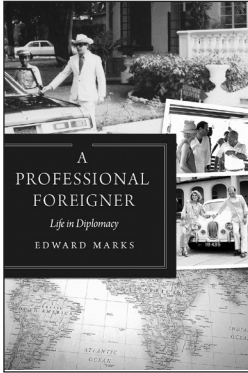


# Book Review



## **A Professional Foreigner: Life in Diplomacy**

**by Edward Marks**

Potomac Books, University of Nebraska Press, 2023, 304 pp.

**Reviewed by Col. Robert R. Ulin, U.S. Army, Ret.**

*Director, Simons Center for Ethical Leadership and Interagency Cooperation*

Edward Marks has written a very interesting and highly readable memoir about his life in the U.S. Foreign Service. He had multiple tours of duty throughout Africa (Kenya, Zambia, Zaire, Angola, Cape Verde, and Guinea-Bissau) during the period of decolonization. He had a front row seat as an observer of transition during the transition to independence for many of these countries. His explanations of the events and the many characters he encountered make for a very interesting read.

He also had some obligatory assignments at the State Department in Washington, D.C., and an interesting stint with the United Nations in New York. Having served in many areas with the military, Ambassador Marks shares his observations about working with the military and their differences in style and substance - State is from Venus, Defense is from Mars.

This book is beautifully written and not laden with diplo-speak. His prose style paints a vivid picture of life as a diplomat, and the patient and deliberate method of diplomacy that is both settling and reassuring. He takes us back to a time when African colonies were exercising their newfound rights and struggling with the transition to independence. The portrait Ambassador Marks paints of African leaders adjusting to the new realities of independence is both interesting and informative. He regrets he didn't serve in any countries experiencing revolution or upheaval, either arriving before or after such events.

He looks back at the period from the 1950s to the end of the Cold war as the "Golden Age of American Diplomacy" where the policy of containment provided the framework for American diplomacy and the professional Foreign Service of the United States flourished and contributed mightily to demise of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, bringing the Cold War to a close.

This book is for readers of history, diplomacy, and international relations. It is well written and engaging and is worthy of your time. **IAJ**