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March 1989

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by David D. Newsom

Short-order Intelligence

by Frank McNeil



Plus:
Farewell Interview with
George P. Shultz



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The McNeil - Abrams Debate

This issue of the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL contains two contentious contributions by former Ambassador to Costa Rica Frank McNeil and former Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams. Both deal with the circumstances surrounding Ambassador McNeil's service in Costa Rica and the Intelligence and Research Bureau as well as the service in Central America of other officers who were caught up in the maelstrom of events in that conflictive region of the world. The Editorial Board of the JOURNAL decided that excerpts from the McNeil book would be of broad interest to the Foreign Service, particularly those serving abroad without access to the book itself, as would comments on those excerpts from Assistant Secretary Abrams. We reached this judgment after considerable discussion of the issues raised, particularly those relating to the political loyalties and integrity of Foreign Service officers working on Central American affairs. Many members of the Foreign Service have expressed concern about what they perceive to be the politicization of the Service. Similarly, we believe the broad question of what is expected of a diplomat in the context of policies as controversial and emotional as those in Central America needs to be addressed in frank and open discussion. These articles are contributions to the dialogue. In deciding to publish both contributions, the Editorial Board is not endorsing the views of either author. It does, however, hope that readers will share their comments and perspectives about the substance of this debate.

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Letters

Significant others

The brief article in the January JOURNAL regarding "significant others" was more than interesting. In my 20 plus years in the Foreign Service I have never had personal experience with such a situation but the disadvantages described seem to me to be significant. One asks oneself, "Why should the Foreign Service be used as a proving ground for people who might not be ready to make that total commitment?" Why don't they get jobs with Club Med and become GOs [activity organizers] instead of FSOs?

Such an arrangement, in addition to possibly insulting the host country (not the real aim of the Foreign Service), and having no support from the embassy, is not to be treated lightly. One other eventuality not mentioned in the article is the possibility of evacuation

for security reasons. This happened to me and my family, although I stayed at post, some years ago. If something like that happened to such a couple, one can imagine the brave Foreign Service officer, smiling through his/her tears as the choppers carried away a lover who couldn't decide about the horrendous state of being married.

As you can infer from the above, I think bringing a boy/girlfriend to a foreign post is not a good idea and should be discouraged by the department.

*Eugene W. Moore
McLean, VA*

As a retired FSO, married to and accompanying my FSO spouse on her assignments, I found the article, "Significant Others: the unmarried dilemma" rather disgusting. I do not know what the author intended to reveal, correct, or otherwise address, but

there is no 'unmarried dilemma.'

Foreign Service marriages, and the associated overseas benefits and/or lack thereof, are related to a natural life process, i.e., making decisions and accepting the consequences. Those who choose to marry, and those who choose not to marry, should be willing to accept the results of their choice. There is a need for all of us to realize that decisions carry consequences.

Specifically for Foreign Service personnel, local attitudes constitute part of the culture shock we all must anticipate as U.S. citizens living abroad. Those of us who choose to live together without marriage in a foreign environment should be willing to accept the results of that choice and should not expect the U.S. government to somehow compensate.

*John C. Stephens
Toronto, Canada*



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Reading about Claire, Jackie and Mike, and "Nick and his partner braving it out at post," makes me wonder what the Foreign Service will be when these stalwarts are the senior officers directing our foreign relations. Mike thinks "there are a lot of people being forced into marriage" so they can live together. I have always thought that was the way the system was supposed to work! At the very least, one would have to question their maturity and judgment.

One question that immediately leaps to mind is if these people are so insensitive as to misread so completely the mores of Mexico and are surprised at foreign reaction to diplomats doing what was formerly described as "living in sin," one wonders what kind of reporting they will do or how they will interpret the consular regulations for reporting an American birth abroad, which require the parents to be mar-

ried. Of course since the new morality has done away with sin, there naturally can be no such thing as "living in sin." That's logical enough.

But one wonders what kind of man would take a woman he professes to love (we haven't yet done away with love as a preamble to marriage, have we?) into a situation where their life style is certain to earn his beloved social ostracism. Somehow none of them impress me as very sympathetic characters. Could it be that the department's Polyester Platoon of the seventies has been replaced by the Wimp Brigade of the eighties?

The article describes how Claire solved the problem. She joined the Foreign Service herself. I have one last question. If Claire and her partner with whom she went to Mexico now arrange for assignments at the same post, will that make them the Foreign Service's

first "unhitched tandem couple"?

*John St. Denis
Fairfax, VA*

It is clear from the "significant others" article that unmarried couples are serious and responsible people who have thought through the pros and cons of marriage. They know the differences and have freely chosen to live together, but unmarried. No problem.

Why then complain when the regulations governing allowances and benefits also make a distinction between married and unmarried? There *is* a difference; the difference is important to the couples, and it's also important to the government in determining its own obligations and the liability and cost to taxpayers, and in balancing obligations with competing interests. It's all part of what couples have to know and take into account in deciding whether

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Letters

or not to get married. I don't think it's discriminatory or unfair.

*Lawrence B. Lesser
New York, NY*

Although statistics tell us that unmarried liaisons are increasing in this country, the fact remains that these relationships represent a lack of total commitment on the part of those involved. The total commitment—marriage—is two people sharing lives and all that which follows!

Life in the Foreign Service is a unique experience, not "just another job." Professional competency is but one requirement for a way of life which demands, above all, adaptability to circumstances often beyond one's control. If one is not committed to the Foreign Service, then how can that person successfully represent the interests of our country abroad? Foreign Service personnel and their families are representatives of the United States and as such are expected to behave in a manner which gives credit to the country. These partners want all the rights accorded Foreign Service spouses, but they are not interested in the accompanying responsibilities!

*Teresa Banyas
Keysville, VA*

Population funding

"The Funding Controversy" (JOURNAL, January 1989) suggests that partisan politics, the Helms Amendment and current policy guidelines have seriously hobbled U.S. international family planning. Yet AID officials who administer those efforts are quoted as saying that 800 family planning institutions in 70 countries have forsworn all abortion activity as a condition for the receipt of U.S. funds. Further, they reportedly pointed out that the Reagan administration has spent more on voluntary family planning than the Johnson through Carter administrations combined. Hobbled?

In context the only interpretation which can be put on the article's con-

cluding comment, that "AID should be free to help as needed," is that directly or indirectly (resources are fungible), U.S. government support for abortions abroad is in order. However much it may be regretted in some quarters, the fact is that the American people are deeply divided on the legal aspects of abortion, with many—on both sides of the question—standing in moral horror at the "harvesting" of some 1,500,000 fetuses each year in our own country. In this sense the Planned Parenthood Federation of America's poster ("Because they know she can't fight back") takes on quite another meaning. At any rate, this is a grave problem which few taxpayers would wish to see exported, or compounded, abroad.

But that AID has done precisely this in the past is certain. The 1979 annual report of the Tunisian recipient of U.S. population control assistance claimed a certain number of "births prevented." Only in a remote footnote did one learn that fully half of the total claimed was achieved by means of abortion. This depressing fact was made yet more poignant by situating a "family planning" clinic in the affluent Tunis suburb of Carthage—in apt proximity to the Sanctuary of Tanit where, over a period of 700 years, some 70,000 Phoenician infants were sacrificed to the gods—theirs to Tanit and Baal Hamon, ours to Per Capita National Income. Regrettably, the humbling perspective of history is sometimes obscured for those who view the whole of life dimly, through the end of a condom.

*John O. Grimes
Arlington, VA*

Time-in-class issues

As an OC, I read with interest Ward Barmon's letter and Evangeline Monroe's report in the December JOURNAL, both of which raised the possibility of establishing a combined time-in-class (TIC) requirement of 12 to 15 years for senior officers.

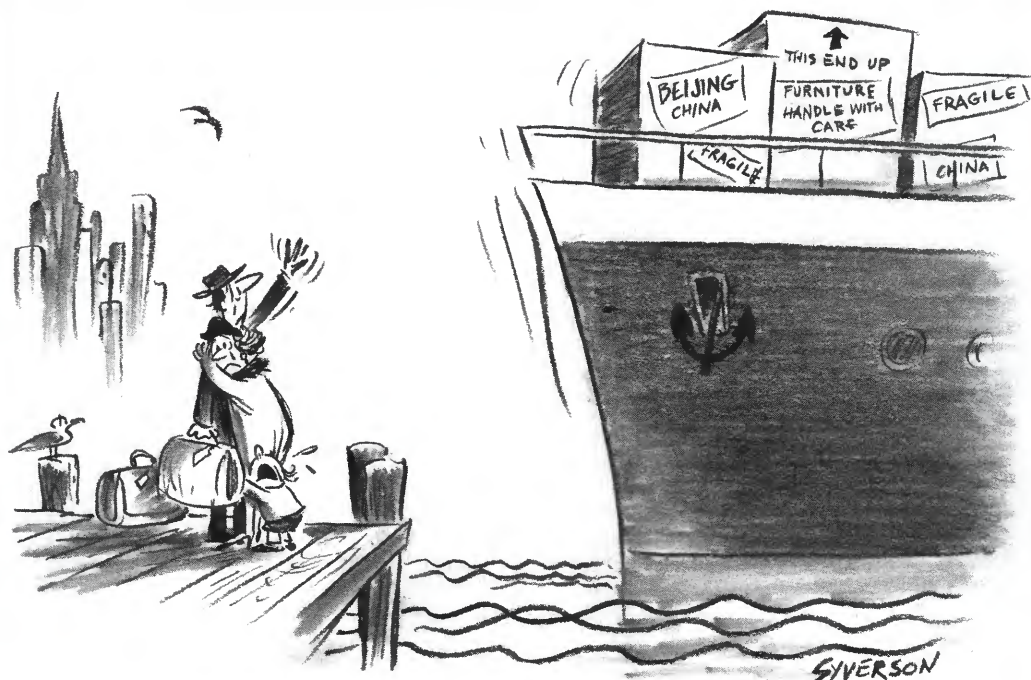
Joe Winder, in an earlier letter, raises

an important point. An officer who makes it through today's careful screening for the Senior Service and then wins an early promotion to the MC level is someone whom the department should not want to discard after a short five years. The current TIC penalizes such an officer for success and deprives the department of a good officer.

But while Mr. Barmon's and Mrs. Monroe's suggestion solves the problem for that officer, it creates another one for the Service as a whole. Do we really want to allow an OC who fails to win a promotion to MC within a reasonable period of time the right to remain in the Senior Service as an OC for 12-15 years, blocking promotion opportunities for younger, better officers? We had a multi-year TIC for senior officers in the latter part of the 1970s, and this was its result.

The senior threshold panels recommend for promotion FS-1s whom they believe are capable of assuming the most important positions in the Foreign Service. Once brought into the Senior Service, an OC has seven years and two or more senior assignments to prove that the panel was right. If an OC cannot win promotion within those seven years, then perhaps it is time to go, and leave the way open for fresh blood to move up.

I therefore believe that we should keep the seven-year TIC for OCs. But if an officer wins earlier promotion to MC, then he or she should be allowed to "carry" the years remaining on their OC TIC with them as a bonus. For example, an officer who is promoted after four years as an OC would get an extra three years added on to the five-year TIC for MCs. In other words, a multi-year TIC for senior officers would come into effect only *after* the officer is promoted to MC. An outstanding officer therefore would not face early retirement as the penalty of his or her success. Even though I could be affected adversely by my own proposal, I believe that this suggestion would solve the problem of the "water-walking" MC but not create another



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Letters

one for the Service as a whole.

*John R. Malott
Osaka-Kobe, Japan*

Are spouses "guests"?

I received an invitation from the Office of Career Transition to attend a reception given by Secretary of State and Mrs. Shultz on January 12, 1989, in the Benjamin Franklin Room. I did not attend, and I would like to share my reason for declining the invitation to this reception.

I feel that the omission of my wife's name from the invitation is symbolic of the department's almost total lack of commitment to or appreciation for the service rendered the United States, the department, and the Foreign Service by Foreign Service spouses. My wife has shared with me a professional life-

time of some 32 years, raising four sons in far-flung corners of the world ranging from Afghanistan to South Africa, "showing the flag," and actively demonstrating a commitment to family unity. In order to fulfill this role she has had to forfeit her own successful career as an editor of educational textbooks. Therefore, it is shocking to me and to her that the Foreign Service does not respect or appreciate her enough to include her in the invitation to a reception honoring the completion of my "career of dedicated service to the United States." What about *her* career?

I think it would have been insulting for me to bring as my "guest" someone who has been my constant companion and helpmate for the entirety of my Foreign Service career.

*William E. Rau
Falls Church, VA*

Dear Mr. Secretary

In response to the offer to share "two minutes" with the new Secretary of State, herewith are mine:

What's to be done about the embassy structures in Moscow and Washington? Try this: Leave the bugs where they are. Make the buildings available to some private-enterprise entrepreneur who doesn't care whether someone listens to his phone conversations. The buildings might be sold, leased, rented. Seems we and the Russians could unload our albatrosses without too much of a loss, and have enough left on hand to start over. The term "private enterprise entrepreneur" may call for different definitions between here and Moscow. Your move, Mr. Secretary.

*John M. Anspacher
Naples, FL*

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Letters

Bylaws Question

In this 65th year of the JOURNAL's publication, I draw attention to a subtle and disturbing change that threatens to undermine its mission to enhance the professionalism of our diplomatic and consular service.

Like the magazines of other professions, such as law and medicine, the JOURNAL must serve as a forum of debate on issues that are as many-sided as they are varied. In most cases, there simply are no "right" answers on difficult issues, which is one of the things distinguishing a profession from a craft or trade. One cannot imagine much disagreement over the right way to weld a seam, nail a board, or lay brick.

In recognition of this, the JOURNAL was established in 1924 with a separate and autonomous editorial board to serve as a mechanism for peer review of submitted material and, perhaps more important, as a cushion from

AFSA's governing board, whose duties are often political or have political connotations. The members of the editorial board are approved by the governing board, but barring egregious behavior have the same freedom to act in accordance with their best judgment as the governing board.

Recently, two seemingly related developments have taken place that should concern those of us who believe that a vigorous and autonomous professional magazine is vital to a vigorous and healthy profession. For the first time in its long history, the editorial board includes the president of AFSA. Second, the statement that "the editorial board is responsible for general content" of the magazine (excepting the *AFSA News* insert) has disappeared from the masthead of the magazine.

Taken together, these developments lead one to conclude that the governing board has taken over the JOURNAL and is in charge of the editorial con-

tent of our professional magazine. Certainly, this can be the general perception of the department, the executive branch generally, Congress, and the public. All will wonder whether thoughts, ideas, and positions with which the governing board disagrees can be ventilated in the JOURNAL and, contrariwise, whether a given article reflects the consensus of the governing board. We are left with the uneasy conclusion that all material, including letters to the editor, must pass some kind of a governing board litmus test of acceptability.

Possibly, these fears are groundless. But as we know full well, appearances and perceptions count for a lot. As long as it *appears* that the governing board is in charge of the magazine's content, its influence as an autonomous, professional magazine will be in serious question.

The editorial board should be reaffirmed on the masthead as being in charge of the magazine's content and

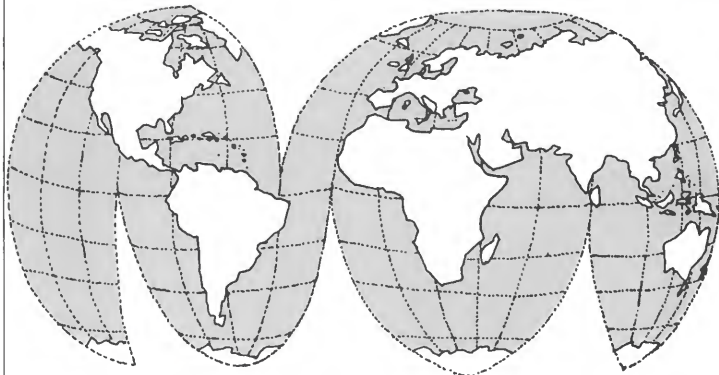
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the president of AFSA should resign from the editorial board as that it may conduct its deliberations in the autonomous manner in which they were originally intended.

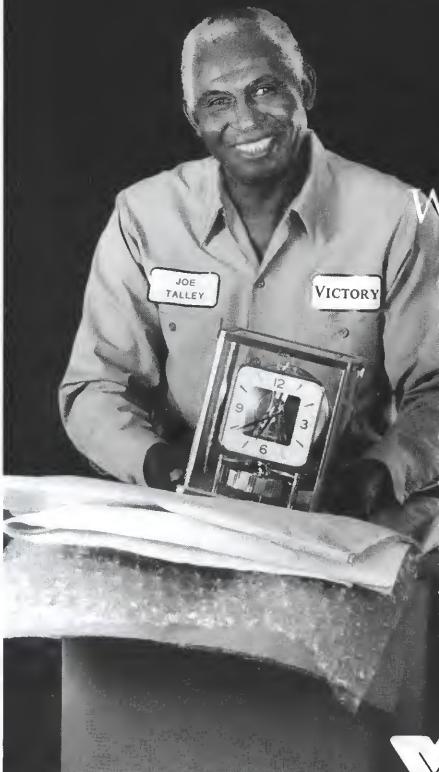
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The language that "the editorial board is responsible for general content" is not contained in the bylaws of either AFSA or the editorial board, and therefore did not inform readers of the JOURNAL of the true role of the editorial board. The relationship between the boards is provided for in the bylaws of AFSA: "Article V, 3. The governing board shall appoint the chairman and members of the JOURNAL editorial board, who shall serve at the pleasure of the board, and who, under the general direction of the board, shall be specifically responsible for the publication of the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL."

The bylaws of the editorial board (promulgated in October 1981) state: "Article 1.1. The editorial board will serve in an advisory role to the governing board of the American Foreign Service Association regarding all aspects of the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL" and "Article 1.4. The editorial board will be responsible for approval for publication of articles, letters to the editor, and other features and columns." The editorial policy of the JOURNAL is stated as: "Article 6. The editorial board recognizes and affirms that the association and the Foreign Service as a whole will be best served by a professional magazine that encourages the lively debate of current issues in foreign policy and Foreign Service issues. Within the watchwords of fairness and accuracy, the JOURNAL encourages its writers to take a firm stance on the issues they address. The editorial board will determine what appears in the JOURNAL, save the editorial and Association News. It will consult with the governing board through its appointed liaison on matters that may be of concern to that board."

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Books

War and Peace in Central America

By Frank McNeil. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.

Do we need yet another book about Central America? That would be the normal reaction from those who follow this over-reported field. In the case of Frank McNeil's book, the answer has to be "yes," especially for those in or headed for the Foreign Service.

The book is a superb chronicle of a hopelessly muddled policy, seen from the inside by a brilliant Foreign Service officer who has been recognized with the department's Distinguished Honor Award and AFSA's Christian Herter Award. One of the first priorities of the Bush administration will be to bring some order to the tangled mess he describes so well.

More than that, the book is the unvarnished record of McCarthyism in

the 1980s, of which McNeil was a victim. McNeil was one career officer who fought back when slandered by the kind of political appointee who regards as near-treason any judgment, however competent, that questions the revealed truth of an ideological bias. After a security investigation cleared McNeil of the charge of leaking to the press (although the underlying complaint was more akin to heresy), he sent a complete account of the matter to Secretary Shultz with his resignation. He also sent a second letter: "I wrote [Elliott] Abrams that I was quitting because of his exercise in McCarthyism. Abrams, who never had the guts to face me with his charges, didn't reply."

McNeil does not simply go to bat for himself, but for a whole string of career officers in Central America in the Reagan administration, from Thomas Enders to John Ferch, who were savaged for relying on their "expert

skills and knowledge" rather than the belief that "foreigners could be expected to reconstruct their reality to comply with our rhetoric."

His treatment of Central America as the "fantasy isthmus" is first rate. Any account of current Central American problems must bring in relevant portions of the area's own history and of U.S. involvement in it. McNeil makes the right choices of such material. He emphasizes the Latin American perspective, so often missing in Washington's view, of Contadora and Esquipulus II (the Arias plan), and the interaction between North and South.

The book is a powerful argument for the reconstruction of a strong, professional Foreign Service, now battered "not only by ideologues but by budget cuts." McNeil does not argue against qualified political appointments, but more against disqualifying loyal career professionals on partisan grounds.

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Books

McNeil does not attempt to pussy-foot around his views of a failed Central American policy. He uses witty, salty language rarely seen in an FSO's memoirs. His scorn for his tormentor, Abrams, is undisguised: "A General Custer in diplomatic drag, supremely confident, and often wrong."

McNeil's book is not only a timely and important contribution to the field, but it can rightly be described as necessary to have been written.

Ambler H. Moss, Jr.

The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American- Iranian Relations.

By James A. Bill. Yale University Press, 1988.

What did the United States do in Iran that was wrong and that contributed to an internal upheaval as fundamental as the French, Russian, and Chinese

revolutions? Almost everything, says James Bill in *The Eagle and the Lion*. He makes a good case in this well organized, plainly stated and well documented historical account of American errors throughout two generations of postwar U.S. - Iranian relations.

Beginning with its role in the overthrow of Mosadeq in 1953, the United States lost its image in the eyes of Iranian nationalists "as an external liberating force, whose influence would protect Iran from its traditional enemies, Britain and Russia. Instead, the protector had become the exploiter." The basic error of the United States, one understands from Bill, was to align its interests and policies solely with the course taken by Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. So important does the author regard this alliance as the leitmotif of the U.S. role in Iran that he invests it with a corporate identity named "Pahlavism" and its apostles "Pahlavites."

This, the author states, plus our ignorance of Iranian culture, our economic-commercial focus, and our obsessive "Soviet-centric" view of events in Iran led the United States to discount the role of Shia Islam and the clergy in Iran. My own Iranian connection dates from 1953-57, when the mul-lahs were assumed to be an antediluvian troop of relics, and I shared in the error of undervaluing their potential. For this reason, I wish Bill had matched his account of how Pahlavism led to tyranny and corruption with a description of the anatomy of Iranian Shiism and how it led to the obscurities of the 1980s. What will be the reckoning for the Shia state?

But sufficient unto the day are the lessons thereof. Professor Bill has taught us a big lesson in *The Eagle and the Lion*.

Norman B. Hannah

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Iran and the United States— A Cold War Case Study.

By Richard W. Cottam. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988.

This new book by the author of *Nationalism in Iran* is an excellent, scholarly overview of U.S. — Iranian relations from the nineteenth century to today. It gives sufficient background information to be understandable to the reader with only a general knowledge of Iran, yet it has new insights into both American and Iranian perceptions and interests to make it valuable to the expert as well. Compared to the negative assessment of the shah in Cottam's earlier book, this time the view is much more objective. He credits the shah with skillful use of the levers of power during what he calls the "decade of stability" (1964-74) and then goes on to analyze how the shah's failure to allow political participation or to gain na-

tionalist support led to his downfall—an event which he concludes might have been avoided by timely and consistent use of coercion. (Cottam does not even mention the effect of incipient cancer on the shah's ability to deal with the crisis of confidence.)

Cottam subjects Khomeini's regime to the same rigorous assessment as he does the shah's. He notes four vulnerabilities: Khomeini has no named successor capable of mobilizing popular support; there is no centralized direction to provide for an easy transition; there is no effective institutional base; and the regime has not recruited and indoctrinated a new generation of technocrats. The reader might well note the irony of the fact that despite their hatred for each other, the shah and Khomeini had in common a commitment to absolute authority that did not permit the institutional development needed for stability.



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One looks in vain for Cottam's guidance on future policy toward Iran. In the penultimate chapter he concludes, "Not only is the era of American involvement in Iran coming to an end, but also the much longer period of European involvement as well." Presumably, he does not mean that *involvement* has ended, but rather *dominance*. Despite the lack of policy prescriptions for the future, Cottam's book joins James Bill's *The Eagle and the Lion* on my list of must reading for anyone who would understand the ups and downs of U.S.-Iran relations.

Archie M. Bolster

Modern Egypt: The Formation of a Nation-State.

By Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr. Westview/Hutchinson, 1988.

When Professor Goldschmidt sets out

to reconstruct the history of modern Egypt, he touches repeatedly on a great driving tension in the Egyptian soul and body politic: the devotion to an Islamic past at war with alien secular seductions; the yearning to obtain the powerful technology and skills of the West in order to vanquish Western intruders; beliefs about liberal democracy and its institutions, battered by European doublespeak and double dealing and unable to survive a nostalgic attachment to the golden age of caliphs, sultans, and khedives; and notions of selfless public service and sexual equality crashing up against entrenched religious traditions, patriarchy, and *bakshesh*.

Goldschmidt has clearly invested much time and effort in his excellent book, gathering, sifting, synthesizing, and summarizing a vast amount of material. The author gives a meticulous

recounting of the rise and fall not only of Nasser and Sadat, but also of lesser illuminaries as well. The total book is a concise sketch of Egypt's evolution since the infuriatingly meddlesome West broke through its rotting Ottoman barricades. Goldschmidt's book will be useful and indeed essential to anyone concerned with this pivotal country of the Arab world.

Sue Ann Dangler

American Propaganda Abroad from Benjamin Franklin to Ronald Reagan.

By Fitzhugh Green. Hippocrene Books, 1988.

Most Americans consider "propaganda" the longest four-letter word in the language and certainly one which should not describe a legitimate government activity. As Fitzhugh Green observes

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in *American Propaganda Abroad*, "Although [the United States] demonstrates every day its ability to sell goods, services, and concepts, its people harbor a rather quaint and puritanical distaste for government propaganda."

The U.S. government, of course, has necessarily been engaged in propaganda activities abroad since its inception. In his foreword, former VOA director John Chancellor reminds us that the Declaration of Independence states "let the facts be submitted to a candid world" and notes that Jefferson later wrote that the Declaration's object was "to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent." What better description of or, under the circumstances, justification for government propaganda abroad?

Green has undertaken two related tasks. He tries to make the essentiality

of the government's conducting propaganda abroad more understandable, while making the concept of propaganda more palatable. At the same time, he traces the history of the U.S. Information Agency and explains its workings for the edification of those who know little or nothing about the organization, which is to say the vast majority of the general public. He succeeds admirably. At the same time, the book can serve as a guide for those of the new administration who will concern themselves with what they will euphemistically refer to as information and cultural activities or public diplomacy, enabling them to profit from past experience rather than repeating old mistakes and squandering valuable time re-inventing the wheel.

S.I. Nadler

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Personnel findings

Federal Times, Jan. 23, 1989

The 1980 law that was supposed to create a streamlined, more professional Foreign Service has instead caused serious morale problems in the U.S. diplomatic corps. But the problem is not yet severe enough to cause an exodus by officers, according to an interim report by the Commission on the Foreign Service Personnel System.

"There is widespread uncertainty and apprehension among employees at all levels as to . . . what kind of a career the Service now offers," said the commission. The five-member panel, chaired by former Assistant Secretary of State John Thomas, was created by Congress last year to examine problems in the Foreign Service personnel system. Among the findings:

- Service personnel rules are inadequate to deal with such pressures as dual-career families, single parent families, and the growing tendency among Americans to change jobs frequently.

- The concept of a Foreign Service officer's worldwide availability has been largely eroded by an assignment procedure that takes into account the officer's preferences rather than abilities.

"The integrity of the formal assignments system is widely questioned, as is its capacity to deliver the most qualified officers where their skills are most needed," the commission said.

- Officers with managerial experience usually advance more quickly than those with in-depth expertise, despite the increasing need for very specialized skills in international diplomacy. . . .

- The "up or out" policy, which forces officers who fail to be promoted within a certain time frame into retirement, is very controversial among employees, who may suddenly find themselves out of work after 20 or 25 years of service.

Overall, the commission found that the personnel system does not seem "to function as a coherent, integrated whole." The commission said the vari-

ous functions of the system, "recruitment, training, assignment, promotion and retirement," are carried out independently with little regard for the Service's mission.

Although the report is only in its interim stages, Evangeline Monroe of AFSA said the commission has so far added little to the growing debate on the need for reform. "Obviously their mandate is to judge. What I find frustrating is the lack of judging," Monroe said. "It is an extremely bland report—it's round, it has no edges."

Monroe disputed the finding that a real morale problem would be reflected in a higher attrition rate among employees. ". . . I'm afraid the commission will conclude that we really don't have to worry about the officer corps because they love their jobs and will stay on anyway."

Leslie Aun

Public service in America

*Current Policy No. 1140
Dept. of State, Jan. 9, 1989*

When I speak of public service, I must put at the center the Foreign Service. These talented and brave Americans are on the front lines of American interests every day. It's no tea party. Every time you enter the State Department lobby, take a look at the two plaques erected in memory of Foreign Service officers who lost their lives. One plaque covers the period up to about 1965. It took two centuries to fill up, and most of the people listed on it died from injury and disease. We've now just about filled up another plaque in only 20 years. Most of those were victims of terrorism. The Foreign Service exemplifies public service.

Secretary Shultz

The Baker hearings

The New York Times, Jan. 17, 1989
They had obviously gathered, these eminent senators, not to bury James A. Baker 3rd under a heap of hostile ques-

tions but to praise him, and the compliments flowed back and forth. . . .

He gave an object lesson, as the day wore on, in how to massage senatorial egos. Every word floated out, in his soft Texas drawl, as if it were borne on a little pillow of reasonableness and courtesy. . . . "It would be premature to try and outline a policy" on this question, and that question "may be less of a problem than you are suggesting." He would be "happy to respond to that in writing, Senator, after I have been in office for 90 days," and he would study another idea "and get right back to you."

Helene van Damm, President Reagan's former secretary, writes in her new book, "At Reagan's Side," that she would often call Mr. Baker, then the White House chief of staff, with what seemed like an earthshaking question, only to wonder, after a few soothing phrases from the Texan, why she had been so agitated. It was like that today as Mr. Baker plied his emollient trade.

R. W. Apple, Jr.

Day One

The Washington Post, Jan. 28, 1989

Baker took time yesterday to send a message to the department's 23,000 employees here and in overseas posts. He saluted "the foreign policy professionals whose knowledge, dedication and judgment are the very embodiment of service in the public interest."

He added that "an important lesson of recent years is the need for diversity and openness. America's greatness rests on the foundations of opportunity for all and a fair hearing for all. I believe these are the characteristics of a great foreign policy as well."

The New Regime column

Professionals needed

*Letters to The New York Times,
Dec. 27, 1988*

It is ironic and sad that many observers see the appointment of Thomas R.

Happy Birthday Lillie Davis!

On March 14, our Lillie turns 58, marking 19 years of her big, beautiful smile and dedicated service to the Foreign Service Club.

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Clippings

Pickering, a career Foreign Service officer, as chief United States representative to the United Nations as a signal that the incoming administration places little faith in either the United Nations or the Foreign Service. . . .

What is uniquely American is the practice perfected by [the Reagan] administration of assigning political and ideological allies to the most demanding diplomatic posts, i.e., those most in need of an experienced, proved professional. The notion that foreign governments (or international organizations) welcome political appointees as evidence of special White House interest is for Washington consumption only; while other governments are not unfamiliar with the political payoff system, they rarely risk plunging neophytes into international diplomacy, and they rarely welcome (kind words aside) American innocents abroad.

There is no diplomatic post more

important to our national interests than the United Nations, but our representative in New York should no more be a cabinet officer than should envoys to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Japan, France, the Soviet Union, or Mexico. The Foreign Service must be fully responsive to United States political leadership, while keeping its distance from the political process, a situation that best meshes with the diplomat's twin duties of pressing on his government his nonpartisan, expert advice and fully carrying out the policies laid down in response. George Bush would be doing himself and the nation a great favor by returning the profession to the professionals.

from Alan Berlind (FSO ret.)

Shortfalls spawn idealism

The Washington Times, Jan. 5, 1989
Outgoing State Department officials of-

fer a word of advice to the new secretary, James Baker. One advised him to take the public elevator just once to see what it's like to be stuck between floors when rushing to a meeting.

"Employees here are so idealistic that no one deals with administration or paperwork. Nothing works," explains one very-high-level appointee. "Mail is backed up for weeks. It's not unusual for those at the top levels to receive invitations weeks after an event. Complaints center on lack of supplies and commissaries in certain countries."

Karen's Column

Strictly for export

The Des Moines Register, Jan. 4, 1989
Guess which nation still refuses to let its people find out what sort of information the United States Information Agency is disseminating everywhere else?

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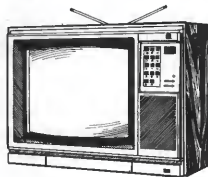
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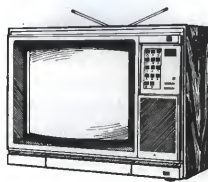
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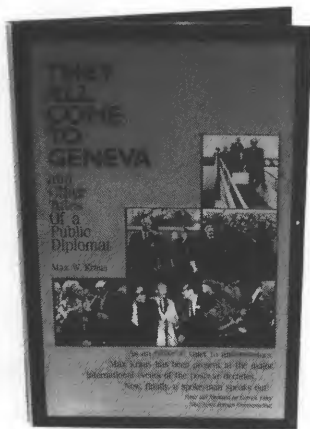
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Clearly, the U.S. government should not be in the domestic propaganda business, but that concern should not be used to deny the public access to propaganda prepared by the USIA for export.

Editorial

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FSJ, March 1979:

In all probability, the political pundits of Washington are quite right about what is good for America. What is also apparent, I discovered, is that what is good for America may be irrelevant. In fact, 12,000 miles of travel throughout this country leaves me with one overwhelming conclusion—the concept of America is a myth. The idea of one nation with definable characteristics, needs and dreams may be a theoretical possibility but, in practice, America does not exist, there is far too much diversity.

It is not just that Norman, Oklahoma, is different from Washington, D.C. and a handful of other metropolitan centers. Norman is different from everywhere else. The regional, even the local, variations in this country are truly incredible. And the differ-

ences are not superficial ones; they are the bread and butter, the gut-level differences. . . .

In looking for an America I found only three nationwide common denominators—the language, the passion for sporting events, and television. The first of these is suspect—the language as written may be uniform but it just doesn't sound the same. As far as sporting events go, Americans will play anything with enormous enthusiasm, particularly from the spectators. . . . The role of television in the United States cannot be overestimated. The majority of Americans work hard and long hours in parts of the country which offer little except television for recreation, amusement, or escape. It is that image of a nation created in Hollywood that is zapped into every home in America and consumed by a population hungry for glamour, excitement, and fantasy, that tells

us, and the rest of the world, who we are.

*"Elephants in South Dakota:
The Search for America,"
by Robert F. Miller*

FSJ, March 1964:

Secretary Dean Rusk: I would say . . . that inside the department our principle problem is layering. For example, when I read a telegram coming in in the morning, it poses a very specific question, and the moment I read it, I know myself what the answer must be. But that telegram goes on its appointed course into the Bureau, and through the office and down to the desk. If it doesn't go down there somebody feels that he is being deprived of his participation in a matter of his responsibility.

Then it goes from the action officer back up through the department to me

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a week or ten days later, and if it isn't the answer that I knew had to be the answer, then I change it at that point, having taken into account the advice that came from below. But usually it is the answer that everybody knew had to be the answer.

I think we do need to do something about layering, and one of the ways to do this is to upgrade the desk offi-

cer level. It seems to me that the man in Washington who spends all of his time brooding about a country like Brazil ought to be a man comparable in competence to the man who is ambassador to Brazil. We then clear the way for him to get quickly to the assistant secretary or the secretary. . . . Have the assistant secretary staffed to provide that desk officer with a good deal

of the specialized advice that he needs and that we can't afford country by country. There would be an economics man, a labor man, and so forth.

A desk officer would typically be an FSO-3 or a 4 at the present time, but clearly an able man on the way up. I think that we might use FSO-1s or career ministers on the desks and see what the effect would be on the quality of the job done.

from the hearings of the Senate Subcommittee on National Security Staffing and Operations, Dec. 11, 1963

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FSJ, March 1939:

Records of the *March of Time* show that its production "Uncle Sam—The Good Neighbor" consumed some 56,000 feet of movie film and \$32,000 in United States currency. Unrecorded is the fact that its making cost both the Department of State and ourselves many worried and sleepless nights, innumerable headaches, gallons of black coffee, and cartons of cigarettes.

But whatever our troubles during its making, the picture has had what a good movie must have—a happy ending. No *March of Time* production has brought more cheers, and already over 20 million cash customers have laid down their money at the box-office to see it.

To most of those 20 million movie fans, the Foreign Service had always meant just one thing: a Hollywood juvenile cast as a vice-consul suddenly remembering his patriotic duty, repelling the advances of a gorgeous blonde, thwarting her nefarious schemes and saving the code book in the nick of time.

Consequently, when we first cautiously approached the chief of the Division of Current Information, we made it clear that the picture we wanted to produce would include no beautiful spies and only the most factual commentary on code books. . . .

"March of Time's Profile" ("the first movie devoted to the Foreign Service"), by Louis de Rochemont (co-producer)



Patty J. Meier

Great people to work with

On January 12, 1988, outgoing Secretary of State George P. Shultz shared some of his thoughts about the Foreign Service with the *FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL*.

Q. Mr. Secretary, there are responsible Americans who question the commitment and loyalty of the Foreign Service to the policies of our elected leaders. How have you answered such questions?

A. I have never heard loyalty questioned in any meaningful way, and my own experience has been that Foreign Service people are talented and energetic. If you're willing to work on the problems, they're willing to work with you right on into the night and over the weekend. It's a great group of people to work with.

Q. What about the Foreign Service's commitment to the policies of our elected leaders?

A. Well, I believe there is a good sense of the fact that when somebody gets elected president, he gets to make the basic decisions and set the tone. Our job is to help the president make foreign policy and get it carried out. That means working with all the different constituent groups. Everybody wants to be in the act. Of course, there is a strong congressional thrust, and we have to work with that. But, by and large, people understand they're working for the president.

I had the experience of working in the Office of Management and Budget. The Office of Management and Budget regards itself as the "president's bureaucracy." Whatever president there is, they belong to the presidency, and to a degree it has seemed to me the Foreign Service has that kind of attitude.

Q. We're sure that in your six and a half years as secretary of state, you've developed some ideas about the Foreign Service—what are some of its weak points?

A. I think the weaknesses of the Foreign Service are that we haven't been able to reach out and get enough talented minorities—blacks in particular—into strong, up-and-coming top positions, and to have them trained—and experienced—so that they should be there. There are some outstanding individuals, but not enough. And the same is true with women, although I think that is remedying itself very rapidly and is not as much of a problem as it was.

I think that our entry process is too cumbersome. By the time a person decides he or she wants to be in the Foreign Service, and finally gets a decision, a lot of time has elapsed. It must be that some good people are lost in that process. One of the things that we've been trying to do is to shorten it so that a more decisive approach is taken.

It's important that people's careers are thought about carefully. One of the things I've been very impressed with in George Vest's tenure as director general of

the Foreign Service is that there has been a lot of effort to think in career terms about what's happening to people.

You never want to find yourself saying that you shouldn't put somebody in another promising job because that person is doing such a good job where he or she is. That's the worst reason not to move somebody. When you get into that mentality, you know you're going to stifle people's careers, not because they're bad, but because they're good. They have to have a chance to broaden their experience. Those are some things that it seems to me need working on.

I also think that the fitness reports, from what I know of them, don't mean as much as they ought to mean, because they seldom say anything critical about anybody, as I understand it. So I guess there's a whole mythology of reading between lines and so on. But it's better to be candid, and then counsel people candidly about what they can do to improve themselves.

Q. One of the concerns today in the Foreign Service is the issue of generalists versus specialists. This drives assignments and promotions. What are your views?

A. The problem of generalists and specialists is not a problem restricted to the Foreign Service. That's a classical problem in all organizations that have professional aspects to them.

You have to have people who are ready to make a career in a specialty, and be willing to reward that. At the same time, your top positions are by and large going to go to people who are willing to undertake general responsibility. That's almost a definition of the job description. Often a person who is really in love with a specialty may say, yes, I'd love to be in that top position, but the actual exercise of the responsibilities is not that interesting to that kind of person.

So I think you have to exercise care in the process of moving people that way. But certainly there are lots of people in the top management of the Foreign Service and in any major organization who have distinguished themselves in some particular and specialized aspect of the organization's work and also have the capacity for working in a position where you have to be broader and deal with a great many things—a so-called generalist.

Of course when a post is medium-sized to small and you're there, you almost have to be a generalist, because, other than highly tech-

nical skills, people have to do more than one thing in order for a post to operate.

I know when I was in business—I was in the construction business—we had lots of very, very big jobs. That meant that a person was assigned to a relatively narrow slice of that job, because of the way you had to organize something big. But we liked to get small jobs and have people, who on a big job were confined to a certain area, go and manage a small job. Because on the small job you had to do everything, you had to know about everything; you had to be, in your words, a generalist. That's how you can see how a person does and whether they like it and are good at it.

By the same token, I think a small post, in managing one or being DCM of one, is a good way of exercising general skills and learning how you do and how well you like that, as distinct from something more specialized.

Q. In what areas within the Foreign Service do you believe there's a need to emphasize training?

A. I think the natural and, I suppose, historic orientation in the Foreign Service is that you are analysts, and you gather information, and you write a report. Everybody wants to write the Mr. X cable or document, and that's tops. Those are individual skills, and people tend to exalt them. But managing these larger embassies is a big management job, and to get things accomplished, there has to be teamwork.

I think people are realizing that in the Foreign Service. At the Foreign Service Institute there are courses that emphasize teamwork and leadership, what it means and why it's necessary. There's also a general realization throughout the building. We're letting people see how important these tasks are that go beyond an individual's capability to size up something and analyze it and write a big report. So I think there is a broadening of horizons of that sort, and I would put a lot of emphasis on that in training.

Q. Your decision against the polygraph was widely supported in the Foreign Service. How can the Foreign Service respond to this and other inappropriate testing such as psychological testing?

A. In every selection process you're trying to do to select the people who are going to do the best. There's nothing wrong with a selection process that tries to pick out

who's going to be best suited, who's going to be most capable, who's going to be reliable, and so on. Those are things that you want and you seek.

There are certain ways of going about it that, in my opinion, can be deceptive, can be unfair, and tend to emphasize, as I see it anyway, the wrong approach to management. That is, management by intimidation of the lie detector test. That's the main rationale for it—it intimidates people. I think we need to go about our task of motivating people in a much more positive way than that.

I think the way you avoid such things is by doing a good job of selection, getting able people and having them work well and look to the proper observance of the rules. And I think the record of the Foreign Service is quite good in that regard. But I think we have to take the problems of security and counter-intelligence very seriously and work at them. The answer to these things that are very intrusive, which are based on concerns in that area, is to do the job properly ourselves in our own way, and I think by and large we do.

Q. Would psychological testing for Eastern European posts in particular help create the right approach?

A. I don't think so. I think that the managerial problem is similar. Obviously, in posts where you know that it's a hostile environment, and you're going to be subjected to counter-intelligence efforts, people have to be alert to it, be briefed on it and be kept posted, and take precautions.

There are some things we are doing that involve the way we manage those embassies that should tighten up our security. But we should go at it directly and expect people to understand its importance.

Q. The Foreign Service feels that it was unfairly singled out for public and congressional criticism following the Moscow embassy revelations. It is an issue that refuses to blow over. Do you have any parting thoughts on this?

A. Oh, I don't know that the Foreign Service was singled out. As people looked into it, it was felt the department was too casual about some of the security matters that people should be taking seriously. I think that the Moscow thing was, as it turned out,

way overblown. The Marines didn't do what was alleged that they did.

Nevertheless, the outcome of all the stew about it has been to produce stronger and better procedures. We have applied them broadly, and I think fairly and properly, and it seems to me we're in a stronger position than we were when it all started.

Q. The foreign policy agenda has changed radically since World War II. It now focuses primarily on political/military issues. What is the role for diplomacy and diplomats in a changing world?

A. I don't know that I agree with the premise of the question. There's a big economic world out there that people think about a great deal. I don't know whether the drug trafficking problem is included in what you mean by military things, or that terrorism is included in that. We have to worry about those things.

So I think the breadth of concern is there, and at least it seems to me there is a big change taking place in the nature of the world economy and the world political and strategic situation. We need to analyze that and think through what it means to us and act accordingly. But I don't think the focus has become narrower. It's a very broad scene out there that we need to operate against.

Q. There's the perception that often discussions of military policy take the place of approaching issues from a diplomatic point of view.

A. Well, it is often said, "Are you going to go the military route or the diplomatic route?" Again, I think that's a very false statement. Strength, whether it's economic strength or military strength, is usually a necessary handmaiden of effective diplomacy. The two things are not alternatives; they're complementary. So I think one of the reasons why we have had some pretty good strides is that our country has strengthened itself.

Q. What do you consider your biggest accomplishment, your biggest disappointment, your biggest frustration?

A. I can't handle such questions! □



ARE DIPLOMATS PATRIOTIC?

DAVID D. NEWSOM

Are diplomats patriotic? Since the time of Franklin Roosevelt, every American president has, in one way or another, voiced his doubts about the loyalty of the American diplomat—either to the country or to an administration. President Bush, in a welcome statement at his initial press conference after the elections, expressed his respect for the men and women of the Foreign Service. Even his positive attitude, however, may not eliminate the problems in communication between the domestically oriented politician and those who live in and report on other lands.

Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's right-hand man, coined the term "cookie pusher," reflecting both on the character and the life style of the diplomat. The activist Truman voiced his impatience with the State Department and overrode recommendations of his diplomats. Eisenhower and Dulles did little to rescue the diplomats from the vituperative charges of Senator McCarthy.

Richard Nixon entered the White House with a deep suspicion of the Foreign Service, arising, apparently, from personal experience. Henry Kissinger speaks of this in *The White House Years*: "He (Nixon) had very little con-

fidence in the State Department. Its personnel had no loyalty to him; the Foreign Service had disdained him as vice president and ignored him the moment he was out of office."

Negative presidential attitudes were not confined to the career Foreign Service. They applied to the entire foreign policy establishment as represented in the State Department—to presidential appointees as well as career officers. Franklin Roosevelt left Cordell Hull out of some of the most critical foreign policy decisions of his administration. John Kennedy treated Dean Rusk as a secondary member of his inner circle. The coolness between Richard Nixon and his first secretary of state, William Rogers, was apparent to everyone. In the Reagan administration, both career and non-career diplomats suffered when their observations ran contrary to the administration's ideology.

This attitude is not confined to the United States. *The Economist* of July 16, 1988, spoke of Mrs. Thatcher's suspicion of diplomats and commented, "Suspicion of diplomats by strong heads of government is a common trait." In contacts with other European diplomats, I have heard them voice similar complaints.

We who are diplomats have asked ourselves why these negative attitudes and suspicions exist. We resent deeply the charges of a lack of dedication to the national interest and a lack of patriotism—charges that are both unjust and untrue. As a group we have suffered too much in dislocation, illness, and the death of colleagues to be so summarily excluded from

David D. Newsom was Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 1978-81. An earlier version of this essay was delivered as the 1988 Oscar Iden Lecture at the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, where he is dean of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy.

the ranks of true Americans. But we must acknowledge that many doubt our sincere attachment to the national spirit.

A satisfactory working relationship between the diplomat and the politician is vital to the national interest. The problem exists both within the executive branch and between diplomats and Congress.

Within the executive branch, the attitude of doubt about the loyalty—and even the utility—of diplomats goes back to the early days of the republic. Diplomats were seen by the fierce democrats of our early years as vestiges of European royalty. They were part of the establishment whose machinations resulted in both entanglements and wars. Because Americans wanted to be removed from the traditional intrigues of the old world, they harbored a suspicion of those public servants who, by choice and the needs of the service, spent much of their lives abroad. That suspicion has not wholly disappeared.

The doubt is heightened by the experience of political campaigns and transitions. To begin with, the diplomat often manifests an unwelcome skepticism toward rhetoric—the life blood of politics. Diplomats will, during their career, hear volumes of highflying words. Inevitably, they will tend to ask what they mean, what commitments they convey, what problems they will create. But the political leader prefers unvarnished expressions—of promises, of friendship, or of denigrating enmity.

Further, presidents and those who serve them come to office after campaigns in which the loyalty and subservience of the staff to the decisions and declarations of the candidate are absolute. Those expectations are carried over into government by the victor—especially in foreign affairs, an area seen by all recent presidents as uniquely theirs. Candidates have a vested interest in the policies and initiatives they have promoted. They fear that any backing away from such commitments will make them seem weak or uncertain. As these policies are developed the president naturally favors those who render support without question, both within the circles of the executive and outside. Along comes the diplomat at transition who loyally supported policies of the previous president and who now raises questions about the new policy. How can the politician trust someone who served a previous administration and was not part of the campaign team?

This mistrust is greatest when an election brings in the candidate of the opposite party

and, with him, many who have not previously served in government. This happened in 1952 with the election of Dwight Eisenhower. In 1976, the Democrats returned under Jimmy Carter after an eight-year absence and brought not only new people but also an ideological departure from the previous eight years.

The ideological factor was even greater and the neophytes to government even more numerous in the first Reagan administration. The diplomats were objects of special suspicion, particularly those who had served in Central America. The attitude was symbolized in the recommendations of The Heritage Foundation that presidents must make a wider use of political appointees if they are to gain adequate support within the executive branch for their foreign policies.

Diplomats see their task not so much as complementing the political agenda of an administration as bringing to the leadership the most accurate picture possible of the world outside and using that to advance the national interest through negotiation. This often means explaining to domestically oriented officials the realities and limitations of other political systems and giving sometimes unpalatable assessments of circumstances abroad. These sometimes contrary assessments are ill received when they challenge existing policies.

Many in the political world do not accept this function of the diplomat. In our assertive society, diplomats are expected to be salesmen rather than assessors. They are to be advocates. Their task is not to survey the market, but to sell the product. To a number of American politicians, the purpose of a diplomatic encounter is to persuade a foreign leader or government of the correctness of the U.S. view of an issue. The officials hope to curb what they see as unwarranted foreign opposition to U.S. policies. In their minds, such policies have been devised on the basis of their best judgment of the domestic climate. If obstacles to implementation exist, the good diplomat surely must know how to overcome them. The reservations of the diplomat are seen not as evidence of the diplomat's concern for the national interest but as signs of the diplomat's lack of will, inadequate persuasive power, or—most damaging of all—subservience to the views of a foreign government.

Washington wants the diplomat to “talk tough,” to argue the point, to “carry the day.” Those who have worked at the executive levels of the State Department can recall cases of profane blasts from the White

House staff after reading an incoming telegram from an ambassador: "Why the hell didn't the ambassador throw it back at the foreign minister. He shouldn't be allowed to get away with that crap."

This attitude has, within it, much irony. The U.S. official, incensed at the lack of a blunt response from the American diplomat abroad, would, quite likely, be among the first to bridle at a foreign diplomat in Washington who sought, in such harsh terms, to challenge U.S. policy. Although American leaders live in an intensely political environment, some seem unable to realize that leaders in other countries also have political problems.

But the diplomat, face to face with a foreign representative, is conscious that, before one can gain support for U.S. policies, one must first understand the viewpoint of the foreigner. This means obtaining the best assessment possible of the foreign government's views and of the relationships within the power structure of that government. The diplomat who must live in the country wishes, also, to keep the door open for other meetings.

Further, diplomats, in the pursuit of their task, sometimes speak to the wrong people. In authoritarian countries—even in some democracies—contact with opposition

elements is discouraged. In Washington, on the contrary, policymakers want the embassy to predict political change and to persuade even known opponents to accept U.S. policies. At the same time, those in the White House do not wish a diplomat's encounters to be embarrassing to an administration. The contacts of U.S. diplomats in China with the Communists of Yanan were exploited by Republicans to the political disadvantage of Democrats in the late 1940s. Quiet, direct contact in the field between American diplomats and representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Middle East has in the past been useful, both in furthering the security of individual diplomats and in gaining a better understanding of the attitudes of that movement. Yet, in the U.S. domestic political atmosphere of the past decade, publicized contacts have been embarrassments to administrations.

Those examples are more than differences

over procedures or strategy. They often represent basic differences over policy. Zbigniew Brzezinski expresses this view in his book, *Power and Principle*:

Secretaries of state only too often (especially with the passage of time), and their State Department professionals almost always, tend to confuse diplomacy with foreign policy. What they forget is that diplomacy is a technique for promoting national objectives abroad and not an end in itself. This is why most recent presidents have tended to become disillusioned and frustrated by 'Foggy Bottom,' gradually concentrating foreign policy decision-making more and more in the White House where it is likely to recoil less from the occasional need to employ compulsion and where it is likely to be more responsive to sensitive domestic economic and other concerns.

What *The Economist* said about Mrs. Thatcher is also true in Washington:

The FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) sees its primary task as to keep open lines of communication with as many countries as possible. It is pragmatic, conciliatory, fonder of compromise than combat. 'To threaten is to fail' is a Foreign Office dictum. So a combative prime minister like Mrs. Thatcher often thinks diplomats lily-livered, willing to sacrifice Britain's interest for a peaceful life.

The political leadership in Washington is also frequently more attracted to force or to covert action than the diplomat, who may see perils in such actions not perceived at home. Presidents must balance foreign policy considerations with the demands and attitudes of the domestic constituency. In many cases, the domestic considerations will prevail: the need to show strength; the need to react to perceived provocations; the need to respond to the feelings of an important constituency.

Diplomats have no problems with such decisions—provided they feel that their observations and recommendations have been seriously considered. They have the right to expect, however, that honest challenges to conventional wisdom will not result in pejorative labeling as "wimps"—or "traitors." It is the nature of the diplomat's job often to bring bad news. But the nation would not be served if diplomats first tested the political waters

The nation would not be served if diplomats first tested the political waters and then tailored their assessment to fit that test.

at home and then tailored their assessment to fit that test.

Problems also exist—often serious problems—in communication between diplomats and Congress. As a young diplomat in the early 1950s, I experienced the searing opprobrium of the McCarthy period. Senator McCarthy's unfounded charges were widely accepted at the time; even some of my friends in California wondered about my orientation and loyalty. The careers of those officers who reported on China were permanently damaged. That period firmly established—if it did not create—an image of the diplomat that still exists today on Capitol Hill and beyond. If the image was not one of disloyalty, it was one of an effete elite, out of touch with the main currents of American life and demanding a life style, including a "whiskey allowance," incompatible with the interests of the taxpayer.

Since my retirement, I have worked with a group of fellow former diplomats to assist members of the Senate in the evaluation of nominees for ambassadorial appointments. We found many members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sincerely responsive to our efforts—although during this time only one presidential appointee was formally rejected. I was not prepared, however, for the constant reminders of the negative image of the diplomat on the Hill.

One staff member who had once been in the Foreign Service told me he never mentioned this fact to fellow staff members; his credentials would be damaged. Another, friendly to the Foreign Service, advised me never to use the word "professional" in discussing diplomacy in Congress. The connotation, he explained, was that of a self-interested diplomatic elite, less interested in the national goals than in preserving its own prerogatives. Senator Jesse Helms has, by his parliamentary maneuvers, frequently questioned the intentions of individual diplomats.

The problem arises in part because the diplomats of the State Department are called upon publicly to present policies that represent the broader views of an administration. Constitutionally, the State Department is responsible for presenting the foreign policy of an administration to Congress. Even though a departmental official may be presenting a fully considered executive position to Congress, it is seen—and attacked—as a State Department position. Those in an administration not in sympathy with the president's decision will be quick to join in this attack on the depart-

ment and its diplomats.

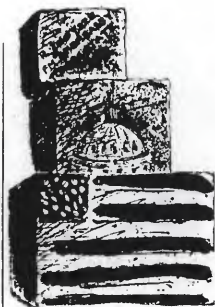
Diplomats and the State Department are thus seen as synonymous. Together they suffer from the lack of a strong domestic constituency and must make strenuous efforts to gain adequate appropriations for the conduct of diplomacy—even though the State Department budget is one of the smallest of all the executive departments. Diplomats bear the brunt of congressional ire and rhetoric over security breaches—such as the recent ones in Moscow—even though other agencies of the government may also be involved. Harsh criticism of diplomats plays to a domestic audience already conditioned to believe that diplomats are failing to protect the national interest.

Another problem: politicians in Congress and diplomats do not speak the same language. In presenting a government position to Congress, diplomats become cautious—perhaps too cautious—in speech. They have learned that whatever is said will be heard at home and by both friends and adversaries abroad. This consideration inhibits the kind of direct "telling it like it is" that Congress likes. When representatives of other government agencies go before congressional committees or speak individually to members of Congress, they appear less circumspect. One day, shortly after the American hostages were seized in Iran in 1979, Henry Precht, then country director for Iran, listened impatiently to a tirade of America's sins from the Iranian chargé d'affaires. Fed up with the tirade, Henry responded with a well known American word, "Bullshit." When this was reported in the press, his stock went up substantially on Capitol Hill.

Members of Congress, quite naturally, have their eyes on their constituents and the problems of their districts. With few exceptions, they do not like to be given the impression that the problems of Zaire, for example, are as serious as the problems of their district. In fact, when the diplomat insists on talking to them about Zaire—or most other countries, for that matter—they may not be interested at all.

Many in Congress are also predisposed to see the testimony of diplomats more as representing foreign interests than those of the United States. Vice President Quayle began his election campaign by stating that, in the matter of the sale of U.S. agricultural products abroad, U.S. diplomats did not "protect the nation's interest."

Moreover, diplomats are associated with ne-



gotiation and compromise. Although compromise is essential in our democratic political system, it seems to be less tolerated in political transactions with foreigners. The public seems to understand the need for compromise in trade and economic negotiations; the understanding is less when political and security issues are at stake. In the late 1970s, the very complex trade agreement negotiated in the Tokyo Round—one full of compromises—sailed through the Senate with only three negative votes; in the same period the Panama Canal treaty barely gained ratification and the SALT II treaty was rejected.

Professionalism is recognized in the military services and in the scientific and technical fields. Far fewer, however, see the special talents of perception, cultural sensitivity, analysis, and area knowledge required of diplomats as constituting an occupation that cannot be easily duplicated by any educated citizen.

The assessment of the diplomat will not always be correct. Parochialism and emotion can color such assessments. But a look at the post-World War II years suggests that diplomats may not always have been wrong. Had we as a nation accepted the view that the Kuomintang in China was fatally flawed and the Communists would prevail—but would eventually divide from the Soviets—the history of our relations with Asia would have been different.

Those African hands who predicted the ultimate end of colonialism in the Portuguese territories were criticized as in league with “terrorists.” Yet, following their advice might have put us in a more favorable position to deal with the political changes in Angola and Mozambique.

Many U.S. diplomats warned of the weakness of the shah, of Marcos, and of Somoza and faced criticism that they were “undermining” friends of the United States. U.S. diplomats in the Middle East pressed for a stronger U.S. position against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and warned against efforts to support a peace treaty between Israel and the Christian leadership of Lebanon. Those few in the State Department aware of the efforts to sell arms to Iran in connection with the release

of hostages warned against it. They were not wrong in regard to either Lebanon or Iran.

Many of the criticisms against the Department of State and the diplomats who serve it are valid. The department is often too slow in its responses to events—too bound up by the cautions and processes of bureaucracy. Diplomats are often parochial; this reduces their credibility, even if, in regions of conflict, the parochialism of one is often offset by that of the colleague in the opposite capital.

Charges that diplomats cling too strongly to past decisions and experience may be valid. Such tendencies spring from an awareness, based on history and tradecraft, that dramatic initiatives that fail to take account of past events can bring disaster. U.S. policy initiatives in Central America cannot ignore the deep residue of suspicion toward the North American giant that remains from other U.S. interventions. Those diplomats who raised questions about policies that ran counter to this historical perspective were removed to other fields and, I would submit, the position of the United States in the region suffered.

At times, it is true, diplomats are insufficiently respectful of political leadership, too reluctant to accept decisions, too cloistered in their own world. Robert Murphy, one of the great diplomats of the World War II period, writing in his book, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, noted that “Not all the troubles of our career officers come from without. There is at times a cloistered attitude in the Department of State, a detachment from daily American realities, an expectation that a vague someone will fight the battles of the Foreign Service.”

Elliot Richardson, veteran of many cabinet wars, wrote of this political-diplomatic relationship in the *FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL* in September 1981, advising the Foreign Service that “The first step (in establishing the influence of the Foreign Service) must be the whole-hearted acceptance, both inside and outside the State Department, of the fact that the president should be the leading spokesman for, and executor of, U.S. foreign policy. Such acceptance is not now universal. Most foreign policy professionals harbor a propensity to regard the president as an interloper who, in relation to the secretary of state and the department, needs to be cut down to size. This is a dangerous fallacy.”

These criticisms may be valid, but that of

Diplomats are often parochial; this reduces their credibility.

a lack of patriotism is not. As we have seen, patriotism is a highly emotional subject in the United States. It means not only the pledge of allegiance, but the lump in the throat when the flag passes by, the tingle of the spine when the national anthem is played, the feeling of pride when the returning American first steps onto native soil. If these are the measures of patriotism—and loyalty—no one feels them more than the diplomat. We all have intense recollections of moments when we have seen the flag hoisted in a foreign land, when a U.S. Navy vessel moves slowly into a distant port, or when, returning home after several years away, we have sighted the Statue of Liberty. But the diplomat's patriotism and loyalty are deeper than this.

The task of a diplomat is more than a job, or should be. Each country's representatives abroad should have a sense of mission in the furtherance of the interests as well as the principles of their country. In the case of the United States, that mission has special meaning.

We hear others talking with deep respect and knowledge of our founding fathers and how much the writings of a Jefferson or a Madison have meant to them. We sense how many in other lands look to us in hope. We cannot help but be proud. But with that pride goes an awareness of how others see contradictions between our declared principles and many of our actions. Living as we do among others, we see our country as they do. The sight is not always favorable. But when we attempt to convey how we are seen abroad to those at home, we encounter one of the most sensitive nerves of Americans. As a people we do not like to learn that our image is, in some places, unfavorable. In the 1980 election, the Republicans successfully exploited President Carter's efforts to portray the limitations of our acceptance abroad, characterizing it as "blaming America first."

We have made mistakes as a nation. We have missed opportunities and courted disasters because we have seen other societies in our own image, rather than theirs. What we have seen as demonstrations of strength have been seen by others as neo-imperialism. We have tended to speak more and listen less.

Diplomats live daily with these mistakes, explaining why they happen, softening the effect of the political rhetoric of our leaders, and seeking the means to create a better understanding of U.S. actions. But, if diplomats are honest, they must also make their government aware that the images and problems ex-

ist. As the tragedies of recent years have shown, the lives of diplomats as well as other Americans can be at stake.

My comments are not intended as special pleading for the Foreign Service or for the Department of State. We of the Foreign Service have, perhaps, damaged our credibility in the political arena by our complaints about political appointees—without a corresponding emphasis on the quality of all appointees. The perils of the diplomat apply to those who enter this field from whatever route. In the eyes of the political leadership they, too, are diplomats. They have been since Benjamin Franklin was appointed to Paris.

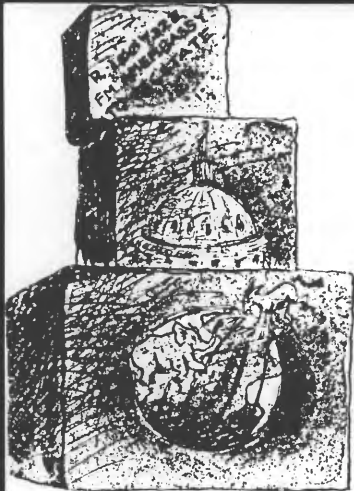
My plea is that the relationship between diplomats and the political leadership be put on a different footing. We face today and will face in the future complex and significant problems and opportunities in our foreign relations. Our margin of superiority over our friends and enemies is no longer what it was in the 25 years after World War II. Skilled practitioners of diplomacy may be more important to our nation than at any other time in our history.

I would suggest three brief guidelines for this relationship. First, American diplomats must accept that they are part of the staff of a president and responsible to that president. They are not part of an external body transmitting wisdom to benighted politicians from above. Secondly, the diplomat, to be effective, must respect—perhaps more than in the past—the particular pressures, perspectives, and interests of the political leadership if he or she is to speak effectively to that leadership.

Thirdly, the politician, must, at the same time, be prepared to accept diplomats also as dedicated Americans even when they are conveying unpalatable messages and, occasionally, to recognize that a careful listening to those messages may save them from grave mistakes.

The nation will be served if the basic differences in perception between these players in the making of foreign policy are recognized and respected. The nation is not served if the diplomat who seeks to warn of dangers abroad, weaknesses in friends, or the nature of enemies is pilloried as unpatriotic or disloyal. □

We all have intense recollections of moments when we have seen the flag hoisted in a foreign land.



Short-order

FRANK MCNEIL

In the McCarthy period, turncoats and spies such as the Rosenbergs existed as they do today; witness the Pelton, Walker, and Wilson cases. But the hysteria whipped up by lying politicians against loyal Americans constituted not just a moral offense but an assault on due process and the political system. Not coincidentally, the witch hunt damaged national security. We lost honorable and talented people from the Foreign Service and chilled public and private discourse about the world outside.

In depriving the "China hands" of their careers and, for a time, their reputations, McCarthy and his allies were the true subversives. The accused were middle-of-the-roads, run over in the madness. We lost the nation's best minds on China, not for sympathizing with communism, but for being correct, for foreseeing that Mao would bring down Chiang Kai-shek's ineffectual government. I recall Jack Service saying that he never doubted he would be vindicated. In the end, the China hands were rehabilitated, ironically, by Richard Nixon's opening to China. But the cost to the republic was high; had they remained on duty, their knowledge and diplomatic skills might have helped avert or shorten Chinese involvement in the Korean War.

Central American Blacklist?

In the 1980s, the Reagan administration faced two problems in Central America, one

Frank McNeil was ambassador to Costa Rica and senior deputy in State's INR bureau. This article has been adapted by the author from War and Peace in Central America, copyright 1988. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Co.

inherited, the other self-inflicted. The first was a very difficult situation, in which Soviet bloc-supported insurgencies had taken over Nicaragua, were active in El Salvador, and, to a lesser extent, Guatemala, and aimed, in the incandescent rhetoric of their leaders, to take over the isthmus. The second stemmed from the rhetoric of the administration's most zealous supporters. In the long run, the second proved the greater, leading to the eventual ascendancy of a frame of reference removed from Central American realities, which saw the region solely in East-West terms.

With respect to China and strategic arms limitations with the Soviets, the Reagan administration went through a learning curve, shuffling off rhetoric to pursue national interests. The Central American learning curve, however, was bell-shaped, a time of learning followed by a period of unlearning, a regression to a rhetoric that held the Soviets responsible for all evil in the region, with no sense that the underlying cause of strife lay in North-South issues, poverty, and oppression, the inheritance of a century of conflict.

In this view, if the United States mucked up, it could only be the consequence of conspiracy. There was no sense of original sin, no room for well-intentioned error. The State Department was a particular "bête noir."

In 1981, Secretary of State Alexander Haig dismissed the controversial State Department transition team, but their personnel hit list in Latin America was largely honored. Assistant Secretary William Bowdler was adjudged guilty of the very thing he had warned against, the likelihood of another Cuba should the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) win military victory over Somoza. He was forced into immediate retirement with no thought for his years of loyal and effective nonpartisan

Intelligence

service to both parties. Even Haig's choice for assistant secretary, Tom Enders, ran into a long confirmation holdup, not from liberals who didn't care for him because of his service in Cambodia, but from Senator Jesse Helms.

In the meantime, two other FSOs, John Bushnell and James Cheek, respectively acting assistant secretary for inter-American affairs and deputy assistant secretary for Central America, carried administration freight in public and on the Hill on such matters as assistance for El Salvador, then highly controversial. Bushnell, in particular, drew great fire from liberals. Both were blacklisted, nonetheless, for ambassadorships anywhere in the world. They had served the Carter administration in policy jobs in Latin America and that was enough. Bushnell, a brilliant economist, headed out as deputy chief of mission in Buenos Aires. Cheek later served with distinction as *chargé d'affaires* in Ethiopia.

In Central America, ambassadors were on the hit list. Larry Pezzullo in Managua and Bob White in El Salvador were given a background savaging in the press, from sources in the incoming administration. Shortly afterwards, I got a call from White asking me to call Pezzullo and urge him not to quit, but to do the Foreign Service thing and wait to see what the administration wanted. Ironically, Pezzullo stayed for a time at Haig's request. It was White who retired after a highly publicized blowup.

Jack Binns, just arrived in Honduras, was close to Bowdler and marked for extinction. Delay in naming Binns' replacement, John Negroponce, who had raised White House eyebrows because he once worked for Kissinger, kept Binns on until the end of October. Throwing away a modest opportunity to ingratiate himself with the new crowd, Binns called them

as he saw them, giving in-house warning, in prescient terms, of the dangers inherent in the contra program. Blacklisted for ambassadorial positions anywhere, Binns returned to European affairs, where he finished his career as deputy chief of mission in Madrid.

Any administration has the right to pick key personnel. And if it intends a major change in policy, it will want to put new people in at the policymaking level in Washington and in key places abroad. What happened was morally wrong and policy stupid for other reasons: the McCarthyite imputation of disloyalty to able and dedicated professionals, the savaging of FSOs for a policy in Nicaragua which they had tried to alter, and the underlying presumption that expert knowledge and skills were meaningless inasmuch as foreigners could be expected to reconstruct their reality to comply with our rhetoric. Contrast this with the approach to Africa, where despite a major policy change, personnel were not sacrificed to the true believers and the administration made use of its Africanists.

The essence of a working Foreign Service is knowledge, intellectual honesty, and discipline. The blacklist served none of these. No professional should be blacklisted for having worked hard, as the oath of office requires, for any administration's policy. There has to be accountability. If an officer broke the law, or deliberately deceived Congress, that is different. But if you punish good people by blacklisting them for doing their jobs, you will ensure a practice of telling political leaders what they want to hear, a recipe for foreign policy disasters.

None of this is an argument against qualified political appointees. Every administration,

*A good
ambassador with
a good staff tends
to provide
considerably
better analysis of
a particular
country than
analysts who work
in Washington*

including Reagan's, has made such appointments, and the Foreign Service is the only profession I know which welcomes knowledgeable people not of the guild into its labors. The argument is against disqualifying professionals on partisan grounds and for disqualifying the unqualified, whose sole virtue is political activism, from foreign policy positions.

The Nicaragua Obsession

In 1980, the Reagan administration entered on a five-year war with itself over policy, marked by the eventual triumph of the single track in respect to Nicaragua, an all-consuming obsession by mid-1985. It was not, as frequently portrayed by publicists of the new right, a war between State Department liberals vs. Reagan loyalists. That portrayal, however, defines the nature of the conflict, a struggle between those who saw policy as the expression of revealed truth and those mostly conservative pragmatists, including devout Republican appointees like Tony Modley (ambassador to Brazil and then assistant secretary of state), who thought you had to deal with reality, not invent it.

At the outset the learning curve forced continuities in policy from the Carter administration: support for democratic elections, support for Duarte in El Salvador, and a degree of concern for human rights. There were new initiatives: a major assistance program for the region at levels undreamed of in the Carter administration, and the innovative Caribbean Basin Initiative, in which for the first time ever the United States provided a system of trade preferences for its near neighbors.

For a time this provided common ground with Democrats disposed to cooperate in support of democratic political and economic development. It was not to last. The treatment of Mike Barnes, then-chairman of the House Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, became a metaphor for savaging Democrats who disagreed with the contra program but had been responsive to overtures to work toward bipartisanship in the region. In the 1986 congressional campaign, TV spots, stimulated by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, smeared Barnes and other opponents of the contras as dupes of communism. Later, the speaker of the House, Texas Democrat Jim Wright, joined the president in a bipartisan peace initiative in the summer of 1987. When Wright persisted in taking peace seriously and gave active support to the August 1987, Guatemala Accords, he was savaged in faceless background

briefings, quickly sourced to Assistant Secretary Elliott Abrams.

From summer 1984, until February 1987, I served as senior deputy in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). The leaders of the bureau, successively Director Hugh Montgomery and Assistant Secretary Morton I. Abramowitz, were intensively involved in the substance of the bureau's analysis. They found it useful to delegate operational management to me. I spent no more than 10 to 15 percent of my time in oversight of INR's analysis and intelligence coordination with respect to Latin America. For substantial periods, I did more on Asia, particularly the Philippines. I make the point because Abrams, his spokesmen, and, apparently, North, saw me as a brooding spirit, incessantly "leaking" and hurling thunderbolts against policy.

There are many organizations with analytic expertise: the regional and functional bureaus of the Department of State, which INR represents in the intelligence community, the CIA's directorate of intelligence, and in matters military, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). In my experience, a good ambassador with a good staff tends to provide considerably better analysis of what is going on inside a particular country than analysts who work in Washington. Foreign Service reporting, even in an era of budget stringency for the State Department, still remains the first line of intelligence in foreign affairs.

No one, including our ambassadors, some less talented than others, is infallible. The operative doctrine is competitive analysis, to make sure that no administration becomes the prisoner of a single analytic point of view. No intelligence agency is supposed to make policy. Unfortunately, the director of the CIA and some of his staff went way over the line. Secretary Shultz insisted that INR stay away from policy and whacked us if he thought we strayed (I recall no such admonitions on Central America). The secretary had enough policy advisers. He wanted INR to follow the rules and maintain distance from the contention over policy around the globe. If someone was interested in my personal views on policy, I gave them privately and quite apart from the flow of analysis.

The analysis most useful to policymakers is that which crisply reflects, rather than homogenizes, disagreement. Today's conventional wisdom can become tomorrow's misjudgment. When I came to INR I shared the concerns, later publicly expressed by Senator David

Durenburger (R-MN) and by John Horton, a retired CIA officer who had held the job of national intelligence officer for Latin America, about efforts within the CIA to tailor for political purposes the analysis about what was going on in Central America.

The records of the congressional Select Committees that investigated the Iran-contra affair show that on November 2, 1984, North and Alan Fiers, the new chairman of the CIA's Central American Task Force, were pushing a Special National Intelligence Estimate (an SNIE in intelligence jargon) toward an optimistic view of the contras' prospects. North's computer memos portray him in a characteristic mood, complaining to Fiers about the State Department, really INR. North took exception to our view that the contras "had become largely ineffective since the funding had run out in May of 1984." North and Fiers, new to the region and on the job two months, "agreed that the opposite was true."

No one else, including the contras themselves, thought they were then doing well. They were surviving, a feat in itself. A million dollars a month, supposedly from private donors (we now know the donation came from a friendly country), kept the contras together and base camps operating. The money kept one unit, the Jorge Salazar command, in central Nicaragua under conditions that in 1985 became reminiscent of Valley Forge without the snow.

The intelligence process was prostituted to a desire to convince Congress to renew assistance to the contras. If memory serves me right, the estimate North talked about was the first of four dealing with Nicaragua which the intelligence community produced in less than a year, attention worthy of a superpower. We called it the "rain of SNIEs," though not all were so titled. With the help of colleagues in the CIA, the paper mill eventually got turned off; there was nothing new to say that could fit under the rubric of an estimate and the Hill was smelling a rat.

Less funny were the echoes of Vietnam, efforts to steamroll optimistic judgments, this time about the contras, into the estimates—against the views of most working-level analysts in DIA, CIA, and INR. In the case of the estimate discussed by North and Fiers, they succeeded. As a consequence, Hugh Montgomery and I agreed with our analysts that INR had to take vigorous written dissent from the key judgments of this SNIE. We did so, the first of a series of incidents in which

INR refused to go along with a modern day version of Hans Christian Andersen, a fable of the contras' new uniforms.

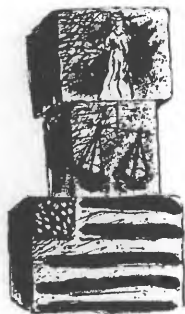
On January 28, 1985, North wrote to National Security Adviser John Poindexter, again attacking INR's views about an SNIE on the Nicaraguan resistance. He asserted that "with adequate support the resistance could be in Managua by the end of 1985." In April 1985, North wrote that the Nicaraguan Democratic Forces (FDN) "has become an effective guerrilla army in less than a year." On May 31, 1985, he further asserted that, "In short, the political and military situation for the resistance now appears better than any point in the last 12 months."

Contrast North's views with those of General Paul Gorman, who had just retired at that time as commander of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama. Gorman told the Select Committees: "What I was saying in those days was that I did not see in the Nicaraguan resistance a combination of forces that could lead to the overthrow of the government or the unseating of the Sandinistas. . . . The Sandinistas could wipe them out."

During Easter Week of 1986, the Nicaraguan military mounted a major incursion just across the Honduran border into the so-called Las Vegas salient, a bump in the map produced by a bend in a river. The move was aimed at disrupting contra infiltration from Honduras into Nicaragua. Minor incursions were fairly common. Larger ones into this Central American version of Cambodia's Parrot's Beak came about once every year or so. (The year before, the contras had beaten back a similar incursion.) As always, the initial intelligence was incomplete, leading to dispute within the intelligence community over the size of the incursion, with analysts in DIA and INR arguing for a lower but sizable figure in opposition to higher figures pushed by North, Fiers, and Abrams.

At one point in this exercise in Kentucky windage (there are no turnstiles through which Sandinistas go to provide an exact count), the CIA's national intelligence officer for Latin America called, in some desperation, to say that the NSC (North and Poindexter) wanted an intelligence community consensus right away. He and I agreed on a rational (and traditional) procedure, an estimated range of Sandinista troops involved, and concluded that 800-1,500 troops had actually crossed the border into Honduras. In a later conversation he told me the range hadn't been "satisfac-





tory" (meaning high enough) for the NSC.

In the meantime, Abrams went public with presumably satisfactory numbers, 2,400 as I recall, higher than what the analytic community thought possible. Poindexter provided frosting on the cake, by calling Under Secretary of State Michael Armacost to complain about INR's views. The hype was necessary to justify \$20 million in "emergency" military assistance for Honduras, assistance which took a long time in getting there, according to a recent GAO report.

The Select Committees' report, which called this episode "intelligence misrepresentation for policy purposes," fills in the story. It notes that "the Sandinista raid was considered routine by the CIA intelligence directorate," (DDI) but Mr. Casey nonetheless instructed DDI "to alert the world that the Sandinistas were preparing and trying to knock the contras out while we debated in the United States." DDI replied to Casey's note the same day. "Pursuant to your note this a.m. [DDI] redrafted the blind memo on Sandinista military actions and intentions. DIA wanted to prepare a dissent. . . . We have been led to understand that its approach will be that the incident represented more a target of opportunity for the Sandinistas rather than being representative of any clear strategy. Also, you should know that in the past we have had some difficulty in coordinating pieces on the fighting with INR, which has estimated lower numbers of troops involved in recent operations."

Casey finally gave up on his analysts and directed Fiers to write an intelligence perspective incorporating Casey's views for use with Latin American leaders to get them "to be supportive of the contras," a task which has so far exceeded the capacity of any word processor in use by the U.S. government. Finally, Casey told Fiers to get the memo into the hands of "Ollie North, Pat Buchanan, and Elliott Abrams for their purposes."

Blame the Messenger

John Ferch, a career officer who had earned a fine reputation over the years, was ambassador to Honduras. Not long after Nicaragua's 1986 Easter Week incursion into Honduras, Abrams succeeded in getting Ferch fired. As I learned during the Carter administration, getting sacked is unpleasant but not the end of the world. Sometimes nothing more than a personality conflict moves senior officers out with little ceremony. What sets Ferch's removal apart is the savaging in the press he

received at the hands of faceless sources from Abrams' bureau and the Defense Department. These sources claimed Ferch didn't support the contras and was undermining American policy. Ferch was also charged with the crime of being nice to Hondurans.

In the case of Ferch the "cabal of the zealots" had transformed one of the lesser risks of diplomatic service, that somebody might fire you, into an ideological purge. Ferch could not have accepted the embassy in Honduras if he hadn't supported administration policy to pressure Nicaragua to change, including its oft-proclaimed rationale for the contras.

Ferch had heard via the grapevine in late 1985 that Abrams was dissatisfied and asked him about it. Abrams sloughed it off with a generality: Ferch wasn't enough of a proconsul (so much for the Good Neighbor Policy). This was soft stuff; the hard reason apparently had to do with the contras. Abrams told Ferch people in Washington were saying he wasn't loyal to the president's policy. Abrams apparently was softening up Ferch. Later, at a meeting attended by North, among others, Abrams asked Ferch to do more for the contras. Ferch, mindful of the Boland amendment, asked for instructions in writing. The instructions never came, but in asking for them, Ferch lit the fuse on his job.

The flap over Nicaragua's Easter Week border incursion tore things. North and Abrams, the Select Committees noted, wanted Honduras to confirm instantly Washington's version of events and make an emergency request for military aid. (Abrams offered aid before the incursion, but no funds were available except under emergency procedures.) Honduras had closed down for the holidays. A spokesman downplayed the incursion; the press dutifully recorded Honduran calm alongside American alarm. In the end, Ferch persuaded the Hondurans but got blamed by the long-distance proconsuls for a flap of their creation. He left not long after.

My turn at the game of "blame the messenger" had begun in the summer of 1985, about the time Abrams became assistant secretary. I took my first trip to Central America since leaving Costa Rica. Neither Abramowitz nor I wrote much—that is the analysts' job—but I did a short trip report for Secretary Shultz. I found reason for optimism about the electoral process underway in Guatemala and voiced concern that America was not providing resources to support a democratic transition there. I also supported

the warnings of INR's analysts and the views of our diplomatic, military, and intelligence personnel in the region that the contras were not doing at all well, politically or militarily, and explained why. This was not a big discovery, but I was told it bothered Abrams, to whose attention Secretary Shultz had called my trip report.

About that time, a draft Abrams memo leaked to *The Washington Post*. Someone fingered me as the culprit to State Department security and also flatly asserted that I had earlier "leaked" defamatory information about Otto Reich's appointment as ambassador to Venezuela to Larry Birns of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, in an effort to get the Caracas post for myself. I had done neither.

Abrams associated himself with these charges. (Ambassador Reich played no part in this scurvy business.) I was subsequently told North believed I was out to sabotage the president's Central American policy; the record shows he was flustered by INR's analysis of the difficulties facing the contras.

(In early 1986, security exonerated me. Later I received my security file, with the name of my accuser(s) blacked out. A senior security official, after reading the file, told me that while he could not comment on who had fingered me, he now understood why I was so angry.)

During the fall of 1985, Abrams, without saying anything to Abramowitz or me, complained several times to the seventh floor that INR sought to undercut the president's policy. Told to take his complaints to INR, Abrams wrote in early 1986 a three-page screed attacking a single sentence in an analyst's paper, sending copies to Secretary Shultz and his principal deputies. The sentence observed, correctly, that we didn't know the political attitudes of the contra military commanders.

As I remember, Abrams claimed his "policy" was to take up disagreements with those with whom he disagreed. (His *new* policy, he should have said.) Among other pleasantries he said that the analyst's paper was neither intelligence nor analysis, indistinguishable from the views of administration critics, and asserted the CIA knew everything—which was interesting in that the CIA had just told us that it didn't know much at all about political attitudes of the contra military commanders. So little was known that it subsequently took Abrams' staff six weeks to produce a paper for public distribution accurately outlining the

origins of the individual military commanders. It did not attempt to describe their political attitudes.

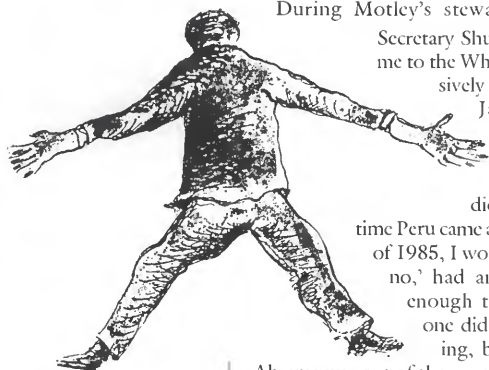
Before the Select Committees, Abrams disputed having a problem with INR; rather it was only with me. I had, he said, a "bias" against the policy, a nicer word than *disloyalty*, more suitable for daytime television. Most interesting were Abrams's responses to Special Counsel Robert Belnick regarding a memo concerning a mid-1986 *Miami Herald* article about North's activities in support of the contras: "It was a complaint about the fact a State Department intelligence analyst, that is, an employee of his, was cited in the article, not for the first time. Here was an example of someone who did not work for me, who apparently worked for Ambassador Abramowitz, who was engaging in the same kind of thing, taking what I would consider cheap shots, inaccurate shots at the program. It was not the first time that had happened; I recall other instances of newspaper articles, or of hearing from people outside of newspaper articles, that people in INR had said something or other."

Belnick asked if Abrams's memo was saying "somebody in your bureau is leaking" and Abrams said, "Essentially that is a fair summary. Leaking is frequently accurate, and this seemed to be inaccurate. It seemed to be an attack on the program and a really unfair one." Belnick asked, "Is there anything in your memo that says what was contained was inaccurate or false in any way?" Abrams said, "No."

The *Miami Herald* story, rather than "inaccurate," as Abrams wrongly characterized it to the Select Committees, we now know to have been true. The article had *10 sources*, only one from the State Department, but Abrams blamed me. I never spoke with Alfonso Chardy, the author, until after I quit, when a congressional staff member invited us to lunch so that Chardy could finally meet the man Abrams accused of being his source.

Chardy, with the authorization of his editors, *confirmed that no one in INR was a source*. Abrams' accusation was on a par with the allegation that had led to the 1985 security investigation, a leak of a document I had not read to two *Washington Post* reporters with whom I had never spoken. All the while, as I subsequently learned, Abrams' faceless spokespersons were occasionally blaming me for unwelcome newspaper stories. In his testimony, Abrams recalled "other instances" of INR leaks about Central America but gave no examples, for good reason. They did not exist.

The slandering of FSOs is about as newsworthy as a dog bite



During Motley's stewardship of ARA

Secretary Shultz had proposed me to the White House successively for ambassador to Jamaica and to Venezuela. Others got the jobs and I didn't quit. By the

time Peru came around, at the end of 1985, I would have said 'hell no,' had anyone had sense enough to ask, which no one did. Peru is fascinating, but working with

Abrams was out of the question after his personal attacks. When I returned from vacation in January 1986, I heard from senior officials that they had proposed me for Peru and that Abrams had exploded. Accounts agree that he characterized me as untrustworthy, a "leaker," and blacklisted by the NSC, which meant North. When I quit, Abrams at first refused public comment but his faceless spokesmen didn't, firing volleys all around. *The Washington Post* quoted one as saying that "several persons in the State Department besides Abrams had suspected McNeil of leaking sensitive information to reporters." The best quote from Mr. Anonymous comes from *Newsday*. "The source close to Abrams did not deny he had used those words" ("untrustworthy, disloyal, and a leaker") "but said his decision was based on the advice of Foreign Service officers who knew Peru and McNeil. They advised that McNeil was a really bad choice for Peru. . . . As for leaks, Frank's reputation as a leaker is extremely widely known, this source said."

In response to Congressman Steve Solarz's question in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Abrams said I quit out of bitterness at not getting an ambassadorship to Peru and blamed a bad personnel system for throwing up my name. Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he acknowledged to Senator Sarbanes that security had not linked me to leaks, but added, "Well, they never discover any leaker," implying that if security had looked hard it would have found me.

Instinct told me to fight back. My decision to quit, taken in the spring of 1986, was a family one. I was tired of coming home angry, and there was no need to take this crap. I waited until it was clear that contra funding would be approved, lest my resignation be seen as a partisan gesture. In late September, I wrote Secretary Shultz; by agreement be-

tween me and his staff, it was not delivered until after the Iceland summit. I respected the secretary; he had not told us to trim our analysis and I disliked adding to his burdens.

I wrote Abrams that I was quitting because of his exercise in McCarthyism. Abrams, who never had the guts to face me with his charges, didn't reply. (In contrast, the secretary called me in to hear my concerns.) In response to Senator Sarbanes's question about why Abrams had not replied to my letter, Abrams called my note "character assassination." He even alleged that I was a well-known "leaker" while ambassador to Costa Rica. But the only time I said something startling to the press in my lengthy tour in San José, I went *on the record* to defend Deane Hinton and Tom Enders after their dedication had been called into question, practice, as it turned out, for defending myself.

Ferch and I were not the only ones. I know of two others to whom Abrams objected on ideological grounds. One was interesting in that Abrams' objection was founded on the individual's service to the Carter administration *in Africa*. If all this is not McCarthyism, I don't know what is.

The oath of office, in requiring support of the Constitution and laws of the United States, is understood to require officers to support policy in public and not ventilate disagreement to the outside world. If an FSO can't hew to that discipline, he or she ought to leave. By and large, however, that sort of "leak" comes from political appointees, giving life to Henry Kissinger's adage about the ship of state leaking from the top.

Loyalty, to the average American, means loyalty to country. In particular circumstances FSOs may be stupid or plain wrong (I plead guilty to both) or too uncomfortable with a particular policy to be point man for it. In the latter case, the officer ought to be the first to ask for a shift in responsibilities or to resign. But FSOs do risk themselves for America. Disloyalty should be a fighting word. Stoicism in the expectation of vindication from a nonexistent "system" is fruitless, a stimulus to further bullying. Nor should we expect the media to defend our honor; the slandering of FSOs is as newsworthy as a dog bite. No one will fight for you unless you fight for yourself. I don't suggest FSOs become thin-skinned. Some insults are likely to be merited; others the product of give and take about serious issues, worth laughing about when the argument cools. But allegations touching loyalty and honor are another matter. □

Response to Frank McNeil from Elliott Abrams

Frank McNeil's "book," from which you have reprinted an excerpt, is a new literary form: hate mail between hard covers. As contemporary history it fails dismally, and perhaps on that point I need only note that McNeil, a self-proclaimed expert on Central America, cannot get right the names of the Carter administration-era U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua, the former inter-American affairs (ARA) senior deputy assistant secretary and current U.S. ambassador to Guatemala, or the most significant drug trafficker in all of Central America.

Still, the book is noteworthy and sad, obviously the product of immense bitterness trying to find an outlet. Readers need to know a bit of background. In my capacity as assistant secretary for human rights, I believe I had met McNeil only once, and had a very faint but nevertheless positive impression of him. When I arrived in ARA, I had the unhappy experience of having several of the most senior and experienced career diplomats handling Central American affairs warn me of their experiences with him. To repeat: FSOs all, with much relevant area experience, who knew McNeil. This put me on my guard, as it was my practice in eight years as an assistant secretary to trust the Foreign Service, not least when Foreign Service officers warned me of what they viewed as biased and unprofessional behavior by a colleague of theirs.

But what embittered McNeil had nothing whatsoever to do with Central America. It was simply this: The Whitehead Committee picked him for Peru, and I said no. Why did I do so? Simple again: Because the FSOs who handled South America in ARA strenuously objected, and told me it was a very bad choice. My initial inclination was to go along; after all, it would get McNeil out of town. But so strong were the urgings of those I viewed as true experts on South America, men who knew McNeil better than I did and were his colleagues in the Service, that I decided to use my prerogative and reject the choice. All the bitterness McNeil feels, and all he writes about

with respect to me, followed this event. I feel obliged to add that instead of McNeil we sent Alexander Watson, a career diplomat, to Peru, and that in retrospect it was clearly the right decision. The advice I got from FSOs in the bureau was correct.

McNeil's complaints about McCarthyism must lie uncomfortably on his tongue, for he indulges in the practice himself: Witness his statement that "I know of two others to whom Abrams objected on ideological grounds. One was interesting in that Abrams' objection was founded on the individual's service to the Carter administration in Africa." This deserves comment. First, note that no facts are presented, only innuendo; nothing to allow the reader to make his own judgment. Second, I'd love to know which two cases McNeil is referring to. The only relevant possibility is the time we needed to appoint an ambassador to Brazil, obviously, along with Mexico, the plum ARA embassy. The Whitehead Committee settled on a fine career diplomat who had done a good job in an important African country, but who had little seniority or experience in Latin America. Again, the FSOs working for me on South America strongly urged me to stop it, and I didn't need much urging. Also available, and now ambassador, was Harry Shlaudeman, a former assistant secretary for ARA and clearly a far better choice. For McNeil to try to mislead readers into thinking this a political or ideological move is pretty low.

I ought also to add a word about John Ferch. In my view, he did a bad job in Honduras. Visitors, including inspectors and career officials of the department, agreed with that opinion. No assistant secretary can decide to remove an ambassador to an important country such as Honduras, and I didn't; the secretary did, after hearing complaints about his stewardship. Ferch has said he was totally loyal to and supportive of U.S. policy in Central America, and I not only believe his assurance but saw with my own eyes that it is accurate. Politics was not involved here; management was. I was,

of course, the messenger carrying the very bad news to Ferch, and for all I know he blames me for the decision. (It is ironic that this section of his screed is titled "Blaming The Messenger.") If anyone cares to look into it carefully, the argument that it was political will not stand.

As to arguments that there was an effort to twist evidence, they are false and, as McNeil no doubt knows, extremely difficult to prove or disprove without an exhaustive review of evidence, for which there is insufficient space here and which is, in any event, largely still classified. And finally, as to the notion that we in Washington tried to force Tegucigalpa into requesting help it neither wanted nor needed, that version is Ferch's and reflects the fact that he was out of commission with flu during the relevant moments. In fact, the president of Honduras had already requested help in direct telephone contacts with Washington, but out of prudence we insisted that this be done formally and in writing. Ferch's job was to get it in writing fast, and if he told McNeil anything else, he still doesn't know what was happening in a moment of crisis.

In eight years as an assistant secretary, I was proud of the closest possible relationships with the Foreign Service. My deputies in three bureaus (International Organizations Affairs, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and Inter-American Affairs) included FSOs such as Nick Platt, Mel Levitsky, Marion Creekmore, Bob Gelbard, Bill Walker, Gary Matthews, Richard Melton, Paul Taylor, and career civil servants such as Mike Kozak, Luigi Einaudi and Jim Michel—every one of whom is still a personal friend. They are men of varying party loyalties but of consummate professionalism, and I made a point of soliciting and following their advice. McNeil's evidently consuming bitterness must be a source of sadness to his friends, but if this is indeed his spirit it is good news that he is out of the Service. I reject his charges entirely, as do the career diplomats who actually know the facts.

Virginia James Byerly: Human Rights Bulldog

Recently, listening to Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders attempt a public defense of the Soviet human rights record on U.S. television, I thought of my introduction to Soviet affairs 25 years ago as the junior officer on the Soviet desk. Even though most of the "old hands" then had little use for the totalitarian Soviet regime, they looked on human rights as a nuisance issue, not a subject to be raised at the government-to-government level. To the degree that the State Department had to respond to public pressures to raise questions such as religion and emigration, they preferred to "let someone else do it."

That "someone else" was Virginia James, then nearing retirement after nearly 50 years with the federal government. Virginia first became involved in Soviet affairs in 1932, before United States recognition of the Soviet Union. By 1965 she was the custodian of serried ranks of file drawers representing the entire history of U.S. involvement in Soviet human rights issues over more than three decades. When

ROBERT L. BARRY

*A State Department employee
is remembered for
her years of
human rights service*

I served with her, she was deeply involved with the case of Newcomb Mott, a young American who had accidentally wandered across the Norwegian-Soviet border and later died under still unexplained circumstances on a prison train en route to serve a sentence in a labor camp. At the same time she was advising American rabbis on tactics for preserving Jewish cemeteries in the Soviet Union, advising Christian and Jewish clergy and lay people on how they might advance the interests of their co-religionists in Russia, and trying to persuade a recalcitrant Soviet government to permit increased emigration.

Virginia's files were crammed with

records of hundreds of U.S. citizens who wanted to leave the USSR and Soviet citizens, many of them Jewish or Armenian, wanting to emigrate. When Vice President Nixon first visited Russia to open the U.S. national exhibit in Moscow (and held the "kitchen debate" with Nikita Khrushchev) he handed over lists to Soviet officials of those wishing to emigrate. The turnover of such lists became a regular fixture of all summits and high-level meetings, and Virginia was responsible for preparing them. She also maintained contact with those who had left, and with the families of those seeking exit permission. She was a one-person bureau of human rights and humanitarian affairs.

Virginia James Byerly, a lively 88, today lives alone in the house she moved to as a child of ten in Frederick, Maryland. Her memories of her involvement with the events and figures in U.S.-Soviet relations going back more than half a century remain undimmed.

Virginia got her start in government in 1918, when she went to work for the Office of Military Intelligence in the War Department after finishing high school. In 1922, she joined the U.S. Mexican Claims Commission. Virginia wanted to work at the State Department because of her interest in the world beyond our borders and her love for the stately State-War-Navy building (now the Old Executive Office Building). She succeeded in landing a \$1,440 a year clerical post—not without difficulty, despite her 14 years experience, a college degree, and a previous salary of \$2,600. Someone who had offered her a better job scoffed, “This little girl thinks she can get ahead at State by working hard.” The fact that she did get ahead in the all-male club that was the pre-World War II State Department was in fact a tribute to hard work, but it was also because she had her heart in what she was doing.

She had hoped for something to do with Latin America because of her experience with Mexico, but instead was assigned to the Division of Eastern European Affairs, headed by Robert F. Kelley. Over the years, Virginia worked with and learned from nearly all of the Soviet experts in the U.S. Foreign Service. By the 1960s, most of her old associates were ambassadors, who listened when their former colleague had something to tell them.

In the days before recognition of the USSR, Virginia recalls that the Division of Eastern European Affairs was chiefly preoccupied with the danger of the spread of communism and the plight of American citizens stuck in Russia. Then came Roosevelt's decision to recognize the USSR in 1933. On the eve of the event, Virginia and others in the division typed the final exchange of diplomatic notes, with William R. Bullitt, soon to be named ambassador to Moscow, looking over their shoulders. Sweeping up the documents, he was off to FDR with the finished product for signature.

Recognition came as an unpleasant shock to some. When she heard of the decision, Jane Bassett, a New England patriot who supervised the file room, ran out of the third floor suite of the State-War-Navy Building and down

the great spiral staircase, complaining loudly of “betrayal.” Loy Henderson, then serving in the office and later one of the key figures in U.S.-Soviet relations, pursued her with calming words. One of his key arguments for recognition was that American citizens in the Soviet Union would no longer be denied access to their country's diplomatic and consular representatives—a situation which Stalin's terror increasingly rendered desirable.

Ambassador Bullitt came to accept the hardheaded anti-communist advice of Robert Kelley and the Foreign Service specialists, who believed in dealing with the Soviets on the basis of strength and strict reciprocity. But Bullitt's successor, Joseph P. Davies, looked with suspicion on his staff and the State Department, believing that they were trying to sabotage Roosevelt's policy of “getting along with the Russians.” At the same time the Soviets became increasingly critical of Kelley's Eastern European Division as implacably anti-Soviet. In 1937, possibly in response to a complaint by Soviet Ambassador (and former Foreign Minister) Maxim Litvinov to Roosevelt, the State Department disbanded the Division of Eastern European Affairs. Responsibility for the USSR was turned over to the European Division. Kelley's priceless library and files were scattered and he was shipped off to Ankara. Virginia James ended up in the Office of Coordination and Review, the watchdog of official prose destined for the world outside.

In fact, Roosevelt's suspicion that the State Department bureaucracy would undermine his policies toward the Soviet Union was strong enough to cause senior department officials to be wary of assembling too many of the “Kelley crowd” under a single roof again. Nevertheless, Chip Bohlen brought Virginia back to the Soviet desk of the European Division in 1940. It was under Bohlen that Virginia began to take on increasingly substantive responsibilities. “He gave you free rein,” she recalls, “and allowed me to do a lot.” Besides, the men were quite content to let the only woman on the desk handle what they saw as the “routine, frustrating, and unrewarding” cases—emigration, religious freedom, impris-

onment and detention of U.S. citizens, family reunification—in short, today's human rights agenda. The old-school Foreign Service officers often looked at “consular matters” as beneath them, but Virginia appreciated the human dimension of the issues involved. And her energy and stubbornness turned out to be just the qualities needed for dealing with the Soviet bureaucracy. “She was a bulldog,” a former colleague commented; once she adopted a case or a cause she pursued it—and the Soviets—relentlessly, regardless of the odds against success.

Meanwhile, she listened and learned from a string of future top professionals in the Soviet field—Loy Henderson, Chip Bohlen, “Tommy” Thompson, Walter Stoessel, Bill Crawford, Elbridge Durbrow, Jake Beam, Mac Toon—and on and on the list goes. One day late in her career, she was called to the office of the then-chief of Soviet affairs. He told her she deserved a promotion to GS-14, but that with so much rank she should be deputy chief of her office—a position “reserved” for the men coming and going to Moscow and other overseas posts. She eventually got the promotion anyhow, but without supervisory responsibilities. “That was the old Foreign Service,” Virginia says with a twinkle in her eye, “and no one then thought it would ever change.”

By 1947, Virginia got her first opportunity to visit the country she had been involved with for 15 years. She was on Secretary of State George Marshall's delegation to the Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference—a lengthy and futile effort to lay the groundwork for a German peace settlement and halt the deterioration of East-West relations. However frustrating for Marshall, spending several weeks in Moscow—living in the Moskva Hotel across from the Kremlin, working in Spaso House, the embassy residence, and seeing Ulyanova dance at the Bolshoi Ballet—was a real opportunity for Virginia.

However, she remained committed to her human rights agenda and pursued it with a persistence that her male

colleagues genuinely admired. Charles Stefan, whose first tour to Moscow was in 1948-49, recalls that she was a "pillar of strength for young officers coming into the Soviet field." Stefan's assignment in the Moscow consular section was to look after the welfare of American citizens—including the thousands being held in prison or otherwise being denied permission to leave the Soviet Union. "Since Stalin had then, for practical purposes, really rung down the iron curtain around his empire, most of my efforts (on behalf of American citizens) were fruitless." Stefan goes on to recall that "by mid-1949, notes to the Foreign Ministry on individual cases were being ignored, and an increasing number of letters to persons wishing to establish their American citizenship were being returned, stamped with the chilling assertion that the addressees had departed, addresses unknown. This was particularly true of persons in the Baltic states."

Using the material collected by Virginia in Washington and by the embassy consular section, Stefan prepared two documents for transmission to the Soviet government. A note transmitted on October 4, 1949, to Acting Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko (even then known as "Grim Grom" to the U.S. embassy) listed 31 American citizens, "most of them women, who were transported under duress to the Soviet Union by the Soviet military forces during or shortly after the conclusion of active hostilities in Eastern Europe," believed to be confined in the Soviet gulag. A longer aide-memoire of December 12, 1949, listed American citizens unable to get Soviet permission to leave the country for the United States.

Virginia was determined to prod the Soviets into taking some action on the U.S. *démarche*, and the department "reminded" the Soviet ambassador in Washington of the issue on January 18, 1950. Finally, the Soviet Foreign Ministry deigned to reply in a dismissive note to the embassy on February 28, 1950. Charles Stefan's recollection is that Virginia played an important role in the decision to publicize the entire exchange, which was done in a State Department press release of March 3, 1950—still a valued

part of Virginia's personal archive.

Among the American citizens held in Soviet prison camps at that time were a number of individuals who survived their ordeals and were finally released after Stalin's death to tell the tales of their captivity. After the Molotov-Ribbentrop partition of Poland in 1939, Father Walter Ciszek, an American Jesuit, decided to join the stream of refugees seeking jobs in the Soviet interior so that he could spread his faith. Following the German invasion he was arrested for espionage and spent the next two decades in prisons and



Virginia James Byerly

labor camps. By 1947 he was declared legally dead, but Virginia clung to rumors from the prison grapevine that he was still alive. It was she who made sure his name was included on lists presented to the Soviet government and she who paid attention when Ciszek's family called for special efforts. She remembers attending a meeting of State Department colleagues at which she proposed another note to the Soviets on Father Ciszek; one of the senior officers there advised her to give up since the man was undoubtedly dead. She returned to her office, drafted the note, and got it approved. In 1964, Father Ciszek was released after nearly 25 years of prison and exile. He inscribed a copy of his book

With God in Russia to Virginia with gratitude for all her efforts.

John Noble was another American swept up in the KGB's net after the war. He and his parents had been caught in Germany during the war, and he was arrested as an American spy when the Soviets occupied Dresden. Like the others, he spent the next 20 years in Soviet prisons and labor camps under terrible conditions and finally was released to the West in 1963. It was Virginia who kept track of reports of Noble's imprisonment and kept including his name on lists to be handed over to the Soviets.

With the exception of Father Ciszek, Virginia got little credit from those for whom she had tried so hard. In part because of the standard Soviet interrogation technique of telling prisoners that they had been abandoned by their government and in part because State Department bashing was an especially popular sport during the McCarthy era, outsiders consistently downplayed the efforts that had been made over the years and gave credit instead to prominent political figures who raised some of the celebrated cases publicly. One critic went so far as to accuse Virginia of intentionally suppressing information on prisoners in the Soviet Union. Nothing could be further from the truth; it was persistence that caused the Soviets to reverse themselves and let Americans leave after years of trying, and persistence was the element that Virginia personified.

Human rights is now firmly established as a central theme of American foreign policy, and it is institutionalized in the State Department and Congress. Pursuit of these issues no longer depends on having the right person in the right place. However, from 1932 until 1965 it was Virginia James Byerly who provided the human face of our Soviet policy and helped countless individuals—Soviet and American citizens—to pursue the cause of freedom. It was an honor to have worked with her. □

Robert L. Barry, former ambassador to Bulgaria, is detailed to *USIA's Voice of America*.

In Memory

JOHN R. LYDEN, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Christmas day at his home in Kelseyville, California, after a brief illness. He was 73.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Mr. Lyden studied journalism at the University of Pittsburgh. He served in the Merchant Marine during World War II and was a licensed master mariner. Commissioned in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1942, he rose to the rank of commander and also served during the Korean conflict.

In 1956, Mr. Lyden joined the Foreign Service and served as procurement and contracting officer in Korea, Laos, and Thailand, and as port adviser in Vietnam.

He is survived by his wife, Estelle; a son, David, of Marysville, California; two grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

TINA BROCKWAY LAWRENCE, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Myron Lawrence, died at Loches, France, December 31, 1988. She was 70.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Mrs. Lawrence received a B.A. degree from Our-Lady-of-Good-Counsel College and an M.A. in Education from City College of New York. Before her marriage she worked as a research analyst for the National Security Agency. She served with her husband in Brazil, Haiti, Italy, France, Morocco, Zaire, and Washington, and taught at American schools at several of those posts.

Along with her husband, survivors include a sister, Mrs. James Scott; a brother, Mr. John Sanfilippo; a sister-in-law, Mrs. John H. Sander; two sons, Philip Myron Lawrence in West Germany and Joseph Myron Lawrence in Massachusetts; a daughter, Mrs. David Stegell in California; and two grandsons.

JOHN PARKER ROBINSON, retired AID employee, died of heart failure on December 8 on a cruise en route to Hong Kong. He was 68.

Born in Northampton, Massachusetts, he attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces from 1960-61, after discharge from the U.S. Navy. He worked in the Marshall Plan and in bilateral U.S. economic assistance programs, including assignments in Paris and Madrid. From 1961-63 he served in AID/Washington, Latin American Bureau. He was director of AID/Santiago from 1963-67, deputy director of AID/Saigon from 1967-68, director, AID/Santo Domingo from 1968-73, and director, AID/Saigon from 1973-75.

Survivors include his wife, Jayne Hughes Robinson; three sons and three grandchildren.

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TAX PREPARATION BY AN ATTORNEY who is a retired Foreign Service officer and is familiar with Foreign Service problems. M. Bruce Hirshorn, Esquire, Suite E, 307 Maple Ave. West, Vienna, VA 22180. (703)281-2161.

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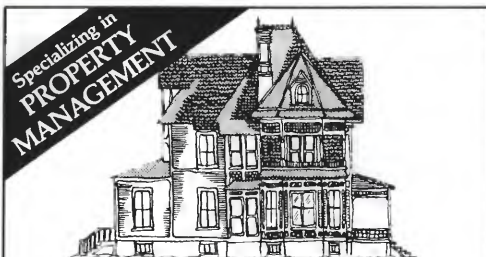
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Notes on Real Estate

By John Clunan
What Is Buyer
Brokering?

Returning to Washington can be quite a shock. Prices have risen considerably over the past two years and finding an affordable adequate home can be a troublesome affair. Most buyers in the Washington area enlist a real estate agent to assist them in this endeavor. What a lot of buyers do not realize is that "their" agent typically represents the seller. Both the listing and selling real estate agents have a fiduciary responsibility to the seller because s/he pays the commissions. However, this circumstance also leaves the buyer without representation when a suitable property is located. These conditions in the real estate industry have created a demand for real estate agents who will represent and be paid by the purchaser. This is called buyer brokering.

Buyer brokering, while commonplace in the commercial arena and other residential markets, is just beginning to take hold in the Washington area though there are many benefits to the buyer. Among these are:

- 1) a knowledgeable representative
- 2) a motivated representative
- 3) a larger market (because it includes houses that are for sale by owner and unlisted properties)
- 4) a fiduciary responsibility from the buyers' representative.

The major drawback is that the purchaser must pay the broker a commission. Depending on how effectively the broker represents the buyer, the broker's commission is usually by a reduction in the sales price equal to if not greater than the broker's commission.

Read the next edition of *Notes on Real Estate* to find out how to select a good broker.



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Proposed AFSA bylaw amendments

These proposed amendments to the AFSA bylaws will be referred to the membership along with the ballots which will be sent to members in mid-May. AFSA members will be asked to vote for or against each of the proposed amendments.

Daniel O. Newberry

Chairman, AFSA Elections Committee

The Governing Board of the American Foreign Service Association hereby proposes the following amendments to the Bylaws.

Draft Amendment A: Article IV of the Bylaws is amended by amending the third sentence of paragraph 4 to read: "Each constituency having a minimum of 100 members as of the last working day of the calendar year before the election shall be entitled to a constituency vice president."

Statement of Explanation: This amendment allows for the election of a retired constituency vice president, giving a more active voice in AFSA to a growing constituency of retired members. Due to the evolving structure of the Foreign Service, the number of members who retire early has increased dramatically. The needs of these members can be more effectively addressed with the addition of a retired constituency vice

president.

Draft Amendment B: Article IV of the Bylaws is amended by adding the following new paragraph 11: "Board members shall be resident in the Washington area within 60 days of appointment to Board office and shall remain resident in the Washington area throughout their term in office. Board members who cease to be resident in the Washington area during their term of office shall submit their resignation to the Governing Board."

Statement of Explanation: This amendment guarantees efficient operation of the Governing Board by requiring that Board members reside in the Washington area. Requiring that Board members maintain residence in the Washington area makes it possible for Governing Board Members to attend Board meetings and other AFSA functions on a regular basis. The Washington area is defined in Article V, paragraph 4 of the Bylaws as the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. Members may run for Board membership while resident elsewhere, as long as they relocate to the Washington area within 60 days from the time they assume Board office.

Draft Amendment C: Article IV of the Bylaws is amended by amending the first sentence of paragraph 4 to read: "The constituency vice presidents and representatives shall be elected from constituencies composed of the members of the Foreign Service in each of the departments or agencies to which Chapter 10 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 applies, pursuant to section 1003(a); provided that chiefs of mission and ambassadors at large shall be members of the Department of State constituency, and all former members of the Service shall be members of the retired constituency."

Statement of Explanation: This amendment serves to clarify inconsistencies between paragraph 3 and 4 of the Bylaws. Paragraph 3 states that constituency vice presidents are elected by the entire membership, while paragraph 4 currently states that constituency vice presidents are elected only by members of that constituency to which they belong. In practice, constituency vice presidents are elected by the entire membership. Therefore this amendment eliminates the inconsistency in the Bylaws and reflects actual practice.

The American Foreign Service Association bylaws as amended July 1985

Article I, Purposes and Objectives

1. To further the interests and well being of the Members of the Association;
2. To represent the Members of the Foreign Service in labor-management relations and grievances;
3. To work closely with the foreign affairs agencies, other interested institutions, and individuals to strengthen the ability of the foreign affairs community to contribute to effective foreign policies;
4. To accept and receive gifts, grants, devises, bequests, and funds from such other voluntary associations as may be created by Foreign Service personnel or to accept and receive gifts, grants, de-

- vises, bequests, and funds as otherwise donated to this Association by any person or persons, group or groups, and to utilize or dispose of the same for the purposes of this Association, or, as directed by said other associations or said other donors;
5. To publish the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL and ASSOCIATION NEWS as the official organs of the Association;
6. To maintain and operate a scholarship fund or funds or such other funds as are commensurate with the purposes and objectives of this Association;
7. To carry on such other activities as the Association may deem practicable in order to serve the interests of the

Association and its Members.

Article II, Membership

1. American citizens who are or were Members of the Foreign Service as defined by Section 103, paragraphs (1) through (5), of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, or predecessor or successor legislation, are eligible to become Members of the Association.
2. Any person eligible for Membership may be so admitted upon application and payment of dues, and shall be permitted to maintain Membership so long as he or she remains eligible and maintains current dues payment; only Members shall have voting and other rights regarding the conduct of the affairs of

the Association.

3. The board shall establish terms and conditions for affiliation with the Association, other than Membership, for persons not eligible for Membership. Individuals closely associated with or interested in the foreign affairs of the United States may become associates upon the acceptance of their applications by the board and the payment of dues.

4. The board may invite to become honorary Members for specified periods such representative American citizens as they deem proper. Honorary Members shall be exempt from the payment of dues.

5. The rates of dues shall be set by the board provided that the dues shall not be increased, or an assessment levied, except after approval by a majority of those Members voting in a secret ballot referendum.

6. Members may be expelled or otherwise disciplined by the Association for engaging in conduct which discredits or brings into disrepute the Association or the Foreign Service, or taking court or administrative agency action against the Association without exhausting all reasonable internal administrative procedures which the board shall establish. However, no member may be disciplined by the Association unless such member has been served with written specific charges, given a reasonable time to prepare a defense, and afforded a full and fair hearing. The board shall establish procedures for such disciplinary actions.

Article III, Rights of Members

Every member shall have equal rights and privileges within the Association, freedom of speech and assembly, and all other rights guaranteed by law, executive order, and regulation.

Article IV, The Governing Board

1. The property and affairs of this Association shall be managed by a Governing Board composed of officers and representatives who shall be elected biennially for terms of two years in the manner prescribed in Article VI from among the Association's Members. Each board member shall have one vote.

2. Vacancies occurring during the term of the board shall be filled by the board by appointment from the Membership, provided that constituency vice presidents and representatives shall be chosen from the constituency of the vacancy as defined in Article IV(4).

3. The officers shall be a president, constituency vice presidents, a secretary, and a treasurer, elected by and from the

entire Membership. They shall have the power and duties specifically conferred on them by applicable law and regulation, these bylaws, and the Governing Board.

4. The constituency vice presidents and representatives shall be elected by and from constituencies composed of the Members of the Foreign Service in each of the departments or agencies to which Chapter 10 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 applies, pursuant to Sec. 1003(a); provided that chiefs of mission and ambassadors at large shall be Members of the Department of State constituency, and all former Members of the Service shall be Members of the retired constituency. Representatives shall be elected by the appropriate constituency Members. Each constituency, with the exception of the retired constituency, having a minimum of 100 Members as of the last working day of the calendar year before the election shall be entitled to a constituency vice president. Each constituency shall be entitled to one representative for each 1000 Members or fraction thereof as of the last working day of the calendar year before the election year, provided that any constituency which for three consecutive months has a Membership which would on the above date have entitled it to an additional representative shall have an additional representative, who shall be appointed by the Governing Board. If subsequently during that board's term that constituency has for three consecutive months a Membership which no longer would entitle it to an additional representative, that constituency will lose such additional representative, who shall be the representative most recently appointed by the board.

5. The Membership has the right to recall any officer, and the Membership of any constituency has the right to recall any representative in whom said Membership has no confidence. Two-thirds of the Governing Board Members or five percent of the Membership concerned may recommend such recall by written request and supporting statement to the Standing Committee on Elections. The committee shall submit the recall proposal, accompanied by such supporting statement and by statements, if any, submitted in favor of the board member in question, to the Membership concerned for secret ballot election.

6. The Governing Board shall, to the extent practicable, keep the Membership currently informed, seek its advice be-

fore making decisions, and inform the Membership of its decisions on important matters affecting the Membership, the Foreign Service, and the Association.

The board shall report to the Membership annually on its management of the Association affairs and the Association's financial position, and its plans and budget for the succeeding year. The board shall also facilitate communication from any member(s) to the Membership, or any practicable portion thereof, on Association business, at the expense of the member(s) initiating the communication.

7. The board shall meet at least once each month. The board shall also meet to consider a particular subject or subjects upon the written request of the president, one-third of the Members of the board, or chapter or 25 Members, submitted at least five days prior to the date of the proposed meeting. Meetings shall be announced and open to Members and associates; provided that the board may adopt regulations to preserve good order, and may go into executive session. Minutes, except of executive sessions, shall be available to Members and associates.

8. The board shall assure that persons affiliated with communist or other totalitarian movements, and persons identified with corrupt influences, are excluded from any position of authority at any level of the Association.

9. The board shall assure that persons in any position of authority at any level of the Association are prohibited from business or financial interests or activities which conflict with their duties to the Association and its Members.

10. The board shall maintain fiscal integrity in the conduct of the affairs of the Association, including provisions for accounting and financial controls, and regular financial reports or summaries to Members.

Article V, Internal Organization

1. There shall be a Standing Committee on Elections which shall have full power within the Association, subject to applicable law and regulation, these bylaws, and the Association budget, to conduct regular elections for Governing Board Members, any election for the recall of a Governing Board member, any referendum, and any vote on amendments to these bylaws. The committee shall establish regulations for these procedures and interpret relevant sections of the bylaws, resolve disputes, and determine and declare results. The committee shall be composed of at least five Members,

including a chairperson and including at least one member from each constituency. The Governing Board shall appoint the chairperson and Members of the committee for two-year terms beginning July 15 of each even-numbered year, and shall fill vacancies occurring during such term, but may not remove committee Members except on recommendation of the committee, or in accordance with disciplinary procedures. Committee Members shall be impartial in the performance of their duties. While serving on the committee, and for six months thereafter, they shall not be board Members, or candidates or nominators thereof, or accept appointment to the chair of any other committee.

2. Standing committees for each of the constituencies shall have primary responsibility, subject to the overall direction of the Governing Board, for the interests of Members of said constituencies. The chairperson and Members of each such committee shall be appointed by the Governing Board from among the Members within each such constituency.

3. The Governing Board shall appoint the chairman and Members of the JOURNAL Editorial Board, who shall serve at the pleasure of the board, and who, under the general direction of the board, shall be specifically responsible for the publication of the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL. The yearly dues shall include a payment of at least \$5.00 for a subscription to the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL.

4. The Washington Membership shall consist of all Members resident in or assigned to the Washington area (the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia). The Governing Board shall call a meeting to deal with a specified agenda at the written request of one-fourth of the board, or 100 Washington Members. Such a meeting may make recommendations to the board on any matter within the board's authority.

5. Members may organize chapters, subject to regulations to be issued by the board, to carry out the purposes of the Association. Chapters shall adopt bylaws, subject to the approval of the board. The board shall delegate such authority to such chapters as it deems necessary.

Article VI, Elections

1. The standing Committee on Elections shall issue an election call to all Members in the February FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL and/or ASSOCIATION NEWS, prescribing the terms and conditions of the election and soliciting candidacies.

2. Candidates may make known their candidacies or Members may nominate candidates in writing to the Standing Committee on Elections not later than 30 days following the date of the election call for officer or representative positions. Candidacies may be filed for individually or in slates. Candidacies must be accompanied by evidence of eligibility as of June 30 of the year of the election.

3. The Standing Committee on Elections shall verify the eligibility of candidates for each position, and announce publicly the names of the candidates on or about April 1.

4. Pursuant to such regulations as it shall prescribe, the committee shall receive campaign statements from candidates and/or slates and distribute them to the concerned Membership at Association expense, and shall, during a campaign period of not less than 30 days, facilitate the distribution of additional material related to the election which candidates and/or slates and/or other Members wish to distribute at their own expense. Those initiating such material shall assume full legal responsibility for its contents.

5. The official ballot bearing the names of all qualified candidates, slate identifications when applicable, and voting instructions shall be mailed to each member on or about May 15.

6. Each member may cast one vote for each officer position and, in addition, each member may cast one vote for each representative position available in the member's constituency. Members may vote for candidates as individuals or as a slate, or may write in the name(s) of any member(s) who fulfills the eligibility requirements as of June 30 of the election year.

7. The secrecy of each member's vote shall be guaranteed.

8. The Standing Committee on Elections shall count on or about July 1 all ballots received at the Association as of the close of business the last working day of June. Candidates or their representatives may be present at the counting and challenge the validity of any vote or the eligibility of any voter.

9. The Standing Committee on Elections shall decide all questions of eligibility and declare elected the candidates receiving the greatest number of votes for each position.

10. The new officers and representatives shall take office on July 15.

Article VII, Referendum

The Membership may, by majority vote in a referendum, determine the Association's policy on any matter within the board's authority. One-third of the board, 10 chapters, or 100 Members may initiate a referendum by submitting a specific proposal to the Standing Committee on Elections. If the committee determines that the proposal is within the authority of the board, it shall submit the proposal, accompanied by statements, if any, from the proponents and opponents of such proposal, to the Membership in a referendum.

Article VIII, Amendments

1. One hundred Members or the board may propose an amendment to these bylaws by submission to the Standing Committee on Elections. Each such proposal shall be accompanied by a short statement of explanation.

2. The committee shall promptly circulate to the Membership each such proposed amendment and statement in explanation by publication in the FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL or ASSOCIATION NEWS. For 45 days following the date of publication of the proposal the committee shall accept statements of appropriate length submitted in opposition thereto, provided each statement is signed by not less than 10 Members, and no two statements shall be signed by the same member. Further, the committee shall commence within 90 days following the date of publication of the proposal, and shall conclude within 45 days thereafter, polling the Membership on the proposal. The committee shall provide to the Membership, together with the ballots, the statements in opposition accepted by it in accordance with this article, as well as statements to be furnished by the proponents.

3. Should Members wish to distribute, at their own expense, additional statements regarding a proposed amendment, the Association shall make available to them on request the Membership list or address labels. In such case, Members will reimburse the Association for all related expenses. 4. The adoption of a proposed amendment will require the affirmative votes of not less than two-thirds of the valid votes received.

Article IX, Parliamentary Authority

The Association's parliamentary authority shall be the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised; except as otherwise provided by applicable law and regulation, these bylaws, and the Governing Board.



AFSA discusses 'Fly America'

AFSA has initiated discussions with the department and Congress on the Fly America Act, which requires U.S. government personnel to use American carriers when traveling abroad. Renewed concern over this legislation was prompted by the recent crash of Pan Am flight 103.

Many posts have cabled AFSA on this issue, arguing that Fly America restrictions are too stringent and needlessly jeopardize the lives of U.S. government employees, in that U.S. carriers are among the most frequent targets of terrorist attacks.

AFSA continues to discuss this matter with department officials, and is in the process of bringing it before the appropriate congressional committees. It is difficult to assess at this point whether it will be productive to seek amendment of the Fly America Act, but at a minimum we expect Congress to be receptive to a less rigid determination of when it is permissible—due to security threats—to allow temporary suspensions of Fly America regulations.

AFSA spoke recently with Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Robert Lamb, who said that his office is reviewing the security measures taken by American carriers. He also stated that the procedures for alerting posts to specific terrorist threats are being reviewed. Meantime, the Bureau of Economic Affairs will continue to inform economic officers at posts about terrorist threats to be relayed to local civil aviation and security officials.

Individual posts already have a certain degree of discretion in waiving the Fly America requirements. The department's position is that in cases where there is a specific terrorist threat, individual posts have the authority to approve use of foreign

Polygraph regulations finalized

Negotiations were recently completed with the department on the proposed polygraph testing program. As reported in the February *AFSA News*, the program will have an extremely limited scope that would currently include no more than 13 department employees. The department would authorize polygraph testing under three specific circumstances.

The first is during a criminal, counterintelligence, or personnel investigation "after all other reasonable investigative steps had been taken." The second is when an employee requests the test in order to exonerate himself from alleged actions for which he is being investigated. The third is when an employee volunteers to work for an intelligence agency that requires polygraph testing or volunteers to participate in programs carried out jointly with employees of the intelligence community.

Then-Secretary of State Shultz made specific changes to the proposed plans that further limit the use of polygraph testing by requiring that a test used for the purpose of exoneration be requested by the employee rather than offered by a department official.

During the negotiations AFSA asked on more than one occasion whether the program proposed by the department would be likely to include communications personnel or personnel from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research or the Bureau of Management. AFSA was repeatedly assured that there were no plans to extend the program to the offices listed above. AFSA continues to disagree with the need for polygraph testing, but agreed to the regulations because the limited scope of the program will provide employees and AFSA a basis on which to challenge any attempt to extend the program in the future.

Negotiations near close

AFSA is nearing the close of negotiations with the department on regulations governing accountability review boards. As reported in the December *AFSA News*, the department recently recognized AFSA's right to negotiate these regulations following an institutional grievance decision in AFSA's favor.

The focus of AFSA's efforts in these negotiations has been protecting the rights of individuals questioned as witnesses during the course of accountability review

board investigations. We have successfully gained concessions from the department in providing adequate time for witnesses to obtain representation prior to questioning and expediting any necessary security clearances for these representatives. We are also working toward agreement on the issue of reasonable time limits between the occurrence of an incident and the decision whether to convene a board investigation. Negotiations should be concluded within the next month.

flag carriers between two points abroad. However, use of foreign carriers is limited to travel between those two points, and the traveller must

disembark at the nearest interchange to the point of origin and continue the journey to the United States aboard an American flag carrier.

Tax allowance for USUN employees

The tax burden facing many department employees posted at USUN will be partially eased as a result of a new housing tax allowance plan. As reported in the September *AFSA News*, the IRS recently ruled that the allowance received by many employees at this crucial mission is taxable income. Because of the high cost of housing in the New York metropolitan area, this ruling places a severe burden on many individuals.

In response to the department's refusal to negotiate the regulations concerning this issue, AFSA filed an institutional grievance against the department asserting its right to bargain. Subsequently, the department decided to adopt an allowance plan that incorporates most of AFSA's concerns. The department plan will grant an allotment to employees who use the housing allowance to offset the increased tax burden resulting from the recent IRS ruling.

Junk mail hinders pouch delivery

Junk mail is a problem which continues to impede pouch service. Although State's mail room has implemented a policy of throwing out clearly unsolicited mail, large quantities are still sorted and distributed. Unfortunately, there are several impediments to cleaning up the system, most notably the fact that some people enjoy receiving unsolicited catalogs and flyers. Moreover, it is often difficult to determine the difference between solicited and unsolicited mail. Some junk mail does slip through, especially to posts with APO drop boxes.

AFSA has consulted on this issue with the chief of pouch operations, who suggested several ways in which employees overseas could facilitate the effort to reduce junk mail. First, employees should try to have their names removed from junk mailing lists.

The Direct Mail Marketing Association (DMA) can excise names from a list of over 3,500 companies and distributors. This is a service provided free of charge by the DMA. DMA can be contacted at: Direct Mail Marketing Association, 6 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017, ATTN: Mail Preference Service. Alternatively, the DMA can be contacted by phone at (212) 689-4977.

The department also suggested that employees leaving post advise mail order companies of their forthcoming change of address. It was also suggested that communication program officers send form letters to bulk mailers once an employee has left post.

AFSA will continue to push the department to improve the pouch system, and would appreciate any suggestions employees may have.

Membership

Your AFSA post representative

Mari Radford
Membership Coordinator



Last month, all AFSA posts should have received an updated copy of the AFSA Chapter Manual. This grey and blue

folder, held by the post representative, contains vital information and is available to all AFSA members.

In addition to historical and organizational background, the chapter manual contains descriptive program information, such as how to form a chapter, a model charter, regulations governing chapters, post representative responsibilities, AFSA

grievance guidelines and more.

We've included a copy of the 1988 Annual Report (reprinted from the November issue of the *JOURNAL*). Take a look at the issues we dealt with, how your dues were spent and new programs developed for AFSA members. You will also find reprints of our 1988 Tax Guide and guidelines for terrorism compensation.

Do you have a question about AFSA insurance plans or your other membership benefits? Consult your AFSA post representative and the chapter manual. Extra brochures and applications are available there. Still have questions? Call AFSA directly—a complete staffing list with program

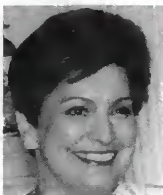
responsibility is also enclosed.

For all of our chapters that don't have a current post representative (we currently have only 119 certified post reps out of 246 posts), AFSA needs some help! All we ask is that AFSA members at post call an election, and after selecting a representative, write or cable AFSA Washington with the results so that we can begin the certification process. The post representative must be from State or AID (because negotiating issues will be involved and AFSA currently is sole representative for only these two entities of the Foreign Service), and cannot hold a confidential or management position.

State Standing Committee

A new State vice president

Evangeline Monroe



Life in the Foreign Service does not roll along smoothly, rather it proceeds in bits and chunks with oftentimes abrupt transi-

tions from one post or assignment to another. One bit has drawn to a close for me somewhat earlier than expected. An ongoing assignment requires that I resign as State vice president before the end of my term. Fortunately for AFSA, the transition from one vice president to another should be eased by the experience and dedication of Charles Schmitz, who has accepted the AFSA governing board's appointment as State vice president effective February 27, 1989. He will serve until July 15, when the new governing board takes office.

Charles Schmitz, an MC on temporary detail to the United States Mission to the United Nations, has been an active member of the State Standing Committee since July 1987, and a State representative to the governing board since September 1987. His interest in and willingness to serve AFSA predates this board. In

the early 1970s, he was among a group of younger officers who helped turn AFSA into an effective representative and bargaining agent for the Foreign Service. More recently he found time along with his duties as an office director in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs to monitor the many ongoing negotiations and professional interests of AFSA.

As State vice president, Mr. Schmitz will help lead a first rate AFSA staff. AFSA is fortunate in being able to attract a dedicated group of employees, most of them young and with no previous relationship to the Foreign Service, who have made our interests theirs and who work long and hard to protect those interests. I am also pleased to turn over to Mr. Schmitz the stewardship of a growing AFSA State membership.

Mr. Schmitz will have an active State Standing Committee that includes specialists and generalists ranging in grade from FP-6 to MC. I owe the State Standing Committee a vote of thanks for its production of articles and position papers that helped AFSA convince Congress not to cut the State budget in 1988. The committee has also worked with the

department to encourage a broader approach to personnel issues. The Precepts for Promotion Agreement was strengthened because the committee included members who brought a perspective that was unique to their skill group. I am particularly pleased that we have begun the process of bringing greater flexibility into the cone system through the Skill Code Change Agreement. The open assignments process has not changed substantially, but this year at our request the department has provided more detailed information to employees on how assignments are made. We concluded an agreement that will limit the use of polygraph tests to the bare minimum.

Changes in the department's management team will provide new opportunities and challenges to expand consultations so that the Foreign Service can have a stronger voice in its own management. The State Standing Committee has begun, in consultation with AFSA members, the development of a basic personnel proposal. The personnel proposal and the implementation of a broader public relations campaign will be among the items of unfinished business that I leave to Mr. Schmitz.

Scholarships

Investing in the future

Cristin K. Springet Scholarship Administrator



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the AFSA/AAFSW Scholarship Fund in 1988.

In this column, however, I am honored to recognize two donors whose gifts to the Scholarship Fund have special significance.

Our thanks go to Secretary and

Mrs. Shultz, who have made many contributions to the Scholarship Fund throughout the years. As a result, we have been able to establish the George and Helena Shultz Scholarship Award, the first recipient of which will be named this year. Their support is an investment in the future of Foreign Service juniors and we hope that Secretary and Mrs. Shultz have established a precedent which will be repeated in years to come.

Special thanks also go to Dwight Sipperelle. Dwight was in the first group of 20 students to be named

AFSA/AAFSW Merit Award winners in 1976, and his donation is "to the program which helped fund my college studies." From this gift, we are able to award a scholarship this year in the name of Dwight's grandfather, Ambassador Sheldon Mills. Dwight has made a contribution in the tradition of public service which is integral to the Foreign Service.

Each person who has contributed to the Scholarship Fund is making an investment in our young people. It is sincerely appreciated and all of us involved in the educating of our students thank you.

Professional Issues

Vest sees personnel system entering period of stability

Richard S. Thompson
Professional Issues Coordinator



Speaking at one of AFSA's regular professional issues luncheons, Director General of the Foreign Service George

S. Vest gave a frank account of key personnel issues as he sees them to a standing-room-only crowd January 24 in the East-West Room of the Foreign Service Club. In her introduction of Ambassador Vest, AFSA State Vice President Evangeline Monroe noted that the AFSA leadership found him to be the consummate diplomat—tough in defense of his positions, but always courteous and available to discuss professional or union matters.

Vest noted his four years as director general "were not always easy" since he had to work in a context which included digesting the 1980 Foreign Service Act, budget crises, and societal changes such as terrorism, working spouses, tandem couples, and now even unmarried partners. Additional elements were various class action suits, a sharp upturn in the number of formal grievances, new security programs and a new inspector general with a role mandated by Congress.

Weighing key developments during his tenure, Vest saw the up-or-out nature of the Foreign Service personnel system for generalists continuing. The system has continued to bring in 200 new officers each year, who know that only about 80 of them are expected to attain senior rank. The "agonizing problem" of the six-year window is lessening as shown by the numbers of FSO-1s identified for involuntary retirement: 102 in 1986, 71 in 1987, and 45 in 1988. Vest also commented that a sizable number of the officers promoted over the senior threshold were in the sixth year of their window. Taking OCs and MCs together, the Senior Service saw 46 LCEs and



Director General of the Foreign Service George S. Vest addresses an AFSA Professional Issues audience.

42 involuntary retirements in 1987 and 40 LCEs and 32 retirements in 1988. The Senior Service is being affected along with the FSO-1s, and those being retired are good: ambassadors and DCMs are among their number. Recalling that the number of persons promoted has varied sharply over the years, Vest reported the number has been steady for generalists for the past three years: 599 in 1988, 596 in 1987, and 585 in 1986.

Asserting that there is a myth that one has to be a DCM to get promoted, Vest stated that many of those promoted were counselors/section chiefs in embassies. More significant is the importance of the job, and its relationship to other positions held, showing adaptability. "Being a DCM is a good thing, but not the only thing."

Vest noted that, contrary to some predictions, the attrition rate has not gone up, although he expects it will do so in the future, not because of personnel policies but because of the working spouse problem.

Referring to the recent articles in the JOURNAL on personnel issues, he asserted the Service needs both management ability and expertise. Some experts are "fantastic" in their area of specialization, but are not ready to run a large embassy where only a third of the personnel are of the State Department.

Vest defended the "heros and heroines" who carry out the assignment process in an objective manner, rec-

onciling the individual's wishes with the need to fill jobs, and advocated service in personnel as a valuable experience.

Looking to the future, Vest saw a continuing up-or-out system with the need to balance intake and promotions. The system is intentionally rigid, so even secretaries of state cannot fiddle with it, but some flexibility has been introduced with the "stop-the-clock" provision for language training. He would personally like to see similar flexibility for other assignments which would be beneficial to the Service. The introduction of multifunctional promotion has reduced some of the rigidity of the cone system, and will have a beneficial effect.

In concluding his prepared remarks, Vest stressed that the new administration is coming in with a genuine appreciation of the Foreign Service. Although he has no knowledge of what appointments the administration has in mind, he is confident that it will, over time, demonstrate increasing trust in the Foreign Service.

In the question and answer period, Vest strongly rejected a suggestion that promotion boards should give greater weight to length of time in class in making recommendations. He noted that boards are asked to rank order candidates based on their ability and usefulness to the Service, and that one aim of the system is to move "water walkers" upward rapidly. Vest defended the practice of

granting LCEs to all career ministers, noting that these are the very best officers in the Service and it makes no sense to force them out, since voluntary retirement provides an appropriate level of attrition.

In response to a question Vest stated the Office of Career Transition was designed mainly to train retiring officers on how to find jobs, but is doing more and more actual placement.

Vest agreed that it is difficult for promotion boards to know which officers should be considered as multifunctional, and suggested this could be clarified as precepts are negotiated with AFSA. In any case multifunctional promotions are here to stay at the FSO-1, 2 and 3 level.

Another exchange involved the role of secretaries. Vest agreed it is chang-

ing, and noted that FSI is looking at the problem. A recent step was abolition of the shorthand requirement for new secretaries.

In response to the observation of one participant that the intake of 200 new officers each year is the same as 25 years ago, Vest remarked that the Foreign Service has been stable since the late 1950s, and that intake is geared to an equation related to needs. We would have been better off with a level of 220 over the years, and when we get below 185 we are in trouble. He has recommended 232 for this calendar year.

In closing, Vest suggested that any further ideas on improving the 1980 Foreign Service Act are welcome and "could be given—to my successor."

AFSA acts on Senate hold-up

During the last session of Congress two names were deleted from the State Department senior promotion list at the request of Senator Christopher Dodd. AFSA objected to this action and asked Senator Dodd and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to honor the integrity of the Foreign Service promotion system.

We are pleased to report that we have received assurance from Senator Dodd's staff that the senator has withdrawn his objection to the promotions. The two names should therefore be approved on a routine basis without difficulty.

Experts or generalists?

The perennial question of whether the Foreign Service has greater need of experts or generalists was discussed vigorously January 10 in the Foreign Service Club library. Senior officers Leo Reddy and Lannon Walker led off with brief presentations of their partially differing views as stated in the January JOURNAL.

In his opening remarks, Reddy emphasized that he agreed with Walker's assertion that we need a consensus on career strategy, but disagreed with Walker's concept of a generalist career track. Reddy urged that area and functional expertise is the essence of the Foreign Service and defines the "service" which it offers to the president, the secretary, and the nation. It also strengthens the professionals' case against ill-prepared political appointees and helps Foreign Service personnel develop credentials for second careers. He named a number of distinguished officers who were experts, and declared that the traditional concept of a Foreign Service officer as a "gentleman who speaks French and fraternizes with elites" is outmoded. The Foreign Service should recruit for expertise, send junior officers in-

itially to their areas of specialization rather than using them to staff consular positions, provide more training, and extend tours of duty. Such an approach would not require more funds, since quantity would be traded for quality.

Walker likewise stressed the need for a personnel strategy, including a systematic way of defining needs. While experts as defined by Reddy are needed, officers who can see clearly the interagency nature of managing foreign affairs are also necessary. That goal might be achieved by establishing an interagency Senior Foreign Service. The department has not forced officers to make a choice in competition for promotion between cones and the multifunctional track, thus giving the individual no incentive to pursue a serious professional development program.

In further discussion, Reddy suggested that officers naturally develop the capability to manage as they are promoted and their responsibilities increase, although broader management training also would be helpful, for example, a DCM course. Walker strongly defended his view that officers who show promise should be

identified as generalists and trained for leadership positions.

There was a consensus among the participants that the Foreign Service personnel system does not have clearly defined goals and that an overall strategy is lacking, with the functions of recruitment, training, assignments, and promotion taking place as separate elements rather than as part of an overall plan. It was also noted that the department has no catalog of skills that are needed, nor a detailed skills' inventory of its personnel. A clear definition of needs and qualifications, especially at senior levels, is required to give a coherent pattern to the rest of the system.

There was also general support for the view that the Foreign Service must find a way to give greater emphasis to professional training and development, including languages. Relevant training, and assignments outside the department should be considered positive elements for advancement, rather than avoided. AFSA President Perry Shankle noted this is the position AFSA has been taking.

Congressional Issues

Health Insurance: more questions than answers

Robert Beers
Congressional Liaison



One of the perplexing questions confronting the new administration and the 101st Congress is how to deal

with the coverage inadequacies and the escalating costs of the federal government's two principal health insurance programs: Medicare and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

One legacy left by the 100th Congress was the Catastrophic Care Coverage Act of 1988, of which the most controversial provision is the

prescribed method of financing the expanded hospital care benefits under Medicare "A." The law imposes an obligatory, graduated Medicare "A" premium on all Medicare-eligible persons with a federal income tax liability for 1989 of \$150 or more, up to a limit of \$800 per person, or \$1,600 for a couple. Some estimates indicate, however, that as many as 5 percent of all Medicare-eligible persons, about 1.5 million, may be required to pay the maximum, which by 1993 is scheduled to rise to \$1,050 per person.

Predictably, as the news of this premium spread throughout the Medicare-eligible community, it began generating heated opposition, which appeared to center around two basic

points. First, might the financing of a government social benefit based upon an individual's ability to pay presage the extension of this principle to other areas, such as the imposition of a means test on social security beneficiaries? Second, the truly catastrophic medical expense which most older Americans fear most—long-term nursing home or home-health care—is not included in the catastrophic care legislation. With this law having just become effective, the concern is that it may prove politically very difficult to enact legislation that would expand Medicare coverage to provide for long-term care outside of a hospital.

As for the chances of revising the catastrophic care bill to modify the Medicare "A" premium provision, two of the key players in Congress, Senator Lloyd Bentsen, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Representative Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, are on record as opposing any such change. Thus, any rollback effort would face formidable opposition in both houses.

In a related matter, Congress is preparing to consider measures to revise the present structure of the FEHBP. There are more than 400 options included under the program, with high-risk beneficiaries—the elderly and those with chronic illnesses—concentrated in relatively few plans. The new Congress is awaiting reports from the Congressional Research Service and recommendations from the Office of Personnel Management before holding hearings on revising the FEHBP legislation.

Although hearings may be scheduled as early as April, informed congressional staffers predict that it may take both sessions of the 101st Congress, i.e., two years, to legislate the changes in the FEHBP which, overall, will provide more effective coverage at lower cost and which also will coordinate FEHBP coverage with Medicare for those retired federal employees eligible to participate in both systems.

The last Reagan budget

On January 9, 11 days before relinquishing the Oval Office to George Bush, Ronald Reagan submitted his final budget to Congress. While characterized by some lawmakers as "irrelevant" on the assumption that President Bush may have in mind a different set of budget priorities, President Reagan's final proposals may provide some clues to the thinking of the administration in certain areas of personal concern to federal civilian employees and retirees.

Federal Pay: Effective in January 1990, the budget provides a 2 percent pay increase for federal civilian employees, with employing agencies absorbing 75 percent of the cost. The budget assumes that in January 1991 and 1992, federal employees will receive pay raises of 3 percent and 2.8 percent respectively.

Retirement: There is no provision for a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) in 1990 for federal retirees, although the COLA for social security recipients is not affected. After 1990, federal retirees would receive an annual COLA based upon the rise in the consumer price index (CPI) minus 1 percent. The budget also proposes to terminate the present

option of withdrawing contributions to the retirement system as a lump sum at the time of retirement.

Health Benefits: The budget proposes a revision in the method used to calculate the government's contribution to the premiums of those enrolled in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

At present, the government's contribution is calculated against a simple average of the high-option premiums of the six largest plans in the program. This formula would be changed to a government-wide weighted average of all FEHBP plans and the distribution of enrollees among those plans. The argument for this proposal is that it permits the government's contribution to reflect the increase in the number of FEHBP plans as well as the increasing shift of enrollees from high-option to low-option plans.

Assuming that these proposals are not revised in amendments proposed by President Bush, they still must be cleared by the House Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. It is thus too early to predict their chances of enactment.

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