

> PART I

> Name of Nominees: Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn (DOS FE-MC)
> DCM Carol A. Rodley (DOS FE-OC)

> PART II

> Name of Nominator: Chanh T. Nguyen (DOS FP-02)
> Supervisory General Services Officer
> Worked for Ambassador Quinn and DCM Rodley in
> Phnom Penh, Cambodia
> from November 1997 through October 1999.

> This nomination are also endorsed by Sr. POL Robert Underwood and AID
> Director William Pearson

> PART III

> Justification for Nomination:

> Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn [FE-MC] and DCM Carol A. Rodley [FE-OC]
> are jointly nominated for the AFSA Christian A. Herter Award for their
> courage, intellectual integrity and constructive but persistent dissent
> which eventually succeeded in reversing the Department's decision to have
> Embassy Phnom Penh remain in what they considered an indefensible
> compound,
> extremely vulnerable to terrorist attack.

> Thanks to Ambassador Quinn and DCM Rodley's intractable opposition,
> the Department's plans to construct a new structure on this badly exposed
> site were eventually cancelled, and an urgent search for a new location
> for
> diplomatic operations in Cambodia was initiated. It is clear, however,
> that
> without their steadfast and unyielding stance on this matter, a plan would
> have proceeded to spend millions of dollars on a structure that, when
> completed, would still have been unable to withstand a terrorist car bomb
> attack. In addition to their leadership on this issue affecting the
> security of all employees at the embassy, Amb. Quinn and Ms. Rodley have
> also displayed great personal courage in dangerous and violent situations
> affecting the lives and well being of other Americans and Cambodian human
> rights activists, making them even more worthy of receiving this joint
> recognition and honor.

Even before the bombing of the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania,
Ambassador Quinn and DCM Rodley had advised the Department of the gross
inadequacies of the Embassy Phnom Penh compound, which sits in the middle
of
the city fronting on busy streets and affording virtually no set back.
This

exposed location put embassy employees in highly vulnerable circumstances
during the more than 50 demonstrations that took place at the embassy over
the past several years, as well as during the brief civil war that erupted
and which engulfed the compound. On numerous occasions during
demonstrations, gunfire broke out right outside the compound walls and
bullets cracked over the top of the compound causing the staff to dive for
cover. Several persons were shot dead or were seriously wounded at the
foot
of the embassy wall less than 25 feet from the desks of American staff
members. On one occasion during the renewed civil war, tank fire was so
close and intense that the chancery building shook violently and the
compound had to be evacuated under
duress. At that time Amb. Quinn remained with just a few staff members to
continue to assist hundreds of trapped American citizens who relied on the
ambassy radio net as their lifeline.

The tragic terrorist attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salam only

emphasized the untenable nature of the Embassy Phnom Penh compound. With the setback and buildings so poorly constructed that experts assessed that there would be massive casualties in a Nairobi-type attack, Amb. Quinn and DCM Rodley urged the immediate relocation of the embassy. As one of their messages put it, the facility was Kobar Towers waiting to happen. The Department's response, however, was to again reject the mission's proposal to relocate to a new interim site and instead to continue with plans to build a new four million dollar addition to the existing flimsy structures, thus almost certainly ensuring that the embassy would remain at its present location for another ten years or more. The Ambassador and DCM again sent in a reclama noting that blast experts still posited the same near 100% casualties even after /after the new construction, but they were told that the decision to build had been taken on the seventh floor and there could be no more appeals. The new construction would go forward with or without their concurrence.

At this point, the Ambassador and DCM realized they had but one choice if they were not prepared to go along with the department's plans,--- they would have to refuse to implement their instructions. The next morning in a very emotional meeting, the Ambassador told the assembled American staff that he could never do anything that would knowingly place his employees in greater jeopardy. Therefore, following a long night of introspection and with the clear understanding that it could adversely affect his career, he felt he had no choice but to refuse to implement the Department's orders. The DCM stated her full support of the Ambassador's actions. They received great applause from the staff, many of whom felt very threatened by the embassy's exposed location. The Ambassador and the DCM were embraced by many employees with tears in their eyes at the meeting's end. That afternoon the Ambassador sent a message in a restricted channel advising that he would not permit any construction to begin as long as he remained in charge of the post.

At this time, however, it was expected that the Ambassador would shortly leave the post as his three years were coming to a close and his successor was already nominated. It therefore seemed that his opposition would be short lived and thus potentially not very effective. DCM Rodley's involvement, therefore, became crucial to the possible success of any effort to convince the Department to change its plans. Therefore, despite being counseled by Ambassador Quinn about the potential adverse consequences involved, Ms. Rodley sent a similar but separate personal cable advising the senior leadership of the Department that at such time that the Ambassador might leave, she too would refuse to carry out the Department's orders to allow construction to proceed. Given the fact that she was a more junior officer with much of her career still ahead, this was an act of profound courage and utmost integrity. The embassy staff and particularly the junior and mid grade officers were greatly moved that Ms. Rodley would put her career at such considerable risk. Given that she had so much to lose, it was felt that her actions demonstrated her commitment to her employees, as well as the genuine partnership she and Ambassador Quinn had in running the embassy.

The strength of conviction contained in their two messages had an immediate effect. Prior to that time Embassy Phnom Penh was not even scheduled to have a visit from one of the emergency assessment teams being sent to those posts considered high risk following the Africa bombings. As a result of the Ambassador and DCM's urging, Cambodia was now added to

and a visit took place. That ESAT team confirmed the post's assessment that its compound was extremely vulnerable and recommended that operations be transferred to an interim site which the post had identified. Despite this new input, the Department did not act on the recommendation and continued to pursue the option to build at the present location. Ambassador Quinn, however, did not leave the post because of congressional inaction on his successor, and he and the DCM continued to press their case.

The DCM met with senior officials, including the head of FBO and Diplomatic Security, during a trip to Washington urging them to drop their plans to build on the old compound. The Ambassador followed this up a month later with approaches at the undersecretary level. Finally, he sent a personal message to the Secretary urging immediate action to relocate the post. All of this effort finally paid off when the Department cancelled its construction plans and began a search in earnest for a new site on which to build a new embassy as well as an interim location. It is absolutely clear that it was only Ambassador Quinn and DCM Rodley's implacable opposition and adamant refusal to give up that ultimately caused the Department to reverse its decision.

In addition to this exceptional effort, both the Ambassador and DCM Rodley have been recognized for their valorous actions in the face of violence and danger. The Ambassador received the Secretary's award for Heroism for his actions to protect American citizens while exposed to gunfire on two separate occasions during the factional fighting in Phnom Penh. DCM Rodley has been nominated for the same award by the East Asia Bureau for her leadership while serving as Charge in defending the chancery while it was being stormed by pro-Chinese demonstrators right after the Belgrade bombing incident. She has also been separately recognized for the personal risk she took to protect an endangered Cambodian human rights activist, whom she spirited into the chancery as police units were seeking to arrest him. In a similar previous incident, the police riddled an embassy car with rifle fire to prevent such an escape.

This may be one of the very few, or perhaps the only, senior embassy leadership team to ever have had both the Ambassador and DCM presented the Department's highest honor for personal valor and courage. It is for demonstrating this same measure of intellectual courage and their willingness to put their careers at risk in order to ensure their employees' safety from terrorism, that they now deserve to jointly receive the AFSA Christian Herter Award.