



APPRECIATION

Tributes to An Outstanding Diplomat Hume Alexander Horan 1934 – 2004

An *Appreciation* of the late Amb. Hume Horan, who died July 22, appeared in the September issue of the Journal. In response to an AFSANET message announcing Amb. Horan's passing, the Journal received so many tributes from friends and colleagues that we were unable to publish them all in September. Here are the balance.
— Susan Maitra, Senior Editor

A RARE COMMODITY

Mentors and cheerleaders are so important to a successful Foreign Service career. Truly outstanding mentors are a rare commodity. Hume Horan was a member of that elite and distinguished group. Hume's philosophy for selecting DCMs was to identify officers who were likely to achieve the rank of ambassador themselves. He sought out self-confident deputies. His track record in identifying such persons was phenomenal.

But Hume failed to appreciate that it was not so much his choice of deputies as it was his mentoring and nurturing that allowed them to move into ambassadorial positions. I had the privilege of serving as Hume's deputy in Yaoundé and Khartoum. I was one of the lucky beneficiaries of Hume's very personal ambassadorial training program. I am deeply indebted to Hume Horan's friendship and guidance.

David Shinn
Ambassador, retired
Washington, D.C.

A FIRST-RATE LEADER

Hume was a first-rate mentor and leader, and he extended these skills across two generations. In the 1980s, as the U.S. ambassador in Cameroon and Sudan, he mentored and taught my father — his DCM at both posts — the essence of being an ambassador. In 1993, he became my mentor. I was

a novice writer, free-lancing for a Washington state newspaper during a yearlong African journey. During an extended Christmas visit in Abidjan, where Hume was also ambassador, he coached me on how to tailor the travel articles, and edited the initial four or five stories. His advice and encouragement then, and periodic e-mails over the years, led me to more significant successes in the years that followed.

The last time I saw Hume and his wife Lori, he had invited my wife and me, and my parents, to their house in Georgetown. It was a special occasion. With characteristic enthusiasm for a profession he adored and epitomized, he toasted my recent success in the Foreign Service oral examinations. Cheers to the quintessential diplomat: Hume Horan.

Chris Shinn
Country Director
America-Mideast Educational and Training
Services, Inc.
Jerusalem

FRIENDLY AND UNPRETENTIOUS

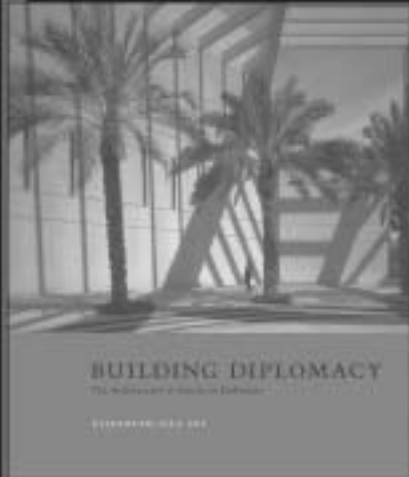
I only met Amb. Horan once, in the 1990s, at FSI. I think he spoke at one of my classes. Afterwards, in a cocky way, I went up and began speaking with him in Arabic. I was a JO and he was the ambassador mentioned in *The Arabists* as the model of success, but he was incredibly warm, friendly and unpretentious. I felt I was in the presence of a human being who had gone a long way toward being what God planned for him to be, and I won't forget him.

Craig White
Refugee Coordinator
Nairobi

AN UNCOMMON APPROACHABILITY

I never worked with or for Amb. Horan, but I did come to know him in the corridors of the Foreign Service Institute. I think that, in itself, says a lot about his approachability and

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winning personality. That a senior, experienced diplomat so easily developed friendly relationships with passers-by in the hallway, to the extent that we could have several in-depth conversations about the future of the department, is uncommon and underscores Amb. Horan's great dedication to all members of the Foreign Service. He will be missed.

*Benjamin Dille
Management Officer
Minsk, Belarus*

NO FOREIGNER SPOKE ARABIC SO FLUENTLY...

Hume Horan was the officer in charge of the branch office of the American Embassy in Baida, Libya, from 1964 to 1966. His principal function at this very small post was to maintain liaison with the members of the Libyan government, chiefly from the Foreign Office, who went to Baida whenever the king, who normally lived in Tobruk, was in residence. In that capacity, Hume had an excellent opportunity to use his Arabic skills and his knowledge of Arab culture.

One such opportunity occurred when the Libyan landlord from whom the embassy rented the small office and two or three other buildings suddenly demanded an increase in the rent the embassy paid to him. When Hume pointed out that the embassy had a lease that still had a long time to go and that the rent was set out in the lease, the Libyan landlord continued to insist on an increase.

Hume went to the Foreign Office official in Baida with whom he usually dealt and told him why the United States could not agree to breaking the lease. The Libyan official, clearly unhappy, pointed out that Baida had practically no surplus housing and that the pressure was on everybody to pay more. He also noted that the Libyan landlord was very well connected to a local family and tribal society. The Libyan official wondered what Hume

expected him to do. He had no ideas himself.

All this conversation was in Arabic. Hume suggested to the Libyan official that the United States would be willing to consider an increase in the rent if the rents of everyone else in Baida were also being increased. To clinch his point, Hume noted, still in Arabic, that the Koran, after all, points out that "the sun shines for everybody."

The Libyan official smiled and said he would look into the matter further. Hume heard nothing more about a possible rent increase. Through his fluency in Arabic and his intimate knowledge of the Arabic culture, he had saved the American taxpayer money that he would otherwise probably have had to pay.

Later, after he had been assigned to the department as Libya desk officer, Hume accompanied the assistant secretary of the bureau on the latter's visit to Libya, which was part of a larger trip the officer was making to Africa. Hume served as the interpreter for the assistant secretary in the meetings with high-ranking Libyan officials, and, at times, seemed to be interpreting for the Libyans. After one such session that lasted over an hour, the Libyan foreign minister, who spoke perfect English, expressed his astonishment to an American who was present at Hume's fluency in Arabic. He said he had never heard any foreigner speak the language so perfectly, catching every nuance, and finding for his Arab listeners words that it would be very difficult to translate from English into Arabic.

*James J. Blake
Ambassador, retired
Washington, D.C.*

LASTING MEMORIES

I served with Amb. Horan in Cameroon as Peace Corps Director from 1979 to 1981. Although new to working with the Peace Corps, Amb. Horan adopted his own style of recog-

nizing the differences between volunteers and Foreign Service officers. He was always eager to visit volunteers, but learned to do so quietly. He even circumvented the regulation that excluded ambassadors from writing Peace Corps directors' efficiency reports. Instead, he wrote a long (and complimentary) open cable to the Peace Corps about my performance, a wonderful twist that certainly helped my later Foreign Service career.

But the most lasting and embarrassing memory was the discussion we had one day about security violations just before country team. As Amb. Horan entered the room, I was declaring that anyone who observed a "clean desk policy" clearly didn't have enough to do. My colleague poked me and said that the ambassador was famous for his clean desk. Never one to take himself too seriously, Amb. Horan laughed heartily when I apologized later. I will always remember the delight

that he and his wife took in the openness of Cameroon society, especially in contrast to the Saudi Arabia they had just left.

*Constance J. Freeman
FSO, retired
Regional Director, East
and Southern Africa
International
Development
Research Center
(Canada)
Nairobi, Kenya*

A JOY AND PRIVILEGE TO WORK WITH

I was saddened to hear about Amb. Horan's death.

I was his secretary in Jeddah, where the embassy was then located, from 1971 to 1972. Amb. Horan was the youngest DCM in the Foreign Service at the time. I was continually amazed by his intelligence, sense of humor, his interest in and concern for others, and his linguistic abilities. He

had not been at post very long, when one day I was away from my desk for a short while. I came back in and heard spoken Arabic coming from his office. I rushed in, worried that someone had come in to his office while I was away. I was amazed to see him leaning back in his chair with his feet on his desk chattering away in fluent Arabic. That was the beginning of my realization of how special he was. Over the years, we would occasionally run into each other in Washington and have lunch. He would always have news of those who were at post with us during that time. Such a memory he had!

I know you will receive many tributes to him, so I won't go into long stories about what a joy and privilege it was to work with him. He was a supreme example of an American diplomat. He is sorely missed already.

*Anna J. Thomas
Management Assistant
Embassy Ankara*

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A MAN COULD COUNT ON HIM

I met Mr. Horan for the first time in Cameroon in 1981, and I was impressed by his knowledge and integrity. He was a caring person and a gentleman. I haven't heard him speaking Arabic, but his friends told me he is fluent in that language. He was an outspoken person and a man could count on him.

*Bijan Yazdani
Certifying Officer
REDSO/RPMC/
Nairobi-Kenya*

A SUPERLATIVE INDIVIDUAL

I first met Hume in Baghdad in 1960, where we both were junior officers on the first year of our first tours with the Foreign Service, Hume with the embassy and I with USAID. He was a few years younger than I, a little shy and instantly likeable.

We inducted him into our weekly embassy/USAID/spook/attaché nickel-and-dime poker night. It didn't take him very long to learn the game, become very good at it, and usually get the best of the rest of us. Thus, he quickly upset our plans to fleece him every week. We just didn't get it. Here was a young man with a charming way about him, who was seemingly somewhat naive. Or so we very mistakenly thought! It was obvious early on that this young man was brilliant, and had a great career in the Foreign Service ahead of him.

Baghdad at that time was definitely a hardship post, and the personalities of everyone in the mission played a key part in maintaining the high morale we all enjoyed there. Hume and his wife, Nancy, were contributing factors leading to that result. In fact, I believed at the time that if the Foreign Service was going to be as great an experience as it was during that tour, it had to be the most satisfying career one could have. And

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that, indeed, has proved true.

Later in Hume's career, when he was the ambassador to Cameroon, I was the USAID desk officer. When I visited Yaoundé on TDY, he most kindly arranged a party in my honor, which mightily impressed the USAID/Cameroon staff. But that was typical of Hume: a spontaneous kindness.

It's not usual to meet a large number of superlative people on life's path. Hume was one of those people. I was very glad to have known him, and my wife Sheila and I are very sorry that his life was cut short.

*William H. Faulkner
USAID FSO, retired
Falls Church, Va.*

WHAT AN AMAZING GUY!

As Hume's former colleague during his two tours as diplomat-in-residence at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, I recall with delight the many hours in which he shared his apparently infinite knowledge on subjects both esoteric and mundane. Best of all, he called upon me to assist in publishing *To the Happy Few: A Story of Death, Love, and Loss in the Sudan*, the novel he completed after returning from his mission as ambassador in Abidjan. We had a fantastic time during the long editorial process that included long digressions on anything and everything related (or unrelated) to this valentine to the Foreign Service.

The book's hero was the DCM in Khartoum, a dashing former Marine, whose daring adventures included life-threatening encounters with Islamist extremists, a sizzling but agonizing romantic dilemma, and thinly-veiled portrayals of classic Foreign Service types to cheer or hiss or chuckle over. We published the novel with Electric City Press, and launched it at the Foreign Service Club in October 1996. When Hume moved abroad a few years later, he donated most of his supply of the book to the Association for

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*Margery Thompson
Association for
Diplomatic Studies
and Training
Washington, D.C.*

A GREAT GENTLEMAN

I was privileged to know Amb. Horan in Yaoundé. I was working as a rover in the communications (now information management) section. We quickly found common ground in our interest in the Middle East. His experiences there had left him with a great respect for the culture of that area. I enjoyed the times we had to talk of the area and people. He, his wife and family showed such grand

hospitality to all — even TDY personnel. During one of my six or so visits, I received word of a promotion. Amb. Horan took time from his busy schedule to not only write me a letter of congratulation, but to include a postscript in Arabic, which has made it an even more special memento of that time. Many years later, while visiting Washington from Damascus, I ran into Amb. Horan. He immediately recognized me, and took time for a short discussion on current events and their possible ramifications. He was a great gentleman, who will certainly be missed by all who knew him.

*Judy Chidester
FS (IM), retired
Las Cruces, New Mexico*

SUPPORT FOR CONSULAR OFFICERS

Ambassador (then-Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Consular Affairs) Hume Horan was

always known to be highly supportive of consular officers — and I am sure of many of his subordinates — working in the field.

I'll never forget the short cable he sent to me personally in the late 1970s on my detailed reporting from Montevideo on the arrest — and the prospective legal process regarding that arrest — of the chairman of the Ford Motor Company in Uruguay. That he took the time to focus on an individual consular officer's work (although I am sure he had received quite a number of calls from Ford in Michigan about the case), and to praise my efforts, was evidence of a genuine concern and appreciation of the work consular officers do on a daily basis. (I also had the chance to meet with him upon my return to Washington and talk about the case.)

*Richard P. Livingston
FSO
Washington, D.C. ■*

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