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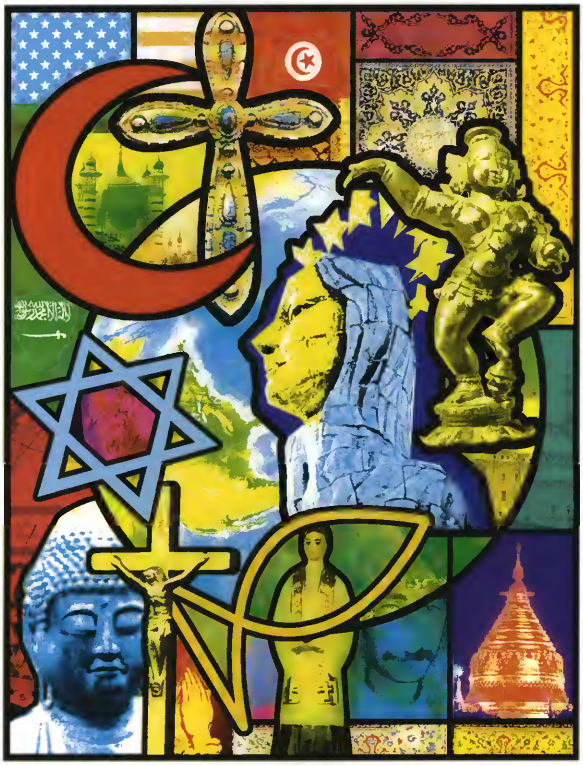
Foreign Service Journal

The Magazine For Foreign Affairs Professionals



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President's Views

State and Congress: An Up-Hill Battle?

By Marshall P. Adair

We are beginning a new year and a new administration with a closely divided government. Scholars of American democracy have long argued that bipartisan cooperation is important to effective government. The most recent election has made it an absolute necessity. Nowhere is the need so pressing or the opportunity so great as in the conduct of America's foreign relations. Perhaps there is an opportunity for the next secretary of State to promote cooperation by overhauling State's congressional relations.

American diplomacy relies on Congress for advice and consent for senior appointments, appropriations for logistical support, and support for policy continuity. Nevertheless, neither the Department of State nor the Foreign Service has taken congressional relations sufficiently seriously for generations. Members of Congress and their staff complain that State's congressional relations are among the worst of any executive branch department. One senior adviser has suggested State treat Congress as a foreign government, since that at least would raise the priority and bring State's diplomatic talents to bear.

At a recent conference, former Defense Secretary (and FSO) Frank Carlucci recommended State adopt DOD's activist approach. He is right. For more than a decade now State has actually discouraged contacts with Congress that are not strictly monitored by the Congressional Relations Bureau (H). The next secretary of State should establish dynamic relations with Congress as a responsibility for all offices of the department, and rely on service discipline rather than H escorts to toe the policy line. Liaison offices in both houses of Congress, staffed by both Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals, should be established immediately. State needs to initiate outreach to meet the needs of members rather than waiting for their requests or our crises.

The next secretary should establish dynamic relations with Congress.

The purpose of H should be to promote the department and the administration's foreign policy requirements to the Congress. That argues for an assistant secretary who is not just a congressional expert, but a foreign affairs professional. Within the department, H should provide regular briefings on congressional dynamics and the department's agenda; and FSI should include a two-week course on dealing with Congress as part of its standard career development training.

The department has an available resource, the Pearson program, which it should use and double in size to ensure Foreign Service officers are available to advise members and committees. It should place these FSOs in key offices, and then work with them. Currently, no one but AFSA seeks them out. Human Resources and AFSA might work to include congressional experience in the promotion precepts to make the work more career-enhancing. A congressional exchange program should also be started to give selected congressional staff the opportunity to work in State offices and overseas posts.

The department should develop a proactive approach to congressional overseas travel, proposing and organizing travel for members of Congress to key areas, perhaps in coordination with DOD — rather than waiting for Congress to initiate the requests.

Public Affairs can help. Working with AFSA and Foreign Service retiree groups around the country, the department should undertake public affairs programs among the constituencies of members of Congress who deal with programs and resources important to American foreign affairs interests.

Does this require more resources? Yes. Should we wait? No. But, it is not all big stuff. A common complaint is the difficulty of keeping track of key officials because department telephone books are always two or more years old. If CIA can update public information on foreign officials every month, perhaps State could do the same for itself. ■

Marshall P. Adair is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

LETTERS

Merge Me with DOD

Not long ago I read testimonials from AFSA management celebrating its efforts to ensure the Foreign Service remained unaffected by alleged attempts to dilute entry requirements. Now AFSA's president is calling for a "re-Wristonization" of the Foreign Service, incorporating the entire Civil Service cadre of the department into a unified Foreign Service. I'm confused, AFSA — do we strengthen the Foreign Service, already seen by too many as simply a more cushy and elitist Civil Service organization, or simply swell the ranks of us soft cookie pushers with our Washington-bound brethren?

The idea of creating "tours" for Civil Service employees, who would then "bid" on jobs as Foreign Service personnel do, would not only destroy the continuity and Washington smarts of the Civil Service, but could bring the building to a screeching halt as job turnover, assignment gaps, arrivals and departures flood an already struggling bureaucracy with even more work and uncertainty.

I'd rather the Foreign Service be merged with the Department of Defense, rather than the Civil Service. After all, the lifestyle (and increasingly, the risks) and rank structure are more akin to that organization. Perhaps then we'd get the funds we need for embassy security and infrastructure upgrades, too.

David M. Birdsey
FSO, German Economic and Financial Affairs
Washington, D.C.

The Foreign Service Journal *welcomes your signed letters to the editor. Please mail letters to the* Journal, *2101 E St., NW, Washington, D.C., 20037; fax to (202) 338-8244; or send via e-mail to journal@afsa.org. Letters, which are subject to editing, should include full name, title and post, address and daytime telephone number.*

Tell the Other Side

One would hope the "Speaking Out" columns in the *Journal* would address major policy and organizational issues rather than use scarce space for a one-sided account of a single personnel problem, as in "The Mouse that Roared at AID" (November *FSJ*). Based on my own experience with AID and other bureaucracies, I would be very surprised if there were not another side — perhaps an equally convincing side — to this story.

No doubt legal restrictions would make it difficult for AID to respond fully to the accusations, but it would be fair to give AID an opportunity to respond.

Robert G. Huesmann
AID FSO, retired
Bethesda, Md.

Two AID Grievances

As a former grievant, I was disappointed in John Rosenberg's article, "The Mouse that Roared at USAID," for two reasons: It did not clearly define the role of USAID during the grievance process, and it did not clarify the objective of Helene Kaufman Rosenberg, the FSO whose case is the subject of the article. In my case, I had no choice but to file a grievance. I was desperate for agency protection from harassment and the only option available to federal employees, despite the professional perils, was to file a grievance. Had I had the option to retire like Kaufman

FICTION IN *FSJ*? IT'S YOUR CALL

For the past 10 years, the *Journal* has had a special summer issue featuring short stories — most of them written by members of the Foreign Service community. Aside from the occasional letter complaining that a story was too risqué, we have gotten little feedback from our readers on our fiction offerings.

The *Journal*'s Editorial Board is considering whether to continue this decade-long tradition, and would like your opinion: Thumbs up or thumbs down on the fiction issue? (You may sample the last three fiction issues on the *Journal*'s Web page, www.afsa.org/fsj/current.html.) Please send us your vote (and a comment if you like), and please include the words "fiction survey" in your e-mail subject line or on the envelope or fax. Our coordinates: journal@afsa.org; fax (202) 338-8244; Fiction Survey, FSJ, 2101 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

Rosenberg, I could have spared myself a lot of grief and anguish.

In January 1995, I became a whistleblower and was labeled a troublemaker. My credibility was taken from me and my career destroyed by agency indifference. I was isolated from substantive work in my field, costing me the ability to be competitive with FSO peers. Kaufman Rosenberg's battle with USAID appears to have become a fight to separate from the agency on her terms. My battle with USAID was a fight to salvage a career I loved.

Thanks to the *Journal*, my story was published (Speaking Out, *FSJ*, April 1997). After the *Journal* put the spotlight on USAID and me, the harassment stopped and I got my credibility back. Thanks to a small group of close friends and supportive colleagues, I was able to identify activities and TDY opportunities enabling me to reconstruct my career and solidify my résumé. In August 2000, I decided it was time to move on. I resigned from USAID as a Foreign Service contracting officer ready to explore new challenges, leaving the agency and feeling no regrets.

The grievance process for federal employees is a complex and an emotionally and financially draining experience. Federal agencies are institutions that, for good or ill, protect their interests at whatever cost to individual employees. One significant element of the problem is an inability of an agency's grievance system to differentiate between those employees who truly require assistance to resolve a legitimate personnel problem from those who abuse the grievance process for personal gain. Consequently, everyone is labeled a troublemaker. Absent a willingness of the institution to make drastic changes to the grievance process, count on more of the same.

Linda D. Whitlock-Brown
Former USAID FSO
Arlington, Va.

What Are We Securing?

The State Department's current security-hysteria raises some important questions: What is our exposure, what threats do we face, and how does our response affect our broader mission as representatives of the U.S.?

First, the physical security of our establishments is a top priority. After Beirut, Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, we have to do more to keep our overseas people, Americans and FSNs, safe. However, at one high-risk overseas post, the U.S. has opted for the appearance of security and not the substance. At this post, local security guards carefully check all vehicles before they are allowed to approach or drive past the chancery — all vehicles except those bearing local government plates. These cars and trucks are simply waved through the barriers without delay. Might an observant terrorist see a pattern and profit by it? People at this post think a lot about this loophole.

A second question is, what are we keeping safe? The main purpose of classification is to protect sources and assure the privacy of in-house discussions. The content of most classified materials is actually pretty small potatoes. Only in the rarest instances is information sensitive in the way some new Microsoft launching, or the Federal Reserve's plans for an interest hike, would be.

A third and truly sensitive issue is whether the drive for more perfect security will actually make it harder for the service to do its job and promote the interests of the U.S. Why, for instance, should American citizens and others visiting embassies overseas have to pass through as many as six

levels of scrutiny before they can see a reporting officer? Many contacts are offended or frightened away — are they presumed to be kidnappers or assassins? How can our own reporting officers develop representational skills and local expertise from such a submarine-like vantage point?

Some might say that Diplomatic Security is seizing a ripe moment to increase its bureaucratic clout. Why, otherwise, adopt procedures now that were not in place during 40 years of U.S.-Soviet confrontation?

Security should help us to better accomplish our mission. These days, I believe, it sometimes gets in the way.

Hume Horan
Ambassador, retired
Washington, D.C.

Reinvent Clearance Process

During the reinventing government exercise, led by Vice President Al Gore, all employees were asked to make suggestions for improving efficiency. One of my suggestions was that any Foreign Service officer of grade FS-1 or above should have the authority to send any cable, including an ALDAC on any subject, without any clearance except that of his/her immediate superior. Between those two officers, there should be enough experience and judgment to determine if the cable needs additional clearances, and the consequences that might be expected should the cable give wrong or misleading instructions. Obviously, many cables would continue to have several dozen clearances, but if an officer were willing to stake his career that he knew what to send, then let him do so. Needless to say, my suggestion did not make it to the top ten list. I still think it deserves consideration.

James W. Carter
FSO, retired
Bryan, Texas

Pop Poli Sci?

Both articles on citizenship-loyalty (*FSJ*, October) had the folkloric tenor normally associated with a pop-sociology/pop-political science publication of an unaccredited graduate school or one of those fringe "think tanks" that populate Washington. At first glance, a reader could deduce that none of the writers a) had been in the Foreign Service and b) had taken Diplomatic History 101. Supposed dual-national, dual-citizenship cases have occurred since Roman times.

Let the first bomb fall, the high-security situation develop, and then see how many claim dual citizenship. Few consular officers can remember individuals proclaiming dual citizenship in a time of emergency evacuation. Rather, it's "Get me out! I'm an American citizen!"

William H. Lindsey, Jr.
FSO, retired
Wicomico Church, Va.

Too Actively Engaged

In his introduction to the congressional scorecard (*FSJ*, September), AFSA Congressional Affairs Director Ken Nakamura states that "AFSA believes the United States must be actively engaged in trying to shape world events." I am sure he did not mean it in this way, but "arrogance" and "imperialism" were the first two words that occurred to me.

Is there anyone else out there who shares my belief that our primary mission is to protect and promote the interests of the U.S. and its citizens abroad, while remaining understanding of diversity and tolerant of differing systems of governance save those generally held to be repugnant (e.g., those that practice or permit genocide or torture)? It was precisely our foolish activism in the past that shaped events, for example, in the Congo and Greece, with consequences that still haunt us.

This is not to suggest a passive or reactive policy around the globe. Of course we were obliged to raise Western Europe from the wreckage of World War II, and our failure to respond as a nation to the needs of those released from the Soviet yoke with equal foresight, energy and generosity was a major strategic error. But let us not make it our first order of business to shape world events. As a general rule, other societies are quite capable of looking after their own affairs.

Alan D. Berlind
FSO, retired
Couleuvre, France ■

Have a Bone to Pick?

Why not write a "Speaking Out" for the *Foreign Service Journal*?

"Speaking Out" is the *FSJ*'s op-ed section, the place where writers can express opinions on issues specific to the Foreign Service, its employees and its work.

Writers are encouraged to take strong stands, but all claims must be supported and documented. Length of submitted articles should be from 1,500 to 2,000 words.

CLIPPINGS

"That is the sort of thing you would expect from a banana republic and could leare America in chaos for weeks. ... The simplest thing might be for President Clinton to be asked to stay on for another four years. But the way things are in the States at the moment, the letter asking him to do that would probably get lost in the post."

—EDITORIAL IN THE DAILY MIRROR, BRITAIN, NOV. 9

BUDGET LOOKING UP FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Thanks to a large federal budget surplus, funding for U.S. foreign affairs agencies and programs — though still low in historic terms — looks better for fiscal 2001 than it has in years. On a number of budget items, Congress, reversing its usual pattern, has appropriated more than the Clinton administration requested.

As this issue went to press in early December, the Foreign Operations bill was fully enacted. The State Department appropriation figures, included in a separate bill, were largely worked out, but still awaited final passage by an unusual lame duck session of Congress.

Appropriations for USAID operating expenses were passed at $520 million, equal to the administration's budget request and also to the FY 2000 figure. The appropriation for international development aid of all types, including export aid, rose from $2,179 million to $2,625 million — more than the $2,565 million requested by the administration.

While not final, it appeared that the appropriation for the State Department would be $7,051 million, about 1 percent above the amount requested. Of that, $1,079 million is for Embassy Security Construction and Maintenance — slightly above the administration request. Congress was also on its way to providing more than requested on educational and cultural exchange programs.

The FY 2001 budget process was noteworthy in that it marked a decisive break with the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the entire process the Clinton administration and the Republican Congress hammered out in the 1990s for controlling the federal deficit. While Congress in the past two years has used various spending mechanisms to appropriate funds above its budget resolution, the fiscal 2001 budget is expected clearly to exceed the budget resolution of last April by more than $35 billion.

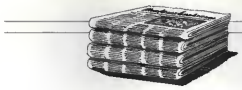
A EUROPEAN FOREIGN SERVICE?

Now that the European Union has appointed an official to help create a common European foreign and security policy, can an EU foreign service be far behind?

Last year, former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana was named Europe's "High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy." This year, the EU has started to consider whether to give this foreign policy chief a staff to represent European interests throughout the world.

In early September, the European Parliament approved plans to discuss the creation of a full-fledged foreign service with its own embassies, according to a Sept. 9 article by Ambrose Evan-Pritchard in London's *Daily Telegraph*. Under the plan, which is not binding, the British, French and German embassies would be merged, and the European Union would institute a system of coordinated representation in international bodies.

If the plan were implemented, it could mean that countries like Britain would lose their votes in the U.N. Security Council and on the boards of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Critics of the proposal,



CLIPPINGS

such as the British Tories, argue that "it's another building block in the construction of the European state. What they are really advocating is a European foreign office run by a single European foreign minister." However, a spokesman for the European Parliament countered that the EU was not talking about creating a foreign service that would replace national foreign services.

FUZZY MATH ON FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

Despite promises to the contrary, the new president is likely to preside over an increase in the size of government, says Brookings Institution scholar Paul C. Light in the October issue of *Government Executive*.

Since 1990, Civil Service jobs have decreased by more than 300,000 positions, from 2.17 million to 1.80 million in 1999. (Light lumps Foreign Service in with the Civil Service numbers.) But Light argues that the true count of federal employees should include military personnel, postal workers, and the contractor, grantee, and state and local government workers needed to fulfill federal mandates and programs. The true size of government, by this measure, is nearly 17 million — eight times larger than the Civil Service workforce. Using that broad number, total federal-related employment still shrank somewhat during the 1990s. Between 1996 and 1999, that number went from 17.2 million to 16.8 million employees.

Additionally, the end of the Cold War — not the Clinton administration — was responsible for most of the Civil Service decline, thanks to huge cuts at the Departments of Defense and Energy. "With the Cold War downsizing coming to a close, the true size of government will almost certainly grow," Light argues.

PARLIAMENT HILL TO BEVERLY HILLS

Now that Bill Clinton has some extra time on his hands, he may want to follow Kim Campbell's lead and take a consular post.

Campbell, who served as Canada's first female prime minister for 4½ months in 1993, recently finished a four-year stint as the Canadian consul general in Los Angeles. She's planning to remain in the U.S. indefinitely with her boyfriend, musician/actor Hershey Felder, according to the July 15 issue of *The Toronto Star*.

Campbell became prime minister in June of 1993, following a five-year rise through the ranks of Parliament as a Progressive Conservative. But she was forced to call an early election, and after a series of campaign errors the party crashed and burned on Oct. 25, 1993. Campbell lost her Vancouver primary district and resigned as Progressive Conservative leader six weeks later.

Three years later her former opponent, Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, named her to the Los Angeles consular post, which covers the Western United States.

Campbell leads the Council of Women World Leaders, composed of current and former female presidents and prime ministers, and recently co-chaired a meeting of female leaders during the United Nations millennium summit in October.

50 YEARS AGO

"The growing sense of community among the democratic nations and the importance of enlightened public opinion are among the factors which make present-day diplomacy different from the old."

—FSO RICHARD H. STEPHENS, "DEVELOPING AN AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC TRADITION," IN THE JANUARY 1951 FSJ

"It is not religion which has been the main formative influence in diplomatic theory; it is common sense."

—HAROLD NICOLSON

PENTAGON GAINS AT STATE'S EXPENSE

Experts agreed at a recent conference that the State Department has lost influence over foreign policy, and that the military is playing a bigger role in representing American interests overseas, reported Joel Melstad Nov. 14 on the Web site planetgov.com. Funding cuts have hurt State and given an edge to the better-financed Pentagon in making American foreign policy according to Richard Gardner, professor of law and international organization at Columbia University. He labeled the cuts at State "dramatic and dangerous."

At a November conference at George Washington University, former Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci explained that State needs to make major reforms before it can attract the funding it needs to play a larger role in foreign policy. State should embrace new technologies more quickly and restructure its management processes, he said.

Robert Gallucci, dean of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, argued that public perception of the State Department may contribute to State's diminished role. The public believes that "diplomats lack the street smarts or viciousness to be effective," he said.

The good news is that the military and the State Department often cooperate in making foreign policy. Lt. Gen. James Scott, director of the National Security Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, said that the military can help the State Department: "The senior military wants to be part of the national security team but does not want to displace the diplomatic corps' role. The most effective use of the military is to augment the diplomatic corps." ■

SPEAKING OUT

Smarter Recruiting: A Short-Timer's View

BY EMI LYNN YAMAUCHI

Last February, as a special project during my year with the Senior Seminar, I went on a recruiting trip for Human Resources. A colleague and I visited the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, Mills College and the University of Washington in Seattle.

As we (like our fellow recruiters) talked to prospective FSOs, we were mindful that the future of the Foreign Service depends more than ever before on our ability to attract and retain creative, hard-working and intelligent people of integrity with a strong commitment to public service. We also knew all too well that we are competing for this talent in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

My presentations at each institution ran approximately 40 minutes, with almost two hours left for questions and answers. (One-on-one sessions with students who requested them took at least another hour at each stop.) My closing remarks always highlighted the rewards of a Foreign Service life, but emphasized the need to have a strong commitment to public service. For a diplomatic career to be fulfilling, I noted, one must value the intangible rewards far more than the salary and perks.

During the Q & A sessions, most of the questions were substantive. Students sought detailed information about each of the cones, the policy-making process, the strictness of the hierarchy from ambassador on down, the bidding process, potential disciplinary actions, possible conflicts between personal values and stated policy, and the handling of dissent.

Do we need Asian-Americans to recruit other Asian-Americans?

The students seemed refreshingly realistic about the fact that few, if any, of them were likely to become ambassadors. Instead, their questions reflected their interest in finding the personal fulfillment that comes from a public service career. "What was your most rewarding experience?" "Can you really make a difference in the life of an individual?" "If you could do it all over again, would you still choose the Foreign Service as your career?"

Inquiries about starting salaries and benefits only came much later in the sessions. Even then, entry level pay of about $35,000 a year seemed reasonable to most students, though they were concerned about the availability of medical care, eldercare, and special education.

Lessons Learned

While my experience as a Senior Seminar recruiter was brief, I feel I did learn a number of lessons on my recruiting trip, as well as from comparing notes with colleagues:

• We should stop complaining that a red-hot economy steals the best and the brightest applicants away from the Foreign Service. Six-figure salaries, corporate perks and stock options are not luring them away, at least not based on what I heard and saw. Rather, many potential officers believe that the State Department is not seriously interested in their talents, has a user-unfriendly exam and hiring process, and in general, does not seem to value human resources. Now, some of us may shrug our shoulders and say, well, that's how it is in a real-life bureaucracy. But in the meantime, we are driving good candidates away.

• Once candidates do take the written exam, too often they receive impersonal letters of congratulations or rejection, can't get their phone calls returned, and detect a general hostility toward questions ("We'll decide what you need to know and when you need to know it"). It's no wonder so many potential officers assume that State is not really interested in employing them, so they pursue other opportunities.

• Finally, we should not assume that only members of a particular ethnic group can recruit other members of the same group. When I, as an American of Japanese descent, first indicated that I was interested in doing recruitment for my February special project, PER/REE's response was, "Great! We need to recruit more Asians!" This was said enthusiastically, as a simple statement of fact, with no racial or ethnic baggage attached. But frankly, I would like to think that I could recruit just about anybody who gives me a fair hearing on the Foreign

Service as a career — not just Asian-Americans.

A few weeks after that, I overheard two minority recruiters talking about the general lack of resources for recruitment, which was pitting minority against minority and geographic area against geographic area. The conclusion one frustrated recruiter reached was, "You just have to look out for your own, because nobody else is going to do it for you." Is this what it has come down to? Are resources so scarce for recruitment travel that each racial/ethnic group had better have its own personal recruiter in PER/REE or it won't get its share of the pie? Surely not.

Let me be clear: There is room for legitimate differences of opinion as to how to recruit minorities. But I come down on the side of not having each minority recruiting only — or even primarily — candidates with similar backgrounds. Such an approach is divisive and detrimental to the Foreign Service's esprit de corps.

In any case, the students I met welcomed the chance to meet a live Foreign Service officer — not someone sent specifically as a minority female or as part of a plan to recruit Asian-Americans. All they wanted was to talk to a friendly, honest and knowledgeable FSO who could present them with realistic expectations for a Foreign Service career.

Fixing the Problem

So how can we start to fix things? Let us assume, for discussion's sake, that the following assumptions hold:

- While State will receive roughly the same amount of funding as it does now for the next few years, it could (and should) decide to give a larger allocation to Human Resources, and a larger allocation within HR to the recruitment division.
- Those resources could, in turn, be increased or redistributed to provide for a larger number of FSO recruiters, particularly those at the 02 and 01 levels.
- The Foreign Service will continue to rely on a written examination offered only once a year for its initial screening of candidates.

Having made these assumptions, I believe the following recommendations make sense if the State Department wants to recruit the best possible candidates:

- Only enthusiastic current FSOs should be sent out as recruiters.
- Attracting such officers to the Board of Examiners and PER/REE should be a high priority in the assignment process. The director general of the Foreign Service could personally designate some 02, 01 and OC officers as "DG recruiters," or the runners-up for the Arnold Raphael Award (for the development, mentoring, and training of younger officers) could be "awarded" a one-week recruiting trip. That said, I do not think the prospect of a promotion or a good onward assignment should be used as bait to attract recruiters. Recruiting should be done for the good of the service, period.
- Mentoring should begin at the earliest possible stage — as soon as a candidate passes the written Foreign Service exam and indicates he/she plans to take the oral exam. Given the long timeline from that point to an actual job offer, assigning an enthusiastic FSO or recent retiree to stay in regular contact with applicants and cut red tape where appro-

priate might help us persuade talented candidates to see the selection process through.

• The State Department's Senior Seminar participants, as the next generation of leaders, should be doing their best to attract the next generation of "followers." Making recruiting trips a regular part of their February project month should be their contribution to the future Foreign Service.

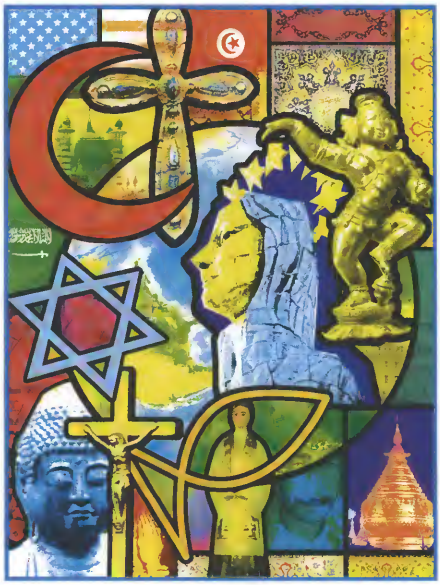
• PER/REE has a list of "targeted academic institutions" to which it gives priority.

Their selection is based on —but not limited to — student body demographics, school affiliation, competitiveness and reputation, and past performance by its students on the written exam. I suggest we aim for more geographic range, giving priority to demographics and performance over affiliation and reputation. If we do that, we could then cultivate a wider range of schools all across the country, particularly historically black colleges and universities, institutions affiliated with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and professional schools in international affairs.

Recruiting for Human Resources was a wonderful experience. It was rejuvenating and reinvigorating to meet so many people on university campuses who could contribute a great deal to the Foreign Service through their commitment to national interests and public service. In many cases, we are their first choice for a career. We should do better at deserving that honor. ■

Emi Yamauchi, an FSO since 1978, has served in Montevideo, Bogota, Johannesburg and Tokyo. She is currently studying Vietnamese at FSI in preparation for her assignment as consul general in Ho Chi Minh City this summer. The views expressed in this column are entirely her own.

THE HOLY REJECTIONISTS: EXTREMISTS AND NATIONALISTS



Ben Fishman

DIPLOMATS MUST BE AWARE THAT NOT ALL FUNDAMENTALISTS ARE ALIKE. NOR ARE THEY ALL HOSTILE TO U.S. INTERESTS.

BY R. SCOTT APPLEBY

The prominence of religious warriors and those who reject secularism in world affairs since the 1970s, and especially in the decade following the end of the Cold War, has led some commentators to denounce "the new tribalism," to predict "a clash of civilizations" in coming years, or to declare Islam the new enemy of the West, replacing the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union.

Such analysts point to the fact that radical Islam has come to power in Iran, Sudan and Afghanistan, and poses a serious threat to secular regimes in Egypt, Algeria and Pakistan; similarly, Hindu nationalism exerts considerable influence on the Indian state and its current policies. And they note with alarm that many other states around the world are also struggling — with varying degrees of success — to come to grips with the tenacious presence within

their borders of various brands of religious absolutism.

There can be little disagreement that, particularly in the states of the Middle East, religiously motivated actors on all sides are prominent among the uncompromising rejectionists who oppose all peace accords, negotiated settlements and power-sharing agreements. It is also undeniable that many states ruled in whole or part by a religious coalition are major violators of human rights and wagers of war. Human rights groups have long campaigned against the Arab-led Islamic government of Sudan, for example, accusing it of genocide because of its brutal repression of black African Sudanese southerners who are Christians or followers of traditional religions. And even in places like Indonesia, South Africa and Nigeria, where they are a small minority, religious extremists are grouped in cadres or militias dedicated to destabilizing religiously tolerant governments and harassing religious and ethnic minorities.

Nevertheless, the sweeping judgment that all "fundamentalists" are alike, and dangerous to American and Western interests, trades in hyperbole. First of all, tarring every religiously orthodox, literate, and committed believer with the pejorative label "fundamentalist" erases the enormous distance, for example, between ordinary, pious Muslims and bomb-throwing "Islamic terrorists." It also flies in the face of the fact that many pious Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Jews strenuously object to the implication that their extremist co-religionists, who are a minority in every religious tradition, are the only believers actually upholding or defending the basic tenets of the faith. And it also conveniently overlooks the fact that radical or extremist religious movements, even those rooted in transnational "world" religions such as Christianity or Islam, are inherently local in character, and incoherent as regional or global entities.

For all these reasons, religious extremism must be analyzed (and countered, where appropriate) not as a civilizational or transnational force, but on a case-by-case basis. And the framework for such analysis must rest on an understanding of the distinction between the two major forms of religious extremism: "fundamentalism" and "ethnoreligious nationalism."

The Fundamentals of Fundamentalism

Used properly, the term "fundamentalism" refers to an identifiable pattern of religious militance in which self-styled true believers attempt to arrest the erosion of religious identity by outsiders, fortify the borders of the religious community, and create viable alternatives to secular structures and processes. Their definition of "outsiders" tends to be elastic, frequently extending beyond missionaries of other faiths and foreign troops stationed on the country's sacred ground to Western businessmen, educational and social service volunteers, relief workers and professional international peacekeepers. In addition, the extremists count among their enemies their own co-religionists — fellow Muslims or Jews or Christians or Hindus — who advocate pluralism and tolerance, as well as government officials and those with no religious faith at all. In each of these categories, the religious extremists are the sworn enemies of pluralism, the legally protected co-existence of a variety of religious and secular practices and ways of life.

Fundamentalists perceive their opponents as either intentional or inadvertent agents of secularization, which they see as a process through which traditional religions and religious concerns are gradually relegated to the remote margins of society. There they can die a harmless death, eliminated by what the Iranian intellectual Jalal Al-e Ahmad called the "sweet, lethal poison" of "Westoxication."

Ideologically, fundamentalists see sacred truths as the foundation of all genuine knowledge, and religious values as the base and summit of morality — a trait they generally share with traditional believers. But fundamentalists emphasize that the world is divided into unambiguous realms of light and darkness peopled by the elect and reprobate, the pure and impure, the orthodox and the infidel. Many if not all fundamentalists further dramatize this Manichean worldview by setting it within an apocalyptic framework: the world is in spiritual crisis, perhaps near its end, when God will bring terrible judgment upon the children of darkness. When the children of light are depicted in such millenarian imaginings as the agents of this divine wrath, violent intolerance toward outsiders

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R. Scott Appleby is the John M. Regan, Jr. Director of the Kroc Institute at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. A professor of history, he is the author of The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation *(Rowman & Littlefield, 2000) and the co-editor of* The Fundamentalism Project, *a five-volume study of global religious resurgence published by The University of Chicago Press in 1994.*

appears justified on theological grounds. ("Apocalyptic," "millennialist" or "millenarian," terms most often associated with Christian fundamentalists, are technical and tradition-specific terms; a more inclusive way of describing this ideological trait is to say that fundamentalists tend to be "exceptionalists.")

Fundamentalists therefore believe themselves to be living in a special dispensation — an unusual, extraordinary time of crisis, danger, apocalyptic doom (the advent of the Messiah, the Second Coming of Christ, the return of the Hidden Imam, etc.) whose urgency requires true believers to depart from the general rule of the tradition.

Many pious people of all faiths strenuously object to the notion that fundamentalists are the only "true believers."

This provides an answer to the puzzling question: How does a religious tradition that normally preaches nothing but peace, compassion, forgiveness and tolerance, adopt the discourse of intolerance and violence? It does so in the belief that "these are not normal times." Thus, certain Zionist rabbis in Israel invoked the halakhic norm of pikuach nefesh in ruling that the Oslo accords threatened the very existence of Israel — and Judaism itself. This interpretation impelled several "yeshiva boys" to carry out the 1995 assassination of the "traitorous" prime minister Itzhak Rabin. Similarly, Ayatollah Khomeini made the extraordinary ruling that the survival of the Islamic Republic of Iran demanded that parts of the Islamic law putatively governing it were to be suspended in deference to the Supreme Jurist's (i.e., Khomeini's) own ad hoc rulings.

Organizationally, fundamentalist movements form around male charismatic or authoritarian leaders. The movements begin as local religious enclaves but become increasingly capable of international networking with like-minded groups from the same religious tradition. They usually recruit rank-and-file members from the general population, but they are often particularly successful in appealing to young, educated males who are unemployed or underemployed (and, in some cases, from the universities and the military). The movement imposes strict codes of personal discipline, dress, diet, and other markers that serve subtly or otherwise to set group members apart from others in the society.

The salient characteristic of fundamentalism, from the point of view of those who would understand its goals and patterns of activism, is its concern with religious erosion. Fundamentalist militancy borrows animus and attitudes from age-old religious orthodoxies; it is born and thrives within the context of the more widespread and diffuse social phenomenon known as a religious revival. And, like a cult or new religion, a fundamentalist movement may depend heavily on charismatic leadership and innovative religious practices. Drawing from all these religious streams, fundamentalism is identical to none of them. Rather, it is a distinctive religious phenomenon, shaped profoundly by the conservative religious encounter with secular modernity — and by the fateful decision, taken by the "angry religious conservatives" who became fundamentalists, to battle secular modernity on its own turf.

Practically, that decision meant that the weapons of the fundamentalists draw from radio, television, audiocassettes, faxes, the Internet, Stinger missiles, black markets, think tanks, paleontological "evidence" for the young earth theory, identity politics, and modern marketing techniques, to terrorist tactics — all turned to militant or extremist religious ends. Yet fundamentalists' organizational and ideological power remains rooted in the host religious tradition. This is the key to understanding the popular support of fundamentalists — and to contesting it, by lifting up and supporting alternative voices and leaders within the orthodox and conservative religious environments from which fundamentalists draw their recruits.

One important result of fundamentalism's commitment to the defense of religion and the consolidation of the host religion's political hegemony within the state is the relative weakness fundamentalists exhibit in the art of "nation-building" — bringing together into a viable political coalition the various groups and peoples living within the boundaries of a "nation." To put the point another way: fundamentalists as political actors are exceptionally vulnerable to fissure, fragmentation and political instability. They are faced with a serious dilemma: abandon the absolutism and exclusivism that inspired and fueled the movement in its formative phase and made it "funda-

mentalist," or relax religious and moral standards to allow for a broader coalition that enables effective governance.

Fundamentalist movements, as noted, include at their core activists who are literate in, and practitioners of, the host religious tradition. This inner core, peopled by religious "zealots," causes problems for fundamentalist governance of ethnically and/or religiously heterogeneous populations — that is, for the governance of most populations existing around the world in the 21st century. (Islam is the host religion of the majority of fundamentalist movements; as Iran, Sudan and Afghanistan demonstrate, religious zeal tends to inhibit effective "national" governance.)

Ethnoreligious Extremism

The other major expression of religious extremism, ethnoreligious nationalism, also fails to produce effective political leaders from the religious community, but for different reasons. In the case of ethnoreligious extremism, the religious component is often weak, underdeveloped, and dependent on secular nationalist politicians and parties. Rather than produce national political leaders of their own, these movements lend religious prestige to ethnic and nationalist leaders.

As the pattern of religious violence in Northern Ireland, India, or the former Yugoslavia makes clear, religious actors may identify their tradition so closely with the fate of a people or a nation that they perceive a threat to either as a threat to the sacred. While the primary focus of fundamentalist energies is the host religion, which they seek to defend, bolster, re-interpret, and revive, religious nationalists feel that the most direct route to purifying or strengthening the host religion is the establishment of a political collective within which the religion is privileged and its enemies disadvantaged.

The nation-building project of the post-colonial era provided opportunities for some communal groups in South Asia, for example, to monopolize the state apparatus and to dominate, incorporate or diminish other groups. Whether or not such discrimination had a religious basis, it has left the "losers" in this competition resentful of the post-independence secular order which has "cheated" them of their fair share of educational opportunities, capital assets, occupational training and jobs. They have typically reacted by forming coalitions binding together diverse racial, linguistic, class and territorial markers of identity.

Even in countries where religious differences have not traditionally been a major source of tension, appeals to true believers can be used to help solidify these political coalitions. In such cases, religion furnishes not only dedicated cadres of young extremists but also the public rituals and processions that bind religious and ethnonationalist sentiments together and become occasions for intolerance and arenas of collective violence.

Weak Religion, Strong Nationalism

The Hindutva — "Hindu-ness" — movement in India has configured itself as one such collective. Allied with secular politicians in the governing Bharatiya Janata Party, its goal is the creation of a representative structure resembling the secular nation-state but pursuing a policy of civic intolerance toward "outsiders" (i.e., non-Hindus). Yet as the host religion for the nationalist movement flying the saffron flag of Hindustan, the imaginary Hindu nation, Hinduism is a weak vessel for religious fundamentalism. It lacks a strong historical sense of itself as an organized religion, with a body of revealed religious law and a concept of God acting dramatically within history to bring it to a definitive conclusion. Perhaps for the same reasons, however, Hinduism does lend itself powerfully to the cause of nationalist movements constructed around the fluid categories of "religion" and "ethnicity" and drawing on a mix of secular and religious symbols and concepts, religious and nonreligious actors.

In fact, like "Hinduism" itself, Hindu nationalism is clearly a construct designed to challenge the secular, pluralist order in India. It has borrowed from the Abrahamic traditions both an eschatology of ultimate destiny (with the Hindu nation depicted as the realization of the mythical kingdom of the Lord Ram) and the notion of a righteous elect representing the Aryan race: the celibate and highly disciplined staff of the National Union of Volunteers (RSS) and the World Hindu Party (VHP), many of whom are Brahmins or members of other "twice-born" castes.

Sadly, the resulting inflammatory and diffuse appeals to "Hindu national pride" in the face of perceived Muslim encroachments have produced a great deal of uncontrolled mob violence. Hindu nationalists are not above calculating the potential advantages of such violence, including the opportunity a crisis situation presents for recruiting and mobilizing young men. They seek platforms for disseminating their ideology

and create "events" that publicize their cause. Characteristically, they redefine sacred land and sacred space in a controversial way, using the mass media coverage of their activism as a means of grabbing attention and mobilizing followers. For instance, the destruction in December 1992 by Hindu nationalists of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya followed a series of fiery speeches given by RSS leaders.

Seeds of Destruction

A similar dynamic shaped Serbian Orthodox extremists' alliance with Slobodan Milosevic in the run-up to the Bosnian War of 1991-1995. To admit that the Serbian president was not motivated by personal religious concerns, the professor of comparative religion Michael Sells argues, is not to say that the forces he unleashed were not deeply, even fanatically, religious. "The genocide in Bosnia was religiously motivated and religiously justified. Religious symbols, … myths of origin (pure Serb race), symbols of passion [the decapitation of Lazar, the Serbian leader at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, by the Turks], and eschatological longings [the resurrection of Lazar, who is memorialized by the Serbs as a Christ figure] were used by religious nationalists."

Yet while war in the former Yugoslavia featured a prominent religious element, this was a case not of fundamentalism, but of the manipulation of "folk religion" to construct ethnonational legitimations for violence. In fact, throughout the region's history, the patterns of religious interaction had often been humane and beneficial to all sides. Despite the wars and strife of the past, religious monuments and houses of worship had been built next to one another in places such as Mostar and Sarajevo. Thus, when the Serb and Croat armies systematically targeted libraries, museums, mosques and churches, they were destroying the evidence of 500 years of interreligious life in Bosnia.

There is a further irony here. The seeds of Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian religiosity were not stamped out under communist rule, even among the so-called secularized masses; but neither were they nurtured. Scattered

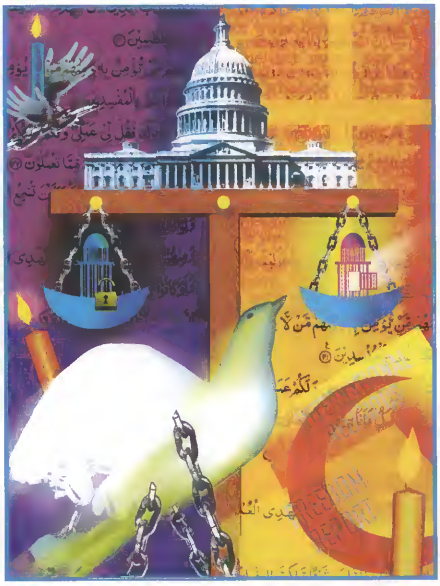
and left untended, they were eventually planted in the crude soil of ethnonationalism, ultimately coming to terrible fruition in the Bosnian genocide.

To evaluate such acts as being religious in motivation and character is not to deny the explanatory power of political and economic analyses. Nor is it to equate "genuine" religious behavior with moral atrocities. Still less is it to justify the acts in question by calling them religious. Unfortunately, the mystical power of the sacred — accessible to human beings through multivalent symbols, elastic myths, and ambiguous rituals; and conveyed through the imperfect channels of intellect, will, and emotion — does not come accompanied by a moral compass. For people who know firsthand what great good religion is capable of, the evidence of its culpability in forming attitudes that legitimated genocide is a hard truth to bear. "The human capacity for acknowledging religiously based evil is particularly tenuous," Michael Sells concludes.

If the United States is to respond wisely to the new prominence of religion and religious actors on the world scene, it must acknowledge not only the existence of religiously based evil, but its motivations, patterns and varying expressions. Religion is a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose political consequences range across the spectrum of possibilities. In several settings religion is a force for peace: Religiously motivated actors participate in nonviolent conflict resolution, defend threatened human rights, and oppose theological interpretations of their faith that would legitimate intolerance and revenge. Elsewhere, religion elevates folk practices and ethnic hatreds to the realm of the holy, enabling ultranationalists to lend their petty territorial and power grabs a sacred aura. In still other settings, fundamentalist religious leaders and followers strive to create an alternative political and cultural order, one that would honor their own narrow and anti-pluralist visions of the just society.

Knowing the differences between these various expressions of "political religion" and their respective resources, popular appeal and goals is essential for those who would understand and respond effectively to them. ■

THE JOY OF SECTS: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORTING



Ben Fishman

THE INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT IS NOW A FACT OF LIFE FOR STATE. IS IT HAVING AN IMPACT?

BY DAVID JONES

One of the basic rules of polite society in the West has long been to avoid public discussions of religion at the dinner table — a policy many advocate extending to public life. Such delicacy, intended to help prevent conversational sparks from leaping into flames, might appear unnecessary, even archaic, in a country like the U.S. But it has deep historical roots.

Mixing religion with foreign policy has often been catastrophic. The adherents of messianic religions, who believe they possess a truth that must be brought to others throughout the world, have all too often run headlong into other religious groups equally convinced they were encountering not truth but evil incarnate. The consequences usually have not been what Miss Manners would recommend.

For example, at their core most of the problems of the Middle East originate in ancient religious conflicts. Try some "iffy history." What if Islam had never arisen? Or suppose either that Christians had never launched the Crusades, or that they had succeeded (however one defines that term)? Or look at 17th century Europe, split between Protestant and Catholic countries; the desire either to protect one faith's members or subjugate another's spawned innumerable bloody conflicts like the Thirty Years War. Similarly, religion fueled much of the European impetus for exploration and colonization — the basis of the major powers' foreign policy between roughly the 15th and 20th centuries.

Thus, unless one is a Richelieu or a Mazarin, most diplomats prefer to keep the sacred and the secular apart. After all, diplomacy is the craft of the secular compromise; religion is the realm of uncompromising absolutes. A true believer cannot compromise with evil; if you represent such evil in his mind, he will die rather than negotiate with you. Thus, while the United States emphasizes its commitment to religious tolerance, we must recognize that to other nations our lack of commitment to a state religion illustrates societal sickness rather than strength.

It is within this complex tapestry, that — with considerable reluctance — the Department of State has moved into the realm of making annual judgments on the quality of religious freedom around the world. Yes, in case you missed it, the Department of State's Annual Report on International Religious Freedom entered the U.S. human rights aviary in September 1999, and the second edition of the IRF report was released this past September.

The IRF Report's Origins

Although there have always been human rights groups like Freedom House monitoring religious persecution (particularly of Christians) overseas, efforts to address the problem more systematically began to gain momentum when Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress in 1995.

Initially the Hill confined itself to joint, non-binding resolutions calling for religious freedom. But in 1997, Representative Frank Wolf, R-Va. and Senator Arlen Specter, R-Pa., introduced a bill that focused on responding to persecution of Christians, Tibetan Buddhists and Bahais with provisions for tough, automatic sanctions against persecutors. (Similarly, its reporting requirement only applied to significant violators.) As would prove to be even more true in the Senate, some representatives opposed applying the concept of automaticity — the immediate imposition of various sanctions against offending countries — to this issue. Consequently, Wolf added compromise language which permitted the president to avoid imposing sanctions by giving formal explanation of his grounds for waiving the requirement. Despite this concession, the bill struggled uphill throughout 1998, but thanks largely to strong support from evangelical groups, it finally passed the House late in the session.

The Senate was a different story. There was considerably less enthusiasm there for the stringent provisions of the Wolf-Specter bill: Some senators believed it was overly rigid in imposing sanctions against governments that violated their citizens' right to worship, while others feared it would recklessly complicate U.S. foreign policy. Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., in particular, already concerned about the requirement for automatic sanctions following the India-Pakistan nuclear tests, pushed for total removal of automaticity from Wolf-Specter.

Responding to these concerns, Senate staffers crafted a substitute bill which Sen. Don Nickles, R-Okla., presented. This version cited in its introductory commentary the persecution of Christians in China, Pakistan and Laos, as well as a draconian law that targeted some religious organizations in Russia. It also called for a comprehensive annual report and a wider, more nuanced range of possible reactions to findings of religious persecution. Even though the bill stripped out the automaticity language in the House version, Sen. Specter joined as a cosponsor following Foreign Relations Committee hearings. The Nickles-Specter bill passed in September 1998 and was returned to the House.

The disparities between the two bills were widely expected to scuttle the entire IRF exercise. Indeed, Wolf subsequently explained that while the Senate version could have been improved, in his view, it was clear that administration resistance was rising and there was literally no time for a House-Senate conference before Congress adjourned. Failure would have forced IRF advocates to start anew after the election, so Wolf elected to accept half a loaf. Following House passage of the Senate version by voice vote, President Clinton signed the International Religious Freedom Act bill into law on

David Jones, a retired senior Foreign Service officer, is a frequent contributor to the Journal.

Oct. 27, 1998, just before congressional adjournment for the elections.

As it emerged, the legislation: (a) created a requirement for an annual report addressing all religions, not just Christianity; b) specified designation of "countries of particular concern" (CPCs) and a hierarchy of sanctions against them; (c) established an ambassador for religious freedom within State with supporting staff and a special adviser for international religious freedom at the National Security Council; and (d) authorized a commission on international religious freedom to monitor religious freedom globally and advise Congress and the executive branch on how best to secure it.

That "Blankety-Blank" Report

Institutionally, the State Department fought the proposal for an annual IRF report tooth and nail from its inception. For her part, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was unenthusiastic about the reporting requirement, although she was careful to publicly endorse the principle underlying the legislative effort.

Much of State's opposition flowed from the simple fact that the imposition of yet another annual report would be a further drain on painfully sparse resources, and the fear that it would set a precedent for comparable single-issue reports on treatment of homosexuals, victimization of women, trafficking in persons, ad infinitum (although this dire prediction has not, so far, come to pass).

On a more philosophical level, State also was concerned that, by duplicating a major element of the long-standing annual Human Rights Report, the new report implied a hierarchy of human rights wherein religious freedom outranked, for example, the freedoms to change government; speak, publish and assemble without constraint; or to be secure from brutality by governing authorities.

State's hostility to the idea of an IRF report led it to bet, in effect, that the bill would die, so it did not include the new mandate in its 1999 master reporting plan. As a result, when the bill became law late in 1998, constructing

the initial report and disseminating intelligible instructions to posts became a frantic scramble by multiple actors with oft-competing agendas.

The department's long-standing bureaucratic concerns about the impact of the new mandate on its limited resources were even more prescient than it had feared: Because the initial report was due to Congress on Sept. 1, 1999, posts had to compile their input during the summer — exactly the period when many officers transfer and most posts already have to cope with staffing shortfalls. (By contrast, the annual human rights report is due each February and follows well-established parameters, lessening the burden on most participants.) As a result of this timing quirk, the work overseas usually fell to whoever was not leaving on a new assignment or on vacation. Back in Washington, the draft IRF report was often managed on country desks by a series of summer interns, not always with close supervision. The second edition a year later benefited from having a template to follow and "lessons learned," but the same inherent timing problem meant that it, too, frequently was addressed at the last minute by harried, relatively junior FSOs and energetic but untutored interns.

State fought the proposal for an annual IRF report tooth and nail from the start.

Substantively, the department's instructions had to go far beyond the (often perfunctory) commentary in the section on religious freedom in the annual human rights report in order to cope with obscure details that had been shoehorned into the International Religious Freedom Act. Were there government-sponsored ecumenical activities? Had there been forced religious conversion of minor U.S. citizens? What was the specific relationship between religion and the local government? And a key question: Exactly what actions had the U.S. government taken to promote religious freedom during the course of the year in particular states? That question initially stimulated some undiplomatic honesty, as several embassies actually reported that they had done nothing in regard to religious freedom during the year — because there was nothing to be done. Alarmed State Department officials quickly devised a stock phrase that U.S. diplomats "discuss religious freedom issues ... in the overall context of the promotion of human rights." Happily, no one was so foolishly honest on this score in the drafts for the 2000 report; instead, those drafts were full of reports of meetings with government officials and religious elements, demonstrating American diplomats' attention to duty.

Still, recipients of the department's instructions were often baffled by requirements which, if taken at face value, could have generated Ph.D. theses covering every aspect of a country's religious structures and practices. In fact, confusion was so rampant that on the day before it had to deliver the document to the Hill in 2000, State was still awaiting a response to questions posed on one country's initial draft. Nor did it help matters that the initial edition of the report had to cover events from January 1998 to June 1999.

Struggling valiantly to bring order out of chaos, the editing team put the jumble of embassy drafts into a coherent format, assuring that no "blanks" were unfilled while simultaneously beating back zealots arguing, for example, that various European countries were guilty of violations of religious freedom merely because their royal head of state had to belong to an officially established church. Curiously, the final 1999 product, a 471-page tome on 194 countries delivered in reader-unfriendly fine print, was available on the Internet immediately after its September release; but due to funding shortfalls, it was not published in hard copy until February 2000. The second edition, released this past September and covering events from July 1999 through June 2000 was even longer and more detailed. While it was immediately available on the Internet (at www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/drl_religion.html), it is still awaiting hard copy publication as of this writing.

Who's In Charge?

Coordination was a real concern from the very start of the process. Although the drafting, compilation and editing of individual country reports were performed under the overall authority of the assistant secretary for democracy, human rights and labor (the same bureau which oversees the annual human rights report), the ambassador for religious freedom was statutorily responsible for submitting the report and its executive summary. This dichotomy continued in 2000, though it is conceivable that the next administration might decide to save some money by folding the IRF operation into DRL.

It required a creative effort and a good deal of flexibil-

ity on all sides to fit the new ambassador for religious freedom and his support staff into State's human rights structure, which was already directed by an assistant secretary. Nevertheless, by most accounts, it has been a successful effort, even though Robert Seiple, the first ambassador-at-large for religious freedom — who departed this fall immediately after the release of the 2000 IRF report — was definitely not your average bureaucrat. A former Marine aviator who flew 300 combat missions in Vietnam, Seiple, a Republican (registered independent while heading the IRF effort), is described as an evangelical Christian. He directed World Vision, the world's largest private relief and development agency, for 11 years before coming to State. Dealing with a public rather than a private bureaucracy had its challenges for Seiple, beginning with learning the painful lesson that he could not simply "call the secretary" to resolve an issue.

In an interview, Seiple mused over State's bureaucracy, politely calling it "cautious" but noting that, while heading World Vision, he was perhaps unaffected by the bureaucracy because he was at its top. Nevertheless, he found that State was replete with individuals charged with saying "No" or "Not yet," although he noted that their negativity was "not personal." In the end, Seiple believed that eventually he got the money and personnel that he needed, albeit slowly and at the expense of others during a period of budget retrenchments.

Ambassador Seiple's support staff, now the Office of International Religious Freedom, is relatively small for an office charged with "strengthening United States advocacy on behalf of individuals persecuted in foreign countries on account of religion." Still a recent creation, it has concentrated its efforts on monitoring and improving reporting on religious freedom and devising démarches to pressure problem states for improvements. In fact, however, one official admitted that when it comes to actually advancing religious freedom, the U.S. "has barely crossed the starting line."

"Countries of Particular Concern"

What makes the IRF Act unique as a human rights document (and thus ultimately as a diplomatic matter) is its requirement to identify as "countries of particular concern" (CPCs) those states that have "engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom." Such a designation and other lesser violations of religious freedom open countries to a calibrated series of U.S. government actions ranging from a tap-on-the-wrist "private démarche" to a wide range of security, economic, financial and trade restrictions.

The initial exercise to identify CPCs generated a frustrating three-month-long bureaucratic slugfest. While to some officials, the IRF Act is a tightly written prescription for identifying countries of particular concern, others concluded it was loose enough to designate any country the U.S. wished to stigmatize. Although they were not cited in the initial IRF report, in October 1999 the department identified the usual suspects: Burma, China, Iran, Iraq and Sudan, along with the unrecognized governments of Serbia and Afghanistan. Yet the subsequent criticism was not of those selections, but rather of the countries omitted from the list; critics pointed out that a substantial number of additional states — e.g., Saudi Arabia, North Korea, Vietnam, Pakistan, India, Brunei, and Indonesia — arguably could qualify for the CPC label.

Nor was the follow-up satisfactory to many. Rather than imposing additional sanctions on the CPCs, as permitted under the IRF Act, State basically maintained existing sanctions imposed under other statutes, most notably the prohibition on selling Beijing various police and riot control equipment. As one skeptic commented, "All this has done is force the Chinese to buy their barbed wire and tear gas from the French." The frustration was particularly pointed when in May 2000, the administration endorsed permanent normal trade relations with China, paying only what critics regarded as lip service to sanctions on Beijing's violations of religious freedom and other human rights. Nor did the additional verbal criticism of China in the 2000 IRF report stimulate additional sanctions.

For Ambassador Seiple, identifying a CPC is a "public undressing" and an illustration of diplomatic failure. He views the IRF Act as designed to promote religious freedom rather than to punish wrongdoers and suggested that the U.S. needs to proceed with passion but also considerable humility. Expanding the CPC list should not be an exercise in "deified testosterone," but as a last resort to be employed very carefully, Seiple said.

The IRF Commission

Although designed to be both a goad and watchdog, the International Religious Freedom Commission got off to a slow start, and it was almost lost in the initial flurry of action. Created as a government-financed body, the com-

AFSA NEWS

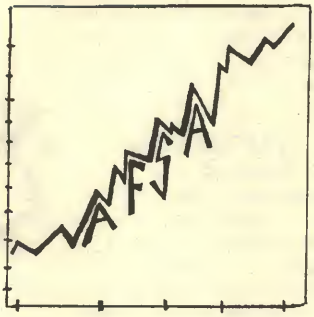
American Foreign Service Association • January 2001

SIGN ME UP

AFSA Membership on the Rise

AFSA membership is up, especially State AFSA membership. In spite of staffing cuts over the past dozen years that eliminated over 1,500 Foreign Service positions at the Department of State and approximately 800 at the Agency for International Development, total AFSA membership rose from 9,029 in January 1988 to 10,724 in Oct. 2000. During the last two years, State AFSA membership (not including

Continued on page 3



This Issue in Brief:

FROM THE RANKS

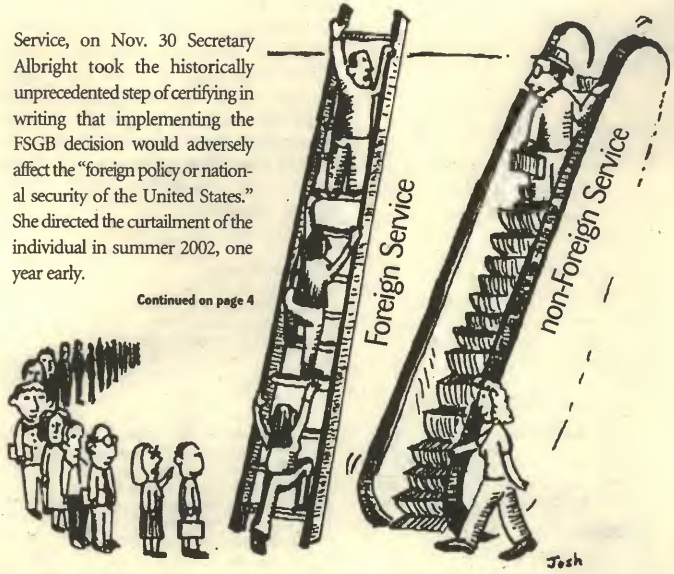
AFSA Members

An astounding 1375 e-mails and faxes poured in to AFSA responding to a call for members to voice their opinions and their "votes" for or against AFSA's position in the grievance case against the State Department for assigning a non-Foreign Service employee to a DCM position. Out of the 1375 responses, 1335 supported AFSA's position — 97 percent. Responses were received from members at almost every overseas mission, from every cone and specialty, and from all ranks.

AFSA asked for member input following the Oct. 31 final decision from the Foreign Service Grievance Board in favor of AFSA's position in the DCM case. The board recommended the DCM assignment be curtailed effective July 2001.

In spite of the strong support shown for AFSA's position from within the Foreign Service, on Nov. 30 Secretary Albright took the historically unprecedented step of certifying in writing that implementing the FSGB decision would adversely affect the "foreign policy or national security of the United States." She directed the curtailment of the individual in summer 2002, one year early.

Continued on page 4



AFSA NEWSBRIEF

AFSA Legislative Fund Drive

The AFSA Legislative Fund drive has raised $33,000, which still falls far short of our goal of $60,000. This is a disappointment for a year when AFSA was very active and effective on the Hill. It is not too late to contribute to the fund. A new year and a new administration will present many opportunities and challenges for the Foreign Service, and AFSA will be there fighting for you. We will need your support! Contributions can be sent to **AFSA Legislative Action Fund, P.O. Box 98026, Washington, DC 20090-8026.**

Reminder: AFSA Award Nominations

AFSA members: Nominations for AFSA awards are due in to AFSA by Feb. 9. Questions should be directed to Barbara Berger by e-mail to berger@afsa.org or phone (202) 338-4045.

Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad

Nominations Due by Feb. 1

The Secretary of State's Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad is an annual award sponsored by the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide, which honors outstanding volunteers who work tirelessly and often without recognition to improve the quality of life at posts abroad.

All U.S. government direct-hire employees and family members over 18 are eligible for the award. All overseas posts are encouraged to nominate one candidate for the award. Six awards are given each year, one for each geographic bureau.

For more information, contact AAFSW at 5125 MacArthur Blvd., N.W., Suite 36, Washington, DC 20016, attention: Claire Bogosian, or phone (202) 362-6514, fax (202) 362-6589, or e-mail: AAFSW@erols.com.

Time to Apply for AFSA Scholarships

AFSA college scholarship applications are due Feb. 5, 2001. Children of Foreign Service employees who are high school seniors or college undergraduates are eligible to apply for merit and financial aid scholarships for the 2001-2002 academic year. Applications and instructions can be printed from AFSA's web page at www.afsa.org. Click on the "students" tab and then on "scholarships." Call 202-944-5504 or e-mail dec@afsa.org for more information.

DACOR-sponsored Dreyfus Scholarships

There is still time for sons and daughters of Foreign Service employees to apply for Dreyfus scholarships and fellowships to study at the Hotchkiss School and Yale University for the 2001-2002 academic year. Applications are due March 15. For information on the Hotchkiss School scholarships contact the school directly at: The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT 06039-0800. For information on the Yale scholarships, contact the DACOR Bacon House Foundation, 1801 F St., N.W., Washington, DC 20006.

We Want to Know

What do you want to hear more about, or less about, in *AFSA News*? Let us know your ideas via e-mail to dorman@afsa.org, phone (202) 338-4045 ext. 503, fax (202) 338-8244, or mail to AFSA News, 2101 E St., N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

How to Contact us:

AFSA News Editor: Shawn Dorman
(202) 338-4045 x 503

Internet Addresses:
afsa@afsa.org (Association)
pres@afsa.org (President)
journal@afsa.org (FSJ)
afsanews@afsa.org (AFSA News)

AFSA Headquarters:
(202) 338-4045 FAX: (202) 338-6820

State Department Office:
(202) 647-8160 FAX: (202) 647-0265

USAID Office:
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Membership • Continued from page 1

new members moved over from USIA) jumped by over 700.

The State AFSA increase can be partly attributed to increased hiring of diplomatic security agents, the vast majority of whom have joined AFSA. In addition, AFSA's recruiting lunches over the past

> One new member explained, "I wanted to have an advocate if I run into trouble with the bureaucracy."

two years have been highly successful. During the early and mid-1990s, an average of only 30 to 40 percent of attendees at recruiting lunches signed up for AFSA membership. In contrast, 86 percent of those who attended recruiting lunches in 2000 signed up for AFSA membership. Speakers at the recruiting lunches try to focus on the specific interests of the attendees, whether they are DS agents or junior officer generalists.

AFSA's improved communication and activism may also be important factors in rising membership. State AFSA VP John Naland's weekly updates, which go out on AFSANET as e-mails, cover issues of direct concern to FS employees and keep members abreast of what AFSA is doing for them.

Naland believes that over the past couple years AFSA has become more willing to take on issues affecting all types of employees, focusing on "bread and butter" issues that have an impact on a greater proportion of FS employees. Labor management specialist James Yorke points out that AFSA may be attracting more members because, "people are less starry-eyed when they come in than in the past," and they realize they might need AFSA.

When asked why she joined AFSA, one new member explained, "I wanted to receive the *Journal* and have an advocate in D.C. if/when I run into trouble with the bureaucracy." □

V.P. VOICE: **STATE** ■ BY JOHN NALAND

Insecurity at State

With the title "Insecurity at State," this column could be about any number of things: assignments, promotions, benefits, etc. In fact, the insecurity to which I refer here concerns the physical security of our employees, facilities, and information.

AFSA has established a strong track record of urging proper attention to security at the State Department. For example, we played an important role in convincing Congress to increase the fiscal year 2000 appropriation for embassy security by $314 million. We actively supported efforts last summer to strengthen the personnel system's incentives to better security management.

However, because we strongly believe that information security is an essential component of successful diplomacy, we have criticized a number of recent State Department actions (or inactions) that appear to miss that goal.

> We continue to object strongly to the department's decision to bar unescorted Foreign Service retirees from Main State.

First, we continue to object strongly to the department's decision to bar unescorted Foreign Service retirees from Main State. After four months, we still have not received an adequate response to the fundamental question that AFSA President Marshall Adair first posed to Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security David Carpenter on July 20: How can the department exclude retired personnel, who have worked with classified material most of their lives, and continue to provide unescorted access to contract, cleaning, and catering personnel who have no clearances?

Second, we have urged the department to improve security awareness training. During the promotion freeze fiasco last September, the department identified eight out of 359 promotees as needing remedial security training. To avoid a repeat next year, we urged the department to review now the security incident records of all State permanent full-time American employees using the "DMV points system" that Director General Marc Grossman applied to the year 2000 promotees. Those employees who flunked that screening would then be scheduled for a DS information security course. With that training completed, there would be no need in the future for the department to temporarily pull names from promotion lists as was done this year.

Third, we continue to ask what steps, beyond paper ones, the department plans to take to improve security management at State. For example, where is the budget request to fund security upgrades at Main State such as dividing the building into classified and unclassified floors?

Finally, we are concerned that any new security policies be targeted at the actual problem, be proportionate, and be effective. In that regard, we note the fallout from the Los Alamos National Laboratory spy scandal last summer. According to a report by former senator Howard Baker and former representative Lee Hamilton, the new "zero tolerance" security policy at Los Alamos "is becoming a bigger threat to national security than the potential loss of secrets." President Clinton expressed similar concerns in November when he vetoed legislation that, for the first time, would have criminalized the disclosure of classified information in all circumstances.

AFSA looks forward to working with the new administration and Congress on improving security management. □

V.P. VOICE: ■ BY RETIREE REP. ROBERT LAMB

Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks. As I rapidly advance in the ranks of "old dogs," I can certainly identify with that. But there is an important exception. Retirees are more willing to consider new points of view. In part I attribute this to being out of Washington: There truly is a different perspective beyond the Beltway. In addition, perhaps as we get older we become less self-assured. Whatever the reasons, I would like to share with you an area in which my convictions have changed.

I've never been a big believer in labor unions. I have always thought them to be especially inappropriate for the Foreign Service. Our service has a culture of collegiality, with a strong sense of dedication to our country. We are not inclined toward confrontation with others either outside or inside the service.

Probably, in my case, it is also a function of experience. Most of my professional career was spent in management positions. I knew from first-hand experience that the Foreign Service managers were good and decent people who wanted to do the right thing for the Foreign Service and its employees.

AFSA Governing Board actions are measured against a very simple yardstick: Are they in the interest of the Foreign Service and its employees or not?

In fact, I ran for the AFSA Governing Board initially not because of any deep commitment to the organization or to the issues, but because Marshall Adair, an old colleague I respect greatly, asked me to run.

Now in my second year on the board, I have become firmly persuaded that AFSA is not only an important, but an essential, institution for the modern Foreign Service. Regrettably, our service is becoming more politicized. There is the unfortunate trend for patronage to be extended to lower and lower levels. We were recently informed that the current administration would like to try to abrogate a long-standing agreement with AFSA so that they can assign "whomever they want" to any management position. This of course would allow for the politicization of DCM positions among others, which we have been able to protect in the past.

At each AFSA Governing Board meeting, it is customary for Marshall Adair to review with the entire board a series of recent actions by management. These actions are measured against a very simple yardstick: Are they in the interest of the Foreign Service and its employees or not?

If any actions are not, we consider what the board should do to try to correct the situation. Incidentally, the answer to this question is not always easy. In recent times, security issues have been among the most complex. AFSA has taken the lead in promoting improved security for our employees and for classified information. We have agreed to tougher standards, recognizing that these may create difficulties for some employees. But AFSA has also played an important role in opposing arbitrariness in imposing these new standards.

While I have only touched on some of the issues that have come up at the board meetings, I hope you can see why this "old dog" has been converted to an AFSA supporter. □

DCM • Continued from page 1

Prior to the final decision, AFSA informed the secretary, the director general and other department officials of the "vote" count. Following are some representative comments sent in to AFSA by members.

• "To overrule the FSGB would be a serious blow to the service and make a mockery of the department's own 'War for Talent.'"

• "As a junior officer new to the Foreign Service, diminished opportunities are not what I signed up for. Having to endure a laughably bad administrative support system in Washington already makes working for the department a challenge. Should this appointment go through, the 'war for talent' will be over and State would have lost."

• "We can't take their (Civil Service) jobs without changing over, why should they get ours? Now is not the time to give officers who have worked hard and waited patiently to rise to policy and management positions yet one more reason to believe there's nothing worth sticking around for."

• "The department seems intent on further eroding the career prospects of FSOs. How the department can expect to attract and retain talented officers while awarding desirable assignments to non-FSOs is beyond me."

• "I can't see the value in de-professionalizing the service. If these types of appointments are valid, then perhaps we need to reexamine the need for a professional officer corps."

• "The department talks out of both sides of its mouth. On the one hand, department management claims it wants to recruit and retain talented officers, and on the other it takes active steps to undermine the interests of the Foreign Service, thereby alienating the talent it already has. It is precisely this type of double-speak that leads to the bleeding off of talented officers. At some point, enough becomes enough."

• "The more I learn about how things work in this organization, the more I wish that I had remain employed in the private

Continued on page 5

sector … Years down the road, I could then have displaced 20 or 30 years of an FSO's effort by purchasing or positioning my way to a ambassadorship or DCM station — both easier and less stressful."

• "To argue that … somehow the security of the U.S. hinges on granting an exception in this case is insupportable and, in fact, just plain silly." □

State Department Foreign Affairs Fellowships

The State Department's Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program for undergraduates and Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program for grad students provide funding to participants as they prepare academically and professionally to enter the Foreign Service. The goal of this program is to attract outstanding students who represent all ethnic and social backgrounds and who have an interest in pursuing a Foreign Service career in the Department of State. Women, minorities and students with financial needs who are U.S. citizens are encouraged to apply.

The goal is to attract outstanding students of all ethnic and social backgrounds who have an interest in a Foreign Service career.

The award includes tuition and a stipend for room and board.

The deadline to apply is Feb. 16 for college sophomores and Feb. 26 for students who will be entering their first year of graduate school in September 2001.

For more information about requirements and benefits, contact Dr. Richard Hope, Director, U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program, The Woodrow Wilson Foundation, P.O. Box 2437, Princeton, NJ 08543-2437 or go to http://www.woodrow.org. □

V.P. VOICE: FCS ■ BY PETER FREDERICK

Do Political Appointees Need Limits?

Last November a colleague and I were discussing the concept of term limits. She said, I thought in jest, that political appointees should have term limits too. Thinking about it further, I realized that rather than term limits, there could be scope limits — that is, guidelines to keep political appointees from taking far-reaching actions in areas in which they lack expertise. To put it another way, perhaps there should be a limit on what political appointees can do during their term. As one looks at the AFSA-FCS relationship, it appears that most of our problems were the result of well-meaning but inexperienced, ill-informed and overzealous political appointees.

One appointee's drive toward integrating the domestic and overseas units of FCS resulted in some GS employees being coerced into applying to the Foreign Service and giving up reemployment rights and their pension. Another's decision to require new officers to spend two of their first four years in a domestic office made those officers ineligible for tenure. One director general ordered that certain overseas posts be held open for GS employees, until AFSA filed an unfair labor practice charge.

There will always be political appointees in government. However, that need not mean that managerial improvement at FCS is impossible.

Recognizing that there were many problems within the organization that needed fixing, AFSA and career members of FCS management worked together to develop a new performance planning and appraisal procedure, new commissioning and tenure policies and a completely revamped assignments process. In certain cases we have reached agreement, only to have a political appointee order changes that neither side could accept. In other cases the political management simply did not respond to any of AFSA's proposals. We have made good use of the grievance process and Unfair Labor Practice complaints to stop some actions but have not found a way to encourage the appointees to take a more constructive approach or respond to AFSA's proposals.

We recognize the "spoils system" in American politics. We understand that every administration feels more comfortable with "friends" implementing policy than career employees with whom they may have no affinity. However, we are also aware of occasions when a political appointee has followed a career officer's suggestion to resolve a problem for the betterment of the service and the officers. There will always be political appointees in government. Perhaps there will always be more political appointees per employee in Commerce than in any other agency in the executive branch. However, that need not mean that managerial improvement at FCS is impossible.

As the new administration begins the political assignment process, may we suggest that they consider a change in the management structure? The position of assistant secretary could be filled with a trusted political adviser while a career Foreign Service officer could fill the position of director general. The assistant secretary would be responsible for implementing the new administration's policy and promotional programs while the director general would be responsible for personnel and financial management. Focusing the political appointees' efforts on policy may be an acceptable form of term limits. Selecting a career Foreign Service officer to run FCS may result in relegating my job as VP for FCS AFSA to that of recruiting new members and sending out invitations to retirement seminars. I wouldn't mind that a bit. □

Q&A

Retiree Issues

BY WARD THOMPSON, RETIREE LIAISON

Q. Why is the 2001 retiree COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) smaller than the pay increase for federal workers?

A. The two serve different functions and are calculated differently. The COLA, intended to enable annuities to keep pace with inflation, is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Congress first passed a law calling for an automatic COLA for federal annuitants in 1962 and has changed the formula several times. In 2001, the approximately 13,000 annuitants in the old system (FSRDS) will receive a 3.5 percent COLA, the largest since 1991. The roughly one thousand in the new system (FSPS) will get a 2.5 percent COLA on the FSPS part of their benefits (except for any annuity supplement) and a 3.5 percent COLA on any portion of their benefits based on the FSRDS.

The pay raise, aimed at making federal salaries competitive with the private sector, is based on the bipartisan 1990 Federal Pay Act. The amount, usually less than projected by the act, is set by Congress and the administration as part of the budget process. Part of the 2001 raise of 3.7 percent will be devoted to locality pay, meaning that the basic pay raise will be less than that amount. (Foreign Service employees abroad do not get locality pay. AFSA and the Department are working to get acceptance of "virtual locality pay," which would allow employees serving overseas to calculate their "high three" for annuities as though they were receiving Washington locality pay.)

Q. Isn't the 2000 COLA unrealistic, given the sharp rise in health care premiums, for example?

A. Health care costs, including prescription drugs, are a major cause of the CPI increase on which the COLA is based. But the COLA should more than cover health care cost increases. For example, a 3.5 percent increase in the median FSRDS monthly annuity of $3000 is $105. By comparison, the 14 percent average monthly increase in federal employee self-and-family fee-for-service health plan premiums is about $23. This will be higher for some plans, and there will also be costlier deductibles and coinsurance, but in general the average annuitant's COLA should meet the objective of letting the annuity keep pace with the overall costs of inflation.

Q. Is an annual COLA guaranteed?

A. Provided by law, the COLA is subject to reexamination by lawmakers, who often change its calculation and once denied it altogether, in 1985. In recent years, Congress considered both a "diet COLA" of less than the CPI increase and reformulation of the CPI itself to compensate for its perceived overstatement of inflation. AFSA helped point out that annuities, protected by COLAs, are delayed compensation earned during Foreign Service careers and should not be targets of budget downsizing. □

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mission includes nine members, each with two-year terms and eligible for reappointment. They are variously named by the president and the majority and minority congressional leadership, with the ambassador for religious freedom as an ex officio member. While the commission is authorized a total staff of 21, financing snafus have kept all positions from being filled. The commissioners also have been frustrated by failure to obtain access to State Department reporting on religious freedom issues; they were even precluded from seeing the instructions for posts on how to prepare the IRF report.

Expanding the list of violators should not be an exercise in "deified testosterone," but a last resort.

The statutory powers of the commission are considerable. Mandated to review the religious freedom aspects of the annual Human Rights and IRF reports (as well as other appropriate sources), the commission is then to make policy recommendations on international religious freedom to the president, the State Department, and Congress. It can hold hearings, take testimony, travel abroad, and is directed to present its judgments and policy recommendations each year in an official report to be issued on May 1. In its first such report, the commission praised the department's 1999 international religious freedom efforts, but detailed numerous weaknesses in organization, extraneous detail, failure to prioritize, and lack of historical and legal context. The commission was also concerned over the potential for critics charging U.S. bias in the assessments, urging that judgments be set in terms of international human rights documents.

Virtually unique in the law is a "sunset clause" that would have the commission go out of business in May 2003. That limitation satisfies some on the commission staff who argue that if the State Department is operating

effectively to assess and advance international religious freedom, it is not necessary. Likewise, if it is failing in this responsibility, the commission should not be retained to provide a fig leaf of respectability cloaking this failure.

Nevertheless, despite some tension between State and the commission, IRF officers at State find the commission a useful bogeyman; they can argue that if the department doesn't pay attention to a particular IRF issue, it will be criticized by the commission and subsequently by Congress. Without the commission as watchdog, the IRF process could devolve into a "going through the motions" exercise rich in rhetoric signifying nothing. However, as Ambassador Seiple noted, once the IRF report is effectively institutionalized within State's political reporting/analysis functions, the commission can fade into its "sunset," secure that its mandate is being carried on.

For his part, Congressman Frank Wolf, who started the IRF ball rolling, sees pluses and minuses in how the system is working. Speaking in August 2000, Wolf praised members of the commission and Ambassador Seiple, but said the absence of sustained high-level support from the administration reduced the IRF effort's potential effectiveness. For example, despite verbal support for the act, OMB did not propose funding for the commission, forcing Wolf to add the funds for its operation to the federal budget.

Wolf also contended that State needs to be more verbally vigorous in exposing specific religious problems. While there may be a role for quiet diplomacy, he says a better case can be made for publicizing the circumstances of groups such as Coptic Christians in Egypt. He recalled that when the West spoke out against the persecution of Jewish dissidents in the USSR, their lot improved, and he hypothesized there would be comparable results in other cases of persecution. In short, Wolf observed, when we align ourselves with the weak, we show the best in ourselves.

So What?

So now that we have an annual IRF reporting requirement for at least two more years, does it mean anything? On the eve of departing his position in September 2000, Seiple declared the reporting process "institutionalized but fragile." True, the report is already a vehicle for the U.S. to highlight limitations on religious freedom throughout the world, giving at least some hope and comfort to those being persecuted for their faith. But he noted that research on violations remains weak, often more anecdotal than conclusive — largely because staffing tends to be lowest in the very Third World posts where assessing the state of religious freedom can be most challenging. And in an era when State is already hard-pressed, the additional resource commitments needed to rectify this deficiency are not likely to be forthcoming.

In addition, the IRF process does not guide posts on how (or even whether) to address marginal "religions" professing tenets that endorse mass suicide, cannibalism, bestiality or human sacrifice. Some would attempt to dodge the issue by labeling such groups as "cults" — but that designation only begs the question of how successful a "cult" must be before it becomes a religion.

For example, our criticism of countries such as Germany, France and Belgium over their skeptical view of the religious nature of Scientology is not appreciated. They point out that their approach to the sect is equivalent to that practiced in the United States less than a decade ago. And as Rep. Wolf observed, Scientologists in these countries are not being persecuted, beaten, or imprisoned.

In any event, our current position that a religion exists when its practitioners say it does has open-ended implications. Would we condemn states that prevented sincere believers in such practices for expressing their faiths? Would we conclude that the convinced cannibal is not philosophically different than the devout Christian who partakes of the body and blood of Christ when participating in communion?

Thus, at the threshold of a new administration, the still embryonic IRF report needs reexamination. In our self-proclaimed concern for all religious freedom everywhere, we have moved far beyond the initial "concerned Christians" stimulus for the legislation. But is there any significant support in the U.S. (let alone a national interest) for investigating persecution of animists by Muslims or vice versa? Restrictions on one Islamic group imposed by another? Limitations placed by one Israeli Jewish group on another? In short, are we prepared for an open-ended commitment of diplomatic and societal capital on the niceties of global religious freedom? If so, what will be the payoff? If not, has there been any consideration of an "exit strategy?" ■

Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of Sudan

Ben Fishman

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL ISLAM IN SUDAN HAS RESULTED IN MISTREATMENT OF THE SUDANESE PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY.

By Donald Petterson

Islamic revivalism (variously termed "political Islam," "Islamism" and "Islamic fundamentalism"), and religious fundamentalism more broadly, have come to play a powerful role on the world stage. Regimes that embrace religious fundamentalism can often be undemocratic, posing unique challenges for U.S. foreign policy-makers.

Islamism is not monolithic. The Islamic world is a hodgepodge of beliefs, political structures, and ethnic allegiances, and the ideas expressed by modern Islamic thinkers are many and varied. Writers who have been at the forefront of the Islamic revival range from Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, who vehemently condemned Western culture, mores, and institutions, to Tunisian Rached Ghannouchi, who views religion as a common cultural base for

democracy and draws a parallel between Islamic and Western democratic values. Some of the fervor of Islamism is directed against conservative or secular governments within the Muslim world since many citizens of countries under these governments feel their governments do not meet their needs.

However, today's Islamism largely arises from and is sustained by a reaction against Western imperialism and its aftermath. The colonial era was a time of great humiliation for the Muslim world. Yet the anger Muslims felt toward the West did not end with colonialism; it has been kept alive by Western economic and political predominance in the global arena and by the spread of Western culture.

Washington's Debate on Islamism

Washington has long debated the danger that Islam poses to its interests. The debate took on renewed vigor in 1992 after the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front's electoral victory in December 1991 was nullified when elements of the defeated ruling party and the military took over the government. In his 1992 book *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, Georgetown University Professor John Esposito emphasized that Westerners should differentiate between religious Muslims and radical Islamists, some of whom embrace a militant anti-Western stance. He noted that radical Islamists make up only a small minority of Muslims. Labeling political Islam more a challenge than a threat, he said, "Islam and most Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American, or anti-democratic." Also writing in 1992, Graham E. Fuller of RAND Corp. went further in downplaying the threat of political Islam. In *The Washington Post*, he asserted that "Islamic fundamentalism ... [is] a movement that is both historically inevitable and politically 'tamable.'"

Others disagreed with this sort of thinking. For example, reviewing Esposito's book in *The Wall Street Journal*, Middle East Forum Director Daniel Pipes warned that it was "wrong to soft-pedal the dangers of fundamentalist Islam, the radical elements of which espouse the world's most virulently anti-American ideology." He criticized Esposito for focusing on "the milder aspects of fundamentalist Islam."

Since 1992, the U.S. government has taken a position akin to Esposito's: Islamic movements are not necessarily a threat to the West. The then-Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs, Edward P. Djerejian, stated in 1992 that "the U.S. government does not view Islam as the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace." In 1994, his successor, Robert Pelletreau, reaffirmed that the United States had no quarrel with Islam and "rejected the notion that a renewed emphasis on traditional values in many parts of the Islamic world must lead inevitably to conflict with the West." Pelletreau added, however, that "certain manifestations of the Islamic revival are intensely anti-Western and aimed not only at elimination of Western influences, but at resisting any form of cooperation with the West."

Religion and the State: Sudan

The prominent role that political Islam has come to occupy in Sudan provides a vantage point from which to judge whether the concern about political Islam is justified. A brief look at how Islam evolved in northern Sudan and at the historical basis of the pronounced political and economic differences between the northern and southern parts of the country help explain political Islam's impact in Sudan.

Arabs moved into northern Sudan beginning in the fifteenth century and established Islam as the dominant religion of the region. Time passed and as the reach of the Arabs extended farther to the south in Sudan, Arab slave traders began to enslave great numbers of Africans. The trafficking in slaves increased after Sudan came under the control of Turco-Egyptian forces in the early nineteenth century, reaching a peak in the 1860s. Because both Arabs and the Turco-Egyptian forces were Muslims, southerners believed the slave trade was Muslim and condoned by Islam. Foreigners, including some British, reinforced this erroneous belief by propagating the view that Islam sanctioned the slave trade.

In 1881 Muhammad Ahmad, a charismatic, deeply religious mystic who claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, declared himself to be the long-awaited Mahdi (Messiah) and emerged as a powerful force for Islamic revivalism. The Mahdi and his fol-

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Donald Petterson, ambassador to Sudan from 1992-1995, was an FSO for 35 years. He is the author of Inside Sudan.

lowers began inflicting a series of defeats on the occupying Turco-Egyptian forces. In 1885 the Mahdi capped his military victories by defeating the Egyptian garrison at Khartoum. The success of the Mahdi on the battlefield led to the creation of a Mahdist Islamic state in Sudan. During its 13-year existence, the Mahdist state endeavored to subdue and Islamize the south. Slavery continued, fueling southern antipathy toward Islam and northern Sudanese. Yet Mahdism and the concept of an Islamic state would prove to be an inspiration to generations of Muslims in Sudan.

The U.S. Government does not view Islam as the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace.

In 1898 the British defeated the army of the Khalifa Abdullah, the Mahdi's successor, at the famous battle of Omdurman, and began a 58-year rule of Sudan. During that time, British efforts to develop the country were focused on the central region of the country, the region of greatest economic strength. Little was done for other areas, including the south. The British virtually walled the south off from the north. They prohibited Arab settlement in the south and use of the Arabic language, Arab-influenced education, and even Arab dress there. By the time Sudan became independent in 1956, it was divided into two distinctly different areas. The north was Arabized and Islamic, relatively advanced economically, highly politicized. The south, populated mostly by animists and Christians, was isolated and backward, its economic development stunted by the region's isolation and by the unwillingness of British officials in the north to devote resources to spur southern development. These great disparities between north and south and southerners' abiding fear and suspicion of northerners were a recipe for political instability.

War erupts between north and south

In 1955, fear that Arabs would take over the army when the British withdrew from Sudan after it gained its independence in 1956 led a contingent of southern soldiers to mutiny. This was the first outbreak of violence in what would later become the war between north and south that continues to this day. Since 1983, over two million people have died as a result of the ongoing war in Sudan between the Arabized Muslim north and the African south, and millions more have been displaced or have otherwise suffered.

Fighting between north and south continued until 1972, when a peace agreement between the southern rebel movement and the military dictatorship of Jaafar al-Numeiry put a temporary end to the conflict. The agreement recognized the pluralistic nature of Sudanese society and awarded regional autonomy to the south. By 1983, however, Numeiry had reneged on the terms of the agreement and the war resumed. In the latter years of his 16-year reign, Numeiry had imposed the Sharia — Islamic laws. Not only southerners, but also many northern Muslims were opposed to the imposition of the Sharia. But, Numeiry's successor, Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, who was dedicated to an Arab and Islamic Sudan, refused to abrogate the Sharia. He insisted that Islam should be the state religion and the Sharia the primary basis for legislation. By mid-1989, however, he had been weakened politically to the point that he was willing to revoke the Sharia. When Islamist military officers and politicians overthrew Sadiq in 1989, establishment of an Islamic state and Islamization of the entire country became unambiguous goals of the government of Sudan.

The place of Islam in Sudanese society is of utmost importance to today's Islamist government, headed by Omar al-Bashir. Since coming to power, this government has demonstrated by its actions and words an irrevocable commitment to an Islamic state and to the Islamization of all of Sudan. It has also demonstrated that governments in the hands of religious fundamentalists are likely to be antithetical to democratic freedoms. The Bashir government's human rights record has earned it repeated condemnation from human rights advocates and the United Nations. The government severely restricts freedom of assembly and speech. Newspapers critical of the government are suspended and journalists are detained. People deemed to be opponents of the government are arbitrarily arrested, detained, and in some cases tortured. Security services conduct night searches without war-

rants, targeting government critics. They routinely open mail and monitor telephones. The government restricts the religious freedom of non-Muslims. People living in oil-producing areas are forced to move elsewhere. Both government and rebel military forces destroy villages, injure, kill, and rape civilians.

True democratic reforms are unlikely to occur in Sudan as long as militant Islamists govern the country. What has happened in Sudan is not unique: Mixing religion and politics tends to test the fabric of democracy. In countries where religious fundamentalists wield significant political power, democracy may be obstructed or threatened. Iran, Israel, and India are cases in point.

How the United States interacts with religiously oriented states should be based not on what they are but on what they do.

In Iran, the Shi'ite hard-liners in power have limited the ability of the country's elected representatives to carry out the will of the people, despite the fact that last year the hard-liners allowed relatively open and competitive elections. In India, the government of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party has not tried hard enough to squelch the rise of Hindu extremism and stop right-wing Hindu organizations from attacking Christians. And the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians has been exacerbated by the behavior of religious-based organizations on both sides: The terrorist acts of Hamas have bedeviled the peace process, and in Israel, small, religious-based political parties who wield disproportionate power in the Knesset have frustrated efforts to reach compromises necessary for peace.

A Stance for the United States

How should the United States respond to regimes that embrace religious fundamentalism? It should deal with fundamentalist states as it deals with other states: in accordance with U.S. national interests. How we interact with religiously oriented states should be based not on what they are but on what they do.

The United States most definitely should not consider itself engaged in a struggle with Islam. In acknowledgement of the fact that Islam is one of the world's great religions, the United States should continue to maintain close relationships with states that govern in accordance with the traditions of Islam. Though there are good reasons for concern about political Islam, if Islamists come to power through free and fair elections, the United States should accept their legitimacy. To do otherwise would be to dishonor our commitment to democracy. However, if a duly elected Islamic government grossly violates the rights of its people, then Washington should respond accordingly.

As for Sudan, the United States will likely continue to be concerned about the human rights record of the Sudanese government. Despite the recent difficulties in the U.S.-Sudanese relationship, such as the American bombing of the pharmaceuticals company in Sudan and the State department's declaration that Sudan is a terrorist regime, Washington should persist in trying to influence Sudan's rulers to make positive changes. Moreover, in addition to encouraging a wider range of African states to work for peace in Sudan, the United States should take a much more assertive role in the search for a negotiated end to the war in Sudan, not only because of the terrible human costs of the war for the Sudanese people, but also because so many of the injustices the government commits against its people happen as a result of the war. To help achieve American objectives, Washington should reinstate a full-time, in-residence diplomatic presence in Khartoum headed by an ambassador.

On a broader scale, because poverty can breed extremism, the United States should espouse policies that are more sensitive to the needs of developing countries. Washington could, for example, go further than it has yet gone in forgiving the international debts of the poorest countries and easing the debts of other developing countries. Congress's recent passage of a debt relief bill is a step in the right direction.

Debt relief would not end extremism, whose origins are complex and multi-faceted. It would, however, help diminish extremism's prevalence and power. A deft diplomatic approach to dealing with fundamentalist states would be to the advantage of the United States. ■

Divinity And Diplomacy: An Uneasy Mix?

Ben Fishman

Being either a diplomat or a religious leader is hard enough on its own. So imagine being an FSO and a Presbyterian minister.

By William F. Davnie

As with many Foreign Service officers, diplomacy is my second career. In contrast to the many lawyers, business executives and academics among us, however, I was a Presbyterian minister for five years before I entered the service in 1981, and have retained my clerical status throughout my diplomatic career. I haven't hidden this fact, but I haven't exactly made it obvious to my colleagues, either.

Several factors account for my reticence on the subject, but the main one is the deep and persistent tension I perceive between the secular outlook of the Foreign Service and the abiding place of religious faith in human life certainly including my own. It is precisely that tension that I wish to explore in this essay.

Ambassadors For Christ?

Although I considered majoring in political science in college, I was moved both by personal faith and intellectual interest to make religion my major. After graduating from seminary in 1974, I spent a year in Indonesia as a Henry Luce Scholar, teaching at a Muslim teacher's college and researching how Islamic thought was adapting its theocratic tendencies to an ostensibly secular state. Upon my return to the States in 1975, I served as pastor in a very small town in the upper Midwest, an experience about which I have no regrets, but that nonetheless helped me decide that I wasn't an ideal match for the pastorate. Realizing that what I really wanted was to return overseas, I took the Foreign Service exam in late 1979, and in January 1981 headed to Washington.

Both our work and our backgrounds encourage FSOs to keep our faith commitments quiet.

When I arrived in Hong Kong, my first post, and attended the country team meeting to be introduced by the consul general, he had somehow heard of my previous employment. He joked that the last Presbyterian he had known of in the State Department was John Foster Dulles, and wished me similar success. Now, conceding that the comment was only intended to be amusing, I still had to wonder how the man had gone from the mid-1950s to 1981 and never known of another Presbyterian in the State Department. Our denomination's fortunes indeed declined over that time, but I know of at least a couple of Presbyterian ambassadors who served during that period.

This was also shortly after the Carter presidency and his introduction of human rights into the U.S. foreign policy agenda. I remember one colleague who assumed, inaccurately, that I had joined the Foreign Service specifically because of that policy, and with the — in her view profoundly ill-advised — goal of furthering it!

More recently, I was dining with a Foreign Service group when my previous employment came up. "What an unusual background," was the first comment, after a slightly awkward silence. Well, I pointed out, tongue only partly in cheek, there is ample historical precedent for it; for centuries the clergy-diplomat, or at least clergy-politician combination, was so common as not to be worth mentioning. While I certainly don't claim to be in anywhere near the same professional league, examples of this phenomenon range from the days of politically potent High Renaissance churchmen like the Medicis and Cardinal Richelieu, to Presbyterian minister and signer of the Declaration of Independence John Witherspoon, to 20th century figures like the Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr, who joined with internationalist politicians in the 1930s to encourage Americans to turn from isolationism and face the need to fight Naziism. Almost every Congress includes a few ordained clergy; among the best known recent examples are former Rep. Robert Drinan, D-Mass., a Catholic priest, and former Sen. John Danforth, R-Mo., an Episcopal priest.

Showing that even our DOD colleagues have trouble thinking of Christians in the State Department, one officer joked to me that in contrast to the numerous military images in the Bible, he wasn't sure that specific authority for the State Department could be found in Scripture. I promptly pointed out that the Apostle Paul had called himself an "ambassador for Christ," which brought down the house — and since that metaphor is in fact well-known, I slightly embarrassed the original joker, who admitted that he knew better.

When I started out in consular work, I found that many colleagues were uncertain about my objectivity in handling church-related visa applications. Yet they were even more uncomfortable about handling them themselves, particularly since they often had little knowledge of what was an established religious organization and what was not. Eventually, I ended up handling most cases of this type, since my peers concluded my background gave me the credibility to sift out legitimate applicants and to back up a denial to a well-intentioned but possibly naïve American sponsor. In a couple of posts I've also found myself to be an unintentional link to the embassy for American missionaries in

William Davnie, an FSO since 1981, has served in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Moscow and Dushanbe. He is currently studying Lithuanian at FSI in preparation for his assignment as DCM in Vilnius next summer.

country, who say they often find embassy staff keeping them at a long arm's-length.

Theology and Wonks

Such tales may help explain my reluctance to be unduly public about my religious faith and professional background. I certainly don't mean I've been mistreated, just that it has seemed a topic best left alone, for several reasons. First of all, both our work and the mores of the well-educated, upper-middle-class American communities from which FSOs predominantly hail encourage keeping one's faith commitments quiet. After all, we're all too aware that religion can be a divisive topic, and as diplomats we do well to avoid giving offense. In addition, living in the fishbowl of expatriate communities overseas, we carefully guard what privacy we can retain.

From Cardinal Richelieu to the Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr, clergymen have long been involved in diplomacy and politics.

While I have over the years discovered more active religious believers — Christians and others — in the Foreign Service than I at first thought there were, it's pretty obvious anecdotally, and well-established sociologically, that such individuals are exceptions. So I would submit that this combination of unfamiliarity and discomfort constitutes the biggest factor underlying the Foreign Service's deep ambivalence as an institution toward discussions of religion in almost any context.

Yet I also have to admit, with an ambivalence that fellow believers may understand, that in most respects this compromise — not hiding my faith but not proclaiming it, either — hasn't been terribly difficult for me. I take my Christian faith seriously both as personal creed and as comprehensive worldview, I'm active in a local congregation and teach and preach when asked, but I'm not particularly evangelical in either theology or personal style. Or maybe it's just that I grew up in Minnesota, not Mississippi! But in any case, I have given some thought over the years to what it means to bring not only personal faith to my work, as do many colleagues, but professional and academic training in theology.

I've occasionally suggested that the principal link between my two careers is that both theology and foreign policy deal with the unquantifiable, and in neither field can 'truth' be proven until years, if not longer, from now. That may be a bit arch, but I think it is a serious point as well. I've noticed that in current Washington wonk parlance, 'theology' has come to mean policy commitments not subject to rational discussion — faith commitments, if you will — or topics so jargon-ridden as to defy public discussion. If there is a rationality at work there, it's accessible only to a few cognoscenti — a chronic complaint against theology, which I suppose helps explain why the word was appropriated into this non-religious setting!

Now, foreign policy specialists would reject the view that their field is irrational, but I dare any serious practitioner to prove that foreign policy formulation is any more 'scientific' than theological reflection. Typically, theology at least must contend with a set of authoritative texts, as well as with the history of that religious tradition and the intellectual context with which it seeks to communicate. Listening to discussions of NATO enlargement, for example, it certainly seems to me that our internal policy disputes have been driven less by differences of factual analysis than by powerful a priori assumptions about cultures, political power, and idealist versus pragmatist ethical analysis — assumptions which are "theological" in wonk-speak, even though they have nothing to do with God. Between competing theories of nuclear escalation and theological debates — well, I trust I make my point. Angels try to dance on the head of both of these pins. So perhaps persons knowledgeable in the complex disputes that have both captivated and conflicted religious believers over the centuries actually have an advantage in comprehending the passions and convictions that drive a number of our most confounding current international problems.

Giving Religion Its Due

Furthermore, I would suggest that a religious sensibility can be especially useful in understanding some of the less appealing but no less important forces which operate in many countries, and yet which can be over-

looked by those who fail to recognize the continuing force of religion. The Balkans serve as a current example (not that religion is the only issue there, by any means), while Iran may be the most obvious case in the recent past (the hostages were released during my A-100 class). Back in the 1970s, few diplomats or Westerners recognized the power of the Shiite revival, most likely because they were unwilling or unable to believe that a country would choose to move "backward" by embracing religion so deeply.

Greater sensitivity to religious beliefs would pay off in more useful reporting and better policy formation.

Yet there are many places around the world where religious developments have strong political impact. Islamic countries get most of the attention in this discussion, but conservative Protestantism in Central America, xenophobic circles in Russian Orthodoxy, and of course militant Hinduism in India all have achieved clear political significance. For that matter, I find that few secular Washingtonians grasp the link between many conservative American Christians and Israel; rather than the anti-Semitism which some assume dominates this Christian community, a particular apocalyptic reading of the Bible actually mandates strong support for Jewish control of the Holy Land, and even the rebuilding of the Temple — not, to be sure, with the same goals for which Jews may support these things, but nonetheless in a way that significantly undergirds U.S. popular support for Israel in an otherwise surprising corner.

In the end, American secularism, and the devotion even of religious believers to separation of church and state, make it difficult for many diplomats — and others in the realm of international affairs — to give religion serious attention for its ability to move hearts and minds.

For example, a best-seller of a few years back, *Among the Believers*, by V.S. Naipaul, described the (to him) terrifying recrudescence of Islamic fundamentalism around the world. Now, these phenomena trouble me as well, but I find Naipaul simply incapable of grasping the real power of these new movements because he seems to have no religious sensibility at all — he makes Doubting Thomas look positively credulous. In his attitude, he simply mirrors the secularized, deracinated presuppositions of the post-British colonial world from which he had sprung. Unable truly to get inside the heads of those with whom he spoke, he could only be upset about what he found alien.

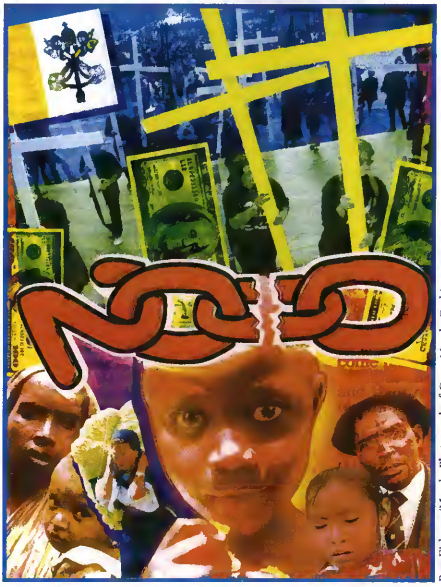
One task of diplomats is to understand even that which we may reject, but with which we must contend. I have known officers who developed relationships with conservative Muslim clerics on the Arabian peninsula, or with Russian xenophobes, but these have been the exception. Greater sensitivity to the religious beliefs that drive some groups, and a willingness to engage with their approaches to socio-political analysis, would pay off in more useful reporting and better policy formation.

For centuries, some intellectuals in the Western tradition have been waiting for religion to disappear, consumed by the acids of scientific method, psychological reductionism, and more. In Western Europe, it sometimes looks as if they have been right — until one considers the battles over Scientology in Germany, the French-Swiss cult which committed mass suicide three years ago, and disputes over head-scarves for Muslim women in France.

Elsewhere in the world, as already mentioned, the place of religion may have shifted over time — sometimes for the worse, certainly, at least in our eyes, in terms of Hindu nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism — but it's certainly not going away. (As G. K. Chesterton put it, "When people cease to believe in God, they will not believe in nothing; they will believe in anything.") Even in the United States, the dramatic decline in "mainline" denominations — including my own — over the past 40 years or so has been matched by an upsurge in groups ranging from evangelical Protestants to Pentecostals to Mormons to Muslims to the plethora of quintessentially American "self-made" religious fellowships. Many of these groups, once considered on the fringe, have moved increasingly into the American mainstream: Mormons are increasingly visible in Congress and federal circles today and Muslim chaplains are in the military. Reporting on the state of religious freedom has now been codified in law and in Foreign Service responsibilities.

No, religion definitely is not going away, and a sensitivity to its place in political and personal life belongs in the Foreign Service. ■

Jubilee 2000: Churches on the Front Lines



Ben Fishman/March. Photograph of Cross March: Corbis

What do the Pope, an Irish rock star and a congressman from Alabama all have in common? A commitment to forgive Third World debt.

By Carrie Reiling

David Duncombe's voice is faint and gravelly, and his words are slurred. His hands are ice-cold and tremble. He is the very picture of a starving man — in fact, he *is* a starving man. On the 33rd day of what would turn out to be a 50-day, water-only fast, during which he marked his 72nd birthday, Duncombe was preparing to visit five more congressional offices to advocate a cause he feels is crucial: the Jubilee 2000 debt relief campaign.

"Starving people aren't allowed in these offices," said Duncombe, a retired minister. "So there has to be somebody who can walk in and offer a cold and bony hand.

"I have a religious approach. I know the denominations of all the congresspersons. I get to know the denomi-

nations of the staff people. I talk to them as a pastor. I try to help them understand their own faith in relation to starving people. I bring them faith statements from their church.

"So when I go in and Senator So-and-so is an Episcopalian, I say, 'Well, do you know that your church has a strong stand on Jubilee 2000? I want you to vote on a perspective of your own personal faith and denominational background. It's not the only thing, but I want you to take that into account.' And coming from someone they can hardly look at because I look so horrible, it's something they have to at least think about."

Help That Hurts

Duncombe is part of an international grass-roots movement called Jubilee 2000 that works to eliminate all of the international debt owed by the world's poorest nations. The United States, like more than 60 other countries, has a national debt relief movement, Jubilee 2000/USA; its Washington, D.C., headquarters is a small set of offices in the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. The Jubilee 2000/USA debt relief campaign is "a coalition, most of which are religious groups, but also includes labor, human rights and environmental groups," according to its national coordinator, Dan Driscoll-Shaw.

Jubilee 2000/USA's many publications describe the history of debt and make the case for debt relief: "Poor countries owe a vast amount of money to rich nations and international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund ... Ordinary people did not benefit from many of the loans that gave rise to this debt. Yet they bear the principal burden of repayment. Without major debt reduction, poor countries are trapped, making unending interest payments on their debts. This requires them continuously to divert large amounts of scarce resources from health care, education and food security."

The organization's literature also discusses current debt relief efforts and why it believes they are inadequate and even harmful: "A comprehensive international debt relief program, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, was established in 1996. ... It was later revised by the leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) wealthy, industrialized countries at their annual meeting in June 1999 in Cologne, Germany and adopted by the World Bank and IMF at their meeting in September 1999 in connection with a new poverty reduction strategy."

"But even under the new strategy, both the IMF's and the World Bank's programs offer only partial debt forgiveness to countries that implement policies to promote economic development. Furthermore, each country that qualifies for debt relief must enact the agreed-upon reforms over a three-year period before the lending institutions will forgive any of the debt. In addition, because the reforms usually entail diverting money away from social programs, the HIPC initiative often hurts the very people it was intended to help."

In contrast to the IMF's and World Bank's initiatives, Jubilee 2000/USA's platform calls for the "definitive cancellation of the crushing international debt in situations where countries burdened with high levels of human need and environmental distress are unable to meet the basic needs of their people or achieve a level of sustainable development that ensures a decent quality of life." Supporters of the Jubilee 2000 campaign want the debt of developing nations, especially those in Latin America, Asia and Africa, to be eliminated without any structural adjustment requirements through a "fair and transparent process."

While the campaign does call for "cancellation of the debt and transparency in future economic relationships," it does not pass judgment on the IMF and the World Bank. "Our focus is on the debt and the victims of the debt ... Member organizations certainly have positions on the IMF and the World Bank, but our organization does not. But when we say, 'Don't put any conditions except those that come from the people themselves,' we're basically saying, 'Get the IMF out,' although that's not our focus," said Driscoll-Shaw. "We just want there to be transparency and have civil society involved."

Biblical Traditions

The Jubilee 2000 campaign dates back to a tradition found in the Old Testament: "At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts" (Deuteronomy 15:1). And after seven cycles of seven years — in the 50th year — the Israelites were to declare a jubilee year:

Carrie Reiling was the Journal's *summer 2000 intern. She is a student at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota.*

"Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you" (Leviticus 25:10).

"In the New Testament, Jesus refers back to the Jubilee in Luke 4:16-21 when he proclaims 'the year of the Lord's favor,' which involves good news for the poor, release to the captives and freedom for the oppressed," according to a packet printed by the Mennonite Central Committee, one of the member organizations on the steering committee of Jubilee 2000/USA.

The Jubilee 2000 campaign dates back to a tradition found in the Old Testament but has been embraced by many non-Christian groups as well.

The campaign's promotional materials also note that some Christian churches use a form of the Lord's Prayer that refers to debts: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"(Matthew 6:12).

Because of these biblical references, many Christian denominations have found this issue to be somewhat more significant than other peace and justice issues, especially in the year 2000, which has been calculated — albeit incorrectly — to be 2,000 years after Christ's birth. "Concern for the poor and the powerless. That's a very strong biblical theme," said Jim Bowman, the director of public policy for Lutheran World Relief.

The most prominent religious figure behind the Jubilee 2000 campaign is, of course, Pope John Paul II, who called for international debt forgiveness more than a year ago in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church's own jubilee observances in 2000.

Driscoll-Shaw, himself a former Maryknoll priest, notes another reason the year 2000 is a particularly appropriate year to hold a jubilee. "This problem is of the past 50 years. This is a wrong that is of our time."

While he acknowledges that most of the religious organizations in the Jubilee 2000/USA campaign are Christian — especially "groups that are more open to the social implications of the word of God" — he notes that other religions have a part in this campaign, not only Christians.

For instance, in the Jewish faith, "this is not a jubilee year for them because they do not celebrate the birth of Christ," said Driscoll-Shaw. "But on the other hand, they're saying, 'Hey, that's a detail. The issue that underlies it is just so important that we want to be part of it.' "

Muslim organizations are also active in the Jubilee 2000 campaign, both in the U.S. and many other countries. "The Qur'an teaches, 'If the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then let there be a postponement to the time of ease; and that you remit the debt as an act of charity would be better for you if you did but know' (al-Baqarah 2:280)," writes Dr. Muzammil Siddiqui, president of the Islamic Society of North America.

Half A Loaf?

Jubilee 2000/USA's steering committee is a group of organizations, both religious and secular, which support the Jubilee 2000/USA platform and meet monthly to set policy for the campaign.

The majority of the faith-based groups on the steering committee are Christian, usually individual church denominations or their respective agencies. There is also one Jewish organization, along with a few ecumenical groups.

Tension between the secular organizations and the faith-based organizations does not seem to exist. "The language with which issues are described differs between secular and faith-based organizations, but there is no real tension," said James Matlack, the director of the Washington office of the Quaker-based American Friends Service Committee.

"Faith groups have a justice focus that is shared with secular organizations," said Melanie Hardison, the Presbyterian Church's Jubilee 2000 coordinator.

If any tension does exist, it lies between the mainline churches, such as the Lutherans and the Episcopalians, and some of the more non-traditional churches and organizations.

"Everybody agrees that the debt ought to be cancelled. But there are some groups who say no conditions should be attached ... The other groups say, 'We want to spend our energy and our time working with Congress to make sure some money is available,' " said Bowman. "Whenever you work with legislation, you're dealing with compromises."

"It's a situation of the ideal versus the pragmatic," said Lisa Wright, the associate director of international development for the National Council of the Churches of Christ and Church World Service.

"The strategies are different between organizations," Matlack concurred. "It's kind of like a half a loaf of bread versus a whole loaf. Do we go for what we can achieve, or do we go for everything and risk not getting anything?"

The mainline denominations are more inclined to compromise. "We're willing to work within the system," said Bowman about his organization, which is a relief agency for two Lutheran denominations. "They [the non-traditional churches and organizations] want to change the system."

One tactic that all the organizations agree on is education about debt relief.

The denominational members of the steering committee are focusing on educating individual members of their congregations about the problem. The Presbyterian Church has designed an order of worship for this cause that has been adapted by many other denominations.

While more churches are spending time and money printing materials and speaking about debt, the leaders of Jubilee 2000 and the members of the steering committee are still concerned about ensuring as many people as possible know about the campaign.

"What happens in the pews? How many Catholics or how many evangelical Christians know about this issue?" questioned Driscoll-Shaw. "We've got to do a better job to get out to certain religious organizations, particularly in the African-American community and in the Latino community."

Like Duncombe, Hardison believes that religious organizations are effective in the Jubilee 2000 campaign because of their moral stance. "People in Congress listen to the faith groups. There is a lot of diversity within the faith groups, so a lot of people can be reached by the message."

A True Jubilee

For the first half of the year, the odds against success for Jubilee 2000 seemed daunting. A few legislators opposed the idea of debt forgiveness on principle; others, like Rep. Sonny Callahan, R-Ala., chairman of the House Appropriations committee, were concerned that money freed up by unconditional debt forgiveness would simply pay off bad loans made by banks rather than directly assist poor people.

Tension between the secular and the faith-based organizations on the campaign's steering committee does not seem to exist.

Nonetheless, strong support came from several prominent Republicans, including House Banking Committee chairman Jim Leach, R-Iowa, and Rep. John Kasich, R-Ohio, chairman of the House Budget Committee, who stated: "Last year the House, the Senate and the administration engaged in what I would call and has been termed a historic act of grace, and it was designed to relieve the debt of the poorest nations in the world. ... When we look at the amount of money that we waste on both sides of the aisle for projects, the simple fact of the matter is, the United States must do something to help alleviate poverty in this world. We cannot turn our back on people who have nothing."

In addition, several Democrats, including Nancy Pelosi, D-Cal., the ranking minority member of the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, and Sen. Paul Sarbanes, D-Md., also played key roles in building a bipartisan coalition in support of the initiative.

But the legislator who did the most to champion the initiative from the very beginning was undoubtedly Rep. Spencer Bachus, R-Ala. He not only worked closely with Jubilee 2000 coordinators behind the scenes to persuade his colleagues but spoke eloquently and repeatedly about debt relief on the House floor. In remarks during a July 12 debate, he effectively stressed the minimal cost of complete debt forgiveness to American taxpayers — $1.20 a year per citizen — but also raised the larger moral question underlying the move: "We have the responsibility, we have the obligation, and we have the direction as to what is the right thing to do. For this decision, whether we are a Muslim, whether we are Christian, or whether we are Jewish, all those religions give us a moral imperative in such a case, and that imperative is to act."

Responding to that call, 26 House Republicans crossed the aisle on July 13 to support — albeit by the narrow margin of 216-211 — an amendment to the foreign aid spending bill (HR 4811) offered by Maxine Waters, D.-Calif. The amendment increased funding for debt relief in fiscal 2001 from $69.4 million to $225 million, drawing on foreign military aid accounts. In return, the recipients must commit themselves to economic reform, channel the savings into health and education, and maintain peaceful relations with their neighbors.

Over the summer, as the bill moved toward final passage, that amount ultimately was nearly doubled to $435 million, and language was added allowing the IMF to release an additional $800 million from the sale of its gold reserves to set up a trust fund underwriting further debt forgiveness. To be sure, the bill also contained some restrictions: Rep. Callahan insisted on a 24-month moratorium on construction project loans from international banks to countries that will benefit from the debt relief efforts, and Senate Foreign Relations chairman Jesse Helms, R-N.C. and ranking minority member Joseph Biden, D-Del., added language requiring recipient countries to report on how they utilize the funds. However, House and Senate negotiators rejected demands by Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Tex., to prohibit the IMF from extending debt relief or any new loans to countries that violate human rights or close their markets to foreign goods.

Most of the debt being targeted for relief covers long-standing bilateral loans by the World Bank and other international financial institutions. For that reason, the $435 million will be funneled through the World Bank to regional African and Latin American banks.

Signing the debt relief legislation in an East Room ceremony on Nov. 6, President Clinton noted both the religious underpinnings of the initiative and the wider coalition supporting it: "More than a year ago, His Holiness the Pope called for debt forgiveness in this, the jubilee year. With the help of countless others, this grass-roots effort grew into Jubilee 2000, [joining

together] evangelists and economists, Democrats and Republicans, non-governmental organizations, labor unions, the business community, and advocates for Africa. ... When we get the Pope and the pop stars all singing on the same sheet of music, our voices do carry to the heavens."

Up Next: Jubilee 2001?

Yet the president also made clear that he was mindful that the measure, generous as it is, addresses only a small fraction of the developing countries' total debt: "The question for us now is, where do we go from here? We have to implement this program well; and if we do implement it well and it works, then there will be broad support around the world to extend it to other nations."

President Clinton closed his remarks by promising that "Next year, when I'm just Joe Citizen, I'll do my part, too. Let's keep going."

Even though they have made substantial progress on debt relief, people involved in the Jubilee 2000 campaign are still concerned about the future and plan to remain active.

Driscoll-Shaw believes that the campaign has been effective and will continue to be so. "What makes our coalition so united and so strong is that many of us have worked in Latin America or Africa or Asia. We know the people there; we care about them."

"Something the steering committee has to examine is our transition past the current year," said James Matlack. "Does Jubilee 2000 fold its tent and go away or does it continue and change its name?"

Whether or not the coalition continues as a formal organization, at least one member is sure to keep the cause going. As Driscoll-Shaw observes, "Church people don't go away. We're going to be there. My hope was that we close the office in December, by February we clean everything out, and then I go look for another job. [But] it doesn't look like that's going to happen." ■

Camp David 2000 — Too Much, Too Soon?

Bill Clinton was looking for a legacy — a broad Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement — but he misjudged the timing and the terrain.

By John Diamond

When the summit at Camp David ended in impasse last summer, Clinton administration officials rushed to the microphones to draw attention to the progress they had made and away from the opportunity missed. For the first time, they emphasized, Palestinian and Israeli leaders had discussed the long-postponed and highly sensitive "final status" issues. Never before in the 52-year history of their conflict had the two sides negotiated on such issues as control of Jerusalem, the borders of a Palestinian state, the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and of Israeli settlers to continue living in the West Bank and Gaza. Surely it was understandable, administration officials argued, that not all these sensitive questions could be resolved in one sitting. With more work, and a greater willingness to compromise, especially by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the final walls in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute could be scaled.

President Clinton, his eyes dark and baggy, his voice ragged, concluded the Camp David talks in the early hours of a humid July morning. His demeanor projected disappointment but not defeat. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, after 15 days of virtual seclusion at the president's Catoctin Mountain retreat, seemed almost stunned when he appeared before a packed news conference. A defiant Arafat, who had been reluctant to attend the summit to begin with, left Washington without speaking to the press. But his surrogates met with reporters and made clear that any peace deal would have to include Palestinian sovereignty over at least part of Jerusalem's walled Old City — including the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex. All three spoke of frustration, disappointment, even anger, but all continued to use the vocabulary of peace, and all expressed a willingness to return to the table.

This was the situation at the end of July: a sense of loss that a final peace seemed so near, but also a sense that taboo issues had been breached, and, once breached, might be solved. The peace process had hit a bump in the road, but would roll on.

From Summit to Intifada

Four months, one summit, and more than 200 killed later, this hopeful view of the outcome of Camp David lay in tatters. The suddenness with which the peace process disappeared into the dust clouds of battle across the West Bank and Gaza has spawned a re-examination of Camp David. This view holds that the peace talks forced too many issues on the table at once; that the raising of hopes for a comprehensive peace helped create a tinder box in the West Bank and Gaza. Clinton was too intent on winning a diplomatic trophy at the end of his term and inattentive to the consequences of failure. Barak emerged greatly weakened, having shown his hand with an offer to share sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem with the Palestinians, an offer that drew immediate and vehement opposition from the hard-line Israeli opposition. Arafat, the one summit participant who went to the talks reluctantly, left Camp David under attack from Clinton and the Israelis for his refusal to accept what many viewed as a generous deal. But Palestinians backed Arafat's stand, saying they had done their compromising in 1993 in Oslo, with their agreement to recognize Israel. The mindset among Palestinian leaders was that Israel's offer, though inadequate, showed that Arafat would eventually get a deal that afforded some sort of Palestinian control over the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem.

Though the violence that has torn the region clearly has many causes, a chain of events can be seen from the end of Camp David to the eruption of street fighting following

John Diamond covers foreign policy for the Chicago Tribune*'s Washington bureau.*

Ariel Sharon's provocative visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex. Many, including Barak, wanted to postpone any discussion of Jerusalem, viewing the issues as too complex and volatile. At Arafat's insistence, Jerusalem became a central issue at the talks, and ultimately, the major stumbling block. Barak's offer to allow Palestinian sovereignty over parts of East Jerusalem and the discussion of a form of Palestinian local control over parts of the Old City energized the Israeli opposition, including Sharon. The Sharon visit to the mosque complex was a rejoinder to the developments at Camp David. And the violent Palestinian reaction stemmed at least in part from the perception that Israel was pulling back on an offer to make the mosque complex part of a new Palestinian state.

President Clinton not only rejected the criticism of Camp David — he appears convinced, despite repeated disappointments, that the solution to the continuing crisis lies in summitry. An emergency meeting of Barak and Arafat in Paris, presided over by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, led to an apparent agreement by Israel to pull back forces and by the Palestinians to call a halt to violent protests. Instead, the violence only intensified. Two weeks later, Clinton brought Barak and Arafat together at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, this time with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Abdullah and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan as both witnesses and fellow prodders. A joint communiqué emerged from the talks, only to evaporate into further fighting and mutual claims of bad faith.

As this article went to press, the Clinton administration agenda on Mideast peace centered on the struggle simply to get the quarrelling parties to carry out the steps they had already agreed to take. Administration officials had dropped the hopeful phrase "peace process" and replaced it with the more functional label, "political process."

The importance to diplomats of the events of last summer and fall on the Mideast peace track go far beyond the sport of taking potshots at Clinton for a diplomatic "failure" or for fulfilling the desire of Arab or Israeli partisans to assign blame to the other side. The professional peacemakers may find valuable lessons in the chaotic events of the past six months that could help the next president more skillfully prepare for, and more carefully time, the calling of a major peace summit. Amid the rock-throwing and helicopter gunship raids raging across the Levant, the quaint and oft-derided notion that summits are to be called only when agreements are ready to be signed, that gatherings of leaders are merely pageants to enshrine the real work done by lower-level diplomats, deserves a second look.

The risk of action is less than the risk of inaction, Clinton told his advisers.

Why Hold a Summit?

Clinton and his subordinates went out of their way to emphasize that it was Clinton's decision to bring the Israeli and Palestinian leaders together. So the responsibility for deciding to convene the summit, and for evaluating the risks of failure, clearly rest on the shoulders of the administration.

The choice of Camp David was no accident. As the place where Israel and Egypt had reached their historic peace accord in 1978, Camp David was the symbolic place where Arabs and Israelis came to end conflict. Perhaps Clinton might have recalled that the first Camp David accord contained detailed provisions on resolving the Palestinian question, provisions that remained unfulfilled nearly a quarter century later. He might also have recalled that the Israelis and Egyptians were both closer to an agreement and more motivated to reach an accord prior to their summit than were the Israelis and Palestinians.

Clinton and his aides offered a number of rationales for pushing ahead, but they all boiled down to this: The peace process must go forward, and only the decisive participation of the U.S. president can move Barak and Arafat to make concessions at this crucial moment.

One of the president's senior negotiators quoted Clinton as telling his aides, "There is a risk of action and there's a risk of inaction." And, the official went on, "This is a case where we judge the risk of action to be less than the risk of inaction."

Beyond the obvious difficulty of the final status issues themselves, there were signs that Barak and Arafat were not in a posture to strike a deal. Arafat had a long-established pattern of brinkmanship, a tendency to resist a deal until pushed to the wall. This assessment, of course, turned out to be highly accurate, as events showed Arafat unwilling to accept what many believed to be a solid compromise.

"The key to closing (a deal) at Camp David is getting Arafat to accept a generous and reasonable Israeli offer," Robert Satloff of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy wrote as the summit began. "Accomplishing this will require the wielding of sticks and carrots, a tactic U.S. president Bill Clinton has not employed before." David Makovsky, an analyst with the same organization, added that "politically, Barak does not need a deal. To the contrary, failure to reach an agreement could even bring his 'big tent' coalition back from the

dead." Both of these assessments have been borne out by events.

Failure at Camp David

Like other summits, Camp David was an exercise in top-down governance — in this case neatly symbolized by the secluded, mountaintop venue of the talks. The world caught only the briefest glimpses of the negotiations. During the 15 days, pool cameras were allowed in only once, on the opening day. Barak and Arafat said nothing.

The news blackout proved to be only marginally effective. Throughout the talks, Palestinian and Israeli representatives both in Washington and the Mideast kept up a steady stream of public commentary, some of it based on details of what was going on at the presidential retreat. Much of this informed speculation and commentary proved accurate, but it often sounded like spin.

Almost from the beginning, Jerusalem emerged as the key sticking point, as expected. At first, Israel was willing to redefine Jerusalem by expanding the borders of the city to include Palestinian-controlled suburbs and according the Palestinians sovereignty over those sections. The Palestinians would also control access to what Jews call the Temple Mount and what the Palestinians call the Noble Sanctuary, site of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

When it became clear that Arafat would not accept these proposals, Barak went further, proposing to agree to Palestinian authority over portions of East Jerusalem in exchange for Palestinian recognition of Israel's claim of West Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestinians were ready to recognize Israeli sovereignty over the western part of the city.

Ideas of international control of the holy sites were discussed, as were proposals to postpone the issue entirely. Barak was willing to let the Palestinians fly the flag over the holy mosques but not to have overall sovereignty. Arafat would accept nothing less than full Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab and Christian quarters of the Old City.

"By the end of it, we had laid out a series of different possibilities," a senior U.S. official said. "And when it became clear that none of these possibilities were acceptable, I think the writing was on the wall that we weren't going to solve it right now."

Clinton now made a critical decision: He decided in the summit aftermath to specifically praise Barak's commitment to compromise during the talks.

By advertising Barak's willingness to make major compromises on Jerusalem, Clinton weakened Barak's hand in Israel and infuriated Arafat by labeling him the stumbling block to

peace. Sharon telegraphed his intention to visit the Al-Aqsa complex days ahead of time; during an informal visit to the Israeli prime minister's home, Arafat urged Barak to intervene. But interference with Sharon was politically impossible for Barak. If he stopped Sharon he would be protecting Palestinian control over the mosque complex before Israel had even formally agreed to that control.

The Aftermath

"Both the publics have to be more a part of what is going on," Albright said the day after the end of the Camp David talks. Would that this had been a higher priority before the talks. Clearly the Clinton administration had gambled on a summit success that would present a finished deal that would energize pro-peace Israelis and Palestinians and overwhelm the hardliners. They had no contingency plan for a summit failure.

In the immediate aftermath, however, there was little discussion of Camp David having been prematurely called. Rather the emphasis was on how close the two sides had come, the promise of real, concrete negotiations occurring on the most difficult issues, and the possibility that a deal could yet be reached in the coming months.

"Israeli-Palestinian talks have ended, but not failed," Judith Kipper, a Mideast expert with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said in late July. "Remarkably, there was no crisis in the talks and none in the region."

After the outbreak of violence, the Clinton administration used summit diplomacy — in Paris, and then in Sharm el-Sheikh — to respond to the crisis. As at Camp David, the results were disappointing. The practical outcome was inaction, confusion and bickering — and continuation of an increasingly violent Palestinian intifada and armed Israeli repression.

It was at this point that the reassessment of Camp David took hold in earnest, with voices from many points on the political compass questioning the wisdom of the go-for-broke gathering.

"I think the Camp David meetings were an exercise in overreach," said former Secretary of State George Shultz. "And the result was that every raw nerve imaginable got exposed."

As a new administration takes office, U.S. primacy over the Middle East peace process is in question.

From this sketch of the events surrounding Camp David, several flaws in planning and execution emerge:

- Haste stemming from political considerations that should have been subordinate to diplomatic considerations.
- Lack of public involvement in the run-up to the summit.
- A decision to abandon a slow but, by most accounts, successful incremental approach in favor of an all-out attempt to gain a comprehensive peace.
- Overestimation of Arafat's willingness to compromise on holy sites to get a final deal.
- Failure by Clinton to place a higher value on his own time and on the prestige of a presidential summit. Clinton's all-too-apparent eagerness for a summit cheapened the event, reducing administration leverage with Barak and Arafat.
- Underestimation of Arafat's flexibility on postponing the mid-September deadline set by the Palestinians for declaring statehood. In short, Afafat was more flexible on political questions than religious ones, though the administration's assessment of Arafat's posture was just the opposite.

Not surprisingly, Clinton defended his decision to convene the Camp David summit.

"I think if there had been no talks at Camp David it would be worse now because the pressure on the Palestinians to unilaterally declare a state would have been far worse, because their level of misunderstanding would have been even greater, because they had never — in all these years, they had never talked about these big, deep underlying issues," Clinton said.

As a new administration takes office in Washington, U.S. primacy over the Mideast peace process is in question. The U.N. and the European Union are taking on greater roles. Other than reiterating their support for Israel, neither major-party candidate for president offered creative new suggestions for achieving peace in the Mideast.

The proposal gaining the most currency, as sporadic violence continued in the West Bank and Gaza, was advanced by Max Kampelman, a former arms control negotiator, who urged a cooling-off period of perhaps a year.

"I sense that there's no consensus on either side. I think it will take at least a year — the wounds are so deep. You've got people in Israel who were committed to peace who are now questioning that commitment," Kampelman said in an interview.

It is going too far to say that Camp David caused the subsequent outbreak of violence in the Palestine and Israel. But the failed summit clearly helped destabilize the delicate political balance in the region. Clinton's successor is likely to be much more careful before lending presidential prestige and energy to an attempt to resolve a conflict of the 20th century that has carried over into the 21st. ■

BOOKS

GOVERNING GLOBALIZATION

A Future Perfect
John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, Crown Business, 2000, hardcover, 343 pages, $27.50

REVIEWED BY PAULO ALMEIDA

In the seemingly triumphal march of globalization, the authors of *A Future Perfect* have assumed the role of acolytes holding aloft laurels for the conquering hero, while whispering a warning that this glory may be fleeting. Despite some apparent foreboding, however, Micklethwait and Wooldridge are enthusiasts for globalization, convinced that it is not only good for the economy but also for the human condition.

To be sure, the authors stipulate that laissez faire capitalism, the 19th century precursor of globalization, failed miserably in the 20th century. But they believe the end of the Cold War presents a new opportunity to fulfill the economic and political promise of globalization.

Contrary to Thomas Friedman who, in last year's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, declared that globalization is as inevitable as the dawn, Micklethwait and Wooldridge warn the process could well fail again. But they see the chief threat as coming not from the idealists and anarchists shouting outside meetings of the World Bank and IMF, nor even from the cultural chauvinists inciting a mob to ransack a McDonald's franchise in France. Rather, the authors see the main problem as the "practical" politicians who seek to placate those few constituencies that are threatened by globalization instead of inspiring its many but diffuse beneficiaries to embrace its challenges.

To increase the odds that globalization will succeed in the 21st century, to the benefit of all, Micklethwait and Wooldridge urge governments to prepare their citizens by removing barriers to competition, improving public education, and combating monopolistic practices which could stifle innovation from start-up companies.

The porn film industry is an example of globalization in action.

In that regard, *A Future Perfect* insists that globalization is about more than just profits, and the authors wax eloquent about the symbiosis between liberalized markets and free political systems. Yet the authors use economic arguments when responding to the social and environmental criticism of free trade. It seems unlikely that those critics will be converted by such a narrow appeal.

There is also a disturbing contradiction between the authors' professed support for democracy and their apparent distaste for the practical business of constituency-building. For example, they dismiss as pandering President Clinton's call for the harmonization of labor and environmental standards as an objective for the next round of global trade negotiations, rather than hailing it as an opportunity to broaden support for globalization.

The authors tell a compelling story with the idiosyncratic verve characteristic of their work as correspondents for *The Economist*. Their work is well-researched and wide-ranging, covering everything from a capsule history of liberal economic theory to several case studies of contemporary globalization in action (including the curious example of the porn film industry). They also are free with their opinions on topics as diverse as management practices, U.N. reform and corporate philanthropy. Yet they do not assess NAFTA or the European Union as examples of free trade areas, and ignore the various climate change negotiations, even though the atmosphere and oceans are the most globalized of commodities.

As absorbing as this work is, in the end, Micklethwait and Wooldridge's defense of globalization comes up short due to such lacunae. The authors would strengthen their case for globalization by addressing its critics on their own terms. Developing compelling arguments for a process

that benefits the majority while still protecting the minority is a difficult task, as the writers of the *Federalist Papers* came to appreciate, but then that is why they call it statecraft.

Paulo Almeida was an FSO from 1985 to 1992, serving in Lisbon, Oporto and Harare. Since 1992, he has been an international affairs specialist at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Frontline Diplomacy: The U.S. Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection
The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, 2000, CD-ROM; $95 for ADST and DACOR members, $145 for non-member individuals (plus shipping/handling).

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Conducting oral interviews is, admittedly, an inherently subjective approach to researching historical questions. Yet, as this collection of transcripts proves, it can also be a powerful tool for showing how U.S. diplomats helped implement — and shape — foreign policy over much of the past century.

Under the best of circumstances, institutional records cannot possibly reflect diplomats' motivations, critiques, personal analyses and private thoughts about their role. In addition, by statute, the official written record of such events is not released by the Department of State until at least 30 years after the fact, and even then is subject to the vagaries of the declassification process.

In contrast, the nearly 900 participants interviewed over the past 12 years by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training for this collection (issued not in printed form but on the compact disk format known as CD-ROM) provide a wide range of reminiscences and commentary which collectively bring U.S. diplomacy to life. Although for understandable reasons, senior-level officials dominate the list of interviewees, ADST's "ecumenical" approach also encompasses mid-level FSOs, Civil Service officials from a host of agencies, military personnel, and political appointees. The collection also incorporates some two dozen interviews drawn from the archives of several U.S. presidential libraries.

Interview subjects are not shy about giving their assessments of past bureaucratic battles, particularly if they lost them.

Equally important, the transcripts survey all aspects of American diplomacy — not just adventures and crises, but also the less glamorous aspects of representing one's country abroad and dealing with bureaucracy. In addition, the interviews completed under the Women Ambassadors' Series by Ann Miller Morin include questions about gender roles.

The main recurring themes are the frequent divergence between foreign policy-making in Washington and policy implementation in the field, and the role of personality in shaping U.S. policy. Decades later, most of the diplomats interviewed still have strong feelings about the countries they served in, the issues they handled, and (last but certainly not least) their colleagues at all levels and stages of their careers. Nor are they shy about giving their assessments of past bureaucratic battles, particularly if they lost them. (To be sure, candor comes much more easily to retired diplomats who no longer have to fear professional opprobrium or retaliation from their peers.)

If this compilation contained nothing more than these individual transcripts, it would be well worth the price. But it also offers 48 "country readers," which assemble the relevant excerpts of the individual officer interviews into files searchable by country name. This additional research tool helps highlight aspects of U.S. policy in specific nations and to facilitate comparisons of various figures' (American and host country) views. One quibble, however: While the individual transcripts are broadly chronological, the country readers are not set up to facilitate following U.S. relations over time.

The CD also includes a search engine that allows researchers to create their own compilations of interview excerpts, just by typing in a word or combination of words. (For instance, it can be quite illuminating to put in a name and see what officers have to say about each other or how differently they recollect the same event!) Finally, the search engine also contains user-friendly software for highlighting, note-taking, saving and printing documents. ■

Steven Alan Honley is the associate editor of the Journal.

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POSTCARD FROM ABROAD

The Order of the Black Tulip

BY BOB GULDIN

For Americans who come to Washington, the Vietnam Memorial on the National Mall has become a place that must be seen — a stark, dark reminder of the only war the United States ever lost.

In 1996, I visited a site in Ekaterinburg, Russia, which made the Vietnam Memorial seem cheerful in comparison — a monument to the veterans of the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan.

Set in a large open plaza in the middle of that industrial city in the Urals, the memorial is a bleak reminder, not only of the lost war in Afghanistan, but also of the long history of Soviet and Russian interventions abroad.

At the center of the large steel and concrete display is a larger-than-life sculpture of a soldier who's had all the fight beaten out of him. He sits cross-legged, his head hanging down, his face a mixture of exhaustion and dejection. One arm hangs loose, the other holds an AK-47 pointed at the sky.

Ten curved steel pylons surround the soldier, each one marked at the top with a year from 1979 through 1989 — the years of the Afghanistan intervention (1979 and 1980 are clustered together).

It is clear that the Ekaterinburg memorial — consciously or unconsciously — borrows conceptually from its predecessor in Washington. As you read down the pylon for each year, you see the names of all the Soviet soldiers from the Urals region who died in Afghanistan that year. The curved steel pylons, I was told, represent the ribs of a cargo plane, carrying bodies back home for burial.

A memorial to Russia's war dead in Afghanistan tells a long story.

Much like its Vietnam counterpart, the memorial tells a story of escalation and then withdrawal from a demoralizing quagmire of a war. The lists of the dead grow longer after 1979, peaking in 1985, then decreasing in the late '80s as the Soviet forces withdrew.

At the base of every pylon, and displayed prominently at the base of the memorial, are black metal sculptures of two tulips, entwined.

"Why black tulips?" I asked Evgenii Petrov, the head of the local chapter of the Organization of Afghanistan Veterans during a visit to the group's headquarters.

He explained, "When we got to Afghanistan, we saw fields and hillsides covered with tulips, so we associated tulips with Afghanistan. Somehow, the planes carrying corpses back to Russia came to be called black tulips." The idea for the monument had started with the veterans organization, Petrov told me.

More than a memorial to a lost cause, the monument lists at its base every foreign military campaign in which Soviet soldiers fought (and presumably died) from the 1920s to the 1990s. An amazing record of superpower ambition: China, 1924-1950; Spain 1936-1939; Khasan 1938; Khalkin-Gol 1939; Finland 1939-1940; Japan 1945; North Korea 1950-1953; Hungary 1956; Laos 1960-1970; Vietnam 1961-1974; Algeria 1962-1974; Yemen 1962-1969; Egypt 1962-1975; Cuba 1962-1989; Mozambique 1967-1979; Syria 1967-1982; Czechoslovakia 1968; Cambodia 1970; Bangladesh 1972-1973; Angola 1975-1979; Ethiopia 1977-1979; Afghanistan 1979-1989; Lebanon 1982; Yugoslavia 1993-1995. The list ended with a number of Russian interventions in what used to be Soviet territory. The last was Chechnya — where war still rages.

Surprisingly, the only war not recognized was the Soviet Union's greatest victory, World War II, which Russians still call the Great Patriotic War. Perhaps the makers of the Afghan soldiers' monument felt enough has been said on that topic — after all, directly across the plaza rises a large monument to the victory over Germany, with horses and chariots in the grand Soviet style.

I couldn't help noticing that the makers of the monument had left plenty of room for new wars to be added to that long list of military campaigns. Perhaps they knew their homeland only too well. ■

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