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DECEMBER 2021



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Restoring a Culture of Respect, Starting with the Iran Hostages

BY ERIC RUBIN

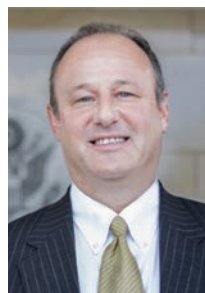
We have much to be proud of as a Service: not only our legacy of dedication, sacrifice and accomplishment, but also our more recent achievements leading on the COVID-19 repatriation efforts and the evacuation of more than 120,000 from Afghanistan.

There is also a lot that needs fixing, including the standard we uphold for decency and respect among and toward professional colleagues.

We have too many examples of callous, overly bureaucratic treatment of members of the Foreign Service in their hour of need. We have seen this poor treatment at play for decades in the aftermath of terrorist attacks that killed and wounded FS members and local staff.

I was personally involved in trying to fix the mistakes State made in responding to survivors and bereaved family members after the 1998 Al-Qaida attacks on U.S. Embassy Nairobi and U.S. Embassy Dar es Salaam. Survivors and bereaved were treated shabbily, and with a real lack of compassion. And I know that they continue to suffer such neglect to this day, as former U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

Prudence Bushnell wrote in her compelling book, *Terrorism, Betrayal, and Resilience: My Story of the 1998 U.S. Embassy Bombings*.



As concerning is the way we have failed to keep faith with the 53 Embassy Tehran hostages. The events of 1979 are seared into the memories of all of us who were alive at that time. In my case, they helped motivate my decision to apply for the Foreign Service four years later.

In February 1979, the U.S. drew down Embassy Tehran after it was overrun by militants. Later that year, the U.S. determined it was important to boost staffing again and requested volunteers to do so. Members of the Foreign Service stepped up.

Months later, the Carter administration allowed the shah into the U.S. for medical treatment, and that decision led directly to the hostage crisis.

The Iran hostages and their families suffered every indignity imaginable, not just at the hands of their Iranian captors, but from our own bureaucracy. Among other things, State cut off their health insurance and employee benefits on the grounds that they were AWOL, while in captivity! (Thankfully, that appalling decision was quickly reversed under scathing public criticism.)

While in captivity, the hostages suffered torture and mistreatment because they represented the United States. And the personal and psychological impact has been endured by the hostages and their immediate family members for the 42 years since.

In the Algiers Accords that Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher

negotiated to free the hostages, the U.S. waived claims against Iran in most cases. It has taken decades for that decision to be reconsidered.

Compensation legislation enacted by Congress in December 2015 provided for \$220 million to be paid to surviving hostages, spouses and children. Because the payments must be funded by successful claims against foreign governments, only a fraction of the promised compensation has been paid.

If nothing changes, the compensation will not be fully paid until 2039 at the earliest—by which point none of the hostages and their spouses are likely to still be alive.

That cannot be the right answer. Forty-two years after their captivity and mistreatment, our retired colleagues and their survivors have not been adequately compensated for the suffering they endured while serving our country.

Yellow ribbons are scant comfort to those who continue to bear the scars of their ordeal, both literally and figuratively. This sad tale is emblematic of our failure as a nation to truly honor those who have sacrificed for us.

It is time to do right by the hostages of Embassy Tehran and pay them what they are owed. We must not only because they deserve what they have been promised, but also because we need to make a statement going forward that we will take care of our people. The time to start is now. ■

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

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Honoring Excellence and Dissent

BY SHAWN DORMAN

This edition celebrates the recipients of the 2021 AFSA awards: the Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, the Rivkin Award for constructive dissent by a mid-level officer and eight outstanding achievement awards.

The October 2021 AFSA awards ceremony honored the recipients of both the 2021 and the 2020 awards (AFSA did not hold a ceremony in 2020 due to the pandemic), and we were able to hear from most of them. That story is in AFSA News. The interview with the 2020 Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award recipient Ed Perkins and the profiles of the other 2020 award winners were published in the December 2020 *FSJ*. Sadly, Ambassador Perkins passed away shortly after the interview. His daughter Katherine Perkins spoke on his behalf at the ceremony.

Our 2021 awards coverage kicks off with a great conversation with the recipient of the Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, John Negroponte. From junior officer in Vietnam to Deputy Secretary of State, and a stint as the first director of national intelligence (DNI), Ambassador Negroponte has a message for all of us: “Government

service is a noble calling, and a Foreign Service career is definitely worth pursuing.”

FSO Anny Vu is the 2021 recipient of the

William R. Rivkin Award for constructive dissent by a mid-level officer. Her courageous work pushing back on Chinese influence in multilateral organizations from a position at the National Security Council meant standing up to internal political pressures.

FSO Erika Kuenne received the Mark Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy for her work on support for Taiwan. Office Management Specialist Bridgette Huerkamp was selected for the Nelson B. Delavan Award for keeping the embassy community connected during the pandemic crisis in Bangladesh.

FS family member Alisse Sargeant received the M. Juanita Guess Award for a Community Liaison Office Coordinator for her outstanding support for Mission China as it was hit by the pandemic, and for sharing best practices to assist other posts.

The Avis Bohlen Award for an FS family member was given to Amanda Jager for her extraordinary support of the U.S. Embassy New Delhi community during COVID-19, and to Ivana Lawrence, for her work with expat families in Cairo.

Ambassador (ret.) Thomas Boyatt received the AFSA Achievement and Contributions to the Association Award (for a second time) for innovations he brought to AFSA over the past 20 years. Based on her work at Mission Jordan, USAID FSO Charlee Doom was selected as an AFSA Post Rep of the Year along with USAID FSO Randy Chester, who was chosen for his work at Mission Pakistan.

Our Cover Story—“When the Soviet Union Collapsed,” 30 years ago this month—contains two must-read pieces by retired diplomats who were there. James Goodby charts the course of the improbable but fortuitous U.S.-Soviet partnership between Reagan and Gorbachev that helped end the Cold War. And George Krol takes us back to 1991 St. Petersburg to offer “Practical Lessons for Today’s Foreign Service.”

Krol’s advice is evergreen, and I must bow to nostalgia and recall the wonderful spring of 1989 in then-Leningrad helping out at the overstretched consulate. We had strict contact rules then (only meet Soviets with a buddy), but it was the era of glasnost (opening up), and one could go almost anywhere.

I recall writing a cable on “Soviet Youth Today” to justify to the RSO my extensive out and aboutness. Today’s Foreign Service faces severe restrictions due to real security concerns, but we are seeing new movement away from total risk avoidance to risk management that can get diplomats out of fortress embassies. I hope we’ll hear from some of you about this.

In FS Heritage, Ray Walser goes back 80 years to “Recalling Dec. 11, 1941: When World War II Truly Began.” Beatrice Camp reflects on “An Upset in Budapest.” And in the Education Supplement, find notes for high school students on why and how to prepare for the SAT and ACT from David Huemer.

Do keep in touch, drop us a line or comment on our LinkedIn page. Best wishes for a peaceful, healthy 2022. ■



Shawn Dorman is the editor of The Foreign Service Journal.

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Remembering Ambassador Johnny Young

I just read the online version of the tribute to Johnny Young. We were of the same generation, but from very different backgrounds. He was a great role model!

Johnny was administrative counselor at The Hague when I was assigned to Rotterdam from 1984 to 1986 as a second-tour consular/admin officer. Our contacts were limited, but whenever our paths crossed, even in post-retirement settings, he displayed the admirable qualities described in the essay about him in the October *FSJ*. That he traveled such an incredible life path from rural Georgian to superior statesman exemplified the fineness of the man in every role he played.

His wife, Angie, contributed much to the well-deserved respect and honor accorded them over their years of service. Thanks, Mr. Ambassador, for your patriotic dedication.

Dave Rabadan

FSO, retired

Annandale, Virginia

Coming to Terms with the 1619 Project

Bob Fretz's letter in the October *FSJ* claims the *New York Times'* 1619 Project lacks "balance, sources, footnotes or bibliography, so is not a history text." In fact, I would submit that it is his own letter that deserves those criticisms.

For despite his assertion that "the project gets a lot wrong," Mr. Fretz does not identify a single factual error—but he commits several of his own.

For starters, the authors of the 1619 Project do not claim there were no Black enslaved persons in America before Jamestown, for plainly there were. But as John Fer noted in his May Speaking Out column on the controversy ("How the 1619 Project Can Help Public Diplo-

macy"), their focus is on the spread of slavery and the institutionalization of systemic racism *in the original 13 colonies* (my emphasis).

The contemporaneous developments in the French and Spanish territories Mr. Fretz cites are certainly interesting and deserving of attention in their own right, but they are also irrelevant to the 1619 Project's mission.

Speaking as a musician, this whole line of attack reminds me of concert reviewers who devote their space to the program they feel the performers should have presented, rather than the one they did.

When Mr. Fretz finally gets around to critiquing the project's actual findings, he treats us to a string of assertions carefully qualified with "likely," "probable" and other weasel words.

But even if everything he claims were 100 percent true, that wouldn't contradict the stirring words of Columbia University Professor John McWhorter, whom Fer quotes in his May column:

"In terms of what makes America unique, 1776 or various years thereabouts, are absolutely crucial, beyond the flags and the songs. ... This land was built on the backs of unpaid laborers and enslaved people, and this went far back beyond 1776."

No historical analysis is perfect, and the 1619 Project is no exception.

We can, and should, debate what responsibility 21st-century white Americans bear for that history, and what we ought to do about it. But let us have that debate on a level playing field—one that acknowledges the continuing reverberations of our nation's original sin, slavery.

Steven Alan Honley

Former FSO

Washington, D.C.



He Likely Prospered?

Bob Fretz wrote a letter of some length commenting on the failings of the 1619 Project and the challenges it poses for our country's diplomacy. He finished off his long critique by elevating the name of one

John Punch, an indentured servant whose descendants likely include President Barack Obama and Ralph Bunche.

What caught my eye was his casual line, "He likely prospered," after noting Punch's marriage to "a white woman, likely a fellow indentured servant." That bears some explanation, considering the most prominent reason for a contemporary American to recognize John Punch's name is that he is most often characterized as America's first official slave.

Sadly for Punch, having escaped with two white indentured servants, he was sentenced upon his recapture to a lifetime of chattel slavery. There are conflicting essays from 1913 and later that explore Punch's status relative to the two Europeans, yet there is never any doubt that he spent the rest of his life as a slave.

There is much to study and learn and understand from the period, but denying the primary fact of Punch's permanent reduction to slave by declaring "he likely prospered" reflects that Mr. Fretz has much more to learn himself. Your readership is due a clarification.

Leslie D. Mark

FS family member

Kansas City, Missouri

Leading on Democracy

The White House's virtual Summit for Democracy set for Dec. 9-10 fulfills a campaign promise by then-candidate Joe Biden to "set an affirmative agenda" for



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global democratic renewal. The initiative comes as the world is experiencing a 15-year democratic decline, thanks to the “unchecked brutality of autocratic regimes and the ethical decay of democratic powers,” according to democracy watchdog Freedom House.

Given the state of democracy around the world and our own affairs here at home, maybe it’s time to examine the role that the United States can realistically expect to play in the effort to energize and expand global democracy.

The United States, founded on democratic principles we have proudly promoted, should be the logical choice to lead the march. The State Department’s website notes that democracy promotion has been “a central goal of U.S. foreign policy” for more than 200 years; America traditionally has been the standard by which other democracies are judged.

It stands to reason that America’s finger should plug the hole in the dike holding back the authoritarian flood. But will it? The summit comes as the world is questioning America’s own commitment to democracy:

- While America calls for economic transparency overseas, October’s “Pandora Papers” leak of secret documents revealed that laws in a number of states help wealthy individuals dodge taxes by concealing financial transactions.
- The chaos and tragedy that surrounded America’s pullout from Afghanistan in August left many wondering whether the United States still has the stomach to fight for democracy.
- The Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol presented an image to the world of a frail and failing governmental system.
- The events that fueled the Black Lives Matter movement, closely watched

internationally, presented grim testimony that America has far to go to achieve its long-sought-after social equality.

- A Pew Global Research Survey conducted last spring (in mostly Western European nations) found that only 17 percent of respondents felt the U.S. provides a good model of democracy.

It’s a worrisome picture at home, too.

A 2020 Pew survey found that 71 percent of Americans “believe elected officials do not care what people like them think,” and 59 percent of us are dissatisfied with how democracy is working here.

Compounding the diplomatic challenge, a poll earlier this year found that only 25 percent of Americans think promoting democracy should be a priority for U.S. foreign policy. Democracy promotion ranked last in the survey’s 20-item list of possible foreign policy priorities.

Some experts agree. Last January, Atlantic Council Senior Fellow Emma Ashford wrote that America’s foreign-policy goals “are completely out of step with the realities of the country’s domestic political and economic dysfunction. How can the United States spread democracy or act as an example for others if it barely has a functioning democracy at home?”

In March, Thomas Carothers and Frances Z. Brown of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace agreed that the U.S. needs serious political reform. Our damaged democratic standing, they wrote, hurts our diplomacy by “[weakening] appeals from U.S. officials to foreign counterparts to respect democratic norms.”

However, they argue, this isn’t the time to step back from promoting democratic ideals: “The global condition of democracy is too dire for that.” Instead, “the Biden Administration can and should move forward with an active democracy support policy [but] eschew any tempta-

tion to sugarcoat our damaged reality and instead face it head on.”

Carothers and Brown say the U.S. should surrender its “almost reflexive” role as the natural leader and exporter of global democracy. Show a little humility, they suggest, and acknowledge our missteps as evidence that “democracy requires constant tending and self-correction, both at home and overseas.”

America needs the December summit, they maintain, but “it will succeed only if it celebrates mutual accountability and partnership, rather than trying to resurrect the idea of America as the sun at the center of democracy’s solar system.” ■

*Bill Wanlund
FSO, retired
Falls Church, Virginia*

CORRECTION

In the October letter from Bob Fretz, “A Project That Challenges Our Thinking,” three sentences should have read as follows:

“Estevanico often went on ahead, as he related better to Native Americans.”

“In 1565, Black people helped found St. Augustine, America’s oldest city.”

“For the 60 Africans who disembarked, this was their lucky day.”

We regret the errors.

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America Rejoins the U.N. Human Rights Council

On Oct. 14, Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that the United States has been elected to a three-year term on the United Nations Human Rights Council, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

The decision to rejoin the UNHRC, first floated back in February, came three years after former President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. off the panel halfway through its 2017-2020 term, citing its apparent bias against Israel.

Cameroon, Eritrea and the United Arab Emirates will also be joining the Human Rights Council in January, despite widespread concerns over their domestic human rights records.

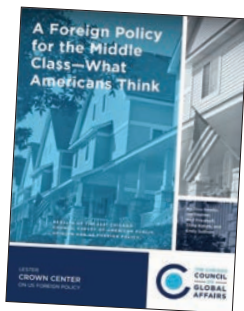
Does the Middle Class Like Its Foreign Policy?

The latest Chicago Council on Global Affairs Survey, released on Oct. 7, examines the question of how well the Biden administration's "Foreign Policy for the Middle Class" is resonating with its target audience.

The White House should be encouraged by the results, which show strong support for its stance on China and domestic renewal to support global competitiveness.

The survey also indicates that Americans are not particularly skeptical about the value of trade, or weary of U.S. global engagement and leadership. Two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) say globalization is mostly good for the United States.

And nearly as many (64 percent) want America to take a leading role in address-



ing many of the world's most pressing challenges, including climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Diplomatic Confirmations Update

As of early November, the Senate had confirmed an additional 10 foreign affairs nominees since its return from the August recess.

At State, 11 assistant secretaries have been confirmed since the start of the Biden administration. Among them are career FSOs Brian Nichols (Western Hemisphere), Mary Catherine "Molly" Phee (Africa), Donald Lu (South and Central Asia), Todd Robinson (International Narcotics and Law Enforcement), Daniel Kritenbrink (East Asia and Pacific), Rena Bitter (Consular) and Gentry Smith, retired SFS (Diplomatic Security).

In addition, political appointees Karen Donfried (Europe and Eurasia), Brett Holmgren (Intelligence and Research), Jessica Lewis (Political-Military Affairs) and Monica Medina (Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs) made it through confirmation.

The assistant secretary for global public affairs position is not a Senate-confirmed one; political appointee Elizabeth Allen was announced in August.

At USAID, political appointee Paloma Adams-Allen was confirmed as deputy administrator for management and resources.

The Senate's record on ambassadorial confirmations remains bleak: Only six of 71 nominees have been confirmed. Four political appointees were confirmed in late October: former Senators Tom Udall (New Zealand and Samoa) and Jeff Flake (Turkey), as well as the widows of two senators—Cindy McCain (U.N. Agencies in Rome) and Victoria Reggie Kennedy (Austria).

Some 22 nominees for senior positions at the foreign affairs agencies await confirmation.

Visit afsa.org/list-ambassadorial-appointments for a complete list of nominations, and track appointments of senior-level officials at the various foreign affairs agencies at afsa.org/tracker-senior-official-appointments.

Looking Forward and Back: State's Role in Afghanistan

On Oct. 12, the State Department tapped veteran diplomat Ambassador (ret.) Elizabeth Jones as the new coordinator for Afghan relocation efforts, days after a U.S. delegation met face-to-face with representatives from the Taliban in Doha for the first time since the militants seized power in August.

Jones, who previously served as ambassador to Kazakhstan and deputy special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, will be responsible for facilitating the departure of Afghans who still want to leave Afghanistan and helping them resettle in the United States.

Meanwhile, State's Office of the Inspector General is opening multiple investigations into the end of U.S. diplomatic operations in Afghanistan, according to an Oct. 18 letter Acting Inspector General Diana Shaw sent to Congress.

Shaw said her office will review the Special Immigrant Visa program, Afghans processed for refugee admission into the U.S., the resettlement of refugees and visa recipients, and the emergency evacuation of Embassy Kabul.

The probe will also "include evacuation of U.S. citizens and Afghan nationals," as well as "several oversight projects" related to the withdrawal of U.S.

Contemporary Quote

As of today, there are more than 80 nominees before the Senate, including 41 pending on the Senate Executive Calendar. Seven career Senior Foreign Service Officers, passed out of committee with full bipartisan support, have been pending on the Executive Calendar since June. Their confirmation is delayed not due to objections over their credentials, but unrelated policy disagreements.

The development and execution of our national security policy depends on having senior leaders in place in our embassies overseas and in Washington. There is not another major power in the world that would leave the vast majority of its embassies without an ambassador in place for many months. In the first nine months of the Biden-Harris administration, only five country ambassadors have been confirmed.

Dozens of U.S. embassies in every region are led not by a Senate-confirmed ambassador but by a chargé d'affaires. Our embassies are being led by dedicated personnel who are doing a fantastic job, and I am proud of all they have achieved. But there is no substitute for an empowered ambassador, and many governments do not provide access at the highest levels to officials who are not accredited ambassadors.

The bottom line is this: our security and interests are substantially undermined because so many of our senior leadership roles are not occupied by confirmed officials. This compounds the challenges we face in pursuing our shared objectives, especially for functions that are critical for taking care of our workforce and leading our overseas missions. While we acknowledge there is more we can do as an administration to improve our part of the process, the level of delay and obstruction we face is unprecedented. I urge the Senate to act on these nominations with all haste.

—Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Brian McKeon, from his opening statement at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, “The State of the State Department and State Department Authorization,” Oct. 27.

troops and other military and diplomatic personnel from Afghanistan.

On Sept. 24 the Defense Department Inspector General announced an investigation into the Aug. 29 drone strike that killed 10 Afghan civilians, including seven children. The U.S. Air Force is conducting its own probe into the episode, as well.

In August, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction released its 11th lessons learned report, “What We Need to Learn: Lessons from 20 Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction,” as well as its 53rd quarterly report to Congress, which looks at the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal, the collapse of the Afghan government and security forces, and risks to the Afghan people.

These developments are a powerful reminder that although the last U.S. troops left Afghanistan on Aug. 31 after 20 years of war, and Embassy Kabul is once again closed, the debate over America’s role there is far from over.

Blinken Announces Plan to Modernize Diplomacy

In remarks delivered at the Foreign Service Institute on Oct. 27, Secretary of State Antony Blinken presented the pillars of his plan to modernize the conduct and institution of U.S. diplomacy to meet the tests of the 21st century.

To mobilize a robust response to cyber threats, Secretary Blinken announced the creation of a new bureau for cyberspace and digital policy headed by an ambassador-at-large. He said he will also name a new special envoy for critical and emerging technology to lead the technology diplomacy agenda with U.S. allies. Both positions will report to Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman for at least the first year.

“We want to make sure technology works for democracy, fighting back against disinformation, standing up for internet freedom and reducing the misuse of surveillance technology,” Blinken said.



Secretary of State Antony Blinken speaks at the Foreign Service Institute on Oct. 27.

The modernization plan includes requesting a 50 percent increase in the department’s information technology budget so State can make better use of

HEARD ON THE HILL



Passing an Authorization Bill

It's been nearly 20 years since Congress passed an authorization for the State Department. Over that time, the department's need for reform of its operations and management has grown enormously. ... If we want to exercise full oversight of the State Department, which is the charge of this committee, we must regularly and consistently authorize the State Department. ... I look forward to working with the chairman and you, Mr. McKeon, on getting a State Department

authorization across the finish line.

—Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Senator James “Jim” Risch (R-Id.), speaking at the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, “The State of the State Department,” Oct. 27.

Competition with China

China now has more diplomats, more missions, more concerted public diplomacy, and more money for its diplomacy than we do in parts of Africa and Latin America. We are being badly outlapped, and the holdup of confirming ambassadors by this body is certainly also hampering U.S. foreign policy objectives to be competitive with China.

—Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Senator Robert “Bob” Menendez (D-N.J.), speaking at the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, “The State of the State Department,” Oct. 27.

FS Families Act Stalled

We want to recruit the very best and brightest in the Foreign Service. Many Foreign Service families have two working spouses, and if a spouse who is not the FSO is not able to use his or her talents overseas where applicable, it makes it a lot harder. This [bill] extends some of the same benefits to Foreign Service officers that we provide to military families abroad. I know of no substantive opposition. I would ask for a commitment that we bring that before this committee for a vote at the next work session.

—Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee business meeting, Oct. 19.

Tribute to a Champion of the Foreign Service

He [Colin Powell] is noted as a great military leader, justifiably so, but he also had a passion for diplomacy and the benefits of avoiding war by stabilizing troubled regions. The men and women of the Foreign Service never had a better champion.

—Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), in a series of tweets, Oct. 18.

emerging technology, including through broader data-sharing efforts.

“The department has vast and diverse data sets,” he said. “But we haven’t done a good enough job making data available to you [staff] in a timely and useful way to help you make missions or management decisions more effectively. We’re changing that.”

To bolster multilateral diplomacy, Blinken stated, a new office has been created within the Bureau of International Organization Affairs with a single mandate: to ensure that the U.S. and its partners can win elections to lead key institutions, be appointed to important bodies, and push back against attempts to undermine the integrity of the international system.

On risk management, he plans to “reinvigorate in-person diplomacy and public engagement.” Security regulations make it difficult for Foreign Service members to work in the field and to open new missions, even in low-risk places, he said. “A world of zero risk is not a world in which American diplomacy can deliver. We have to accept risk and manage it smartly.”

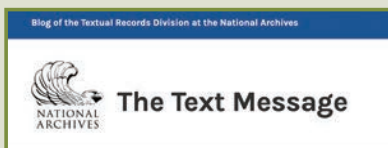
No new security regulations were announced; however, the Secretary vowed to work closely with Congress to ensure policies support Foreign Service personnel.

Blinken unveiled other steps to modernize American diplomacy and to build and retain a diverse workforce. They include the launch of a new “policy ideas channel” that allows employees at any level to share their policy ideas directly with senior leadership as well as revitalization of the Dissent Channel.

“None of these changes are reform for the sake of reform,” the Secretary emphasized. “They’re all tied directly to the mission in front of us. We need to put

Blog of the Month: The Text Message (text-message.blogs.archives.gov)

Employees of the National Archives and Records Administration handle billions of pages of documents that contain historical and evidentiary information created by the federal government. The Text Message blog is a vehicle for staff at NARA's many facilities across the country to share



their knowledge and discoveries within that trove with the public.

The Oct. 4 edition, contributed by David Langbart, archivist in textual reference at the branch in College Park, Maryland, is of special interest to Foreign Service folks.

A century ago, in 1921, the State Department sent a circular to all

posts soliciting examples of how “the Diplomatic Service is of use to the economic interests of this country,” among other queries.

Joseph Grew—then U.S. minister to Denmark and later a senior official in the Department of State who was instrumental in the professionalization of the Foreign Service following the 1924 passage of the Rogers Act—submitted a lengthy, detailed response that still resonates a century later.

Langbart's Text Message blog post about the survey excerpts Grew's answers to each question, while including a link to an image of the complete text at the end of each edited section. In July, Langbart received the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations' first-ever Anna K. Nelson Prize in Archival Excellence.

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

the State Department in the best possible position to confront the challenges facing our country, and we need to build, support, and protect the workforce that makes everything that we do possible.”

Pandora Papers Reveal U.S. Hypocrisy

The “Pandora Papers,” almost 12 million documents and just under three terabytes of data obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, is the largest trove of leaked offshore documents in history.

One revelation has thrown a particular challenge to American policymakers: the fact that the U.S. itself serves as a tax haven for hundreds of elites

from around the world, including sitting country leaders, such as King Abdullah II of Jordan, and Russian elites close to President Vladimir Putin. Many are using a complex network of secret companies to move money and assets to avoid paying taxes and, sometimes, to conceal the proceeds of criminality.

As the ICIJ notes in its investigation: “A burgeoning American trust industry is increasingly sheltering the assets of international millionaires and billionaires by promising levels of protection and secrecy that rival or surpass those offered in overseas tax havens. That shield, which is near-absolute, has insulated the industry from meaningful oversight and allowed it to forge new footholds in U.S. states.”



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Vietnamization of the Foreign Service

Nearly three million Americans have now served in Vietnam. Of these, about 600 have been Foreign Service officers.

Thus, roughly 20 percent of the Foreign Service has been exposed to many of the stimuli which have turned “nice” kids from Middle America into peace freaks, hawks, junkies, and even assassins. ...

About 350 FSOs have been assigned to the pacification program (CORDS). ... Serving in Vietnam is not like service elsewhere. With respect to no other country could it be said that perhaps 20 percent of the FSOs had experimented with soft drugs, but that is the case in Vietnam. And in no other country do FSOs have their own personal automatic weapons and receive training in how to fire a grenade launcher before they go.

Vietnam is different.

Most FSOs who have served in Vietnam are acutely aware of the mistakes America has made in that country and are determined that the experience shall not be repeated elsewhere. More than anything, they understand the limitations of military power. ...

Coupled with the Vietnam veterans’ mistrust of Americans in uniform will be their own activism. In Vietnam they left the traditional diplomatic world of reporting and



demarches. The emphasis in Vietnam was on *doing* things, whether inside or outside the system. If Vietnamese officials would not feed hungry refugees, the FSO usually found a way to get the job done himself. ...

What the attitudes of the Vietnam returnees portend for the future of the Foreign Service is not yet clear. If the slight trend toward resignation increases, then the department may well lose many of those who have been most markedly affected by the Vietnam experience.

Morale has unquestionably been hurt by the large number of Vietnam assignments, but morale has been hurt countless times in the past.

FSOs who have been to Vietnam may well be viewed as a cadre for future counter-insurgency assignments elsewhere. But fewer and fewer people believe that anything approaching American involvement in Vietnam should or will be repeated elsewhere.

In any case, the Vietnam war may someday come to an end. But many Foreign Service officers, and perhaps the Service as a whole, will never be the same again.

—John Claymore, a pseudonym for a former FSO who served in Vietnam, from his article by the same title in the December 1971 FSJ.

The U.S. government has long condemned prominent offshore financial centers, where permissive regulations and guarantees of discretion have drawn oligarchs, autocrats and foreign individuals and companies accused of wrongdoing.

That the U.S. now serves as an offshore destination in its own right for trillions of dollars belonging to questionable actors stands in stark contrast to U.S. values and rhetoric, including the rule of law American diplomats promote abroad.

In response to the Pandora Papers, a bipartisan group of lawmakers announced in early October a bill known as the Enablers Act. This legislation would, for the first time, allow the Treasury Department to require trust companies, lawyers, art dealers and others to investigate the bona fides of foreign clients seeking to move money and assets into the American financial system. It also represents the most significant reform of rules against money laundering since 9/11.

“If we make banks report dirty money but allow law, real estate, and accounting firms to look the other way, that creates a loophole that crooks and kleptocrats can sail a yacht through,” Rep. Tom Malinowski (D-N.J.), co-sponsor of the proposed bill and co-chair of the Congressional Caucus Against Foreign Corruption and Kleptocracy, said. “Our bill closes that loophole and encourages the administration to move in the same direction.”

Russia Closes Mission to NATO

The Kremlin will suspend its permanent mission to NATO this fall and close the alliance's offices in Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced on Oct. 18.

The move comes as a response to NATO's expulsion of eight Russians in early October for alleged spying, with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg calling them "undeclared Russian intelligence officers" suspected of "malign activities." The number of people Russia can accredit at the organization will also be halved from 20.

"We have practically no conditions for elementary diplomatic work," Lavrov

told reporters. He said NATO could interact with Russia via its embassy in Brussels, if needed.

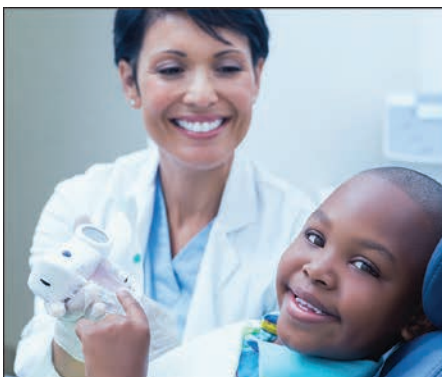
Russia also plans to shut down the alliance's liaison mission in the Belgian embassy in Moscow, established in 2002, and the NATO information office set up in 2001 to improve understanding between NATO and Russia.

The dispute marks the latest deterioration in East-West ties, which are already at a post-Cold War low.

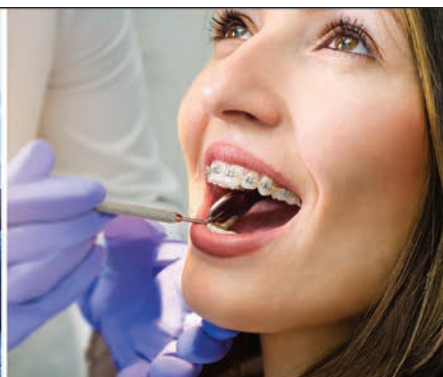
NATO suspended practical cooperation with Russia in 2014 after Moscow annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, but has kept channels open for high-level meetings and military-to-military cooperation.

Most recently, Russia and NATO have been at odds over Moscow's nuclear missile development and aerial intrusions in NATO airspace, as well as major Russian troop movements near the Ukrainian border. The Kremlin has been angered by NATO's aims to strengthen ties with Ukraine and Georgia, which Russia considers to be within its sphere of influence as post-Soviet nations. ■

This edition of Talking Points was compiled by Julia Wohlers and Steven Alan Honley.



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A Conversation with Ambassador John D. Negroponte

2021 Recipient of the AFSA Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy

Ambassador John D. Negroponte, a former Deputy Secretary of State and a five-time chief of mission, is this year's recipient of the American Foreign Service Association's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy. (For coverage of the ceremony, see AFSA News, p. 63.)

He is the 27th recipient of this prestigious award, given annually in recognition of a distinguished practitioner's career and enduring devotion to diplomacy. Past honorees include George H.W. Bush, Thomas Pickering, Ruth Davis, George Shultz, Richard Lugar, Joan Clark, Ronald Neumann, Sam Nunn, Rozanne Ridgway, Nancy Powell, Thomas Boyatt, William Harrop, Herman "Hank" Cohen and Edward Perkins.

John D. Negroponte was born in London, England, on July 21, 1939, and raised in New York City. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University after graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. Following a brief period at Harvard Law School, he joined the U.S. Foreign Service in 1960. His initial overseas postings included Hong Kong, Vietnam, France (as a staffer at the Paris Peace Talks), Ecuador and Greece. Stateside, he served in the Bureau of African Affairs, was a State Department Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and twice served on the National Security Council.

In addition to serving as a deputy assistant secretary of State (1977-1979), deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (1980-1981), assistant secretary in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (1985-1987) and deputy national security adviser to the National Security Council (1987-1989), Ambassador Negroponte was chief

of mission in Honduras (1981-1985), Mexico (1989-1993) and the Philippines (1993-1996).

After serving as a special representative to what was then the Bureau of American Republics Affairs (now the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs), Ambassador Negroponte retired from the Foreign Service in 1997 and worked for McGraw-Hill Companies as executive vice president for global markets for four years. In 2001, President George W. Bush summoned Amb. Negroponte back to public service as U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (2001-2004) and ambassador to Iraq (2004-2005). Appointments as Director of National Intelligence (2005-2007) and Deputy Secretary of State (2007-2009) followed, before Amb. Negroponte retired from government service.

During his Foreign Service career, Amb. Negroponte received the highest award that can be conferred by the Secretary of State, the State Department Secretary's Distinguished Service Award, on two occasions. In 2005, he received the Raymond "Jit" Trainor Award for Distinction in the Conduct of Diplomacy from Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy. In 2006, he won the American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award as well as the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service from the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. And in January 2009, President George W. Bush personally conferred the National Security Medal on Amb. Negroponte.

After retirement, Amb. Negroponte received two additional



COURTESY OF JOHN D. NEGROPONTE

John Negroponte in a helicopter in Vietnam when he was a provincial reporting officer at Embassy Saigon, 1964.

awards for his invaluable contributions to diplomacy. In 2014, the American Committees on Foreign Relations presented him with its Distinguished Service Award for the Advancement of Public Discourse in Foreign Policy. And in 2019, the American Academy of Diplomacy chose him for its Walter and Leonore Annenberg Award for Excellence in Diplomacy.

Amb. Negroponte taught international relations at Yale's Jackson Institute from 2009 to 2016 and again in 2020-2021. He taught at the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University from 2016 to 2018, and from 2018 to 2019 was the James R. Schlesinger Distinguished Professor at the University of Virginia's Miller Center. Negroponte is now an adjunct professor at Georgetown University.

Amb. Negroponte serves as chairman emeritus of the Council of the Americas/Americas Society and co-chairman of the U.S.-Philippines Society. He is a past member of the Secretary of State's Foreign Affairs Policy Board and has also served as chairman of the Intelligence and National Security Alliance.

Amb. Negroponte is married to Diana Villiers Negroponte, the author of *Master Negotiator: The Role of James A. Baker, III at the End of the Cold War* (Archway Publishing, 2020) and *Seeking Peace in El Salvador: The Struggle to Reconstruct a Nation at the End of the Cold War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). They have five children.

FSJ Editor-in-Chief Shawn Dorman conducted the following interview with Amb. Negroponte via email in September.

BECOMING A DIPLOMAT AND THE EARLY DAYS

FSJ: I understand that you decided to pursue a diplomatic career while in high school. What was the catalyst for that decision?

Amb. John Negroponte: I was much influenced by my father who had studied diplomacy in Paris during the 1930s but then, owing to the war, was unable to go forward with his plans to join the Greek diplomatic service. We came to the United States instead when I was an infant. But my dad definitely had a passion for foreign policy issues, and they were a part of our regular conversation, even at a very early age. Along with that, my parents were very international in perspective and spoke several foreign languages, and I became very accustomed to their international friends visiting our home in New York City.

FSJ: What was notable about joining the Foreign Service in the 1960s?

JDN: Government service was popular. Many of my classmates joined the military. Others joined the Central Intelligence Agency. Several of us joined the Foreign Service. The Cold War was in full swing. We were in a real international competition with the Soviet Union. It was palpable.

FSJ: What do you recall about the orientation and training of that time?

JDN: We had eight weeks of basic training, including a week at the Commerce Department. We were taught that trade promotion was a key part of our work, contrary to the legend that State Department FSOs disdain commercial work. That was a myth promoted by those who wanted to take the commercial function away from State, which eventually happened. That was a big mistake.

After the A-100 course, I took consular training in preparation for my assignment to Consulate General Hong Kong. The course was superb. One of the star teachers was Frank Auerbach, a legendary head of the State Department Visa Office. I recall being impressed that Mr. Auerbach had a personal meeting with each and every one of us going out to do visa work. He was the best.

FSJ: For many FSOs of your generation, Vietnam was a searing experience. You did an early tour there. How was that for you, and how did it shape your career?



John Negroponte as a novice skier in Sun Valley, Idaho, 1941.

JDN: My Vietnam experience was very much career-defining. It was not just one tour. It was about four in a row, starting with language training at FSI in 1963-1964, then a 3-1/2 year tour at Embassy Saigon (with TDYs at our consulate in Hue), followed by the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam and ending as director for Vietnam on Dr. Kissinger's National Security Council from 1971 to 1973, roughly a decade. Being director for Vietnam on the NSC was the most difficult and challenging position I ever had.

OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENTS

FSJ: In your ADST oral history, you say you learned a "cardinal" lesson from your time in Vietnam: "Don't overuse U.S. military forces. Use local capacity." How did you apply that to Iraq when you were ambassador there in 2004-2005? And could that have been applied more effectively in Afghanistan over the past 20 years?

JDN: This is an extremely important issue. In my experience, developing local capabilities has often been something of an afterthought in these conflict situations. In Vietnam, for example, during the first four years of combat involvement by our forces, we seemed to want to do all the fighting. The intellectual proponent of this approach was General William Westmoreland, the military commander. I remember attending a Mission Council meeting in Saigon chaired by Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, when Westmoreland briefed us on his approach. He said he wanted the U.S. forces out in front facing the North Vietnamese forces, while the Saigon army and other forces would defend the populated areas. I remember thinking then that this was a prescription for keeping U.S. combat forces in Vietnam in large numbers for much longer than we needed to.

Westmoreland's approach was changed by his successor, General Creighton Abrams Jr., in 1968, when we adopted the "Vietnamization Program." It was long overdue; by the early 1970s the Saigon army had acquitted itself quite well in some very difficult situations. Saigon was ultimately defeated by a conventional invasion from the North with Soviet tanks. We chose not to come to their assistance.

As ambassador to Iraq, I certainly carried some of the lessons I felt I had learned in Vietnam. One of them was the lesson of Vietnamization. When I arrived in Baghdad, there were two or three battalions left in the entire Iraqi army. We had a \$17 billion reconstruction program on the books and none of it dedicated to rebuilding the Iraqi armed forces. I persuaded Washington to



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

From left: FSO David Engel, the interpreter; John Negroponte, liaison officer with the North Vietnamese delegation; and co-leaders of the U.S. Delegation to the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam, Ambassadors Cyrus Vance and W. Averell Harriman, at a secret meeting with North Vietnamese negotiators Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy in 1968.

reprogram about \$2 billion of those dollars to train and equip the Iraqi army and police forces. It turned out to be a slow and uneven process; but I have no doubt that Iraq is better able to stand on its feet today because of what we spent then and later to empower their armed forces.

In Afghanistan, we made the same mistake as we did in Vietnam. We started the program of training and equipping their army several years too late, and it was a more challenging task than in Vietnam.



John Negroponte, then National Security Council director for Vietnam, with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in June 1972 during NSC Adviser Henry Kissinger's visit to Beijing.

FSJ: *Most of your assignments were in Latin America or Asia. How did you come to specialize in those regions? Was that a choice or more based on the needs of the Service?*

JDN: It was a combination. But basically, I never planned my career beyond my next assignment. And some assignments were almost random. For example, I was beginning an assignment in the Africa Bureau in the summer of 1963, as a post management officer. I pretty quickly concluded that wasn't for me and sought help from my personnel officer. At first he said there was nothing else available since the assignment cycle was complete. A couple of weeks later, he called me up to ask if I would be interested in volunteering for 44 weeks of Vietnamese language training since things were heating up over there; I agreed to do it, and it transformed my career.

FSJ: *What was your favorite posting and why?*

JDN: We loved Mexico City, where I was ambassador from June 1989 to September 1993. The family loved it. We traveled extensively, managing to visit every state in the country, and we made lasting friendships. On the substantive side, there was a lot to do, and we achieved the North American Free Trade Agreement on my watch.

FSJ: *You took on some tough assignments during your career. Looking back on your time as U.S. ambassador to Honduras, in particular, do you have any regrets about the Reagan administration's support for the Contras?*

JDN: Not really. First of all, I had very lively exchanges with Washington about how to pursue our objectives in Central



THE COLOR ARCHIVES/ALAMY

During an NSC briefing on Dec. 9, 1988, President Ronald Reagan and his top advisers watched TV news on Israel's move into Lebanon. From left: President Reagan, Deputy White House Chief of Staff M.B. Oglesby Jr., Vice President George H.W. Bush (seated), White House Chief of Staff Kenneth Duberstein, National Security Adviser Colin Powell (in foreground) and Deputy National Security Adviser John Negroponte.

America, and I feel my views always got a fair hearing. Second, Congress cut off funding for the Contras fairly early on. In any event, the Sandinistas lost the presidential election in 1990 to Violeta Chamorro. Some would say that her victory was the result, in part at least, of our having supported a democracy and freedom agenda in Nicaragua.

I would add that it is hard to be too critical of Ronald Reagan's approach when you see what an absolutely terrible job Daniel Ortega is doing in Nicaragua today.

CHALLENGES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FSJ: After "retiring" from the Foreign Service, you were given some of the most challenging diplomatic positions, including as U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (2001-2004) as the U.S. reacted to 9/11 and the global war on terror ramped up with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. What was working at the U.N. at that time like? Do you think America's standing in international organizations has changed since then, and if so, how?

JDN: I loved working at USUN. It was a very intense time, and the U.N. Security Council was in full swing. I would say, initially at least, the atmosphere at the council was one of consensus about how to deal with international terrorism. We worked well with the Russians. The Chinese were low key, and the French and British worked very closely with us. We passed a seminal resolution (1441) on Iraq WMD inspections toward the end of

2002; but the consensus then frayed when we sought a resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq in early 2003, which we ultimately had to withdraw because France threatened a veto.

Consensus took a blow, but I believe it was restored pretty quickly as we worked closely with the council on the occupation of Iraq and developed a political road map for the future.

Sometimes I feel we exaggerate the differences at the U.N. We are still the largest donor, and we are by and large supportive of peacekeeping, humanitarian programs and most of the other good things the U.N. does. I think there is more unity at the U.N. than sometimes meets the eye.

FSJ: What are some of the lessons from the war in Iraq? What effective role can U.S. diplomats play in conflict zones? How can the Foreign Service better prepare for working with the military, working in war zones?

JDN: The biggest lesson for me was that we should have given UNSC Resolution 1441 and the WMD inspection regime more time to take effect. I was really surprised, even shocked by how quickly the Bush administration wanted to declare Iraq in further "material breach" of its UNSC obligations and go for a second resolution authorizing the use of force. I would have thought they might have waited six months or a year from the passage of 1441. But, no, they wanted to move almost immediately.

As for the war itself, I certainly felt we had good military-civilian cooperation, and we reached a good division of labor.

Our FSOs stood up well to their responsibilities, both at the embassy and in branch offices, as well as on the provincial reconstruction teams. We had no difficulty recruiting FSO volunteers for service in Iraq, and I will always be proud of that.

As for preparing for future work in war zones, or with the military in general, I don't think there is any set formula. Incentives are important. We made sure people who volunteered for service in Iraq were suitably rewarded in their subsequent assignment. And I think it helps to have a certain quotient of military veterans in the Foreign Service. But, frankly, each of these wars has had certain unique characteristics and circumstances, and those, too, help shape the civilian-military effort.

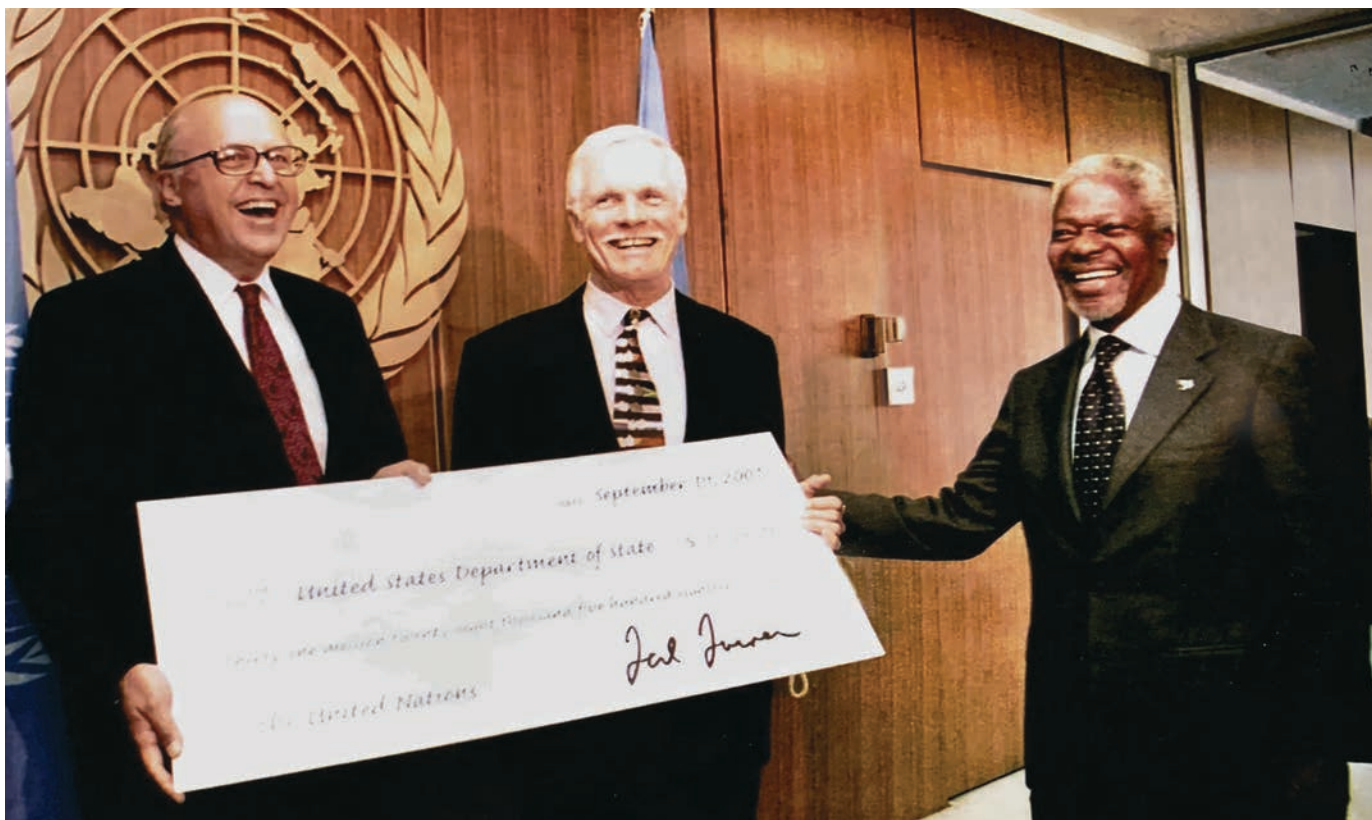
FSJ: *You were the very first U.S. Director of National Intelligence after the position was created in 2005 in the wake of 9/11 to lead the intelligence community (IC). What were some of the challenges you faced, and what are you proudest of accomplishing as DNI?*

JDN: The DNI was like a start-up. In some respects, we stood it up from scratch. I thought we strengthened communitywide capabilities. We increased open-source collection and analysis. And we brought the law enforcement community into closer



COURTESY OF JOHN D. NEGROPONTE

Amb. Negroponte (center) with Secretary of State James Baker (at right) and National Security Staffer FSO Don Johnson (second from left) at an Oval Office meeting with President George H.W. Bush to discuss getting the president's approval to pursue the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1990.



COURTESY OF JOHN D. NEGROPONTE

Then—U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. John Negroponte (at left) accepting a \$31 million donation to the State Department from Ted Turner (center) for the United Nations in 2001. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is at right.



Negroponte, then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, with Secretary of State Colin Powell outside the Security Council chamber at the U.N. in New York City, 2003.

partnership with the traditional foreign intelligence agencies. We especially strengthened the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), which was very important at the time. I think the DNI has played a positive role as manager of the IC. And for me personally, it was an honor and pleasure to participate in the president's daily intelligence briefings. President Bush was, as they say in the IC, a good customer!

FSJ: *What were some of the challenges you faced as Deputy Secretary of State, and what are you proudest of accomplishing as D?*

JDN: Being Deputy Secretary is an all-consuming job. There was no second deputy, as there is now. So I worked on both the diplomatic and management issues. I had a "portfolio" of issues, if you will, that I worked on. The U.S.-China Strategic Political Dialogue, for example, was extremely interesting. I also dealt with Pakistan, plus various problems in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

On management, I was fortunate to have as a colleague Ambassador Patrick Kennedy, who always succeeded in making many of these issues seem easier than they were. We ramped up Foreign Service recruitment to a high pitch. We continued to staff the ongoing efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

We tried once again, unsuccessfully, to get

the Law of the Sea Treaty (UNCLOS) ratified by the Senate. I was the lead State Department witness, along with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is an effort near and dear to my heart and high on my list of the department's unfinished business.

Drawing on my extensive network of friends throughout the Bush administration, I think I succeeded in consolidating very good relations with the key Cabinet departments. My counterpart at Treasury, Bob Kimmitt, and I successfully revived the Treasury Attaché Program, which had been allowed to atrophy during the Clinton administration. And Gordon England over at Defense and I succeeded in making our bilateral monthly meetings something much more action-oriented, so much so that assistant secretaries were eagerly seeking to join us.

But the bread and butter of the job was, quite simply, running the department and getting done whatever the Secretary needed done, and there was a steady stream of challenges every single day.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE CAREER

FSJ: *When did you join AFSA? In your view what should AFSA's top priorities be? Where can AFSA add the most value?*

JDN: I joined AFSA early in my career. Then, at some point, I allowed my membership to lapse. I rejoined in 2007, when I became Deputy Secretary.



Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte speaks to State Department employees in January 2008. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is at left; at Amb. Negroponte's right is his wife, Diana Villiers Negroponte.

AFSA's priorities are dictated by its mandate to advance the interests of the Foreign Service. I think it should focus on the importance of the career Service and minimization of political appointments. It would also do well to think about ways of fostering greater cooperation and unity among foreign affairs agencies.

FSJ: *What are the essential ingredients for a successful diplomat?*

JDN: Experience.

FSJ: *Is the Foreign Service as an institution stronger today? Has the role of the Foreign Service changed? What are the most critical reforms needed?*

JDN: I think the Service is stronger as a collection of individuals than as an institution, overall. We would benefit from having more current active-duty FSOs in very senior positions both here and abroad.

FSJ: *What areas, either functional or regional, would you point to that may require increased focus for American diplomacy in the coming years?*

JDN: Language and area studies remain critically important, especially the study of China and Russia. The study of economics, including sustainability, is critical. But, above all, we must maintain a versatile and diverse workforce, capable of dealing with unexpected challenges.

FSJ: *Since retiring from government, you have found time to do a lot of teaching. What is your message to students about the U.S. Foreign Service and government service more generally?*

JDN: My message to students is that government service is a noble calling, and that a Foreign Service career is definitely worth pursuing. I have had Rangel and Pickering Fellows as my teaching assistants at Yale, George Washington and now Georgetown. I have been following the careers of many of my students who joined the government since 2010. It is an impressive group, and we try to meet at least once a year. Most recently, I met virtually with about



COURTESY OF JOHN D. NEGROPONTE

John and Diana Negroponte with children, daughter-in-law, son-in-law and grandchildren.

60 of my former students. A couple of them are already in fairly senior positions. One early Pickering Fellow is on his fifth Foreign Service assignment. This is inspiring.

My advice to students and recent graduates today is that, if they are interested in foreign affairs, they should seriously consider

a Foreign Service career or some other foreign affairs opportunity, like working for a U.N. humanitarian agency or an international nongovernmental organization. There are numerous ways to serve in some sort of international capacity.

As for those who may be considering leaving the Service, my thought is this: Be careful what you wish for. You may quickly find that you are nostalgic for the work you were doing, and the cost of being “out of the arena” outweighs any benefit you

may have expected from leaving the Service. I retired from the Foreign Service in 1997; but I assure you that one of the happiest days of my life was when I was called back to government. And I then stayed in as long as I possibly could. ■



Restoring the Treasury Attaché Program, Deputy Secretary of State John D. Negroponte with Deputy Treasurer Bob Kimmitt in the State Department Treaty Room, 2008.

2021 AFSA AWARD WINNERS

– CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT –

William R. Rivkin Award for a Mid-Level Officer

Anny Vu

Countering Chinese Aggression in International Organizations

While on her first detail to the National Security Council from 2019 to 2020, Anny Vu demonstrated intellectual courage, integrity and initiative in fighting to ensure the United States did not cede additional ground to China in international organizations. She led the interagency in advancing U.S. interests in multilateral institutions during highly challenging times.

Ms. Vu's expertise on China and multilateral affairs helped her see national security threats before they materialized. She argued that multilateral standards-setting bodies had become battlegrounds where China intended to assert its influence. If led properly, she believed, these institutions could be force multipliers for



Anny Vu.

the rules-based international order supported by the United States.

In early 2019, she was one of the first to flag the risks of China's campaign to head the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, potentially the fourth U.N. specialized agency to come under PRC control. While mobilizing the U.S. interagency to block China from winning the election, Ms. Vu ran up against senior political opposition seeking to advance a different policy for personal gain. She quickly raised

an alarm. Her concerns were met by fierce resistance, including the threat of professional reprisal.

Ms. Vu refused to back down. She convinced NSC leadership to advance a policy on the election in support of France's

Award winner profiles compiled by Associate Editors Julia Wohlers and Cameron Woodworth. All images are courtesy of the award winners, unless otherwise specified.

candidate, the individual she deemed had the best chance, with U.S. support, to defeat Beijing's candidate. However, the State Department disregarded White House guidance and publicly campaigned in support of Georgia's candidate, which ultimately resulted in China's candidate winning with 108 out of 191 votes.

In the interagency aftermath, Ms. Vu raised what she believed constituted process fouls and ethical failures that led to the outcome, which seriously undermined the U.S. ability to work with its trans-Atlantic partners in multilateral organizations.

Determined to keep history from repeating itself, Ms. Vu used the loss to spotlight the threat of China's growing influence in international organizations. When China nominated a candidate to head the World Intellectual Property Organization in the fall of 2019, Ms. Vu warned that given China's reputation for stealing intellectual property, a PRC national leading WIPO would be like having the proverbial fox guarding the henhouse.

As the then-NSC acting senior director for international organizations, Ms. Vu ran point for the White House on the election and mobilized departments and agencies in the policy process. Initially, her recommendations encountered resistance from those interagency officials who had refused to take a more competitive approach with China.

Ms. Vu stressed that winning the WIPO election would require an unprecedented whole-of-government strategy, followed by working closely with allies and partners. She developed a path forward, convinced NSC leadership and several Cabinet officials to support the plan, pushed the interagency to select the most competitive candidate (Singapore) and tasked agencies with engaging with allies to reach consensus around a shared strategy. Ms. Vu advocated using the full force of the White House, Cabinet principals and the diplomatic corps to engage more than 80 capitals at the highest levels.

After two rounds of balloting, Singapore's candidate won with 55 out of 83 votes. Under Ms. Vu's leadership, this victory was institutionalized as the model for working effectively with partners to ensure the preservation of U.S. influence in international institutions. Those who saw Ms. Vu in action understood the critical role she played in identifying the problem, convening the interagency, and developing the whole-of-government strategy to rally allies and partners to counter China's influence in multilateral fora.

Ms. Vu played a critical role in identifying the problem, convening the interagency, and developing the whole-of-government strategy to rally allies and partners to counter China's influence in multilateral fora.



Anny Vu and her husband at the Marine Corps Ball in Beijing, China, in 2016.

"As career officials, it is our responsibility to give the best advice and present the best options that we can in the policymaking process," she says. "Even if we encounter resistance, it is our duty to continue to push for outcomes that are in the interest of our national security. The challenge is to develop policies that live beyond any single person and that ultimately strengthen the institution."

In pushing back on the PRC's influence in international organizations, Ms. Vu collaborated closely with several key allies and partners; one capital subsequently credited her strategic vision by naming its corresponding approach "the Anny Vu policy process." NSC leadership recognized Ms. Vu and promoted

her to special assistant to the president and senior director for international organizations for the NSC—the first State Department detailee to hold the position.

Currently on her second detail to the NSC, Anny Vu serves as director for China. As a Davis Fellow, she was an adjunct associate professor at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. She previously served as special assistant to the president and NSC senior director for international organizations, NSC deputy senior director for African affairs, and NSC director for U.N. and multilateral affairs.

She has also served on the Secretary of State's policy planning staff, at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York, at the U.S. embassies in Beijing and Paris, and in Washington, D.C., where she had assignments in the Operations Center and the bureaus of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Ms. Vu is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the University of California-Los Angeles. She joined the Foreign Service in 2007 and speaks Mandarin, Vietnamese, Indonesian and French. A native of Orange County, California, she is married to a Foreign Service officer and has a daughter.

– EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE –

Mark Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy

Erika Kuenne

China Watcher Builds Support in Europe for Democratic Taiwan

Erika Kuenne led Department of State efforts to support Taiwan, a democracy under daily pressure from China, and to counter Chinese efforts to undermine democratic values by systematically violating the human rights of the Uyghur ethnic group.

While serving in Prague as the first regional China officer (RCO) for Europe from 2019 to present, Ms. Kuenne encountered bureaucratic obstacles to U.S. diplomatic efforts to create international space for Taiwan. Having studied in Taipei as a Fulbright scholar, Ms. Kuenne says, she was thrilled to undertake initiatives in support of this model democracy. Until last year, State Department guidelines for interacting with Taiwanese officials hampered U.S. engagement. Recognizing the confusion this created, Ms. Kuenne worked with colleagues to develop a script for briefing China watchers throughout Europe on best practices for strengthening interaction with Taiwan.

Kuenne worked with Czech planners and Arati Shroff at the American Institute in Taiwan to facilitate an 89-person Czech delegation to Taiwan in August 2020, which included the highest-level Czech politician ever to visit the country. To counter China's threatened retaliation, Ms. Kuenne successfully advocated for then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to deliver a speech to the Czech parliament emphasizing U.S. appreciation for the Czech Senate's upcoming trip to Taiwan, sending a signal globally that the United States stands by its partners. The Czech Senate sub-

sequently voted unanimously in favor of Taiwan's admission as a member to the World Health Organization.

Building on the Secretary's visit, Ms. Kuenne created a model of subregional engagement on Taiwan with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. This multilateral format was so successful that the State Department is replicating the approach to share Taiwan's experience as a vibrant democracy defending against authoritarian influence in all regions of the world. Ms. Kuenne also met with embassy colleagues across Europe to dispel misconceptions about working with Taiwan, which led to additional engagements across the continent.



Erika Kuenne.

In a meeting with EUR Deputy Assistant Secretary Molly Montgomery in April 2021, Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office Representative Liang-yu Wang singled out Ms. Kuenne, expressing not just personal admiration but all of Taiwan's appreciation "for all Erika has done." The representative acknowledged that she laid groundwork for Taiwan to work systematically with the United States "to expand relations with European democracies." Taiwan has already seen a noticeable uptick in its involvement in the Baltic region, especially in Lithuania, which plans to open a representative office in Taipei by the end of 2021. This decision came about in no small part due to Ms. Kuenne's relationships with officials in that country and her tenacious advocacy to expand Taiwan's unofficial ties.

Kuenne also worked tirelessly to urge concrete action opposing China's human rights abuses against Uyghurs in Xinjiang, arguably the most pernicious in the suite of malign activities by which Beijing undermines democratic norms including the rule of law, due process and fundamental fairness. To raise awareness of these abuses, Ms. Kuenne devised Twitter messaging on Xinjiang for the White House and the Secretary of State in the Uyghur language, and secured global publicity for groundbreaking reports outlining China's human rights abuses.

She collaborated with Germany's largest newspapers to publicize satellite imagery showing prison labor conditions in Uyghur reeducation camps and coordinated a traveling photo exhibition that exposed hundreds of thousands to Beijing's repressive human rights record. Beyond Europe, Ms. Kuenne provided indispensable

assistance in creating successful speaker programs to raise awareness of the Uyghur plight among colleagues, journalists and think-tanks in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

Assessing that U.S. missions needed better guidance on how to work with Uyghur diaspora populations, Ms. Kuenne, in cooperation with China Watcher Che Lee, crafted departmentwide guidance on the topic. She curated a slate of Uyghur-themed programming options, ranging from “Poetry as Political Resistance” to “Digital Autocracy in Xinjiang,” which paved the way for embassies to engage more effectively.

In concert with embassy colleagues, she worked closely with Czech legislators to raise Uyghur issues in the country’s parliament. As a result, in March 2021 the Czech government supported the imposition of European Union sanctions against four Chinese officials and one entity implicated in human rights abuses in Xinjiang. When considering opportunities for trans-Atlantic cooperation on Xinjiang after China imposed countersanctions, the U.S. National Security Council relied on Ms. Kuenne’s assessments to inform the National Security Adviser.

Ms. Kuenne’s creative and effective work in Prague led directly to a new congressional allocation of \$2 million in public diplomacy funds for RCOs. Eligible programs modeled after hers will increase public diplomacy programming in cooperation with populations including Uyghurs, Tibetans and other Chinese political refugees.

In addition to her policy contributions, Ms. Kuenne took decisive action in three cases in which Europe-based Uyghurs



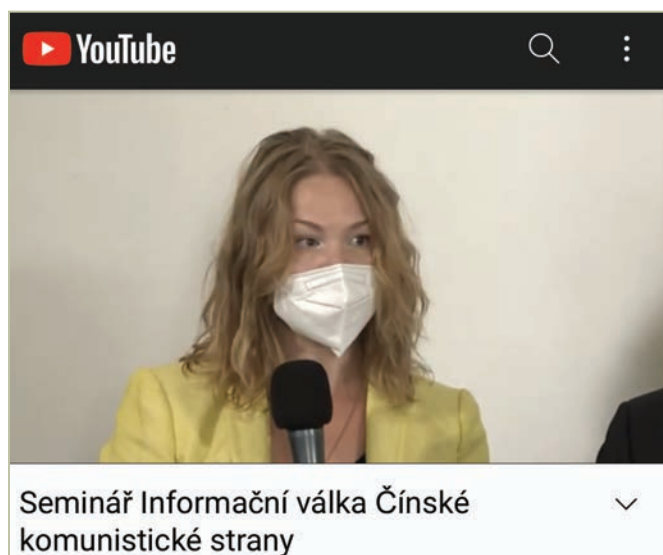
Erika Kuenne visits the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Prague, Czech Republic, in 2021.

Ms. Kuenne’s creative and effective work in Prague led directly to a new congressional allocation of \$2 million in public diplomacy funds for RCOs.

faced deportation back to China. In each instance, her determination to help these individuals resulted in their finding asylum in a third country. By working with U.S. allies and partners to oppose Chinese actions that violate human rights and stifle democratic processes, Ms. Kuenne has made singular contributions in furthering top U.S. foreign policy priorities related to the advancement of democracy.

Erika Kuenne is the regional China officer covering Eastern Europe. Prior to this assignment, she was a Holbrooke Fellow at Central European University’s Shattuck Center on Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery. She has served as the cultural affairs officer in Belgrade, assistant cultural affairs officer in Beijing and as a consular officer in Shenyang.

Prior to joining the Foreign Service in 2005, Ms. Kuenne worked at the Colorado Court of Appeals as a law clerk for the Honorable Marsha Piccone. She has a B.A. degree in international relations from the University of Colorado and a juris doctor degree from the University of Denver College of Law. She studied Mandarin as a university student in both Kunming and Taipei.



Erika Kuenne speaks at a workshop titled “Information Warfare of the Chinese Communist Party and PRC Wolf Warrior Diplomacy” in Prague, Czech Republic, in July 2021.

Nelson B. Delavan Award for an Office Management Specialist

Bridgette Huerkamp

Going Above and Beyond in Bangladesh

Amid significant staffing gaps and remote work challenges arising from the pandemic, Embassy Dhaka relied heavily on Office Management Specialist Bridgette Huerkamp to navigate a period of crisis and keep the embassy community connected. She was selected for the 2021 Delavan Award for her outstanding support of mission goals and personnel.

Although she was assigned as the political-economic affairs OMS, Ms. Huerkamp also served as OMS for the ambassador and deputy chief of mission. Dedicated to mission continuity, and in response to minimal post staffing, she enthusiastically provided additional OMS support across multiple sections, uniformly excelling in each one.

As Embassy Dhaka prepared to respond to the pandemic, Ms. Huerkamp quickly identified the need to designate a large conference room for use as a virtual command center, a location where the embassy could provide essential and time-sensitive communications to many audiences and across platforms. The space was used to host regularly scheduled town halls where critical information regarding repatriation guidelines and CDC pandemic updates was provided to mission personnel and American citizens living in Bangladesh. In preparation for each meeting, Ms. Huerkamp proactively solicited input, designed topics and agendas, recruited speakers, assigned remarks and arranged logistics. This confidence-building communication also served as a lifeline in keeping the geographically dispersed team informed and connected to the embassy.

With many Americans rapidly departing Bangladesh in the spring of 2020, Ms. Huerkamp served as the direct liaison with the Royal Thai Embassy to coordinate the boarding of U.S.

diplomats on multiple restrictive Thai Airways flights. She drafted flight clearance diplomatic notes and, as a Ministry of Foreign Affairs-identified contact, she was directly involved in coordination efforts. During the embassy's multiple repatriation flights, she joined colleagues to staff the airport in support of more than 2,100 Americans scheduled to depart Dhaka.

Ms. Huerkamp described her participation in the undertaking as an honor. "I am proud of the work we accomplished as a team and as representatives of the United States to support the safety and security of our colleagues, the people of Bangladesh and thousands of Americans who were counting on us to get them home during the pandemic crisis," she tells the *Journal*.

In the midst of a long-term crisis and while managing multiple responsibilities, Ms. Huerkamp played a vital coordination and editorial role in crafting responses to post's 2019 Office of the Inspector General inspection, clearly articulating recommendations to the OIG's satisfaction. She also cataloged and retired more than 36,000 files; coordinated the pol-econ section's rolling reporting plan and the post's working group manifest; developed the post's travel manifest; and supported its 2020 integrated country strategy submission.

Simultaneously, Ms. Huerkamp managed country team and Emergency Action Committee coordination. Given shifting requirements from Washington and the immense volume of information for consideration arriving daily from the host nation, her work preparing EAC members for "Diplomacy Strong" discussions proved critical to sound decision-making.

As the embassy settled into its pandemic posture, Ms. Huerkamp provided extensive control officer duties during diplomatic engagements, including as primary logistics coordinator for the most extensive ambassadorial diplomatic engagement during her tour: a nine-day trip for the ambassador involving other diplomatic missions, amid myriad COVID-19 restrictions, to Bangladesh's most politically sensitive regions, including Cox's Bazar, the site of the world's largest refugee population. If a particular embassy process was not making sense, Ms. Huerkamp advocated for change and, once approved, implemented it. For example, she developed a combined decision memo and briefing checklist to streamline efficiencies and revitalized front office guidelines.

Beyond her formal responsibilities, Ms. Huerkamp played a central role in the embassy community. While the embassy remained at minimal staffing, she catalyzed the facilities team to conduct long-overdue maintenance throughout the mission, repairing HVAC systems to improve air quality, sealing floors, painting and refurbishing



Bridgette Huerkamp.



Bridgette Huerkamp delivers a tribute during the farewell ceremony for Ambassador James Entwistle and Dr. Pamela Schmoll in Abuja, Nigeria, 2016.



Bridgette Huerkamp (at left) receives a token of appreciation from the Mayor of Rajshahi, A.H.M. Khairuzzaman Liton, during U.S. Ambassador Earl Miller's visit to discuss the regional implications of the pandemic, 2021.

interior spaces, and conducting a deep clean of community spaces and furnishings for health and sanitation purposes.

She also served as a barometer of post morale, advocating small day-trip excursions, regularly hosting small, socially distanced gatherings to celebrate special occasions, ensuring staff were officially Hailed and Farewelled, and organizing front office community events. During global authorized departure, she facilitated work and payment of numerous household staff and routinely checked on vacant residences. When the pandemic prevented the return to Dhaka of many of her colleagues, she personally coordinated and supervised the pack-out of their residences.

The pandemic brought economic hardship to many in Bangladesh, household staff in particular; Ms. Huerkamp provided food supplies and opened her home to offer various types of training to develop new skills and improve employment opportunities. She did this at some personal risk and without expectation of accolades, but for the good of the community. She subsequently supported returning personnel, new arrivals and those in quarantine, providing a warm welcome and ample provisions.

In praise of her efforts, the executive office characterized her thus: Ms. Huerkamp is “the type of diplomat you wish to see representing the United States. She hosts events with style, will dedicate as many hours as needed to deliver on priorities, regardless of the task, and has a rare ability to bring levity during serious times.”

Bridgette Huerkamp joined the Foreign Service in 2014. Prior to her tour in Bangladesh, she served in Nigeria and Cambodia. Previously she enjoyed a successful career in the corporate sector serving in management and executive-level administrative roles. Her portfolio required extensive international travel, which inspired a broad appreciation for diverse cultures and sparked her interest in joining the Foreign Service.

M. Juanita Guess Award for a Community Liaison Office Coordinator

Alisse Sargeant

Remaining Behind to Turn Adversity into Action

Alisse Sargeant believes that the key ingredient to a thriving community at post is collaboration; and for those serving at Embassy Beijing, it was Ms. Sargeant herself who set an example of working hard in the service of others. When the pandemic hit, she was serving as a community liaison office coordinator (CLO) at her first overseas posting, Beijing. Working in challenging and unpredictable conditions because Mission China was the first post to be faced with COVID-19, she helped maintain cohesion throughout the mission and offered guidance to colleagues at embassies across Central Asia.

Embassy Beijing has 400 U.S. direct hires and more than 1,000 family members. With the pandemic originating in China and the bilateral relationship coming under great strain as a result, the CLO office was put to the test. Mission China went on Ordered Departure on Jan. 31, 2020. Many staff were already out of the country on vacation for the Lunar New Year holiday and were unable to return to post. In total, the mission lost 80 percent of its community.

“I, like most others in China, was away on holiday during Chinese New Year,” Ms. Sargeant recounts. “My husband and I made the decision to rush back to Beijing to support the mission in what we knew would be a difficult period. We were among the very few who had the option to remain at post, which brought with it the responsibility to channel opportunity into action.”

She coordinated with the Marines, the American Employee Association and embassy leadership to maintain the morale of those remaining, while also working closely with her evacuated



Alisse Sargeant.

colleagues to keep the community scattered throughout the U.S. connected and informed. Through a weekly newsletter, virtual town halls and social media groups, she distributed FAQs, mission notices and situation reports with the latest on the evacuation status, allowances and information on when and how staff and families would be able to return to post.

Mission China set an example as the first post to go through pandemic evacuation and then bring its community back during the summer of 2020. Ms. Sargeant shared her experience with CLOs around the world. She was an essential member of the missionwide task force that brought more than 1,200 passengers from China to three U.S. cities on 11 charter flights within six weeks.

Once staff and families returned to post, they were required to spend two weeks in strict isolation. Ms. Sargeant and her team organized virtual events for those quarantined in Beijing and at the consulates, and also for colleagues in Ulaanbaatar and beyond. “For some posts that were just starting the return process, we offered our experiences and best practices, as well as links to our virtual events for them to join while in quarantine,” Ms. Sargeant says.

She then turned her efforts to re-forging a community. The Family Liaison Office’s guidance cable cited Embassy Beijing’s experience, as it quickly became a thriving community again,

thanks to Alisse Sargeant’s leadership. Typical comments from an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services survey during her time at post praised her efforts. “The CLO team in Beijing is absolutely amazing,” reads one. “Alisse has done so much for the community.”

Ms. Sargeant combined excellent leadership and management skills with strong advocacy for the community. She mentored her staff while giving them room to use their own judgment. She sought training opportunities, then applied her learning to her own work and ensured her staff had the tools to be successful.

In preparation for the summer transfer season, when nearly the entire office transitions, Ms. Sargeant developed a simple knowledge-management system to keep the office on track across all eight areas of responsibility. She responded to difficult customers with compassion, maintained contact with the entire community, and reached out to sections and agencies to facilitate engagement on a wide variety of issues.

When CLO funding was cut by 70 percent as the result of closing a profitable AEA summer camp, Ms. Sargeant seamlessly shifted to raising enough money through a variety of smaller activities to fund other major community events, while simultaneously helping the AEA find new ways to earn money. In response to international travel restrictions, she identified local providers to organize trips throughout China.

Because the U.S. has no bilateral work agreement with China, Ms. Sargeant coordinated with the Bureau of Global Talent Management and the Women’s Leadership Group to create an annual “dual career” event to help families manage their options. She directed a new, professional-grade orientation video for Beijing (the first in 12 years), maintained close contacts with multiple schools and regularly mentored CLOs from the consulates.

“I’ll be forever grateful for and inspired by the spirit of the Foreign Service officers and their families, and I’m lucky to count myself among them,” Ms. Sargeant tells the *Journal*.

Before moving to Beijing with her FS husband in 2018, Alisse Sargeant worked in education as the executive director of a childcare center. She has returned to her work in childcare in the greater Seattle area as the couple awaits their next assignment.



Alisse Sargeant (at left in back row) celebrates the return of mission colleagues with the homecoming taskforce at the ambassador’s residence in Beijing, China, in September 2020.

Avis Bohlen Award for a Foreign Service Family Member

Amanda Jager

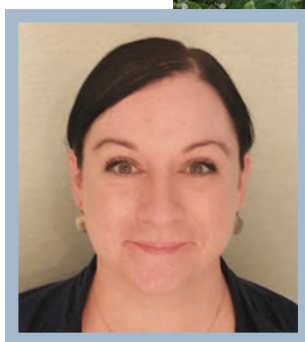
Sustaining Community through Lockdown in India

During her family's first overseas assignment after joining the Foreign Service, Amanda Jager provided extraordinary assistance to the U.S. Embassy New Delhi community amid the host country's greatest mortality crisis since its independence.

India had just announced what would prove to be one of the longest and most restrictive COVID-19 lockdowns in the world when Ms. Jager was appointed vice president of the American Community Support Association at the embassy. Many board members had recently departed post, prompting Ms. Jager to assume responsibilities far beyond the scope of her position as she helped to manage the association's expansive offering of services for U.S. and third-country diplomats and their families.

In particular, the commissary and restaurant became a lifeline for the community, one of the few places to safely and reliably purchase groceries. Despite the lockdown and associated supply shortages, Ms. Jager ensured that the commissary never lacked essential items. Meanwhile, thanks to her advocacy, the restaurant offered takeout and delivery to embassy employees working around the clock—including her husband—to arrange repatriation flights for thousands of U.S. citizens.

Ms. Jager's concern for the community's well-being quickly earned her the moniker "mayor of the compound" with nearly everyone, including the front office. When police checkpoints became difficult to transit, she worked with mission security personnel to ensure staff had all the supporting documentation and credentials required to safely travel to and from work. Ms. Jager also kept everyone informed as she worked closely with



Amanda Jager.



Amanda Jager and her family celebrate Holi at the American Embassy School in New Delhi, 2019.

senior leadership and the health unit to ensure facilities could reopen safely.

Inevitably, some ACSA members disagreed with embassy policy and directed their frustrations toward the association's staff. Ms. Jager was always the first to field these calls, adeptly calming tempers while still maintaining strict adherence to medical guidelines. As a result of these protocols, and her enforcement of them, not a single case of COVID-19 was transmitted at ACSA functions or facilities.

"When the pandemic hit, we really had to get creative," Ms. Jager says. "I worked with our medical team through the mission's COVID Working Group to come up with safe, socially distanced fun to help alleviate the stress of being locked down. It was a lot of work, but it was rewarding to know that what we did helped provide some much-needed relief."

The “Commissary Inclusivity Initiative” represented a concerted effort to listen to often-marginalized members of the community and advocate for their needs.

As the first lockdown lifted, Ms. Jager organized an award ceremony to recognize the efforts of the ACSA staff. Ambassador Kenneth Juster used the occasion to personally thank her and the staff for “keeping ACSA open and the morale of our community afloat” despite unprecedented challenges.

Shortly thereafter, as racial equality movements spread across the U.S., Ms. Jager felt moved to consider how the commissary could better serve its diverse customers. She launched the “Commissary Inclusivity Initiative,” which evaluated inventory patterns and stocked the commissary with hair and skin care products for persons of color that were not locally available and impossible to ship to post.

“I reached out to another EFM who was a woman of color because I wanted to get it right. We then started our inclusivity initiative to make sure that everyone at the mission was represented in the products we stocked and the events we held. This is one of the things I am most proud of accomplishing during my time at post.”

The success of the program quickly spread to the ACSA branch at the U.S. consulate in Mumbai. Beyond simply expanding product availability, the initiative represented a concerted effort to listen to often-marginalized members of the community and advocate for their needs.

Ms. Jager showed her dedication to the community in myriad other ways, offering guidance to parents at the American Embassy School, creating social media community groups and personally delivering groceries every day to dozens of incoming families in quarantine.

She tells the *Journal* that she feels truly honored to have been chosen for this recognition, and wishes to dedicate the award to “so many other amazing EFMs out there who stepped up during this crisis, rolled up their sleeves and went to work to help their communities. This is what it is to be a part of the State Department: working together. I am so grateful to be a member of this community.”

Amanda Jager currently lives in London with her husband, a consular officer, and their two young sons.

Avis Bohlen Award for a Foreign Service Family Member

Ivana Lawrence

Engaging Cairo Expat Families in a Season of Distancing

During 2020, the worsening pandemic brought new apprehensions to families residing overseas. For American families transitioning to Egypt, as well as the entire Maadi Cairo community of school-aged children and their parents, Ivana Lawrence provided crucial support and reassurance in the midst of uncertainty.

Throughout her four years in Cairo, Ms. Lawrence chose to be actively involved with the Cairo American College, the school where a majority of U.S. expatriate children enroll. Because of her consistent support for CAC’s many initiatives, Ms. Lawrence was chosen to serve as president of the parent teacher organization (PTO) for the 2020-2021 school year. What was remarkable



Ivana Lawrence.



Ivana Lawrence (at left) and Carmen Allison, president of the CAC Booster Club, sell calendars at a fundraiser to benefit the PTO.

about her approach was her focus on organizing closer collaboration between parents and the school administration.

"I approached this more as a job than as a volunteer position," Ms. Lawrence says of her work. "We established a strong partnership with the school administration and the board of trustees, in close communication with the embassy CLO [community liaison office coordinator]. We relied on each other to find creative, pragmatic ways for our community to thrive and shared the idea that we are one big family with the same desire: the best experience for our children despite the pandemic. Together, we chose action over fear."

The wisdom of this approach was thrown into sharp relief at the height of the pandemic in 2020, when the U.S. embassy facilitated more than 50 American staff family transitions into Cairo. Ms. Lawrence seized the opportunity to strengthen the communications that PTO managed. Under her leadership, a new plan took advantage of all media platforms, weaving them together into a seamless social media communication strategy to reach hundreds of families from more than 50 countries.

As the PTO president, Ms. Lawrence orchestrated a COVID-

safe welcome and orientation seminar for families joining the school, giving newly arrived mission families a guidebook to the neighborhood, as well as a chance to meet others when the embassy was not able to hold in-person events. Ms. Lawrence also personally reached out to new families, speaking with each individually and helping them feel accepted and less anxious. As CLO Margaret Friar reported: "Ivana is a natural community builder, and she has definitely made our mission and the CAC school environment for families better in Cairo."

Despite the school's elaborate social distancing strategy and hygiene training, many incoming parents still felt uncertain about in-person learning at the beginning of the school year. Ms. Lawrence took the lead in encouraging CAC's head of school to participate in two Q&A sessions for parents. These virtual events quickly exceeded attendance capacity, prompting Ms. Lawrence's team to create a transcript and circulate it throughout the community. With their concerns addressed, parents overwhelmingly supported the reopening plan.

Most memorable about Ms. Lawrence's innovative approach was her creation of "CAC Talks," a series of virtual community

Most memorable about Ms. Lawrence's innovative approach was her creation of "CAC Talks," a series of virtual community discussions on popular subjects of concern for families.

discussions on popular subjects of concern for families. Modeled after "TED Talks," each session was led by a subject matter expert, facilitated by the PTO under Ms. Lawrence's leadership, and covered such topics as overcoming COVID-19 anxiety, addressing gender and race issues and combating misinformation.

In April 2021, CAC's board of trustees presented Ivana Lawrence with the school's Core Value Award, an annual recognition given to those who best exemplify the school's core values of integrity, creativity, perseverance, courage, respect, responsibility and compassion. The embassy's minister counselor for management affairs, Randall Budden, who also sits on CAC's board, notes that Ms. Lawrence "volunteered more hours than anyone, and changed the PTO into a diverse, inclusive community outreach organization."

Ms. Lawrence believes that communities at post around the world stand to benefit from intentionally engaging beyond their American cohort. "In the Foreign Service, we are called upon to move frequently," she tells the *Journal*. "But too often, we're left in a bubble that's hard to break out of, and we hardly get to experience the local culture. I found that PTOs have this amazing ability to bring us all together and show what marvelous experiences, projects and friendships can happen on a larger scale. Receiving the Avis Bohlen Award gives me a platform to showcase this approach so it can inspire replication. It offers great insight into the powerhouse that we, the 'trailing spouses,' are, and the positive impact we can have in our communities."

Born in the former Yugoslavia, Ivana Lawrence lived through the siege of Sarajevo and experienced refugee life in Croatia as a child. She worked as a journalist and news anchor for the first independent radio stations in the region. Today she is an accomplished translator and interpreter in three languages. Always looking for ways to promote community building, she organized many diplomatic and public cultural events while working for the Swiss embassy in Sarajevo. She currently lives in Rwanda with her husband, Benjamin Lawrence, a contracting officer for USAID; their two sons, Dominic and Noah; and her mother, Vesna Varunek.

AFSA Achievement and Contributions to the Association Award

Thomas D. Boyatt

Bringing Major Innovations to the Association

For more than 60 years, Ambassador (ret.) Thomas Boyatt has played a major role in the success and evolution of the American Foreign Service Association. Two decades ago, AFSA honored him with the 2001 AFSA Achievement and Contributions to the Association Award in recognition of his enormous contributions to AFSA from the 1960s through the 1990s, notably in leading AFSA to victory over the American Federation of Government Employees to establish AFSA as the Foreign Service union in 1973.

During the past 20 years, Amb. Boyatt has not only continued to contribute to AFSA, including serving as a Governing Board member multiple times, but in doing so he has led four major innovations that strengthened AFSA's role as the voice of the Foreign Service, both as a professional association and a labor union.



Ambassador Thomas Boyatt.

Political Action Committee. While serving as AFSA treasurer from 2001 to 2003, Amb. Boyatt led the way to the establishment of AFSA-PAC, a political action committee to engage with members of Congress and congressional candidates and advocate on issues of significance to the Foreign Service.

The Governing Board was initially wary of becoming involved in politics after 78 years of not doing so, but Amb. Boyatt convinced the board that the initiative would benefit AFSA and that the committee could and would operate in a nonpartisan fashion. The board approved the move in February 2002. Amb. Boyatt served as the new AFSA-PAC's treasurer, the senior PAC officer, for the next six years, guiding its activities.

During the past 20 years, PAC contributions to congressional candidates have opened the doors for AFSA representatives to

Ambassador Thomas Boyatt (at right) at the AFSA awards ceremony in June 2016, pictured with fellow recipients of AFSA's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, Ambassador Ruth A. Davis (center) and former Senator Richard Lugar (at left).



make personal pitches to powerful senators and representatives regarding Foreign Service pay and benefits, funding for diplomacy and development, and other issues.

Foreign Affairs Council. It was Amb. Boyatt's idea in 2002 to bring together a dozen foreign affairs organizations under one umbrella to jointly advocate for the interests of the U.S. Foreign Service. Those organizations include AFSA, the American Academy of Diplomacy, the Association of Black American Ambassadors and the Foreign Service Youth Foundation.

As FAC president since 2002, Amb. Boyatt has made the case for funding for diplomacy and development in testimony before Senate subcommittees, in written FAC reports that he co-authored, in press conferences and in meetings with successive Deputy Secretaries of State. He still leads the FAC today, and expects to lead it in an initial meeting with Secretary Antony Blinken's senior management team when the COVID-19 situation permits a face-to-face meeting.

Foreign Service Grievance Board. While serving as AFSA's retiree vice president from 2015 to 2017, Amb. Boyatt suggested that the Governing Board become actively involved in the previously staff-coordinated process of nominating Foreign Service retirees to serve on the Foreign Service Grievance Board and Foreign Service Labor Relations Board.

Beginning in 2015, and continuing through his term as AFSA secretary from 2017 to 2019, Amb. Boyatt actively recruited distinguished retirees to be nominated for those boards, with a focus on seeking those who strongly support the rights of employees. The benefits of that effort can be seen in the January 2021 FSLRB decision in which two FSLRB members recruited by Amb. Boyatt ordered the State Department to award meritorious service pay increases to hundreds of employees.

AFSA Bylaws Amendments. While serving as AFSA secretary from 2017 to 2019, Amb. Boyatt chaired the Governing Board committee that proposed substantial revisions to the AFSA Bylaws.

During the past 20 years, Amb. Boyatt has led four major innovations that strengthened AFSA's role as the voice of the Foreign Service, both as a professional association and a labor union.

Faced with disagreements between the AFSA president and other Governing Board members concerning a series of decisions regarding AFSA operations, staffing and expenditures, Amb. Boyatt drafted amendments to the association bylaws that specified the issues on which the AFSA president must consult with the executive committee and the full Governing Board. The AFSA membership overwhelmingly approved those amendments.

In summary, while serving in three different positions on the Governing Board since 2001, Amb. Boyatt led four major innovations that strengthened AFSA as an organization, increased its operational efficiency and made it a more powerful advocate for the interests of the career Foreign Service.

It is for these reasons that Amb. Boyatt, who now resides in Charlottesville, Virginia, is richly deserving of the 2021 AFSA Achievement and Contributions to the Association Award.

AFSA Post Representative of the Year

Charlee Doom

Two-Time Winner Goes Beyond the Call of Duty

Charlee Doom, a USAID Foreign Service officer, regularly goes beyond what is expected of an AFSA post representative. Serving as a post rep for a second time, this time in Amman, she not only helped AFSA members in Jordan's capital, but also those from her previous post, Nairobi. She even helped members from other posts where she had not served.

For her exceptional efforts in Amman from 2018 to 2020, Ms. Doom has been selected as the AFSA Post Representative of the Year for a second time. She also received the award in 2015 for her work at Embassy Nairobi.

"Serving as an AFSA post representative is an incredibly rewarding element of my service as an FSO," Ms. Doom says. "Having an opportunity to advocate with and on behalf of my colleagues and to work strategically with AFSA staff affords a special window into a broader view of the Foreign Service. Earning this award for a second time for effectively supporting and advocating with and for my colleagues, and hopefully making their



Charlee Doom.

Ms. Doom knows the Foreign Affairs Manual and the USAID Automated Directives System well. She frequently researched answers to member questions rather than referring them to others. A number of Ms. Doom's former constituents from Nairobi chose to continue working with her, even after her departure for Amman, on cases that persisted until nearly the end of her Amman tour.

Ms. Doom managed more than 15 complex individual personnel matters from Amman, including one security case in which an officer had virtually no support at post, but with AFSA assistance, the officer was eventually able to exonerate herself of all wrongdoing. Ms. Doom has such a strong reputation as an AFSA rep that she occasionally took on cases from posts where she had never served. She also acted informally at several

lives easier or less stressful, is a tremendous honor."

Ms. Doom stood out for her activism on behalf of members, her willingness to manage complex issues from post and to intervene directly with a range of Washington actors, including USAID's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity, and for the sophisticated nature of her interactions with the AFSA USAID VP's office.



Charlee Doom (at far left) moderates a panel on USAID's Local Enterprise Support Project and Women's Economic Empowerment in Amman, Jordan, in 2020.

posts where there was no AFSA post rep. The AFSA USAID VP's office looked to Ms. Doom as its go-to rep when her counterparts at other missions sought peer advice or counseling, or needed a model of how to be successful as an AFSA rep.

On institutional matters, Ms. Doom was instrumental in convincing high-ranking personnel at one large post to abandon their threats to retaliate against officers who sought to

The AFSA USAID VP's office looked to Ms. Doom as its go-to rep when her counterparts at other missions sought peer advice or counseling, or needed a model of how to be successful as an AFSA rep.

go on authorized departure as a result of the pandemic. In this she worked not only with AFSA but also with State's Bureau of Medical Services. In the context of a heavy VIP visitor load necessitating extensive overtime, Ms. Doom also played a key role, along with fellow post rep Daniel Devries, in convincing mission leadership to honor overtime payment regulations; failure to honor these regulations had resulted in low morale and resentment among at least 60 affected members.

"I managed several complex situations," Doom says. "One that was particularly challenging was assisting a post where officers had received guidance from leadership that if they chose to go on COVID-19 authorized departure, they would face career repercussions. Several officers at that post were understandably concerned for both their and their family's health, as well as their own careers. Working with AFSA headquarters in Washington to address this situation, we were able to convince leadership at that post to retract and shift their position, and several families then went on AD."

Ms. Doom hosted periodic meetings for AFSA membership at posts where she was the rep. She has been able to convince employees of the benefits of membership, increasing enrollment in AFSA by five to 10 persons per year.

Charlee Doom began her diplomatic career with USAID a decade ago. She has served in Kenya, Somalia and Jordan. In August, she began a tour in Timor-Leste. Before joining USAID, she worked at Bunge Global Agribusiness, BASF, The Chemical Company and Monsanto, where she specialized in global commodity trade and global strategic marketing for agricultural chemicals and non-GMO seed traits.

Ms. Doom completed her bachelor's degree in agricultural economics at the University of Kentucky and an MBA at the University of Western Australia while serving as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. She is currently completing an executive certificate in economic development at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She speaks Kiswahili and is studying Tetum, an official language in Timor-Leste.

**AFSA Post Representative
of the Year**

Randy Chester

**Expanding Employee Rights
at U.S. Mission Pakistan**

Even before joining USAID, Randy Chester was a longtime union member. In college, he joined the Teamsters and his local grad school union. When he joined USAID in 2004, he was excited to be able to join AFSA soon after his swearing-in as a Foreign Service officer. He became AFSA's post representative in Islamabad in 2018.

"Unions have been and continue to be an important force in promoting labor rights, a supportive work environment conducive to personal and professional growth, and the space to advocate for and engage in constructive dissent with management," he says. "These past 18 months under COVID-19 restrictions further strengthened my belief in the need for continued strong union representation."

Randy Chester served as a valued mentor, adviser, bridge to management and spokesman for 40 AFSA members in Islamabad, one of the most challenging posts in the Foreign Service. Because there was no AFSA rep for the State Department in Islamabad, he expanded his volunteer duties to include State employees serving there.

"During my two years as AFSA rep, I learned that often, just being heard is what FSOs need," he says. "While advocacy was important, especially in the early days of the global authorized departure due to the pandemic, being a sounding board for concerns and complaints helped staff through a difficult time."



Randy Chester.

Mr. Chester was instrumental in making the case that unaccompanied posts such as those in Pakistan faced unusual difficulties in managing both drawdowns and skeletal staffing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some officers had to evacuate on 48 hours' notice against their wishes, while others were obliged to stay despite hoping to join family elsewhere.

Many employees had families sheltering in locations other than the United States, necessitating additional dislocations and separations in dangerous travel circumstances. Mr. Chester helped dozens of anxious employees make decisions about where they would spend lockdown and how to telework most productively.

"Talking with my colleagues across agencies, I collected their fears, questions and ideas to address the uncertainty," he says. Mr. Chester sent policy recommendations to the AFSA USAID vice president's office advocating specific guidance for unac-

companied posts. At town halls, he continually pressed senior leadership to reexamine the policy and address the uniqueness of critical priority country (CPC) posts. It was in part due to his efforts that USAID eventually issued instructions tailored to these locations.

"Additionally, during the town hall meetings, I asked leadership to reconsider requiring FSOs to evacuate to the U.S. if their family was safe-havened at a post with limited COVID-19 impact," he says. The advocacy led to positive results: USAID published a specific gender and development policy for CPCs that accounted for the uniqueness of serving at a one-year post. "The evolution in policy reaffirmed my belief in the necessity of union representation and the importance of fairness in the workplace."

Mr. Chester is an excellent team-builder. In advance of USAID, State Department and AFSA town hall gatherings



Randy Chester (center) escorts Ambassador Amy Hyatt (at Chester's right) during a visit to a USAID humanitarian assistance food distribution warehouse operated by UNICEF in Ambovombe, Madagascar, in the summer of 2021.

“These past 18 months under COVID-19 restrictions further strengthened my belief in the need for continued strong union representation.”

related to the pandemic (and to the promotion process in a tumultuous year), he polled the AFSA membership at his post to determine the kinds of questions employees had. If individuals did not wish to pose those questions themselves, he raised them on behalf of his constituency, serving as the voice for dozens of more junior employees at the mission.

Thanks to Mr. Chester’s thorough knowledge of the Foreign Affairs Manual and the USAID Automated Directives System, he has spent many lunch hours counseling AFSA members about what they need to know about their rights.

On group matters beyond those related to the pandemic, Mr. Chester assisted several entry-level USAID officers whose tenure was inadvertently held up for three years, advising State personnel about how the two agencies could work together more productively to resolve the situation. He also provided guidance to a number of Civil Service employees trying to make the complicated switch to the Foreign Service. He played a helpful role in several discrimination cases, and generally kept morale up among a group of employees who felt discouraged by circumstances.

Mr. Chester joined USAID in 2004 and has served in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Pakistan. In Pakistan, he was the director of the mission’s Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Regional Office, overseeing a dynamic \$1 billion portfolio aimed at mitigating and countering the influence of violent extremism on the border with Afghanistan. He has previously served as an agriculture officer, private sector officer and energy officer. In May, he joined the USAID/Madagascar Mission as the new director of the Integrated Development and Emergency Assistance Office.

Prior to joining USAID, he worked for an environmental think-tank in Washington, D.C., and as a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal. He holds M.S. degrees from the University of California-Davis, in agricultural economics and international agricultural development. ■



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The Odd Couple and the **End of an Era**

Thirty years ago, an improbable U.S.-Soviet partnership took dramatic cooperative security steps to end the Cold War.

BY JAMES E. GOODBY

George Kennan made public his ideas about what became the American Cold War strategy of containment in 1947 in an essay published by *Foreign Affairs* under the pseudonym “X.” The article was based on the “Long Telegram,” a strategic analysis of the sources of Soviet conduct he had written and sent as a cable while posted in Moscow in 1946. One question that he obviously thought he had to address was: How does it all end?

Kennan’s answer was strikingly close to what actually happened to the Soviet Union more than four decades later, in December 1991: “If ... anything were ever to occur to disrupt the unity and efficacy of the Party as a political instrument, Soviet Russia might be changed overnight from one of the strongest to one of the weakest and most pitiable of national societies.” His rhetoric got a bit out of hand with adjectives like “overnight,”



James E. Goodby joined the Foreign Service in 1952 and rose to the rank of Career Minister. During his career, he was engaged in international security negotiations with the USSR and later with the Russian Federation, including tours as head of the U.S. delegation to the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, part of the Helsinki Process, and as chief negotiator for Cooperative Threat Reduction (the Nunn-Lugar program).

After service in U.S. Missions to the European Community and to NATO, he was appointed deputy assistant secretary of State for European affairs and then ambassador to Finland. He worked with George Shultz at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution from 2007 until Secretary Shultz passed away in February 2021. He is currently Annenberg Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Acknowledgment: The author thanks Tom Blanton and Bill Burr of the National Security Archive for their invaluable advice during the research and writing of this essay.



Mikhail Gorbachev (at left) and Ronald Reagan talk during a walk in Washington, D.C., where they signed the INF Treaty on Dec. 8, 1987.

“strongest,” “weakest” and “pitiable,” but the general sense of his prediction was spot on.

In his “X” article, Kennan did not venture to discuss the possibility that the leaders of the two bitter Cold War protagonists, the Soviet Union and the United States, could ever become partners in the global political arena. In fact, he ruled that out for what he called “the foreseeable future.” With no evidence to suggest that a Reagan and a Gorbachev would emerge simultaneously at the tops of their respective governments, he could not have anticipated what took place during the 1980s. Selling containment as the preferable alternative to a war that then seemed all too likely was uppermost in his mind.

And yet, they did become partners, and from the late 1970s through the 1980s, just before the collapse of the USSR, took dramatic cooperative security steps that ended the Cold War. It is the most surprising and unpredicted part of the story, and well

worth remembering today. In the following we explore how that came to be and where it led.

The INF Fulcrum: 1979-1984

With the Soviet Union’s achievement of strategic nuclear parity with the United States in the early 1970s, arms control had become a central policy concern. Negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) started under the aegis of President Jimmy Carter and General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev following Soviet deployment of SS-20s, multiwarhead ballistic missiles targeted on Western Europe, in 1976. At a combined NATO Foreign Ministers–Defense Ministers meeting in December 1979—in which I participated as State’s European Bureau representative—NATO had agreed on a two-track policy: The Alliance would offer negotiations with the Soviet Union to limit deployments of intermediate-range missiles but would also prepare to deploy

By 1983, no agreement on INF had been reached with the Soviet Union, and deployments of ground-launched cruise missiles had begun that year in a few NATO countries.

such missiles in the territories of European alliance members if agreement could not be reached with Moscow.

This was the same formula NATO had been prepared to use in a negotiation with Moscow over NATO's proposed deployment of the "neutron bomb," until President Carter decided the weapon was not needed and was politically divisive. No progress was made in the remaining year of President Carter's term, and Ronald Reagan became president in January 1981.

By that time, a suggestion that all INF missiles on both sides should be banned had gained traction among defense experts in West Germany, and Richard Perle, then a top aide to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, had advocated that this become the U.S. position. The idea appealed to Reagan, and the zero option became the position presented to Moscow by the Reagan administration in November 1981, contrary to the advice of Reagan's first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig. (As a former Supreme Commander of NATO, Haig favored some NATO INF deployment in Europe to fill what some Europeans saw as a deterrence gap in NATO's posture.)

By 1983, however, no agreement on INF had been reached with the Soviet Union, and deployments of ground-launched cruise missiles had begun that year in a few NATO countries. West Germany had agreed to deploy Pershing II intermediate-range ballistic missiles in its territory, and these deployments also had begun in 1983 despite a major Soviet effort to persuade the German government and people not to do so. The Soviet delegation in the Geneva INF talks was ordered to walk out when its campaign to block Pershing II failed, and that act meant the suspension of any negotiations on INF.

George Shultz long maintained that the German decision to proceed with Pershing II deployments in 1983 over strong Soviet objections was the turning point in the Cold War, because it proved to Moscow that the Western allies would stick together in standing up to Soviet threats. This display of NATO solidarity must have added to the feeling in Moscow that their government lacked the clout their people expected it to have.

In the meantime, circumstances arose in America and Russia

that solidified that turning point. This is the most unexpected part of the unlikely partnership that ended the Cold War. It comes down to a story of "the odd couple"—two leaders steeped in the values of their respective systems but whose thoughts turned to an imagined better future, and who gained the power to act on those visions.

Converging Interests: 1985-1988

After Mikhail Gorbachev's ascent to the top positions in the Soviet hierarchy in 1985, he vigorously pursued conditions he perceived as necessary for the economic health of the Soviet Union—or, as he put it, to achieve the full potential of socialism. Gorbachev thought it was possible to end the military confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States that had been the driver of defense expenditures in both countries. He believed, in fact, that the Cold War had to be ended if he was to achieve his ambitions for the Soviet Union. His actions quickly led to a changed outlook for agreements with the West, both in U.S.-USSR cooperative security negotiations and in political relations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Gorbachev had probably read or perhaps listened to the State of the Union message that Ronald Reagan delivered in January 1984. Gorbachev certainly paid attention to this part of the American president's speech: "People of the Soviet Union, there is only one sane policy, for your country and mine, to preserve our civilization in this modern age: A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. The only value in our two nations possessing nuclear weapons is to make sure they will never be used. But then, would it not be better to do away with them entirely?"

To a man looking for a way to end the Cold War, Reagan's words must have seemed like manna from heaven. A year later, in January 1985, George Shultz and Andrei Gromyko achieved an agreement that was aimed at expediting nuclear negotiations between the two sides, another signal that Reagan and Shultz were serious. They restructured the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) negotiations, and Reagan appointed new heads of the negotiating teams for strategic and space arms. The table was set for progress.

After becoming General Secretary in 1985, Gorbachev lost no time in joining President Reagan for what became known as the "Fireside Summit" in Geneva, Switzerland, on Nov. 19-20, 1985. The joint statement released by the two leaders included these words from President Reagan's State of the Union message: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

In October 1986, Reagan and Gorbachev met again, this time in Reykjavík at the Hofdi House. That meeting was sup-

posed to be for the purpose of preparing for a summit to be held later, in Washington, D.C. Gorbachev surprised his counterparts by coming prepared to talk, in effect, about the question that President Reagan had raised about nuclear weapons in his 1984 State of the Union message: Wouldn't it be better to do away with them entirely? Encouraged by Secretary of State George Shultz, this issue became a major focus of the discussions, and it produced the most extraordinary meeting that leaders of the two nations ever held.

The typical outcome of such discussions would have been to refer their bold exchanges with each other to their strategic arms negotiators in Geneva so that the issues could be sorted out and made ready for the planned summit. What happened instead was that the talks broke up in disarray over the issue of testing ballistic missile defenses. In a back room at Hofdi House, the veteran presidential adviser Paul Nitze and others had been having an exchange with Soviet counterparts, including the powerful Soviet Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev, on issues that had arisen in talks on intermediate-range ballistic missiles. They were at an impasse, but it was only a temporary setback in what proved to be a momentous process.

In 1987, following up on the 1986 discussions in Reykjavík, Gorbachev agreed to zero out INF missiles and two types of short-range ballistic missiles. This move had been considered highly unlikely when Reagan first proposed the zero option, but Gorbachev saw it as part of his campaign to end the Cold War. Reagan and Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty in Washington in December 1987, and it was ratified and entered into force in June 1988.

The two men met again in May-June 1988 in Moscow but failed to resolve differences over issues in the strategic arms treaty. It was too late in Reagan's term to reach agreement on START, but a good beginning had been made under the leadership of Reagan and Shultz. A treaty would be concluded and signed on July 31, 1991, by Gorbachev and George H.W. Bush during the latter's single term and what turned out to be the last year of Gorbachev's tenure as president of the USSR. The START Treaty was succeeded by the New START Treaty in 2010 under President Barack Obama and Prime Minister of Russia Dmitry Medvedev, and that treaty was extended for five years by President Joe Biden and President Vladimir Putin soon after Biden took office in 2021.

While all that was going on in the nuclear arena, Gorbachev was trying to end the Cold War in Europe, believing that good relations with Western Europe would be a key element in improving Russia's economic condition. He had told the

Gorbachev had thought a lot about how to revive the Soviet Union, and he took office with change in mind and policies to make change happen.

members of the Warsaw Pact—known as the “satellites” in the West—that they were free to adopt their own policies without interference from anyone. The political climate in Europe had been ready for such a move because of the agreement in 1975 on the Helsinki Final Act, which amounted to a definition of the international order for the Euro-Atlantic community of nations, including the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Gorbachev's actions were consistent with the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, which had been signed by Brezhnev.

Soon, East and West Germans were discussing unification. The Berlin Wall came down in 1989. Germany was reunited in 1990. Gorbachev received assurances from the United States and its allies that even with a united Germany as a member of NATO, the alliance would not expand its military footprint eastward and these assurances were observed through Gorbachev's tenure as leader of the Soviet Union and through the term of President George H.W. Bush.

As the 1980s came to a close, the U.S. and USSR had achieved arms control successes that George Kennan would not have imagined possible. Kennan did, however, foresee what the USSR's “end” would look like with striking accuracy: it hinged, Kennan said, on something that would “disrupt the unity and efficacy of the Communist Party as a political instrument.”

The Gang of Eight: The 1991 Coup

The proximate cause of such a disruption was the decision of eight top officials of the Communist Party to stage a coup against USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991. A crisis had been brewing as Communist Party chiefs in several of the 15 republics declared independence from the central government. The trend had been encouraged by no less a personage than the ambitious, recently elected president of the Russian Republic, Boris Yeltsin. Though Yeltsin saw USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev as an obstacle to his consolidation of presidential power, staging a coup to reverse the trend toward the independence of the Soviet republics was the last thing that Yeltsin wanted, so his opposition to the coup was practically guaranteed.



ITARTASS NEWS AGENCY/ALAMY

On May 4, 1991, President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev (front, seated) watches Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR Boris Yeltsin deliver a speech on television. With him, from right, are Director of Soviet Central Television Kaleriya Kislova, Head of the USSR State Committee for TV and Radio Broadcasting (Gosteleradio) Leonid Kravchenko, TASS General Director Vitaly Ignatenko, Soviet President adviser Georgy Shakhnazarov (seated behind Ignatenko), three Soviet Central Television staff members and Head of the Ninth Directorate of the KGB Yuri Plekhanov (at left).

Gorbachev, for his part, planned to address the crisis in the party by moving toward a new “Union Treaty” defining the legal relationships between the 15 constituent republics of the USSR. Fearing a loosening of the legal bonds that the founding treaty had created in 1922, the plotters intended to preempt any such moves. They seized Gorbachev and his family at their vacation home on Aug. 18, placed them under house arrest, announced that the president could not speak to the public because he was ill, and proclaimed themselves an emergency committee empowered to deal with the crisis in the Soviet Union.

By Aug. 21, the coup attempt had failed, thanks to the leadership of Yeltsin and the active opposition of hundreds of thousands of others who had their own good reasons for not wanting to turn back the clock. The episode was, however, the straw that broke the camel’s back. By virtually forcing Yeltsin to redouble his efforts to create a counterweight to the power structures of the USSR, the disruptive actions of the Gang of Eight only accelerated the dissolution of the Soviet Union. And so, on Dec. 8, 1991, the sovereign states of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, the heartland of the Slavic world, agreed to form the Commonwealth of Independent States. Other republics were not far behind. The USSR was finished.

On Dec. 25, 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev, the first and only

president of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, accepted the reality that there was no longer a viable legal entity called the Soviet Union, and he resigned as president, acknowledging that the position, in fact, no longer existed. The flag of the Soviet Union that had been hoisted that morning over the Kremlin’s walls was lowered for the last time that evening, and the old flag of Russia was raised in its place. The next day, Dec. 26, 1991, the Upper House of the Congress of People’s Deputies of the Soviet Union also acknowledged that the Soviet Union no longer existed. These formalities brought the de jure situation into conformity with the de facto situation: a revolution had taken place within the borders of what had been the USSR.

Seeds of Collapse

Mikhail Gorbachev, of course, is blamed, or credited, by practically every observer for losing an empire. But nearly every historian and economist also accepts that the seeds of the Soviet Union’s downfall were planted when successive Communist Party General Secretaries refused to make basic reforms in the Soviet economic structure that had been set in place grosso modo under Stalin’s rule. Nikita Khrushchev, who succeeded Stalin in 1953, ended the most repressive features of Stalin’s governance but did not essentially change the economic system.

Khrushchev's reckless decision to deploy ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads in Cuba in 1962 can be seen as a desperate effort to reduce the huge costs of building a new fleet of nuclear-armed ballistic missiles. His failure, labeled "adventurism and capitulationism" by the Communist Party of China, led to his removal from office in 1964.

His successor, Leonid Brezhnev, who led the country for 18 years, strengthened the authority and priorities of the Soviet military-industrial complex and devoted enormous resources to building nuclear weapons and the means to carry the warheads to their targets in North America and elsewhere. (The SS-20 was a top priority in the aftermath of Khrushchev's dismissal and figured as a negotiating issue in Gorbachev's later efforts to change relations with the West.) Yet his rule was later characterized by Soviet critics as the "era of stagnation," which it was so far as the Soviet economy was concerned.

Indeed, when Brezhnev died in 1982, Yuri Andropov, head of the KGB, is said to have favored Gorbachev as the next Soviet General Secretary, apparently because he agreed with

While all that was going on in the nuclear arena, Gorbachev was trying to end the Cold War in Europe.

Gorbachev that the Soviet economic system was not delivering the goods and services needed by a modern state. Instead, Konstantin Chernenko, an elderly product of the Brezhnev era, was selected because he seemed next in line and was a safe bet to continue the policies thought at the time to have been supportive of internal stability as well as the Soviet Union's international interests. Chernenko died after just 13 months in office and was succeeded by Yuri Andropov, who probably was thought capable of enforcing discipline in the Soviet workforce.

But Andropov himself died in February 1984, after 16 months in office. I watched as his son, a member of the Soviet Union's delegation to the 1984-1986 Conference on



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Russia today is in much the same situation economically as it was when Mikhail Gorbachev diagnosed its problems.

Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, also known as the Stockholm Conference, abruptly left a plenary meeting. We learned later that he had been summoned back to Moscow because his father lay near death. At the time, when asked about getting on with nuclear arms talks, President Reagan said that he would like to, “but they keep dying on me.”

The stage was set for a younger, more dynamic leader to take the reins of power in Moscow. Gorbachev was 54 when selected in 1985 by the Politburo to succeed Andropov—indeed, to replace leaders who ever since the death of Stalin had resisted changes in the status quo. Gorbachev had thought a lot about how to revive the Soviet Union, and he took office with change in mind and policies to make change happen. He summarized his policy in two words: “perestroika” and “glasnost,” by which he meant that he wanted to restructure the old Soviet system while making it more open and transparent.

Gorbachev helped usher in a new era, one in which cooperation with the U.S. on curbing the nuclear arms race was possible.

Reykjavík’s Flame of Hope

The world of 2021 is a far different place from the world of the 1980s. In 1984, Reagan was able to argue in a State of the Union message that the only purpose of nuclear weapons was to see that they were never used and that the logic of that suggested they should be done away with. Imagine a U.S. president saying such a thing now!

On May 31, 1988, standing with Mikhail Gorbachev at the Kremlin in Moscow, Reagan was reminded by a reporter of his speech castigating the Soviet Union as an “evil empire.” He replied simply: “No, that was another time, another era.” Today there is no counterpart either to Reagan in Washington or to Gorbachev in Moscow. There is no “nuclear freeze movement” in which Americans demonstrate in the streets to ask their government to slow down the nuclear arms race. President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the Reagan-Shultz-Gorbachev INF treaty effective Aug. 2, 2019, citing Soviet noncompliance and suggesting that China should be covered by any INF treaty.

Four distinguished statesmen of the Cold War wrote several articles between 2007 and 2013 that argued for the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, hoping to rekindle the flame of hope that had burned brightly in Reykjavík. George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, William Perry and Sam Nunn met with President Barack Obama, who supported their goal and gave a speech in Prague that laid out an ambitious arms control and disarmament program. Obama spoke later in Berlin to advocate deeper reductions in nuclear weapons after New START. He also spoke in Hiroshima about the need for moral advances to match technological advances.

Leaders of other nations spoke in support of working toward the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. The U.N. Security Council in 2011 adopted a resolution asking for efforts to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in line with the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. But today, late in the year 2021, little is heard of eliminating nuclear weapons as a national priority. Obviously, the pandemic has sucked all the oxygen out of the room available for debate about great public issues, but we should not forget the far greater global catastrophe that awaits us if a nuclear war should ever start.

Russia today is in much the same situation economically as it was when Mikhail Gorbachev diagnosed its problems. Much like Leonid Brezhnev before him, President Vladimir Putin has opted for the status quo in the name of maintaining a stable society. Putin does not have a Communist Party nomenklatura, true; but he does have wealthy oligarchs eager to do his bidding. He has relied on Russia’s natural resources as the driver of gross domestic product rather than encouraging entrepreneurship, and has thus sacrificed the potential offered by science and technology for modernizing the economy.

Despite evidence that Russia is a nation in decline, or maybe because the behavior of a weak Russia could be more dangerous than that of a strong and secure Russia, the United States should look for chances to work constructively with that nation.

George Shultz’s last book before he passed away at age 100 in February 2021, was about the future. Titled *A Hinge of History*, it was written with James Timbie, a leading figure for many years in nuclear negotiations with the Soviet Union. In that last testament of a great American patriot, Shultz and his co-author eloquently argue for renewed engagement with Russia. They write: “Russia is a major power, armed with the most dangerous weapons on earth. It will always be important, so the United States must figure out how to work with Russia constructively. It has been done before, and it can be done today, even in a new and changing world.” ■

Practical Lessons for Today's Foreign Service

U.S. diplomats in the former USSR had a unique opportunity to better comprehend the world and practice their craft.

BY GEORGE KROL

Thirty years ago this month, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ceased to exist. At the time, I was a relatively junior diplomat, on my third overseas tour, assigned to the American consulate general in what was then called Leningrad. Little did I—or anyone else—know that the assignment would end two years later in the renamed city of St. Petersburg, in a world transformed by the collapse of the Soviet Union.



George Krol retired from the U.S. Foreign Service in 2018, concluding a 36-year career during which he served in Poland, India, the Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine, and as ambassador to Belarus, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. In the State

Department he held positions as, inter alia, deputy assistant secretary of State for Central Asia and director of the Office of Russian Affairs. Ambassador Krol is currently an adjunct professor at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I., lectures locally on foreign policy topics and is an associate of Harvard University's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies.

I spent most of 1991 traveling to Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn to report on the historic efforts of the Baltic republics to reassert their independence from the Soviet system. In July a Latvian parliamentary contact, Mavriks Vulfsons, asked me to be in Riga on Aug. 19 because he had heard “something big would happen that day.” Driving to Riga in my trusty Chevy Nova on Aug. 18, I woke up the next morning in a city under siege. Armed Soviet security forces stood outside my hotel opposite the Ministry of Internal Affairs building and had occupied key roads and bridges. I turned on the radio and TV and heard Soviet media reporting that Gorbachev had been “taken ill,” signaling the start of the attempted coup by Communist Party hardliners that most expected would trigger a crackdown in the upstart Baltic republics.

I quickly left the hotel, skirting the armed troops, and made my way to the Latvian Foreign Ministry, which was nearly deserted. I found Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans sitting alone in his office, smoking his pipe and considering his options, including a possible dash to Sweden. From his office, I was able to contact the State Department Operations Center to convey Jurkans' message to Secretary Baker: There's a coup underway in Moscow that may crush Latvia's quest for independence; please do whatever you can to stop it.

I felt firsthand the reality of the collapse of the Soviet system for Russians at all levels. For a few, it was exhilarating. For many more, it was a nightmare of uncertainty and instability.

Leaving Jurkans, I walked to the offices of the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers, where I found Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis on the phone with his Estonian counterpart, Edgar Savisaar. As Godmanis motioned me into his office, I could hear Savisaar's loud voice: Soviet tanks are on their way to Tallinn. As they hung up, a Soviet military helicopter flew low over the nearby statue of Lenin and drew level with the prime minister's office. I suggested we should get away from the windows.

After a hasty chat with Godmanis, I walked across town to the Latvian parliament building, arriving just in time to witness the deputies rapidly pass a resolution declaring Latvia's full independence before they hastily fled the building. Outside, I encountered Deputy Chairman of the Parliament Andrejs Krastins urging a gaggle of people outside the barricade to go home and take cover. Seeing a line of armored personnel carriers advancing, firing shots in the air, I suggested we return to the parliament building.

Inside, a strange scene appeared. A large buffet was laid out, perhaps intended to celebrate Latvia's renewed freedom. Most of the deputies had fled, but not the parliament's senior leaders and the stalwart cafeteria workers, who were all women. As Prime Minister Godmanis joined the group, Parliament Chairman Anatoliy Gorbunovs, reflecting the dark humor I frequently encountered in the Baltics, urged all present: "Eat while we are still free; it might be our last good meal!" After we toasted Latvia's independence, however short-lived that might be, we waited for the bang on the door from Soviet security forces. My hosts thanked me for being there with them. At that moment, I realized what it meant to truly represent my country: To them, I was not George Krol, a young American diplomat from New Jersey, I was America; and America was standing with them in their darkest hour.

I share these vignettes not to chronicle my exploits as a Foreign Service officer during that historic time (those stories are being collected through the dedicated efforts of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training's oral history program). Rather, I use them to highlight some of the lessons I learned as an FSO,

not only in the Baltics but also in Russia and elsewhere in the former USSR, where I served almost continuously for the rest of my career. These experiences not only helped me become a better diplomat; they helped me comprehend today's Russia and the other states that emerged from the Soviet Union.

Lesson One: Use the Language.

First and foremost, I cannot overemphasize the importance of learning and using the language. My only Russian language training had been a year at the Foreign Service Institute before arriving in Leningrad. It was clearly inadequate at first, but certainly provided a firm base on which to expand. The sheer number of conversations and interactions with Russian speakers initially overwhelmed me, but over time greatly improved my grasp and fluency in the language. Most importantly, I lost the fear of speaking Russian and learned how to communicate and, even better, how to listen. Using the language is not only vital for a diplomat to comprehend people and culture but also affords access and insight—and it can, and should, be fun.

Lesson Two: Adapt. Adjust. Be Flexible. Be Creative.

Prior to my arrival in Leningrad, reforms in the USSR under Gorbachev had already caused a sea change in our consulate's work. The years of being confined to a 20-mile radius of the city—of reporting from Soviet newspapers and conversations with other diplomats and a few harassed dissidents—had ended. While we still had to file notes with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs office if we wanted to travel beyond that perimeter, the MFA rarely denied travel. Although my predecessor Doug Wake and our deputy principal officer Jon Purnell had been ejected from the Baltics in March 1990 after Lithuania had declared its full independence, when I sought to venture back into the region in the late summer of that same year, along with our previously expelled DPO, the Soviet MFA did not object and never subsequently denied or even harassed any U.S. diplomat traveling to the Baltics. As events heated up in the Baltics throughout 1991, I traveled there practically weekly, and mostly alone, without incident.

At the consulate, we had no local hires aside from some contract Americans and a few Finnish nationals. We had to do most of the administrative work ourselves, which included making travel arrangements. Under these circumstances we became largely self-reliant and independent of Embassy Moscow. Despite embassy security regulations that would have required us to travel in pairs—and if by train, in a compartment by our-



President of Russia Boris Yeltsin (holding flag) and his supporters in front of the Russian Parliament (the “White House”) in Moscow in the aftermath of the August 1991 coup attempt.

selves—we regularly ignored those rules (with our local security officer’s tacit approval). Moreover, the train conductors would often put people into the empty berths in our compartments to earn a little extra money for themselves. Frankly, those compartment companions were a fount of knowledge and insight for our cables. We in the “grad” (Leningrad) were glad the “embassy tsar” was far away, and that we had a benevolent consul general, Dick Miles, who let us do our job and kept Embassy Moscow at bay. As a former Marine, Miles instinctively understood and supported the expeditionary nature of our work, recognizing that creativity and a certain amount of guile were required to get the job done.

Lesson Three: Go Out and Discover.

The collapse of the August 1991 coup and subsequent independence of the Baltic states freed me from the Baltic beat and enabled me to concentrate on covering developments in Leningrad (the name change came in September) and the huge territory of northwest Russia. I was able to travel throughout the region meeting people who had rarely seen an American. I

quickly realized that not all Russians are alike, and those who live away from the big cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow have their own distinct cultures and languages.

Our diplomatic tasks had also changed with the collapse of the USSR. No longer were we focused primarily on reporting on conditions in our district. Suddenly we became program officers for U.S. aid and assistance programs for which we had no prior experience, such as providing humanitarian aid to hospitals, orphanages and old age homes. We now saw sides of Russian life that Soviet authorities had long shut off from foreign purview. Most of our contacts in the Russian provinces spoke no English, and their Russian was of a type we Russian-language neophytes had never encountered. The experience was overwhelming for them and for us. But ironically, it allowed us to develop a deeper bond and, if we allowed ourselves, an emotional connection with the people.

I felt firsthand the reality of the collapse of the Soviet system for Russians at all levels. For a few, it was exhilarating. For many more, it was a nightmare of uncertainty and instability. I and many Russians knew precisely what Vladimir Putin meant when



Citizen volunteers erect barricades to protect the Russian Parliament in Moscow during the 1991 coup.

he called the end of the USSR a tragedy. But we also knew the USSR was now in the past—a defective system led by defective leaders that had failed. My contacts, like most Russians, did not wallow in self-pity or remorse. They showed remarkable strength and fortitude to pick up the pieces, adapt and live their changed lives with the same sardonic humor that is quintessentially Russian. As a diplomat, I tried to convey this picture back to Washington, but I fear many there had a different picture drawn for them by others who lacked the insight and did not share the empathy afforded us in the field. It was then—and I would contend, remains—an unfortunate dilemma and flaw in the American foreign policy establishment.

We also had to deal with a deluge of official and unofficial visitors, who often knew little about Russia and had even less experience working with Russians. Many visitors were well intentioned, while others sought advantages for themselves, like vultures circling a corpse. We from the consulate often had to sort out misunderstandings between locals and visiting Americans. Both sides could be equally uncomprehending and at times overbearing. It was Diplomacy 101 at its best, but FSI never trained us for this. We learned on the fly, and what

helped most was empathy: putting yourself in the other guy's shoes.

I frequently encountered visitors and even colleagues who clung to preconceived notions about Russia and the other former republics, and I am sorry to say that arrogance often accompanied our assistance. I vividly recall the restrained ire in Vladimir Putin's eyes when, as St. Petersburg's de facto "foreign minister," he had to listen to yet another American official or businessperson lecture him at length on the merits of American-style democracy, market economics and practically everything else. Putin was not alone at the time in appreciating America's attention but not necessarily our approach.

Lesson Four: Know and Explain Thyself.

I found in those early days, and subsequently, that acknowledging and explaining the flaws in my own country and society helped my credibility immensely in dealing with folks throughout society. American officials and diplomats have a well-known and regrettable penchant for preaching or talking down to people on subjects about which they consider themselves superior—like "democracy." Don't get me wrong—I am proud of our

country and its institutions, but I recognize their flaws and that nothing human is perfect. Having grown up largely in northern New Jersey, I've had the opportunity to observe practically every form of political corruption known to mankind, or at least to New Jerseyans. This helped me immensely in understanding the politics of St. Petersburg and other locales, and enabled me to "talk turkey" with officials and civil society activists alike. Human nature is, after all, human nature; any diplomat would be wise to keep that in mind and act, and report, accordingly.

Lesson Five: Get Out of the Office.

As a diplomat in those days, I spent a lot of time among what Russians call the "narod"—the people, the masses—standing in lines, in crowds, shopping at local markets, and taking public transportation. I picked up quite a bit of unvarnished opinion while waiting in line, just listening and minding my own business, not to mention finding out why everyone was queuing in the first place. It was a habit I continued throughout my career, even as an ambassador, when people on the Tashkent subway or at a market in Astana would sometimes do a double take, perhaps recognizing me from some public event or news report. I'm open to just about anything that gets me out of the office, and it's certainly better, and more fun, than attending speeches and formal meetings.

Besides, isn't that what we're supposed to be doing—getting out among the people? Understanding the street as well as the corridors of power? Later in my career, I found too many colleagues spent too much time planning their vacations outside the country or patronizing specialty stores for fear, it seemed, of the "foreigners" they might otherwise encounter. To understand a society and a people, I strongly believe it is necessary to experience life as they live it and not focus too much on the English-speaking elite.

Lesson Six: Learn to Listen, and Listen to Learn.

Another part of our duties in the early days after the collapse of the USSR was providing educational and English-language teaching materials to schools and libraries, as well as speaking to audiences, large and small, in the Russian language, however imperfect. I found that the library systems and the librarians themselves were the greatest proponents of education, and of openness. The librarians, all women, were without a doubt among the strongest and most resourceful people I encountered in Russia and the former Soviet republics. They found all sorts of ingenious ways to keep their underfunded libraries going. They never took no for an answer and braved

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In many respects, it is often a world of our own making that hinders our diplomatic work, blinds us to essential insights and inhibits our ability to empathize.

even the most obstinate bureaucrat—whether in Lukashenko’s Belarus or Karimov’s Uzbekistan—to, eventually, get their way. They were mainstays of communities where economic deprivation after the fall of the USSR was rampant.

I listened to them, did my best to provide whatever assistance they requested and learned a lot from them. Their tutelage helped me greatly in dealing with the State Department’s bureaucracy. Sometimes, if not most times, it pays to listen to the people with whom we work. My experience in the former USSR led me to suggest that FSI should conduct a course in listening for diplomats.

Lesson Seven: Team Is Supreme.

After the collapse of the USSR, as we struggled to establish new embassies, we did not have the “conveniences” of established diplomatic housing, medical staff, commissaries, or even Marines and security guards. We relied on ourselves but mostly on our new local hires, who took us in almost as family. We trusted each other and built strong personal and professional bonds as colleagues, not as superiors and subordinates. Ah, how fleeting those halcyon days were—before all the department’s rules and regulations, and other agencies with their rules and regulations, arrived to separate us and complicate our lives and our work. Yes, we all knew the day would come when the “real” world would intrude on our lives and work. But, in many respects, it is often a world of our own making that hinders our diplomatic work, blinds us to essential insights and inhibits our ability to empathize.

Thirty years ago, American diplomats in the former USSR had a unique opportunity to get to know peoples and places like we never had before. We experienced the exhilaration but also the pain, uncertainty and humiliation the people around us felt, from Vladimir Putin to the babushka next door. We learned to communicate; we learned to listen (well, at least some of us did). We also learned how to explain ourselves, our country and our society, not as superiors but as people like them, journeying on a path that was hard, rocky and uncertain, but one that offered hope and something dear to which to aspire.

Living History

Back in Riga, on that fateful August day, I stood together with the leaders of the Latvian nation to witness what we all expected would be the death of a dream, and possibly of ourselves. Instead, the Soviet security forces halted their advance and never entered the parliament building. By the next day, an eerie calm had descended as news began to seep out that, back in Moscow, the coup was unraveling. I decided to travel on to Vilnius where, earlier in the year, I had stood with Lithuanians in their embattled parliament building as they suffered the onslaught of Soviet repression in their own drive for independence.

As I drove out of Riga, my car radio delivered astonishing news: The Russian Parliament had declared the Communist Party illegal, and the coup plotters were being arrested. On the road to Vilnius, I encountered a stream of military trucks filled with Soviet forces heading in the opposite direction, returning to garrison. I couldn’t believe what I was witnessing—at once terrifying and exhilarating. On that beautiful summer’s day, as I drove with the windows down through the idyllic Baltic countryside, I thought: I represent the United States of America; I can’t believe they pay me to do this.

The experience of those years transformed me as a diplomat and as a person. It taught me a lot about the Baltic republics and Russia, and provided a foundation I continued to build on in Ukraine, Belarus, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. It taught me to understand these countries and their highly diversified, complex societies as they are and as they strive to be, not as we want or expect them to be. Most of all, it taught me humility and patience. It also gave me a sense of confidence in the resiliency of the human spirit and its extraordinary adaptability to change, adversity, deprivation and uncertainty. And it exposed to me an essential goodness and often greatness in people under duress.

It saddens me greatly to see, 30 years later, our consulate in St. Petersburg closed, our missions and diplomats in Russia and Belarus confined and harassed. But nothing in life is permanent.

Even in the midst of the gloom, pessimism and adversity of the dark and difficult days in the Baltics, or in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus or Uzbekistan, I was and remain heartened by the profound spirit in people to endure and hope for a better time, however long that might take.

Above all, I came to appreciate the inestimable worth of our diplomatic craft, which strives to understand, to empathize and ultimately to build, rebuild and maintain bridges. For such is our stock in trade, our vocation and our duty. ■

Recalling Dec. 11, 1941

When World War II Truly Began

“**E**xcruciating uncertainty.” Such was the troubled state of mind among Embassy Berlin staff, as First Secretary George F. Kennan

recalled in his memoirs, in the aftermath of Japan’s surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941. Stationed in the Nazi capital since 1939, Kennan at age 37 was already in his 15th year of diplomatic service. For four days, U.S. Embassy Berlin, occupying the sprawling Blücher Palace, was increasingly isolated: no cables, no telephones; code books and sensitive files burned without clear instruction. “We were,” recalled Kennan, “on our own.”

Shortly after noon on Thursday, Dec. 11, Kennan continued, “the telephone suddenly and mysteriously came alive.” A German

Join this retired FSO and historian on a journey back to the day when the U.S. entered the Second World War.

BY RAY WALSER

official announced dispatch of a car to collect Chargé Leland B. Morris. Once ushered into Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop’s grandiose Wilhelmstrasse office, Morris remained standing while the Nazi’s top diplomat, “striking ferocious attitudes,” delivered a declaration of war, “screaming at him, ‘Your President has wanted this war, now he has it!’” Morris simply requested permission

to cable Washington. Having, in diplomatic-speak, been handed his passport, Morris acknowledged the end of America’s diplomatic mission in Nazi Germany. The hostile encounter lasted three minutes.



At 3 p.m., in the Kroll Opera House, Adolf Hitler launched into a 90-minute boastful, meandering tirade to announce war with the United States. Much of the speech was devoted to vilification of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as a plutocrat, failed political leader, warmonger, hypocrite, insane individual and pawn of “the eternal Jew,” according to Mark Weber in *The Journal of Historical Review*. Moreover, Hitler reached an ominous conclusion: Ulti-



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In December 1941, contends historian Klaus P. Fischer, Hitler “crossed the line separating a brutal dictator from a mass murderer.”

mate blame for a world war rested with the Jewish race, and the only answer was their annihilation. In December 1941, contends historian Klaus P. Fischer, Hitler “crossed the line separating a brutal dictator from a mass murderer.”

Was the declaration of war on the U.S. a suicidal and irrational decision? Why wage war on the U.S. with the mass of the Wehrmacht locked in titanic winter combat at the gates of Moscow and in an air and African ground war with Great Britain?

Historians point to Hitler’s belief that the United States was already at war with Germany. Indeed, FDR’s un-neutral neutrality—a “Destroyer for Bases” deal with Britain, Lend Lease, a Western Hemisphere security zone, the Atlantic Charter, “shoot-on sight” orders—were all, in Hitler’s view, warlike acts. Even before Pearl Harbor, the Germans reaffirmed unwavering commitment to the Tripartite Pact binding Germany to Italy and Japan. Although surprised by the attack on Pearl Harbor, according to premier Hitler biographer Ian Kershaw, the Nazi leader exclaimed, “We can’t lose the war at all. We now have an ally which has never been conquered in 3,000 years.” On Dec. 8, he authorized Admiral Erich Raeder’s U-boats to attack U.S. shipping anywhere on the high seas. Undoubtedly Hitler, with his self-proclaimed instinctive genius, was dismissive of U.S. military and industrial capabilities and the tenacity of its leaders and citizens. Now, he embarked on a war he could not win.



In Rome at 2:30 p.m., Benito Mussolini’s Foreign Minister (and son-in-law) Galeazzo Ciano summoned U.S. Chargé George Wadsworth. This “good man, somewhat timid,” confided

Ciano to his diary, “thinks I have called him to discuss the arrival of certain newspapermen, but I disillusion him immediately. He listens to the declaration of war, turns pale. Wadsworth’s response: ‘It is very tragic.’”

In a brief speech from the Palazzo Venezia’s balcony, Mussolini denounced FDR as an “authentic and democratic despot” responsible for the outbreak of war with “diabolical pertinacity.” He termed Italy’s alliances the guarantor of victory and the future artificer and organizer of just peace among the people.

“Italians ... rise to your feet once more,” Il Duce exhorted. “Be worthy of this great hour. We will win.” Ciano recorded sourly: “It was three o’clock in the afternoon, the people were hungry, and the day was quite cold. These are all elements that do not make for enthusiasm.”

On this day, too, a revised version of the September 1940 Tripartite Pact committing the Axis powers to wage war together and pursue victory in order to bring about a “just new order” was signed in Berlin.



Germany’s dashing chargé in Washington, D.C., and loyal Nazi, Hans Thomsen, and an aide arrived at the Department of State at 8:20 a.m., one hour after the Ribbentrop-Morris encounter. His instructions:

Deliver the war message to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, then ask for your passport and a repatriation plan.

At about 9:30 a.m., the Secretary brushed past the Nazi envoy. The State Department’s press release reported, “The Secretary, otherwise engaged, directed they [the Germans] be received by the Chief of the European Bureau.” *New York Times* diplomatic correspondent Bertram Hulen described the atmosphere as “frigid,” but also marked by “a complete absence of excitement or dramatics.”

The rebuffed German climbed the stairs to the office of chief of the European Division, Ray Atherton. Upon receiving Thomsen’s message, Atherton made it clear that since 1939, the United States had recognized the threat and purposes of an aggressive Germany “toward the Hemisphere and our free American civilization,” as stated in another State press release.

In an elevator on the way out, press photographers jostled Thomsen, whose comment was captured also by Hulen: “This is



ETH-BIBLIOTHEK

German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop in London, March 1936.



GERMAN FEDERAL ARCHIVES

Speaking to the men of the Reichstag in Berlin's Kroll Opera House on Dec. 11, 1941, Adolf Hitler delivers a speech on Franklin D. Roosevelt and the war in the Pacific, declaring war on the U.S.

not very dignified." The Germans retreated to their embassy on Massachusetts Avenue to await developments. Soon the Swiss flag was hoisted over it, as it was over the American embassy in Berlin. Swiss diplomats quickly assumed the duty of representing both American and German interests.

At 10:30 a.m., Italian Ambassador Prince Ascanio Colonna visited political adviser James Clement Dunn, only to confess he was without instructions from his government and had called to inquire as to his status. Dunn acknowledged that a state of war existed with Italy. FDR's press secretary acidly noted that a vainglorious Mussolini was in goose-step fashion reduced to following Hitler's orders.



By midday, the die was cast. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and his aides hurriedly drafted the text of a presidential message to Congress: "The long known and long expected has thus taken place. The forces endeavoring to enslave the world are moving toward this hemisphere. Never before has

there been a greater challenge to life, liberty and civilization." Prompt action, President Roosevelt told American lawmakers, promised "a world victory of the forces of justice and of righteousness over the forces of savagery and barbarism."

Before 3 p.m., without Roosevelt's appearance, Congress unanimously approved war resolutions. At 3:06 p.m., FDR initialed them. The U.S. was at war with Germany and Italy.

In a single day, a Pacific war became a global war with cascading consequences for grand strategy and statecraft. In the geopolitical game, Hitler's and Mussolini's actions further unleashed the fury of American power. Despite the humiliation of Pearl Harbor and daunting Pacific challenges, the bull's-eye fell squarely on Nazi Germany and occupied Europe as the focal point for U.S. war strategy. With no end other than victory and a Grand Alliance—the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union—taking shape, the fate of the Axis was sealed. On Jan. 1, 1942, 26 nations signed the United Nations Declaration pledging to accept the Atlantic Charter and agreeing not to negotiate a separate peace with any Axis power.



SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG/ALAMY

In 1937 Benito Mussolini addresses a crowd from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome to celebrate the Fascist Party of Italy. (Inset) Benito Mussolini on Nov. 1, 1922, shortly after the March on Rome when he ascended to power.



Hitler's action forced his East European allies—Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania—to follow Berlin.

In Budapest, Premier László Bárdossy summoned Minister Herbert “Bertie” Pell, a U.S. political appointee to Hungary and former minister to Portugal, to announce a rupture in relations. Two days later, on Dec. 13, Hungary fell in line and declared war. (If the name “Pell” sounds familiar, it is because Bertie’s son—Claiborne, future FSO and long-serving chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—enlisted as a seaman in the Coast Guard in August 1941. Correspondence in FDR’s files testifies to an anxious father in faraway Budapest asking high-powered friends, including FDR, to keep an eye on his adventurous son.)

In Bucharest, sadness prevailed. Minister Franklin Mott Gunther, a career FSO since 1908 and former minister to Egypt and Ecuador was stricken with leukemia. Although advised to depart post, he remained. Assigned to Romania since 1937, Gunther distinguished himself through relentless reporting on rampant anti-Semitism, the Isai pogrom and the massacre of Jews. He was

among the first at State to lift the veil of secrecy surrounding

Romania’s appalling complicity in the ultimate murder of as many as 300,000 Jews. Citing obligations under the Tripartite Pact, an official delivered a note verbale on Dec. 12 announcing a state of war to Chargé James Benton. Less than two weeks later, the 56-year-old Gunther was dead. In the words of the State Department press release: He “sacrificed his life in the course of duty.”

George H. Earle III, minister to Bulgaria, stands out as one of the most intriguing political diplomats of the 1930s. Appointed minister to Austria (1933-1934), Earle left Vienna to run successfully as a New Deal Democrat for the governorship of Pennsylvania. When his term ended in 1939 and a Senate bid failed, the indefatigable Earle jumped back into the diplomatic game.

He attracted international attention in February 1941 when he became embroiled in a diplomatic kerfuffle. With Germans present in a popular restaurant, Earle requested the band play “Tipperary,” a British World War I marching song. Taking offense,



TOPICAL PRESS AGENCY

a German, presumably a Nazi in mufti, livid with rage threw an empty wine bottle at Earle. “This sudden, vicious, unprovoked attack irritated me considerably,” Earle, a rugged 220-pounder told the press. “So I smashed him in the face, knocking him down, causing his face to bleed.” Shades of Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in the 1942 hit “Casablanca.” Earle would report that from King Boris on down, Bulgarians regretted having war with the U.S. forced upon them.

Opéra bouffe? “The United States should pay no attention to any of these declarations ... against us by puppet governments,” FDR wrote to Secretary Hull. Reciprocal U.S. declarations of war did not come until June 5, 1942.



On Sunday, Dec. 14, Chargé Morris, First Secretary Kennan and others arrived, luggage in hand, from U.S. Embassy Berlin at Potsdamer Station to board a special train for the spa town of Bad Nauheim. The party of 130—men, women and children, as well as several journalists—would remain in the Jeschke’s Grand Hotel for months under the Gestapo’s watchful eyes. Isolation, boredom and meager diets took a toll. “Particularly disillusioning were the endless complaints about food which I was compelled to receive,” Kennan wrote in his memoirs.

One embassy staff member, Herbert John Burgman, an American-born but locally engaged clerk, failed to appear at the station. He subsequently became an anti-American propagandist/broadcaster for the Nazi regime. In 1949 a U.S. court convicted Burgman of treason, a dubious distinction for a one-time State Department employee.

Invidious comparisons were often made between the spartan conditions at Bad Nauheim and the treatment Thomsen and the German diplomats received while interned at the Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

American diplomats in Italy experienced a more civilized confinement. Allowed to stay in Rome, each American was shadowed by so-called “guardians” in plain clothes and permitted considerable freedom as long as they followed what Second Secretary Elbridge Durbrow described as the “rules of internment”: no social contact, movies, restaurants, golf or tennis; plenty of walking and sightseeing.

Minister Earle and staff escaped internment in Bulgaria, safely arriving in Istanbul in late December. Hungarians also treated Minister Pell well. After closing the U.S. mission in Hungary, the Pells occupied a suite in the Ritz, vacated temporarily by Pell and his wife when von Ribbentrop descended on Budapest. Following

In a single day, a Pacific war became a global war with cascading consequences for grand strategy and statecraft.

a friendly send-off, Pell’s party reached neutral Portugal in January 1942 after promising not to leave the continent until such time as Hungarian diplomats arrived there from the U.S.

Last to leave were the American diplomat refugees camped at Bad Nauheim. Traveling through Germany, Occupied France, Vichy France and Spain, they did not reach Lisbon until May 16. Kennan confessed in his memoirs that after months on the receiving end of food complaints, as the only American allowed to leave the train at the Portuguese border, he took “final revenge upon



The German chargé d'affaires, Herr Hans Thomsen, and his wife, Frau Hans Thomsen, depart the German embassy in Washington, D.C., for a White House diplomatic reception on Dec. 14, 1939, soon after war was waged in Europe.

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WIKIMEDIA

The S.S. *Drottningholm* in Gothenburg Harbor, Sweden, circa 1943. The spring before, in 1942, her first westbound voyage during WWII had carried U.S. diplomats Leland Morris and George Kennan, and many others, from Lisbon to New York City.



FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION/OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

On Dec. 11, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the declaration of war against Germany, which leads the United States into World War II in Europe. On his left is Senator Tom Connally, who holds a watch to mark the exact time of the declaration.

my fellow internees by repairing to the station buffet and eating a breakfast of several eggs.” It was hours before the rest of the internees could eat to their fill in friendly Lisbon.

On June 1, for the hundreds aboard the Swedish-flagged liner S.S. *Drottningholm*, chartered to ferry diplomats and others across the Atlantic, there was no more welcome sight than Lady Liberty and New York’s skyline. In the minds of Minister Pell, Mrs. Gunther, Chargé Morris, First Secretary Kennan and numerous others, it was a bittersweet ending to ordeals begun five months before.



Eighty years later, Dec. 11, 1941, marks a day when the world descended with head-spinning rapidity into total global war. Wrote Secretary Hull: “The voices of diplomacy were now submerged by the roar of the canon.”

War forced upon the State Department and Foreign Service challenges never before experienced and scarcely imagined. They ranged from waging economic warfare, while preserving alliances and hemispheric solidarity, to supporting governments in exile and shaping public opinion while planning for postwar peace. State vied for influence in a time of war, not always with success. Competing agencies proliferated; personnel shortages persisted; and FDR, sometimes known as the Juggler, frequently kept his own counsel.

Nonetheless, for the Foreign Service, staff and families, ahead lay ordeals of separations, perilous journeys and risky assignments. Total global war would continue to test the mettle of State and the Foreign Service until the guns of war fell silent on Sept. 2, 1945. ■

AFSA Awards Honor Foreign Service Excellence and Constructive Dissent

For 53 years, AFSA has been proud to highlight achievement, courage and sacrifice within the Foreign Service community through its awards program. This year, due to ongoing concerns over the COVID-19 delta variant, AFSA hosted its annual awards ceremony in a virtual format on Oct. 19.

Hundreds of guests tuned in to applaud the winners of the 2020 and 2021 awards for outstanding performance and constructive dissent, and to honor both years' recipients of AFSA's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy.

AFSA recognized 23 award recipients during the ceremony: 13 who had been selected in 2020 (their profiles appeared in the Dec. 2020 *FSJ*), and 10 who received awards this year (profiles begin on page 20).

AFSA President Eric Rubin served as emcee of the ceremony before an audience that featured family members and colleagues of the recipients, as well as former award winners. Ambassador Rubin welcomed and recognized five former recipients of AFSA's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy: Ambassadors (ret.) Herman "Hank" Cohen, Ruth Davis, Tom Boyatt, Ron Neumann and Bill Harrop.

"Due to COVID-19, we were unable to gather in person



AFSA/JULIA WOHLERS

Ambassador John D. Negroponte delivers remarks on accepting the 2021 Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy.

last year, and that unfortunate situation remains with us still," Amb. Rubin said in his opening remarks. "However, rather than ask our recipients to wait yet another year to be recognized, we decided it was right to honor our colleagues from both 2020 and this year. Their achievements deserve to be highlighted."

He also acknowledged the passing of four Lifetime Award recipients over the past two years: Ambassador (ret.) Edward J. Perkins, who died on Nov. 7, 2020, not long after learning of his selection for the award; Ambassador (ret.) George Landau, Ambassador (ret.) Bill Swing and former Secretary of State George Shultz.

Award recipients participated virtually from all over the world and gave brief remarks as they accepted



AFSA/JULIA WOHLERS

Katherine Perkins speaks on behalf of her late father, Ambassador (ret.) Edward J. Perkins, recipient of the 2020 Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy.

their awards. AFSA congratulates all the 2020 and 2021 award recipients!

Lifetime Contributions

Amb. Rubin presented the 2021 **Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy** to Ambassador (ret.) **John D. Negroponte**.

In accepting, Amb. Negroponte reflected on his 44 years of government service and foreign policy accomplishments.

"I held nine senatorially confirmed positions under five different presidents and got to know every Secretary of State since the Nixon administration. There were many highlights," Amb. Negroponte said.

"Prominent among them were the opportunities to serve on the National Security Council staff under Dr. Henry

CALENDAR

Please check www.afsa.org for the most up-to-date information.

December 1
AFSA Scholarship Applications Available

December 8
12-2 p.m.
AFSA Governing Board Meeting

December 9
12-1 p.m.
AFSA Book Notes: Career Diplomacy

December 13
Federal Health Benefits Open Season Ends

December 24
Christmas Eve AFSA Offices Closed

December 31
New Year's Eve AFSA Offices Closed

January 17
Martin Luther King Day AFSA Offices Closed

January 19
12-2 p.m.
AFSA Governing Board Meeting

Kissinger in the 1970s and again under General Colin Powell at the end of the Reagan administration. Later, as director of national intelligence, I developed a close working relationship with George W. Bush, who gave me extraordinary opportunities to serve the country."

Negroponte continued: "Reflecting back on these

years of work, I believe the Foreign Service has stepped up in ways that were truly above and beyond the call of duty. We can be justifiably proud of the way our officers and staff have stood side by side with our military brothers and sisters in times of danger. For me personally, the chance to work at close quarters with our military, whether in Vietnam, Iraq or elsewhere, has been among the most rewarding experiences of my life.”

Katherine Perkins—daughter of the late Ambassador **Edward J. Perkins**, who was honored with the 2020 **Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy** spoke about her father and his legacy. “To say that he was pleased and honored with this award is an understatement,” Ms. Perkins said. “He cherished the men and women of the Foreign and Civil Service, but he always asked how the State Department could fully represent the United States when it did not represent all of its people.

“With help from colleagues and support from Congress,” she continued, “he convinced the department to create programs that would diversify the Foreign Service, focusing on those who were under-represented and who might not otherwise have the opportunity to consider the Foreign Service as a career. These opportunities, now known as the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship Programs, have brought a cadre of dedicated professionals who bring their own vision, intelligence,

curiosity and desire to make a positive impact on the world.”

Constructive Dissent

AFSA’s four constructive dissent awards are unique within the U.S. government. Every year for nearly a half-century, AFSA has given these awards to Foreign Service officers and specialists who demonstrated the courage to dissent within the system, to question the status quo and to take a stand.

In 2020, two recipients were selected for the **Christian A. Herter Award** for a Senior Foreign Service officer. **Julie M. Stufft**, then on detail to the National Security Council, was recognized for her advocacy of policies to protect American citizens abroad in the early days of the pandemic—policies that some senior officials initially viewed as unthinkable and that were later adopted by the executive branch.

“There is a deep and abiding need for Foreign Service expertise to be part of the policymaking apparatus,” Ms. Stufft said in her remarks at the ceremony. “My greatest satisfaction [at the NSC] was to see how others perceive the Foreign Service when encountering us for the first time—almost universally with astonishment at what we do and what we contribute.”

Stufft is now a deputy assistant secretary for the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Monica Smith, as the senior resident legal officer for USAID’s Israel mission, received the award for her

The cover of the Dec. 2020 *FSJ* issue highlighted the work of the 2020 AFSA award winners, who were recognized during this year’s awards ceremony.

persistence, at great personal cost, in challenging the approach of mission management in the West Bank and Gaza as she assessed the risk of inadvertently assisting a terrorist actor.

“I hope we all recognize every day that being a leader, and a person in a position of authority, gives us a special responsibility to speak up, encourage discussion of difficult issues and support our colleagues who do the same,” Ms. Smith said in her acceptance remarks. “Diversity of opinions fosters diversity in action.”

This year, the **William R. Rivkin Award** for a midlevel officer was given to **Anny Vu**, on detail to the National Security Council, for her courage and conviction in countering China’s growing influence in international organizations, despite the threat of professional reprisal from senior political opposition.

Ms. Vu was unable to attend the ceremony. AFSA State Vice President Tom Yazdgerdi, who accepted the award on her behalf, read aloud her remarks: “Throughout the process [of dissent], my North Star remained the belief that what I was doing—and what each and every one of us does every day—must always be in the best interest of the United States and the vision of the world that we seek to uphold and at times defend.”



The 2020 **William R. Rivkin Award** was presented to **Jason Smith**, then a political officer in Jerusalem, for his objectivity and integrity in helping shape U.S. policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one of the most politically charged and controversial American foreign policy issues.

Mr. Smith shared observations on his experience: “First, dissent can and should be empowering, and good leadership—and trust in that leadership—is critical. Second, dissent does not need to be a solo journey. As Americans we know that when we are united, we stand.”

Lindsay Dana received the 2020 **W. Averell Harri-man Award** for an entry-level officer for her work to end gender bias on visa application forms, which resulted in a departmentwide alteration to the forms.

“Constructive dissent for me means being confident enough to ask the department to take an uncomfortable look at itself in order to improve, to better serve our public or to better represent our interests abroad,” Ms. Dana said on receiving the award. “Those who dissent within the department do so from a place of understanding the role of diplomacy, and out of a very genuine want to make the State Department better.”

The 2020 **F. Allen “Tex” Harris Award** for a Foreign Service specialist went to **David “Dave” Heddlestone**, then a supervisory special agent for the Diplomatic Security Service, for his work urging the State Department and DSS to change overseas vehicle usage policy so regional security officers can provide a more secure environment for U.S. government personnel and their families.

Mr. Heddlestone noted that he received his award the same year that Mr. Harris passed away. “I’m grateful for Tex’s service, bravery and commitment to leveraging constructive dissent for the betterment of humanity,” he said in his acceptance remarks.

Exemplary Performance

AFSA offers six awards in recognition of exemplary performance and extraordinary contributions to effectiveness, professionalism and morale.

The 2021 **Mark Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy** went to FSO **Erika Kuenne** in recognition of her creative and effective work as a China watcher building support across Europe for a democratic Taiwan and countering Chinese efforts to violate the human rights of the Uyghur ethnic group.

There were two recipients of the 2020 award: **Alexandra Shema**, then a political officer in Moldova, for her leadership and engagement with political leaders, opposition and civil society to strengthen Moldova’s fledgling democ-

racy; and **Rafael “Rafi” Foley**, then political counselor and deputy chief of the U.S. Mission to Venezuela, for his work in fostering pro-democracy initiatives in the face of an intractable regime that poses a dangerous human rights and security threat to the country and the region.

The **Nelson B. Delavan Award** recognizes the work of a Foreign Service office management specialist (OMS) who has made a significant contribution to office or post effectiveness and morale beyond the framework of job responsibilities.

Bridgette Huerkamp is this year’s Delavan recipient for her exceptional and multifaceted contributions to mission goals in Dhaka during the pandemic.

In 2020, the award was given to **Jennifer “Jenny” McCoy**, then OMS for the regional security office in Colombo, for her extraordinary support of the embassy community after terrorist bombings on Easter Day 2019.

Jean Monfort, then OMS in the regional security office in Conakry, was the 2020 runner-up.

The **M. Juanita Guess Award** is conferred on a community liaison office coordinator (CLO) who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, dedication, initiative or imagination in assisting the families of Americans serving at an overseas post.

Alisse Sargeant received this year’s Guess Award for her service to the embassy community in challenging and

unpredictable conditions at Mission China, the first post to be faced with COVID-19.

The 2020 award was presented to **Jennifer Mauldin** for her dedicated work in support of consulate staff in Karachi, a high-threat post, during the pandemic.

The **Avis Bohlen Award** honors the accomplishments of a Foreign Service family member whose relations with the American and foreign communities at post have significantly advanced the interests of the United States.

Ambassador Avis Bohlen presented the awards named after her late mother, in whose honor the recognition was established by Ambassador Averell Harriman in 1982.

This year, the award went to two people. Foreign Service family member **Amanda Jager** was selected for her significant service as vice president of the American Community Support Association in New Delhi, and for the inclusivity initiative she launched to better serve the wider community of Mission India.

Ivana Lawrence, a Foreign Service spouse, received the award for her active involvement with Cairo American College, where she had a significant impact on the expat community as president of the parent teacher organization.

In 2020, **William “Rick” Bassett**, a professional composer and orchestrator, was selected for the Avis Bohlen Award in recognition of his creativity and generosity in

sharing his musical talent to connect with the embassy and local community in Monrovia.

“I salute my fellow eligible family members for all that they do to support U.S. missions around the world, from volunteer work to community and school leadership to raising families and pursuing independent careers while moving post to post,” Mr. Bassett said in his remarks.

The **AFSA Achievement and Contributions to the Association Award** recognizes an active-duty or retired AFSA member from any of the foreign affairs agencies who has made a significant (nonmonetary) contribution to the association in its role as either a professional association or a labor union.

Ambassador (ret.) Thomas Boyatt was given this year’s award for his work over the last two decades in leading four major innovations that strengthened AFSA’s role as the voice of the Foreign Service. Amb. Boyatt received the same award in 2001 in recognition of his contributions to AFSA from the 1960s through the 1990s.

In accepting the award, Amb. Boyatt traced the growth of AFSA over nearly 100 years as a professional organization and during the past 50 years as a union, singling out instances when it went to bat in defense of AFSA members.

“I would like to point out that having the capacity to defend the [Foreign Service]

Continued on page 75



2021: A Year of Unrealized Potential?

I think we can say that 2021 has been a year of unrealized potential for AFSA's efforts to take on the overarching issue of Foreign Service reform.

Looking back at my column in the January-February edition, the tone was hopeful that with the advent of the new administration we could reverse the previous four years of executive branch disdain for the Foreign Service and implement, or at least seriously discuss, FS reform with senior department leaders: overhauling or doing away with the coning system; greatly expanding the time for training, especially at the entry level; further rationalizing the assignments and promotion processes; and increasing the size of the Foreign Service and putting more FSOs overseas, to name just a few critical issues.

Thankfully, the disdain has been replaced with respect and recognition. But the surprisingly slow pace of nominations and confirmations has left the ship of State with little wind in its sails.

Reform Effort Stalled.

As of this writing there is still no confirmed under secretary for management (M) or Director General, the very officials with whom AFSA would need to engage on this fundamental effort. To be fair, partisan politics has held up many confirmations, but that doesn't explain everything.

Even if these two key positions are confirmed in

the next two months, it will likely be early 2022 before we can have this engagement. As AFSA President Rubin and I have discussed in our periodic meetings with the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources (D-MR), this is the most important policy priority for AFSA at this time.

No Movement on Second Full-time LM Position. This situation has also affected AFSA's ability to support its members more effectively. AFSA's Governing Board gave its approval a year ago, in November 2020, for Labor Management to negotiate with the department to secure a second full-time position in LM so that AFSA could better serve our members, particularly specialists. (Please see my column in the March 2021 *FSJ* that discusses this proposed position in detail.)

Unfortunately, these negotiations have also been put on hold until nominees for DG and M are confirmed. While we cannot predict the outcome, we are confident we can demonstrate the need for this position and want to get started as soon as possible so we can move forward.

The position is not necessarily permanent but will be established for a defined period of time. If it is approved by the department, AFSA is also confident that this defined period will prove that the position should be made permanent.

Still, Some Good News for AFSA. Despite these disappointing developments, AFSA has had some wins and successes in 2021:

MSI 2015 and 2016 Payments. In January 2021 the Foreign Service Labor Relations Board ruled in AFSA's favor that the department is legally required to retroactively pay the 2015 and 2016 meritorious service increases (MSI)—with interest—to the approximately 450 affected employees. (See April 2021 *FSJ* for more details).

In October, AFSA and the department signed a settlement agreement paving the way for these payments, estimated to be about \$6 million. By the time this issue goes to print, we expect that our members will have received this money, which is rightfully theirs.

CDC Dog Ban. While we had urged the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide a general exemption to the dog ban for U.S. government personnel on official travel orders, that did not happen. Nevertheless, direct advocacy with the CDC head by AFSA President Rubin and, at our encouragement, Deputy Secretary (D-MR) Brian McKeon resulted in more overseas testing sites and more ports of entry into the U.S., making the process less burdensome.

Professional Liability Insurance. At AFSA's urging, the department agreed in

August to increase its professional liability insurance reimbursement amount from \$175 to \$250, or 50 percent of the premium, whichever is less.

New Core Precepts Will Hold Only for Next Rating Period. As of this writing, AFSA is negotiating with the department on fundamental changes to the Core Precepts, the criteria by which promotion panels determine whether FS members are ready for the next rank.

AFSA fought hard to ensure that these precepts will hold only for the next EER rating period (2022-2023), so that there is sufficient time for our members to understand and internalize these changes, which for the first time include a stand-alone precept on diversity and inclusion.

Assignment Restrictions Policy. As of this writing, we are still awaiting the official change in assignment restrictions policy that we expect will make the process more transparent and equitable. We are convinced that AFSA advocacy with high-level department officials has made a difference. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of current restrictions, perhaps even a majority of them, have already been lifted.

Please send your concerns to us at member@afsa.org. Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season! ■



USAID at the NSC Table

Each administration approaches national security differently—not only with reference to actual policy, but also in terms of policy formulation.

For example, previous administrations have tended to invite the USAID Administrator to National Security Council principals committee (PC) meetings on a discretionary “as appropriate” basis. The Trump administration made the Administrator a regular at NSC deputies committee (DC) gatherings, one step below principals. When President Joe Biden nominated Ambassador Samantha Power as Administrator, he elevated the position to the status of “permanent” PC participant.

For those of you particularly interested in the NSC, including some of its history, I recommend the June 2021 Congressional Research Service Report, “The National Security Council: Background and Issues for Congress.”

So, what does a seat at the NSC table mean for USAID as an institution, and for FSOs?

The elevation of USAID from the DC to the PC is what technical experts refer to as “a big deal.” A more thoughtful reflection can be found in a piece published in June by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, capturing the views of five former Administrators on the impor-

ance of adding the USAID Administrator to the NSC.

As the piece highlights, “being at the table enables a development voice to shape and influence policies in a meaningful way. It also means that USAID is no longer simply seen as a technocratic implementing agency, but rather as representing a distinct policy perspective.”

In fact, over the past several years, USAID has steadily built its capacity to engage with the interagency community, including the NSC. PC meetings are generally the culmination of a series of interagency processes and dialogues, and USAID has greatly upped its game in terms of representing agency priorities and perspectives in the interagency policy committee (IPC) and other sub-PC fora.

True, our field-led model can be challenging when D.C.-based colleagues must engage on Washington time; they want to represent the field but don’t have the luxury of telling the interagency, “I’d like to consult with the mission and get back to you later.”

But even here, we have improved our coordination and communications, and are better able to bring our strong comparative advantage of field-focus and perspective to the NSC. Kudos to all USAID colleagues who have raised the agency’s role and contribution to U.S. national security policy.

For all the progress we have made institutionally, we must continue to build our human, IT and operational capacities to meet USAID’s elevated NSC role on a long-term, sustainable basis. We must invest in strengthening USAID’s capacities—including the number, skills and roles of FSOs—to secure a true permanent position in the years to come.

Absent this investment, I fear the pundits will write that it was Administrator Samantha Power as an individual who was named to the NSC principals committee, not USAID the institution. We might even see USAID—and the issue of development—revert to “as appropriate” status in future administration NSC structures.

For FSOs, USAID’s elevated role in the NSC should present an excellent opportunity to contribute to U.S. development policy and priorities, as well as to build professional skills, networks and experience. In fact, given USAID’s unique field-driven perspective, FSOs bring valuable insights and skill sets to these positions.

In return, details to the NSC offer FSOs the ability to build their skills and hone new ones, and contribute across the array of USAID’s Precepts for Foreign Service Promotion Boards, not to mention advance development at the highest level of government.

Of course, NSC positions are challenging, and one should probably not expect

to maintain an optimal work-life balance. And in terms of an FSO’s career path and assignment planning, these are not traditional “assignments” that one bids on; they are details. The agency does not control when opportunities arise or whom the NSC ultimately accepts.

Such operational complexities can be worked through, and the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management and others do appreciate the unique nature of the positions. But there’s no denying they are still complex, particularly for FSOs posted in the field. While they can be stressful and time consuming, they are also professionally and personally rewarding!

Soft power, including development, will continue to be at the forefront of U.S. foreign policy. In this context, I encourage FSOs to seek NSC detail opportunities. You will no doubt become a stronger, more capable officer; but more critically, you will help advance the agency’s mission and U.S. foreign policy through collaboration with colleagues from across the foreign policy community.

I am hopeful that over the next few years, USAID—through investments in FSOs and other career staff along with policy and structural reforms—will secure a truly permanent seat at the NSC principals committee table. After all, as the old saying goes: If you’re not at the table, you’re probably on the menu. ■



Achieving FS Parity in Legislation

It's not difficult to point to laws and policies that do not confer the same treatment or benefits on Foreign Service members as they do on members of our country's other deployed services. Because policymakers have been unwilling to provide parity, they have created unfavorable precedents over time. Some omissions are more egregious than others. And some go unnoticed until a member of the Foreign Service is directly affected.

For example, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act that became law in 2003 gave members of the armed forces reprieve from any penalties for breaking residential leases, vehicle leases and cellphone contracts when given military orders.

The Foreign Service has no equivalent civil relief law. Yet breakage fees are frequently listed as a significant financial burden on members of the Foreign Service preparing to serve overseas.

AFSA seeks the same reprieve from any penalties for those on diplomatic orders. During the 117th Congress, AFSA saw the bipartisan introduction of S.1550, the Foreign Service Families Act, that would provide this relief. We continue to advocate for its immediate passage into law.

While the SCRA spotlights well-known parity concerns, other issues are

only just emerging and have a far less obvious effect on the Foreign Service. For example, the American Rescue Plan, passed earlier this year, changed the 2021 qualifiers for the expanded child tax credit, requiring a principal residence in the U.S. for more than six months of the year.

The tax code already has a carve-out for those in the military serving overseas, so they qualify even if their principal residence is outside the United States. There is no such carve-out for the Foreign Service, so those without a principal residence in the U.S., even if serving their country overseas, are unlikely to qualify for the credit this year.

AFSA has asked Congress to address this new disparity in any extension of the expanded child tax credit beyond 2021.

Parity for the Foreign Service with other federal government employees, especially the military, has been a perennial priority for AFSA. The large disparity between the international affairs budget and the defense budget strains our efforts to seek equivalence. Controlling fewer dollars can sometimes mean being overlooked in major legislation; and, thus, achieving significant legislative changes that help the Foreign Service is difficult.

By taking a closer look

Parity for the Foreign Service with other federal government employees, especially the military, has been a perennial priority for AFSA.

at the process of drafting large-scale bills (e.g., an omnibus package) and making inroads with those who draft bill text, AFSA has an opportunity to make sure Congress gets it right the first time.

This means getting in on the ground floor of drafting massive bills, usually thousands of pages long, that may only contain a few pages affecting the Foreign Service. The SCRA and the American Rescue Plan are two examples.

When ideas concerning the Foreign Service emerge, AFSA serves as a resource for committee staff. But we must look to influence the process from all angles, not just traditional advocacy with members serving on our committees of jurisdiction or key committee staff.

In large bills covering multiple jurisdictions, counsels outside our key committees of jurisdiction are drafting text that can affect our membership.

Not all congressional offices have counsels expert in specific areas of law that the legislators wish to change, so they rely on legal experts provided through

the House and Senate Office of Legislative Counsel.

Many have never worked with the Foreign Service directly or indirectly and are unaware of the small details that could affect the Foreign Service in a big way.

Pearson Fellows are AFSA's greatest assets on the Hill. Among other things, they are in a unique position to interact with the same staffers who draft bills.

Now that law-making is primarily conducted via these massive bills covering broad swaths of jurisdiction, AFSA asks both our champions in Congress and our Pearson Fellows to join us in the effort to educate those who are not familiar with the disparities between the Foreign Service and other federal government employees.

By emphasizing what diplomats do and why it matters when the first drafts of big bills are circulating, we can better ensure that the Foreign Service is not left out of major legislation. ■

Welcome to AFSA's New FAS VP

AFSA is pleased to announce that Lisa Ahramjian was approved in October to join the Governing Board as AFSA Vice President for the Foreign Agricultural Service.

She is currently completing a six-month assignment leading the FAS section as agricultural attaché in Kyiv, where she represents U.S. agricultural interests in both Ukraine and Moldova, and will commence her AFSA role full-time in January 2022.

Ms. Ahramjian started working for FAS in 2015. She served in Washington, D.C., focusing on bilateral trade issues with India and Foreign Service operations. She later became the agricultural attaché at Embassy Santo Domingo with regional coverage of the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica.

Prior to her current role,



U.S. EMBASSY KYIV

she led the FAS section in Rangoon, where she introduced 4 million Burmese consumers to U.S. food through a collaboration with MasterChef Myanmar. After the military coup in February, she advised the ambassador and policymakers in Washington on ways to hold the regime accountable for its actions, including through U.S. government sanctions.

Ms. Ahramjian is the recipient of two 2015 Office

of the U.S. Trade Representative Team awards for her work negotiating the U.S.–East African Community cooperation agreement and the U.S.–Korea organic equivalency arrangement. She was also honored with the 2014 Administrator's Award for connecting organic farmers and businesses with services through the USDA Organic Literacy Initiative, and she received the Secretary's Honor Award for streamlining organic trade between the U.S. and the European Union, the two largest organic markets in the world.

In a statement to the Governing Board, Ms. Ahramjian said she values the wide-ranging support AFSA provides to members across the Foreign Service agencies: "From personal safety to personnel-related

concerns, members finding themselves in a tough spot rely on AFSA for support. Having recently been through COVID-19, a violent military coup and Ordered Departure from Burma, I am no stranger to difficult situations. I am honored to serve as the Foreign Agricultural Service Vice President for AFSA, thereby helping members thrive in this increasingly complicated world and strengthening the Foreign Service overall."

Before joining FAS, she worked at the USDA's National Organic Program, in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and at the National Institutes of Health. In total, she has 15 years of U.S. government service across four agencies.

Ms. Ahramjian holds a bachelor's degree in animal science from the University of Delaware and a master's in biotechnology from Georgetown University. ■

NEWS BRIEF

AFSA Talks Priorities with USAID Administrator

On Sept. 30, AFSA President Eric Rubin, AFSA USAID VP Jason Singer, USAID Chief of Staff Gideon Maltz and Deputy Chief of Staff Sonali Korde met virtually with USAID Administrator Samantha Power. The meeting served as an opportunity to share AFSA's agenda and priorities, and to hear the Administrator's perspective on USAID's role within the Biden administration's foreign policy priorities.

The discussion also touched on strengthening AFSA-agency collaboration, as well as workforce plan-

ning, and improving the integration of career Foreign Service officers in key bureaus and Washington leadership positions.

With the welcome confirmation of Paloma Adams-Allen as USAID deputy administrator for management and resources on Oct. 5, AFSA looks forward to collaborating with agency leadership to advance President Joe Biden's call to "protect, empower, and rebuild the career federal workforce," including USAID's Foreign Service. ■

Inside Diplomacy Event

20 Years Later: The Legacy of 9/11

The Sept. 11 attacks changed many things about America, including how we conduct our foreign policy, observed AFSA President Eric Rubin in opening remarks at the latest Inside Diplomacy event, held virtually on Sept. 22.

Ambassador Rubin hosted Ambassador Anne Patterson, former assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs, and Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann, president of the American Academy of Diplomacy, to examine the legacy of post-9/11 global engagement two decades later and to consider how foreign affairs agencies have been affected.

Amb. Neumann noted that U.S. foreign policy has taken on a new orientation since 2001.

"It's very difficult for people now to remember the absolute fear in which those early months and years took place," he recalled. "The [George W.] Bush administration didn't know what other threats there might be, which engendered a heavy counter-terrorism policy."

Amb. Patterson also spoke of efforts to keep the U.S. safe from further attack in the years after 9/11, and how those efforts—which she commended for their success—redirected resources from other foreign policy priorities, such as immigration reform and competition from China.

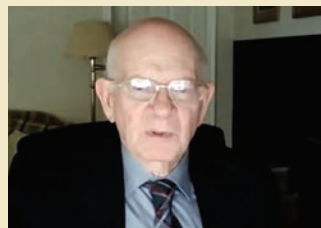


Ambassador (ret.) Anne Patterson and Ambassador (ret.) Ronald E. Neumann discuss the effects of 9/11 on U.S. foreign policy.

"This had a structural impact on the Foreign Service," she observed. "First, it absorbed the personnel increases that Secretary [Colin] Powell and Deputy Secretary [Richard] Armitage had gotten from Congress at considerable cost. The second [impact] was the further distortion of the personnel system in the Foreign Service with one-year tours and mandatory tours in war zones."

"A lot of problems with implementation stemmed from extremely rapid turnover," Patterson continued, "and not just with State but also with USAID, CIA and DOD. Throughout the war on terror, we didn't have the right people in the right posts for long enough."

While risk aversion is not a new issue in the Foreign Service, she said, it's been a significant issue since the Inman Report and the wave of terrorist attacks on diplomatic premises in the early 1980s. Fear of political blowback heightened this disinclination to engage on the ground, particularly after the 2012 Benghazi attack.



AFSA/JULIA WOHLERS

"We were afraid to talk to people in places that were dangerous. We lost track of important trends. We couldn't get outside our fortress embassies, and now the Chinese have more missions overseas than we do," Patterson said.

"Fortunately, the risk problem is now being recognized," she added. "There is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to focus on the structural reform of the Foreign Service."

Amb. Rubin agreed that there's a need for introspection in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in the aftermath of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Amb. Neumann, who served as chief of mission in Kabul from 2005 to 2007 and has returned to the country repeatedly in the years since, expressed concern that 20 years of effort in the region are being oversimplified in current analyses to the point that it becomes difficult to create a basis for learning. He believes that in seeking lessons, the Foreign Service must confront tough questions arising from U.S. experience overseas.

"The one-year tour is a mistake for the conduct of policy," he said. "One does not learn enough; one has too short a period to be effective. But that poses huge issues for families. The starting point is: How do you bring to bear your best expertise on any given issue? In theory, the Foreign Service is worldwide-available, but in practice we are extremely loath to make anyone go anywhere they don't want to go. We need to rethink the question of duty, to examine tactics."

Amb. Patterson added that it's important not to draw the wrong lessons from Afghanistan and other civil-military operations. "Here's one: that nation-building is a failure," she said. "It's not always a failure, and we're going to have to do more of it, so we might as well learn to do it better."

She advocated for preparing to meet the challenges of the future through skill development, training and professional education.

"We need to get back to the basics in the Foreign Service. There are opportunities for a global Foreign Service to reinforce our position all over the world."

Inside Diplomacy is a new series of discussions that explore current national security issues as they relate to foreign policy and the profession of the Foreign Service.

Members can visit [afsa.org/videos](https://www.afsa.org/videos) to view the complete conversation and previous Inside Diplomacy sessions. ■

Diplomats Engage Road Scholars in Washington and New York

As AFSA celebrates its 25th year of collaboration with the Road Scholar lifelong learning organization, AFSA managed two programs on the East Coast to educate participants about the work of the Foreign Service.

From Sept. 13-16, nine AFSA members led adult students through the “Inside American Diplomacy with the Foreign Service” program. Held at the Madison Hotel in Washington, D.C., the event featured subject matter experts giving presentations on the topic, “Challenges and Opportunities in Asia.”

The program drew on the experiences of Ambassadors (ret.) James Zumwalt,

Kurt Tong, Charles Ray and Richard Boucher, along with current and retired Senior FSOs Julie Nutter (AFSA policy director), Philip A. Shull (AFSA Governing Board member), Christopher Beede and Alexis Ludwig (chair of the FSJ Editorial Board).

During 10 lectures across four days, students received a crash course on U.S. policy in Asia, examining issues from partnership with Japan and relations with Taiwan to the U.S.-China rivalry and commercial opportunities in Southeast Asia.

Participants also ventured outside the classroom to explore the Museum of Chinese American History,

which opened its doors just for Road Scholars, and tour the Tidal Basin to learn about the cherry trees, which were originally gifted to the U.S. by Japan in 1912.

Later in the month, from Sept. 26 through Oct. 1, AFSA speakers visited the Chautauqua Institution in western New York to present a program on the 21st century’s pressing regional and thematic foreign policy issues.

More than 100 participants attended from all over the country to hear from AFSA President Eric Rubin and six retired senior FSOs: Philip A. Shull, Amb. Richard Boucher, Molly Williamson,

Julie Moyes, Ambassador (ret.) James Zumwalt and Annie Pforzheimer.

Topics included technology to address food insecurity and climate change, the global implications of instability in the Middle East, the enduring value of international exchange programs, and combating transnational crime in the Americas.

Participants provided extremely positive feedback on the content of the week; in post-event evaluations, attendees scored the program at 91 out of 100.

The Road Scholars program remains a highly successful outreach and constituency-creating vehicle. For more on AFSA’s programs and course offerings through Road Scholar see www.afsa.org/road-scholar. ■

Retirement Planning 5 to 10 Years Out

In a Sept. 21 virtual presentation, AFSA Retiree VP John Naland reviewed important issues that employees should consider five to 10 years before retirement to best position themselves for life after the Foreign Service.

Mr. Naland, a former director of the State Department’s Office of Retirement, walked members through the steps they need to take to ensure they’re prepared for near-term retirement.

He shared a detailed checklist outlining how pro-

spective retirees can ensure a smooth transition, as well as websites and email addresses for more information. View the checklist at <https://bit.ly/ret-checklist>.

In his one-hour overview of Foreign Service retirement, Mr. Naland touched on the following topics:

- What if you resign before you can retire?
- Understanding your benefits
- Growing your TSP: Roth IRAs vs. traditional, stocks vs. bonds

- FEHB and Medicare B: whether to sign up at age 65
 - Social Security: deciding when to start
 - Prior service credit
 - Divorce decree (if applicable) and retirement benefits
 - Leave classifications: what adds to your pension, what’s use-or-lose
 - Post-retirement employment: potential impact on pension
- “This is not official guidance,” Mr. Naland empha-

sized in opening remarks.

“Please do your own due diligence. The Foreign Service Institute retirement planning seminars are excellent, and AFSA’s website has State Department guidance. You can also hire a financial planner or tax adviser to give you individual advice.”

Mr. Naland’s presentation, which is AFSA’s fifth webinar concerning retirement in 2021, is available to members at afsa.org/video.

You can also visit AFSA’s one-stop shop for retirement information at afsa.org/retirement-services. ■

AFSA Welcomes Newest FSOs

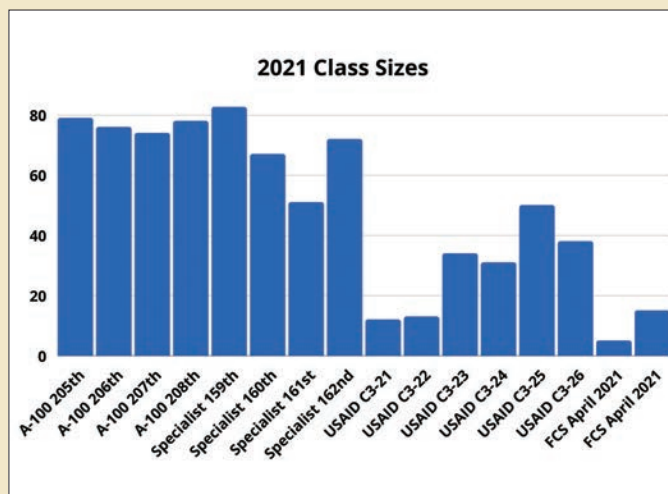
Over the course of this year, AFSA has been pleased to welcome a full slate of new classes from the State Department, USAID and the Foreign Commercial Service.

Since the start of the pandemic, welcome events and recruitment activities have been conducted entirely online. AFSA President Eric Rubin greets the newest Foreign Service members and provides an overview of the dual functions of AFSA as a professional association and labor union. The new hires hear from other members of

the AFSA Governing Board and staff, as well.

As restrictions ease, AFSA looks forward to meeting these new colleagues in person and returning to the traditional welcome reception and recruitment luncheon at AFSA headquarters.

More than 750 new members of the Foreign Service learned about AFSA in 2021, the majority opting to become AFSA members. There were two Foreign Commercial Service classes, USAID classes C3-21 through C3-26, State A-100 classes 205 through



208 and FS specialist classes 159 through 162.

The new officers include Olympic athletes, beekeepers, geographers, musicians, culi-

nary aficionados and more, and they speak more than 50 languages, collectively.

Welcome to the Foreign Service! ■

AFSA Speaks to Job Search Program Participants

On Oct. 13, AFSA President Eric Rubin joined FSI's Job Search Program to discuss what the association can offer Foreign Service members in retirement.

After congratulating the class, Amb. Rubin highlighted AFSA's ongoing work to advocate for current and retired FSOs.

Priority issues include increased resources for the foreign affairs agencies, a higher rate of career Foreign Service officers compared to political appointees in key positions, institutional reform to bolster the number of FSOs posted overseas, and diversity.

By remaining a part of

AFSA, he said, members stay connected to their unique community, support the association's advocacy work and ensure that their voices are heard across these critical issues. They'll also stay abreast of the diplomacy and development matters in which they've invested their careers.

He reminded the class that they must take action to remain a member. Those approaching retirement should contact Member Services (member@afsa.org) to let AFSA know of their retirement and to secure all the benefits of being an AFSA member. ■

American Diplomacy Journal Celebrates 25 Years

In a virtual event held on Oct. 14, the online *American Diplomacy* journal marked its 25th anniversary with a slate of speakers addressing the evening's theme: "How Does U.S. Diplomacy Benefit Americans?"

Ambassador (ret.) W. Robert Pearson, president of American Diplomacy Publishers, led a panel discussion with Ambassador (ret.) Piper Campbell, Ambassador (ret.) Lino Gutierrez, Ambassador (ret.) Charles Ray and retired FSO Mary Thompson-Jones. Active-duty U.S. diplomats also submitted brief video segments discussing the scope and impact of their work.

As political officer Rebecca Hunter explained, "My job is understanding the country I'm in and advocating for America ... to see the opportunities, warn of the dangers, and most importantly, tend to the relationships."

And from FSO Chuka Asike: "While we work on complex issues, we're always thinking about how this can advance U.S. interests and improve prosperity for America."

Find more of the evening's insights at bit.ly/adj25.

AFSA congratulates the *American Diplomacy* journal on its 25-year anniversary. You can browse the online journal at bit.ly/adjournalonline. ■

AFSA Dues Increase for 2022

AFSA has increased dues for 2022 by 5.9 percent for all individual membership categories. In concrete terms, this amounts to an increase of between 25 cents and \$1.02 per pay period, depending on an individual's membership category.

In accordance with Article IV of the AFSA bylaws, the Governing Board can increase dues by up to but no more than the cumulative increase in the national Consumer Price Index, published by the Department of Labor, since the effective date of the previous dues increase. AFSA last increased its membership dues rate in January 2021.

Active-duty and retired members paying dues via payroll and annuity deduction will see a small increase in the amount automatically deducted from their paychecks and annuities. Those paying annually will be billed the new rate on their regularly scheduled renewal date. ■

Active Duty

Grade	2021 Annual	2021 Bi-Weekly	2022 Annual	2022 Bi-Weekly	Annual Increase	Deduction Increase
SFS	\$448.28	\$17.24	\$474.73	\$18.26	\$24.65	\$1.02
1-3	\$349.57	\$13.45	\$370.19	\$14.24	\$20.62	\$0.79
4-6	\$199.20	\$7.66	\$210.95	\$8.11	\$11.75	\$0.45
7-9	\$108.43	\$4.17	\$114.83	\$4.42	\$6.40	\$0.25

Retiree

Annuity Level	2021 Annual	2021 Monthly	2022 Annual	2022 Monthly	Annual Increase	Deduction Increase
Under \$25K	\$64.79	\$5.40	\$68.61	\$5.72	\$3.85	\$0.32
\$25-\$50K	\$80.81	\$6.73	\$85.58	\$7.13	\$4.77	\$0.40
\$50-\$75K	\$168.98	\$14.08	\$178.95	\$14.91	\$9.97	\$0.83
Over \$75K	\$208.50	\$17.38	\$220.80	\$18.40	\$12.30	\$1.02
Retiree Spouse	\$58.71	\$4.89	\$62.17	\$5.18	\$3.46	\$0.29

Associate

Category	2021 Annual	2022 Annual	Annual Increase
Associate Member	\$120.66	\$127.78	\$7.12



AFSA Governing Board Meeting October 20, 2021

The Governing Board met by videoconference on Oct. 20 due to concerns over the COVID-19 delta variant.

The board made the following decisions, which must be ratified at the next in-person meeting, according to AFSA bylaws:

Member Dues: Governing Board members approved a 5.9 percent dues increase for members for 2022, in accordance with the consumer price index, as is done on an annual basis.

New FAS VP: Lisa Ahramjian was appointed to serve as AFSA Foreign Agricultural Service Vice President.

Board Member Resignation: Russell Duncan resigned from his position as APHIS representative and member of the

Governing Board due to an upcoming assignment in Tokyo. AFSA bylaws require board members to be resident in the Washington, D.C., area.

Publications: The board approved a proposal from Publications Director Shawn Dorman to commission and publish an updated edition of *The Voice of the Foreign Service: A History of the American Foreign Service Association*, for release in 2024 for the AFSA centenary.

Governance Committee: The board approved creation of a Governance Committee to address bylaw reform. This body will consist of at least five AFSA members appointed by the AFSA president. Committee members will appoint a chair from among themselves.

Disputes Panel: Mary Brett Rogers-Springs and Jay Raman were appointed to serve on the Foreign Service Impasse Disputes Panel. ■

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AFSA NEWS

AFSA Welcomes New Staff Member

AFSA is pleased to introduce Sean O'Gorman, the new policy analyst for Congressional Advocacy and Professional Policy Issues.

Sean was born and raised in Long Island, New York. He holds a master's degree in international relations and a bachelor's degree in government and politics, as well as one in French from St. John's University, with primary concentrations in international law and economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

During college, Sean also spent time at satellite campuses in Paris (2017) and Rome (2020).

Recently, Sean interned

with the office of Representative William R. Keating (D-Mass.), where he compiled and analyzed legislative research focused on national

security, veterans affairs and environmental conservation.

Prior to that, he worked in government relations with the Québec government office

in New York. He also worked in policy development and community outreach as an intern with two different New York City transportation agencies.

Sean speaks French and enjoys studying other languages. He loves to play golf and to visit family in Ireland, where his parents grew up. ■



COURTESY OF SEAN O'GORMAN

Governing Board Holds Annual Retreat

The AFSA Governing Board held its annual daylong retreat on Oct. 21, this year meeting at the DACOR Bacon House. Most board members and staff were able to join in person -and enjoyed a chance to connect after months of virtual interactions.

During the gathering, participants reviewed the board's strategic goals for the next two years, including congressional advocacy priorities, board guidelines and possible AFSA bylaw amendment proposals.

Central to the discussion was adherence to AFSA's mission: to promote the long-term health of the U.S. Foreign Service and to safeguard the rights of its members. ■

DACOR and UDC Launch Mentoring Partnership

DACOR and the University of the District of Columbia have begun a mentoring partnership matching diplomats with undergraduate global studies students.

At the historic DACOR Bacon House on Sept. 10, the presidents of the two institutions signed an agreement laying the foundation for a three-year pilot mentoring program. The partnership is aimed at expanding the opportunities for women and minorities leading to Foreign and Civil Service careers.

The ceremony drew senior State Department officials including State's Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley; Ambassador Kenneth Merten, senior bureau official for Global Talent Management; Bernadette Cole Byrd, continuity officer for Global



JENIFER MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHY/JENIFER MORRIS

Seated, DACOR President James Dandridge II (left) and UDC President Ronald Mason Jr. Standing, from left: Mentor Dawn Thomas, Mentor Marti Estell, State Department D.C. Metro Diplomat-in-Residence Yolonda Kerney, State Department Senior Bureau Official Global Talent Management Ambassador Kenneth Merten, UDC Professor Jasmine Yarish, Mentor Rhonda Ferguson-Augustus, Mentor Daphne Titus, State Department Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Ambassador Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, UDC Dean April Massey, and UDC Professor Amanda Huron.

Talent Management; and D.C. Metro Diplomat-in-Residence Yolonda Kerney.

"The success of this ven-

ture will ultimately depend on the strength of the relationships built over time between DACOR mentors and the

participating students," said DACOR President James Dandridge II. "It is our hope and expectation that this new undergraduate mentoring partnership will expand the diversity of young people entering the talent pipeline, leading to fulfilling and spectacular careers in the State Department and other U.S. government agencies operating internationally."

For the university, the agreement is the first such formal mentoring program open to undergraduates at the 170-year-old institution, one of 51 public historically Black colleges and universities in the nation. "We're honored to pair our global studies students with accomplished foreign affairs professionals and diplomats who can share their experiences," said UDC President Ronald Mason Jr. ■

AFSA Awards
Continued from page 65

institution is not the same as demonstrating the courage and the wisdom to defend the individuals or the institution when they're under attack," he said. For example, when the Trump administration made unfounded allegations against Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch in 2019, Amb. Boyatt recounted, "AFSA charged to the rescue."

"In a period of days, through a group funding mechanism, AFSA raised three quarters of a million

dollars. No member of AFSA spent a nickel on the serious legal problems they had. That sends a message to everyone concerned that AFSA can and will defend the institutions of the Foreign Service and the State Department and individual officers and specialists serving those institutions," he concluded.

The 2020 award was given to FSO **Jason Vorderstrasse** for his commitment over the past 13 years to discover and honor early American diplomats and consular officers who died overseas in the line

of duty, but whose names were unknown when AFSA unveiled its original Memorial Plaque in 1933.

The **AFSA Post Representative of the Year Award** is presented to an exemplary AFSA post rep who has demonstrated sustained and successful engagement with AFSA membership at post and post management to advance the strategic priorities of the association.

The 2021 award was presented to two people: USAID FSO **Charlee Doom**, in recognition of her activism

on behalf of AFSA members at her post in Amman as well as at her previous post; and USAID FSO **Randy Chester**, for his service as a valued mentor in Islamabad and his advocacy of policy changes regarding unaccompanied posts.

In 2020 an **AFSA Special Achievement Award** was given to **James Yorke**, ASFA's Senior Labor Management adviser, for his tireless, behind-the-scenes assistance to thousands of AFSA members during his 25 years with the association. ■

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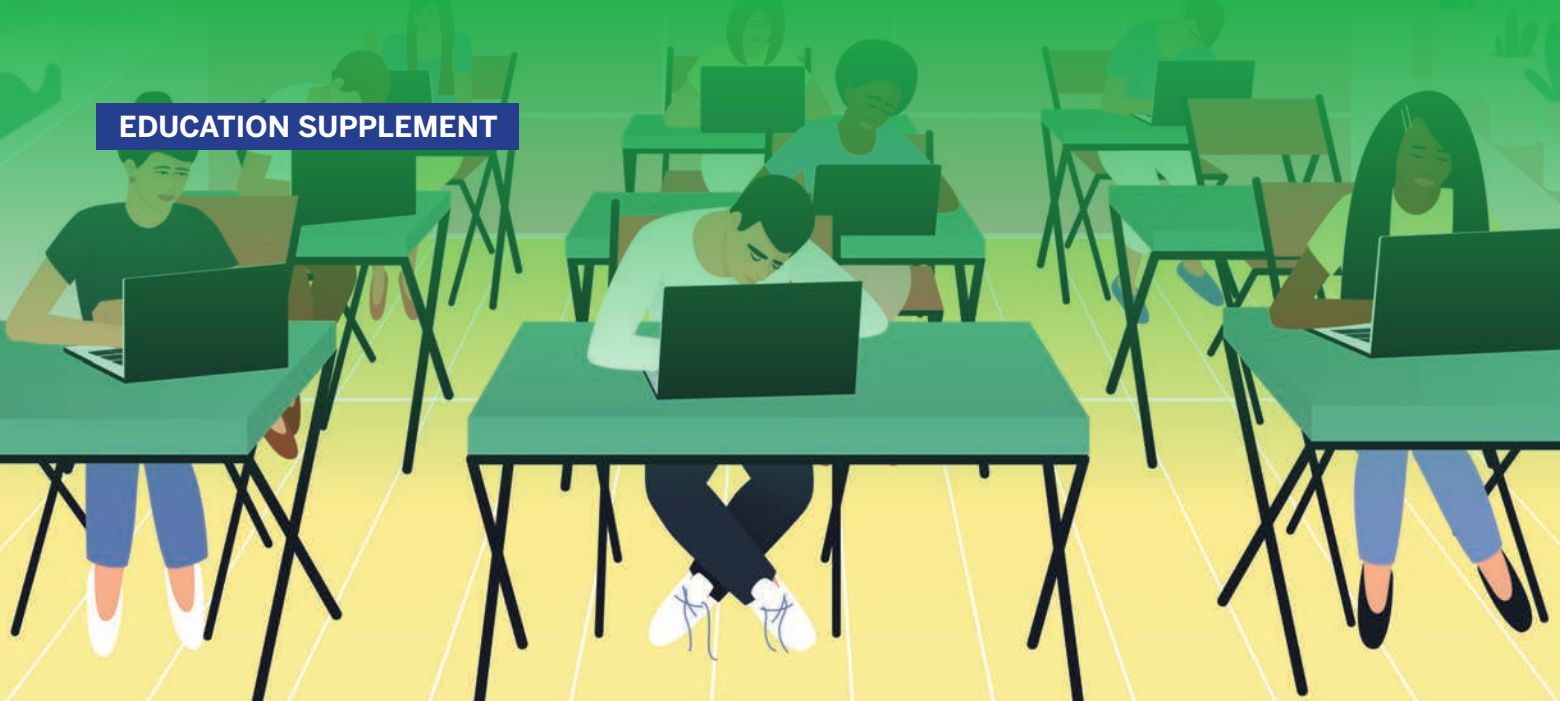
-James E., 2020
USA



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Preparing for the SAT and ACT

Why and How You Should Do It

Standardized tests can help you get into the college of your choice, but they are not like ordinary school tests and require preparation far in advance.

BY DAVID HUEMER

After a year of change and cancellations for all things academic, the 2021-2022 school year appears to be one of relative stability for the two big, standardized college admissions tests—the SAT and ACT. There are more tests scheduled in more places than last year, and early reports are of fewer cancellations.

This is good news for students of Foreign Service families, for whom navigating the college application and admission process is always difficult, but who had real challenges just being able to take the PSAT, SAT or ACT last year.

Many colleges have kept, at least temporarily, the “test optional” status of the SAT and ACT—meaning stu-

dents can choose to submit scores, but students who do not won’t be penalized in the admissions process. Some schools, most notably the University of California, are “test blind”—they will not consider SAT or ACT scores at all in the admissions process.

But even when a college does not require or will not consider test scores, it may use scores as an alternative method of fulfilling minimum requirements for eligibility or for course placement after you enroll.



David Huemer is the founder and owner of Your College Strategies, LLC, an academic tutoring firm for middle and high school students with an emphasis on SAT, ACT and SSAT prep. A graduate of Columbia College in New York, he spent 30 years on various trading floors in New York and Chicago before founding YCS in 2011. If you have questions about this article or the SAT or ACT in general, he can be reached at yourcollegestrategies@gmail.com.

To Take, or Not to Take?

Whether or not to take a standardized

test is something all prospective college students must decide. For most international and other students, with the exceptions listed below, the answer is yes.

If you are applying *only* to schools where the SAT/ACT will not be considered (such as the University of California system), then no.

If you are applying *only* to test-optional schools *and* you've taken a practice test *and* your score would be weak relative to the rest of your application—then no.

If you have not completed Algebra 2 (or the equivalent), it's probably best to wait to take the SAT or ACT until you have done so.

For everyone else, taking the test will give colleges more information about you

The international test dates are different for the ACT and SAT.

and allow them to more reliably compare you with the rest of the applicant pool. If your current school doesn't have a long track record of sending students to the colleges to which you are applying, you may make it easier for colleges to accept you by taking the SAT or ACT.

Which Test—SAT or ACT?

The two tests have many similarities: each has four sections and lasts approximately three hours plus breaks. Both tests have a Grammar/usage section (called “English” on the ACT and “Writing and

Language” on the SAT), a Reading section and a Math-with-calculator section. The ACT has a Science section (no SAT equivalent), and the SAT has a Math-without-calculator section (no ACT equivalent).

The SAT has dropped the written Essay section; the ACT has an optional Writing section, administered after the multiple-choice sections, where students have 40 minutes to respond to a topic prompt and three perspectives on the topic.

Here are some differences that might help you decide which test to take:

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The ACT is faster paced (less time to answer each question), but its questions are simpler and more direct.

■ The ACT is faster paced (less time to answer each question), but its questions are simpler and more direct. If you can answer questions quickly and don't want too much complexity, take the ACT.

■ Take the SAT if mental calculation is a strength. The SAT Math section is split into a calculator-assisted section and no-calculator section. (The ACT allows a calculator throughout.) Paradoxically, you should also take the SAT if you have real difficulty remembering basic math formulas—only the SAT has a “cheat sheet” included as part of the test.

■ If you can write well on demand, and the colleges to which you are applying accept the Writing score from the ACT, you may want to take the ACT.

Some other considerations may matter in your individual circumstances:

- The ACT for international students is only administered online, while the SAT is paper only.
- To practice using the ACT online test tools, you must have Google Chrome.
- There are more international SAT sites (roughly 5,000 in 189 countries) than international ACT sites.
- The international ACT is a little more expensive than the SAT.

The international test dates are different for the ACT and SAT. Registration deadlines are typically 28-30 days ahead of the test, with a two-week late registration (for a fee) period. Full information is on their websites (sat.org/international and act.org).

The most straightforward way to determine which test is better for you is to take a full-length practice test in both,

and compare scores. A rough but accurate comparison formula is:

$(\text{Composite ACT Score} \times 40) + 150 = \text{Combined SAT Score}$.

Example: $(28 [\text{Composite ACT Score}] \times 40) + 150 = 1270$ (Equivalent Combined SAT Score).

If you take practice tests in both, pay particular attention to the ACT Science score—the higher it is relative to the rest of your ACT score and SAT score, the more likely you'll score better on the ACT.

These Are “College Readiness” Tests

Both the SAT and ACT are tests designed to predict “college readiness,” not content knowledge. Both tests are significantly different than most, if not all, school tests. That means you have to learn unique skills for taking these tests, and you might possibly have to unlearn those skills that may help you on school tests but hurt you on a time-compressed, complex standardized test.

Let's examine the unique challenges and the techniques you can use to meet them.

1. The tests are long—175 minutes on the ACT, 180 minutes on the SAT, plus breaks.

Technique—Atomize the test; that is, break each section into its smallest parts.

For the ACT, each English passage has 15 questions and should take about 9 minutes. You have 1 minute for each math question. The four Reading passages each have 10 questions, and each passage should take 8-9 minutes. The six

Science sections each have six or seven passages and each passage should take 6-7 minutes.

The SAT is less time-constrained, although the passages are longer and the math questions often more complicated. Each Reading passage has 10 or 11 questions and takes on average 13 minutes. The Writing and Language passages have 11 questions and average 8-9 minutes each.

Math-without-calculator questions average 75 seconds. Math-with-calculator questions have a little more time—roughly 86 seconds per question.

You will want to use your breaks—eat, drink, use the bathroom, close your eyes and do some deep breathing, notice and relax any areas of tension in your body and, above all, stand up and move around!

2. The tests are (almost) all multiple choice.

Technique—Use your pencil (SAT) or pencil and online tools (ACT) to attack and eliminate answer choices.

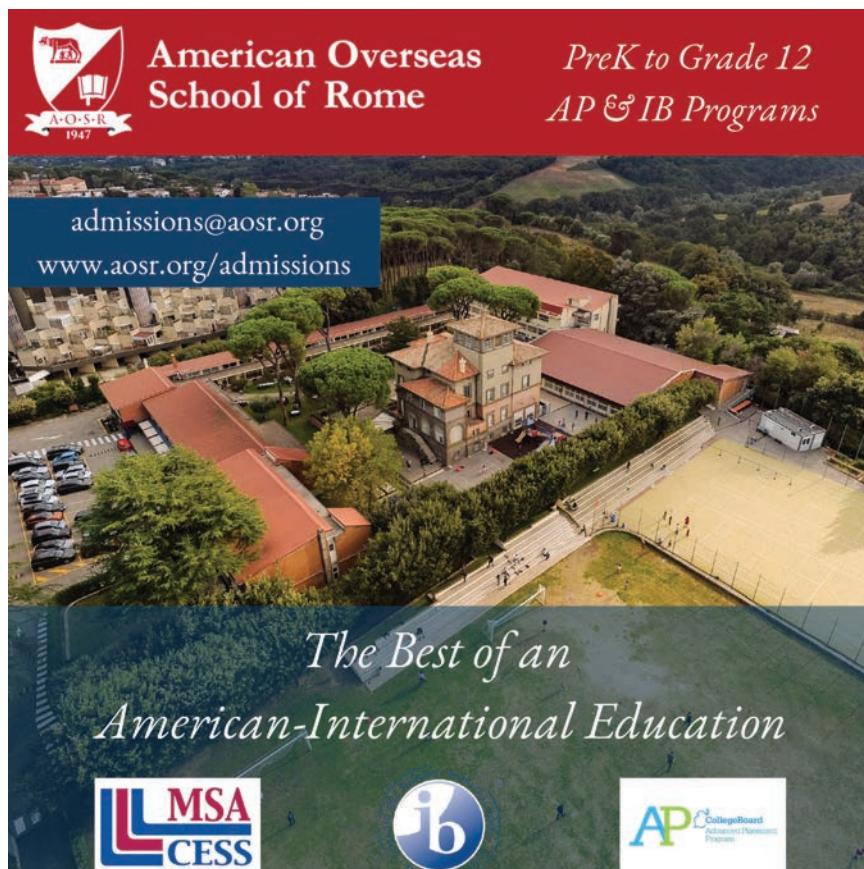
The Reading sections of both tests are entirely multiple choice, and a typical question will have two clearly incorrect answer choices, one tempting answer and one correct answer.

The people who write the test do *not* want any calls from students questioning their work, so they make sure the correct answer is definitively correct and the incorrect answers have something definitively wrong with them.

Since three of the choices are wrong, attacking the answers—figuring out what's wrong—is the correct strategy (this is different from the “defending of interpretations” you often do in English class).

Ways to attack: Does your choice answer *exactly* what is being asked?

Continued on page 84



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FROM THE DECEMBER 2020 FSJ EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

College Options: Community College with a Guaranteed Transfer Program

BY FRANCESCA HUEMER KELLY

There are some economic and other advantages in spending your first two years at a community college that offers a guaranteed transfer to an acceptable four-year university. ...

Public and even some private universities partner with certain community colleges, accepting transfer students after two years if they maintain a certain grade point average and fulfill other requirements. This initiative has elevated the status of participating community colleges, and two-year colleges such as Montgomery College (linked to the University of Maryland and other institutions) and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA, linked to a variety of VA universities) are now fairly competitive in the quality and range of their course offerings. ...

The guaranteed transfer system is also appealing because, in two years' time, you won't have to go through the usual transfer application process, which can be just as stressful as the freshman application process. As long as

you meet the requirements dictated by your eventual four-year institution, you're guaranteed admission. ...

If this sounds intriguing, visit the "Transfer Student Admission" pages of a few of your favorite four-year universities to determine if they offer guaranteed transfer programs from certain community colleges. You can also search under the term "articulation agreement," which is the agreement between a community college and a four-year college that paves the way for easy transfer. Be aware, however, that some articulation agreements include guaranteed transfer, while others do not.

Francesca Huemer Kelly, the spouse of a retired Foreign Service officer and former ambassador, has worked as a freelance writer and an editor, and is a co-founder of Tales from a Small Planet and a former FSJ AFSA News editor. The complete article appeared in the December 2020 FSJ.



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The Reading sections of both tests are entirely multiple choice, and a typical question will have two clearly incorrect answer choices, one tempting answer and one correct answer.

Continued from page 81

Does it contain extraneous information?
Is it too extreme?

All the multiple-choice questions in the Reading and Math sections of both the SAT and ACT have, at minimum, two parts: A “question stem,” which includes the actual question to answer along with additional information that may be needed to solve it, and four or five “answer

choices,” each designated by a letter that matches a bubble on the answer sheet.

In the ACT English and SAT Writing and Language sections, most of the questions have no “question stem”—just an underlined portion of the text and three alternatives to the underlined portion. Read those “no question stem” answer choices vertically, and mark the differences; you can figure out what concept/

grammar rule the question is testing, as well as eliminate obviously wrong answers.

The ACT offers two online tools to help you clear away obviously wrong answers: Answer Masker and Answer Eliminator. Using the tool and clicking on the answer choice either makes it disappear (Masker) or puts an X through it (Eliminator), leaving it readable.

Play with the two tools so you can use them quickly—it will help you navigate the test.

Attack the answer choices on the ACT Math and Science sections, as well. Estimate, apply rules of arithmetic and use the differences in answer choices to eliminate many answer choices. Three (Science) or four (Math) “wrongs” make a right!

Continued on page 90

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FROM THE DECEMBER 2018
FSJ EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

For High School Juniors (and Sophomores): Research Your Colleges Over Winter Break— and Get a Head Start on the College Admissions Process

BY FRANCESCA HUEMER KELLY

First, you will need a way to record notes on each college. You can do this electronically on a spreadsheet, in Google docs/sheets, OneNote or other online software; or you can keep handwritten notes in a notebook or portable filing system. Your high school might even offer software like Naviance or College Planner Pro that will allow you to record and organize the information. If not, the very practical website www.admissionpossible.com has different organizers and checklists.

For your filing system, you will need the following categories, some of which can be combined:

- Name of College or University (location/URL)
- Tuition, Room and Board Costs
- Majors, Classes and Activities that you're interested in
- Deadlines for Application and for Scholarships (which are often earlier than the general application deadline)
- Type of Application: Common Application, Coalition Application, Universal Application or the college's own application
- Number of Essays Required (Start a document where you can cut and paste all essay prompts. Use last year's prompts until the college publishes new ones, usually in August before your senior year.)
- Other Requirements for Admission (particularly important for non-U.S. colleges)
- Personal notes

The complete article appeared in the December 2018 FSJ.



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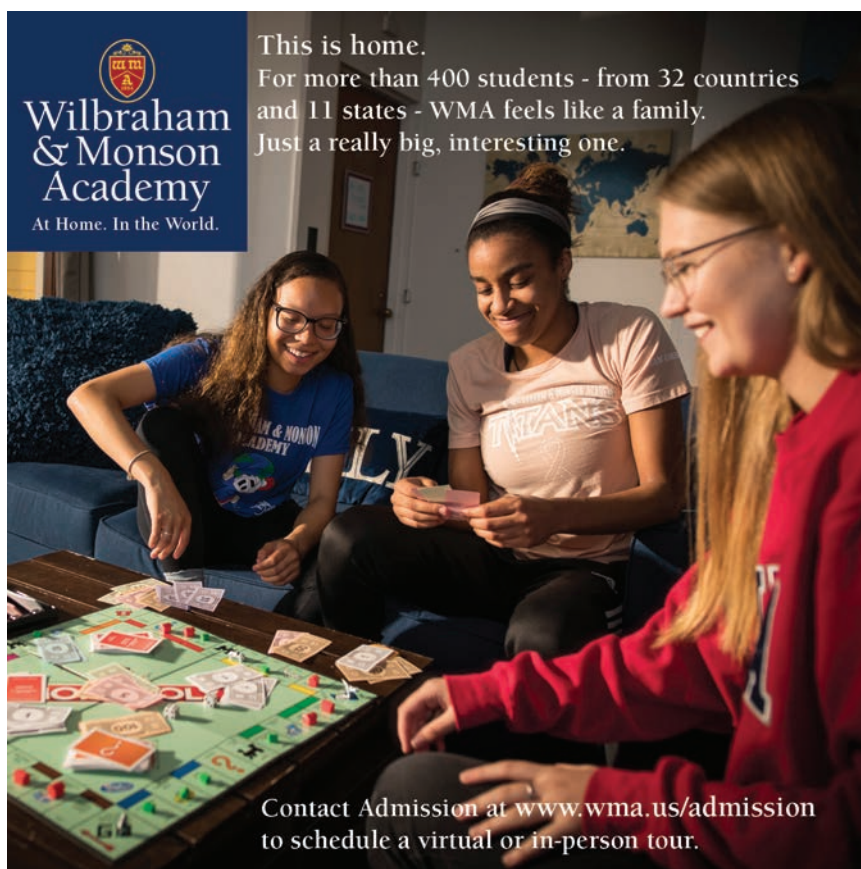
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School	Page Number	Enrollment	Gender Distribution M/F	Percent Boarding	Percent Int'l.	Levels Offered	AP/IB*	TABS common application	Accept ADD/LD**	Miles to Int'l. Airport	International Students Orientation	Holiday Break Coverage***	Annual Tuition, Room & Board (US \$)
■ ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH													
Fairfax Christian School	96	330	50/50	15	20	PK-12	AP	N	Limited	3	Y	Y	60,000-67,620 ^{abdefg}
Garrison Forest School	85	530	All Girls	30	14	PK-12	AP	N	Limited	20	Y	N	63,875-69,475 ^b
Ridley College	98	711	55/45	53	33	K-12, PG	IB	N	Y	41	Y	Y	53,300 ^{abcdef}
Ross School	87	360	50/50	45	47	PK-12, PG	AP	N	Limited	90	Y	Limited	82,215 ^{abe}
TASIS The American School in Switzerland	95	685	330/355	37	93	PK-PG	AP/IB	N	Y	45	Y	Limited	97,000 ^{bcddef}
■ JUNIOR HIGH/SENIOR HIGH													
Grier School	92	250	All Girls	85	40	7-12	AP	Y	Y	120	Y	Limited	59,900 ^{ad}
New England Innovation Academy	80	75	60/40	24	NA	6-12	NA	N	Y	35	Y	Y	44,625 ^{bdef}
Oak Hill Academy	84	140	60/40	100	10	8-12	AP	Y	Y	90	Y	N	36,900 ^{ab}
The Orme School	92	120	50/50	100	50	8-12, PG	AP	Y	Y	60	Y	Limited	49,500 ^{abcde}
Wilbraham & Monson Academy	85	415	56/44	49	30	6-PG	AP	Y	Y	28	Y	Limited	62,300 ^b
■ SENIOR HIGH													
Besant Hill School of Happy Valley	97	100	50/50	80	50	9-12, PG	AP	Y	Y	90	Y	N	57,750-64,155 ^{bde}
Chatham Hall	99	150	All Girls	93	20	9-12	NA	N	Y	75	N	Limited	58,500 ^{bdefg}
Christchurch School	BC	210	60/40	70	25	9-12	AP	Y	Y	50	Y	Y	55,900-56,900 ^d
EF Academy New York	79	450	53/47	98	95	9-12	IB	N	Y	40.5	Y	N	62,250 ^a
EF Academy Pasadena	79	150	50/50	75	75	9-11	AP	N	Limited	32	Y	N	62,250 ^{ab}
The Madeira School	94	330	All Girls	51	15	9-12	AP	Y	Limited	16	N	N	64,500 ^{be}
New Hampton School	81	336	55/45	75	20	9-12, PG	AP/IB	Y	Y	95	Y	Limited	64,700 ^b
St. Mark's School	91	375	51/49	76	21	9-12	NA	Y	N	30	Y	N	67,590 ^{bf}
St. Timothy's School	99	175	All Girls	70	30	9-12, PG	IB	Y	Limited	20	Y	N	35,800-62,900 ^{bde}
Woodberry Forest School	89	403	All Boys	100	10	9-12	AP	Y	Limited	74	Y	Limited	62,200 ^{bcf}
■ OVERSEAS													
American Overseas School Rome	81	560	50/50	NA	70	PK-12	AP/IB	N	Y	20	Y	Y	12,460-32,923 ^{bc}
Berlin Brandenburg International School	95	720	50/50	10	70	K-12	IB	N	Y	22	Y	N	48,000 ^c
Carlucci American International School of Lisbon	78	689	48/52	NA	78	PK-12	IB	N	Limited	18	Y	N	10,490-22,232 ^{abc}

*Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate **Attention Deficit Disorder/Learning Disabilities ***Dec. 25-Jan. 1 NA, Not applicable
 BC, Back Cover ^aSibling discount ^bFinancial aid available ^cDollar value subject to exchange rate
^dAid for federal employees ^eGap year ^fNeed-blind admissions; will meet full financial need ^gHost families



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■ OVERSEAS (CONTINUED)													
EF Academy Oxford	79	165	42/58	100	100	11-12	IB	N	N	48	Y	N	59,470 ^{ac}
John F. Kennedy School Berlin	79	1,617	50/50	NA	47	K-12	AP	N	Limited	15	Y	N	None
Leysin American School in Switzerland	82	300	50/50	100	85	7-12, PG	AP/IB	N	Limited	75	Y	N	104,000 ^{abd}
St. Stephen's School	93	294	47/53	15	64	9-12, PG	AP/IB	N	Y	12	Y	N	44,380 ^b
TASIS The American School in England	91	630	50/50	30	41	Pre PK-12	AP/IB	N	Limited	8	Y	N	68,000 ^{bcd}
■ SPECIAL NEEDS													
The Gow School	94	125	80/20	95	10	6-12, PG	NA	N	Y	25	N	Limited	72,500 ^b
The Lab School of Washington	83	375	59/41	NA	1	1-12	NA	N	Y	26	Y	N	54,000 ^b
■ DISTANCE LEARNING													
TTU K-12 (Texas Tech)	93	2,257	49/51	NA	39	K-12	AP	N	Limited	NA	N	N/A	3,000-4,600
■ HIGHER EDUCATION													
Thunderbird School of Global Management	76	388	53/47	13	45	NA	NA	NA	NA	19	Y	Y	70,000-110,000 ^b
■ OTHER													
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DACOR	98	DACOR Bacon House Foundation offers Dreyfus Scholarships to children and grandchildren of FSO's attending Yale or Hotchkiss. Contact dacor@dacorbacon.org or go to www.dacorbacon.org/scholarships_fellowships.php .											
GCLO	90	Global Community Liaison Office: Information and resources for Foreign Service families. Contact GCLOAskEducation@state.gov .											
FSYF	90	Foreign Service Youth Foundation: A support network for U.S. Foreign Service youth worldwide. Go to www.fsyf.org .											

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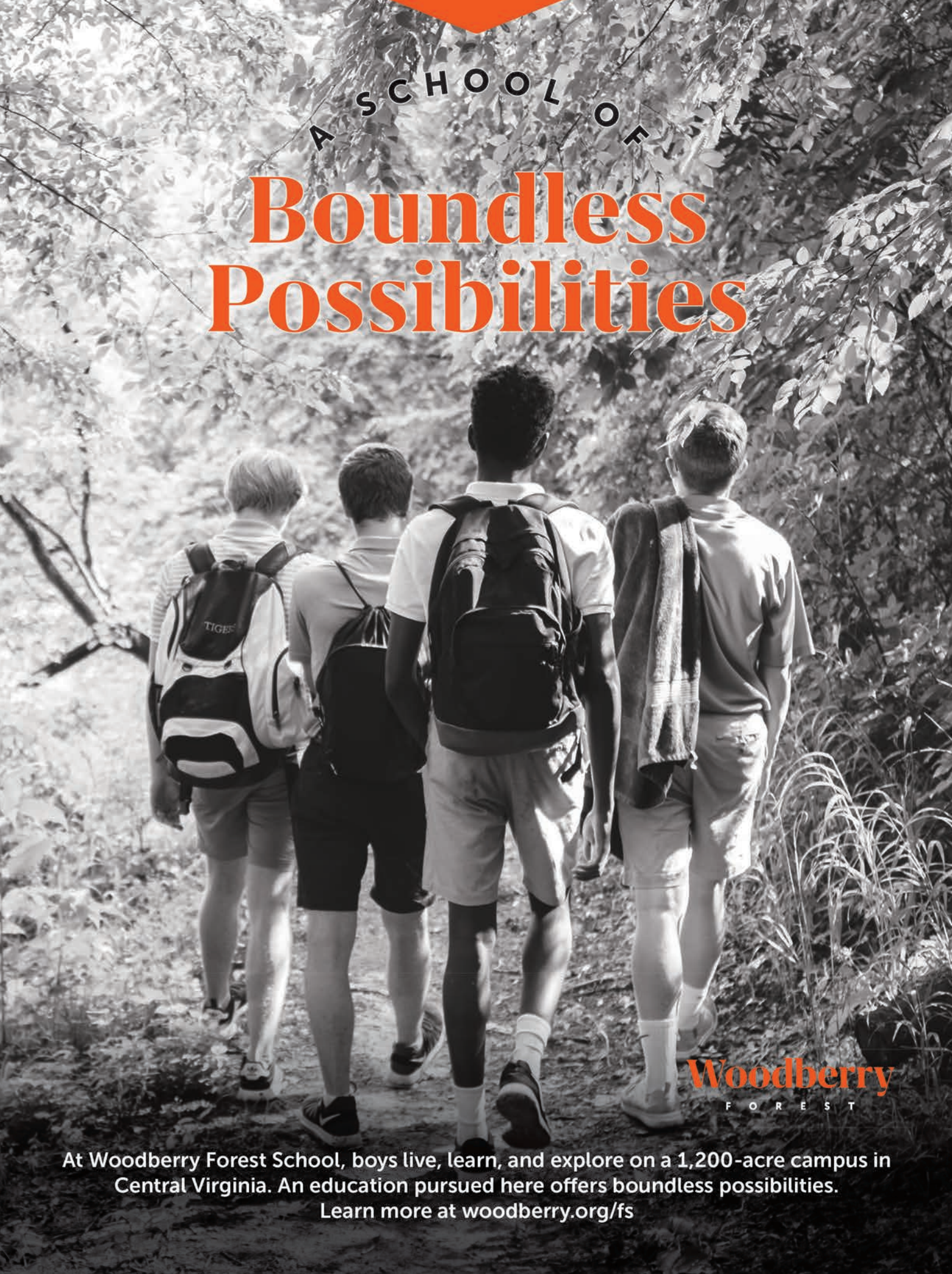


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A black and white photograph of four boys walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a forest. They are wearing backpacks and casual clothing. The path is surrounded by dense trees and foliage, with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The text 'A SCHOOL OF' is arched over the top of the image, and 'Boundless Possibilities' is written in large, bold, orange letters across the middle. The Woodberry Forest logo is in the bottom right corner, and a paragraph of text is at the bottom.

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In the Reading section, since three of the choices are wrong, attacking the answers—figuring out what’s wrong—is the correct strategy.

Continued from page 84

3. The reading material is unfamiliar and/or presented in an unusual format.

Technique—Mark the questions before reading the passage.

On the SAT Reading test, mark in the passage any line or paragraph references mentioned in the question stems. Mark

the “paired questions” (unique to the SAT—two sets of answer choices for the same question stem) so you can answer them efficiently.

On the Writing and Language section, draw a line between the question stem and its corresponding number in the text.

On the ACT Reading test, look at the questions first, as well. The computer text replaces line references with highlights, and you can use the highlight function to

identify key words in the question. Use the flag function to identify questions you want to answer first or avoid.

4. The math questions are in order of difficulty and not sorted by content.

Technique—Do the test in your own personal order, not the order the test makers give you.

On the SAT Math section, before you answer any questions, skim through the entire multiple-choice section, marking each question N (for now), L (for later) and X (for never), depending on your personal preferences. With practice, you can do this in five seconds (or less!) per question; it will give you an efficient guide.

Top Test-Taker Tip—Since the Grid-In

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sections of the SAT Math test are open-ended and often more complicated, do them before the multiple choice.

On the ACT, you can skim the questions first and use the “flag” function to identify questions you want to answer first—the “Now” questions. Then use the navigation function to isolate those and move through them efficiently.

How Best to Prepare

Start with a goal: That on the day you take the test, you will have a thorough

understanding of both the **content knowledge** that you will need to answer questions and the **test-taking strategies** to answer those questions quickly and accurately. So any plan will include learning (or relearning) content *and* learning how to take a timed, multiple-choice test of college readiness.


You'll be practicing taking the test well and being so fluent at those test-taking strategies that you can use them consistently, quickly and accurately over three hours and in multiple subjects.

To organize your test prep, have the tools you need on hand, so it's easy to follow a daily routine. Two simple steps: **First**, you will need practice tests, and the best practice questions are from actual SATs or ACTs.

The Official SAT Study Guide (ISBN 978-1-4573-1219-9) contains eight actual SATs, including answer sheets. Those same tests are available on the College Board website, but unless you can print for “free,” the book is cheaper and more compact.


For the SAT, do your actual test practice on paper, since the College Board is still committed to traditional pencil and paper testing.

Second, sign up for help and daily progress. At www.collegeboard.org, you




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can get a College Board account, the CB app and a Khan Academy account (good for content review). You will stay up to date, get a daily practice and vocabulary, and have access to Khan Academy's content library. You can scan your test practice sheets and get them scored through your phone.

By contrast, the ACT for international students is only given online, and only through a proctored test center (no at-home tests!). By creating an ACT account (act.org), you will have access to two free ACT online practice tests.

Use the ACT "untimed" practice tests to get very comfortable with the interface and the tools. Play with each of the tools to see how you can best use them. The Answer Eliminator and Flag tools are par-

For both tests, practicing even 15-20 minutes a night will help.

ticularly useful for using your test time efficiently.

Save the timed test for two or three weeks before your test date. *The Official ACT Study Guide* (ISBN 978-1-119-68576-0) includes five practice tests, so it is a relatively low-cost way to get content. The ACT has partnered with Kaplan Test Prep for a variety of fee-based preparation options.

Start by taking a practice test (in your preferred test, or both tests if you want to determine which to take), get it/them scored and use the scoring guide to

see what content you need to learn (or relearn).

In general, the more time you have to study before the test, the more content you can learn. Learn or relearn content first. Then apply the content while you practice the taking of the test closer to your test date.

If you can, don't study alone. Grab whatever resources your school offers, and see if they will help you start a study group or class if none already exists. (Not only will you study more and better, but you will also add a nice line to



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For both tests, practicing even 15-20 minutes a night will help. That's enough time to do two-three ACT Science passages, two ACT Reading or English passages, or one third of a Math section. On the SAT, it's the time you have for two Writing and Language passages, 1+ Reading passage, a Math-with-calculator Grid-In section, or 8-10 medium-difficulty Math questions. If you have time, stretch out the practice sessions as you get closer to the test.

Practice is just that: test-taking practice. The only score that matters is the actual test score, not practice scores. Try different ways of taking each section to see what works best for you.

About two weeks before the test, take

Pack everything you need the day before. Leave for the test site earlier than you need to.

another full-length practice test. Keep this one as close to actual conditions as you can. The last week should be reviewing math formulas and tables, figuring out how you will navigate each section, and getting plenty of sleep.

Test Day Is Here

Pack everything you need the day before. Bring extra pencils and batteries for your calculator, if needed. Bring more food and water than you think you need. If possible, don't bring your phone.

Leave for the test site earlier than you need to. Remind yourself of your hard work and how well prepared you are. Answer every question—there's no guessing penalty! Then stick to your plan for three hours and get your best score.

While many top colleges have test optional or test blind admissions procedures, most students can help themselves by targeting a test and date, working a study plan and getting an ACT or SAT score that strengthens their application at their target schools. ■

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FROM THE JUNE 2021
FSJ EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

What's New with Special Education Allowances?

The Family Liaison Office Talks with the Office of Child and Family Programs

Bidding on one's next assignment can be a daunting task for any Foreign Service family. It can be even more complex when education options in overseas settings for children with special needs are a part of that decision.

The State Department's Office of Child and Family Programs (known as CFP) under the Bureau of Medical Services (MED) works together with parents and overseas MED medical staff members to ensure children's psychological, behavioral health and special educational needs are identified and appropriately assessed. The goal is to have an effective treatment and education plan established in advance of and during overseas assignments.

Once the need for special education services is determined, families can apply for the Special Needs Education Allowance (known as SNEA). In the past, parents have faced challenges with this process; thanks to their advocacy, the department has put in place new procedures and updated guidance to improve application processing time, added staffing with geographical responsibilities, improved electronic reimbursement procedures and adopted a new appeals process.

The Bureau of Global Talent Management's Family Liaison Office's education and youth team (E&Y) works closely with CFP and can assist parents in navigating the SNEA process. Recently, FLO spoke with CFP to discuss available resources, previous challenges and new procedures to better serve all FS employees under chief-of-mission authority and their families.

In April, as education and youth program officer of the Family Liaison Office, I conducted a written interview with Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Mental Health Programs Charles J. Lilly, M.D., of the State Department's Bureau of Medical Services. We discussed new staffing and procedures in support of the Special Needs Education Allowance.

Charlotte Larsen joined the Family Liaison Office (now Global Community Liaison Office) as education and youth program officer in 2020. She served previously as a global employment adviser and a community liaison office coordinator in Asia and Europe and, prior to joining State, taught in international and Department of Defense schools. The complete interview appeared in the June 2021 FSJ.

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FROM THE JUNE 2018 FSJ EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

The Vocational Education Option: A Student's Search for Meaning in Today's Economy

BY MARYBETH HUNTER

A head start on career training might be just the ticket for the curious Foreign Service student. Many public high schools in the United States offer academies or specialized programs that feature courses for students interested in preparing themselves (both academically and through hands-on training) for their career of choice.

Enrolling in specialized classes gives students a chance to learn from business leaders while exploring firsthand all of what a career entails. Students might also consider apprenticeship programs for highly skilled occupations that combine supervised, paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction. ...



In the past, conventional thinking separated education and career into either blue-collar or white-collar tracks. This model may be increasingly obsolete. In the future, the more appropriate model may be a trichotomy: jobs that can exist solely on the internet, those that require a physical presence and those blending both. (To quote Princeton

economist Alan Blinder: One "can't hammer a nail through the internet.")

At any rate, students need instruction beyond what the curriculum of either academic or vocational education offers. Solid character, interpersonal skills, spiritual wisdom and community involvement complete the package in the young adult on the road to personal and professional fulfillment. ...

Why not merge together a keen understanding of the significance and context of work and valued technical skills? Such a blend can build confidence in the student so that he or she feels well prepared to contribute meaningfully in the modern world.

Marybeth Hunter is the education and youth officer in the State Department's Global Community Liaison Office. She traveled overseas with her Foreign Service family for more than 21 years, and has worked as a teacher and a community liaison office coordinator abroad. The complete article appeared in the June 2018 FSJ.

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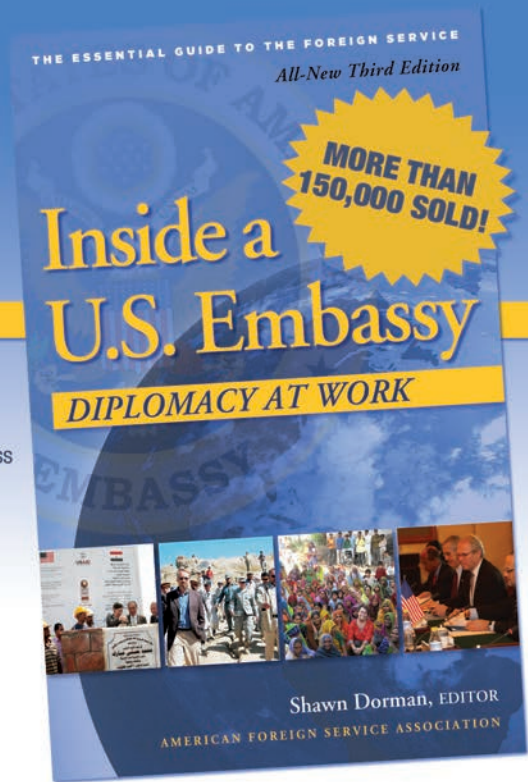
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FROM THE DECEMBER 2016 FSJ EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

Finding Money for College

BY FRANCESCA HUEMER KELLY

Paying for college in the United States can be a Herculean task. But some of the burden can be reduced with scholarships. Unlike loans, scholarships and grants are gifts—and a gift is always better than a loan.

The best source of funding—“inside” funding—comes in the form of merit scholarships and need-based grants from the colleges themselves. These are often renewed each year, as long as you keep your grades up and have no disciplinary problems while in college.

It pays to research colleges with large endowments that can afford to give out more money, as well as the many excellent private colleges that are less selective than the “top tier.” They often generously award students who rank in the top 25 percent of their high school class.

Need-Based Aid

Need-based financial aid is a different story. But it's worth reviewing the basics of this because there is increasing overlap in the forms required for both need-based and merit assistance ...

There are many additional, private (“outside”) sources for scholarship money, including a few that are geared specifically to dependents of Foreign Service employees. However, there are some things to keep in mind about outside scholarships.

Once you have received a need-based financial aid package from your college, you are required to report any outside scholarships to the financial aid office. Expect your financial aid package to be consequently reduced.

When this happens, many colleges try to reduce your loans before they reduce grant money, but make sure you are aware of each of your chosen colleges' financial aid policies if you plan to apply for outside scholarships.

If you submit multiple private scholarship applications, it's possible to win enough money to eliminate your loans and even cover most, if not all, of your college expenses.

The complete article appeared in the December 2016 FSJ.



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Revisiting Ronald Reagan's Cold War Strategy

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.*

REVIEWED BY EDWARD SALAZAR

Simon Miles is an impressive Canadian scholar who writes with an obvious passion for understanding the complexities of superpower relations in the 1980s as well as the minutia of internal White House and Kremlin politics. What he lacks in practitioner credentials, he easily makes up for in the sweat equity he invested in years of archival research across the globe, along with the guidance he received from seasoned professionals, including former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Jack Matlock.

The result is a rich cascade of facts, quotes and back stories highlighting the power politics and diplomacy that played out on the U.S.-Soviet strategic chessboard between 1980 and 1985—the period Miles calls the beginning of the end of the Cold War. Indeed, the author's notes, bibliography and index are so extensive that they take up nearly half of the book's pages.

Miles does a masterful job unfolding the making of Ronald Reagan's approach to Moscow. The author documents that by 1980 both Washington and Moscow perceived that the balance of power (both in armaments and political will) had shifted in favor of the Soviets—and that time was critical to both governments in dealing with each other.

The United States needed to buy time to restore economic health and to rearm; the USSR initially sought to act

quickly to make good use of its position of undisputed strength. But the realities of economic decline forced Moscow to give higher priority to buying time to rescue its own economy.

Miles reconstructs the dual strategy crafted by the Reagan campaign in 1980 that aimed at cooperation and confrontation on the one hand, and negotiation and rearming on the other. He reminds us that Reagan's advisers believed that the eventual devolution of the USSR would take at least 60 years; thus, the demise of the USSR was not an objective.

Meanwhile, Miles argues, barely two months into the new administration, the assassination attempt against him in March 1981 imbued Reagan with a sense of urgency to act on his belief that he had to engage the Soviets to reduce tensions. This "epiphany," the author points out, strengthened the White House's need to make the economy and arms build-up a high priority as a prerequisite for improved East-West relations.

Indeed, in the months that followed, Reagan's strong anti-Soviet statements (which the Kremlin called "vulgar") were indispensable in the White House's view to diplomatic engagement with Moscow, putting the USSR on the defensive and elevating the U.S. to a position of strength.

Meanwhile, like Moscow's room for maneuver, General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev's health continued its steady decline as Soviet control in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan deteriorated, and the price of oil dropped 40 percent.

At the same time, as Miles documents, the back-channel approaches were being tested through quieter diplomacy, including via Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, as well as between the U.S. and Soviet ambassadors in West and East Germany.

By the time George Shultz became Secretary of State in 1982, the path of negotiating with Moscow from a position of strength had become clearer, but Brezhnev's death in November introduced some uncertainty regarding how to use that strength with his successor, Yuri Andropov.

Without a doubt, in Miles' words, 1983 was a year of extremes—and some misfires. Although both Andropov and Reagan had openly committed themselves to dialogue, developments on both sides in 1983—KAL 007, Grenada, the Strategic Defense Initiative, Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces—created near insurmountable obstacles to any direct dialogue.

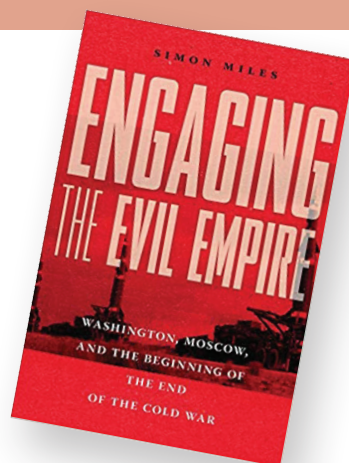
Publicly, however, Secretary Shultz promoted four areas in which the U.S. was ready to engage (human rights, regional issues, arms control and bilateral cooperation), and these defined the engagement agenda going forward.

Miles' research concludes that Andropov believed there to be an opportunity with Reagan to halt the arms race in Europe. However, Reagan's surprise SDI announcement caught the Kremlin off guard. Andropov saw it as a U.S. attempt to "check" the USSR, then declare "check-mate" without starting a war. By the end of 1983, in the wake of Reagan's October "evil empire" speech, it seemed that the Shultz-Dobrynin channel was the only one that remained active.

Following Andropov's death in February 1984, Miles notes, his successor Konstantin Chernenko had reaffirmed commitments to détente, but the Kremlin remained in a reactive mode only, subject to the continued intransigence of Gromyko, who seemed "preoccupied with litigating the decline of détente."

Nevertheless, Reagan's meeting with Gromyko on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly that year marked the begin-

Reagan's advisers believed that the eventual devolution of the USSR would take at least 60 years; thus, the demise of the USSR was not an objective.



ning of an “open” dialogue with Moscow. (The two sides continued to engage in quiet diplomacy in the form of “umbrella talks” on arms control.)

Reagan’s sweeping reelection victory in November brought greater Soviet readiness to begin arms control talks. Chernenko’s death the following March ushered in Mikhail Gorbachev, who was already familiar to many in the West. Initially, as Miles recounts, Gorbachev’s only motivation for dialogue was to find a way to compete more effectively with the West.

After early attempts to redefine the playing field with classic Soviet wedge-driving and pushing so-called “universal human values,” however, Gorbachev agreed to meet with Reagan in Geneva in November 1985. Miles observes that the White House viewed Geneva as little more than another forum for Cold War competition, but by this time Gorbachev appeared open to a more tangible objective.

The Soviet leader had four “guidelines,” as Miles calls them: do not deviate from the Soviet arms control position (i.e., opposition to the SDI); maintain solidarity with freedom fighters worldwide; do not provoke Reagan; and learn how to live together by finding a common language. Gorbachev hoped to begin to improve U.S.-Soviet relations, even if only in atmospherics.

In Miles’ view, although Geneva brought no concrete progress, it created optimism about the future, even if that

future was about continued competition as rivals, as well as partners.

In his conclusion, Miles argues that the White House’s two-track strategy of “peace through strength” and quiet diplomacy proved successful and that “Hippocratic diplomacy” (first do no harm) and the rejection of violence made the biggest difference in implementing that strategy. The balance of power shifted between 1980 and 1985, giving advantage to engagement in the diplomatic domain as diplomacy shifted from covert to overt.

Simon Miles’ book not only fills the vacant space in the library for a sharply focused, comprehensively researched discourse on the beginning of the end of the Cold War; it also helps to fill the greater and lesser gaps for those of us who, directly or indirectly, had parts in this complicated but fascinating chapter in U.S.-Soviet relations. ■

Edward Salazar is a retired Foreign Service officer, a “Soviet hand” who served as a Soviet foreign affairs analyst in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (1984-1986), on the Soviet desk (1986-1989) and the Ukraine desk (1992-1995), and at Embassy Moscow (1989-1992, 1998-2000 and 2003-2005). A frequent lecturer on Soviet and Russian affairs, he also contributed to National Geographic’s well-received television production, “The 80s: The Decade That Made Us.” Since retiring, he has lived and worked as a consultant, lecturer and educator in London and Budapest, and currently resides in Ottawa.

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An Upset in Budapest

BY BEATRICE CAMP

No one imagined—not the Hungarians, and certainly not the Americans—that a little-known Hungarian basketball team could beat the vaunted U.S. women's squad that had swept the 1996 Olympics.

Embassy Budapest was excited to learn that we would host the U.S. Women's Basketball 1996 Olympic gold medalists in February 1999 on their winter European tour. The U.S. team had compiled a 52-0 exhibition record during its pre-Olympic competition and then won all eight Olympic games to finish with a 60-0 record. More popular than any previous women's basketball team, Team USA drew a record 202,556 fans during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

And now Olympic champions Lisa Leslie, Ruthie Bolton, Sheryl Swoopes, Teresa Edwards, Dawn Staley and Katrina McClain would play an exhibition match in Budapest against the local Ferencvárosi Torna Club team, with a pre-match friendship game between Parliament and the U.S. embassy. Sports diplomacy at its finest, we thought.



An official photo of the 1996 U.S. women's senior national team.

Basketball has a long and distinguished history in Hungary. Physical education teacher Géza Kuncze introduced basketball (korbball) in Hungary in 1912, after he first saw it in Germany. The game proved popular in schools, and Hungary's national team frequently did well in European competitions.

More than eight decades later, Géza's grandson, Deputy Prime Minister Gábor Kuncze, was the stimulus for the match between Hungarian parliamentarians and U.S. embassy staff that was to precede the top ticket.

The embassy hoopsters included Deputy Chief of Mission Tom Robertson, Public Affairs Officer Bill Morgan, Consul General Teddy Taylor and Defense

Attaché Jon Martinson. Team uniforms were procured at an Air Force base used by the Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a NATO-led multinational peacekeeping force deployed after the Bosnian war.

Our public affairs section worked closely with U.S. team coach Nell Fortner and managers to support what we saw as a terrific exchange program.

Both teams hobnobbed at a reception hosted by the DCM the night before the game. The Hungarians were wonderful hosts in turn; on game day, they provided a fabulous feast of prime national delicacies, including goose liver pâté.

With most embassy staff eager to cheer for the U.S. from the stands, my husband and I were designated to sit in the official box, presided over by Agriculture Minister József Torgyán. We did our best to cheer diplomatically.

During the pre-match, the embassy managed to hold off the parliamentarians, with considerable help from an Air Force master sergeant augmenting the contingent of diplomats.

The main bill did not go as well. Although we all considered Team USA invincible, the Hungarian club team, Ferencváros, managed the unthinkable, beating Lisa Leslie and her superstar squad, 73-70. A stunned Ferencváros manager admitted she expected to be trounced, saying she would have been



Beatrice Camp retired in 2015 from a Foreign Service career that took her to China, Thailand, Sweden and Hungary, in addition to assignments at the department and at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. She is the editor of American Diplomacy Journal. The opinions and characterizations in this piece are those of the author and do not necessarily represent official positions of the U.S. government.

HOOP DREAMS, HUNGARIANS BEAT AMERICAN OLYMPIANS IN BASKETBALL



The Hungarian team, Ferencváros, managed a surprise upset against the vaunted 1996 U.S. women's Olympic basketball team in February 1999.

Physical education teacher Géza Kuncze introduced basketball (korgball) in Hungary in 1912, after he first saw it in Germany.

proud to lose by only 20 to 30 points, much less actually come out the victor.

Equally stunned, several of us gathered to say goodbye to the players. Our two sons were among the embassy kids eagerly waiting with their programs for autographs. But Team USA swept out of the locker room headed for their bus, brushing aside the uncomprehending children. Parents were left to explain

that, while it is important to always be gracious in defeat, even adults sometimes behave less than civilly. A teachable moment, perhaps.

Ferencváros was the only defeat on the U.S. national team's five-game winter tour against European professional teams in Slovakia, France and Hungary.

As we debated how this debacle could have happened, the coach blamed the heavy lunch the team enjoyed from the Hungarian hosts earlier that day. "I'll never allow them to eat liver pâté again," she declared. ■

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BY JASON SMITH ■ BRASÍLIA, BRAZIL

This image of Brazil's National Congress, designed by the famous Brazilian modernist architect Oscar Niemeyer (1907-2012), was taken just after dusk in June 2020, as wintertime's late afternoon rainfall was beginning. Hence the striking color tones.

As a federal capital with standard opening and closing hours for official buildings, the city empties out relatively quickly after close of business. But when this photo was taken, Brasília was in the initial stages of its COVID-19 response, and most federal government office buildings were closed. Hence the look of desolation.

Oscar Niemeyer, who lived to the age of 104, was arguably the most consequential architect in Brazilian history, earning the country's capital, Brasília, designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The twin towers shown here house offices of Brazil's Senate and Chamber of Deputies, each occupying a separate

tower. The white dome at the center is the Senate chamber, where legislation is deliberated.

The photo was taken with an early-version Hasselblad 503CW medium format camera, using Kodak Portra 400 film (6x6cm) and an 80mm f/2.8 Zeiss Planar T lens. ■

Jason Smith, a 21-year veteran of the U.S. Foreign Service and an AFSA member, is currently serving in Beirut. One of the greatest privileges of serving in the Foreign Service, he says, has been the opportunity to bear personal witness to significant moments in world history, to see the diverse realities of the human condition around the globe and to carefully document his experiences along the way—often through photography.

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