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# FOREIGN SERVICE

JOURNAL

THE MAGAZINE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS



## FOREIGN SERVICE MEMORIES

*A Selection of Reflections*

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# CONTENTS

June 2009 Volume 86, No. 6



Cover and inside illustrations  
by Pietari Posti

## **PRESIDENT'S VIEWS / 5**

Constructive Dissent  
By John K. Naland

## **SPEAKING OUT / 13**

EERs: The Forgotten Front  
in the War for Talent  
By Jonathan Fritz

## **REFLECTIONS / 92**

Afghanistan Revisited  
By Bruce Laingen

## **LETTERS / 6**

## **CYBERNOTES / 9**

## **MARKETPLACE / 11**

## **BOOKS / 76**

## **IN MEMORY / 78**

## **INDEX TO ADVERTISERS / 90**

## ***F O C U S O N***

### ***FS Reflections***

#### **LEST WE FORGET / 17**

On the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, it is more important than ever to honor those who died there in the name of democracy.

*By Joanne Grady Huskey*

#### **MY BLACK BELT JOURNEY / 22**

In Taekwondo, one practitioner learns, it's not the destination that matters but the journey.

*By Scott B. Ticknor*

#### **RUSS AND I / 27**

A carpool chat leads to the addition of several long-deceased diplomats' names to the AFSA Memorial Plaques.

*By Jason Vorderstrasse*

#### **COUNTERTERRORISM: SOME LESSONS TO CONSIDER / 32**

A retired diplomat sees a disturbing pattern of inconsistency, dishonesty and deceit in the U.S. response to acts of terrorism.

*By Alan Berlind*

#### **REPRIEVE ON MANILA BAY / 38**

They say a cat has nine lives. But how many reprieves are we humans granted before mortality's inexorable triumph?

*By John J. St. John*

## **A F S A N E W S**

### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY 2009 / 43**

### **BRIEFS, ACCELER / 44**

### **VP VOICE – STATE: A BITTERSWEET FAREWELL / 45**

### **VP VOICE – RETIREE: AFSA HAS YOUR BACK / 46**

### **VP VOICE – FCS: OUR FRIENDS ON THE HILL / 47**

### **FAMILY MEMBER MATTERS: A TCK LETTER / 48**

### **IAN HOUSTON NAMED AFSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / 49**

### **AFSA BUILDING REOPENS / 49**

### **CLASSIFIEDS / 51**

# CONTENTS

## SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT

### GETTING FOUND: INTERNATIONAL LIFE 2.0 / 53

The Internet has a special role to play in connecting Third Culture Kids.

*By Mikkela Thompson*

### SCHOOLS AT A GLANCE / 63

Essential data on educational choices.

### A VITAL POINT OF CONTACT FOR PARENTS: THE OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS / 70

*By Kristin Grasso and Carol Sutherland*

### TIPS ON WRITING COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ESSAYS / 72

*By Francesca Kelly*

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# PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

## *Constructive Dissent*

By JOHN K. NALAND

This month, AFSA will present its 41st annual Constructive Dissent Awards. This unique program began in 1968 with the William R. Rivkin Award for initiative, integrity and intellectual courage in the context of constructive dissent by a mid-level Foreign Service officer. AFSA now offers similar awards for Foreign Service specialists and junior and senior generalists.



Before attending his first AFSA awards ceremony, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger asked AFSA President Tom Boyatt what the constructive dissent awards were all about. After being told, Kissinger gave a knowing smile and asked rhetorically, "You mean that I am giving awards to people who disagreed with me?" He proceeded to do just that, honoring Foreign Service members with the courage to speak out forthrightly, using appropriate channels, to take a stand by confronting the status quo, asking tough questions, offering alternative solutions, and giving the best counsel possible.

This year's ceremony will include awards in the categories of specialists and mid-level generalists. No nominations were received for junior or senior FSOs. Before anyone draws negative conclusions about intellectual courage in today's junior and senior ranks, please

note that awards in those two categories were presented last year. Other evidence that constructive dissent is not dead can be seen in the seven nominations submitted this year for the mid-level Rivkin Award.

Hopefully, AFSA will receive multiple nominations in all four categories next year. Arguably, the problem is not a lack of dissenters, but rather a shortage of colleagues who recognized dissent by taking the time to submit nominations for an AFSA award.

Along those lines, it is clear that not all members recognize the extent to which AFSA itself exemplifies constructive dissent (not on foreign policy issues, but rather on management and personnel matters). One cause of this lack of recognition is that AFSA cannot always reveal everything that happens behind closed doors.

For example, AFSA has engaged in numerous negotiations in recent years that succeeded in dissuading State Department management from taking shortsighted steps that would have had negative long-term implications on the Foreign Service. While we strive to keep members informed, some of these gains were achieved in tough negotiations that cannot be detailed without harming our ability to achieve future successes. Were AFSA to crow publicly about some of those victories, then future cooperation from powerful policy-

makers might evaporate.

AFSA must also sometimes exercise prudent silence in the face of setbacks. As much as we might want to blast some agency's poor decision, AFSA leaders must keep in mind that they will face that same policymaker in future negotiations. Foreign Service members who have negotiated with foreign governments will understand this tactical decision not to burn bridges that may be needed in the future.

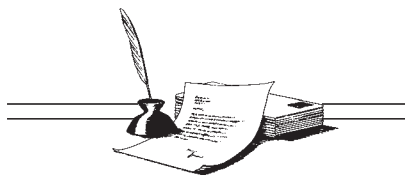
Of course, blowing the whistle on personnel system shenanigans is sometimes an effective way to shame agency management into following the rules. And sometimes the transgression is so blatant that AFSA must make a "federal case" out of it, even if the result is reduced cooperation on other issues.

While AFSA will continue to speak out forthrightly, the ultimate objective is to advance our members' interests. While members consistently say that they want AFSA to be vocal and assertive; they need it to be effective. Just like individual members who engage in constructive dissent, AFSA's goal must not just be to point out what is wrong, but rather to effect a positive change in the situation.

That is what the AFSA Governing Board has striven to do over the past two years. As our term of office nears its end, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to fight the good fight on behalf of the U.S. Foreign Service. ■

---

*John K. Naland is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*



# LETTERS

## Concrete Honors for Diplomatic Heroes

The valuable and heartfelt letter from Bruce K. Byers (“Thirty Years Ago in Kabul,” March) expresses hope that “in 2009 we will achieve greater progress with our Afghan allies and so honor the memories of all those Afghans and Americans who, like Spike Dubs, have lost their lives in service to our country and to the Afghan people.”

Permit me to suggest an initiative for AFSA that would help ensure our State Department Civil and Foreign Service heroes, like Ambassador Dubs, live on in our collective memory — the naming of some State Department buildings for them.

Names on public buildings can provide a sense of common purpose, shaping our collective memory, our concept of community and the meaning of our democracy. We already have edifices named after Harry S Truman, Ronald Reagan and J. Edgar Hoover. Let’s name some of our buildings to honor *real* heroes who made great sacrifices to preserve our way of life.

An appropriate start would be to name State Annex 2 (where many retired Foreign Service employees are working) the Spike Dubs Building. Amb. Dubs also served as a U.S. Marine in the Pacific in World War II (“Once a Marine, Always a Marine”). By extension, his selection would also honor the Marine security guards,

some of whom have given their lives while helping to protect the Foreign Service worldwide.

*Francis Xavier Cunningham  
FSO, retired  
Arlington, Va.*

## Recognizing the Foreign Service

Since 1991, I have had several opportunities to serve as a public member on U.S. Foreign Service award, tenure and performance panels. Through this service, I have been privy to information that identifies many members of the U.S. diplomatic corps as skilled, intelligent, dedicated and courageous professionals. These men and women should be counted among the most talented and productive individuals on the planet.

Both at home and abroad, Foreign Service personnel work with people from every stratum of society. Citizens of host countries often base their perceptions of America in large part on the behavior and demeanor of our Foreign Service representatives. Indeed, one might well view every officer as an ambassador in his or her own right. The many files I have reviewed attest that they almost always represent our country very positively and personify America’s best. They are enthusiastic facilitators of our most valued ideals.

It is a great tragedy that so many Americans are unaware of the excellent

work these individuals do. Insights I have gained from working on FS panels have had significant impact on my concept of myself as an individual and as an American citizen. Always strong, my pride in American identity and heritage has intensified as a result of increased awareness of the role our diplomatic corps plays in making this world a better place for all. In the face of national or international crises, I no longer experience any sense of hopelessness, because I have been blessed to know that some of the greatest minds of our time are working to safeguard America, her citizens and people all over the globe.

Recognition of Foreign Service members’ contributions should be given a higher position in the hierarchy of governmental accomplishments. Undoubtedly, a major step toward achieving this goal would be amending the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act so that foreign affairs agencies have more freedom to publicize their goals and accomplishments. This will enable them to recruit new talent more aggressively, thereby giving taxpayers fuller, more transparent explanations of Foreign Service projects and their role in preserving U.S. national security.

The American people have a right to know about the magnificent diplomacy being carried out on their behalf. With this in mind, I respectfully suggest that the president, Secretary of State and Congress be encouraged to pub-



## LETTERS



lily recognize and support the unsung heroes and heroines who serve America so well.

*Vernessa White-Jackson  
Hyattsville, Md.*

### Remembering Lockerbie

I would like to thank Mitchell Cohn for his Reflections column in your April issue about the 20th anniversary of the Lockerbie tragedy. I arrived at the consulate general in Scotland the following summer, but my experiences were similar to his.

Emotions were still at high pitch among the family members of the victims as we started returning the possessions of their loved ones. I listened as they cried and reminisced, and when they shouted with anger and frustration. I remember well the cold, damp police warehouse in Lockerbie where I spent hours ticking off personal property on an inventory for each American passenger. Each one of them was an individual to us. We knew them all by name, we knew their families, and we knew what they packed in their suitcases that fateful day. As Mitch said, there was a pervasive sadness that surrounded our work, but sometimes the relationships that evolved gave us peace.

I still recall the mother of a Syracuse University student who came to the warehouse to look for some of her daughter's possessions. She was such a kind person and brought great warmth and love to the experience. We ended up exchanging Christmas cards over the years, until last year, when my card was returned.

I eventually found out that she had passed away and, for the first time in many years, I sat down and cried. I was crying not just for her, but for everyone who had been touched by this terrible event. It broke the heart of everyone

who had to deal with it.

*Julie Rethmeier Moyes  
FSO  
Arlington, Va.*

### Medical Exams

Having retired 10 years ago, I was quite surprised to learn that the Office of Medical Services has stopped performing full examinations prior to overseas transfers (March President's Views, "To Your Health"). In 1989, MED's exam probably saved the life of my husband, FSO Douglas Van Treeck. Very early colon cancer was detected, a golf-ball sized mass was removed without complications and, other than required screenings every three years, he lives quite normally. Had he gone to Niger for two years without treatment, his life would probably be over by now.

Maybe State has a plan: reduce MED's costs and reduce pension payments.

*Marie-Elena Van Treeck  
FS specialist, retired  
Carson City, Nev.*

### The Freeman Appointment

The discussion of Ambassador Charles "Chas" Freeman's withdrawal from consideration for the position of chairman of the National Intelligence Council drew attention to the role of National Intelligence Estimates in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. But I found Susan Maitra's analysis in the April Cybernotes ("Controversy Points to Foreign Policy Dilemma") more of an op-ed than straight news reporting. The implication was that the neoconservative cabal did Freeman in.

Regarding the "vitriolic campaign," no mention is made of the role of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Representative Frank Wolf, R-Va., in this short-lived appointment. The

article also does not spell out Amb. Freeman's position on the board of the China National Offshore Oil Corporation and why this matters.

*Arthur Green  
USIA FSO, retired  
Boynton Beach, Fla.*

### Enjoying FSJ Access

Thanks for making the *Journal* so accessible on the Internet. We are posted overseas and I really enjoy being able to read current information. The articles in the March focus, "Going It Alone," were timed perfectly because we, along with many other families, are beginning to think about the next bidding cycle. We now have a better idea of how to prepare for and handle a separate assignment.

*Renee Atkinson  
FS spouse  
Embassy Canberra*

### Any New Ideas?

Some time ago, you published a letter from me which proposed a radical departure in U.S. relations with Russia. As I recall, it received no reaction whatsoever (perhaps an indication of its worth). I reworked my proposal and sent it to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The reply from one "IK" (Ivan Knishknif?) was an underwhelming form letter addressed in a Dostoevskyan fashion to "Dear Interested Citizen!" Perhaps I need to work harder to appreciate the utter disdain in which my suggestion of policy change is held.

Reading the April *FSJ*, which again addressed the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and related issues, I felt that the three authors approached relations with Moscow in a traditional fashion. Isn't there a new idea in our house? Is everything about adjustments? Is an adversarial relationship,

## LETTERS



as established in the time of Marshall Stalin, to be eternal? After all, I thought the new administration's mantra was "change." Among the three articles, my ideas coincide most with those of Paul Fritch from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe ("The Russia Factor").

In my opinion, with the termination of the Soviet Union and the concomitant end of the Soviet empire and threat to Western Europe, the need for NATO also ended. Just think of the savings if it were abolished! Yet because of some unexplained infatuation, we seem to have insisted not only on its continued existence, but on its expansion. And since an expanded NATO is a finger in the Russian eye, is it any wonder that Moscow sought to support nations such as Iran and Venezuela?

### Change of Address



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I suggest that we think boldly and seek to integrate Russia more fully and firmly into Europe. At the same time we should reduce our military role there.

*Sheldon Avenius*  
*FSO, retired*  
*Miami, Fla.*

### Seeking John Haigh

In 1956, while stationed with the U.S. Army in Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, an MG TF sports car came into my temporary custody. Being a sports car buff and an adventurous sort, I applied for a three-day pass to drive through the Alps and over the St. Gotthard Pass to Milan, to attend the famous race at the Monza Track.

Unbeknownst to me, engine oil started leaking out around the oil filter gasket when I started the engine. By the time I got midway through the Alps, my oil pressure had dropped to zero! I was able to get a tow to a garage but, being on a very tight budget, I had brought just enough money for the mission at hand, with no contingency funds. After paying the garage, I had only enough money to reach Milan or to turn around and drive back to Stuttgart. I decided to continue.

I reached Milan at 4 p.m., after the Monza race was over. I had enough cash for either a hotel room or a good meal. I opted for the meal, and then did the only thing a foolish young soldier could do at that point: I curled my 6'3" frame up across the MG cockpit and eventually fell asleep.

In the morning, I decided that my best course was to go to the American consulate and try to borrow enough money to get back to Stuttgart. To my dismay, I found an announcement on the front door that the consulate was closed for the Fourth of July! I saw my

only possible salvation in a small sign that said: "In case of emergency, call the consul at ..."

Not wanting to be absent without leave, I dialed the number and was rewarded by the voice of a kind gentleman, John W. Haigh. He listened patiently to my fool's tale, and arrived about 20 minutes later. After reviewing my situation, he generously gave me enough money to get me back to Stuttgart. I thanked him profusely, promising him that he would be repaid within the week. He probably thought he would never see *that* money again!

As I drove north from Milan, darkness began to fall. I knew how long the drive took but figured, correctly, that going back at night, on unfamiliar roads, would take me longer. As I crossed back into Germany, a light rain began to fall. The rest of the journey to Stuttgart turned into my own private Monza race, driving on the very edge of control, with bald rear tires giving the feel of glare ice to the cobblestone roads. I passed through the main gate at Patch Barracks at 6 a.m., went to my barracks and collapsed on my bunk.

I have looked back many times on that trip, almost 53 years ago, and thought how great it would be to speak with Mr. Haigh once more. Of course, it's unlikely he is still alive, but his children or grandchildren would enjoy hearing this tale of his kindness, if it were possible to track them down. We exchanged Christmas cards for a few years, but I don't know where he is today. I'd be most grateful to hear from a relative of his if one happens to spot this letter. Please contact me at [focalplane@cfl.rr.com](mailto:focalplane@cfl.rr.com). ■

*David B. Keith*  
*Shady Intl. Airport*  
*Ocala, Fla.*



# CYBERNOTES

## Tweaking U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy

“Support, do not promote, democracy” is the watchword of the final report of the Center for Strategic & International Studies’ Democracy in U.S. Security Strategy Project, released on March 11 ([www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/090310\\_lennon\\_democracy\\_web.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/090310_lennon_democracy_web.pdf)).

According to project director Alexander T.J. Lennon, democracy promotion efforts lost credibility as a result of “the gap between U.S. rhetoric and public action in places like Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, and not launching a democracy crusade in Iraq.” Moreover, he adds, “promoting democracy has become synonymous with imposing it.”

In a related development, also on March 11, a bipartisan group of prominent scholars and experts issued an open letter to President Barack Obama urging him to make democracy in the Middle East a top priority ([www.csi-donline.org](http://www.csi-donline.org)). “Because of its association with the Bush administration, there is a temptation to move away from any discussion of democracy promotion in the Middle East. That would be a mistake,” says Shadi Hamid, director of research at the Project on Middle East Democracy (<http://pom-ed.org/>).

— Susan Brady Maitra,  
Senior Editor

The president [George W. Bush] instructed us that nothing we would do would be outside of our obligations, legal obligations, under the Convention Against Torture. And so, by definition, if it was authorized by the president, it did not violate our obligations under the Convention Against Torture.

—Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary of State, speaking at Stanford University on April 27, [www.allgov.com/ViewNews](http://www.allgov.com/ViewNews)

## A Slice of FS History

Wesleyan University’s Academic Media Studio launched an educational Web site in March on the life and work of Henry Merritt Wriston (1889-1978), the distinguished professor, college president and foreign policy expert who was instrumental in shaping the modern Foreign Service ([www.henry-merrittwriston.org](http://www.henry-merrittwriston.org)).

The Wriston family funded creation of the site, which is designed to provide information about the life and work of the Wesleyan Class of 1911 graduate and to be a research portal for scholars.

Henry Merritt Wriston advanced the ideals of liberal education and internationalism throughout his life as a dynamic speaker, prolific author and professor; the president of Lawrence College (1925-1937) and Brown University (1937-1955); and a foreign policy expert. His doctoral dissertation, *Executive Agents in American Foreign Relations* (Harvard University, 1922), has become a standard text in the U.S. Department of State.

Among several tours of duty in Washington, D.C., Wriston served as chairman of the Secretary of State’s Committee on Personnel (1954) and as a member of the U.S. Department of State’s Advisory Committee on the Foreign Service (1956-1958). There he earned a reputation as the architect of the reorganization of the State Department’s Foreign Service. He also served as president of the American Assembly (1957-1963) and president of the Council on Foreign Relations (1951-1964).

— Susan Brady Maitra,  
Senior Editor

## Google Helps Dig for Government Data

On April 28, Google launched a new search tool to help users find and compare public data more easily. “Google Public Data” is meant to make information from federal, state and local governments accessible to citi-





zens, starting with U.S. population and unemployment data from the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, respectively. Later Environmental Protection Agency statistics and other data sets will be available.

The new tool takes data and reformats them so that they are immediately consumable, so that people don't have to go through rows and rows of numbers to get the specific figure they want, David Girouard, president of Google Enterprise, explained to Kim Hart of the *Washington Post*. It also allows the user to construct an interactive chart comparing data.

Although the E-Government Act of 2002 requires government agencies to make information more accessible electronically, many agencies do not organize their Web sites for easy indexing by search engines. Some even embed codes to make certain pages invisible to search engines, Girouard says.

Google Public Data Project Manager Ola Rosling discusses the new tool on her official *Google* blog (<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2009/04/adding-search-power-to-public-data.html>). "The data we're including in this first launch represent just a small fraction of all the interesting public data available on the Web. There are statistics for prices of cookies, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, asthma frequency, high school graduation rates, bakers' salaries, the number of wildfires — and the list goes on," says Rosling.

"All the data we've used in this first launch are produced and published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Division. They did the hard work! We just made the data a bit easier to find and use," she adds.

Rosling and Google hope that the

new tool will be useful in the classroom, the boardroom and around the kitchen table, allowing public data to play a more central role in informed public policy discussions.

For a primer on the problem Google Public Data seeks to address, and some related initiatives to watch for, read cyberspace innovator and entrepreneur Vanessa Fox's March 24 blog, "Transforming the Relationship Between Citizens and Government: Making Content Findable Online" (<http://radar.oreilly.com/2009/03/transforming-the-relationship.html>).

— Susan Brady Maitra,  
Senior Editor

### Assessing the Status of Refugees Worldwide

The status of refugees, especially in Africa and the Middle East, is a topic that has received increased attention from international organizations and civil society. At the end of 2007, there were about 31.7 million individuals of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — including nearly three million stateless persons, about 13 million refugees and asylum-seekers, and some 13 million internally displaced persons — around the world ([www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)).

To get a more accurate and up-to-date reading on the scope of the problem, the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees has launched a "Global Needs Assessment" in 2009 to comprehensively map the real state of the world's refugees and people of concern under its mandate. UNHCR plans to use the resulting data and report as a "blueprint for planning, decisionmaking and action with governments, partners, refugees and people of concern" to address the situation ([www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/GNA](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/GNA)).

The agency's 2008 pilot program to assess needs conducted in eight countries found significant gaps in the protection and care of refugees, further revealing that UNHCR has only a portion of the budget it needs to protect all refugees and asylum-seekers. Specifically, the report showed that one-third of refugees' basic needs in these countries remain unmet ([www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/48ef09a62.pdf](http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/48ef09a62.pdf)).

The plight of refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa and South Asia has significantly worsened. Beside the ongoing refugee crises in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Sri Lankan government's effort to clamp down on the secessionist Tamil Tigers terrorist group has already uprooted some 171,000 people. In the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than 100,000 people have been displaced, as Congolese civilians flee their homes fearing attacks by the rebel Hutu militia, the so-called Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.

Another refugee drama continues to unfold in Kenya, where 60,000 Somalis recently crossed the officially closed border seeking shelter in camps that already house more than 260,000, according to a March 30 report, "From Horror to Hopelessness: Kenya's Forgotten Somali Refugee Crisis," from Human Rights Watch ([www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)). In Sudan, half of the estimated four million persons displaced by the civil war and fighting in Darfur have returned, but remain under threat. Another 200,000 are still in Chad.

Another category of refugees is persons who are internally displaced by non-conflict factors, such as development projects, natural disaster and climate change. These individuals are the focus of the International Refugee



## 50 Years Ago...

Today, whether or not he aspires to be a deputy chief of mission, every officer of the Foreign Service should, in the course of his career, become acquainted with as many of the tools of his trade as possible. One of these accepted tools is now cultural exchange.



— Donald Edgar, from “Cultural Exchange and the Foreign Service Officer,” in the *FSJ*, June 1959.

Rights Initiative, a nongovernmental organization that believes states should be legally obligated to protect non-conflict IDPs under such circumstances.

IRRI acknowledges that the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol do not mandate such protection, but points to a new, binding protocol that has come into force in the Great Lakes region of Africa: the International Conference of the Great Lakes’ Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons ([www.refugee-rights.org/Publications/RRN/2009/February/V5.I1.CanTheICGLR.html](http://www.refugee-rights.org/Publications/RRN/2009/February/V5.I1.CanTheICGLR.html)). The protocol addressing the Bujagali Dam Project and establishment of the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda may be a model for wider international adoption, as well.

— Betsy Swift, *AFSA Intern*, and Senior Editor Susan B. Maitra

## The Somali Piracy Poser

Until recently, the idea of pirates in the 21st century sounded outlandish. But the issue forced itself onto the U.S. foreign policy agenda in April, when Somali pirates took over the *Maersk Alabama*, holding Captain Richard Phillips hostage. After five days, U.S. Navy Seals brought the drama to an end, freeing the captain, capturing one pirate and killing the rest.

On April 15, Secretary of State

Hillary Rodham Clinton announced a series of initiatives to combat the problem, including the formation of a State Department team to press Somali government officials to act against pirates on land, work with international peace-keeping circles to help the county police its own territory, and assist the shipping industry with implementing self-defense measures. An international contact group will also meet regularly to improve coordination of naval patrols in the region and explore freezing pirate assets ([www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/04/121758.htm](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/04/121758.htm)).

At this writing, Somali pirates were holding some 16 ships and more than 250 seamen (none American) for ransom. According to the Malaysia-based International Maritime Bureau, such attacks off the coast of Somalia increased tenfold during the first three months of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008, and are continuing at the rate of two to three per week.

The vast geographic area involved makes policing very difficult, if not impossible. Five naval ships, both American and others, are currently on counterpiracy missions in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean regions. The European Union, which launched a naval operation in December with at least 12 of the 27-member states, has four to eight warships deployed in the region and is seeking more spotter

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planes, Reuters reports.

The geographic challenge is compounded by an institutional one: Somalia is a poster child for the failed state. The government is not strong enough and the security forces are inadequate to stop the piracy. As Defense Secretary Robert Gates explained in a speech to officers at Maxwell Air Force Base on April 15, there once was a huge piracy problem around the Strait of Malacca, but the Pentagon was able to assist the navies of Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia with training and equipment to resolve it. “The problem in Somalia is that we don’t have governments like we had in Southeast Asia,” Gates said ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)).

How to tackle the Somali piracy scourge is on the agenda of formal and

informal meetings and conferences from London to Cairo. An emergency summit was planned for May 27 in Cairo, with the governments of Egypt, Somalia, Djibouti, Yemen, Jordan, Panama and Malaysia, as well as international agencies and industry leaders, according to Agence France Press. Cairo has additional incentive to participate because it faces a steep drop in revenue as more ships opt to bypass its waters, going around the Cape of Good Hope ([www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/04/28/MNOK16RIRV.DTL](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/04/28/MNOK16RIRV.DTL)).

On April 30, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee convened hearings on the dilemmas that legislators, shipping companies and governments face (<http://foreign.senate.gov/hearings/2009/hrg090430p.html>). As

testimony revealed, arming the crew, as suggested by Capt. Phillips and embraced by many legislators, could spark an arms race and encourage accidents. It also presents thorny legal issues.

Diplomats and the military clearly have important roles to play in finding solutions, as both Maersk Inc. Chairman John Clancey and Ambassador Stephen Mull, acting assistant secretary of State for political-military affairs, testified.

From the Somali viewpoint, the problem looks somewhat different. Somali writer and political analyst Abukar Arman argues in an op-ed, “Piracy, Geopolitics and Private Security,” that the routine encroachment into East African territorial waters by international shippers that dump waste and by fishing boats must be addressed, for the resulting pollution and overfishing have undercut the population’s ability to make a living from the sea. Arman also proposes a security treaty with the U.S. ([www.hiiraan.com/op2/2009/apr/piracy\\_geopolitics\\_and\\_private\\_security\\_security.aspx](http://www.hiiraan.com/op2/2009/apr/piracy_geopolitics_and_private_security_security.aspx)).

But, he insists, we ought to look at the bigger picture, too, including the importance of the Indian Ocean as a “premier strategic region in light of the shifting economic balance of power from West to East.” Arman cites analyst Robert D. Kaplan’s prediction that the Indian Ocean will be the central stage for geopolitical competition in the 21st century, as “70 percent of the total traffic of petroleum products” bound for both the Pacific and the Middle East pass through it ([www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story\\_id=4862&print=1](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4862&print=1)). ■

— Senior Editor Susan Brady  
Maitra and Hans Mulder,  
former Editorial Intern

### Site of the Month: Pandora.com

*Pandora* is an Internet radio site for music lovers. If you find yourself without your personal music collection on the road, you can access all your favorites online anytime without charge. You simply choose a song, an artist or a composer and Pandora creates an online “station” that will pull together music that goes well with your selection. The music streams on your computer or mobile phone. You can save stations and share favorites with friends and family.

*Pandora* evolved out of the Music Genome Project, launched in January 2000 by a group of musicians and “music-loving technologists” who set out to create “the most comprehensive analysis of music ever.” According to founder Tim Westergren, “we set out to capture the essence of music at the most fundamental level. We ended up assembling literally hundreds of musical attributes or ‘genes’ into a very large music genome. Taken together these genes capture the unique and magical musical identity of a song — everything from melody, harmony and rhythm, to instrumentation, orchestration, arrangement, lyrics and, of course, the rich world of singing and vocal harmony.”

That work has continued on a daily basis as the Music Genome Project team compiles “all the great new stuff coming out of studios, clubs and garages around the world.” Says Westergren: “It has been quite an adventure, you could say a little crazy — but now that we’ve created this extraordinary collection of music analysis, we think we can help be your guide as you explore your favorite parts of the music universe.”

— Shawn Dorman, Associate Editor





# SPEAKING OUT

## *EERs: The Forgotten Front in the War for Talent*

BY JONATHAN FRITZ

During her confirmation hearing, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared that making sure the department is functioning at its best is absolutely essential to America's success. While there are myriad challenges to rebuilding a strong and effective State Department, I would like to address one in particular: the dysfunctional performance evaluation system for Foreign Service officers.

The Employee Evaluation Reports we spend so much time writing every year fail to give promotion panels a useful means for comparing officers to their peers. Raters and reviewers are not required to rank their subordinate officers, and almost never do. That leaves panel members almost wholly dependent upon the EER narratives, most of which describe the rated officers as diplomatic wunderkinds. And when everyone is advertised as a superstar, it is hard to differentiate between real achievers and mediocre performers. The result is promotions that are far more random than they should be.

This problem is not new. In fact, it was one of the five key weaknesses identified in the "War for Talent" study that McKinsey & Company conducted for State in 1999. The report found that "the department fails to differentiate people sufficiently based on performance. It does not offer fast enough advancement for the best and brightest, nor does it move aside enough of

*Employee Evaluation Reports fail to give promotion panels a useful means for comparing officers to their peers.*



the weaker performers."

Disappointingly, when the department asked McKinsey to update its study in 2005, the company found that "The area in which the department has made the least change is in performance evaluation, whose processes still work largely as they did in 1999." Senior State officials at the time said that the amount of effort required to fix the problem exceeded the benefits of doing so, revealing a disappointing apathy toward talent management.

Since then, the only noticeable change has been to expand the use of a new EER form (DS-5055) that requires rated officers to write a greater portion of their own evaluations. I, for one, am quite happy to have more space to sing my own praises, but don't see how this injects objectivity or rigor into the process.

### **Where All the Officers Are Above Average**

For those unfamiliar with the EER

process, here's how it works. Most Foreign Service officers devote the first half of every May to drafting annual evaluations. Individual officers, their immediate supervisors (raters), and their raters' bosses (reviewers) spend hours and hours filling up three pages with dense, single-spaced text detailing the rated employee's numerous contributions to the salvation of the republic over the past year.

There is also a single line devoted to "General Appraisal" that asks the rater "Was performance satisfactory or better?" Except in very rare cases, the "yes" box is automatically checked. In addition, raters and reviewers almost always include a recommendation to promote the rated officer immediately. The percentage of officers receiving such recommendations far exceeds the number of promotions available in a given year. In 2008, for example, only about 15 percent of FS-2 economic officers made the cut.

The huge gap between the number of those recommended for promotion and the small minority who will make the cut renders most of our EERs close to useless. But with no requirement to rank subordinates against their peers and the sure knowledge that everyone else is engaging in the same kind of grade inflation, no one has an incentive to disadvantage his or her own subordinates by writing candid evaluations. That leaves promotion panelists, who



rarely have direct knowledge of the employees they are assessing, with very little solid information on which to base their own rankings.

This has five pernicious effects on the Foreign Service as an institution:

*Inefficiency:* Many excellent officers advance quickly through the ranks of the Foreign Service, but the high degree of randomness in promotions (a direct consequence of our unhelpful EER process) means a great number of the “best and brightest” are delayed by a year or more in assuming positions of greater responsibility commensurate with their abilities. This built-in inefficiency deprives the Foreign Service of the optimal use of its top performers and puts it at a disadvantage relative to other institutions with more effective performance evaluation systems.

*Demoralization:* Seeing “the best and brightest” passed over year after year is almost as bad as seeing “weaker performers” shoot past them based on nothing more than a well-written EER. Frequent occurrences of this phenomenon sap morale, discourage hard work, and prompt some high achievers who do not get promoted quickly to consider other careers (or agencies) that offer a more direct link between performance and reward.

*Ineffective mentoring:* Allowing managers to classify all their subordinate officers as “above average” makes the EER worthless as a tool for guiding employee performance. While there are many mid-level and high-ranking FSOs who take seriously their responsibility to groom younger officers, this conscientious behavior takes place in spite of the system, not because of it.

*Narrowing, not broadening:* Officers who accept assignments outside of the department mainstream — i.e., who have raters or reviewers not

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***When everyone is hailed  
as a superstar, it is hard  
to differentiate between  
real achievers and  
mediocre performers.***

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steeped in the EER’s inflated rhetorical tradition — run the risk of being disadvantaged by a less-than-hyperbolic evaluation. Awareness of this danger discourages career-broadening experiences beyond the traditional FS track, a problem Sally Horn analyzed in her June 2008 *FSJ* article, “Rewarding Functional Policy Expertise.”

*Wasted time and energy:* EERs ought to be drafted with care, but the amount of time we spend on the process is excessive. Though unfortunate, this is not surprising, given that many promotion panel rankings are made more on the basis of how an evaluation “reads” on the page (with the focus on writing style, typos, white space, use of buzzwords, etc.) than on comparative ratings among peers.

**Better Ways to  
Evaluate Performance**

It is ironic that an organization with one of the most rigorously meritocratic recruitment processes in the world has a performance evaluation system so totally lacking in rigor, especially compared with the “hard grading” systems employed by other large bureaucracies.

Each branch of the U.S. military uses different methods to assign top grades to rated officers, from the

Army’s top block (restricted to less than half of the rater’s subordinates) to the Air Force’s “stratification” (25 percent of a rater’s subordinates) to the Marine Corps’ keeping a lifetime record of grades assigned by each rater, which retroactively affects the weight of any grade given in the past. (If a Marine colonel gives top grades to all his or her majors this year, any good grades given to previous subordinates are correspondingly devalued.)

Virtually every major multinational corporation also limits the number of top performance evaluations that a supervisor can award. At General Electric, for instance, managers identify the 20 percent of “top talent” ready to move up, the 10 percent who are lagging, and the 70 percent in the middle.

Each of these systems, unlike ours, forces someone in the rated employee’s direct chain of command (not complete strangers sitting on a promotion panel) to do the hard work of rationing the number of top grades given. In most cases this “grade giver” is not the immediate supervisor (equivalent to our rating officer), but one level further up (equivalent to our reviewing officer). Whether these grades form the proximate basis for the decision to promote (as in many private-sector companies) or are forwarded to an independent promotion panel that makes that decision (as for the military), there exists a clear link between performance and the promotion process, something currently lacking in the Foreign Service.

Naturally, the rationing of top grades stimulates competition among rated officers (and perhaps their immediate supervisors) as they lobby the grade-giver over who deserves to make the cut, creating a certain amount of “office politics” and interpersonal stress within the work unit. But because

## SPEAKING OUT



these organizations consider managing talent a paramount responsibility of those in supervisory positions, that is deemed an acceptable trade-off.

It is high time the Foreign Service reformed its officer evaluation system to ensure our “best and brightest” are leading the charge. The department should take the following steps to design a new evaluation system:

- Shorten the EER form dramatically, with single-paragraph narrative sections for the rated officer, rater and reviewer;
- Require the reviewing officer to place all FSO generalists of the same rank that he/she is reviewing into one of the following three categories: Recommend promotion, satisfactory performance, unsatisfactory performance;

• Forbid the reviewing officer from placing more than 50 percent of all reviewed officers of the same rank in the “recommend promotion” category; and

• Establish a credible enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance.

### The Advantages of Hard Grading

Reducing the time and effort needed to complete EERs would encourage the movement of ratings and reviews up to higher-level supervisors, who could identify their top subordinates by merely recommending them for promotion, rather than composing essays that try to outpace the competition. This would enable higher-level officers to review more subordinates more quickly. Larger pools of reviewed

officers would, in turn, bestow greater credibility on the evaluations. A top grade given by a reviewer to the only FS-3 he or she evaluates (which might occur at a very small post) might not hurt the rated officer, but would obviously not carry the same weight as the top grades given to three out of seven FS-3 officers reviewed by another individual.

Most importantly, promotion panels would have something solid on which to base their own rankings, to the benefit of all those officers whose performance was truly excellent but whose narratives failed to stand out, whether due to a rater’s poor writing skills or the inflated EERs of others in the same rank cohort. Promoting these high performers would strengthen the Foreign

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## SPEAKING OUT



Service by putting our best people into positions where they can make a bigger difference sooner rather than later, and motivating them to stay in the Service, knowing that their hard work is more likely to be rewarded.

Such a system would also spur a healthy dialogue among rated, rating and reviewing officers over how to compare performances. Ideally, reviewing officers would base their grading on fair and transparent metrics that would spur virtuous competition among those being reviewed.

A potential complaint about instituting a “hard grading” system is that it would unfairly penalize missions, sections or offices that tend to attract a disproportionately large number of high performers. This is a valid concern,

one also faced by elite military units like the Army’s Rangers or F-15 fighter squadrons in the Air Force. Neither service, however, makes exceptions to limits on top grades for so-called “elite units,” yet this does not spell ruin for excellent officers who fail to obtain a top score every time. In such cases, the senior reviewer’s short narrative is crucial to contextualizing the absence of a top grade.

And after all, if the officers of a particular unit really *are* elite, they will receive a disproportionate share of top grades when they are transferred to other “non-elite” units. The same pattern would likely hold true for the Foreign Service.

The current EER system reflects and exacerbates the conflict-averse

managerial culture of the Foreign Service. By not forcing senior officers to rank subordinates, it essentially randomizes who gets promoted each year. Without a strong link between performance and promotions, the Foreign Service has learned to use other ways to identify top performers, such as an officer’s assignment history and “corridor reputation.” But those are neither as efficient nor as fair as an evaluation system that actually does its job. If we are serious about the “War for Talent,” it is high time we made EERs more relevant to the promotion process. ■

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*Jonathan Fritz, an economic officer in Beijing, entered the Foreign Service in 1993. He has served in China, Latin America and Washington, D.C.*

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# LEST WE FORGET



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ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TIANANMEN SQUARE MASSACRE, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO HONOR THOSE WHO DIED THERE FOR DEMOCRACY.

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*By JOANNE GRADY HUSKEY*

**I**n the spring of 2008, after a 19-year absence, my husband and I took our two children to visit Beijing and see Tiananmen Square, during their spring break from Taipei American School. Jim and I had lived there from 1988 to 1991, when he was a political officer, but we had never been back.

The ultra-modernity of the city, feverishly preparing to host the Summer Olympics, startled us. But what most surprised us was the sheer normalcy of Tiananmen Square. In the midst of the tourist traffic, I had a horrible fear that if

history is not recorded, and the truth never told, the present can completely erase the past.

That is why I feel compelled to share my recollections of the tragic events in Tiananmen Square 20 years ago this month. Although China is a very different place today, and the government has tried to sweep it all under the rug, we must never forget what happened that spring and all who died there in the name of democracy.

### **The Buzz Begins**

On April 15, 1989, Hu Yaobang, the former Communist Party general secretary who had lost power in January 1987 because of his liberal views, died. In the days that followed, thousands of students at Beijing University (known as Beida) and other university campuses began citing Hu's views as they formed the "Beijing Spring" movement in China.

Three days after Hu's death, Jim and I went to see a film on the Beida campus. When we came out of the theater, there was an almost palpable buzz, as students milled about reading slogans tacked to the walls and held impromptu open discussions. Curious about what was going on, we mingled with the youth and listened to some of their ideas. They thanked us for coming, saying "Meiguo hen hao" ("America is good"), and some asked us how students in the United States demonstrated, and about our student days during the late 1960s and early

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*Joanne Grady Huskey is a Foreign Service family member who has been posted with her husband and children to Beijing, Madras, Nairobi and Taipei. A cross-cultural trainer and international educator, Ms. Huskey founded Global Adjustments in India, a relocation company that specializes in cross-cultural training. She is also a co-founder of the American International School in Chennai and a former international director of Very Special Arts International at the John F. Kennedy Center. She has published articles in Newsweek, the Washington Post, State magazine, the Foreign Service Journal and Centered on Taipei.*

*This article is excerpted from her forthcoming book *Unofficial Diplomat* (New Academia Publishing, September), a volume in the *Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Memoirs and Occasional Papers Series*.*

*A large crowd of students  
listened as we shared  
our experiences  
demonstrating against the  
Vietnam War in the U.S.*

1970s. A large crowd of students listened as we shared our experiences protesting against the Vietnam War in the U.S. We told them about the 1969 Moratorium March on Washington, and they listened with keen interest.

Over the next week we watched the movement spread to other campuses, each day expecting the government to crack down on this activity. May 4, 1989, was the 70th anniversary of the launching of the May 4 Movement, when crowds massed in Beijing to protest the Chinese government's weak response to the Treaty of Versailles. Once again students poured off the university campuses into the streets. Their numbers grew each day, until thousands of students were marching around the second ring road encircling the capital, where we lived, calling for freedom and the right to enter into dialogue with Communist Party leaders. The government did not respond; instead, its leaders stayed secluded in their privileged refuge of Zhongnanhai, adjacent to the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square.

On May 13, 1989, a Beijing Normal University student named Chai Ling made an emotional plea for the government to begin a dialogue with the students, or they would stage a hunger strike to demand direct negotiations with Communist Party leaders. When no response was forthcoming, the students descended by the thousands on Tiananmen Square, set up camp outside Mao Zedong's mausoleum, and launched the hunger strike. Mao must have been rolling over in his grave! Although he knew very well the power of mobilized students driven by nationalistic fervor, such as the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, he would have been horrified to witness students calling for democracy and freedom from the Communist Party.

Over the next week, the square filled with colorful banners, loudspeakers blared, and hundreds of tents were set up. We wandered among the students, amazed at what we were living through. In mid-May, Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev arrived in Beijing on an official visit. The first Russian head of state to visit China in 30 years, Gorbachev arrived at the Great Hall of the People for a historic meeting with Premier Deng Xiaoping. The entire international press corps came to Beijing to cover



the momentous meeting. Much to the embarrassment of the Chinese government, however, the student movement and occupation of Tiananmen Square turned out to be a far more colorful and interesting story.

ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, the BBC and many other media outlets from all over the world set up cameras in Tiananmen Square. While awaiting Gorbachev's arrival, they focused on the fasting students.

The night before the Gorbachev visit, students confronted police on the steps of the Great Hall of the People, which runs along the western side of Tiananmen Square. Because the media were on the scene to capture the drama, the entire world was drawn into the student movement. The video images of Chinese students broadcast worldwide aroused tremendous international sympathy for their struggle. The crowd's excitement was palpable.

### **Energized by Success**

Emboldened by the worldwide attention and support, students continued streaming into the area. People arrived from the countryside by the train carload, turning the square into a people's camp. The air was electric with debate, criticism and new ideas. Students were speaking publicly and testing their skills with new political slogans.

Each day, Jim and I wandered through throngs of students on street corners and in parks deep in heretofore-prohibited political debate. We watched them grow bolder by the day, becoming increasingly vocal and sure of their ideas. And the movement spread from street corners to offices, shops and worker cooperatives. We could almost feel the opening up of people's hearts and minds, like watching a dead flower come back to life. It was an astonishing experience. Students, workers, old and young people, shopkeepers, even Communist Party members, began smiling, greeting each other, speaking out in public, and defending their rights in the street.

By this point, tens of thousands of permanent demonstrators were occupying Tiananmen Square. Medical supplies flowed into the square from Hong Kong. Students lay with IVs in their arms on cots in hospital tents. Medics rushed in and out of the square offering first aid.

*Jim's eyewitness report remains, to this day, one of the most detailed descriptions of the night's events.*

The students established volunteer brigades to direct traffic, transport food and medical supplies, and patrol the streets and alleys. They and their supporters were effectively in control of large swaths of Beijing, as police and soldiers stayed out of sight. The students proclaimed they were setting up "a real people's government."

Meanwhile, Communist Party leaders remained hesitant and confused, unable to respond to calls for dialogue. Finally, on May 20 Premier Zhao Ziyang, the most liberal-minded member of the ruling Politburo, met with the students in Tiananmen Square. With tears in his eyes, he pleaded with them to stop their hunger strike and leave. Soon afterward, he was ousted from power for trying to stop the hardliners from cracking down. Placed under house arrest, he was never again seen in public before his death in January 2005.

Late on May 30, Vice Premier Li Peng went on television surrounded by members of the Politburo, stiffly dressed in Mao suits. He soberly announced that the government was sending troops in to restore order.

### **The Government Cracks Down**

On June 1, 1989, Jim went to Tiananmen Square at around 7 p.m., as he had done each evening since the movement had begun. He watched as young, unarmed People's Liberation Army troops tried to reach the square, but were turned back by the students and workers, who persuaded the soldiers not to hurt their fellow Beijingren. Celebrations rippled through the square.

The next morning, the government imposed martial law and clamped down on all media. As the entire world watched, broadcasters were shut down, some right in mid-sentence. Foreign broadcasters were pushed off their sets and the screens went black as millions of people all over the world watched. International reporters were physically forced to leave the square.

Nevertheless, on June 2, thousands of Chinese ignored the restrictions, riding their bicycles to Tiananmen Square in support of the students. Jim and I also solemnly biked through the streets and around the square. We could sense a strange mixture of exhilaration and foreboding as no one was certain what would happen

next. No police were visible. The students seemed to be running the city, directing traffic and maintaining order. But after foreign media broadcasts were cut off, it was difficult for us to find out what was happening.

The government began broadcasting over loudspeakers in the square and on street corners, proclaiming “The PLA loves the people and the people love the PLA.” The airwaves were filled with martial choruses singing patriotic marching songs and pledging to restore peace. On television, soldiers caked in makeup danced in flowing white chiffon capes to military music. So the only way to know what was really happening was to make the long trek down to Tiananmen Square and watch.

In the middle of all of this, Jim’s 70-year-old mother, Helen, came to visit us from Alabama and also got swept up in the excitement when she went down to the square with us. She saw the students’ huge white “Goddess of Democracy” statue modeled after the Statue of Liberty, and snapped photos of demonstrators sleeping in the square. And she, too, engaged in conversations with the protesters and felt the electricity in the air.

On the evening of June 2, 1989, a brigade of PLA troops nearly succeeded in reaching the square. Several thousand young men, appearing no more than 15 years old, marched west along Jianguomen Boulevard. The people surrounded them, however, and persuaded them not to attack. The young soldiers were dazed and scared, holding hands with each other like children on the playground. This time they were sent in from the countryside and had no idea what they were getting into. The demonstrators tried to educate them about the events in Beijing and urged them to join in the protest. We walked among the groups as a sense of victory once again reverberated across the square.

The evening of June 3 seemed to be a repeat of the preceding nights. Helen, Jim and I spent the early evening walking around the square talking to the students. Then Helen and I said goodnight to Jim around 9:30 p.m. and took a cab back to our apartment, leaving him behind in the square. On our way home, we stopped at the Great Wall Hotel; anxiety pervaded the press gathered there. Many thought some kind of confrontation

*People surrounded my cab  
and urged me to turn back,  
anxiously shouting,  
“Go home quickly; you can’t  
get through.” So I did.*

had to happen; otherwise, the government would just cease to exist. Helen and I then returned to our apartment.

Around 10 p.m. on June 3, Jim called and asked me to come back to the square. Hearing this, Helen commented: “This day has been amazing; the students have such zeal. The democracy movement seems so strong that the government can’t stop them.”

“I know,” I said. “It is unbelievable that the students could turn back the army night after night. What a phenomenal thing!”

I kissed Helen goodnight and tried to go back to the square — but people surrounded my cab and urged me to turn back, anxiously shouting, “Go home quickly; it is not safe, you can’t get through.” So I did.

### **“Do You Know Where Jim Huskey Is?”**

On reaching the apartment at around 10:30 p.m., I heard a rising roar in the streets below and the building began to shake a bit. My heart sank. I looked out and saw a seemingly endless column of tanks rolling swiftly toward the city center. Knowing that Jim was in Tiananmen Square, I frantically called the embassy.

“Do you know where Jim Huskey is? Have you heard from him?” I asked the Marine guard on duty.

“Sorry, ma’am, we’ve had no contact,” he responded. “Things are a bit confusing right now.”

As tanks advanced on the square from the west along Changan Boulevard, Jim was one of the only U.S. embassy officers to witness firsthand the nightlong massacre. Moments after the shooting started at around midnight, a man standing next to him was shot in the middle of the forehead. Jim ran behind the trees in front of the Gate of Heavenly Peace of the Forbidden City, then retreated eastward along Jianguo Boulevard (the Avenue of Eternal Peace) as the government machine-gunned its own citizens.

While most protesters either stood in front of the tanks or fled, Jim and a CNN cameraman did see angry crowds set one armored personnel carrier on fire, drag a soldier from it and beat him to death. From midnight to dawn, Jim ran in and out of the square, following each round of shooting to count the wounded and the dead.

After a night of counting bodies and helping Americans and others get out of the area, Jim ended up in the early morning of June 4 at the Beijing Hotel, in the embassy's 17th-floor room overlooking Jianguomen Boulevard and Tiananmen Square, exhausted. He returned to the embassy mid-morning and, in a fury, wrote a long cable to the State Department outlining minute by minute what he had seen. That eyewitness report remains, to this day, one of the most detailed descriptions of the night's events. When the Chinese government later tried to deny that anyone was killed in the square that night, Jim's account was crucial evidence of what had actually happened.

He made his way home late that day, June 4, utterly shaken by what he had witnessed. Only then could I rest.

### **Leaving the Chaos Behind**

In the chaotic days that followed, I and other embassy members manned the phones, calling all Americans in the Beijing Consular District who had registered with the embassy, and answering questions from Americans calling in from across China. Many panicked and didn't know if they should stay where they were or leave the country. Thousands thronged the Beijing airport trying to leave. I managed to squeeze Jim's mother, Helen, onto one of the departing flights.

A few days later, as the security situation continued to deteriorate, Ambassador James Lilley called a meeting of all embassy families and told us that he was ordering a "voluntary evacuation." While he was speaking, however, a barrage of gunfire broke out in front of the embassy and the ambassador changed his order on the spot: he called for a mandatory evacuation of all non-essential personnel. He gave us an hour to prepare to leave China. But I refused to leave the embassy until I could say goodbye to Jim, who was out convoying American students and tourists from their university campuses and hotels in northwestern Beijing to the east side of the city and proximity to the airport.

As I waited, Chinese troops opened fire again, this time on the nearby diplomatic high-rise apartments on Jianguomenwai Street. Someone shoved a phone in my hand and said, "Help them!" I started talking with em-

*With foreboding in my heart,  
I closed the door to  
our apartment, leaving  
the chaos — and my  
husband — behind.*

bassy families over the telephone as the soldiers were shooting up their apartments. I urged them to run for the U.S. Marine van waiting outside their compound. "Leave your things behind. Just go quickly!" I told them. One family was literally under their beds talking to me on the phone while bullets bounced off the walls in their apartment. They eventually made it to safety. Luckily, no American was hurt despite what seemed like complete anarchy in the streets of Beijing.

Along with all the other families and "non-essential" personnel, I was relocated to the Lido Hotel near the airport. Jim was still out ferrying Americans to safety, so I didn't get to see him before I left Beijing the next morning. At that time, I didn't know if I would ever be back. With foreboding in my heart that night, June 8, 1989, I closed the door to our apartment, and left the chaos — and my husband — behind.

The next morning, I was evacuated from China, relieved to be on a United Airlines jet bound for the U.S. My husband and I were separated for four months, during the worst period in U.S.-China relations. It wasn't until October 1989 that I returned to join Jim in a very different Beijing. The government had cracked down on all freedom. We were watched by security police. It was risky to meet with our Chinese friends. No one was able to mention what happened in Tiananmen Square and no one could mourn the dead.

Nineteen years later as we walked through the square with our children, Beijingers were strolling and laughing while taking tourist photos. For the young people in the square, the events of 1989 were ancient history. They now lived in a vibrant new country, preparing to host the Olympics. National pride and happiness were palpable as the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China approached.

But for Jim and me, and for those who were there in June two decades ago, Tiananmen will always remind us of courage and hope and a glimmer of democratic freedom. In this month marking the 20th anniversary of the Beijing "Democracy Spring," let us not forget — and yes, even mourn — those who died for a better China. ■



# MY BLACK BELT JOURNEY



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IN TAEKWONDO, ONE PRACTITIONER LEARNS,  
IT'S NOT THE DESTINATION THAT MATTERS  
BUT THE JOURNEY.

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*By SCOTT B. TICKNOR*

taekwondo: literally, “the art of kicking and punching.” It didn’t sound like the kind of skill I needed to learn at the age of 40. I was more a guitar-playing, read-a-good-book kind of guy. And as a Foreign Service officer at the consulate in Mumbai, just getting through work and adjusting to a new culture put more than enough on my plate.

It was 2003, and we were leading busy lives in a frenetic city. We’d gone through a nuclear scare that year when

India and Pakistan seemed headed toward war, and we had been living in a new world of heightened terrorist threats ever since 9/11.

Still, I was intrigued by the trainer who came every day to teach the Korean martial art in the outdoor patio of our small apartment building — not only by his graceful movements and flexibility, but by the way he cleaned the patio before every class, sweeping away the dust and soot accumulated from the city's pollution like a weekly puja (the act of showing reverence to God). When I met him at a party one night, I was drawn by the charisma of this young, wiry Nepali who proposed to teach me Taekwondo. Sher — because his full name was too complicated to pronounce, he said “Just call me Sher” — could barely speak English. But he radiated enthusiasm.

### **You're Never Too Old**

We began working out in a tiny consulate happy-hour room with a pool table at one end, a large wooden bar at the other, and walls filled with photos of movie stars. The room was musty and smelled of beer, but it was the only free space I knew of that had enough room to do a few kicks and provided indoor air-conditioning to ward off Mumbai's humidity and pollution. Sher soon had me doing duck walks around the pool table and push-up dips with bar chairs.

Over the course of a year, he shared fragments of his life — how he had left Nepal several years before to seek a better life in India's biggest city and had developed a network of Taekwondo “gigs” all over Mumbai. He taught middle-class kids in a large park near our house; he taught Indian movie stars; he taught street children. One day Sher took me to spar (practice fight) with one of his street pupils, a one-armed man in rags who showed me his kicks and punches with incredible

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### *Every new instructor I've had focused initially on correcting all the “mistakes” of my previous teacher.*

determination and skill. We had just done push-ups in a local park; every time I dipped down, my face was swimming in a cloud of mosquitoes. After that experience, I limited my workouts to the air-conditioned pool room and approached the sport with greater humility.

As a poor migrant far from his family, Sher had very little, but gave a lot of himself — to his students and to the animals he frequently rescued on the streets. One day he came to class with a huge injured hawk, which he tethered outside the room so he could take it to a vet after our lesson. He saw potential in me, his oldest student, reassuring me “you're never too old for a challenge” and seeing me through my green belt. (Taekwondo belts start with white, and then go up through yellow, green, blue, red and, finally, black.)

In 2004, my wife, newborn son and I moved to Accra and were once again consumed with setting up a new life. As the embassy's political chief, I scrambled to understand this new country as it headed into national elections. Our three-year tour would keep me busy with participating in Ghana's 50th-anniversary celebrations, launching a major outreach effort to the Muslim community, tracking narcotics and corruption scandals, and handling a steady stream of visitors.

### **Abel-Bodied**

I still found time for Taekwondo in Ghana. It helped that our house was well configured for it, with a downstairs open-air garage that doubled as a dojo. My first teacher was a muscular Burkinabe named Abel. Like Sher, Abel was trying to make a better life for himself far from home. He was also escaping family expectations, avoiding pressure from his father to join the family construction business.

Abel taught Taekwondo literally by the book, consulting instruction texts to walk me through my paces. He loved working with groups of children and his soft smile contrasted with his rippling, cut physique, motorcycle and air of mystery. But his life was complicated: he had constant, ever-more-tangled problems with women; family members constantly called him for favors; and he got into rumbles with Ghanaian neigh-

bors who resented foreigners. Our relationship cooled when I began hearing stories that he was wanted by the police, possibly for robbery. He tested me for my blue belt and then left suddenly for Burkina Faso, never to be heard from again.

Steven, the Ghanaian national Taekwondo champion, took me into the next part of my martial arts career. He was a steady, friendly fellow: much less muscle-rippling, much less complicated. Inevitably, as with every new instructor I've had, he focused initially on correcting all the "mistakes" of my previous teacher — the imperfect stances, the wayward stylized fighting, etc. He taught me how to use a punching bag, which was fun until I broke my toe on a kick.

Our sessions slowed not just because of my hobbled toe but because Steven's knee was in pain from an earlier injury. Doctors told him he needed surgery and should take a break from Taekwondo. He couldn't afford to have the surgery or to stop giving lessons. Like a macho martial artist, he persevered under increasing pain.

Then one day he announced he had to leave Ghana temporarily because his village had selected him to be their next chief. He had no desire to be a traditional chief, but saw no way out. If he resisted, he was convinced villagers would send goons to track him down and force him to succumb to his fate. His only option, he told me, was to hide out in France for a while, which would also give his knee a rest. Steven tested me for my red belt — and then disappeared.

### **Taekwondo Cameroonian-Style**

By that time I was preparing to leave Ghana, so I took a break from blocking and kicking until my next post, Yaounde. Sebastien, president of the Yaounde Taekwondo chapter, was my next mentor — a heavy-set, friendly Cameroonian who enjoyed talking about French literature more than doing martial arts.

Rarely changing out of his jeans and sweater, Sebastien stretched me into contortions and drilled me on a dictionary's worth of new Korean terms. He seemed steady and uncomplicated (if a bit lazy) until he started asking for money, first for small amounts and then for large chunks. He came in taxis and then asked me for

*Sher had left Nepal to seek a better life and had developed a network of Taekwondo "gigs" all over Mumbai.*

the money to pay the cabs. He was unreachable for weeks because of a lost cell phone, and then asked for money to buy a new one.

I ended our sessions and once again took a break from martial arts, unsure if I had the drive to try again. My new job kept me busy, managing the political, economic, commercial and assistance

work of a medium-size embassy. Taekwondo was taking time away from my 4-year-old, who frequently interrupted my home workout sessions with pleas of "Can you play with me?" And not only were the Korean terms difficult to learn, but my body was feeling less flexible with age.

But eventually I decided to tackle the sport again with Sylvan, a member of the Cameroonian national team, who gave me a tryout that left me curled on the floor in a pool of sweat. Like his predecessors, Sylvan corrected all the "flaws" in my technique, expanded my Korean vocabulary, and got me back into the sport. After several months, upon my return from a long vacation, Sylvan announced "it's time," and booked me for a black belt exam 10 days later.

He worked with me two hours a day, reassuring me that I was ready at the same time as he threw new words and techniques at me. "I haven't done attack-defense exercises for years," I protested; he promised to review them all with me. When I said I'd only done board-breaking once, he assured me: "Don't worry; it's easy and you're ready." Sure enough, when it came time for the exam, a day after my 45th birthday, it all came back to me in a rush of adrenaline and sweat.

As I caught my breath and stared in amazement at the four boards I had broken (it really was easy after all!), my two examiners asked why I did Taekwondo and what the sport meant for me. I first gave them a Foreign Service officer answer, marveling at the sport's 2,000-year history. I admired the fact that it was a symbol of ethnic cooperation in ancient Korea and had survived underground as a source of national pride for decades when the sport was outlawed during the Japanese occupation. I was impressed that Taekwondo was a uniting factor for North and South Korea, that it borrowed from Japanese and Chinese martial arts, that it grew from rel-



## F O C U S

ative obscurity to being the most practiced martial art in the world, and that it had been recognized as a full Olympic sport in 2000.

### **Just the Beginning**

The examiners nodded, but I could tell they wanted to know about my personal journey. During my years of doing Taekwondo, I had gained a son and moved across continents. I saw generosity and perseverance in the instructors who had encouraged me, even as they struggled with their own personal, physical and financial challenges. Their dedication to their art inspired me to overcome my own doubts and physical insecurities.

Finally, I explained to my black belt testers that I pursued Taekwondo mainly because of the challenge and the exercise, and because devoting five years to working toward a difficult goal made me feel younger and more

*Their dedication to their art inspired me to overcome my own doubts and physical insecurities.*

alive. The black belt isn't the end but the beginning of a new set of goals — “and you're never too old for a challenge,” I said. The examiners nodded, congratulating me on passing the test. “You're never too old,” they agreed, “but at your age, don't spend too much time learning to spar. At your age, you don't need to fight.”

My first lesson with Sylvan after this test was sobering. “You only begin to learn Taekwondo once you get the black belt,” he said, outlining a new, much more intense routine for the coming year. I would have to do more cardio, take fewer breaks, build my muscles, increase my tolerance for pain. I would have to absorb the spiritual aspects of the sport and learn that each movement I learned in the previous five years had an inner meaning connecting the mind to the body. He took me

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## F O C U S

through a warm-up that left me gasping for air, then introduced a totally new set of stretching exercises that required holding awkward positions until my limbs ached. He corrected flaws in basic kicks I had been executing for years but was not doing “the black belt way.” This was a new world, he reminded me, and I could see from his new intensity that he saw his job as pushing me to my limits.

This is the point when many people drop out of martial arts, I’m told. By dropping out after the black belt test, you can brag about your achievement without enduring the trials of the next, more serious stage. And as I squeeze in Taekwondo sessions around work and family commitments and once again recognize my physical limitations, I have to admit that another year

*When my two examiners asked what Taekwondo meant to me, I initially gave them a Foreign Service officer answer, marveling at the sport’s 2,000-year history.*

of meeting Sylvan’s demands sometimes strikes me as a bit insane.

But as our routine takes a dramatic shift into higher gear, I also find myself drawn to a deeper understanding of the sport, to the physics of perfecting a technique, to the beauty of the roundhouse kick and cat stance, to the multiple intricacies that make Taekwondo so fascinating.

I’ve begun to internalize that most Asian of insights: It’s not the destination that matters — it doesn’t even seem so important when you get there — but the journey. And so, at least for now, I’ll continue Taekwondo — not for the fighting skills or some promised spiritual gain, but for the exercise, and for the challenge of seeing whether I can do it and where it all leads. ■


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# RUSS AND I



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A CARPOOL CHAT LEADS TO THE ADDITION OF SEVERAL LONG-DECEASED DIPLOMATS' NAMES TO THE AFSA MEMORIAL PLAQUES.

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*By JASON VORDERSTRASSE*

**F**elix Russell Engdahl (better known during his lifetime as Russ) was a Foreign Service officer who died in Hong Kong in 1942. In researching his case for inclusion on the AFSA Memorial Plaques, along with those of two other diplomats, I found the following curious letter, reproduced verbatim, in his personnel file:



Mr. Stimson,  
Sect. State

Dear Sir —

*I wish to draw your attention to a Mr. Russel Engdahl who last year was Vice-Consul to Haiti. A fine good Episcopal lad, but who is in danger after much persuasion and pressure from priests and a treacherous Mother of becoming the husband of her daughter and marrying into the Roman Catholic Church ... It is appalling the way the heads of our government are fast falling a pray to the Catholic Church thro just such methods and many others. This is an appeal from one who knows but can do nothing.*

*Even though the trail  
was cold, I felt a compulsion  
to continue my research.*

*An American*

Clearly, the National Archives takes its responsibilities seriously: it had kept this letter in Engdahl's personnel file ever since 1932.

### **History Comes Alive**

The roots of my research into Engdahl's life date back to the mid-1980s, when I first lived in Hong Kong while in high school. During that time, I was fortunate enough to meet various longtime residents of the territory, including a few who had been there during World War II. Listening to their stories and visiting some of the battle locations made their experiences come alive.

After I left Hong Kong in 1990, however, I rarely thought about this period in history. But those memories came back once I was assigned to the territory in early 2007.

Like many other entry-level Foreign Service officers, I was assigned to live at Shouson Hill, on the south side of the island. While that neighborhood offers beautiful views, it is not convenient for public transportation. As a result, up to five of us would crowd into a colleague's Mazda 121 each morning, carpooling to the consulate together. The vehicle was sometimes so packed that we called it "the clown car." A positive aspect of this daily shoehorning, though, was the opportunity to discuss many different matters.

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One day, a fellow carpooler mentioned that he had visited the Stanley Military Cemetery, and had found a U.S. diplomat's grave from 1942. He also said that the diplomat's name was not on the AFSA Memorial Plaques, which com-

memorate Foreign Service personnel who have died in the line of duty. Apart from having scanned the names on the plaques briefly on a few occasions when I was in the C Street Lobby of the Harry S. Truman Building, I did not know much about them.

Early in 2008, I moved to the American Citizen Services unit at the consulate, where my responsibilities included prison visits. When looking at the map to check the locations of the facilities I was going to visit, I noticed that two of them were very close to the Stanley Military Cemetery. So I decided to stop there and look for the deceased diplomat. Unfortunately, I did not remember his name, and I had neglected to ask where in the cemetery he was buried. So although the site is relatively small, I despaired of ever tracking down the grave — particularly because I had scheduled my visit to be brief, taking place just before I was to meet an incarcerated American at the nearby Tung Tau Prison.

In the last section of the cemetery, I came across a gravestone marked "FRENGDAHL, U.S. CONSUL, DIED 15.4.1942, AGED 34." The inscription was crudely carved into the rough-hewn stone, so much so that I did not realize that the letters "NGDAHL" were smaller than the "FRE", making me think that the diplomat's last name was "Frengdahl." After the prison visit, I did a few Internet searches, and began to realize that "Frengdahl" was an incorrect rendering of the consul's name, which was actually *F.R. Engdahl*. Other results I pulled up were primarily for "Edmund Roberts," a name unfamiliar to me.

Eventually, I discovered that Roberts was a special diplomatic agent of the United States, sent by President Andrew Jackson to conclude treaties with Muscat, Siam and Cochin China. Roberts intended to travel on to Japan, but died of cholera or dysentery in Macau in 1836 before reaching his destination. He is buried in the Old Protestant Cemetery in Macau, along with two other U.S. diplomats who died in the 1800s, Thomas W. Waldron and Samuel Burge Rawle. Waldron died of cholera, an occupational hazard for a diplomat at that time, while Rawle apparently died of old age.

### Unraveling the Mystery

Further Internet searches confirmed that Felix Russell Engdahl was indeed the individual buried in the military cemetery. But at this point I did not know *how* he had died, information that was necessary to determine his eligibility for commemoration on the AFSA Memorial Plaques.

Even though the trail was cold, I felt a compulsion to continue my research. I can't articulate precisely what drove me, but in large part it was a conviction that the service of these men should finally be recognized.

I decided to write to the Historian's Office for more information about Engdahl and Roberts, on the assumption that the department maintained biographies of anyone who had ever worked there. I quickly learned that this was not the case, particularly for 19th-century diplomats. I was instead referred to the State Department's Ralph J. Bunche Library and the National Archives. The library gave me several leads on books, while the National Archives referred me to the National Personnel Records Center, which has records on many federal employees. Several weeks after writing the NPRC, I received a thick envelope on Engdahl, which included such items as his application to the Foreign Service, his personnel evaluations and two photographs.

I was very surprised to learn that personnel files become public records after an individual's death — something all of us should keep in mind as we write Employee Evaluation Reports! To be sure, the process has changed considerably over the years. Some very blunt and now-illegal statements appear in Engdahl's reviews, calling him "lazy" and describing him as a "blue-eyed Nordic type." In addition to the letter quoted at the beginning of this piece, there are a few other references to the fiancée he'd had while in Port-au-Prince. He did not end up marrying that woman, but instead wed Elizabeth "Lee" Lockhart, who joined the Foreign Service herself after World War II and lived until Dec. 15, 1994.

From his personnel file, I learned that Russ Engdahl joined the Foreign Service on Dec. 16, 1930. After serving as vice consul in Port-au-Prince and Calcutta, he took up an assignment in Shanghai in October 1935. He was still serving there as consul in late 1941 when he traveled to Hong Kong on courier duty. (Copies of his ship tickets

*Further Internet searches confirmed that Felix Russell Engdahl was indeed the individual buried in Stanley Military Cemetery.*

were in his personnel file.) After the Japanese invaded, he was interned in Stanley along with all Allied civilians, including several other members of the Foreign Service.

Engdahl died on May 14, 1942, shortly before the interned Americans (including members of the Foreign Service) were repatriated to the United States. The July 1942 *FSJ* ("In Memoriam") contains the following obituary:

"ENGDAHL. — F. Russell Engdahl, last assigned Consul at Shanghai, and recently detained by the enemy, died on May 13, in Hong Kong."

### Suspicious Circumstances?

Given Engdahl's death and burial during the occupation of Hong Kong, I naturally assumed he had been killed by Japanese soldiers. Fortunately, his personnel file in-

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cludes several contemporaneous descriptions and telegrams related to the incident that led to his demise. Unfortunately, even though Engdahl was held in the same house as four other U.S. diplomats, none of them witnessed the event that caused his death. All, however, were adamant that the Japanese were not involved.

According to the reports, on the night of May 13, 1942, Engdahl got up for water, which necessitated going downstairs. His fellow internees then heard him fall. They found him at the bottom of the stairs and, although he was unconscious, put him to bed. He died the next morning, from a skull fracture sustained in the fall. Fortunately for my research, one of the internees, John Bruins, had taken measurements of the stairs and described them in great detail.

By the time I received Engdahl's personnel file, I had already established contact with several amateur historians in the United States and Hong Kong, a few of whom had some information about him. Most of them also thought Engdahl had been murdered, most likely by being pushed down the stairs by an internment camp guard. None of these historians had seen the contemporaneous descriptions of his death by his fellow internees, however. Their belief was primarily based on a statement by renowned China hand John Service, who, as part of testimony before the Senate, had said that Engdahl had been "killed." Unfortunately, Service did not elaborate on this statement; but I now believe that he meant "killed in an accident."

Because the accounts of Engdahl's death were written by his contemporaries in the United States during the war, I felt it unlikely that they would have avoided blaming the Japanese if they were, indeed, involved. Still, I wanted to see the stairs in question to judge for myself.

Through my contacts with a historian based in the U.S., I learned from another internment camp survivor the exact location of the house where Engdahl and his fellow internees had been held. It was at the St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, very close to the Stanley Military Cemetery. Those who have visited Hong Kong will know that few buildings over 50 years old remain. Fortunately, it appeared from the school's Web site that recent construction had not led to the razing of the original buildings.

Armed with the description from Bruins and a tape measure, I felt confident I could find the stairs if they still

*Some very blunt and  
now-illegal statements  
appear in Engdahl's  
employee evaluation  
reports.*

existed. At the school, I learned that they were most likely in the house of the headmistress. After securing her permission, we went inside to see them. The measurements matched the Bruins description exactly. The stairs were quite steep, making it easy to see how Engdahl could have died from a fall. The upstairs area where Engdahl and his fellow internees slept was very small and could only be accessed by the single set of stairs, so it would have been nearly impossible for anyone to sneak into the house without the internees knowing.

I felt a sense of closure in visiting the house, confident that I now knew for sure that he had died in an accident.

**"In the Line of Duty"**

Although Engdahl almost certainly died in an accident, and Roberts and Waldron of disease, I still felt all three men merited nomination for the plaques. With many others listed on the memorial as having died from disease, I was certain that Roberts and Waldron also qualified. As for Engdahl, had it not been for his diplomatic service, he would not have been interned in Hong Kong. To me, that met the standard of "dying in the line of duty."

I was gratified when AFSA accepted all three nominations, as that provided a concrete result for all of this research. (All three names were engraved on the plaques on Foreign Affairs Day, May 1, 2009.) I only wish I had undertaken this research 20 years earlier, as then I might have been able to speak with someone who had served with Engdahl.

While I have learned a great deal from colleagues of Lee Engdahl and family members of her husband, none of them knew him personally. I still harbor the hope that I will eventually find someone with personal recollections of Russ, but with each passing year I know that becomes less and less likely.

If I have learned anything from this process, it is that there are many Americans buried overseas whose stories have yet to be told. So there are very likely other U.S. diplomats who died in the line of duty but are not yet listed on the AFSA Memorial Plaques. I hope that employees at other posts will be inspired to undertake this type of research, so that we can commemorate the efforts of those who came before us. ■



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# COUNTERTERRORISM: SOME LESSONS TO CONSIDER



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A RETIRED DIPLOMAT SEES A DISTURBING PATTERN OF INCONSISTENCY, DISHONESTY AND DECEIT IN THE U.S. RESPONSE TO ACTS OF TERRORISM.

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*By ALAN BERLIND*

The suicide attacks on the United States of Sept. 11, 2001, alerted most Americans to the terrorist threat for the first time, even though large numbers of their compatriots had been killed in overseas terrorist incidents during previous decades. The response of the Bush administration to the attacks, however, attracted no more attention among the general public than had the reaction of previous administrations to earlier incidents.

Taking comfort in the tough and patriotic rhetoric that flowed daily from Washington, the majority of Americans did

not want to consider the idea that the death, destruction and offense to the nation were being used as pretexts for pursuing unrelated goals — much less allegations that credible intelligence available before the attacks had been disregarded.

Leaving 9/11 to future historians, we might more usefully ask how American policymakers reacted to previous acts of terrorism against U.S. targets, and then re-examine the question of how best to deal with this awful blight on modern civilization. My limited experience suggests a disturbing pattern of inconsistency, dishonesty and deceit in high places, centered on the oft-repeated dictum that the United States does not negotiate with terrorists.

That serious charge is best illustrated by a gruesome tale of interrelated events spanning nine years in Africa and the Middle East — a tale I could not tell before now, because of one secret I knew and another I did not. The recent release of documents some 35 years after the events recounted below compel me to tell that story and to offer some unremarkable, textbook proposals for handling future crises.



On March 1, 1973, the Saudi ambassador in Khartoum, dean of the diplomatic corps, hosted a reception in honor of departing U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission George Curtis Moore. Early on, eight armed men crashed the party; captured Moore, newly arrived American Ambassador Cleo Noel Jr. and Belgian Chargé d’Affaires Guy Eid; and demanded the release of several Palestinians from custody in Jordan and freedom for Robert Kennedy’s assassin, Sirhan Sirhan. The terrorists were members of “Black Septem-

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*Alan Berlind retired from the Foreign Service in 1986 after 25 years in nine jobs, including three in Washington, plus a year each at Columbia University and the National War College. Specializing in political-military and trans-Atlantic affairs, he served as DCM in Khartoum and Athens, director of the Office of the Law of the Sea Negotiations in Washington and political adviser at NATO. Following retirement, he taught at two American colleges in Greece and now lectures occasionally at the University of Bordeaux in France, where he lives with his wife and son.*

*I could not tell this  
tale before now because  
of one secret I knew and  
another I did not.*

ber,” an instrument of the Palestine Liberation Organization and its Fatah wing, led by Yasser Arafat. Sudanese security forces surrounded the embassy but did not intervene for fear of putting the lives of the hostages at risk, while the government attempted to secure their release by other means.

Others elsewhere were less concerned, or more cavalier, respecting the hostages’ fate. On March 2, 1973, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Management William Macomber was dispatched to Khartoum, presumably in the hope that their release could be arranged. Before the envoy could arrive, however, President Richard Nixon let it be known loudly and publicly that in keeping with U.S. policy against negotiating with terrorists, Washington would pay no blackmail.

Shortly after that pronouncement, intended for a worldwide audience and bolstered by a comment for the press from the State Department to the effect that Macomber had no negotiating authority, Noel, Moore and Eid were murdered in cold blood. Sudanese forces promptly arrested the Palestinians and placed them in prison pending trial.

Over the ensuing 15 months, American officials attempted to hold the Sudanese government’s feet to the fire, urging that priority be given to the judicial proceedings that had been promised. The Sudanese kept promising, but in the early hours of June 24, 1974, after a court had summarily sentenced the accused to life imprisonment and President Jaafar al-Nimeiry had immediately thereafter commuted the sentences to seven years each, Sudanese authorities spirited the prisoners out of jail and onto a plane bound for Cairo, saying they would be handed over to the PLO for execution of the sentences. Washington reacted swiftly, recalling American Ambassador William Brewer from Khartoum and suspending various bilateral programs and projects. The Egyptian government, for its part, seized the killers at the airport and imprisoned them.

**Where I Came In**

About to complete a tour at the U.S. embassy in Belgium and with four years of African experience, I was sent to Khartoum in late July 1974 as chargé d’affaires, with only an overnight briefing from Amb. Brewer in Brussels and instructions not to initiate any discussions with Sudanese

officials. Administration of the silent treatment was meant to punish the Sudanese for their want of firmness in the face of terrorism. Nixon had just recently resigned and Henry Kissinger, who had become Secretary of State while remaining national security adviser, was in undisputed control of foreign policy.

Within days of my arrival, I received a cable outlining “U.S. Policy Toward Sudan in Wake of Terrorist Release” (State 169610, sent Aug. 2, 1974; declassified Sept. 25, 2002): “Conclusion is that Pres. Nimeiri’s decision to release terrorists to PLO for execution of commuted sentences is incompatible with continuation of cooperative ties. ... In addition to substance of decision, manner in which it was made and USG learned of it showed scant courtesy to highest level USG. ... In dealings with GOS, Embosffs should continue correct posture, meeting with officials at their request. ... You should respond to specific assistance requests of all types with statement that you will submit them to Washington for consideration, but that GOS should not RPT not expect early response.”

But there was a problem. Several months earlier, the militant arm of the Eritrean Liberation Front had kidnapped several people, killed one and released a few. They were still holding four, including two Americans, somewhere in the wilds of northern Ethiopia. Neither Embassy Addis Ababa nor the Ethiopian government, which was in its last days, had any good intelligence on the exact whereabouts of the hostages, much less any leverage on their captors. The best avenue to information about and subsequent resolution of this terrorist incident passed through the security services of the blacklisted Sudanese government.

How to overcome this obstacle? While I sought and weighed assurances from Eritrean interlocutors in Khartoum that the hostages were in good health, the Sudanese security services were ever so quietly encouraged to pursue efforts to secure an end to the episode. With their help, the hostages emerged unscathed at the border in September and departed the next day for the United States. Khartoum’s interests and Washington’s had both been served.

### **Modest Recommendations**

The instruction given me before I left Brussels for Khartoum was, basically, to keep my mouth shut; but it did not

### *Administration of the silent treatment was meant to punish the Sudanese for their want of firmness in the face of terrorism.*

occur to me to stop thinking. Not convinced that our policies were producing positive results; concerned that they were sowing confusion in the Sudanese government and, via the diplomatic corps, abroad; and reasoning that Khartoum’s actions paled in comparison to the murders themselves, I undertook to draft for country team approval our joint appreciation of the situation and recommendations for future steps (Khartoum 2100, sent Sept. 11, 1974; declassified Nov. 15, 2001).

In brief, we recounted the Sudanese political motives for ridding themselves of the prisoners and reviewed U.S. national interests in ending the stalemate that in combination could be said to outweigh the Sudanese action. We suggested that the Sudanese contribution to the release of the ELF hostages deserved some recognition and proposed engaging our hosts openly to fully explain U.S. policy (for the first time) and explore Sudanese willingness to take appropriate measures to overcome the impasse.

The department’s terse, unresponsive and essentially dismissive reply — containing not a hint that our analysis and recommendations had been read, much less considered — arrived three weeks later (State 218518, sent Oct. 3, 1974; declassified Nov. 15, 2001): “... Our policy remains unchanged with respect to Sudan.” I realized that the sobriquet bestowed on me by a friendly colleague was on the mark: *Chargé de rien faire* (that is, in charge of doing nothing).

Not until 32 years later did I learn that senior American officials such as Under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco had been asking the Ethiopians to release some ELF prisoners to ease negotiations for the release of the hostages (State 171544, sent Aug. 6, 1974; declassified May 4, 2006). In other words, we were asking others to deal with terrorists while we maintained an uncompromising position.



Fast forward to July 1982, when I arrived in Athens as *chargé d'affaires* and was enlisted almost immediately in an effort led by U.S. diplomat Philip Habib to avert a regional disaster. The Israeli army under General Ariel Sharon had surrounded Yasser Arafat, some 1,000 of his fighters and many other Palestinians in the port area of Beirut, and was

threatening their mass annihilation. The only way to avoid a blood bath was to evacuate the Palestinians by sea, and the only feasible way to accomplish that in the time allotted was to seek Greek help on an urgent basis.

First, several Greek ship owners withdrew their vessels from the high-season August island trade and dispatched them to Beirut, where they took Palestinian troops on board and deposited them wherever permission had been granted. Secondly, Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu readily agreed to make available a Greek man-of-war to pick up Arafat in Beirut and carry him to safe haven. A massacre was avoided, along with potentially disastrous political fallout. Greek and U.S. interests were different but not incompatible in this case, and the generally poor state of relations at the time was put aside to get the job done.

*The instruction given me before I left for Khartoum was, basically, to keep my mouth shut; but it did not occur to me to stop thinking.*



What does all this have to do with that tragic episode in Sudan a decade earlier? The connection became apparent to me only recently, when a secret that I did not know at the time was made public, giving new meaning to the secret that I did know in 1974.

Although the State Department had been content to ship me off to Khartoum with no more than an overnight course for beginners, a friendly contact in Brussels judged that I should be better equipped. So before leaving I was shown the text of a message sent by radio from Beirut on March 2, 1973, by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, instructing the "Khartoum Eight" to kill Cleo Noel, George Moore and Guy Eid.

National Security Adviser Kissinger, if not his boss, was presumably aware that Arafat had been directly involved



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in the murders: That intercept of the order to kill was almost certainly the work of the National Security Agency, which was closely monitoring the situation; if the Belgians had gotten it from some other source, they would have surely shared it at once with the U.S. Assuming that others up the line who had to know did know, I never thought to ask at the time.

Later research backed up that assumption. The Arlington National Cemetery Web site ([www.arlingtoncemetery.com](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.com)) credits Israeli intelligence with intercepting the order to kill and forwarding it at once to Washington. (Elsewhere, in a chilling reminder of former National Security Council counterterrorism adviser Richard Clarke's allegation that serious intelligence warnings of an attack on the U.S. were ignored prior to 9/11, former NSA Middle East analyst James Welsh has for several years been testifying that in late February 1973 he sent a flash message to State, for forwarding to Khartoum, concerning a credible warning of an imminent PLO operation in Sudan, which inexplicably was never passed on. See [www.wnd.com](http://www.wnd.com) and [www.frontpagemag.com](http://www.frontpagemag.com) for reports on Welsh's efforts to draw official attention to this matter.)

In any case, a 1973 State Department document declassified and released on May 4, 2006, leaves little doubt about what was known and who knew it ([www.state.gov/documents/organization/67584.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/67584.pdf)): "The Khartoum operation was planned and carried out with the full knowledge and personal approval of Yasir (sic) Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the head of Fatah. Fatah representatives in Khartoum participated in the attack, using a Fatah vehicle to transport the terrorists to the Saudi Arabian embassy." (The same document, incidentally, also notes that "no effort was spared, within the capabilities of the Sudanese government, to secure the freedom of the hostages.")

### **A Secret Revealed**

Arafat's central role in the assassinations was the secret I already knew, thanks only to that friendly briefing I was given in 1974. The devastating secret I did not know showed up in the papers of former CIA Director Richard Helms released in August 2008. These files make clear that in 1973, within days of the Khartoum murders, the

*We were asking others  
to deal with terrorists  
while we maintained  
an uncompromising  
position.*

CIA had been authorized to pursue negotiations with a trusted Arafat aide.

Witness this excerpt from a memorandum of July 18, 1973, from CIA official Robert Ames to Helms, the U.S. ambassador to Iran at the time, who, several of the papers make clear, was in constant contact with Henry Kissinger ([www.foia.cia.gov](http://www.foia.cia.gov)):

*MEMORANDUM FOR: The Ambassador*

*SUBJECT: Contacts with the Fatah Leadership*

*During my stay in Beirut on 9-10 July [1973] I contacted a close associate of Fatah leader Yasir (sic) Arafat on the basis of a letter he sent to me requesting a meeting. As you know, I had a useful meeting with this fellow in the past and his position in Fatah is fully established. ... My contact said that significant changes had taken place in the Palestinian Movement since I had last seen him in early March 1973. He reiterated what he said at that time, which was shortly after the Khartoum murders. The fedeyeen have no plans to go after individual Americans or American interests; Khartoum had made its point of causing the USG to take fedeyeen terrorist activity seriously.*

*He again insisted that no blackmail was intended; the men would have been killed in any event. He said that, while he could not guarantee complete immunity from terrorist acts, no one can stop a determined individual gunman.*

*Arafat wanted the USG to know that he had "put the lid on" American operations by the fedeyeen and that the lid would stay on as long as both sides could maintain a dialogue, even though they might have basic disagreements. This was not a threat — i.e., talk to us or else — but a recognition that talking was necessary.*

### **The Iron Rule**

Defenders of both Nixon and the iron rule that demands there be no negotiations, no bargaining, no deals with terrorists may want to seize on the assurances of those terrorists that "the men would have been killed in any event," although that could just as easily have been an Arafat gesture for getting Nixon and Kissinger off the hook. Does it really matter?

Senior American officials, who would later fulminate over the release of the terrorists by the Sudanese, tolerated

threats (labeled something else) from those they knew had ordered the Khartoum killings within days of the dreadful event, perhaps even before Cleo Noel and Curt Moore had been laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

If Nixon and Kissinger thought it essential to negotiate quietly with Arafat for reasons related to broader Middle East policy, they might have saved lives in the process by doing so several days earlier, instead of going on the air with macho posturing that can be said to have triggered the Khartoum murders.



The United States must without question have a firm policy, stated and on the record, regarding terrorism, as well as the human and material resources for carrying out that policy. But the incidents cited above make certain lessons self-evident.

First, it is foolish, pointless and potentially dangerous to trumpet policy at every turn. Secondly, we have no right, moral or legal, to encourage other governments to negotiate while we stand aloof on principle. Thirdly, diversionary tactics aimed at concealing our role in negotiations serve no real purpose and may skew policy on other important issues.

Finally, we must rid ourselves of the notion that flexibility is weakness. It cannot be excluded that a particular situation will require negotiations, perhaps direct, perhaps via a third party, in order to save lives, both American and others.

The key requirement is to focus on vital interests rather than policies in determining how to respond to specific incidents. The interests of both parties to a negotiation can often be accommodated, whereas neither policy set in cement nor ideological rigidity leaves room or hope for compromise.



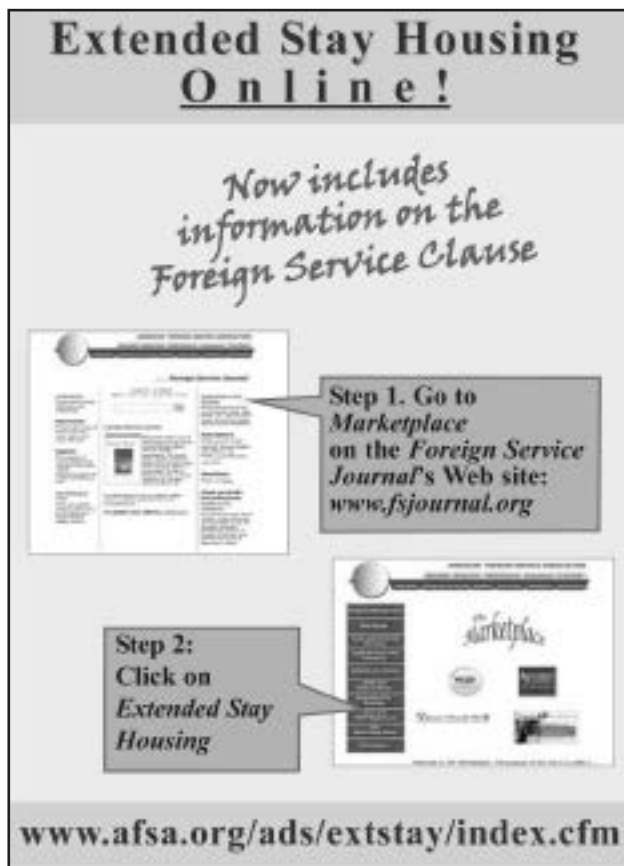
To the best of my knowledge, the evidence presented above has received no previous mention in the mainstream media, at home or abroad, although it is based on

*Within days of the  
Khartoum murders,  
the CIA had been authorized  
to pursue negotiations with  
a trusted Arafat aide.*

government documents declassified and released as long ago as 2006. The depressing conclusion is that old news is no news, no matter how important in substance. Perhaps that explains official confidence that publication of old secrets will make no waves.

Equally disheartening, Henry Kissinger's reputation as the supreme master of foreign affairs would probably suffer no damage even if the story I have told were broadcast beyond the circle of the *Journal's* devoted readership.

Does *anybody* care, including those in our own Foreign Service community? I do. I am certain I would not have chosen the career I did had I known what I now know about the dishonesty and deceit in high places — an awful truth I have stumbled upon only in retirement. ■



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# REPRIEVE ON MANILA BAY



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THEY SAY A CAT HAS NINE LIVES. BUT HOW MANY REPRIEVES ARE WE HUMANS GRANTED BEFORE MORTALITY'S INEVITABLE TRIUMPH?

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BY JOHN J. ST. JOHN

The sun was blindingly bright that Saturday in the summer of 1978, its heat only partially offset by the light breeze across the bow of the Philippine Government Customs launch as we sped across Manila Bay.

I was the State Department's man on a U.S. delegation that had finished negotiating a trade agreement with the Philippines the day before. Now, with 24 hours to kill before catching a plane to our next destination, we were being treated by the host government to a tour of Corregidor — also known as “The Rock” — that infamous isle where, 36 years be-

fore, an overwhelmingly outnumbered garrison of Americans and Filipinos had held out heroically under months of bombardment before their inevitable surrender to the Japanese.

The visit would give us an opportunity to see firsthand the conditions under which the beleaguered force had lived — especially the complex of caves and tunnels that provided the garrison's only shelter, the claustrophobic maze that encompassed living space, infirmary, storerooms and operations center, as well as General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters and that of the elected Philippine government.

During the two-hour trip, we felt the rigors of the past week's negotiations melt away. Yesterday we were government officials with a job to do; today we were tourists, intent only on relaxing and immersing ourselves in the history and locale of some of World War II's most significant events.

Well past the midpoint of the trip, an extraordinary sight seized our attention — a small island totally surmounted by what appeared to be a concrete battleship. And that is exactly what it was. Larger than a football field, its walls 25 to 36 feet thick, its deck more than 40 feet above the water, its armament four 14-inch naval guns in two heavily armored turrets, Fort Drum was an immobile concrete battleship that had dominated the entry to Manila Bay ever since its construction in the early 1900s. Although all but obsolete by 1942, it was one of Manila's last harbor defenses to fall to the Japanese.

### **A Concrete Battleship**

Seeing our obvious interest, our hosts moved the launch closer to the fort, where we could fully appreciate its size and see the hundreds of shell-holes that pocked its sides. Someone in charge read my mind and, on the spur of the moment, suggested we pull alongside and go aboard.

Climbing to the main deck, we found ourselves facing

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*Just inside the doorway,  
the ambient light changed  
instantly from blinding  
day to blackest night.*

a broad ramp, perhaps 20 feet wide, which led slightly downward toward an equally broad open doorway into the interior. I barely noticed the two striped sawhorses lying on their sides near the entryway, though the word "caution" flashed ever so briefly through my mind as I led both delegations forward.

Just inside the doorway, the ambient light changed instantly from blinding day to blackest night. After a few steps, I stopped to give my eyes time to adjust. Still sightless after a minute or two, I placed my hands behind my eyes, like a horse's blinders, to block more of the glare from outside. This helped, if only a little. I could sense, not really see, a very large room and — perhaps five or six feet in front of me — the short, frayed remnant of a rope hanging from the ceiling. But nothing more.

Realizing that the visibility was not going to get any better, I started forward. It was nearly the last step I ever took.

One of the most remarkable of human phenomena is the way our sense of time slows down — or maybe our thought processes speed up — when we are in extremis. My thoughts, still vivid in memory, went like this:

First: "I'm falling."

Next: "Hey, I'm still falling."

Third: "This is taking one helluva long time; I could get hurt."

Fourth: "Is this the end?"

Fifth: "Nobody up there in the dark even knows this drop-off is here; I'd better warn them."

So I did — I said, "Aaaaaaaaaaaaa...!"

And finally — splash!

### **Triaging Fear**

Surprisingly, my thoughts were calm and fairly well organized when I regained my feet. Relief at being alive, essentially unhurt, and standing in no more than a foot of water, was tempered by the realization — which grew quickly to fear — that I might not be alone down there in the dark. Snakes? Sharks? Morays? Are there 'gators in the Philippines? I quickly established communication with the folks up top, telling them I was OK but needed light and a long rope, in that order. And fast!

The light came quickly, large balls of crumpled newspaper set aflame with a cigarette lighter. This brought a new fear — might there be some flammable petroleum





*Fort Drum, the concrete battleship.*



*Out of the depths ...*



*Delegation head Mike Smith administers first aid.*

Photos by Lazare Teper

product floating on the surface? I triaged my fears, and decided to put that one aside.

While waiting for the rope, I looked for the first time at my surroundings and saw that I was, indeed, in a large room of approximately the length and breadth I had sensed just before the fall. But how far had I fallen? I guessed the height of the deck to be about 30 to 35 feet. However, 40 feet may be more nearly accurate — as others present at the time and historical records concerning the fort's dimensions indicate.

How in the world did I avoid breaking my legs, or even my back, falling into such shallow water from that height? The answer can only be that, although I began my fall in an upright posture, I gradually rotated forward by 90 degrees, thus spreading the impact of my contact with the water over my entire body.

As I continued looking around in the light of more flaming spheres of newsprint, I saw something even more

sobering. Protruding above the surface of the water all around me were large rocks and concrete blocks. I had fallen in the only open space in which I could possibly have survived a 40-foot drop!

### **Spinning to Safety**

Soon the rope arrived, cheering me immeasurably as I imagined all manner of marine predators circling and sizing up my meaty white legs. Judging that my freedom of action at the top would be greater if I ascended in a standing, rather than in a seated position, I stepped onto the rope's loop, rather than sitting in it, and the crew began slowly hauling me up.

Suddenly the rope began spinning — and I spun along with it. The centrifugal force induced both vertigo and a growing fear that I would lose my grip, resulting in an instant replay of my swan dive. Tony Bennett may have left his heart in San Francisco, but I definitely did not want to leave my body at the bottom of Fort Drum!

After what seemed a much longer time than it actually was, I arrived just below the deck and had to shout for the crew to stop hauling. From where I hung, I could see that the edge of the deck was bright, sharp metal, and I did not want my body dragged across that blade by over-enthusiastic rescuers, especially while spinning. With the help of strong arms on the deck, I was able to gain control, stop the spin and clamber over the edge with only a minor two-inch slice along the fatty part of my waistline.

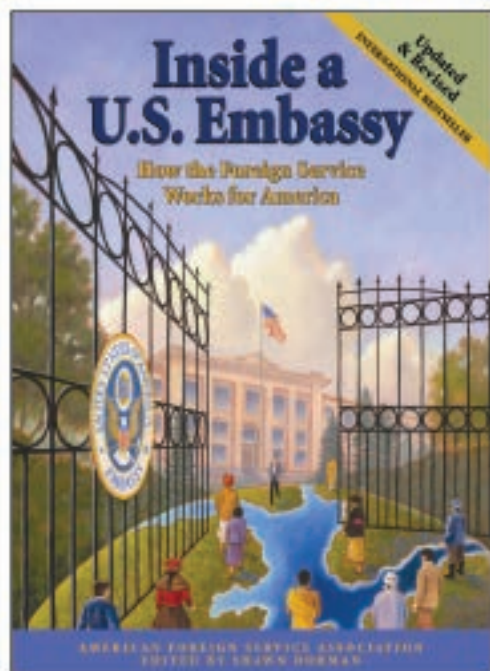
Luck was with me that day. The worst injury was to my watch, which was a total loss. My body got away with scrapes and scratches.

The motor launch dropped me off on the Bataan Peninsula (site of the bloody "death march" of World War II), where I was checked out and treated at the infirmary of a blue-jeans factory located there. After a quick shower, I was outfitted in some of their products, since the clothes in which I had begun the day were no longer usable, and then zipped across the bay in a motorboat just in time to join my colleagues for lunch and the afternoon tour of the wartime tunnels.

All in all, it was an eventful and memorable day. When it began, I had never heard of Fort Drum. By the time it ended, the concrete battleship had become a place I will never forget.

And although by the end of the day I had scratched off one of my "nine lives," that was just fine by me, considering the alternative. ■

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# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • June 2009

FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY 2009

## Memorial Plaque Ceremony Honors Diplomats of Old — And One Too Young

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

**O**n Foreign Affairs Day, held on May 1, the AFSA Memorial Plaque ceremony honored those Foreign Service personnel who lost their lives overseas while in the service of their country. This year, three of the four names added to the plaques in the State Department C Street lobby — Edmund Roberts, Thomas W. Waldron and F. R. Engdahl — were those of FSOs from America's past, including two of our country's earliest diplomats. Roberts and Waldron served in Southeast Asia in the early 19th century and both died, at different times, in Macau. From the 20th century came the name of F. R. Engdahl, an FSO posted to Hong Kong who was captured by the Japanese in 1941.

The fourth name added to the plaque this year was that of Brian Adkins, a gifted young first-tour officer who died tragically and violently in Ethiopia in January. The presence at the ceremony of so many young friends and colleagues of Mr. Adkins served as “a testament to the impact that Brian had on everyone whose lives he touched,” AFSA President John Naland said in his opening remarks. He next presided over the presentation of the colors by the U.S. Armed Forces Color Guard, who stood solemnly, their flags highlighted against the international flags lining the atrium windows above them. Following the Pledge of Alle-



Secretary Hillary Clinton speaks at the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony, flanked by the U.S. Armed Forces Color Guard (right), as AFSA President John Naland looks on, May 1.

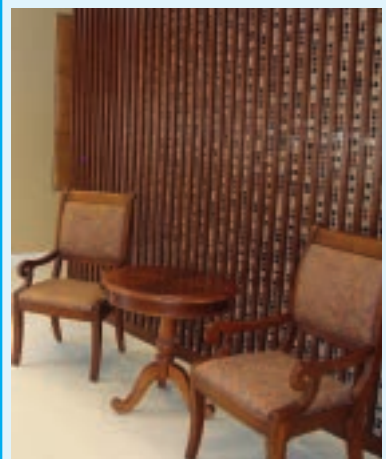
giance, Naland introduced Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Sec. Clinton first spoke directly and emotionally to the Adkins family, relaying condolences on their loss on behalf of the Foreign Service community. She then read a message from President Barack Obama, in which he honored all diplomats who have fallen in the line of duty, noting that “danger is not just confined to war zones.”

Turning to the plaques, Sec. Clinton called them a reminder of “the gravity of the work we do here.” She spoke about all four men whose inscribed names were unveiled at the ceremony, but ended with a tribute to Brian Adkins, remarking that the “smart, talented and generous young man” was “everything his country looks for in a Foreign Service officer.”

Continued on page 50

### AFSA Headquarters Reopens Story page 49



Front entry, AFSA Headquarters.



# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS



## American Diplomacy Seeks an Editor

Founded in 1996, *American Diplomacy* ([www.americandiplomacy.org](http://www.americandiplomacy.org)) is one of the oldest solely Web-based journals of foreign affairs in existence, and is currently looking for an editor to take over the reins. He or she will work with a group of associate editors and the journal's webmaster to prepare and post new material on a regular basis. The job takes perhaps 15 to 20 hours per week, a good bit of which involves generating new articles and commentary. Interested parties may apply or seek further information by contacting the publisher, retired Amb. Michael Cotter, at [publisher@americandiplomacy.org](mailto:publisher@americandiplomacy.org).

## Life in the Foreign Service

BY BRIAN AGGELER



"Johnson, I share your deep interest in the geostrategic direction a new administration will take American foreign policy, but that doesn't change the fact that you've got to do those visa interviews."

## New AFSA/TLG Intern

Miai "Velyn" Sheets, a rising junior attending Spelman College, has been selected as the 2009 AFSA/Thursday Luncheon Group Intern. She will work in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and receive mentoring and financial support from AFSA and TLG. Ms. Sheets is an international studies major and is fluent in French.

The AFSA/TLG program supports a minority college or graduate student exploring an international relations career in a high-profile, substantive and supportive work environment. The Thursday Luncheon Group is a State Department organization founded in 1973 by African-American employees to further minority advancement in foreign affairs. In 1995, AFSA started working with TLG in jointly sponsoring this internship.

## FSRA Funds AFSA Scholarship

The Foreign Service Retirees Association of Florida has generously donated \$1,000 to fund a need-based Financial Aid Scholarship in the 2009-2010 school year. The donation was coordinated by Amb. H. Kenneth Hill, FSRA chairman. This 600-member group includes Foreign Service retirees from the five foreign affairs agencies and their spouses, who live throughout Florida. They meet five times a year to listen to speakers on issues of interest and also make annual donations to affiliated Foreign Service organizations.

For more information on the AFSA Scholarship Program, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504 or at [dec@afsa.org](mailto:dec@afsa.org).

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## A Bittersweet Farewell

Four years as AFSA vice president for State have left me with decidedly mixed emotions. On the one hand, this has been one of the most fulfilling assignments of my career. It has been an honor to stand up and defend the Foreign Service at a time when it has come under fire from all sides. It has been a learning experience to see how our system really works — and doesn't work. It has been a privilege to fight for the things that matter in this diplomatic life we have chosen: fairness and equity in assignments, the ability to manage our personal and family lives honorably while moving from one overseas post to another, and the opportunity to serve our country and make a difference in the world of foreign policy.

By far, the most satisfying aspects of this job have been having the chance to get to know so many Foreign Service colleagues personally and working with AFSA's superb professional staff to help the hundreds of members who come to us every year for assistance when the "system" wreaks havoc with their lives and their careers.

The bureaucratic horror stories I have witnessed firsthand are endless. But there is an unparalleled feeling of gratification when AFSA can help resolve an injustice that threatens the well-being or career advancement of someone you admire. And I have come to admire the vast majority of the men and women of the Foreign Service who — despite all the hardships, the dislocations and the nonsense they have to put up with — courageously perform a vital task for our nation in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth.

That said, my tenure at AFSA has been intensely frustrating at times. There was no pleasure in struggling for three years with an administration that, let's face it, made little secret of its disdain for the Foreign Service and its unwillingness to devote the resources necessary for diplomacy. There was no joy in watching helplessly as many of the "quality of life" benefits that the Foreign Service had earned over decades were eroded by neglect and budget cuts. AFSA shared the anguish throughout the ranks when one single overseas mission became the exclusive obsession of department leaders, to the detriment of every other embassy and consulate and every other aspect of the work of the Foreign Service.

Perhaps most importantly, I leave AFSA baffled and dis-

mayed by two of our most pervasive failures, one internal and one external.

On the internal front, AFSA proved unable to soften the hard-line attitudes and lack of sympathy for employee concerns among certain of our senior officers. Although these individuals rose through the ranks, once they ascend to top management positions they seem to forget that many of their colleagues sometimes face difficult personal circumstances that require just a bit of compassion, or flexibility, from department management. It remains difficult for me to understand this unwillingness to allow for humanitarian

considerations and this insistence on applying the most rigid interpretation of the regulations, which drives most of the grievances and employee discontent that AFSA deals with.

On the external front, despite vigorous public outreach efforts — and despite our repeatedly publicizing the story of thousands of members who have served in combat zones — we never seem to

make much headway in dispelling the pre-World War II public perception of the Foreign Service as a club for spoiled Ivy League brats who spend their time swilling champagne at black-tie receptions in London and Paris. We hope Secretary Clinton will do a better job than her predecessor in defending the real Foreign Service.

This ludicrous image of the pampered diplomat contrasts with the harsh reality of today's Foreign Service, whose members spend most of their lives in the dusty capitals of the developing world, dealing with the thorniest problems and crises confronting our nation. Yet this derogatory perception damages our quest to secure public and congressional support for so many of the things we need, including greater resources and staffing, legislation to fix the overseas pay gap, domestic partner benefits and paid maternity/paternity leave.

The next AFSA Governing Board will take up these battles where we left off. I hope they will come to understand, as I have, that this is important, necessary work for which we need an effective union. At least the next AFSA leaders will start out with an administration and a Secretary of State that appear favorably predisposed toward the Foreign Service. I wish them well. □



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## AFSA Has Your Back

The economic news of recent months leaves me more persuaded than ever of AFSA's important role as "Watcher of the Hill" insofar as retiree benefits are concerned. Even a cursory reading of Retiree Coordinator Bonnie Brown's bimonthly newsletters reveals an increasing number of congressional bills affecting one or more federal employee retiree benefits. A sampling of topics in Bonnie's recent newsletters — Medicare Part B, Premium Conversion/Flexible Spending Plan, Social Security offsets, changes to the Thrift Savings Plan, sick-leave credit for FSPS retirees, When Actually Employed rules and related issues — attests to this state of affairs.

The question I ask myself is: how much is this information worth in dollars and cents to AFSA's retiree membership? Let's take just one example: Medicare Part B. What would happen if its benefits were cut by, say, 20 percent? Depending on the state of your health and the frequency of your visits to the doctor, the sum of money involved could reach into several hundred dollars a year, much more than the cost of your annual AFSA dues. The time for seriously thinking about these matters is upon us.

For me, this is a perfect example of the congruence of AFSA's organizational interests and those of its individual members. I am reminded of the line in the film "Jerry Maguire" when Tom Cruise's character exhorts his client football star: "Help me help you!" As I've said before, this is our basic cry to the more than 7,000 Foreign Service annuitants who have chosen not to join our ranks and support AFSA's mission.

While we on the Retiree Membership Task Force continue to reach out to these retirees through many channels, I must be candid in saying that the going is slow. For starters, we lack solid information as to their whereabouts. And even when we have valid addresses and phone numbers, there is the challenge of overcoming people's tendency, in this day of screening devices, to refuse to pick up phone calls or open the many requests for support they find in either their e-mail or snail mail. But we soldier on in our efforts to sign up new members to assure the future viability of our association.

Since this is my last column as vice president for retirees, permit me a few departing observations on AFSA's role in promoting the Foreign Service and in defending the rights

and privileges of its members: active-duty, retired (including persons in transition to second careers) and surviving spouses. First, as to the old question, which still sparks debate, especially among our older members: Is AFSA primarily a professional association or a labor union? My reply is that depending on the situation, its role can be one or the other or both at the same time. When Bonnie Brown describes AFSA as "multidimensional," she's right.

What is undeniably true is that AFSA is the only voice that can be relied on, unencumbered by political or bureaucratic considerations, to defend the Foreign Service. We are able to speak truth to power when Foreign Service mem-

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bers inside the system are unable to express publicly their professional concerns or policy differences.

Second, with your continued support — and bless you for it! — AFSA remains an organization that you can count on in this time of change to protect and preserve the benefits you have justly earned after years of service to your country. Its expert staff members fulfill one of our most important roles: providing information and guidance to our members and their families in time of need. (I will resist the temptation to name them individually lest I leave someone out; but rest assured they are all working full-tilt to make your association the best of its kind.)

As the State Department resumes its place at the head of the foreign policy table, AFSA will continue to watch the Foreign Service's back.

Finally, to you retirees and members in career transition, I extend my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to serve as your representative on the AFSA Governing Board. It has been an honor and a privilege. □



Briefs • Continued from page 44

## Attention Amateur Radio Enthusiasts!

The American Foreign Service Radio Network, which has been in service since 1968, exists primarily to support employees serving in the many embassies, consulates, Peace Corps missions and other official postings around the world, as well as friends and colleagues on domestic assignment.

Because this group meets on amateur radio frequencies, people desiring to participate need to have the appropriate license and authorization for the country in which they are currently residing.

Since his arrival two years ago in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., for assignment at the Regional Information Management Center, RIMC technician J Edgar McDermott, amateur call NS5N, has activated the club station, K4DOS, each week when he is not traveling. He reports that there is also a strong movement afoot to activate the main State station, W3DOS, and have both in operation and available for TDY amateurs wishing to participate in the weekly nets or utilize the equipment for casual contacts or contest participation.

“At the time of this writing, our Net Control Station is KF7E, Jim Henderson, located in Phoenix, Ariz.,” says McDermott. “The K4DOS station has operated as Net Control in his absence and will continue to do so during my presence.”

If you have an active amateur radio license for your current location, McDermott urges you to check in regularly, “if for nothing more than to test your long-range communications capabilities, should the need ever arise.”

Below are the frequencies and times of operations.

### AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE NETWORK EVERY SUNDAY

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21.416 MHz USB +/- QRM	1530-1600 UTC
28.416 MHz USB +/- QRM	1600-1630 UTC

On the intranet, visit RIMC's SharePoint Site at: <http://irm.m.state.sbu/sites/rimc/Florida/default.aspx>

V.P. VOICE: FCS ■ BY KEITH CURTIS

## Our Friends on the Hill



As I write this column, the fate of the Foreign Commercial Service still hangs very much in the balance. On April 23 and April 28, Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke testified on the Hill on our department's budget. Commerce's \$7 billion budget is so broad, with so many urgent priorities, that FCS's \$237 million portion gets very little attention. Despite four hours of testimony, our budget issue did not get one mention. We are like Jonah, lost in the belly of the leviathan.

The Secretary was questioned about the census, from which much political power stems; about digital television, the improper management of which is more likely to spur a revolution in this country than anything else; and on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and climate change issues. He was grilled on patents and fried on fisheries.

**We have heard that there are ambitious plans afoot for a significant increase of personnel in the FY 2011 budget — now, if we can just last that long!**

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We know that Sec. Locke is knowledgeable and cares about trade issues, and we know he has gotten the message that the Foreign Commercial Service is in bad straits and sorely needs resources. In his confirmation testimony on the Hill, the Secretary called us “one of the most under-recognized and underappreciated services in government.” He regularly points out that the state of Washington, where he was governor for two terms, is the most trade-dependent state in the union. But will this be enough to save us when the president is calling for widespread government cuts?

Acting Under Secretary for International Trade Michelle O'Neill has been on the Hill twice recently, and although she was received in a positive and supportive way, she is not optimistic about FY 2010. We have heard that there are ambitious plans afoot for a significant increase of personnel in the FY 2011 budget — now, if we can just last that long!

The best thing we have going for us is the group of dedicated friends we have developed over the years through our hard, caring and sincere work. Recently, the Business Council for International Understanding delivered a strong and clear message to the Secretary that we need more resources. (Thank you, BCIU President and CEO Peter Tichansky!) The District Export Councils are working very actively on the Hill as well, and National Association of Manufacturers Vice President Frank Vargo was a star in his testimony there on our behalf. So we take great heart from our friends. Despite all our adversity, we know we make a difference to many.

While this effort goes on, we continue to work with management on our midterm proposals, as well as on proposals they have put forward on changes in the rules for promotion into and within the Senior Commercial Service. It goes slowly, but I expect by my next writing there will be something to report. In the meantime, thanks for your input and your help with all our efforts. □



## Letter from a Third Culture Kid

Dear Mom and Dad,

Before you start congratulating me about finding my first apartment after college, you should probably know: There's an ant (and occasional mouse) problem. The landlord does not speak English, and the water smells like sulfur when it first comes out of the tap, just as it does in Taiwan. I feel like I'm home.

I know I kicked and screamed my way through five countries, seven cities, four languages and more than 200 plane rides, but it has all been in preparation for this. Now I get to choose my own destination, my own sponsors. Danger pay? Are you kidding? This is going to be a breeze.

Wait. A little help here, please? I may have bid on the wrong post.

I settled into college in yet another unfamiliar city, chosen more by the gods of wait-list mercy than my stellar application essay. Stage one of culture shock, excitement, slid quickly into stage two, denial. "They don't even know where Budapest is," I would cry. "They're all from Massachusetts!" But you helped me through it, with telephone calling cards that I abused, trips home at Christmas and the promise that Boston would soon feel like home.

I appreciate your help, I really do. But four years in an American college did not "repatriate" me as I thought it would, and the well-established notion that being a TCK is not so easy to grow out of — well, that's hitting me pretty hard as well.

I wish you had told me that watching my friends ask for simple things to be sent from home — a phone charger, an extra pillow, some old movies — would bring out so much anger in me. My spare blankets are in a fiery hell of FedEx

flames, the result of a box gone missing because you had to get rid of moving weight.

I wish you had told me that dragon boat races, swimming tournaments in Bratislava and cow-tongue soup weren't exactly hot topics of conversation among American students. Along with the sense of pride I felt in sharing my stories, there was loneliness, too, when no one responded with their own frightening tales of Kazakh cuisine.

But mostly, you should have warned me about *after* — after all the diplomas were handed out and the caps had been thrown, my choices were going to be slightly different than those of my peers. A triumphant return to my hometown was not possible (which one?), nor was living in a city close to the comfort of relatives (the ones we saw once a year on home leave?). This new post has a lot to live up to, and it has to be done on my own; now that I'm 22, there goes my educational travel allowance.

I hope I don't sound bitter, though you would, too, if you smelled like sulfur after every shower. It's just that the world was at my fingertips for so many years, and I was naive to think it could continue to exist so easily within my reach. Now you are both 6,500 miles away and I am left wanting to see more, with no idea how to do it on my own.

I wish you had told me that picking a college destination was the least of my worries. In this city that I have finally chosen for myself, all I can think about is my next move, and why the one after it may not leave me satisfied either.

Love,  
Your diplomat daughter

*Erin Kushner is a recent graduate of Boston College who currently resides in San Francisco.*



### See the New, Improved FSJ Online

All 2009 issues of the *Foreign Service Journal* are now online in a new, more reader-friendly and easily searchable format.

In taking this step to raise AFSA's profile on the Web, the *FSJ* has teamed with Texterity, Inc., of Boston, Mass., one of the most prominent providers of digital publication services to associations.

You will continue to access the magazine online as before, by going to [www.afsa.org/fsj](http://www.afsa.org/fsj) or [www.fsjournal.org](http://www.fsjournal.org), but you'll find many more features. You can read the magazine online, download it for offline reading, share articles with friends and much more. A brief guide on the site will introduce you to the new format and explain how it operates.

Check it out and let us know what you think by sending an e-mail to [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org) (also the general address to submit letters for publication, by the way). *FSJ* readers can now join us on Facebook as well; type "Foreign Service Journal" in the search box.

## SEASONED LEGISLATIVE EXPERT STEPS INTO LEADERSHIP ROLE

## Ian Houston Named AFSA Executive Director

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

Ian M. Houston has been named the new executive director of the American Foreign Service Association. Houston has been instrumental in providing interim leadership since December. After a competitive and careful selection process, Houston was selected, says AFSA President John Naland, “because we believe him to have the skills and abilities required to lead AFSA’s staff in the coming years.”

Houston is no stranger to AFSA and its policy and Foreign Service management issues. As legislative affairs director since 2006, his knowledge of and familiarity with complex legislative issues are respected throughout the organization and beyond. He has worked on foreign policy, international development, poverty reduction and advocacy with nonprofits and government agencies for more than 14 years.



SHAWN DORMAN

Houston is excited about building on AFSA’s past successes and traditions, while helping move it into a new era. “We are a membership organization,” he points out, “and we are here primarily to consciously serve and represent our members and their interests.”

When it comes to management style, Houston cites an inscription over the door of an old Scottish arch — “Whate’er

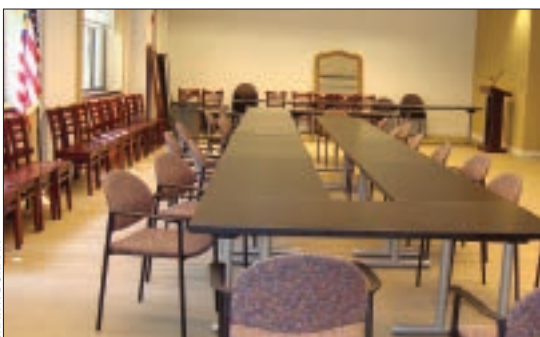
thou art, act well thy part” —as his philosophy for an effective organization. “Everyone plays a certain role in an organization like AFSA,” he explains, “and if each person takes that role seriously — even a role that is the most mundane — it will serve the organization well.”

Born in the San Francisco area, Houston is the son of immigrants from Scotland and England. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Brigham Young University and the University of Kent (Canterbury, England) with a focus in policy, political science and international relations.

Houston is on the faculty at the Lutheran College Washington Seminar program and formerly at Northern Virginia Community College, teaching subjects ranging from public policy to international affairs. A volunteer soccer coach for many years, he is also a self-described “struggling artist.” Houston’s hobbies include following the Green Bay Packers and reading; he especially loves the novels of Charles Dickens. He lives in Lake Ridge, Va., with his wife Jolene and three children, Aidan, Griffin and Grace. □

## AFSA Headquarters Building Reopens

BY FRANCESCA KELLY



The new and improved AFSA conference room, left. Executive Director Ian Houston, left, confers with Member Services Representative Michael Laiacona, in Houston’s newly renovated office, right.

The substantial renovation of AFSA’s offices at 2101 E St. NW has finally been completed after more than a year. Having weathered a challenging work situation during which they faced relocation, then several months of displacement, AFSA staff eagerly began moving back into the new space in late March.

In April, working operations quickly returned to a normal stride, and employees appreciated the simple dynamics of a functioning office that allows closer interaction among colleagues, such as being able to walk just a few feet to get a question answered face-to-face. In a “back to business” spirit, AFSA’s

professional staff immediately began hosting board meetings and membership lunches in the main floor’s spacious conference room.

A warm combination of tile and wood, taking up most of the front entry wall, greets staff and visitors when they enter the building. Tall windows make the space light and bright, and neutral carpeting covers all floors. The second and third floors contain offices, cubicles, a small conference room, seating areas, efficient staff kitchens and bathrooms. An elevator affords easy access to the upper floors for members, guests and bulk deliveries.

“This is a new chapter for AFSA,” says Executive Director Ian Houston. “By returning to our offices, we’re in a better position to serve our members, which is our core mission.” He hopes that members will stop by and visit the renovated headquarters. “This is, after all, their building.” □

Foreign Affairs Day • Continued from page 43

Attending the ceremony were those personally connected to the honorees, such as Brian Adkins' supervisor, Paul Cantrell, chief of consular services at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa. Dignitaries in attendance included Acting USAID Administrator Alonzo Fulgham, FAS Administrator Michael Michener and Director General of the Foreign Service/Director of Personnel Harry K. Thomas Jr. AFSA board and staff members, including Professional Issues Coordinator Barbara Berger, who organized the ceremony also attended.

Also present was consular officer Jason Vorderstrasse, formerly posted to Hong Kong and currently the global affairs officer in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs Office of Regional and Security Policy Affairs. He has been instrumental not only in bringing diplomats from the past to AFSA's attention but also in doing extensive research on their lives and deaths, reflected in the first three of the following biographical summaries.

The honorees were:

- **Edmund Roberts** (July 29, 1784–June 12, 1836) was appointed as a special agent on Jan. 26, 1832. President Andrew Jackson tasked him to negotiate commercial treaties with Muscat, Siam and Cochin China. He successfully concluded treaties with Siam and Muscat before returning to the U.S. In March 1835, he left on a follow-up mission to Cochin China and Japan. Roberts contracted cholera or dysentery and died in Macau on his way to Japan. He is buried in the Old Protestant Cemetery in Macau.

- **Thomas Waldron** (May 21, 1814–Sept. 8, 1844) was appointed as the first U.S. consul to Hong Kong on July 21, 1843. This was a recess appointment, and he was later confirmed by the Senate on May 17, 1844. Waldron arrived in Hong Kong in early February 1844. While in Macau on an official visit in September 1844, he died of cholera. He is buried in the Old Protestant Cemetery in Macau.

- **Felix Russell (“Russ”) Engdahl** (July 28, 1907–May 14, 1942) joined the Foreign Service on Dec. 16, 1930. After



The AFSA Memorial Plaque, with four new names, after the ceremony on May 1.

Edmund Roberts was serving as vice consul in Port-au-Prince and Calcutta, Engdahl took up an assignment in Shanghai in October 1935. He was promoted to consul on April 26, 1937. In late 1941 he traveled to Hong Kong on courier duty, and was still there on Dec. 7, 1941. He was captured by the Japanese not long after the fall of Hong Kong later that month, along with several other members of the Foreign Service. Engdahl died in an internment camp on May 14, 1942, approximately six weeks before most Americans in the camp (including all other members of the Foreign Service) were repatriated. He is interred in the Stanley Military Cemetery in Hong Kong. (Read more about Engdahl in Jason Vorderstrasse's article on p. 27 in this issue.)

- **Brian Daniel Adkins** (Feb. 2, 1983–Jan. 31, 2009) was serving as a consular officer at Embassy Addis Ababa, his first overseas assignment, when he was found murdered in his residence earlier this year, shortly before his 26th birthday. Adkins, a native of Columbus, Ohio, won a four-year scholarship to The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where he also attended graduate school, graduating summa cum laude. He was a skilled linguist who spoke seven languages.

Fellow A-100 classmate Meagan Call, one of many friends who attended the ceremony, remembers him as “the most cheerful—and hilarious—person in the whole 135th class.”

Another classmate, Matthew Buffington, met Adkins when they were both Pickering Fellows. “He took his role in the Foreign Service very seriously,” recalls Buffington, who has fond memories of Adkins “sitting in the cafeteria with his Amharic flash cards.” (See the Appreciation for Brian Adkins, “A Life Dedicated to Service,” in the May *FSJ*.)

This year marks the 76th anniversary of the creation of the AFSA Memorial Plaques. The first plaque was unveiled on March 3, 1933, by Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson at the entrance to what is now the Eisenhower Executive Office Building next to the White House to honor Foreign Service colleagues who lost their lives overseas.

When first created, the AFSA Plaque was inscribed with 65 names representing more than 150 years of history. Since then, an additional 166 names have been inscribed, commemorating the deaths of 231 honorees in 70 different countries.

In 2000, in cooperation with the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide, AFSA established a new type of plaque that honors Foreign Service family members who have died abroad. Every year, during the AFSA Memorial Plaques Ceremony, a wreath is also placed at that site, located on the other side of the State Department lobby, to recognize the sacrifices made by those who accompanied their spouse or parent overseas.

Later in the day, AFSA welcomed retirees and other Foreign Affairs Day guests to a reception at the newly renovated AFSA headquarters, organized by Retiree Coordinator Bonnie Brown. Amb. Ed Dillery, chairman of the AFSA Scholarship Committee, presented merit scholarship awards with assistance from AFSA President John Naland and Scholarship Director Lori Dec. Full coverage of AFSA's merit scholars will appear in the July-August *FSJ*. □



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# GETTING FOUND: GLOBAL NOMADS 2.0

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SOCIAL NETWORKING HAS A SPECIAL ROLE TO PLAY  
IN CONNECTING THIRD CULTURE KIDS.

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By MIKKELA THOMPSON

**W**hat are you doing right now? Do you hate Facebook but post comments on Facebook photos? Google people when hiring? Need to know what your acquaintances are thinking this very instant? If you've had any of these impulses, then you are a social networker.

As a member of the Foreign Service community, joining LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Hi5 or Bebo will keep you connected to the entire global village. At least where there is reliable electricity and access to the World Wide Web, social networking is here to stay.

The most popular social networking sites, according to Wikipedia, are MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn in the United States; Nexopia in Canada; Bebo, Hi5, Facebook, MySpace and dol2day in Germany; Tagged, XING and Skyrock in Europe; Orkut, Facebook and Hi5 in South America and Central America; and Friendster, Orkut, Xiaonei and Cyworld in Asia.

I'm one of those people who dislike Facebook, yet I'm on the site a few times a week and use several other social networking sites every day. Explaining my childhood as a global nomad was always a bit like describing life on the other side of a looking glass. So in many ways growing up in the Foreign Service prepared me for a 2.0 world.

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*Mikkela Thompson, daughter of retired FSO Ward Thompson, is a global nomad, portrait painter and writer, and a former business manager of the Journal.*

For a global nomad, social networking is a virtual scrapbook. I like that I can keep in touch with many of the friends I left years ago. I can feel a sense of community without leaving my home. I can even reconnect with my international schools.

Curious to learn more about the reach and role of social networking among global nomads generally, and the children of Foreign Service families and international school alumni in particular, I have conducted an informal survey, posting questions on the subject on listserves and on virtual "walls." This article presents the highlights of my findings to date.

## **An Irresistible Pull**

"Social networking has had a tremendous impact on my life as a global nomad. Finally a way to keep in touch with my friends all over the world — and in real time, too!" So responded an international school alumna to my inquiry. "I'm on MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and I keep in touch with friends from middle school, high school, college, grad school and every job I've ever worked, as well as with people I've met more recently online. I attended an international school, and the number of international schools I see linked on Facebook is astounding."

The fastest-growing demographic on Facebook consists of individuals age 35-54. Many in this group are being brought to social networking by their children. "Who knows when I first heard about Facebook? Probably through my children, who are much more electronically savvy than I am," one adult "convert," a former Foreign Service child,

wrote to me. The attraction of social networking for her was being able to reconnect with former classmates and friends.

“The school I attended, in Caracas, folded the year I graduated. There was no alumni organization, no records, no way to get in touch with anybody,” she explained. “Somehow, a network began — one person reaching out to another — and suddenly there was a site on Facebook, and there were these faces that one might be able to recognize (I graduated in 1971, nearly four decades ago!). I am a total convert.”

My own experience with Facebook has been fairly typical of global nomads and, probably, most other people over 30. Since I set up my account, people from my past and present have been finding me. We engage in a flurry of back-and-forth e-mails catching up on news — then, after a few months, the private messages stop. It is as if the

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*“Social networking has had a tremendous impact on my life as a global nomad. Finally a way to keep in touch with my friends all over the world — and in real time too!”*

---

Facebook relationship defaults to what it actually is in real life. But that is fine with me. I like getting the next chapter in someone’s story, but I

wouldn’t want to be required to keep up with everyone daily.

### Facebook

One of the fun elements of Facebook is photo sharing. I check my Facebook account every few days to see if anyone has scanned and posted photos of me; some that have turned up online are from decades ago. I feel slightly queasy about this exposure of my private life, but it can be very amusing. On Facebook it is possible to “flag/delete” photos of yourself that the poster has tagged (labeled) with your name. But you can’t protect against photos that *aren’t* labeled.

Privacy can be an issue for those who do not feel that all their Facebook “friends” are actually friends. This is, at least in part, a generational thing: I find it weird to read about what my friends were thinking 34 minutes ago from their Facebook status updates, but again, I’m over 30.

For one 18-year-old I corresponded with, however, this ability to have one’s friends do the keeping-up is precisely what is so great about social networking. Instead of having to tell, e-mail or write a letter to others about new developments in your life, you can post news on Facebook, write a Tweet on Twitter, or add a video online. Then those friends who care to “follow” you can participate in your virtual life. As the 18-year-old put it, “Facebook is like a yearbook that constantly refreshes itself.”

There are many groups on Facebook that one can join. Some are based on common experiences, like school attendance. As the groups are user-generated, many of their names are crude: *Third culture kid — You wouldn’t understand; You know you went to an International School when ...; I went to an International School, bitch!; Global Nomads (the one under Common Interests — Beliefs* &

### Selected Glossary

App – application – a computer program designed for a specific task

Avatar – an online persona used as a virtual identity

Blog – Weblog; a Web site used like a journal

Delicious – a bookmarking social network

Digg – a news-sharing Web site based on voting on news stories

IM – instant messenger

PM – private message

PPC – pay-per-click – a method of generating revenue

Podcasting – digital files of audio and video information

RSS – Really Simple Syndication – frequent updating of news stories

SEO – search engine optimization – moving Web sites to the top of the search function

Skype – service that enables phone calls using the Internet

Social Networking – a social structure made up of nodes and ties

Twitterfeed – service that pushes your twitter to RSS

Vidcasting – also vodcasting; video on demand

Viral video – a video that gains popularity through sharing via the Internet, usually via e-mail or IM

Virtual Worlds (Second Life) – computer-based world

Web 2.0 – second generation of World Wide Web usage, including social networking and blogs



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*Causes*); *Third Culture Kids Everywhere*; and so on.

Figuring out what being “friends” on Facebook actually means can be confusing. For some people, the site has become a place where they list everyone they know. It has become like a high school popularity contest. I am *not* “friends” with all my friends on Facebook.

One grown FS child told me he was being sent so many friend requests that he wanted to kill his whole account and start over. My advice was that he “unfriend” people as a method of cleaning up his account. He said he would feel bad about doing that, even though the “unfriended” do not receive notification that they have been dropped. I reassured him that he could simply “ignore” friend requests.

***“I want to know what happened to people, what kind of people they became, where they ended up.”***

Later, when I asked the FS kid if he had killed his account yet, he said just as he was about to, his high school sweetheart contacted him — and that made all the hours online worthwhile.

### LinkedIn

For those who consider social networking to be frivolous, there is LinkedIn, a professional networking site that asks members to provide professional information and resumés in curriculum vitae style, including photos and references. LinkedIn sends continual updates about your connections and thus expands your network.

Launched in 2003 as a “contact” platform, LinkedIn is playing catch-up as a social networking site. It is adding new applications, in addition to the resume building ones, including such features as “100,000s of interesting discussions on LinkedIn.” The site is working to control the credibility of the discussions by adding managers, who are other users, in an attempt to retain its “professional” status.

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*“I am a total convert. I truly believe in the social value of the Internet, though I am appalled by the lack of privacy and protection, the intrusion, the easy access.”*

---

As an aside, LinkedIn is one of the sources mined by employers for background on prospective employees. Its new advanced reference feature says it offers a “more credible and powerful reference check.” All the employer does is enter the company name and years of employment or the prospective employee’s name to find his or her colleagues, who can act as references.

**Education:**

**The Future Is Now**

Most organizations have incorporated social networks into their outreach activities. So I was surprised that international schools lag far behind in utilizing this versatile medium. According to my informal survey, social networking among the alumni of these schools was initiated by individual alumni, using search functions online, and *not* by the schools’ alumni staff. This is clearly a missed outreach and fundraising opportunity for these international schools, whose students most likely will go on to make more than above-

## Welcome to the Vanguard School.



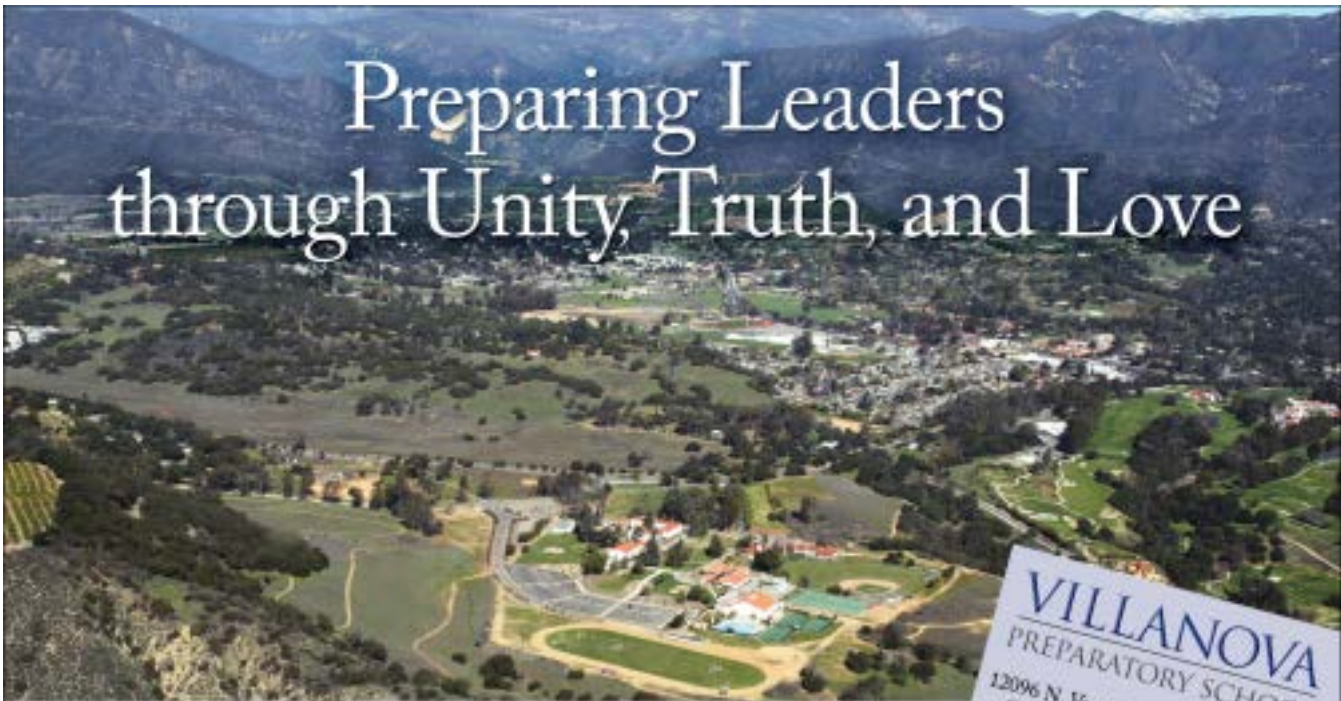
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average incomes.

“None of my schools reached out to me, and in general I simply had to find people based on names,” an alumna of Kodaikanal International School in India explains in an e-mail. “A fledgling LinkedIn group was started by another alum when the school itself said they were not interested in administering such a thing. Very strange, backward thinking, which may be related to the historically bad Internet connections in India — but it has not stopped them from asking for money (by snail mail, generally).” The alum who set up the LinkedIn group for KIS says he intends to hand it over to the school once its membership is too large to ignore.

Jim Keson, a former principal of the Copenhagen International School, told

*I was surprised that  
the international  
schools lag far behind  
in utilizing this  
versatile medium.*

me that CIS hired its first-ever director of development in August 2008, and that the alumni page would be her responsibility. Jim, who had administered the clunky alumni page since its inception and had also taken

it upon himself to keep a real-world social network of phone numbers, addresses and meetings, sounded somewhat relieved. “You are right about the relatively low amount of linkage on our official alumni Web site — most of the younger graduates use Facebook for active contacts,” he wrote.

### Privacy Issues

“I truly believe in the social value of the Internet, though I am appalled by the lack of privacy and protection, the intrusion, the easy access,” one of my interlocutors wrote, pinpointing one of the dilemmas posed by social networking. “For instance, anyone can post anything about me — photos, gossip, it doesn’t matter what — and I have no way to stop or inhibit it.

*Continued on page 66*

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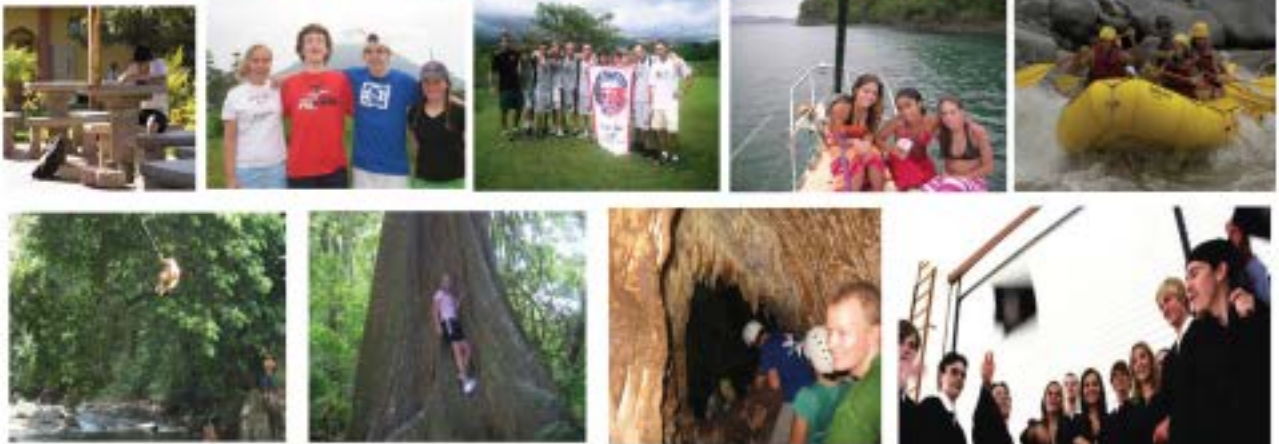
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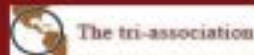
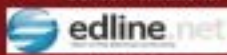
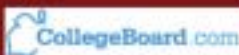
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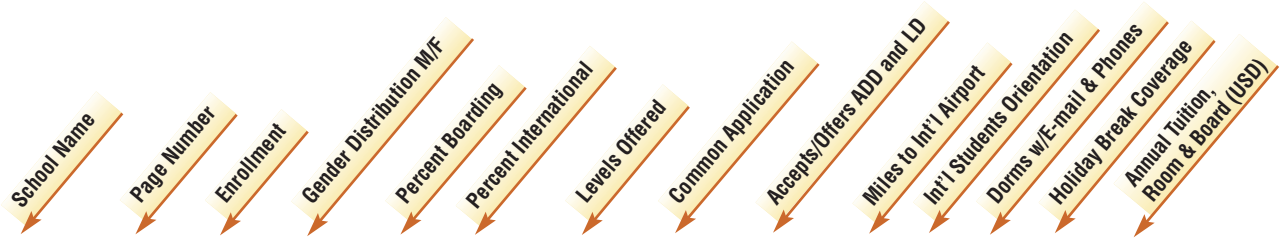
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## ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH

Barrie School	69	400	50/50	NA	NA	PK-12	NA	Limited	31	NA	NA	NA	11,750-24,080
British School of Washington	55	380	55/45	NA	50	PK-12	N	N	10	Y	NA	NA	20,300-24,250
Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart	67	740	All girls	NA	5	PK-12	N	N	15	N	NA	NA	10,000-19,275

## JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH

Queen Anne School	69	155	NA	NA	NA	6-12	N	Y	15	N	NA	N	17,500
Tallahassee Falls School	58	160	48/52	65	15	6-12	Y	N	75	Y	Y	N	22,000

## SENIOR HIGH

Advanced Academy of Georgia	57	100	45/55	100	11	11-12 EEC*	N	Limited	50	Y	Y	Y	10,300-19,900**
Annie Wright School	65	160	All girls	45	35	9-12	Y	Y	27	Y	Y	N	39,000
Darrow School	71	100	60/40	80	15	9-12	Y	Y	40	Y	Y	N	42,150***
Interlochen Arts Academy	67	475	40/60	89	18	9-12, PG	N	N	16	Y	Y	N	42,700
Orme School, The	61	200	50/50	70	33	8-12, PG	N	N	79	Y	N/Y	Y	37,250
St. Mark's School	56	335	51/49	80	24	9-12	Y	Y	30	N	Y	Y	43,600
Villanova Preparatory School	59	315	50/50	35	30	9-12	Y	Limited	82	Y	Y	N	41,000
Western Reserve Academy	60	375	55/45	63	12	9-12, PG	N	N	35	Y	Y	N	39,100

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American Public University	73	45,000	78-28	NA	1	A.A., B.A., M.A.	N	Y	NA	N	NA	Y	See below Tuition: 750 per 3 credits; 825 per 3 grad credits
University of Missouri - Ctr Distance & Ind. Study	75	Independent study: Grade 3 through university. Bachelor's degree completion. For more information, go to <a href="http://cdis.missouri.edu/go/FSJ9.aspx">cdis.missouri.edu/go/FSJ9.aspx</a>											

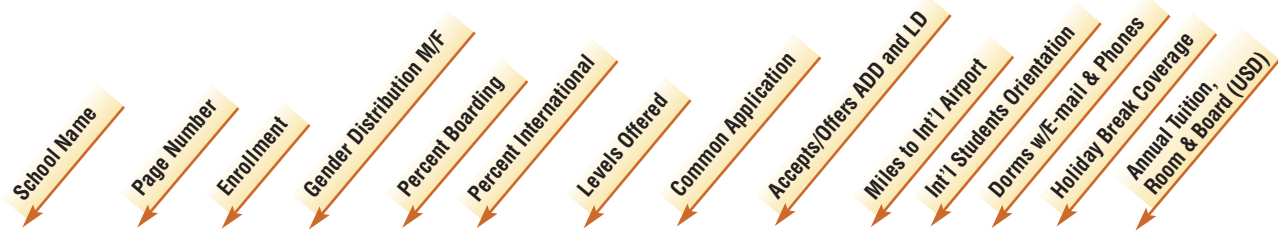
Notes: NA - Not Applicable ADD - Attention Deficit Disorder LD - Learning Disability PK - Pre-Kindergarten PG - Postgraduate  
\* Early-entrance-to-college program. \*\* Ltd. out-of-state tuition waivers. \*\*\* Tutorial program additional.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 63

## SPECIAL NEEDS

Glenholme School, The	73	111	80/20	93	7	5-12, PG	N	Y	50	N	Y	Y	Call
Gow School, The	59	148	All boys	100	22	7-12, PG	N	Y	20	Y	Y	N	46,250
Kildonan School, The	60	140	70/30	46	7	2-12, PG	N	Y	90	Y	Y	N	54,500
Landmark School	69	447	60/40	50	10	2-12	N	Y	25	N	Y	N	Call
Oakland School	69	86	60/40	50	10	NA	N	Y	60	Y	N	N	42,000
Vanguard School	58	131	70/30	85	30	5-12, PG	Y	Y	50	Y	Y	N	42,000

## OVERSEAS

American Overseas School of Rome	68	630	50/50	NA	65	PK-PG	N	Y	30	Y	NA	N	12,750-21,500
Country Day School, Guanacaste	62	150	50/50	15	80	PK-12	N	N	40	Y	Y	N	28,050
Leysin American School in Switzerland	61	360	52/48	100	65	9-12, PG	Y	Limited	75	Y	Y	N	38,000
St. Stephen's School	67	232	47/53	16	65	9-12, PG	N	N	12	NA	Y	N	39,970
TASIS, The American School in England	65	700	46/54	21	39	PK-12	Y	Limited	8	Y	Y	N	43,725
Woodstock School	71	470	50/50	85	56	PK-12	N	N	230	Y	Y	N	16,000-19,000

## POST-SECONDARY

Rutgers University	73	52,471	48/52	40	1.7	B.A., M.A., Ph.D.	N	Y	10-25**	Y	Y	Y	31,718
St. Mary's University	74	2372	40/60	49	4.3	B.A., M.A., Ph.D.	N	Y	13	Y	Y	N	29,928
University of Kentucky	75	U.S. master's degree programs, ranked by <i>Foreign Policy</i> magazine in the top 16. <a href="http://www.pattersonschool.uky.edu">www.pattersonschool.uky.edu</a>											

## OTHER

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*Continued from page 60*

Yet for many of us, this is really the only way to communicate anymore.”

It is a fact that there is scant protection or accountability online. Once posted, even material that you flag or remove is irrevocably out there. People, both young and older, are putting huge amounts of personal information on their social networking sites — perhaps without thinking through the consequences.

I myself have decided to treat Facebook like a train station: if I run into people I know, and they want to “friend” me, I usually accept. But I try not to say or do anything on Facebook that I would not do or say in a train station.

There are also basic online rules, like knowing that typing IN ALL CAPS is the equivalent of yelling and

**From the Facebook group,**

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- 2) You speak two (or more) languages but can't spell in any of them.
- 3) You flew before you could walk.
- 4) You have a passport, but no driver's license.
- 9) *National Geographic* (or The Travel Channel) makes you homesick.
- 10) You read the international section before the comics.
- 11) You live at school, work in the tropics, and go home for vacation.
- 12) You don't know where home is.
- 13) You sort your friends by continent.
- 15) You realize it really *is* a small world, after all
- 16) You feel that multiple passports are appropriate.
- 28) You know the geography of the rest of the world, but you don't know the geography of your own country.
- 29) You have best friends in five different countries.
- 30) It takes 24 hours to reach home in a plane.
- 31) You can only call your parents at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.
- 33) School trips meant going to a different country.



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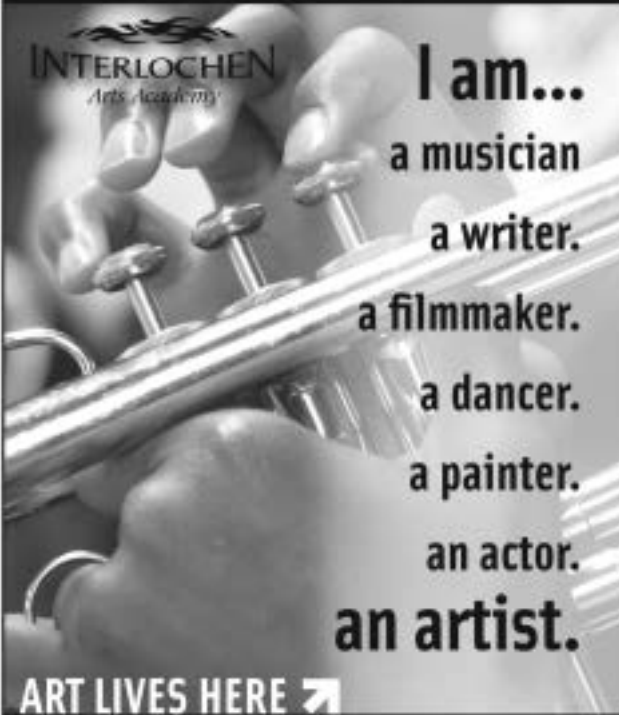


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is extremely rude. Also, most Web sites have “rules of the road” that include staying civil and G-rated. Crude language and personal harassment will usually lead to “flagging,” which leads to removal of the post and, often, banning of the user from the site.

### **It’s A Wide, Wide World**

Many Internet activities are essentially visual. Perhaps this is why YouTube is growing so fast. Its motto is “broadcast yourself” and, with the Internet’s options, everyone can now become a star, and not just for fifteen minutes.

For those who enjoy the written word, there is blogging. You can publish your photos, videos and words in your own blog. If you keep it completely private, it remains a diary; but if you open it up to the world, you can

---

*It is a fact that there is scant protection or accountability online.*

*Once posted, even material that you flag or remove is irrevocably out there.*

---

get feedback — and once you do, you are engaged in social networking.

Both Facebook and MySpace have

many groups you can join, but beyond these platforms there are hundreds of social networking sites for every conceivable interest and activity (see Wikipedia for an encyclopedic list).

Soon Internet access will be available on all flights (it’s already in place on some), so there will be no moment in the day or night when you cannot tap into your social network. If there is electricity, there will be someone tapping or scrolling through an app or reading a message, caught up in their virtual world, even as they are physically next to you.

With social networking and the Web 2.0 world, international students can keep up with everyone they have ever met or would like to have met. Just like that Foreign Service child who was ready to kill his Facebook account — until he was found. ■



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# A VITAL POINT OF CONTACT: THE OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

BY KRISTIN GRASSO AND CAROL SUTHERLAND

**E**stablished in 1964, the Office of Overseas Schools coordinates and administers the Department of State's Overseas Schools Assistance Program. A/OPR/OS works to ensure that the best possible educational opportunities are available for dependents of U.S. government personnel while stationed abroad.

While the office's primary goal in supporting schools abroad is to promote quality, American-style educational opportunities, it also increases mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those from other countries through its assistance to overseas schools by demonstrating American educational ideas, principles and methods.

The schools A/OPR/OS assists are independent, non-profit and nondenominational. In most cases, they were established on a cooperative basis by U.S. citizens residing in foreign communities. The schools vary widely in historical background, size and complexity, ranging from tiny primary schools with fewer than a dozen students to large K-12 schools with enrollments approaching 4,000.

The Department of State does not operate these schools; instead, ownership and policy control are typically in the hands of parent associations that elect school boards. The boards then develop school policies and select administrators, who oversee day-to-day operations.

The makeup of the student body at these schools is international. Of the 121,970 students currently enrolled, 27

percent are U.S. citizens, 29 percent are host-country citizens and 44 percent are third-country citizens.

To assist the schools, A/OPR/OS allocates money through grants, most commonly for salary support for U.S. citizens who have been trained in the U.S. as administrators, educators and other educational personnel; for American educational material and equipment; and for in-service training for both staff and faculty.

The safety of American children attending overseas schools is of vital concern to the State Department. To this end, the department has provided security-enhancement grants totaling \$80.4 million to 538 schools. Some of the security enhancements that are now in place at schools include shatter-resistant window film, public address systems, emergency radios, security walls, bollards, gate systems and other physical security upgrades. These grants are part of the Soft Target Initiative launched in response to congressional concerns over the security of U.S. citizens living abroad.

## **REOs Are the Backbone**

The Office of Overseas Schools draws its professional staff from public school systems, universities, foreign aid education programs and from overseas schools themselves. Six Regional Education Officers, each assigned a specific geographic region, are the backbone of A/OPR/OS. Some of the issues the REOs deal with include the adequacy of schools; accreditation; the opening of new facilities; and programs for children with special needs.

On any given day the REOs can be found advising parents on the availability of educational opportunities over-

*Continued on page 74*

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*Carol Sutherland is the Office of Overseas Schools' information coordinator; Kristin Grasso is associate information coordinator.*

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# TIPS ON WRITING A COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ESSAY

FOREIGN SERVICE KIDS HAVE A DISTINCT ADVANTAGE  
IN CRAFTING THEIR COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAYS.

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

- *Write your essay before the start of senior year.* Even if your chosen colleges haven't made their applications available yet, you can still compose at least a rough draft of your essay. That's because many colleges, as well as the Common Application ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)), give you a choice of several essay topics, including "Write on a topic of your choice" or "Write about an experience that changed you." Get the essay done by the end of summer, before life gets hectic in the fall of senior year.

- *Show, don't tell.* Do not simply assert, "I am a very creative person." Your reader will not trust you. In contrast, describing your experience painting a landscape in southern Greece, for example, by evoking sounds, sights, smells, the sun filtering through the fields and the feel of the brush in your hand, will show how creative you are without your ever using that adjective.

- *Turn any anecdote into something compelling by writing descriptively, deeply and with purpose.* An essay on a seemingly innocuous subject like raking leaves with your father could go in any number of directions: capturing a peaceful moment after a tumultuous year; symbolizing your relationship with your father; or even showing how, for a Foreign Service kid who has always lived in apartment complexes, raking leaves is a new and exotic experience.

- *Grab the reader's attention in the first sentence or two.* The typical admissions reader is overwhelmed by dozens, even hundreds of applications. Consider starting yours with a small, descriptive phrase rather than a blanket statement: "I was following a school of silvery fish when I realized a large barracuda was following them, too," rather than, "The day I learned to snorkel was one of the best days of my life."

- *Good essays often come full circle.* Whether you start

your essay describing your first game of chess at age 7 or your latest jazz guitar gig, try to include a reference to it in your conclusion.

- *Write about something that is not already on your application.* You may have gone on a school trip to the Galapagos Islands, but if that will be listed on your application, choose something more illustrative of your character. One of the best essays I ever read was by a student who wrote about a friendship that ended. There were no big, impressive words in this essay — it was just a simple tale told in an earnest way. It showed colleges much more than what was listed in his resumé. This applicant — who was not a straight-A student, by the way — was accepted by nearly every college to which he applied.

- *Your overseas experience is very important, but it does not have to be the main theme.* It can serve as a kind of "basso continuo" while another theme is the melody. For example, if you've performed in plays wherever you've lived, write an essay comparing your different acting experiences in different countries. Look for experiences that students who've lived in the U.S. all their lives could never have. One of my students wrote about playing on a Belgian national sports team — how many college applicants have done that?

- *Ask someone to look over your essay, but don't let anyone change your voice.* Never submit your essay without having someone — an English teacher, a professional editor or another trusted and objective adult — check it for grammar, syntax and spelling issues. But do watch out for people who want to "fix" everything you wrote — they can edit the life out of your essay.

The student I mentioned above was successful because he wrote an essay that was true to who he was. The application essay is your chance to show colleges who you are, and, in fact, they really do want to know. But the application process is not just about making them want you — it's also about choosing the school that is the "right fit" for you. So be yourself. ■

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Francesca Kelly is the Journal's AFSA News Editor and, in her spare time, coaches students on their college application essays. She worked as a high school guidance counselor while overseas.





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Continued from page 70

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### A Different Kind of College Ranking

In September, *Washington Monthly* will unveil its 2009 "Annual College Guide," a new and improved version of the post-secondary education survey that sorts schools according to what they give to society ([www.washingtonmonthly.com/college\\_guide/](http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/college_guide/)).

Prospective college students and their parents will want to bookmark this site to have at their fingertips this very helpful alternative to the traditional "best" college rankings issued annually by *U.S. News & World Report* and other organizations.

Five years ago, *Washington Monthly* concluded that the public would be better served with more and different types of school rankings. The *WM* annual guide ranks schools' performance as engines of social mobility, as producers of the scientific minds and research that develop new knowledge and drive economic growth, and as promoters of an ethic of service.

"While other guides ask what colleges can do for students, we ask what colleges are doing for the country," the magazine's editors stated in the introduction to their 2005 inaugural guide.

In the 2007 *WM* guide, only Stanford shows up in the top 10. And among the Ivies, only Cornell figures in its top 25, thanks to the large number of graduates who earn a Ph.D. or join the Peace Corps. The elite schools' "abysmal" record of taking on and graduating poorer students is one of the reasons they don't do well, reports *WM*. The guide also surveys the country's best community colleges.

— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

*The safety of  
American children  
attending overseas  
schools is of vital  
concern to the State  
Department.*

seas; helping parents locate schools offering programs for children with special needs; briefing ambassadors, DCMs or management officers on educational issues at post; or arranging for an educational consulting specialist to visit a school.

Twice a year the REOs travel around their regions to meet with parents and embassy officers to discuss educational issues at post, visit the schools attended by U.S. government dependents and meet with school boards and administrators.

### A Wealth of Information

In the 2008-2009 academic year, the State Department assisted 196 schools, and A/OPR/OS publishes a one-page fact sheet on each of them. The office also compiles a CD-ROM of detailed reports on more than 500 preschools, elementary schools and secondary schools. These backgrounders bring together information on course offerings, special programs, programs for children with special needs, extracurricular activities, graduation requirements, etc.

This information is available from the Community Liaison Officer at each post and on the A/OPR/OS intranet site. Copies of the CD-ROM



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*The office publishes detailed reports on over 500 preschools, elementary schools, secondary schools and boarding schools.*

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are also available to individuals upon request. In addition, A/OPR/OS maintains a resource center on schools at each post including yearbooks, newsletters, school profiles and a few videotapes.

As all Foreign Service parents know, the quality of education available is a major factor they consider in the bidding process for overseas assignments. Foreign Service personnel being posted overseas who have school-age children should therefore make A/OPR/OS one of their first points of contact.

To reach the Office of Overseas Schools, you can use any of the following methods:

**Tel:** (202) 261-8200

**Fax:** (202) 261-8224

**E-Mail:** [overseasschools@state.gov](mailto:overseasschools@state.gov)

**Internet:** [www.state.gov/m/a/os](http://www.state.gov/m/a/os)  
(Contains the list of REOs and their regions)

**Intranet:** <http://aopros.a.state.gov>  
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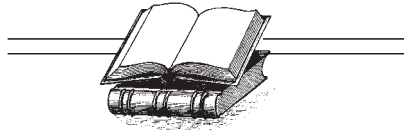
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# BOOKS

## Our First Official Propagandist

### **Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda**

Alan Axelrod, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, \$26.95, hardback, 244 pages.

REVIEWED BY JOHN BROWN

I have yet to meet a student who, before taking a course I give at Georgetown University, “Propaganda and U.S. Foreign Policy: A Historical Overview,” can identify George Creel (1876-1953), the head of the Committee on Public Information — the first U.S. government propaganda agency.

The book under review, while not in-depth scholarship, tells much about the little-known Creel and his organization. At a time when the federal government was far smaller than today, the Committee on Public Information employed more than 100,000 people in its many activities (e.g., Division of News, Division of Women’s War Work, etc.). Creel, a muckraking journalist who was a confidant of President Woodrow Wilson and had worked on his political campaigns, set up this huge bureaucracy almost single-handedly following Wilson’s 1917 executive order. It operated until 1919.

Critical of the “iron silence” demanded by the military in wartime, Creel believed that “expression, not

*Creel favored the dissemination of positive information to the media, rather than outright censorship, to gain public support for U.S. engagement in World War I.*

suppression, was the key.” He thus favored the dissemination of positive information to the media, rather than outright censorship, to gain public support for U.S. engagement in World War I.

While focused primarily on the home front, the committee also operated overseas. As Axelrod notes, citing Creel: “The mission was to produce and disseminate propaganda on a global scale and through every medium — not ‘propaganda as the Germans defined it,’ but ‘propaganda in the true sense of the word, meaning the ‘propagation of faith.’” The media used were multitudinous, ranging from the traditional — books, pamphlets — to the newly invented, such as film.

Creel, who called his recollections *Rebel at Large*, does not fit the conventional image of the period’s foreign policy establishment. He came from

modest roots, had little formal education, and spent his newspaper career mostly in Kansas City and Denver. Given Creel’s outsider background and closeness to the president, whom he venerated, it is not surprising that Secretary of State Robert Lansing, among others, complained about the power Creel wielded. He was also the subject of much congressional criticism, even during World War I.

But Axelrod paints a largely sympathetic portrait, praising Creel’s “remarkable integrity” and the Committee on Public Information’s overseas success (except in Great Britain), as well as his ability to recruit talented agents of influence from among writers, scholars and artists.

At the same time, Axelrod does not sugarcoat his assessment of the “impulsive, mercurial” Creel or his activities. For instance, he claims that the Nazis were inspired by the committee’s success as a propaganda operation — though, regrettably, he does not identify a specific source for this assertion. And it was largely due to Creel, Axelrod says, that “the CPI converted the commercial instruments of public relations and advertising into weapons of war.”

One of Creel’s contemporaries, *Collier’s* editor Mark Sullivan, offered an even less generous evaluation. Creel, Sullivan wrote, recognized just “two classes of men: There are skunks and the greatest man that ever lived. ... His



spectrum contains no mauve, nothing but plain black and white.” Just the kind of world view needed to be America’s first official propagandist?

*John Brown, a Foreign Service officer for more than 20 years, compiles the Public Diplomacy Press and Blog Review (<http://publicdiplomacypressandblogreview.blogspot.com/>). He also teaches at Georgetown University and is a contributor to Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, a journal published by Palgrave Macmillan.*

## A Seminal Figure

### Traitor to His Class:

#### The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt

H.W. Brands, Doubleday, 2008, \$35, hardcover, 896 pages.

REVIEWED BY JOHN STARRELS

When George W. Bush upended the post–World War II tradition of a multilateral U.S. foreign policy, he not only repudiated the example of his father, but that of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who painfully crafted an alliance system that set the terms of reference for American diplomacy over six decades.

With our advantage of hindsight, it is all too easy to forget how difficult it was for FDR to overcome the power of the isolationist lobby and public aversion to international affairs. How he did so constitutes approximately one-third of H.W. Brands’ magisterial biography of our 32nd president, *Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*.

Brands, the Dickson Allen Anderson Centennial Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin, reminds us at the outset that “Roosevelt’s first-term allergy to foreign policy was topical rather than systemic; he kept clear of the world not because he lacked strong views but because he realized that his views weren’t generally shared” by the U.S. public. Thus, a major part of FDR’s campaign to prepare Americans for the nation’s foreign policy challenges was sounding the alarm on the growing menace posed by international fascism — without unduly panicking the public and handing his domestic enemies yet another weapon with which to attack him.

Like all smart politicians, Roosevelt knew he needed more than slogans to make his case. A supreme pragmatist, he used all tools at his disposal. One of the more effective ones, according to Brands, was obfuscation. Before a large Chicago crowd in the summer of 1937, for example, he called for a “quarantine” against German and Japanese aggression. But he didn’t spell out what he meant by that term: “In fact, lest his audience — in Chicago and beyond — think he was advocating military action, he stressed the opposite: ‘It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace.’”

FDR’s machinations could only take him so far, however. By the summer of 1940, Hitler’s Wehrmacht sat astride Western Europe and was on the verge of invading Britain. This is where Winston Churchill entered the picture. As Brands and other historians have noted, it was Churchill, more than any other foreign leader, who kept FDR fully apprised of the Nazi menace through private briefing papers, which passed under the radar of the White House

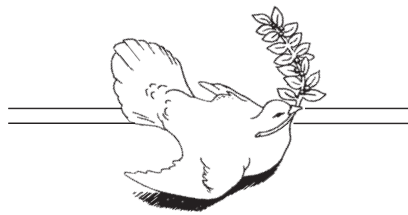
communications system. As Britain’s military situation continued to deteriorate, Churchill increased the pressure for more American arms. FDR understood the gravity of the situation, but continued to be wary of isolationist pressures. Desperate or not, Churchill had to wait until FDR deemed the time right for more robust action against the Germans.

In that regard, Adolf Hitler baffled Roosevelt, Brands observes. Was he a madman, or a more conventional politician masquerading as one? To get a handle on his nemesis, FDR sent Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles to Berlin to meet with the German leader in early 1940. Welles reported back that, compared with his chilling reception by Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, “Hitler was a sweetheart, at any rate in personal style and tone.” In terms of substance, however, no progress was made.

Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor quickly triggered a congressional declaration of war on Tokyo. Citing Germany’s military alliance with Japan, Hitler did precisely what FDR wanted him to do by declaring war against the United States on Dec. 11, 1941.

*Traitor to His Class* may strike the community of FDR experts as painfully obvious in its analysis, but I nonetheless urge you to read it. Not only is its prose straightforward and free of jargon but, more importantly, it provides real insights into the life of one of America’s most fascinating and seminal public figures. It’s hard to imagine what our world would have been like without him. ■

*John Starrels, a Washington, D.C.-area writer, was a senior public affairs officer at the International Monetary Fund until his retirement in 2006.*



# IN MEMORY

**Edwin Melville Adams Jr.**, 94, a retired FSO, died on Oct. 17, 2008, of lymphoma at Falcon's Landing, a retirement community in Potomac Falls, Va.

Mr. Adams was born in Gridley, Ill. He attended the University of Illinois, receiving a bachelor's degree in political science and drama in 1936 and a law degree in 1939.

He worked in the private sector from 1939 until 1942, when he joined the State Department's World Trade Intelligence Division.

In 1943, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving first as a gunnery officer in the Pacific theater and then as an attorney terminating industrial contracts.

In 1946, he returned to the State Department as a legal attaché to the Allied Commission, uncovering Nazi assets hidden in bank accounts in Switzerland and other neutral countries. Later, as embassy counselor in Rome, he negotiated treaties for air and naval base sites, including Aviano Air Force Base and Sigonella Naval Base, which are still in operation.

Mr. Williams held various positions in international economics and administration in Washington, finishing his career in 1969 as special assistant to the deputy under secretary of State and associate dean of the Foreign Service Institute.

Following his retirement from the Foreign Service, Mr. Williams turned to acting, a career he had considered years before, during his final year in law school. He hosted radio and television shows in Hollywood, appeared in commercials for Ford and Four Seasons Hotels, and was the writer for an NBC series, "Venice, My Love." He appeared in 24 movies, usually cast as a congressman, banker, doctor or priest. He also wrote poetry; a novel, *Petty Destiny* (Xlibris, 2004); and memoirs to be published posthumously.

There are no immediate survivors.

**Hazel Briggs**, 92, a retired FSO, died on Dec. 27, 2008, in St. Augustine, Fla., of natural causes.

Ms. Briggs was a native of Wyoming and graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle. Until 1942 she worked for private industry in Wyoming and South Dakota. Shortly after the start of World War II, she went to work for the Department of the Navy in Seattle and, later, for the Department of the Army's Signal Corps in Seattle.

Following the end of the war, she was employed by the Department of State and later was integrated into the

Foreign Service. She served in Toronto, Aruba, Iceland and Hong Kong. After retiring in 1966, Ms. Briggs settled in Rockport, Mass., later moving to St. Augustine.

Ms. Briggs leaves no immediate relatives. Donations may be made in her memory to Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, in Kanab, Utah, at [www.bestfriends.org](http://www.bestfriends.org).

**Vincent William Brown**, 84, a retired FSO with USAID, died on March 11 in Laguna Hills, Calif., surrounded by his family, after a prolonged struggle with heart disease.

A native of San Francisco and a veteran of the submarine service in the Pacific Theater in World War II, Mr. Brown held a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of California at Los Angeles and was a graduate fellow in international relations at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Mr. Brown was a pioneer in the field of economic development. Beginning as a project manager in the Marshall Plan in Paris after World War II, he devoted his career to managing U.S. assistance programs in Tunisia, the Congo, South Korea and Pakistan. His last posting — from 1972 to 1977



## IN MEMORY



— was as director of the USAID program in Afghanistan.

Upon retirement, Mr. Brown led a special initiative to globalize the operations of the worldwide headquarters of the Christian Science Church in Boston, Mass. He then completed another decade of international development consulting before retiring to his home in Laguna Woods, Calif.

Mr. Brown is survived by his loving wife Françoise; a daughter, Valerie, and son-in-law John; a son Gregory and daughter-in-law Daphne; a son, Christopher, and daughter-in-law, Betsy, both retired Foreign Service officers; and five grandchildren (Michael, Danielle, Andre, Melissa and Gabriel).

The Brown family requests that any memorial donations be made to the American Foreign Service Association Scholarship Fund. Checks can be made payable and mailed to “AFSA Scholarship Fund,” 2101 E Street NW, Washington DC 20037, or individuals can visit [www.afsa.org/scholar/](http://www.afsa.org/scholar/) and click on “Form to Make a Donation.”



**Charles W. Grover**, 80, a retired FSO, died on Feb. 26 at Charleston Hospice Center in Charleston, S.C., while visiting his son and family.

Mr. Grover was born in Waltham, Mass. During the Great Depression, the family lived in several states in New England before settling in Gloversville, N.Y., in 1935. That is where he grew up, so he always considered it his home.

Mr. Grover graduated from high school at Worcester Academy in Worcester, Mass., then spent a year at St. John's College in Annapolis, Md. He received a B.A. in history from Antioch College in 1951 and an M.A. in Amer-

ican history at the University of Oregon in 1953.

At the University of Oregon, Mr. Grover was president of the Young Democrats chapter. At a campaign event at the Eugene train station in September 1952, he was gaffed by an elephant hook during a turbulent whistle-stop visit by vice presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon. He was also a charter member of the university's National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chapter, an organization and issue that created a stir at the time.

After serving in the U.S. Army for two years, Mr. Grover entered the Foreign Service in 1956. Although a member of the political cone, he enjoyed the variety of activities that the Foreign Service offered. In Spain, he was vice consul at a two-man post (Valencia); in Rio de Janeiro, a commercial officer; in Bolivia, chief of the political section; in Medellín and Guayaquil, he was consul and consul general, respectively; and in Santiago, he was deputy chief of mission.

In Washington, D.C., he served in the Exchange of Persons Program, in the Bureau of African and Near East Affairs, as deputy executive director of Latin American Affairs, and in the Personnel Bureau. During two years of postgraduate education, he pursued Latin American studies at Tulane University and took senior training at Stanford.

Each new posting offered new horizons, but the personnel apparatus itself sometimes also qualified as an adventure. In 1963, the department assigned Mr. Grover to Mozambique as the assistant consul general. Unbeknownst to Mr. Grover, the Portuguese government refused to issue the necessary diplomatic visas — thereby leav-

ing him in the awkward position of a persona non grata on the eve of his scheduled departure for post (and on the day he had sold his house in Bethesda, Md.). Lisbon apparently undertook this rarest of actions to express disagreement with U.S. policy on Africa. The U.S. government chose not to protest this usurpation of the assignment process and the Grovers, freshly trained in metropolitan Portuguese, were reassigned to Brazil — even though the language was markedly different.

Both prior to and after retirement in 1985, Mr. Grover also performed extended temporary duty in Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, and Antigua & Barbuda.

In retirement, the Grovers settled in Bethesda, Md. Mr. Grover worked for many years in the program division of Meridian International Center in Washington, D.C. He was also an amateur genealogist and a longtime member of the New England Historical Genealogical Society, the New Hampshire Historical Society and the Hampstead Historical Society, to which he bequeathed his Civil War library.

Mr. Grover wrote a study, “Sons of Edmund,” tracing various Grover lines back to an immigrant forebear. He also wrote a book, *Company E*, based on letters to and from his great-grandfather and others. In it, Grover tells the adventures of 24 Hampstead boys who formed a subunit of the Eleventh New Hampshire Volunteers during the Civil War.

Mr. Grover's wife of 48 years, Janet Halsten Grover, died in 2005. The couple had met when he was a junior officer and she an executive secretary at the Department of State.

He is survived by four children: Marisa Grover Mofford of Altadena, Calif.; Charles Halsten Grover, also a

## IN MEMORY



Foreign Service officer, currently assigned to Charleston, S.C.; Michael Eugene Grover of Jamaica Plain, Mass.; and Ellen Grover Reber of East Douglas, Mass. He is also survived by a sister, Mrs. Jean Sylvester of Buffalo, N.Y., and 10 grandchildren.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the AFSA Scholarship Program.



**Virginia Spitler Jones**, the wife of retired FSO Ambassador Marshall P. Jones, died on March 17 of pneumonia at the West Meade Health Care Center in Nashville, Tenn.

Born in Kentland, Ind., on Sept. 2, 1918, Virginia Jones was the only child of a farming family. Like many other rural families, they were hit hard by the Great Depression and moved off the farm to Mishawaka, Ind., adjacent to South Bend, where she attended grade school and high school. After graduation, she went to work at the Ball Band Rubber Company (later Uniroyal) in Mishawaka, where she met Marshall P. Jones, a salesman and recent graduate of Depauw University. In 1942, Virginia and Marshall were married in Las Vegas, N.M., just before he enlisted in the U.S. Army.

During World War II, Virginia Jones went to work for the University of Notre Dame, in an office under the Golden Dome (the campus landmark atop the university's main building) while Marshall Jones was serving with the Eighth Army Air Force Bomber Command, based at High Wycombe Abbey in England. She later said that the sight of the Golden Dome every morning and the vibrant life of the university around her helped to sustain her during the long years of the war.

After her husband's safe return in 1946, the couple moved to Indianapolis, Ind., where he went to work for the Veterans Administration, and their first son was born the next year. Mrs. Jones took classes in American and English literature at the Indianapolis campus of Indiana University and, although she never attained a college degree, this experience cemented a lifelong respect for literature, poetry, history and the value of higher education.

In 1950, Mrs. Jones began preparing herself to become an Air Force wife again. Her husband anticipated being recalled to active duty for service in Korea and at that point expected to make the Air Force a career. When he was not called up after all, she encouraged him to pursue an international career of service with the State Department. In 1951, after his selection for the Foreign Service, they moved to Bethesda, Md.

The Jones' first overseas post was Tel Aviv (1954-1956). This was followed by Belgrade (1956-1959); while stationed there, Mrs. Jones went to Germany for the birth of their second son. After a tour in Washington, they moved to Seoul (1961-1963), where their third son was born. In 1966, she took on a new role as the wife of an ambassador in Blantyre, Malawi. While there, she did volunteer work with leper colonies and devoted herself to the role of wife of the chief of mission and representative of the United States in this landlocked, poor but beautiful country in Africa's Rift Valley.

After her husband's retirement in 1971, they left the Washington area and moved to an active small college town, Murray, Ky., which was reminiscent of the Indiana communities where they had each grown up — but

warmer. Here she adapted to yet another new life as the wife of an active member of the community and local politician, doing service work and helping him with his involvement in activities with Murray State University, election to the city council, and service on the board of a savings and loan.

While living in Murray, she also perfected an old tradition of her family, making many exquisite quilts for her children and grandchildren, and continued to read history and literature.

Mrs. Jones moved to Nashville, Tenn., following the death of her husband in 1985 to be close to two of her sons. She also made visits back to the Washington, D.C., area where her other son lived. She became an even more voracious reader and continued her tradition of service, receiving several awards for the thousands of hours she gave to St. Thomas Hospital.

She is survived by her three sons, Marshall P. Jones Jr. of Washington, Va.; Tarpley B. Jones of Nashville, Tenn.; and Zachary C. Jones of Brentwood, Tenn. She also leaves six grandchildren (Erin Jones Swenson, Tarpley Brooks Jones Jr., Madison Jones, Jordan Jones, Grant Jones and Turner Jones), and two great-grandchildren (Mountain and Caroline Swenson).



**Edward Eugene Keller Jr.**, 79, a retired FSO, passed away at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 11 from complications of Parkinson's disease.

Mr. Keller was born on Feb. 19, 1929, in San Francisco, Calif., and grew up in San Mateo, where his father, Edward Eugene Keller Sr., was a former mayor. After graduating from Tufts University in Boston in 1951, he served

## IN MEMORY



as a first lieutenant on the USS *Franklin D. Roosevelt*.

Following discharge from the U.S. Navy in 1954, he attended the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs at Princeton University, receiving a master's degree in public and international affairs in 1956. He entered the Foreign Service that same year and served as a career diplomat for more than three decades, with overseas postings in Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Jordan, Morocco, Switzerland, Turkey and Yemen. He also served at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York.

He retired in 1986 and lived in Washington, D.C., until his death. He was a member of the Tangier American Legation Museum and endowed

the chair of the Edward Keller Professorship of North Africa and Middle East at Tufts University.

Mr. Keller was married to Sylvia Keller-Egli from 1960 to 1966; the marriage ended in divorce. Mr. Keller is survived by J. Waltan Santos, his partner of 30 years.



**Philinda C. Krieg**, 91, wife of retired FSO William L. Krieg, died on April 8 in Sarasota, Fla.

Born in Maplewood, N.J., on Sept. 2, 1917, she was the daughter of John W. Campbell and Dorothy Harrison Campbell. She grew up in New Jersey and attended Swarthmore College, where she majored in French.

After spending two summers at the University of Mexico, she went to Paris in the summer of 1939, planning to study at the Sorbonne. The outbreak of war made this impossible, but she elected to stay in Paris and got a job working at the American Library. Years afterward she recalled her agitation as she watched German troops marching down the Champs Elysee.

At the end of June 1941, she was forced to evacuate Paris when the U.S. consulate and all American institutions were closed. She traveled to Lisbon, where she obtained a clerical position in the consulate general. While on a tour of Lisbon nightclubs she met a handsome young FSO named William Krieg. The two fell in love, but after a few short months she was shipped

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## IN MEMORY



back to the United States, while William was assigned to Lagos after the Vichy French government vetoed his posting to Dakar in French West Africa.

She arrived in the United States in October 1941 and spent the next year unsuccessfully attempting to arrange transportation to Lagos. At last a vacancy on the consular staff there opened unexpectedly, so she was able to book passage across the Atlantic. She traveled to Nigeria through waters infested with U-boats on an unescorted merchant vessel that was sunk by German submarines on a later voyage. The happily reunited couple was married in Lagos on Feb. 6, 1943.

Mrs. Krieg accompanied her husband on subsequent assignments to Caracas, Guatemala City and Santiago, alternating with assignments in Washington, D.C. In Venezuela she took an active part in the Caracas Players, with a leading role in Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit," presented in El Teatro Municipal, then the capital's main downtown theater. In Guatemala she was active in the Union Church, and in Santiago she worked as a volunteer with the Salvation Army in rural areas.

Upon retirement, the Kriegs settled in Bethesda, Md., until 1993, when they moved to Sarasota, Fla. Philinda is survived by her three children, Laurence John Krieg of Ypsilanti, Mich., Laura Krieg Morris of Sarasota, Fla., and Helen M. Came of Pittsfield, Mass.; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



**Harry Roberts ("Bob") Melone Jr.**, 80, a retired FSO, died on Jan. 30 from pulmonary fibrosis at his home

in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Melone was born in Auburn, N.Y., on June 30, 1928, the son of Harry Roberts Melone and Dorothy Swift Melone. He was president of the senior class of 1946 at Auburn High School and graduated in 1950 from Dartmouth College. He then studied international relations at Yale University before entering the Foreign Service in 1952.

During a 30-year career, Mr. Melone served in Tabriz, Yaounde, Paris, Niamey and Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations. He was appointed ambassador to Rwanda in 1979 and served there until 1982.

Mr. Melone is survived by his wife, Domnica Djuvara Melone, of Takoma Park, Md.; his daughter, Sandra Djuvara Melone (and son-in-law Andrei Popovici), and a granddaughter, Zoé Melone Popovici, all of Takoma Park, Md.; his sisters Anne Deidrick and Mary McIsaac; and nine nieces and nephews: Nancy Deidrick Kosub, Elgin Deidrick, Sara Deidrick Timms, John Deidrick; and Martha, Jeffrey, Betsy, Caroline and David Post.

Contributions can be made in his memory to Search for Common Ground at [www.sfcg.org](http://www.sfcg.org).



**Edwin C. Pancoast**, 83, a retired FSO with the U.S. Information Agency, died on March 13.

Born in New Jersey, Mr. Pancoast served in the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer from 1943 to 1946. He received his bachelor's degree from Maryville College in 1949, and a master's degree from The George Washington University in 1971.

Mr. Pancoast entered the State Department in 1949 as an intern and a

year later, as a civil servant, was sent to Germany, where he worked as an administrative assistant in the office of the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany. He was then appointed resident officer for Dieburg, Hesse, and from 1951 to 1953 served as the film officer in the U.S. Information Service office in Bremen. He served as director of Amerika Haus there until 1955, when he was transferred to Naples, where he was the cultural affairs officer for southern Italy until 1958. He was transferred to Trieste in 1958 and commissioned as an FSO in 1960.

In 1961, Mr. Pancoast was assigned to USIA headquarters in Washington, where he was the desk officer for the Mediterranean countries of Europe. He returned to Germany in 1965, first as an information officer in Bonn and, a year later, as branch public affairs officer in Duesseldorf. After a detail to the National War College for the 1970-1971 academic year, he was posted to Accra in 1971, where he was public affairs officer to Ambassador Shirley Temple Black.

In 1974, he returned to Washington, D.C., to head the policy office at the Voice of America. In 1979, he was named director of the Amerika Haus in Munich, serving there for five years. Returning to USIA headquarters in 1984 as a senior program officer, Pancoast retired in 1986, settling in Chevy Chase, Md.

He is survived by his wife, Eunice Billings Pancoast, of Chevy Chase, and three children: a son, Lawrence; and two daughters, Karen and Joanne.



**Thomas Rickert Reynders**, 71, a retired FSO, died unexpectedly on Feb. 1 in Kabul, where he was con-

## IN MEMORY



ducting a supervisory visit as the home-office manager of two USAID-funded projects implemented by Checchi & Company Consulting, Inc. He was a resident of Darnestown, Md.

Mr. Reynders was born in Worcester, Mass., and educated at Andover Academy. After receiving his B.S. in economics at Princeton University in 1959, he served in Korea in the U.S. Army until 1962. He earned a law degree from Harvard University in 1966 and was admitted to the Massachusetts bar. He worked briefly for the Department of Justice before joining the Foreign Service in 1966.

Mr. Reynders was a Foreign Service officer with the Department of State for 20 years, serving overseas in Jakarta, Hamburg, Rome, Paris and

Amsterdam, where he was consul general. In assignments in Washington, D.C., he served as a special assistant to the counselor; as a special assistant to the foreign affairs adviser for Vice President Spiro Agnew; as an adviser to the late Patsy Mink, when she was assistant secretary of State for oceans and international environmental and scientific affairs in the mid-1970s; and as director of the Operations Center.

At the time of his death, Mr. Reynders was a senior associate at Checchi & Co. Since joined the firm in 1996, he had project management responsibilities for USAID-funded legal development and institutional reform projects in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Madagascar, Montenegro and Israel. He

also led the American Bar Association's Law and Democracy Project in Cambodia in the early 1990s.

Mr. Reynders was preceded in death by his daughter, Siobhan Reynders, in 2002 and by his parents, John and Louise R. Reynders. His wife of 41 years, Joyce Mercer Reynders, died on March 8. Mr. Reynders is survived by a brother, John R. Reynders, of Orange, Conn.



**Joyce Mercer Reynders**, 66, wife of the late FSO Thomas R. Reynders, died on March 8 of lung cancer in Shady Grove Hospital in Rockville, Md.

Mrs. Reynders was born in Bristol, Va. She graduated in 1965 from Rad-

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## IN MEMORY



ford College, where she was a member of Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority. After graduation she came to Washington to work for the District of Columbia Crime Commission.

From 1967 to 1987 she accompanied her husband on his assignments to Jakarta, Hamburg, Rome, Paris and Amsterdam. Following her husband's retirement, the couple settled in Darnestown, Md.

Joyce Reynders was an executive assistant to Ambassador Bruce Laignen at the American Academy of Diplomacy from the late 1980s until 1993. From 1996 to 2001, she assisted General Alexander Haig at Worldwide Associates Inc. She also worked as an agent for Weichert Realty's Potomac Village office from 2004 until 2008.

Mrs. Reynders was a member of the Darnebloomers Garden Club, and her home and garden were featured on several of their holiday tours. She was also a member of the Altar Guild of All Saints Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, Md.

Her husband of 41 years, Thomas R. Reynders, preceded her in death by just over a month. She was also predeceased by their daughter, Siobhan Reynders, in 2002, and by her parents, Gordon and Ruby Mercer. She is survived by many dear friends and several cousins and aunts.



**Martha Reed Skoug**, 76, wife of retired FSO Kenneth N. Skoug Jr., died

on Oct. 12, 2008, of pneumonia in Alexandria, Va. When suddenly taken ill, she had just celebrated their golden wedding anniversary and her birthday.

Mrs. Skoug served with her husband in Germany, Mexico, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Venezuela (twice) and Washington, D.C., between 1958 and 1990. From her first tour in Munich, where she was corresponding secretary of the German-American women's club, she was proactive in outreach toward the host country and made friends readily. Having studied German and French at Randolph-Macon Women's College, where she graduated as an art major, she acquired fluency in Spanish on her own and also spoke acceptable Czech and Russian.



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## IN MEMORY



In days when the “performance” of wives still received official comment, those about her were exceptional. (Her conduct did not change when the grading stopped.) Having been introduced to society in New York City, Mrs. Skoug was at ease at lunches or dinners with dignitaries such as Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and President Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela. Yet it gave her equal satisfaction to visit poor areas of Caracas in 1989 and 1990 and present contributions to the needy as wife of the charge d'affaires, and she regretted not having done more of that.

During the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, she opted not to be evacuated but remained at post where she assisted American citizens and

others seeking relief at the embassy. Despite hardship involved in three years of service in Moscow during the Cold War (1976-1979), where she resided many miles from the embassy, she made the most of her opportunities to arrange and guide embassy tours to explore Russian culture. Indeed, she regarded Moscow as the most interesting post at which she ever served.


Mrs. Skoug was a trained, prize-winning artist whose watercolors and acrylics, especially those of old churches and winter scenes in the Soviet Union, were appreciated by diplomatic colleagues and the international business and journalistic community. She was always glad to paint a specific scene upon request of a friend. Those

works of art will keep her memory green on walls around the world.


She was also a gourmet cook, skilled hostess and convivial entertainer. Her sincerity, lively humor and warm smile always won the esteem of colleagues and associates. However, she regarded her chief responsibility as providing a serene and cheerful home, as she did for her family wherever in the world they might be.

She is survived by her husband, Ken, of Alexandria, Va.; her daughter, Reed Stevens Skoug-Roller of Harleysville, Pa.; her son, Kenneth N. Skoug III of Plymouth, Mich.; and five grandchildren: Curtis, Cecilia and Evangeline Martha Roller, and Kenneth N. Skoug IV and Meganne Skoug.

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**Parker Drummon Wyman**, 87, a retired FSO, died on March 3 at his home in Chevy Chase, Md., of brain cancer.

Mr. Wyman was born in Evanston, Ill. He attended Harvard University, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in government and international relations in 1944. He received a second bachelor's degree in 1983, in systems analysis, from the University of Maryland. Mr. Wyman served from 1943 to 1946 with the U.S. Army in Europe, where he participated in the Battle of the Ruhr.

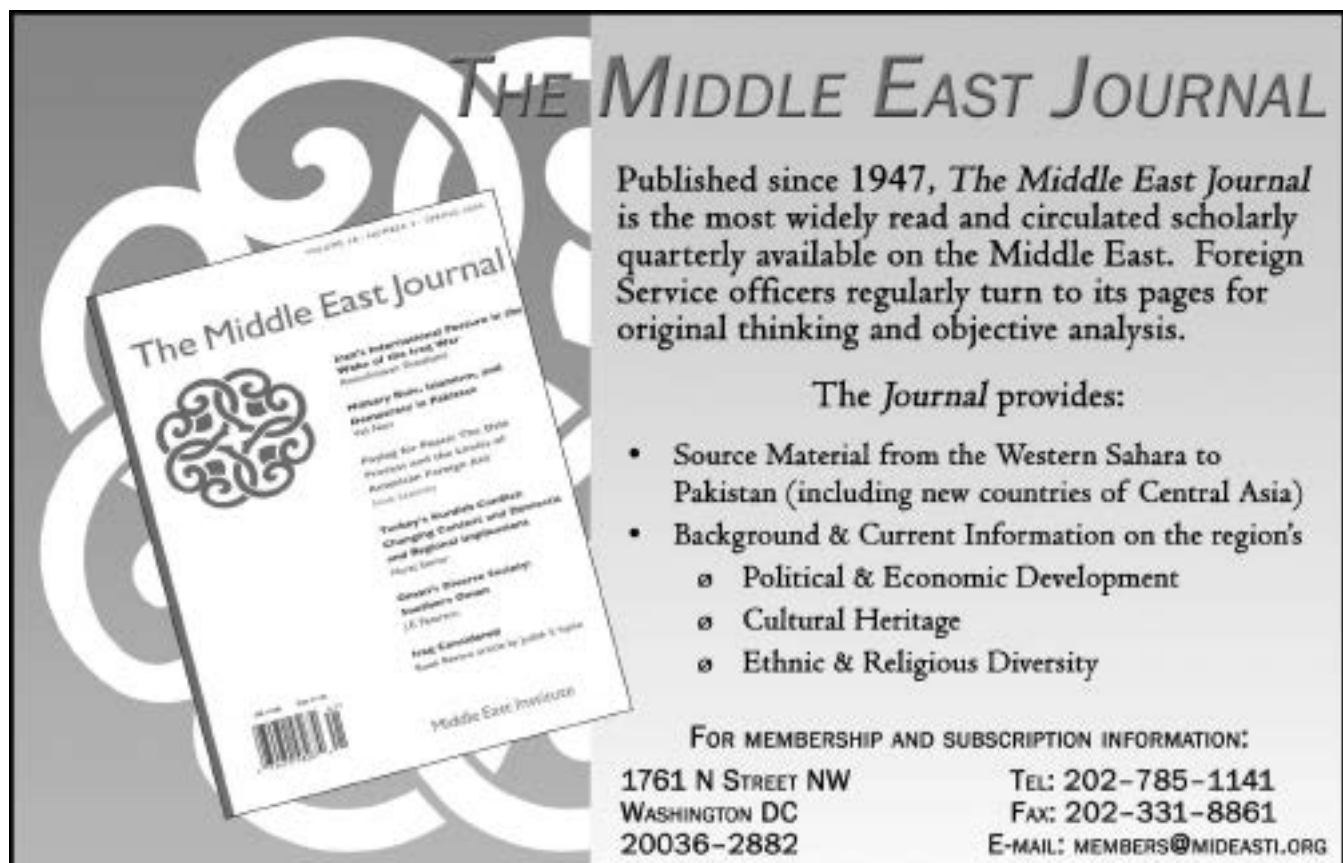
In 1946 Mr. Wyman joined the Foreign Service, beginning a 38-year diplomatic career as a consular officer

in Berlin. In 1948, he was assigned to Cairo as a political officer, returning in 1950 to Washington, D.C., to serve in the German affairs office. He was detailed to Harvard University in 1951 for a year as a German specialization trainee and then posted to Duesseldorf in 1952 as a political, and later economic, officer. In 1955, he was posted to Milan as chief of the economic section, returning to Washington in 1958 for a four-year tour in the Bureau of Economic Affairs and a one-year training detail at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Mr. Wyman returned to Berlin in 1963, where he served first as an economic officer, then as chief of the economic section, and finally as political adviser (the deputy chief of mission

position at that time). Service as diplomat-in-residence at the University of North Dakota (1968-1969) was followed by a year in Washington, D.C., as the State Department adviser to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1969-1970).

In 1970, Mr. Wyman was assigned to Vietnam for a two-year posting at the head of a 100-man combined military-civilian team in the province of Tay Ninh as senior adviser in the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program. In 1972, he was sent to Addis Ababa as DCM, serving as chargé d'affaires during the first 13 months of the Ethiopian Revolution. He returned to Washington, D.C., in 1975 to serve as office director for economic affairs in the Bureau of International Organizations.



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## IN MEMORY



He was posted as DCM in Lagos in 1977, returning to Washington, D.C., in 1980 as international affairs adviser to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He then served as a systems analyst in the Bureau of Information Management before retiring as a minister counselor in 1984.

Mr. Wyman went on to become an independent contractor for the State Department from 1984 to 1995, developing and overseeing a program for the management of nonexpendable property. He enjoyed visiting many posts around the world to train personnel on that program.

In retirement, Mr. Wyman served as an election judge and chief election judge in a Chevy Chase precinct from 1998 to 2002. He edited a newsletter for the Montgomery County chapter of the Evergreen Society, an adult-learning unit of Johns Hopkins University, from 2000 to 2004. He was also a volunteer at Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic from 1995 to 2008.

He was a member of the All Saints Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase, Md., the Chevy Chase Club, the Gibson Island Club and the Harvard Club of Washington, D.C. His professional affiliations included Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired, as well as the American Foreign Service Association and the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training.

Among Mr. Wyman's other interests were tennis, chess, genealogy and stamp collecting.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Patricia Howland Wyman of Chevy Chase, Md.; four children, Cheryl Wyman of Washington, D.C., Joyce McGugan of Chestnut Hill, Mass., Robert Wyman of New York, N.Y., and Candace Wyman of Johnson City, Tenn.; and seven grandchildren. ■

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### AUTOMOBILES

Diplomatic Automobile / 26, 31

### FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND TAX SERVICES

MCG Financial Planning / 26  
State Department Federal Credit Union / 25

### HOUSING

Accommodations 4 U / 35  
AKA / Inside Front Cover  
Attaché Property Management LLC / 16  
Capitol Hill Stay / 41  
CAS/Corporate Apartment Specialists / 83  
Fearrington Village / 41  
Pied à Terre Properties, Ltd. / 35  
Remington, The / 83  
Suite America / 85  
Virginian Suites, The / 81

### INSURANCE

AFSPA / 87  
CIGNA Dental / 4  
Clements International / 1  
Hirshorn Company, The / Outside Back Cover

### MISCELLANEOUS

Cort Furniture / 2  
*Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* / 71  
*Inside A U.S. Embassy* / 41, 84  
*Middle East Journal* / 86  
Shaw, Bransford, Veilleux and Roth, PC Attorneys at Law / 16  
*Strategic Studies Quarterly* / 15  
Tetra Tech / 42

### REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Cabell Reid, LLC / 90  
Executive Housing Consultants / 91  
McEearney Associates / 88  
McGrath Real Estate Services / 89  
Meyerson Group Inc., The / 90  
Peake Management, Inc. / 91  
ProMax Realtors / 89  
Property Specialists, Inc. / 91  
RE/MAX / JoAnn Piekney / 89  
Stuart & Maury, Inc. / 91  
Washington Management Services / 88  
WJD Management / 88

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

AFSA Legacy / Inside Back Cover  
Foreign Service Authors' Roundup / 87  
Marketplace / 11

### EDUCATION

Advanced Academy of Georgia, The / 57  
American Overseas School of Rome / 68  
Annie Wright / 65  
Barrie School, The / 69  
British School of Washington / 55  
Country Day School Guanacaste / 62  
Darrow School / 71  
Foreign Service Youth Foundation / 66  
Glenholme School, The / 73  
Gow School, The / 59  
Interlochen Arts Academy / 67  
Kildonan School, The / 60  
Landmark School / 69  
Leysin American School / 61  
Oakland School, The / 69  
Orme School, The / 61  
Queen Anne / 69

Stone Ridge School / 67  
St. Mark's School / 56  
St. Stephen's School / 67  
Tallulah Falls School / 58  
TASIS The American School in England / 65  
Vanguard School, The / 58  
Villanova Preparatory School / 59  
Western Reserve Academy / 60  
Woodstock School / 71

### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND DISTANCE LEARNING

American Public University / 73  
Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey / 73  
St. Mary's University / 74  
University of Kentucky - Patterson School of Diplomacy / 75  
University of Missouri - Center for Distance and Independent Study / 75



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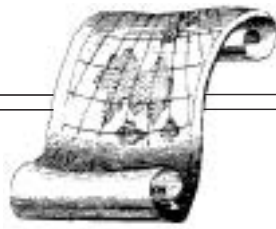
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# REFLECTIONS

## *Afghanistan Revisited*

BY BRUCE LAINGEN

Sorting papers recently from my assignment as DCM in Kabul from 1968 to 1971, I relived positive memories — especially when considered against the changes in that country's troubled history since.

Deep in my files was a post report that included photos of a brand-new chancery in Kabul, a city described as rapidly growing at 400,000 people (today it's nearly 10 times that number). The report also describes active American communities in the Helmand Valley, Kandahar and Jalalabad; a large USAID program in education and agricultural development; a good-sized USA program; and a growing Peace Corps presence.

Afghanistan is portrayed as a land of “rugged beauty, sharp contrasts, of desert wastes and lush green valleys seen from the towering mountain ridges of the Hindu Kush.” That same month, *Look* magazine carried a glossy, 12-page spread, “Crossroads of the Silk Route.”

Kandahar, then the country's second-largest city, had a brand-new air terminal building, said to be worthy of future refueling stops by PanAm and other airlines. It was already served internally by Ariana Airlines, which was proudly flying a brand-new Boeing 727. The post report's recommended reading? *Caravans*, by James Michener.

My files contain accounts of jaunts by American families on U.S.-funded highway projects linking Kabul to Kandahar and the Helmand Valley, and extending west to Herat and the Iranian border. A nearly nationwide circular

*There was no  
mention of poppies.*



highway was evolving — the U.S.-funded segments linked with Soviet-built highways from Kabul north thorough the Salang Pass and on to Mazar-i-Sharif and the Soviet border.

I remember those road trips for non-existent service stations and an embassy driver capable of coping with leaks in an overheated radiator by the creative use of apricots from roadside orchards.

USAID workers traveled frequently to the Helmand Valley and their headquarters in the town of Lashkargah — evident in a headlined report from the *Kabul Times* of May 10, 1969: “A 21-Percent Increase in Wheat Harvesting Expected in the Helmand.”

The article was accompanied by a photograph of then-Ambassador Robert Neumann, standing proudly with both turbaned and white-shirted Afghan farming experts in tall stands of wheat. There was no mention of poppies.

In painful contrast, the *Washington Post* of April 6, 2009, has a front-page story and large color photo captioned “U.S. Marines fire 120-mm rockets on Taliban positions in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province.” In 1968, defense and air attachés (the latter flying a two-engine prop plane) managing a small army leadership training program — a geopolitical gesture to “balance”

the overwhelming Soviet presence. Today? The U.S. military force in the country is expected to soon reach 55,000, with perhaps another 30,000 in supporting NATO forces.

So much for the hopes and optimism of those now-long-ago days. The “Great Game” for influence in Afghanistan continues. The Taliban have replaced the Russians and we, with President Hamid Karzai as a partner, face some of the same difficulties (and new, more daunting ones) as we try to help build democratic governmental processes in a still deeply traditional society.

In 1963, King Zahir Shah had put in place a constitutional democracy. Today we know full well from the painful record since — including the king's ouster by his cousin Daud in 1974 — that this governing experiment has yet to prosper.

Equally uncertain is U.S. military success in attaining the objectives that began with our intervention in 2001. Pursued at great cost, in both human and material terms, since that time, a stable and terror-free Afghanistan is now a major strategic goal in the broad region, both for us and NATO.

No one could hope more for success than those of us who enjoyed diplomatic service in Afghanistan in the years following the opening of the U.S. legation in Kabul, back in 1952. ■

*Ambassador Bruce Laingen was a Foreign Service officer from 1949 until 1987. He is a past president of the American Academy of Diplomacy.*



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