassador John Sherman Cooper.

Upon his return to Washington, his roles included director of the Office of Recruitment and Management, executive director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research and, later, of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. He also served as a Foreign Service inspector and was a proud alumnus of the National War College.

A member of the Senior Foreign Service, Mr. Weiner retired after four decades with the rank of Minister Counselor.

Mr. Weiner had a unique ability to immerse himself in the culture and language of his many international assignments, and his interest in foreign and domestic affairs was of paramount

importance. He brought to bear his talent for understanding complex situations, managing teams and conveying his deep sense of pride in his country to his overseas postings, which he shared with his former wife, Aniko Gaal.

Following his retirement, in 1996, he moved to Palm Beach. He became a member of the World Affairs Council, the Foreign Service Retiree Association and the Cato Institute. For 15 years, he served as one of the directors of the Palm Beach Civic Association, involved in town governance.

Friends say that Mr. Weiner was inquisitive, active and adventurous. He loved to ski, and excelled at golf, tennis and bridge. He enjoyed good food and fine wine, had a wonderful sense of humor and danced a mean samba. He is remembered as an engaging storyteller.

Mr. Weiner is survived by his older brother, Dr. Robert Macy Weiner, and his wife, Helen, of Boston, and nephews Andrew Weiner of Montclair, N.J., and Kristopher Weiner of New York City.

In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made in his name to the Palm Beach Civic Association or a charity of your choice.

■ **Johnny Young**, 81, a retired FSO and one of the few African Americans of his generation to achieve the rank of Career Ambassador, passed away on July 24 at his home in Kensington, Md., from complications of pancreatic cancer.

The son of a laborer, Mr. Young was born in Savannah, Ga., in 1940. He lost his mother just before his first birthday and was raised by one of his aunts in a poor Black neighborhood on the edge of the city. The family relocated to Wilmington, Del., in 1947, where he graduated from high school. Although his guidance counselor discouraged

him from pursuing higher education, he enrolled in night classes at Temple University, studying accounting and Spanish while working as a census enumerator for the city of Philadelphia.

In 1956 the YMCA invited Mr. Young to be a U.S. delegate to an international conference in Beirut, and the experience proved transformative. He later described it as “that moment that I said I have got to do something in the international sphere.” After graduating magna cum laude from Temple in 1966, he passed the Foreign Service exam, becoming one of just a handful of Black professionals to enter the diplomatic corps.

Mr. Young began his career in 1967 as a budget and fiscal officer in Madagascar. He was subsequently assigned to Conakry, Guinea and Nairobi as a supervisory general services officer. In 1974 he was transferred to Doha as an administrative officer to provide support to the newly expanded embassy and the first U.S. ambassador to Qatar, who appointed him to the role of chargé d'affaires until 1977. He went on to serve in Barbados, Amman and The Hague.

In 1989 Mr. Young was named ambassador to Sierra Leone, where he helped coordinate humanitarian assistance during the civil war and refugee crisis in neighboring Liberia. From 1994 to 1997, he served as ambassador to Togo. Upon his return, he was promoted to Career Minister and named ambassador to Bahrain (1997-2001), making him the only Black ambassador in the Near East and one of the few outside Africa. In his final diplomatic assignment, he was ambassador to Slovenia (2001-2004), where he helped guide the country's progress toward NATO membership.

Soon after, Mr. Young retired from the Office of the Inspector General, having attained the rank of Career Ambassa-

dor in recognition of his distinguished service over four decades.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, the former Angelena V. Clark; two children, David Young of Washington and Michelle Young of Brooklyn; and a grandson.

Read more about Ambassador Young's remarkable life in the October *FSJ* Appreciation.

■ **George S. Vest III**, 102, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of circulatory ailments at his home in Bethesda, Md., on Aug. 24.

Mr. Vest was born on Dec. 25, 1918, in Columbia, Va. He graduated from Episcopal High School in Alexandria, then received a bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia in 1941. Although he seldom spoke of the experience, Mr. Vest served as an Army officer in Italy during World War II. After the war, he used the G.I. Bill to obtain a master's degree in history from the University of Virginia in 1947, and joined the Foreign Service the same year.

After serving in Bermuda and Ecuador, Mr. Vest was assigned to the Dominican Republic. He later recalled spending a chunk of his savings on warm weather attire, only to receive a transfer to Ottawa, which ranks among the coldest capitals in the world.

In 1959 he turned down the opportunity to serve as consul in Florence and opted to go to Paris instead as a political adviser to Air Force Gen. Lauris Norstand, then the supreme allied commander in Europe. This experience led Mr. Vest to focus the rest of his career on Cold War diplomacy. He went on to several assignments with NATO, including a term from 1961 to 1963 as the first American to be the top adviser to the NATO secretary general.

He moved to Brussels in 1967 as one

of the top U.S. diplomats to the European Commission, and in 1973 he was chosen as lead negotiator in talks for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, or the Helsinki conference, which ratified the postwar boundaries of the continent and established new standards for human rights in the Soviet Union and the rest of Eastern Europe.

Mr. Vest served as Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's top adviser on political and military affairs and was subsequently tapped to be assistant secretary of state for European affairs in 1977. He then served as ambassador to the European Union from 1981 to 1985. His final assignment was as director general of the Foreign Service; he retired in 1989.

In his later years, Mr. Vest remained a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, worked as a consultant to the Akin Gump law firm in Washington and volunteered as a reading tutor in the D.C. schools. He also served on the vestry of St. Alban's Episcopal Church and worked in its thrift store.

Mr. Vest is preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, the former Emily Clemons, who died in 2015, and their daughter, Jennie Vest, who died in 2014. He is survived by two sons, George S. Vest IV of Fairfax, Va., and Henry Vest of Broomfield, Colo., and two granddaughters. (See the Appreciation on page 81.) ■



If you would like us to include an obituary in In Memory, please send text to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org).

Be sure to include the date, place and cause of death, as well as details of the individual's Foreign Service career. Please place the name of the AFSA member to be memorialized in the subject line of your email.

## A Masterpiece of Diplomatic History

### **The Road Less Traveled: The Secret Battle to End the Great War, 1916–1917**

*Philip Zelikow, PublicAffairs, 2021, \$30/hardcover, e-book available, 352 pages.*

REVIEWED BY HARRY KOPP

The Great War of 1914–1918 taught lessons of pessimism, futility and corruption of the human spirit. Historian Barbara Tuchman blamed the war on “the bellicose frivolity of senile empires.” Workers of the world did not unite, she wrote. Instead, across Europe a fevered nationalism carried them to war “willingly, even eagerly, like the middle class, like the upper class, like the species.”

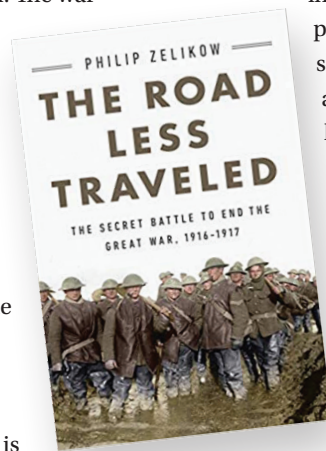
When the fighting at last stopped, some 20 million soldiers and civilians were dead. The French poet Paul Valéry wrote: “We, we civilizations, we know now that we are mortal.” Memoirist Edmund Blunden wrote that victory belonged not to any of the belligerents but to War itself, a doom-laden insight that soon was vindicated. The Great War became World War I when the rapid arrival of the next conflict made it clear that people would have to give them numbers.

“What if ...” is not a question historians normally ask. Nor do they normally spend time examining events that did not happen. But what if the war had ended differently, and earlier? It could have; it should have happened.

President Woodrow Wilson in 1916 sought a way to bring the Allied and Central Powers to a peace conference that would end the war and keep the United States out of the fighting. The governments of Britain and Germany were eager for peace (though not in public),

and France and Russia were exhausted. Yet the road to peace was the road less traveled, the road not taken. The war raged on.

Philip Zelikow, holder of two named chairs at the University of Virginia, is a former Foreign Service officer and senior policy official under five presidents. In this book he documents and explains the misunderstandings, confusions, betrayals, egotism and cowardice behind this nearly forgotten episode. It is a meticulous, back-and-forth, almost day-by-day account, based largely on memoirs, diaries, letters and similar source materials left by the principals in Great Britain, Germany and the United States—the definitive history of a colossal failure.



“practically a member of the family.”

House, from a wealthy Texas family, was in Zelikow’s words “a savvy political operator,” a “quintessential inside man,” an amiable dilettante and a good listener, uninterested in public office but possessed of “odd utopian ambitions.” (House had written a novel, published anonymously, that columnist Walter Lippmann said displayed “the imagination of a romantic boy of 14 who dreams of what he would do if he had unlimited power and no one objected.”)

British and German politics blocked Wilson’s early efforts. A divided British cabinet—with the foreign secretary on one side, and the war secretary and chief of the general staff on the other—would

**In brief, Wilson had wanted to mediate the crisis in Europe even before the first shots were fired. But his diplomatic infrastructure was feeble ... and he “did not know what he did not know.”**

In brief, Wilson had wanted to mediate the crisis in Europe even before the first shots were fired. But his diplomatic infrastructure was feeble—no policy process, poor communications and only a few able career people (such as chargé Joseph Grew in Berlin) among many inexperienced patronage appointees—and he “did not know what he did not know.”

As his conduit to London and Berlin Wilson relied on private citizen Edward House, a friend who had worked on his 1912 campaign and soon became

not respond to peace feelers before a military offensive planned for the summer of 1916.

A similar split prevailed in Berlin. The chancellor and foreign minister were eager for Wilson’s mediation—prepared even to pledge German withdrawal from Belgium and Alsace—but the general staff held that idea in contempt. They sought and expected the kaiser’s approval for the unrestricted submarine warfare that, they were sure, would bring quick victory.



Wilson approached the situation as a pragmatist, with no strong pro-German or pro-British inclinations. In this he was poorly served. Secretary of State Robert Lansing and Walter Hines Page, the American ambassador in London, wanted the United States to enter the war on Britain's side and were willing to sabotage the president's diplomacy to pursue that goal.

Edward House bought into the fiction, promoted by David Lloyd George and the British pro-war press, that Britain was winning on the battlefield. (Lloyd George knew better but lied to advance his campaign to replace David Asquith as prime minister. George attained that office in the fall of 1916, soon after Asquith's son was killed at the front in the failed summer offensive.) House was profoundly unwilling to confront the British leadership on this or any other point.

Wilson had delayed an appeal for the convening of a peace conference until after the 1916 election, but by mid-November he was ready to act. To his surprise, he found House in opposition—the British, said House, would never agree. House, “a fool or a villain” in Zelikow's phrase, garbled or twisted Wilson's messages to London and Berlin and misconstrued the replies. Wilson delayed yet again.

Wilson's failure to act fatally weakened those in Berlin who, up to then, had stalled the U-boat campaign against civilian shipping by insisting that Wilson would call for a peace conference as soon as the American election was over. In January, the kaiser yielded to his military commanders and authorized unrestricted submarine warfare to begin on Feb. 1, 1917.

The move turned Wilson and the American public against Germany, leading to a declaration of war in April. Of nearly equal importance, U.S. banks, which on the basis of Wilson's instruc-

tions to the Federal Reserve had stopped lending to the tapped-out British, reversed course and resumed financing the war. Once the United States was committed on the side of the Allies, the Central Powers had no realistic hope of victory. Zelikow offers a clear judgment: The German high command, “besotted with their victory mirage ... rescued their bitterest enemies from defeat.”

Such clear judgments and waffle-free language, as well as the novelty and importance of the subject, are what make this book such a fascinating read. Students of history and practitioners of diplomacy will find their imaginations piqued again and again: What if Wilson had pressed his case in 1916? Wilson believed, and Zelikow agrees, that once a peace conference was underway, the fighting would have to stop, and once it had stopped, it could not resume.

And then what? The United States would have been spared the war. Would Russia have been spared its Bolsheviks, and Germany its Nazis? Would the 20th century have been spared the need to number its wars, after all?

Lessons for the statesman leap from these pages: the importance of staff work and process; the need for clarity and precision in communications; the danger of the political double game; the desirability of conforming public messaging to private conviction; the need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of staff, and of oneself; the costs of personal ambition.

In this splendid book Philip Zelikow retrieves from oblivion “the most consequential diplomatic failure in the history of the United States.” We are all in his debt.

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*Harry W. Kopp is a former Foreign Service officer. He is a frequent contributor to The Foreign Service Journal and a member of its editorial board.*

## A Diplomatic Success Story

### Master Negotiator: The Role of James A. Baker, III at the End of the Cold War

*Diana Villiers Negroponte, Archway Publishing, 2020, \$20.99/paperback, e-book available, 418 pages.*

REVIEWED BY JOSEPH L. NOVAK

James A. Baker's term in office as Secretary of State (1989-1992) spanned the final stages of the Cold War and many other landmark events whose impact continues to reverberate. In examining Baker's consequential years at Foggy Bottom, Diana Villiers Negroponte's new book, *Master Negotiator*, stands out for its light touch and trove of fascinating insights.

The author comes to the subject as a scholar with significant international experience. A global fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center, Negroponte has lectured on international politics at several universities. She dedicates the book to her husband, John D. Negroponte, the highly regarded former ambassador, with whom she ably partnered at postings around the world.

Major sections of *Master Negotiator* chronicle James Baker's priorities and actions as he grappled with the question of German unification in 1989-1990 and the unraveling of the Soviet Union in 1991. Earlier books on these subjects—including *To Build a Better World* by Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, and *Autopsy on an Empire* by Jack F. Matlock Jr.—are more panoramic and comprehensive in gathering the complex strands of a turbulent era. That said, Negroponte masterfully keeps her focus on Baker and his impressive diplomatic track record.

*Master Negotiator* is not Eurocentric. Finely tuned chapters capture Baker's crucial role in the diplomatic leadup to the Gulf War and in arranging the Madrid Arab-Israeli peace conference. The author, who has considerable experience in Central America, also explores Baker's successful efforts to promote democratization in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In explaining Baker's effectiveness as America's top diplomat, Negroponte emphasizes that he was "tough, determined and competitive." She also highlights his laser-like focus on pivotal issues.

## In explaining Baker's effectiveness as America's top diplomat, Negroponte emphasizes that he was "tough, determined and competitive."

*Master Negotiator* returns repeatedly to the point that Baker's close relationship with George H.W. Bush, the 41st president who died in 2018, served as the bedrock of his empowerment as Secretary of State. Underscoring the connection, the former president wrote the book's foreword, relating that the two went "back a long, long way," having met in Texas in the 1950s. Bush adds that his choice of Baker to be his Secretary was a "gimme." The book reports that the two were "like brothers" and were so much on the same wavelength that they could finish each other's sentences.

Negroponte makes adept use of "night notes" that Baker regularly wrote to keep the president briefed on daily events. The notes, often informal in style, serve to underline the intimacy of the Bush-Baker relationship. In a note from early

1990, for example, Baker lets off steam by grouching that "it was a long and at times difficult day" and then launches into the minutiae of arms control negotiations.

Regarding his management style, Negroponte perceptively comments that "Baker was more of a single operator, supported by a very small team." This sparked some tension when career officers were not brought into Baker's compact decision-making circle.

One of the book's more riveting chapters examines where Baker stood in relation to the long-running "idealist versus realist" clash over the direction of U.S. foreign policy.

With verve, Negroponte describes how Baker's senior thesis at Princeton University manifested the pragmatic outlook he took while in office decades later. The thesis probes policy debates involving midcentury British Labour Party leaders. In concluding his thesis, Baker made it clear why he preferred the policies and mindset of Ernest Bevin, the postwar foreign secretary, stating: "I favored the approach of the realist."

The book sketches how Baker's realist perspective was tested in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre in June 1989. Baker acknowledged the brutality of the crackdown but did not see concrete ways to influence Beijing's behavior. Human rights advocates and

political opponents excoriated the Bush administration for failing to confront the "Butchers of Beijing." Baker dodged the incoming flak and stuck to his pragmatic approach. In doing so, he "showed that he remained a follower of Ernest Bevin," as Negroponte skillfully puts it.

Even as it delves into serious issues, the book exposes the lighter side of diplomacy. To flag one example, the author mentions Baker's occasional deployment of Texas-style colloquialisms, such as "Don't let a dead cat lie on your doorstep" and his references to winged bullfrogs. While perhaps readily understandable in Abilene, Baker's phrases

tended to baffle his interpreters and international interlocutors.

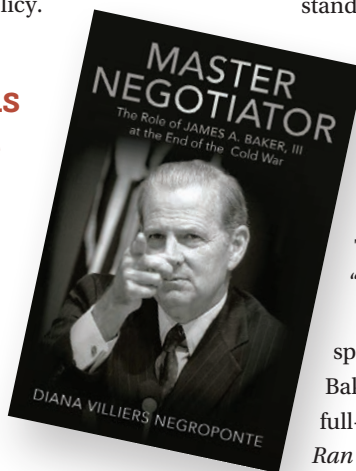
She also cites British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as referring to two visiting American emissaries as "Tweedledum and Tweedledee," dryly noting that this "was not meant as a compliment."

While *Master Negotiator* places a spotlight on his years at Foggy Bottom, Baker was also the subject of a recent full-length biography, *The Man Who Ran Washington*, by Peter Baker and Susan Glasser (see June FSJ review). Both books, true to their respective titles, hold Baker in high esteem as they interweave examples of his professional competence, realist perspective and power-broker status.

Reflecting on how a singular figure can inspire others, W.H. Auden wrote that W.B. Yeats "became his admirers." Through erudite books like *Master Negotiator* and *The Man Who Ran Washington*, James Baker is the subject of a similar process. ■

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Joseph L. Novak is a Foreign Service officer serving with the Bureau of International Organization Affairs at the State Department.





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# Forestalling a Democracy Crisis in Paraguay

BY ROBERT E. SERVICE

Paraguay has a long history of authoritarian rule and little experience with democracy. In 1989 democratic elements deposed Alfredo Stroessner after 34 years of dictatorship. They elected, first, another general to replace him and then, in 1993, a civilian, Juan Carlos Wasmosy.

Wasmosy appointed Gen. Lino Cesar Oviedo head of the army. As a colonel, Oviedo had helped oust Stroessner and harbored political ambitions of his own. For more than two years, Wasmosy and Oviedo frequently disagreed over government and Colorado Party issues.

I arrived as U.S. ambassador in Asunción in late 1994. Maintaining democracy in Paraguay was a top U.S. priority, not least because we believed it would result in more cooperation in fighting drug trafficking from Bolivia and Peru.

On Saturday afternoon, April 20, 1996, an aide to President Wasmosy asked to see me urgently. He said the president was planning to fire Oviedo the coming Monday. He wanted us to be aware in case there were difficulties.

The next morning the public affairs officer drafted a statement of support for Wasmosy and constitutional order, should it be needed. We checked with the presidential palace and learned that Oviedo had refused to accept his dismissal unless

the president and vice president also stepped down. When we checked again in the late afternoon, nothing had changed.

We decided to issue our statement of support for the legally instituted government of Paraguay, calling on Oviedo to accept his dismissal. Soon after, the Brazilian and Argentine ambassadors joined me in going to Oviedo's base to talk to him. He refused to see us, and there were rumors of a coup.

Back at the presidential residence, numerous officials and much of the small ambassadorial corps milled around. After a while, I decided there was nothing I could do and crossed the street to my own residence to retire for the night.

Soon there was a call from the papal nuncio saying that I'd better come back; the president was thinking seriously about resigning. Oviedo was threatening to start the tanks rolling, and Wasmosy was worried that many of those around him might be killed. Resigning would save lives.

I said there was another alternative: "Send all these people home, and come spend the night at my place." President Wasmosy agreed and soon, he, his two sons and I were headed back to our embassy compound. There we were joined by the Brazilian ambassador.

Negotiations continued with Oviedo for another couple of hours. Meanwhile, Was-

mosy was receiving calls from Washington and elsewhere urging him not to resign. By 3 a.m., finding the needed support, Wasmosy pretty much ruled out resignation, and we all got a couple hours of sleep.

At 6:30 a.m. or so on April 23, Wasmosy looked out at the lovely embassy grounds and opined wistfully he might just spend the day with us. The deputy chief of mission and I said: "No, now more than ever you have to be seen as president." Wasmosy agreed, returned to his residence and then went to the presidential palace, with a cavalcade of cars following behind and applause from those along the route.

Negotiations with Oviedo continued over the next two days. President Bill Clinton and other world leaders called. Wasmosy offered to make Oviedo minister of defense (a position without direct command of troops) if he resigned his army position.

Oviedo agreed, and the resignation from the army took place the next day, Wednesday, before a huge crowd and with much ceremony. By then Wasmosy was rethinking the second part of the deal, making Oviedo defense minister.

Thursday morning at his residence, Wasmosy turned to the general then holding that job for advice. Gen. Silvio Rafael Noguera demurred, saying that the military had been making decisions for too long in Paraguay. Wasmosy announced that Oviedo would not become defense minister. The immediate crisis was over.

Although Oviedo would later reemerge, unsuccessfully running for president in 1998, Paraguay would remain a democracy. Almost 24 years later, it still is. ■



*Robert E. Service joined the Foreign Service in 1961 and served as political officer in Mexico City, as political counselor in Santiago and as deputy chief of mission in Madrid, Buenos Aires and Brasilia, among other assignments. He served as U.S. ambassador to Paraguay from 1994 to 1997, when he retired.*

*Editor's note: Prior to finalizing this edition, we learned that Robert Service had passed away. Look for an obituary in an upcoming FSJ edition.*

**T**he Kopet Dag mountains, shown here at sunrise, separate Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, from Iran by only 15 kilometers at its nearest point. I was posted in Ashgabat for a two-month assignment, starting in January 2021. The new embassy compound in the foreground is among other buildings currently under construction.

A week after getting out of quarantine, I discovered at the center of a large traffic circle, one of many throughout the city, an extremely elaborate statue. It depicts the ancient trade routes of the Silk Road, transecting the Karakum Desert of Merv in what is now Turkmenistan. The writing translates to “Turkmenistan—Home of Neutrality.” ■

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*Marlene Wurdeman retired from the Foreign Service in 2014 and has since been working in the Bureau of Information Resource Management's Office of Foreign Operations. In September, she returned from temporary duty (TDY) in Reykjavik. This image was captured with an iPhone 8+.*





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