

FIRST PLACEMENT REPORT

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The Diplomatic Fellowship to the Department of State offered several challenging potential positions. Of the many available, the one I selected was the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States (OAS), within the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs,

Through the U.S. Mission, I have been “seconded” (i.e., loaned) to the OAS for the Fellowship year. The specific position is: Senior Advisor to the Executive Secretary of CITEL, the InterAmerican Telecommunications Commission, which is part of the OAS.

My initial activities are threefold: (1) Consolidating government and industry contributions for the CITEL Strategic Plan, which addresses the future emphasis of the organization for the Western Hemisphere/Latin American/Caribbean countries and Industry Members of CITEL, (2) Contributing to the Advisory Board of the Engineering for the Americas Program (EftA) to develop accredited engineering curricula in Latin American and Caribbean countries to enhance the countries’ competitiveness and innovation, and (3) Working as a member of the Haiti Task Force (CITEL/OAS/FCC) to provide technical assistance and coordination for restoring telecommunications facilities and services in Haiti. This last activity is the one currently in the forefront.

This position and set of assignments was chosen because it most closely matches my background and interests, necessities for my making the maximum contribution through the Fellowship. My relevant experience includes: extensive worldwide – particularly Latin American/Caribbean – telecommunications activities; consulting to multinational, multilateral organizations; prior government service (Executive Office of the President); graduate school teaching (engineering and economics) and lecturing at the InterAmerican Defense College.

The placement process was difficult, but clearly not insurmountable. The major issue was coordination required between two immense bureaucracies.

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