

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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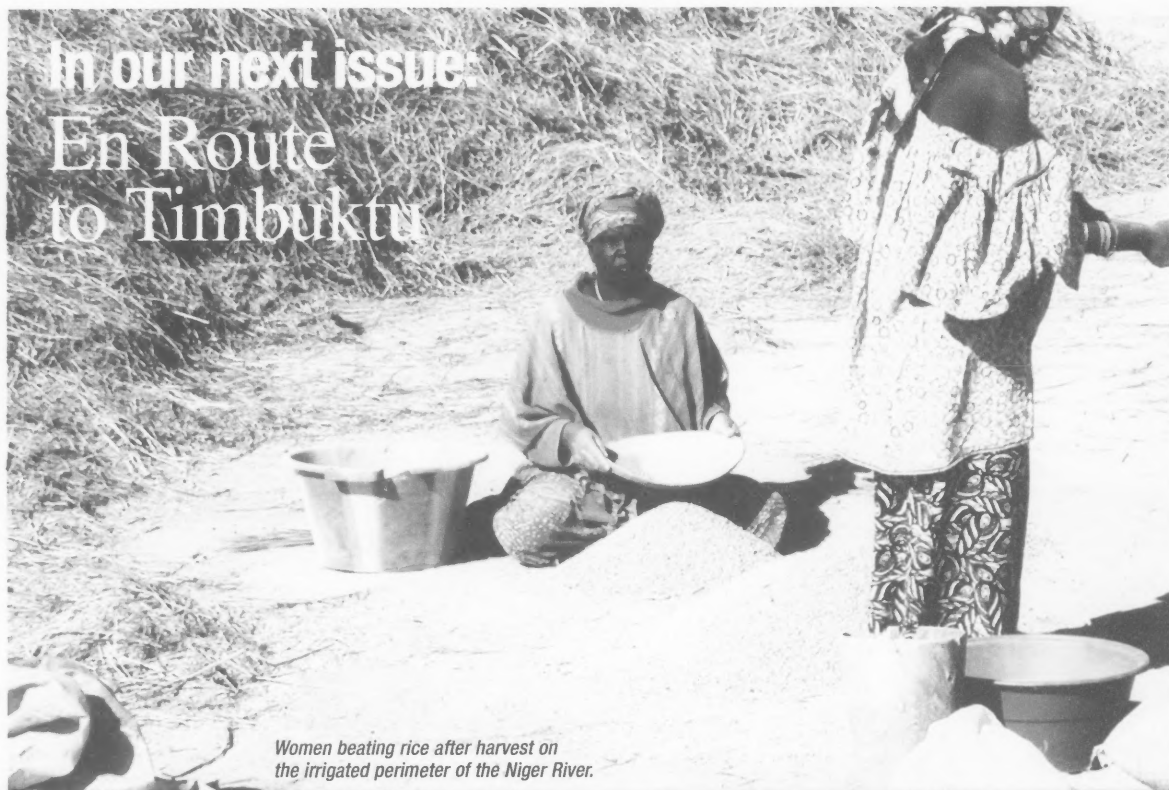
State

Magazine

Baku, Azerbaijan

*A Complex History,
A Bright Future*

In our next issue: En Route to Timbuktu



Women beating rice after harvest on
the irrigated perimeter of the Niger River.

Photo by Tim Trenkle

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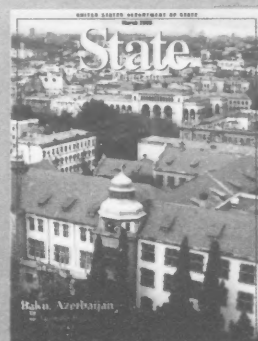


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On the Cover

Baku, situated on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, is the capital and cultural center of Azerbaijan.
Photo © Sovfoto/
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SHOULD READ ISSUE 466.

FROM THE SECRETARY

SECRETARY COLIN L. POWELL



On 'the Front Lines of Offense'

Along with the snows of the new year in Washington comes the new budget season. This is my third year testifying before Congress on behalf of the State Department budget. I take great pride in going before the relevant committees to represent our Department's needs in a world that requires the very best people and policies we can put on the front lines of diplomacy.

During the first two years of the Bush Administration, Congress has given our Department strong support. Clearly, Congress is firmly behind what the men and women of the State Department are doing on the front lines of diplomacy as we take our message, our value system and our beliefs to the rest of the world.

In the old days of the Cold War, we could view our role through the simple lens of superpower rivalry. That is no longer the case. In today's world, we have to address poverty and disease, including HIV/AIDS. We have to deal with nations that are no longer behind iron or bamboo curtains, but are trying to find their way forward to democracy in the free enterprise system.

To succeed, we need a world-class State Department. President Bush's budget request recognizes that fact and asks for approximately \$8.5 billion for the people, places and tools we need to promote American foreign policy around the world.

Let me highlight what these funds are for. First, after two successful years reinforcing our diplomatic force, we intend to bring 399 more professionals on board. This hiring will bring us to the 1,100-plus new Foreign Service and Civil Service officers we set out to hire over the first three years of my tenure to bring the State Department's personnel back in line with its diplomatic workload.

Second, people who can't communicate rapidly and effectively in today's globalizing world can't conduct our foreign policy. So we have worked to bring state-of-the-art telecommunications, computer and Internet capability to the Department.

We have to make sure that we give all of our people in every embassy the real time capability to know what is going on and to convey that message to our audiences around the world. In both unclassified and classified communications capability, including desktop access to the Internet, every man and woman in the State Department must be connected. The President's FY 2004 budget will move us well along in that direction.

Finally, I have wanted to sweep the slate clean and completely revamp the way we construct our embassies and other overseas buildings. Our facilities must be better places to work and they must be more secure. That is a long-term task, particularly in this time of heightened terrorist activity. But we are well on the way to implementing both the construction and the security tasks in a better way and creating a firm foundation for subsequent State Department leaders to continue and improve upon.

Our Overseas Buildings Operations, under the leadership of retired Gen. "Chuck" Williams, has done a great job in bringing down the costs of our embassy facilities around the world and doing it in a way that makes maximum use of modern technology, modern construction techniques and modern construction management techniques.

We work in challenging times. But I believe there is even more opportunity in the days ahead. American leadership is essential in times of peril and promise.

Together, with the support of President Bush, Congress and the American people, we can meet the dangers, capture the opportunities and build a better world. ■

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Freedom of Speech, by artist Jessica Phrogus.

Art for an Ambassador's Residence?

Accompanying your January feature on the Art in Embassies program is a photo of a ceramic tile work, *Freedom of Speech*, destined for the ambassador's residence in Caracas, that includes a group belonging to Campus Women for Peace.

The Internet describes the group as a 1960s campus organization at Berkeley opposed to military action, civil defense and U.S. policy in Vietnam. The group also met with women's groups active in the former Soviet Union. The only women's groups leaving the U.S.S.R. then were communist party organizations, so one can only guess at the Berkeley group's sympathies.

That a piece of art depicting such a group would hang in an ambassadorial residence just as the United States may be preparing to go to war

strikes me as inappropriate and tone deaf to the mood in Washington and the rest of the country.

Yes, freedom of speech includes protecting speech that we disagree with, including speech by organizations that oppose U.S. policies abroad and that associate with communist organizations. But I can only wonder whether anyone associated with this piece of art, either in Washington or Caracas, has read a newspaper in the past year or two.

Robert Fretz

Consul General

U.S. Embassy, Bridgetown

Response

We appreciate the concern Mr. Fretz expressed in his letter to the editor and thank him for taking the time to write.

Freedom of Speech by artist Jessica Phrogus visually documents one of our nation's oldest and most important tenets, the right of its citizens to publicly voice their opinions—a right protected by the First Amendment. As a democracy we pride ourselves on our many civil rights. The U.S. government, including the Department of State, promotes these rights at home and abroad.

In recording a controversial moment from U.S. history, *Freedom of Speech* exemplifies that Americans

debate difficult issues in public. According to the artist, "All I really know as the truth is what I observe...this is where our country is strong, we are a democracy."

We believe it appropriate to exhibit Ms. Phrogus's work in the ambassador's residence. To disavow *Freedom of Speech* would only endorse the very government censorship that we deplore in less democratic nations.

Anne Johnson

Director

Art in Embassies Program

A Clarification

Several readers expressed concern about the photograph of the aluminum ladder next to an electrical panel in December's safety section on taking falls seriously. The respondents correctly noted that the electrical shock hazard is greater than the fall.

While the photograph was selected to demonstrate this, the caption failed to convey the message intended. Paragraph six of the article directly addressed the shock hazard when using an aluminum ladder and we always instruct post employees never to use such a ladder when performing electrical work. We will make certain that captions under future photographs convey the intended message.

Daniel L. Harman

Industrial Hygienist

Safety, Health and

Environmental Management

From the Editor

Thanks to a reader's suggestion, we have provided a map with our Post of the Month, Baku, so that everyone, young and old, will know where in the world we're talking about. Look for more maps in the future.

Closer to home, our Office of the Month, e-Diplomacy, may be little known as well. But rather than draw a map, we've provided text and photos to help you understand one of the newer kids on the block.

And speaking of youth, our story about observing elections in Kenya was contributed by a young member of the diplomatic community who traveled with his elders to villages beyond Nairobi to observe firsthand an equally youthful democracy.

We have come to know terrorism all too well and our eyewitness story on Bali is further testament to its tragic results for victims and survivors alike.

Corrections

A photo in our January article on Art in Embassies incorrectly identified Elizabeth Ash as the person unpacking a painting with Cohn Drennan. Instead, it was colleague Rebecca Clark.

In December's *Our Town* feature, retirees Jim and Carol Steeves of Albuquerque were incorrectly identified as Jim and Carol Reeves.

Tunis Dedicates New Embassy

Tunisia, the site of Carthage and home to Phoenician, Roman and Islamic architecture, recently welcomed a new monument—the U.S. Embassy in Tunis. The combination of Islamic architectural principles with modern American materials and security elements symbolizes more than two centuries of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

The architecture recalls the old city in capturing the spirit of classical Tunisian design and incorporates local motifs into a U.S.-style workplace. The vision of a mansion in a park includes a main chancery surrounded by 11 auxiliary buildings, four guardhouses and seven acres of landscaped lawns and fountains.

The chancery's interior is built around a series of courts that evoke traditional houses of the market. Local stone and tile work pay homage to popular Tunisian colors and styles, while the design itself employs traditional strategies for natural lighting and sun protection. Behind the main chancery, a series of olive tree groves have been planted to take advantage of the water retention ponds, a system of irrigation designed to maximize natural water collection.

The new embassy symbolizes the very best of the Tunisian/American cooperative spirit, involving more than 3,400 local workers. The construction and occupation of the \$82 million embassy were accomplished on



Interior view of the Tunis chancery.

Photos courtesy of Tai Soo Kim Partners

schedule, with the dedication on Dec. 10, two years after groundbreaking.

More than 750 people attended the dedication. Speakers included Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs William Burns, Overseas Buildings Operations Director Charles E. Williams, Ambassador Rust M. Deming and Tunisian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Saida Chtioui.

—Stephanie Syptak



Exterior view of the new chancery in Tunis.

DIRECT FROM THE D.G.

AMBASSADOR RUTH A. DAVIS

Join Us for Foreign Affairs Day

During these cold winter months, I look forward to spring and the return of cherry blossoms and Department retirees for Foreign Affairs Day, May 9.

This is "homecoming" day at the Department of State, a day for reminiscing, reconnecting and discussion with our retired Civil Service and Foreign Service colleagues. Just because you have retired does not mean you are forgotten. Retirement is just another phase of your State Department career. Though we may demand less of your time, we want to see you at Foggy Bottom, to tell you we miss you, to find out how you are doing and to let you know how things have been with us since you left. We also want to give you a chance to catch up, swap stories and trade e-mail addresses with other retired colleagues.

Attendance has been unprecedented at the last two Foreign Affairs events. I have a hunch attendees came not just for the varied and stimulating programs we offered but for our ever popular keynote speaker, Secretary Powell. He plans to give the keynote address and preside at the AFSA memorial plaque ceremony again this year, and I hope we'll have a standing-room-only crowd.

Secretary Powell has breathed new life into the tradition that is Foreign Affairs Day. He has made it a day when we honor all State retirees. He has made the Harry S Truman Building more accessible to retirees. In turn, he appealed to you all to take the message of U.S. diplomacy to the American people, to help direct talented recruits our way and to mentor those who are coming after you. Retired employees are some of our best recruiters.

During Foreign Affairs Day, we also honor and remember those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Sadly, this year we will add six more colleagues' names to the AFSA memorial plaque at the C Street entrance.



The ceremony will once again remind us that the State family is on the front lines, protecting American interests under circumstances rendered dangerous simply because of whom we are.

We are working constantly to improve Foreign Affairs Day. We have heeded your feedback and scheduled seminars on everything from the latest on the Secretary's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and refugee issues to the situation in the Middle East and North Korea. We know many of you want to interact with your former bureaus and our small-group seminars will permit that.

Let me give you a snapshot of the schedule. The day will begin in the Delegates' Lounge over coffee and

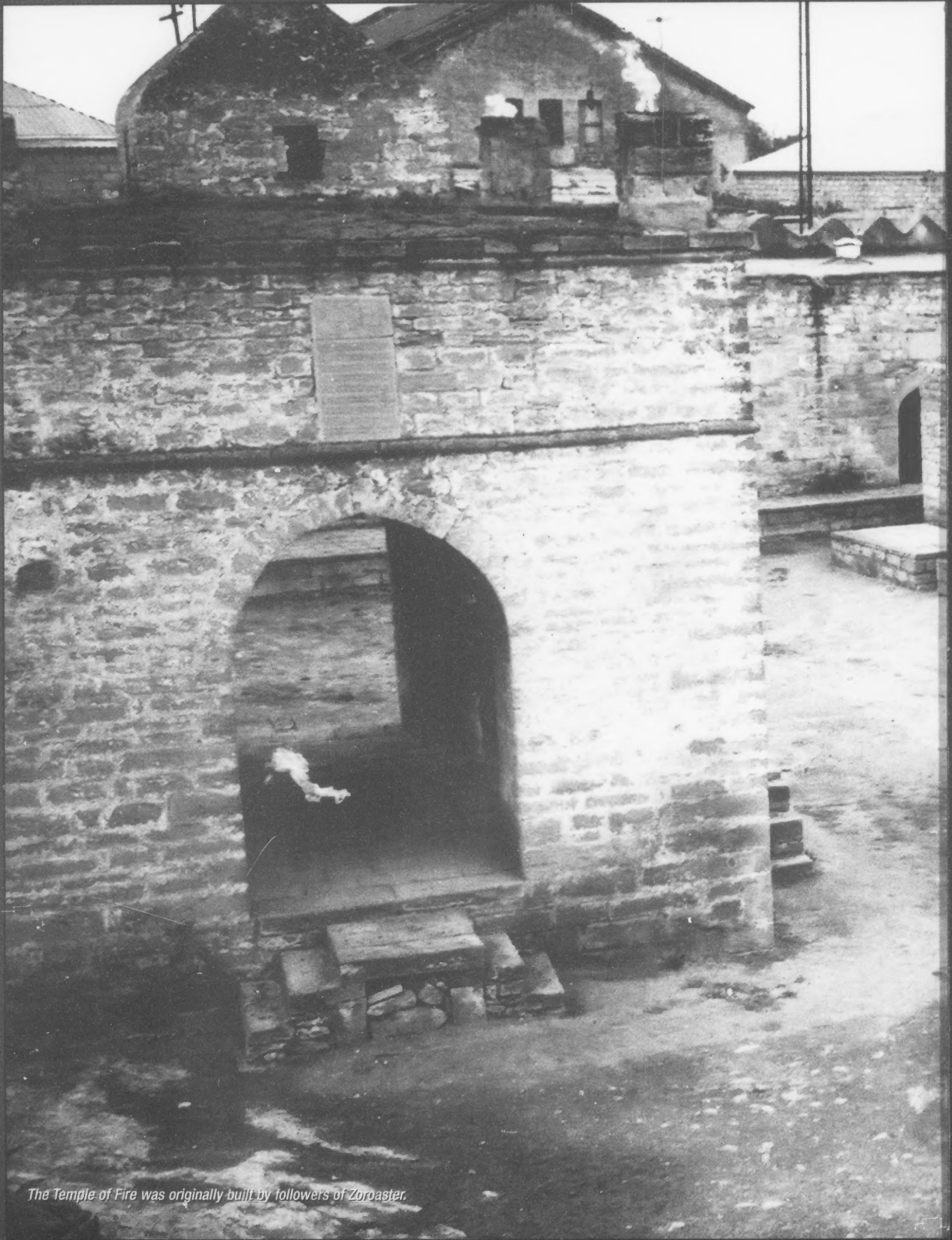
pastries, with an opportunity to reminisce, followed by a foreign policy speech. The AFSA memorial plaque ceremony and the Secretary's keynote address will follow. Before breaking for lunch, we will have two rounds of small-group seminars led by assistant secretaries. This will be an occasion for dialogue and exchange—when we can hear your thoughts and benefit from your expertise.

The day will conclude with the traditional luncheon in the historic Benjamin Franklin Room, where I will present the Director General's and the Foreign Service Cups.

It is amazing how far people travel for this reunion. It is only February as I write this column, but already we have received calls from California asking, "When is Foreign Affairs Day?" and "How do I make sure to get an invitation?"

Well, here is the answer: invitations will go out in early March. If you want to make sure you are on the list or to find out more information, e-mail foreignaffairsday@state.gov or call Peter Whaley at 202-663-2383.

This will be the Department's 38th annual homecoming for retirees and all of us look forward to having you back, if only for a day. Please mark your calendars now! ■



The Temple of Fire was originally built by followers of Zoroaster.



Post of the Month:

BAKU

By Lilla Lally and Theresa Markiw

Sipping tea in a carpet shop straight out of an Arabian Nights fairy tale. Shopping in the very modern stores around Fountain Square. Climbing the 12th century Maiden's Tower in the old city and gazing out over the smooth sheet of the Caspian Sea. Strolling "the boulevard" along the shore of the Bay of Baku.

These are just some of the pleasures employees of the U.S. Embassy in Baku enjoy in the fascinating country of Azerbaijan.



About the size of Portugal, Azerbaijan sits on the western edge of the Caspian Sea. The country is a land of contrasts—from high mountains and flat plains to deserts and subtropical lushness. The capital, Baku, is home to about one-third of the country's eight million people. The city sprawls along the northern shore of the Bay of Baku on the Apsheron Peninsula, which juts into the Caspian Sea. Azerbaijan borders Russia, Iran, Georgia, Armenia and Turkey.

Humans have inhabited the Caucasus region for at least 200,000 years. Newcomers to the area in the last 1,300 years include Arabs, Turks, Mongols, Persians and Russians. Briefly independent during the turmoil after World War I, Azerbaijan celebrated the 10th year of its second independence in October 2001.

Azerbaijan has a long, complex history. But these days it's looking forward to a potentially bright future. The country rests on an estimated 31 billion barrels of oil and 4 trillion cubic meters of gas. The signing of the Contract of the Century in 1994 marked a turning point for Azerbaijan. This contract granted development rights to foreign oil companies over three large oil fields. Since then, other production-sharing agreements have been signed, and projects have been developed for pipelines to take the region's oil and gas to international markets, pumping billions of dollars of investment into the country. The Caspian Oil and Gas Show is the major business event of the year, attracting attendees from around the world.

But the oil boom has not reached everyone. At least half of the country's population still lives below the poverty line and most rural inhabitants engage in subsistence agriculture. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, agricultural land was privatized. The government has made commitments to other key reforms, but the business climate remains challenging and corruption is still pervasive.

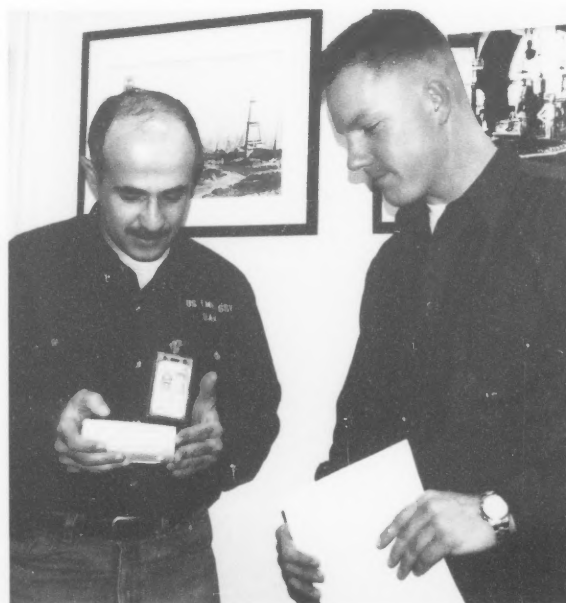
Azerbaijan gave the United States its unqualified support in the wake of Sept. 11 and offered assistance to U.S.

efforts against international terrorism. In January 2002, President Bush waived section 907 of the Freedom Support Act that had restricted most forms of assistance to the government. The waiver has allowed the embassy to expand its cooperation with the Azerbaijani government—promoting regional stability, developing a market economy and fostering democratic reform and civil society.

The embassy is also strengthening its bilateral military-to-military ties, reinforcing Azerbaijan's maritime boundaries and working with Azerbaijani customs and border guards to monitor and stop the transit of dangerous people and materials. The mission is

also working with Russia and France to reach a negotiated settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

To meet all these challenges, the embassy has more than doubled its staff in the last two years to approximately 50 Americans and 230 local employees. The embassy is located in central Baku. The chancery, built in 1908 as the home of a famous Baku architect, is one of many ornate buildings that sprang up during the first Azerbaijani oil boom at the beginning of the 20th century. The chancery boasts one of the most beautiful gardens in town and employees enjoy their lunch there year-round in Azerbaijan's temperate climate.



Sgt. Ed Burke, right, checks equipment with Ilgar Jafargulazade.

Photo by Lilia Lally



Embassy staff gather in the chancery garden to celebrate the 10th anniversary of U.S.-Azerbaijani relations.

Photo by Heydar Aslanov

For leisure, employees hike in the mountains, ride horses in Baku's new indoor stables and shop for antiques. Shopping for food in the open bazaars is fun, too. There are always fresh fruits and vegetables, but in season there are pyramids of pomegranates, strawberries, raspberries, lemons, melons and quince, surrounded by mounds of olives, dried apricots, almonds, hazelnuts and fragrant spices. And then there's the famous caviar. These fish eggs harvested from the mythic sturgeon that inhabit the Caspian Sea are coveted by connoisseurs the world over. In Baku, you can find beluga, sevruga and osetra caviar. These would cost a small fortune in the United States, but they are readily available and most affordable here. A growing number of western-style grocery stores also offer a variety of imported goods.

Azerbaijan is a hardship assignment and it's true that living here has its challenges. But Baku is an attractive and cosmopolitan city with a multitude of restaurants, pubs, museums and cultural activities. It is also fascinating and ancient. The heart of Baku is the old walled city, recently declared a

UNESCO World Heritage site. Inside the maze of narrow cobblestone streets is the medieval Caravansarai, a traditional inn where weary travelers on the fabled Silk Road once stayed overnight with their horses and camels. Today it is a restaurant with musicians playing traditional instruments and diners enjoying traditional foods.



Robert Hensley, left, general services officer, confers with procurement professionals Lala Aghahuseynova, seated, and Dima Volkov.

Photo by Lilia Lally



Photo by Lilia Lally

Foreign Service Officer Tess Moore, seated, is surrounded by budget and finance staff. They are, from left, Intigam Abdilov, Tamilla Gadashyeva, Rufat Aghayev, Heydar Aslanov and Shalala Huseynova.

If you're looking for great bargains, there's no better place than the arts and crafts shops of the old city. Azeri carpets, known for their multicolored designs and varied motifs, are indeed bargains as are kilim pillows, camel saddlebags and woven door hangings. Beautiful gold and silver filigree jewelry, copperware and antiques abound. If your taste runs to the more modern, there are many art galleries displaying the work of talented Azerbaijani artists.

Beyond Baku are all sorts of intriguing destinations that can be reached easily by car and offer good accommodations. Others require four-wheel drive and an adventurous spirit. For example, Quba, several hours north of Baku, is nestled in a wooded, hilly area with pleasant scenery and wildlife. Along the coast of the Caspian Sea near the Iranian border lies the city of Lenkoran, surrounded by cypress trees, vineyards, orange groves and tea plantations. Then there are the historic cities of Sheki and Lahij, as well as Zoroastrian fire temples and bizarre mud volcanoes. Azerbaijan has more of these than any other country in the world.

Azerbaijan is a multifaceted country with a rich and storied past and a bright, beckoning future. Doubtless, this small Caucasus nation will play an important role in the coming century. ■

Ms. Lally is the co-community liaison officer and Ms. Markiw the public affairs officer in Baku.



Photo by Lilia Lally

Consular staff at work are, from left, Victor Kastrulin, Gulnara Mekhty-Zade and Jeniffer Fasciglione.

Office of the Month:

Advancing e-Diplomacy

"The success of U.S. diplomacy in this new century depends in no small measure on whether we exploit the promise of the technology revolution."

—Secretary Powell

By Joseph Merante

At the State Department, the names of offices usually say it all. Hear "Brazil Desk" or "nonproliferation"—or the suffix "ex" attached to anything—and you pretty much know what the office does.

Not so with "e-Diplomacy." Most react with raised eyebrows. When one former ambassador was told that the Department had just formed an Office of e-Diplomacy, he responded: "e-Gad." So, quickly defining e-Diplomacy became the first order of business.

"The first thing we did when we started last July," recounts Ambassador James Holmes, office director, "was to clarify our role. And that is to put the business practitioner of the Department—whether a political officer in Europe or a consular officer in Africa—at the forefront of our decisions on new technology."



Bruce Burton, left, Jerry Gallucci and Ned Alford talk shop in e-Diplomacy's office.

Photo by Dave Krecke



Photo by Harry Ponting

Michael Bishton looks on as Jim Holmes brings up the e-Diplomacy web site.

The Office of e-Diplomacy reflects three strong commitments by Secretary Powell and Under Secretary for Management Green. The first is to give Department personnel the best technology possible—smart, simple and secure—to exploit the pace and scope of diplomacy in the new century. The second is to ensure that this technology truly reflects the needs of individual users and advances the Department's business practices. The third is to make much better use of the knowledge and experience of the Department and its superb work force.

"With these commitments behind us, we know our mission," Mr. Holmes said. "It is to enhance the Department's leadership in diplomacy by fostering a knowledge-sharing culture and by putting innovative new technologies in the hands of those who need them. We've made progress in both areas."

The 10-person office has moved ahead on several fronts:

- It has negotiated State's participation in the Open Source Information System, a communications network of nearly 50 federal agencies. This will give State users a rich menu of information sources in the sensitive-but-unclassified environment and the means to collaborate

Photo by Dave Krecke



Jim Holmes, center, director of the Office of e-Diplomacy, chairs a meeting of information technology representatives from other bureaus.

and exchange information with other agencies.

■ It was the driving force in the pilot project with the U.S. Embassy in Budapest, which has produced the new "web in a box" software that will give posts and bureaus an easy-to-use, self-service capability for posting content on the unclassified and classified (SIPRNet) networks (see sidebar).

■ It is overseeing the collection and representation of user contributions to the development of the new SMART messaging system to be deployed by the end of FY04.

■ It is working with other offices to develop the strategies for two major programs: knowledge-management and e-Government. They are among the five main elements of the President's Management Agenda.

"All these are pieces of a whole," Mr. Holmes said. "Access to OSIS is a major step forward in connecting

Photo by Michael Bishton



Ideas are the lifeblood of e-Diplomacy, and it looks like Harry Ponting just caught one.

State to other agencies, crucial for homeland security. The 'web in a box' technology will enable State to project a robust presence on OSIS and on the classified network as well. Now we need to exploit the breakthroughs."

e-Diplomacy plans to do that in several ways. "Training is critical," according to Jerry Gallucci, the office's deputy director. "We want State users to know how to use these tools and why it is important they do so."

The office also has been working with the Bureau of Consular Affairs to use the new OSIS connection to link consular and INS databases. "This will be a huge achievement," Mr. Gallucci said. "Our consular officers will be able to check visa applicants against INS's databases virtually in realtime. And it will

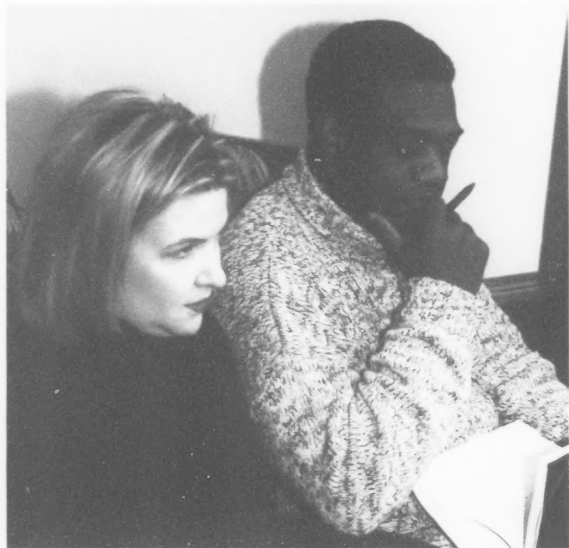


Photo by Dave Krecke

Mickey Skelton and Dave Jefferson from the business center participate in the e-Diplomacy meeting.

open the door to links with other important law enforcement databases as well."

e-Diplomacy will advocate Department adoption of other key technologies that will serve as a foundation for a range of objectives—better use of the Department's knowledge base, collaboration within and without State, knowledge-sharing and e-Government.

"By the time the new messaging system comes online," Mr. Holmes said, "we think State users should benefit from three programs well within our technological grasp—a portal page that will integrate a lot of capabilities right on their desktops, a global directory that will let them easily access services and other people and a portable personal ID that will let them tap into the Department globally."

The goal of e-Diplomacy is not to "revolutionize diplomacy," the official said. Rather, it seeks "evolution-

ary changes in the way we work and carry out our diplomatic mission."

Although e-Diplomacy is designing new means for the Department to transmit, manage and access information, the office is also an advocate of ways to increase everyday efficiency within current technological capabilities.

Mr. Gallucci, who manages e-Diplomacy's web site (<http://ediplomacy.state.gov/>), says success will depend

upon an active flow of fresh ideas and suggestions from users. He says feedback registered at the office web site will be answered, and he invites those in Washington to the weekly "e-Dip" lunch in the cafeteria. This informal gathering takes place every Tuesday from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the table marked "e-Dip." ■

The author works in the Office of e-Diplomacy.

e-Diplomacy Abroad

By Samuel Laeuchli

The web-based technology introduced into the Department's classified systems offers great potential for improving the way it reports information. Since the spring of 2001, the embassy in Budapest has been engaged in a project to take advantage of this technology.

The system developed in Budapest has three "legs." One is a daily report, delivered by e-mail, that highlights key information on Hungary that Washington and other consumers need to know. The second consists of "non-cables," similar in content to cables but sent as Microsoft Word attachments to e-mail messages. These non-cables are more readable than cables and can include pictures and graphs as well as text. The final leg is a web site that uses "cold fusion" web technology. It lets us be our own webmasters without the complexity of normal web publishing software.

The IRM business center and e-Diplomacy have provided the software and tailored it to the embassy's needs. The site can be accessed on SIPRNET at <http://budapest.state.gov/>.

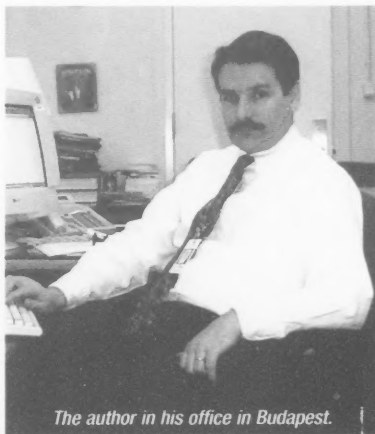
This is a different communication system that doesn't use cables to transmit information, but it requires two things: a dramatic change in the way an embassy does business and front office support. From the beginning, two successive deputy chiefs of mission have given the project their full support, engaging the whole embassy. Several

sections and many officers contribute to the daily reports. Non-cables are produced on political, economic, military, scientific and other topics. Background information, biographies and key issues papers are posted to the web site by different sections of the embassy. Hence, there is no greater online repository of information on Hungary in the U.S. government than our site. Slowly, it is becoming a one-stop shopping center for those who need information on Hungary.

This system of reporting has involved a change in business practices by producers and consumers. It is not only an IT issue. Producing a daily report requires constant focus and collaboration among sections on what is important for information consumers to know. The embassy must decide what types of information are transmitted via each reporting format. These are management decisions about substantive issues. Finally, the system needs a day-to-day manager, who sees that it works. Without such a manager,

the whole system could stall. Any embassy wishing to implement a similar reporting system will need to appoint a substantive manager whose primary responsibility is managing this flow of information.

While these steps represent a significant investment of an embassy's time and resources, the increase in the quality of information flowing to consumers and the impact on policy make it worth the effort. ■



The author in his office in Budapest.

The author is a political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Budapest.

Use Your Government

By Karna E. Thompson

The Transportation and Travel Reform Act of 1998 requires employees to use the government travel charge card to pay for official travel. The card streamlines how employees' official travel is funded and replaces cash advances.

Officials discourage the use of personal credit cards for official travel, citing both the 1998 legislation and the *Foreign Affairs Handbook*, which states that employees who travel more than once a year must use the travel card. Employees who decline to apply for and use the government credit card for official travel are ineligible for cash advances.

The Office of Financial Oversight and Coordination in the Bureau of Resource Management provides central guidance for the Department's travelcard program, relying on coordinators to administer the approximately 7,600 travel cards issued to employees in more than 150 locations stateside and overseas. The coordinators tell employees about the program; maintain an up-to-date list of all accounts; process account maintenance forms; answer cardholder questions; review monthly reports and follow up with delinquent cardholders.

The FOC is the liaison between the coordinators, cardholders and the bank. The office maintains regulations and department procedures; communicates program information; keeps a list of all coordinators and cardholders; and monitors delinquency and travel card abuse.

A letter notifies cardholders when their accounts are 90 days past due. The employing bureau is also notified and is asked to counsel the employee to pay the travel card balance in a timely manner. If the cardholder's account remains unpaid after 120 days, past due wages are garnished. The employee's executive officer is notified of the continued outstanding balance and the employee is

referred to the Office of Employee Relations in the Bureau of Human Resources for administrative action.

To date, the wages of 11 employees have been garnished.

The FOC monitors misuse of the travel card. Misuse is defined as any charges that are not authorized in a travel authorization. Each month, travelcard transaction reports are reviewed for questionable charges. In addition, a search is performed for transactions of employees with spotty payment histories, cash advances and purchases exceeding a predetermined amount. Once potential misuse is identified, a misuse assessment form is e-mailed to the bureau program coordinator. Misuse is determined from the information on the form. After two instances of

misuse, the employee is referred to the employing bureau for counseling. If misuse continues, the employee is referred to the Office of Employee Relations.

Cardholder and bureau program coordinator information should be updated when employees change locations. Cardholders should notify the bank of their current address. Cardholders should immediately tell their coordinators if payments are expected to be late. Coordinators

should ensure that cardholders are transferred to the correct reporting office when changing locations. This also applies to coordinators when they change locations.

In the coming months, cardholders with Internet access will be able to view and pay their travel card accounts online. This should eliminate delayed payments due from overseas cardholders. Also, new computer programs will be installed to help coordinators process requests. There will likely be more oversight by the General Services Administration, Office of Management and Budget and the Congress. ■

The author works in the Office of Financial Oversight and Coordination in the Bureau of Resource Management.



David Muir/Masterfile

Travel Card Responsibly

Area Students Shadow Employees

Employees gave kids from area elementary and high schools an opportunity to see what they do through the Groundhog Job Shadow Day program.

On Jan. 31, the Department joined with more than 100,000 businesses and organizations such as Marriott, Home Depot, Wal-Mart and NBC to provide young people with career awareness and mentoring opportunities.

The youngsters got a close look at the workplace and how to apply skills learned at school.

Although the 80 youngsters the State Department hosted may not have seen their shadow in commemorating the mid-winter groundhog myth, they did become shadows for a variety of people and positions, including Secretary Colin L. Powell.

"This is our third year in the program," Mary Pensabene, a public affairs specialist who manages the Department's shadowing program, said. "It's a full day."

The region was well represented by elementary, middle and high school students from the District, Maryland and Virginia's Fairfax, Fauquier, Rappahannock and Culpeper counties, she added.

About 50 pupils from Northeast Washington's Miner Elementary School were among those invited. In addition to a Department tour, they saw a demonstration by dogs trained to sniff out drugs and explosives.

"We brought out the entire fifth-grade class," said John Arbogast, an attorney with the United Nations Affairs Office who oversees a tutoring program at Miner where employees work one-on-one with the elementary pupils throughout the year.

Secretary Powell, who mentored a student from Booker T. Washington High School, met the group at the end of their day and pitched the virtues of hard work, self-discipline, commitment and even failure.

"The simple solution that I've found to deal with something going wrong, a failure, is to find out what you did wrong," he told the students. "And then learn from



Photos by Franklin Jones

Department spokesman Richard Boucher, right, was mentor-of-the-day for Evan Bustria, who attends the Wakefield School in The Plains, in Northern Virginia.

that. Examine it. Fix yourself. Prove yourself. And then roll up that failure in a little ball, throw it over your shoulder and never think about it again." —Paul Koscak



Alessandra Carozza, a senior at the District's School Without Walls, was one of 160 students who shadowed Department employees.

Kabul Hosts U.S.-Afghan



Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues April Palmerlee with Afghan children.

Council on Women



Meeting of the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Story and Photos by Daria M. Fane

We heard the stories. We knew about the harsh Taliban decrees against women. I was deeply moved by the hardships these women faced and wished there were something I could do to help. I was eager to get to Afghanistan but our embassy in Kabul was still closed.

Then came Sept. 11. The events that followed catapulted Afghanistan onto the front page of the news. With swift military action by a U.S.-led coalition, the Taliban soon fell. A new era was dawning for Afghanistan. It was clear that things would change, but we were faced with the question of how best to help Afghanistan's women.

Hamid Karzai visited Washington last January. In a joint public announcement with President Bush, the heads of state launched the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council to ensure that Afghan women receive the training and education they were denied under the Taliban. The council received funding from Congress and the legal mandate to promote partnerships between U.S. and Afghan institutions and mobilized private resources to support these goals.

The council held its first meeting in Washington last April. Its first major goal was to train women working in the new Afghan government, and last September a group of

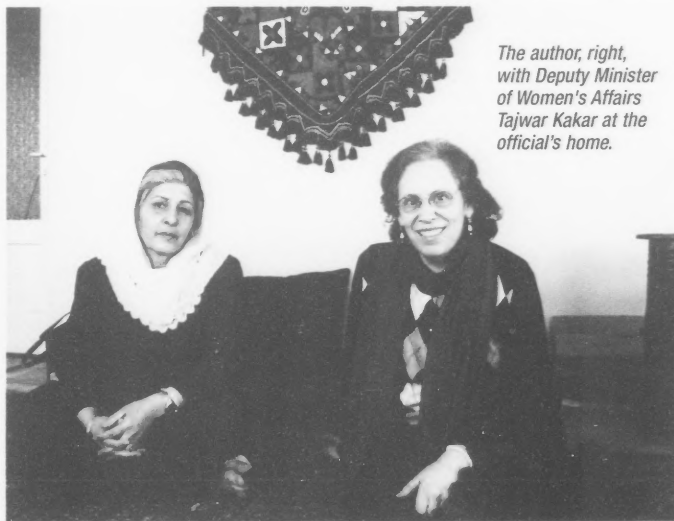
young women working in various ministries came to the United States for one month of training in computer skills, grant writing and leadership.

The council's second meeting was held in early January in Kabul. State's Paula Dobriansky, co-chairwoman of the council, led a delegation of 10 Americans, including Presidential Advisor Karen Hughes and other government and nongovernment representatives.

I went to Kabul in advance of the delegation to make logistical arrangements. The last time I saw Kabul was in 1976, a time of relative calm when no one envisioned the 23 years of warfare and civil strife that lay ahead. Though the bazaar in the center of town is now bustling with stores and restaurants that sprang up like wildflowers after the fall of the Taliban, western Kabul is destroyed, with only an occasional family camped out among the rubble, living in windowless rooms, with little protection from the elements.

Though some women feel free to wear head scarves, the majority still don the head-to-toe chadri or burqa when on the streets. The eerie silhouette of their chadris billowing in the wind as women walk is one of Afghanistan's most typical, haunting scenes. Why do they still wear their chadris? Some of their answers surprised me.

"If I didn't wear the chadri, people would think I am communist," said a woman working as a security guard at the ministry of education. "This is



The author, right, with Deputy Minister of Women's Affairs Tajwar Kakar at the official's home.



Young women learn to crochet at the Women's Resource Center, above, and to read, right.

part of my religion, I will always wear it and no one can make me stop," said another. Others spoke of security concerns.

The Afghan delegation to the Kabul meeting included 10 women of ministerial rank and two deputy ministers, as well as a range of nongovernment representatives, including those working outside government, in U.N. agencies, humanitarian activities and the private sector. The key topics discussed included education, political participation of women, human rights, the new constitution, economic development and small-business opportunities for women.

One of the key priorities of the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs is its plan to create a network of women's development centers operating in each of Afghanistan's 32 provinces. A signing ceremony took place at the end of the meeting, where the U.S. Agency

for International Development committed \$2.5 million for the construction of women's centers in 14 provinces.

In addition, the council announced its plans to issue \$1 million in grants to support educational programs at the centers. The council will provide money for programs supporting literacy, human rights, political participation, small-business development and managing nongovernment organizations. The council will fund projects by Afghan organizations and their U.S. nongovernment



partners, with priority given to programs that reach beyond the provincial capitals to train women in rural and remote areas who would not otherwise have access to such training.

Besides the formal meetings, the U.S. delegation also visited a number of sites, including a women's resource center run by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. We saw classes in sewing, embroidery and literacy. It was impressive how eager these women were to learn and how good they felt about being able to read. Four months before they had been illiterate. Now they can read simple texts and they talked about their dreams of being teachers, writers and doctors.

Education is the key to development in Afghanistan and its prospects now are better than they have been for a quarter of a century. Our visit to Afghanistan renewed our faith in the resilience of the human spirit, demonstrating the determination and courage of Afghans and especially Afghan women. ■



Many women still wear chadris when out in the street.

The author works in the Office of Women's Issues.

A View from the Hill as a Congressional Fellow

Story by Jonita Whitaker
Photos by Dave Krecke

Having spent the last nine years of my Foreign Service career at a series of African posts, I was hesitant about working in Washington as a Congressional Fellow. After a while, I adjusted to taking the Metro, driving on interstate highways, choosing from hundreds of new products at the supermarket and observing congressional debates in person.

When I received my assignment as a Pearson Fellow, finding a congressional office to work in was my job. So I contacted Rep. Donald M. Payne (D-N.J.), who had visited my post in Bamako, Mali, in 1997 as the ranking mem-

ber of the Subcommittee on Africa. I looked forward to working with someone with an abiding interest in Africa and was delighted when the congressman agreed to have me join his staff for my fellowship year.

Previous fellows advised me that this job would be unlike any I had ever held. They were right. The job is largely what you make of it, a combination of your own experience and the interests of the member of Congress. As a foreign affairs adviser, most of my work has focused on what I call the "I" countries: Iraq, Iran, Ireland, India, Israel and Indonesia.

I have found researching the Iraq issue stimulating. I review news from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, CNN and other sources and summarize the information in abstracts I share with other members of the Iraq working group. As a member of the group, I've



Pearson Fellows gather
at U.N. Headquarters.

Photo courtesy of Humpty Dumpty International



Congressman Payne and author discuss draft legislation for a bill he is sponsoring to eradicate polio.

learned a lot from attending debates in closed sessions that sometimes last into the early hours of the morning.

Some days, I attend meetings featuring people like Scott Ritter, Jessica Matthews, Jonathan Tucker, Richard Perle and leaders of the Iraqi National Congress. I was fortunate to be with Congressman Payne during a hearing of the House International Relations Committee, where Secretary Powell testified. I listened with pride as committee members posed questions to the Secretary. I was impressed by the transparency of the process and by Chairman Henry Hyde's skillful management of the discussion with so many divergent opinions. It was a great opportunity to witness history in the making.

My day typically starts with compiling a news briefing on Africa. I attend briefings, host office visitors or prepare letters of commendation for the many groups that count Rep. Payne an ally. Luncheons are frequent and often feature fascinating people. For example, author Ivan Hali, who wrote "How America Lost the Intellectual Game with Japan and Its Implications for our Future in Asia," spoke recently.

I draft letters for the congressman's approval, responding to constituents from northern New Jersey who are expressing their views on foreign affairs issues. Work sometimes involves attending off-site meetings or conferences, such as

a recent seminar called, "Is There a Crisis in U.S. Foreign Relations?" at George Washington University's Elliot School of International Affairs. Staff from other U.S. government agencies often brief on the Ivory Coast, Angola, the Southern African food crisis or women's issues, which rounds out my busy day.

Some days are spent writing speeches on peacekeeping, Iraq and debt relief for Africa. Others end with receptions hosted by industry groups. Conferences and seminars offer insight into a wide variety of topics. The only limitation is time and energy, so you have to be selective.

One of my favorite roles as a Pearson Fellow is representing the Foreign Service on the Hill. I'm always proud to introduce myself as a Foreign Service officer and share my experiences with congressional staffers. I enjoy inviting them to events hosted by the Department and to ambassadorial swearing-ins in the Benjamin Franklin Room. I see these as recruiting opportunities and have even arranged for a panel of Foreign Service officers to hold a career session for Hill staff. During the recent Congressional Black Caucus conference, I joined other Foreign Service colleagues at a Department of State booth to show participants the face of America.

Although I'm midway through my tour, it's already clear that this experience has enriched my perspective as a Foreign Service officer. And things sure look different from the Hill! ■

The author is a Pearson Fellow serving on Capitol Hill in the office of Congressman Donald M. Payne from New Jersey's 10th district.



The author outside her office at the Rayburn Office Building.

Mother Channels Anger Into International Action

By Paul Koscak

With help from the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, a Potomac, Md., schoolteacher has stirred the conscience of a nation after losing her son in a Turkish traffic accident.

Aron Sobel, 25, died—along with 30 others—when the bus he was riding in went out of control and careened down an embankment near Bodrum, a Turkish beach resort.

The 1995 tragedy energized his mother, Rochelle Sobel, with whom he spoke the night before the crash, to cajole Turkish officials and citizens into improving their traffic system and roads.

Mrs. Sobel was furious at the bus driver, the bus company and the Turkish government for its indifference to traffic safety. She picketed the Turkish embassy and considered suing.

Marc Grossman, State's under secretary for Political Affairs, encouraged Mrs. Sobel to form



U.S. Ambassador Robert Pearson hosted a reception at his residence for Mrs. Sobel and Rotarians involved in "Safe Communities." From left, District Governor Omer Tezcan, member of Parliament Ahmet Tan, Mrs. Rochelle Sobel, Ambassador Pearson and local Rotary Club President Iskender Coygun.

Photo courtesy of the embassy



U.S. Ambassador Robert Pearson delivers remarks at a ceremony honoring Aron Sobel. Aron's mother, Rochelle Sobel, looks on.

an international traffic safety organization to find closure and change a nation's driving habits as well.

In the spring of 2001 she formed the Association for Safe International Road Travel and took her cause directly to Turkey, her first visit ever to the country. Paving the way, the U.S. Embassy put Mrs. Sobel in touch with Turkish traffic officials, politicians and journalists.

The Turkish media rallied behind her and the U.S. Embassy introduced her to the leaders of Turkey's 25,000-member Rotary International who also embraced her cause. In February 2002, she and Turkey's Rotary district governor barnstormed the country for three days, bringing their message of traffic safety to police, educators, traffic planners, insurance companies and automobile manufacturers.

"Turks have long known that their roads are unsafe," said Stu Jones, deputy director of regional, political

and military affairs in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. "Virtually everyone knows someone who has been killed in an automobile crash. The issue has great public resonance."

While getting a driver's license is actually tougher in Turkey than in the United States, the country is sorely lacking in roads, traffic lights and signs. Furthermore, Mr. Jones said, civil war in south-east Turkey has diverted law enforcement away from traffic duties. "People have become impatient and they drive with impunity," he added.

Through a grant, the embassy in Ankara brought Mary Russell, a community organizer from Palm Beach, Fla., to Turkey to spend 10 days rallying the support of citizens, public officials and community groups. In response, Turkey's Rotary Club made traffic safety one of their highest priorities.

When Mrs. Sobel visited Ankara in May 2002, the country's largest newspaper ran a full-page profile of her efforts and she attended an embassy ceremony honoring her son.

Last month, the now veteran organizer traveled to Nairobi to take her organization and traffic safety message to more than 700 Rotarians in that African nation. ■



Mrs. Rochelle Sobel delivers remarks honoring her son, Aron, at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara.

Department Alerts Travelers to Potential Driving Hazards

By Tom Sandusky

Vehicle accidents are among the most difficult cases consular officers handle. Since accidents can happen to U.S. citizens at any time and frequently in remote areas, they require immediate action, especially when there's a death or serious injury. It's consular officers who visit hospitalized Americans, or, worse, call families about the death of loved ones.

The State Department helps protect U.S. citizens driving overseas by flagging hazardous conditions. Since 1998, thanks to Rochelle Sobel and the Association for Safe International Road Travel, based in Maryland, driving conditions have been part of the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Consular Information Program.

Road conditions, public transportation and availability of roadside assistance are included in the consular information sheets prepared for every country in the world. The sheets highlight hazardous local conditions and may contain warnings of dangerous local driving habits, information on road rules that differ from those in the United States and tips on obtaining international and foreign driving permits.

This information is available on the bureau's web site at travel.state.gov. There are links to the associa-

tion's web site as well as to other government and international organizations concerned with road safety.

Congress requires the Department to list U.S. citizens killed in overseas traffic accidents and of other non-natural causes. The first report was posted Dec. 30, 2002, and it will be updated every six months.

Because most U.S. citizens who die abroad are residents of the host country, it doesn't occur to their families to inform the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Also, the report doesn't include deaths of U.S. military or government officials. For these reasons, the report can't be considered a complete account of U.S. deaths in foreign countries.

What it shows, however, is this: From Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2002, 5.5 percent or 62 of the 1,130 Americans who died abroad were killed in traffic accidents. But when compared to the 246 Americans who died overseas from other non-natural causes, traffic deaths jump to 25.2 percent. Also during this time, 31 Americans abroad were murdered, 20 drowned, nine were killed in aviation accidents and eight died from terrorist actions.

The author is the European division chief, American Citizens Services and Crisis Management in the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Observing History in Kenya

By Scott Warren

For only the third time since independence in 1963, Kenyans went to the polls Dec. 27, 2002, to elect a president, parliamentary representatives and local leaders.

Since independence, only two presidents have governed Kenya: Jomo Kenyatta and, for the past 24 years, Daniel arap Moi. Both represented the Kenyan African National Union party. Discontented with pervasive corruption and minimal economic growth, Kenyans overwhelmingly elected Mwai Kibaki of the opposition National Rainbow Coalition over Mr. Moi's designated heir, Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of Mr. Kenyatta.

Several international organizations, including the Commonwealth, European Union, Carter Center and U.S. Embassy, were accredited through the Kenyan government to observe the elections. About 100 embassy

employees participated, including Foreign Service officers, family members and Foreign Service National employees.

We were divided into groups of four or five and observed in different constituencies or regions throughout the country. There were also several thousand Kenyan observers representing various nongovernment organizations. By being present, the observers were able to show their interest in fair and free elections and to report their findings to the international community.

I participated, along with my dad and three FSNs, in rural Rongai constituency in the Great Rift Valley about three hours north of Nairobi. We arrived at our first polling station a little after six in the morning. A line of about 20 people anxiously waited to cast their votes. We entered the social hall where the voting was to be conducted. The room held about 20 people, including six clerks, a presiding officer, agents from the various politi-

Voters lining up to vote at a polling station, normally the town hall.



Photo courtesy of the author



Clerk dips voter's finger in indelible ink to prevent multiple voting.

Photo courtesy of the author

cal parties and observers. A small kerosene lamp in the middle of the room was the only light as the presiding officer, a clergyman, attempted to make final preparations. Finally, at about 6:50 a.m., the first person voted.

Throughout the day, we visited eight polling sites located throughout the constituency. Almost all were located in small, primary school rooms, many with broken windows, dirt floors and no desks. Ironically, one of Kibaki's chief campaign promises was to provide free primary school education, a luxury unavailable in Kenya today. In all the sites, a table seating six clerks was located close to the entrance. All the clerks had different roles, ranging from making sure the voter was registered and stamping and handing out ballots to dipping the voter's finger in indelible ink to prevent multiple voting.

The actual voting process was fairly simple. The voter would register by showing a valid ID and voter registration card before receiving three ballots: the presidential ballot, the parliamentary ballot and the civic ballot for a local position. The voter would then proceed to a makeshift voting booth to ensure secrecy. Voters put an "X" by the candidate of their choice and then placed the vote in one of the designated ballot boxes. Many of the people who voted, however, were illiterate. For these people, two options were available. They were entitled to have a close friend or relative vote for them or have the presiding officer read out the names of the candidates and mark that person's choice.

The stations closed at six at night to count the ballots. The votes were counted one by one, with agents from the major political parties looking on. It took about one hour to count a box of 600 votes.

There were some isolated incidents of voters being threatened or bribed to vote for certain candidates and at several stations voters not on registration rolls could not vote. Overall, the election went smoothly. Westerners take fair and democratic elections for granted and it was remarkable to see how much Kenyans tried to make their elections as fair as possible.

After two long days of counting, the electoral commission of Kenya finally announced a winner: Mwai Kibaki. The announcement left Kenya in jubilation, with people on the streets giving the victory sign and smiling whenever they passed. "It's the best Christmas present we've gotten in a long time," said one Kenyan. Mr. Kibaki's inauguration was held in Nairobi's Uhuru Park (Uhuru means freedom in Swahili) and attended by some 250,000 people. The streets were empty and everybody not attending the ceremony gathered around televisions and radios.

The occasion marked one of the few times in post-colonial Africa that a ruling party has democratically handed over power to the opposition. The coming years will tell if Kenya really will change for the better, but I feel privileged to have been part of such a historic election. ■

The author is a sophomore at the International School of Kenya and the son of Glenn Warren, political officer.



Special agent James Minor examines bombing scene inside Paddy's Bar.

Photo by Sarah Motil

Bali Duty Reminds Consular Officer of Bosnia

By Tom Daniels

Twenty days in Bali changed my life. I am now connected to the families, the victims and to Bali forever. Shortly after midnight on Sunday, Oct. 13, I learned of the horrific bombing at a Bali nightclub that killed 183 people and injured 326 others. More would die from their injuries during the next few days. Among the dead would be seven Americans.

Monday, I left for Bali on the first flight out of Surabaya, accompanied by a dedicated Foreign Service

National consular assistant who was just as wet behind the ears as I was. I packed a small bag expecting a four- or five-day trip. It turned into three weeks.

We checked into the hotel, rented a car and drove straight to the consular agency where I began organizing the search for missing Americans.

Tuesday morning I issued the first death report for a young American woman who was a Bali resident. It was the first of my career and I never expected I would be doing this just six weeks out of consular training.

That afternoon, I visited the morgue at the Sanglah

hospital. I was suddenly struck by the bombing's destruction. There were no cold-storage containers. Most of the dead were lined up in body bags on the grass and on the sidewalk behind the morgue. It was impossible to count them all. Body fluids drained out of all the bags as they languished in the tropical sun. The stench was pervasive. Inside the morgue, bodies were in various conditions—from those who were incinerated to those who died from injuries but were not badly burned. Although, as a soldier, I had seen bodies in the "zone of separation" in Bosnia, nothing had prepared me for this.

With passports and photos in hand, I began the search for more American dead.

By the end of the first week we had identified another American victim. I had spent dozens of hours looking for her, identifying the body, processing her release from the morgue and staying with her father while she was cremated. I grew very close to him in those few days as I watched the pain of a grieving father. The week also brought me close to five other families. I grew to know and love them. Nearly every day I talked to one or more of them to get more information that would help identify their loved ones who were presumed dead. Did they have any tattoos, piercings, jewelry or other identifiers? Finally, dental records began to arrive.

Thursday, the first of the Australian odontologists arrived. I developed a close working relationship with the Australian dentists and police officers. Because I spoke Indonesian, I helped them procure depleted supplies on the local economy. In exchange for my personal time and expense, I gained unimpeded access to their labs, offices and information. Throughout the



Photos by James Minor

Victim identification team from the Australian Federal Police work at the Bali bombing scene.

next two weeks I spent countless hours with the Australian team as we identified the five remaining American casualties.

During my second week in Bali, State Department psychiatrists began calling me regularly. I guess they were concerned about my being surrounded by so much blood and carnage. In reality, I was working so hard that by the time I retired each night I was too tired to dream. Psychosis would have to wait. There were more pressing matters.

My last three days in Bali were spent supporting the visit of the ambassador, the counselor for public affairs and my consul general, who came to Bali to participate in several ceremonies. We placed a wreath at the bombing site and held a town hall meeting for the Americans in Bali. And while the ambassador visited Balinese government officials, I stayed at the morgue to identify one more American victim. She was officially released from the morgue on Saturday, 20 days after I arrived in Bali. On Nov. 2, I flew back to Surabaya. Visa interviews began again on Monday, Nov. 4, and life in a drawn-down post continued.

Despite the long hours and the sense of vulnerability to terrorism, this is why I joined the Foreign Service—to make a difference. As an attorney, I could be filing divorces and bankruptcies, but not everyone can really make a difference in the world without being willing to sacrifice.

Those 20 days in Bali were as formative to me as the year I spent in Bosnia with the Army. But, in Bosnia, I was just another sergeant. In Bali, I was the U.S. diplomat on the scene. I was the person to whom the desperate turned for help. ■



Balinese visit the memorial to the victims near bombed-out Paddy's Bar.

The author is a vice consul in the U.S. Consulate General in Surabaya, Indonesia.

CELEBRATING THE FUTURE

*Many things, having full reference
To one consent, may work contrariously;
As many arrows, loosed several ways,
Fly to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;
As many lines close in the dial's center;
So may a thousand actions, once afoot,
End in one purpose, and be all well borne
Without defeat.*

—William Shakespeare,
King Henry V, I, ii, 205

By Joseph A. Parente

The bard, of course, was a no-show. But his words spoke to the gathering last October in London organized by entry-level generalists and specialists from the U.S. Embassy in London. More than 150 participants from 53 Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs posts in 42 countries and senior-level officials from Washington convened in the city on the Thames to promote the future of the Foreign Service.

It was evident from the breadth and scope of senior officials who participated in the conference, beginning with Secretary Powell, that entry-level employees and their concerns are important to Department management. In post-conference questionnaires, participants

Entry-level participants listen to the ambassador's opening remarks.



Photos courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in London

OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE

said they appreciated the commitment of senior officials. One respondent wrote, "I would have flown to London just to hear Secretary Powell speak for 30 minutes." Another said, "Biggest win was the personal contact with the senior levels of the Department. I had no idea our top State leaders were so dynamic, smart and approachable."

Conference participants had the opportunity to assemble at one of the largest embassies in the world to learn from senior managers and to exchange ideas and share experiences with colleagues from other posts. Rather than reinvent the wheel, participants learned how their colleagues had solved problems facing them.



Ruth A. Davis, director general of the Foreign Service and director of Human Resources, greets the conference participants.



Ambassador Farish opens the conference.

One respondent found the exchange particularly helpful in consular work because so much had changed over the last year.

The London meeting sought to move beyond the traditional junior officer conference to embrace the wide spectrum of people who comprise today's Foreign Service. There were generalists from all five cones as well as a large number of specialists. London organizers experienced in hosting junior officer conferences found the dynamics of the entry-level event more complex. The majority of responses suggested the conference was successful. Equally important, however, were a number of thoughtful specific comments that will aid organizers of the next entry-level conference.

The success of the specialist-generalist fusion at the London conference varied greatly. Several participants suggested the gathering was "heavily geared toward junior officers." Clearly, the transition to an all-inclusive conference was not without some snares. At least as many respondents, however, applauded the organizers for including generalists and specialists. A Foreign Service officer who had worked as a specialist and Civil Service employee was delighted to have had a private meeting with the director general. Most specialists agreed that the Department had come a long way by including specialists in the conference but that more balance was needed in the future.



Attendees mingle during a break in the conference.

No conference about the future of the Foreign Service would be complete without suggestions from participants as to its future. Several themes emerged. Family matters were high on the list of priorities for improving the Foreign Service, especially employment for family members. "My wife desperately wants to work and can't because of where we live and the limited jobs at post," a respondent said.

Comments about abolishing the conal system strongly resonated with the participants. "If we're all supposed to be generalists, then let's put our money (or our system) where our rhetoric is," said one participant. Another hot topic was the tenuring and promotion system. Said one attendee: "It was clear from the discussions at the conference that many of us are still disillusioned with the not-so-transparent tenure and promotion policies."

Nomenclature also matters. As one participant wrote, "The feeling that specialists have of being snubbed by the Department and by generalists will never go away without some real work being done. A person's work should never be called substantive or nonsubstantive!"

Office management specialists asked for more promotion opportunities within their ranks and in professional jobs elsewhere in the Foreign Service. Consular associates also had questions about what role they would play after recently announced changes in consular processing.

The general sense from the conference was that management is definitely on the right track and is taking employees' concerns seriously, but there is still a long way to go. ■

The author is a vice consul at the U.S. Embassy in London.

CONFERENCE OFFERS TIPS FOR NEW OFFICERS

By Matthew Austin

Junior diplomats from 22 posts came to Seoul, Korea, to give their careers a push.

For newcomers, the 2002 East Asia Pacific conference last October was a unique opportunity to learn from the Department's top management how to cultivate a career and avoid pitfalls.

A video link during the fall conference gave the new officers a two-way channel to directly question State's senior leadership and learn about their vision for the Foreign Service.

Conference speakers talked specifics.

Competing on promotion boards and how to bid for jobs prompted lively discussions. In both cases, speakers emphasized presenting the "whole person" package, not just accomplishments within one's career.

Learning the language and culture of an assigned region, according to Michael Lemmon, dean of the School of Language Studies at the Foreign Service Institute, is vital to being an effective officer. He urged the posts to improve their language programs.

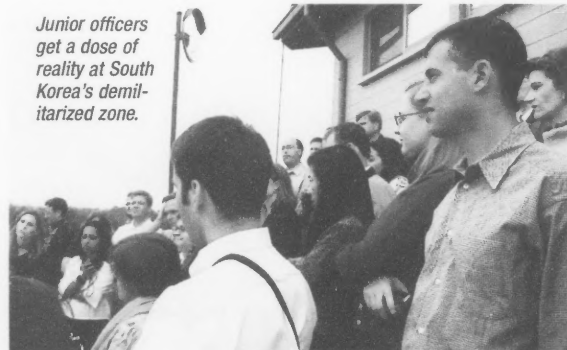
On the other hand, security violations are certain career killers, according to another speaker.

Russell Ross, a diplomatic security officer, briefed the participants on the region's dangers, including gangs in Fiji and al Qaeda cells in Indonesia.

Korean diplomat Kim Won Su briefed the officers on how Americans can better understand Asian sentiments toward U.S. policy in the region. The officers also visited the demilitarized zone. ■

The author is a vice consul in the U.S. Embassy in Seoul.

Junior officers get a dose of reality at South Korea's demilitarized zone.





Your Medical Clearance

By Kumiko Cross

It's early in the year, but now is the time for Foreign Service families to think about preparing for their onward assignments. Obtaining a medical clearance is essential. Valid for two years or until the end of a tour, a medical clearance is required of everyone in the Office of Medical Services program who will reside overseas. You do not need your orders to begin this process.

You have a choice of the traditional full physical exam or a streamlined approach that includes health maintenance specific for your age and personal health history. You and your health care provider will review your health to determine whether there are any concerns that might require further tests or treatment. Recommendations for additional tests may be made after discussions at post or after Medical Clearances reviews your file.

This streamlined medical clearance is available to all employees and eligible family members in all agencies regardless of age or previous medical clearance. The form may be used for any in-service clearance exam—except for pre-employment—for a new eligible family member or for separation.

Employees and eligible family members who choose to use the medical clearance update form may still want additional studies later to maintain their health. MED will continue to pay for these evaluations, from the medical clearance update form to home leave. Once home leave is complete and families are medically cleared and have returned to post, funding ceases.

Routine testing might include any examination or diagnostic testing normally done as part of the traditional complete history and physical exam, such as a Pap smear, mammogram, prostate screen, colon screen and other age-related routine tests. The post will authorize the examinations or tests.

This is a newly created position to help individuals who have almost completed their exams or updates in

one location and wish to complete their clearance exam in Washington. Your post health unit, Foreign Service health practitioner or regional medical officer can help prepare a cable requesting an appointment with a health promotion clinician. Those needing additional clinical procedures in Washington should bring all their documents including summaries of care and the health maintenance sheet received at post. The health promotion clinician will help you complete your exam or medical clearance form.

Employees need an updated medical clearance before beginning long-term language training. When assigned to language training, employees should update their medical clearances immediately after being officially notified of the assignment.

There are 10 ways to expedite your medical clearance:

- Contact your health care provider at post six months before departing to discuss your clearance exam.
- Sign and date the form.
- Give good contact information so, if necessary, you can be contacted.
- Attach any medical reports about conditions that require follow-up or for which you have been issued a Class 2 clearance.
- Have the examiner complete all the laboratory work required.
- Have the examiner attach all the laboratory results to the form.
- Keep a copy of your completed exam and give it to the health unit at your new post.
- Ensure that a copy of your completed exam is mailed in to the address on the form.
- Check with Medical Clearances to ensure that you are medically cleared for your onward overseas assignment.
- Use the opportunity to discuss your health maintenance with your provider.

All employees and their eligible family members must have an updated medical clearance before arriving at

their next post. Those currently serving in the United States who are seeking an overseas assignment should note that travel orders can not be issued unless the employee and all family members who will accompany the employee have current medical clearances.

The Department may withhold medical benefits from employees or their families who proceed to a foreign

posting without proper medical clearances. Clearances can be confirmed by contacting Medical Clearances by e-mail, MED Clearances Washington on the Department's global directory, or medclearances@state.gov. ■

The author is chief of Medical Clearances in the Office of Medical Services.

DNA Repository Program

MED began the DNA Repository Program in January 2002 for the purpose of collecting and preserving blood samples from mission employees. This is a voluntary program. The blood sample could be used for DNA analysis to identify human remains. The opportunity to have a sample of blood preserved for this purpose is offered to people coming to the exam clinic in MED for clearance physicals. Elsewhere, regional medical technologists collect blood samples at their home posts and train health unit staff on the collection process at their regional posts. Everyone is asked to either accept or decline the offer. Those who decline can choose to donate a sample the next time the offer is available. Bloodstain cards will be kept for 50 years unless the donor requests that the card be destroyed.

Accurate information is vital since these cards are used for identification purposes. Social security numbers of all eligible family members are needed on the bloodstain card. If you want a blood sample to be collected from your child, please bring your child's SSN. Please go to MED's web site, <http://med.state.gov>, for more information on the DNA Repository Program.



Stephen Buck observes as Madeleine Richardson, medical technologist, spots his blood on the filter paper to be preserved for DNA analysis.

Kelli Davis leads the Princess Club in an activity.



People Like You

Enriching the Lives of Children

"When you volunteer, you discover talents you never knew you had," says Kelli Davis, a secretary in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

She joined the booster club at her children's elementary school four years ago, and one of the club's officers asked if she would handle fund raising and planning for the chorus's trip to Italy. It was unlike anything she had ever done, but she gave it a try.

Since then, she has organized countless silent auctions, school fairs, cookie, doughnut and candy sales and planned successful trips of more than 100 parents and children to Italy, France and Spain. Ms. Davis is now president of the school's Parent Teacher Association and investing time and effort in other worthy projects at school and church.

"It's gratifying to see what happens to kids on these trips," she says. "Many have never traveled very far beyond their own neighborhoods.

When they go abroad, a whole new world opens up to them and they're changed for life."

Every Sunday evening, you can find Kelli Davis at the Woodlawn Baptist Church in Bowie, Md., leading the Princess Club. The club encourages girls ages 5 to 11 to gather back at church for arts, crafts and activities that build their self-confidence. Inspired by the theme of each session—snow or Valentine's Day, for example—they fashion artful gifts for their family members. The program has been so successful with the church's girl members that a group of men in the church has established a similar group for young boys.

Ms. Davis's older daughter, a Princess Club graduate, is now a bus captain, giving back to the church what she gained from participating in the club. She rides on one of the church's 11 school buses, monitoring younger passengers as the bus travels from Laurel to the District line picking up parishioners who need transportation to attend church.

"Volunteering and being active are contagious," Ms. Davis says. "I enjoy the company of the core group of people who work with me on these projects, especially those committed to enriching the lives of children."

—Dave Krecke



Ms. Davis pauses in the Department's cafeteria.

Photo by Dave Krecke

Photo courtesy of Kelli Davis

Core Precepts Guide Performance Process

By Dan Spikes

To the outsider, the procedures governing Foreign Service promotion and tenure may seem mysterious.

Even those intimately involved in the process agree that the system of performance evaluation for State Department Foreign Service employees is complicated. It involves a number of selection boards that make recommendations on tenure, promotion, low ranking and other decisions that affect not only employees as individuals but also the Foreign Service as an institution.

Although the criteria for tenure, promotion and low ranking are different, they do share one common element: the decision criteria for tenure and promotion in the Foreign Service, commonly known as the core precepts, that guide these different boards in their work.

As the 2002–2003 rating cycle draws to a close and reports are being prepared for the Office of Performance Evaluation, rating and reviewing officers should review the core precepts before they begin writing their sections of the employee evaluation report—or EER. The core precepts are available both on e-forms (DS-1829cp) and on the HR/PE Intranet site, under “Regulations.”

The core precepts describe six major competencies—leadership skills, managerial skills, interpersonal skills, communication and foreign language skills, intellectual skills and substantive knowledge. They are essential to a successful Foreign Service career.

Each of the six competencies includes four to six specific subcompetencies or skills. For example, the competency for leadership covers problem solving and decisionmaking, innovation, representational skills, openness to dissent and community service and institution building.

Each skill set is arranged as a grid with a brief description of the level of accomplishment expected from employees of junior, middle and senior rank. The skill levels are cumulative. Under the interpersonal skill of teamwork, for

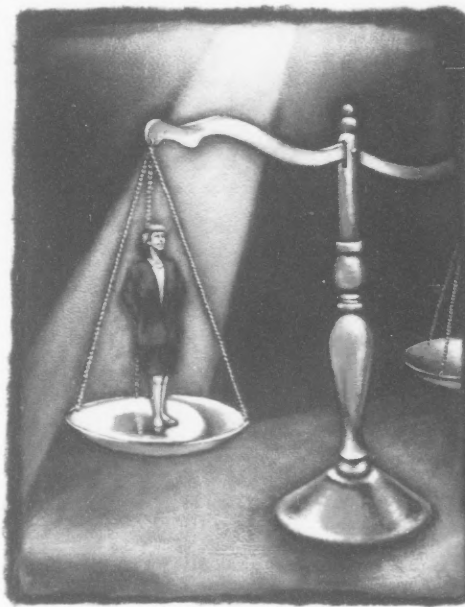
example, junior officers should be collaborative and productive team members; mid-level officers should be inclusive and supportive team leaders and senior officers should motivate teams under their direction and encourage the resolution of conflict through cooperation.

In effect, the core precepts elaborate on the six competencies that must be addressed in the section of the employee evaluation report entitled “Evaluation of Potential.” There is, of course, no requirement for every sub-competency to be mentioned, but board members and other readers expect to find each major competency addressed through specific examples of performance.

Recommendations for promotion essentially are based on demonstrated potential to serve well at the next level of responsibility. Recommendations for tenure are based on demonstrated potential to serve effectively through FS-01 (for generalists) or at higher levels in the appropriate occupational category (for specialists) over the

span of a normal career. Consequently, this section of the EER and the core precepts that inform it are important. Although not a requirement, the narratives in other EER sections will benefit from being prepared with the core precepts in mind.

The Office of Performance Evaluation prepares and issues the core precepts on a three-year cycle. Those now in effect for the 2002–2003, 2003–2004 and 2004–2005 rating cycles were prepared last year in consultation with the American Foreign Service Association. They were announced by cable and Department Notice (02 State 85291 and Department Notice of May 7, 2002). Although it does not differ radically from the earlier version, the current edition incorporates important changes and introduces new sections on leadership and management training and customer service and institution building. As always, new material is in italics. ■



James Wardell/Masterfile

The author works in the Office of Performance Evaluation.

APPOINTMENTS



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana. Joseph Huggins of Washington, D.C., a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana. Mr. Huggins was executive director of the Bureau of African Affairs from 2000 to 2002 and deputy executive director from 1998 to 2000. He was the administrative officer at the U.S. Embassy in Amman from 1993 to 1996. His other overseas assignments have included Moscow, Nairobi, Conakry and Lomé. He has served in Washington, D.C., in the Bureaus of Refugee Programs, Finance Management and Policy, and Administration. Mr. Huggins and his wife Margot Sullivan have two children.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. John F. Keane from New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. He directed the Office of Central American Affairs from 1998 to 2002 and was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassies in Venezuela from 1995 to 1998 and Guatemala from 1992 to 1995. Mr. Keane also served in Vietnam, Peru for two tours, Argentina, Chile and Brazil. In Washington, D.C., he was country director for Mexico and directed assignments for political officers in the Office of Career Development and Assignments. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Colombia from 1966 to 1968. Mr. Keane and his wife Graciela have two sons.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador. Kristie A. Kenney of Washington, D.C., a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador. She was senior adviser to the assistant secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement from 2001 to 2002 and executive secretary of the State Department from 1998 to 2001, when she led the Department's transition from the Clinton to the Bush Administrations. Ms. Kenney has served abroad in Geneva, Buenos Aires and Kingston. In Washington, D.C., she directed the Operations Center, served on a detail to the National Security Council staff

and as a political-military officer in the Office of NATO Affairs. Ms. Kenney is married to William R. Brownfield, a senior Foreign Service officer currently the U.S. Ambassador to Chile.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Niger. Gail Dennise Mathieu of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Niger. She was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Accra from 1999 to 2002. She served as deputy director of the Office of West African Affairs from 1997 to 1999 and as deputy director of Pacific Islands Affairs from 1995 to 1997. She was the U.S. observer to UNESCO in Paris and has held other assignments in Geneva, Jeddah, Paris, Port of Spain and Santo Domingo. She and her husband Erick have one son.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua. Barbara C. Moore of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua. She was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota from 1998 to 2002 and deputy director of USIA's Office of Inter-American Affairs in Washington, D.C., from 1997 to 1998. She was public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Santiago from 1993 to 1997 and has served two assignments in Caracas and one each in Toronto and Mexico City. Ms. Moore and her husband Spencer have one son.



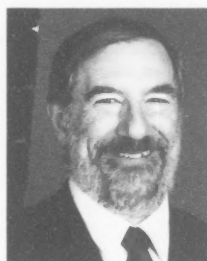
U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras. Larry L. Palmer of Georgia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras. He was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Quito from 2001 to 2002, a member of the Senior Seminar from 1998 to 1999 and the administrative officer at the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo from 1994 to 1998. He was personnel officer in Seoul from 1991 to 1994 and a Pearson Fellow at the University of Texas, El Paso, from 1989 to 1991. Mr. Palmer has also served in Freetown, Montevideo,

APPOINTMENTS

Asuncion and Santo Domingo. He was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1971 to 1973 in Liberia and later taught history there from 1974 to 1976 at Cuttington College. He and his wife Lucille have one son.



U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Charles A. Ray of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia. He was consul general at the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City and has served in Freetown, Chiang Mai, Guangzhou and Shenyang. Before joining the Department in 1982, Mr. Ray served for 20 years in the U.S. Army, retiring with the rank of major. He and his wife Myung Wook have four children.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. Richard A. Roth of Michigan, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. He was a special adviser to the assistant secretary for African Affairs from 2001 to 2002. In the fall of 2001, he served briefly as charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy

in Harare. Before that, he was principal deputy assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs from 2000 to 2001. Mr. Roth was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv from 1996 to 2000. Earlier, he directed the Office of Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs. He was deputy director of Southern African Affairs from 1990 to 1993, when the United States was leading peace negotiations to end conflicts in Angola and Mozambique. He has also served in Lisbon, Algiers, Johannesburg and Addis Ababa. He and his wife Carol have two sons.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Panama. Linda Ellen Watt of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Panama. She was foreign policy adviser at U.S. Southern Command from 2001 to 2002 and attended the Senior Seminar from 2000 to 2001.

From 1997 to 2000, she was deputy chief of mission in Santo Domingo. Ms. Watt was deputy executive director in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs from 1995 to 1997 and administrative officer at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 1993 to 1995. She has also served in Managua, London, San Jose, Quito and in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Ms. Watt and her husband Leo A. Duncan, a retired Foreign Service information management officer, have two children.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Foreign Service Retirements

Allen, James Beach	Holgate, Stephen
Aramayo, Susan B.	Jacobs, Mark T.
Barbour, Kirol R.	Jarvis, Richard Michael
Bickle, Lou H.	Johnson, Nancy Edith
Booth, Robert David	Johnson, Richard G.
Broderick, Amelia Fitzjohn	Kessler, Richard E.
Clark, Howard Dean	Krug, Frederic M.
Cronin, A. Patricia	Lee, David J.
Dimon, Judith K.	Lester, Cheryl S.
Ehrman, James J.	Loftus, Gerald J.
Elias, Patricia	Long, Marva L.
Eustis, Wallace James	Mayer, Margarete A.
Futch, Judith A.	McCarthy, Robert E.
Gibbs, Christiane S.	Moran, David Richard

Munshi, Kiki Skagen
Murphy, Sandra J.
Myrick, Bismarck
O'Brien, Evelyn M.
Patterson, Mildred Anne
Payne, Jeannette A.
Press, Evan Lee
Riordan, Jerris Kathleen
Smith, Paul R.
Vaccarino, Joseph C.
Valois, Denise Marie
Von Duerckheim, Marsha D.
Williams, Leonardo M.
Wood, Edwin J.

Civil Service Retirements

Blasenstein, Gerald	Pfeffer, Clarita C.
Foster, Jane H.	Porter, Ruth L.
Fuchs, Lydia Esther	Recachinas, George J.
Glover, Thomas E.	Shealey, Alvin R.
Jefferson, Charles James	Simmons, Gina Coleen
Khdair, Mafalda M.	Stebbins, Wade W.
Luk, Kam-Hung P.	Tandy Sr., Maurice J.
Neilson, Thomas S.	Velarde, Edilia E.

O B I T U A R I E S

Sturgis R. Carbin, 82, a retired Foreign Service officer, died July 12, 2002, in Cape Coral, Fla., from congestive heart failure. Mr. Carbin served as an education adviser in Vietnam and Indonesia before returning to Washington, D.C., where he retired in 1980.



Daniel Lee Fisher, 62, a retired Foreign Service communications specialist, died Jan. 8 at Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington from myasthenia gravis, an autoimmune disorder. Mr. Fisher's assignments took him to India, Pakistan, Belgium, Brazil and Taiwan. Before joining the State Department in 1965, he worked for the National

Science Foundation and the Federal Aviation Administration. An Air Force veteran, he retired in 1990 and worked as a consultant at State until last year.

Donna Gigliotti, a Civil Service employee, died Dec. 16 in Gibsonsia, Pa., following a long illness. A longtime Department employee, she had worked most recently for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Prior to that, she had worked for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and as deputy editor of *State Magazine* in what was then the Bureau of Personnel.

Pat Hughes, a retired State Department employee, died of cancer July 29, 2002, at her home in Washington, D.C. The widow of Foreign Service officer Paul Hughes Sr., Mrs. Hughes accompanied her husband on tours to London, Helsinki and Cape Town. Except for stints with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, she served most of her time in Washington, D.C., with the old Bureau of Personnel. She is the mother of former Foreign Service officer Paul Hughes Jr.

Margaret E. "Margie" Lampe, 78, wife of retired Foreign Service reserve officer Herbert R. Lampe, died June 30, 2002, of emphysema at a hospice in Port Orange, Fla., near Daytona Beach, their home. She lived with her husband in Bowie, Md., during his career with the Department's Office of Security (now the Bureau of Diplomatic Security) from 1952 to 1976. He had previously worked for the FBI and served with the U.S. Army in the Philippines. She is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



Aileen S. Miles, 87, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 14 of cancer at her home in Washington, D.C. The former U.S. Information Agency employee served in Germany, Italy, Austria and Afghanistan. She retired in 1976. As a reporter with the U.S. Army after World War II, she covered the Nuremberg trials.

In the Event of Death

Questions concerning deaths in service should be directed to the Employee Services Center, the Department's contact office for all deaths in service: Harry S Truman Building, Room 1252, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520-1252; (202) 647-3432; fax: (202) 647-1429; e-mail: EmployeeServicesCenter@state.gov.

Questions concerning the deaths of retired Foreign Service employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960, Retirement@state.gov.

Questions concerning the deaths of retired Civil Service employees should be directed to the Office of Personnel Management at (202) 606-0500, <http://www.opm.gov>.

IT'S THE SEASON FOR EMPLOYEE
EVALUATION REVIEWS, AND
THE RATING STATEMENTS
THAT MIGHT
BE GOOD...

"BOB WORKS LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS."

BOB, WHAT ARE
YOU DOING IN
THERE?!"

NONE OF
YOUR BUSINESS!



"I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYBODY WRITE
LIKE BOB..."

IS THIS MEMO
WRITTEN IN
CRAYON?

THE PICTURE ON THE
BOTTOM IS "BUFFY THE
VAMPIRE SLAYER!"



"BOB SPENDS EXTRA TIME HANDLING
CLASSIFIED MATERIAL..."

NO, I DIDN'T READ THE CABLE, BUT
I DID TURN IT INTO THE BEST DARN
AIRPLANE YOU'VE EVER
SEEN!



"SUPERVISING BOB HAS BEEN A UNIQUE
EXPERIENCE..."

BOB, COULD YOU PUT AWAY
YOUR STAR TREK GAMING
AND WORK
ON THAT
REPORT?

WHOA, SET
PHASERS TO
"FUN
ZAPPER!"



"WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'LL DO WHEN BOB
LEAVES THIS OFFICE..."



AGGIES 2003

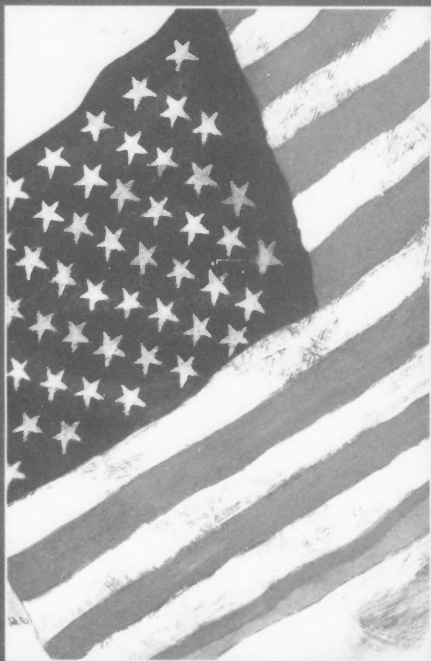
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