

ICAR News

A Publication of the Institute for
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Barack Obama: A Conflict Resolution Friendly White House?

By Dennis J.D. Sandole, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, dsandole@gmu.edu

Since his election and inauguration, it has been clear that Barack Obama, represents many things to many people, not only in the U.S., but worldwide as well. I experienced his global appeal when I was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and a Muslim Tamil Indian, who considers himself a member of Malaysia's minority population, confided that he was exhilarated by Obama's empowering maxim: "Yes, we can!"



Barack Obama taking the Oath of Office. Photo: Wikimedia.

Another dimension of Mr. Obama's significance derives from the combined influence of his Kenyan Muslim father; his Anglo Christian mother from Kansas; his childhood spent in Hawaii and Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation; and his work as a community organizer

on Chicago's South Side. He has an undergraduate degree from Columbia and a law degree from Harvard, where he served as the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review. Most notably, after delivering a rousing keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2004, he came out of nowhere to persuade Americans to elect him as the nation's first African-American President!

The significance of Obama's background, which resonates with conflict resolution theorists and practitioners, is that he is sensitive to the observation

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ICAR, ELI Partner for Dialogue

By Leila Peterson, ICAR Adjunct Professor, lpetersh@gmu.edu

The ICAR Undergraduate Program actively seeks ways to reach out across the George Mason community. Last fall, the Undergraduate Program collaborated with the English Language Institute (ELI) to create an experiential learning opportunity in cross-cultural communication and dialogue. CONF 202 Dialogue and Difference combined with ELI 089 Dialogue with Americans to offer a joint course focused on dialogue about the U.S. election and identity politics.

Students from the two classes represented 15 different countries, with the majority of students from Korea, the United States, Sudan, China, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam. The majors and areas of academic study represented in the class were equally diverse. "The diversity among the students challenged us all to examine our fundamental assumptions about government, politics, and democracy," said Leila Peterson, ICAR Adjunct Professor.

The course began with a dialogue workshop designed to build trust and develop individual communication skills such as listening, identifying assumptions, and asking questions. The class then moved to a series of eight dialogues on topics relevant to the election, including immigration, the role of religion in government, the relationship of the West and Muslim world, and race, ethnicity, and nationalism. Student groups designed and led each dialogue, giving them the opportunity to experiment with different formats and techniques. Although designed to maximize the time the students spent learning together, the course also allowed opportunities for the two groups of students to reflect on their experiences separately.



Dialogue course participants. Photo: Michael Smith.

ELI has provided English language instruction at GMU since 1981 and also works with students to develop academic skills and cultural awareness. "It was a natural fit. This gave my students the opportunity to interact with GMU students, learn about the U.S. from Americans, and get a sense of what an academic class entails," said Michael Smith, ELI instructor. "And, the CONF 202 students didn't just learn about conflict resolution theory – they got to experience it," added Peterson. Both departments are excited about continuing the partnership between ICAR and ELI.

The students shared their perspectives on the experience during the final class. One student noted, "I could understand other students from other countries. Their thoughts, customs, behaviors; some things were very similar to mine, but others were totally different. We have seen the same event, but our viewpoints were various. I learned that I had to escape from bias when I saw or heard news. I also learned the way to dialogue with another people. Although I have opposite opinion, I have to respect the other people's opinion. Before speaking, listen." ■

network

Michael Shank Heads for the Hill

By Julie Shedd, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate and Associate Director for Administration, jshedd@gmu.edu

Michael Shank, ICAR's Communications Director, bid farewell to the Institute to pursue a new challenge as the Communications Director for U.S. Representative Mike Honda from California. During Michael's tenure at ICAR the institute made giant leaps forward in media presence and communications savvy. Among his many accomplishments, Michael is responsible for developing the ICAR News Network - ICAR's online news and analysis portal. Michael designed, developed, and hosted Analyze This - ICAR's weekly radio and online broadcast. These initiatives have helped expand ICAR's reach, offering analysis on current conflicts that is accessible around the world. Michael also developed and published the ICAR Newsletter and assisted faculty, students, and staff with writing and publishing Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor in regional, national, and international newspapers. But with all the visible accomplishments in print, on the web, and in video, Michael's biggest accomplishment was building confidence among ICAR's faculty, staff, and students in our capability to reach the larger world with ICAR's message. We wish Michael well with his new undertaking and know he will continue to open doors for the ICAR Community. ■



Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate.
Photo: ICAR.

ICAR APT Team Off to Morocco

M.S. and Ph.D Students Seek to Apply Theory to Practice

By Kathryn P. Roberts, ICAR M.S. Student, krobertm@gmu.edu

As one of three options for graduation, ICAR M.S. students have the chance to participate in the Applied Practice and Theory (APT) program. Under the guidance and mentorship of a faculty member, this six-credit capstone aims to provide students with real-world application of the theories learned in the classroom.

The Applied Practice and Theory program was developed in 1992 to create an opportunity for students to practice in the Conflict Resolution field with a safety net – a faculty member to counsel and mentor them as they face realistic conflicts in the community they are working in. Over the subsequent 17 years of APT team projects, a need was voiced for a similar program for students interested in comprehensive and long-term research projects.

In an effort to provide different APT opportunities that met the broad range of student interests, Karina Korostelina was asked to mentor a research focused APT team. In the years since, she has worked with groups engaging conflicts in Chiapas, Mexico – a trip made memorable by a meeting with a Zapatista leader in the middle of the rainforest – as well as projects at the International Criminal Court, and justice and peacebuilding for the United Nations.

Led by Korostelina, the current research team, comprised of eight students – 3 Ph.D. students and 5 Master's students – is focusing on the impact of modernization on Islamic Radicalization in Morocco. Unlike most other APTs, the group met once a week in an ICAR classroom in preparation for their trip to Morocco, where they will meet with 20 to 30 international and local NGO leaders, academics and religious leaders. Essentially, they spent the last year developing their research knowledge base in order to conduct these interviews.

All eight students involved in this project had little to no research background when they met for the first time. Korostelina prides herself on teaching her students the basics of research design, which she believes, is fundamental to developing the Conflict Resolution field. In her words, she is “growing a new generation of researchers.” By participating in a research APT program, she believes students will develop the skills necessary for jobs in analytical fields post-graduation.

M.S. student Xanthie Mangum plans to use the tools she has learned in this APT program to work in the Conflict Resolution field after she



Photos: Paul Snodgrass.

earns a Ph.D. – preferably as an overseas investigator for the federal government. She sees this program as a chance to gain research tools, as well as conflict resolution practice and theory in one place.

The research-based APT group provides research tools to each student through practical experience: “Action research is conditional and learned,” said M.S. student and Fulbright grantee Aneela Shamshad. She registered for the APT class in order to internalize research methods and designs through interactions with her fellow group members, and to gain interviewing experience onsite in Morocco this spring.

Jamila Mammadova, also an M.S. student, plans to graduate this spring and is simultaneously writing her thesis on a different topic. The tools she has gained throughout the year have helped her develop her own thesis. The research APT group appealed to her for the travel opportunity, as well as the field application of research.

For the three Ph.D. students in the program, these credits are not required for their curriculum. One of those students, Clement Aapengnuo, wanted the practical experience more than the general credits he is earning toward his doctorate. Ph.D. student Suliman Giddo agrees, “At work, when you make mistakes, you get fired.” In the APT program, mistakes turn into opportunities for learning.

The Morocco APT team is comprised of ICAR students: Clement Aapengnuo, Fatima Hadji, Xanthie Mangum, Jamila Mammadova, Ali Erol, Erica Soren, Suliman Giddo, and Aneela Shamshad. ■



initiatives

Point of View Hosts Georgia, South Ossetia Peacebuilders

By Susan Allen Nan, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, snan@gmu.edu

EVENTS

George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution hosted South Ossetian and Georgian civil society-based peacebuilders from December 16-19 at Point of View, the University's conflict resolution retreat facility at Mason Neck, VA. Susan Allen Nan, Assistant Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, planned the session and facilitated with Dr. Paula Garb and Laura Olsen. The meeting represents one of the first focused track two or citizen diplomacy initiatives since the August war disrupted Georgian-South Ossetian relations.

The individuals in this track two meeting participated in their own personal capacity. During the meeting, they discussed the implications of the August war in rebuilding peace and security in the region, as well as areas where civil society initiatives could play a constructive part in improving relations. These exploratory discussions generated creative ideas for civil society contributions to the overall peace process. "The participants persevered through difficult conversations and made plans for

working together to identify missing persons, facilitate dialogues between other Georgians and South Ossetians, protect human rights in the conflict zone, and open communication between their societies," said Nan. "I am really grateful for USAID funding the Georgian participants' travel to the dialogue, Planethood Foundation covering workshop expenses, broad university support, and the use of Point of View for these discussions." ■



ICAR professor Susan Allen Nan with participants. Photo: Adrienne Struss.

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

For more info on events, email Erica Soren, esoren@gmu.edu

Thursday, March 26, 2009

Guest Speaker: Sally Engle Merry, NYU
Indicators, Human Rights, and Global Governance

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

Thursday, March 26, 2009

Guest Speaker: David Shasha
Contested Histories & Disembodied Voices: How to Speak of the Arab Jew

7:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

Friday, March 27, 2009

Civilian Devastation in War Conference
8:00 am - 6:30 pm, Original Building, 329

Saturday, April 4, 2009

Point of View Watershed Cleanup
9:00 am - 2:00 pm, Point of View in Lorton, VA

Thursday, April 16, 2009

Guest Speaker: Randa Slim
Assessing Democratization Efforts in Iraq
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

Ambassador Hill Gives CR Lecture

By Susan Allen Nan, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, snan@gmu.edu

On Monday, February 9, Ambassador William Hill presented a public lecture on "The OSCE and Moldovan-Transdnestrian Conflict Resolution" in the Johnson Center Cinema. This lecture followed a discussion with the class CONF 495 Organizations and Actors in the Conflict Field.

Ambassador Hill is a Wilson Center Public Policy Scholar and served two terms as the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, where he was charged with the negotiation of a political settlement to the Transdnestrian conflict and facilitation of the withdrawal of Russian forces, arms, and ammunition from Moldova. When the war erupted over South Ossetia in August, pitting Georgian, South Ossetian, and Russian military forces against each other in a five-day war, many raised questions about the prospects for settling the similarly structured post-Soviet Transdnestrian conflict. Moldova claims Transdnestria as part of Moldova, but Transdnestria asserts independence. This conflict continues as a frozen conflict today. ■



Ambassador Hill. Photo: Christy Larsen.

Zones of Peace in the South Caucasus

By Susan Allen Nan, ICAR Faculty, Irakli Kakabadze, ICAR M.S. Alumni, Arsen Kharatyan, Jamila Mammadova, ICAR M.S. Student, and Ekaterina Romanova, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

Published 2/26/09 in Contact

At a recent symposium held at George Mason University, peacebuilders based in Baku, Tbilisi, Yerevan, Moscow, and Washington D.C. considered the concept of Zones of Peace.

While Georgian Minister for Reintegration Temuri Yakobashvili's announcement this week of the Georgian initiative to declare Abkhazia a weapon-free zone was met with disdain by Russia and Abkhazia, there is merit to a much broader consideration of Zones of Peace. Beyond simply banning weapons, Zones of Peace are geographic areas where violence is limited and a culture of peace and tolerance is encouraged. Zones of Peace, already successful elsewhere, present promising prospects for the future of the South Caucasus, particularly if structured so as to be attractive to all involved. For example, if the Georgian government were to work towards making all of Georgia – not only Abkhazia-- a weapons-free zone, that idea might find favorable Russian and Abkhaz consideration.

Rather than becoming a battlefield for global power struggles, the Caucasus as a whole could transform into a Zone of Peace, where no military powers would compete and all cultural traditions, religious practices, and languages would be respected. We know transformations are possible; post-World War II European reconciliation giving rise to the E.U. demonstrates radical transformation. Zones of Peace in the South Caucasus are also possible—hopefully without another sixty-year delay.

Zones of Peace have worked to keep villagers in Colombia and the Philippines safe from the violence surrounding their homes, to protect eighty-six communities in a larger Local Zone of Peace in Ecuador, and to safeguard residents along the mountainous Peru-Ecuador border. In an even grander peace initiative, the entire country of Costa Rica relinquished its military forces. Zones of Peace could offer similar benefits in isolated villages, across buffer zones, or regionally throughout the South Caucasus.

There is a history in the Caucasus of markets serving as informal Zones of Peace in the towns of Egret and Sadakhlo, and at the Red Bridge market. While local people from across conflict lines have bought and sold produce, they have also kept communication open between their communities. More of these micro Zones of Peace could facilitate necessary local trade, while simultaneously keeping grassroots communication open between the societies separated by conflict. Legalizing and supporting markets in Zugdidi near the Inguri, near Sadakhlo, the Red Bridge area, and Ergneti would minimize the threat of heroin trade or other illicit activities by allowing appropriate regulation of market

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Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Washington Also Needs to Change the Way it Engages

By Susan Allen Nan, ICAR Professor
Financial Times, 2/26/09

Why Hamas Wants to Marginalize the PLO

By Rawhi Afaghani, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Al Arabiya News Channel, 2/25/09

From Open Door to No-Go: Interpreting Iran's Policy Toward Afghan Refugees

By Carrie Chomuik, ICAR M.S. Student
Think Tank, Stimson, 2/23/09

The Ripe Moment for Peace is Over

By Rawhi Afaghani, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Arab Writers Group Syndicate, 1/29/09

Obama, Change South Asia Policy

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
The Nation, 1/26/09

Time for a New Start on Afghanistan Policy

By Neamat Nojumi, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Journal Sentinel, 1/24/09

20th Anniversary of UN GA Resolution 43/189: Specific Measures in Favour of Island Developing Countries

By Alfred Farrugia, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
The Malta Independent, 12/20/08

Boost to Small Island Developing States

By Alfred Farrugia, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Times of Malta, 12/20/08

Media Silent as Indian Muslims Forego Holiday

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor
Media For Freedom, 12/17/08

G20 Momentum Could Spur Collective Climate Action

By Dennis Sandole, ICAR Professor
Financial Times, 12/16/08

Fierce Blame Game in Georgia

By Susan Allen Nan, ICAR Professor
The Wall Street Journal, 12/08/08

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In Memoriam

Henry C. Barringer: A Personal Reflection

By Dennis J.D. Sandole, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, dsandole@gmu.edu



Henry Barringer with Dennis Sandole and Bryant Wedge. Photo: Mason Gazette Archive.

It is with great sadness that we at ICAR report that Henry C. Barringer, co-creator with the late Dr. Bryant Wedge of the “Center for Conflict Resolution,” which eventually became the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, passed away on January 14, 2009, at 88 years of age.

Henry, a retired U.S. Foreign Service Officer, was a delightful, generous individual with great vision for how the United States could be a force for positive peace in the world.

It was this vision that enabled him and Bryant Wedge to work for the creation of a U.S. National Peace Academy in the 1970s and early 1980s, which eventually led to, in addition to the U.S. Institute of Peace, the establishment of CCR/ICAR in 1981.

I am honored to have been associated with Henry and Bryant, as the very first faculty hire of CCR/ICAR in August 1981. In those halcyon days, CCR was located in Fenwick Library on the Fairfax Campus as a part-time operation: Henry and Bryant were co-directors, Mary Lynn Boland was secretary, and I was split between CCR and the Department of Public Affairs, where I taught courses in International Relations. In the background as constant pillars of support were Professors Tom Williams, then Dean of the Graduate School, and Joseph Scimecca, then Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (who eventually succeeded Henry and Bryant as CCR director).

During that time, Henry was indefatigable in his efforts to sustain CCR, including locating well-placed individuals in the community to comprise ICAR’s Advisory Board, providing financial and other support. One member of the Board, Ed Lynch, together with his wife Helen and son Bill, have been very generous to ICAR over the years, including leaving us their beautiful property at Point of View along the Potomac River. It was at Point of View, in fact, where I saw Henry for the last time during an unveiling last year of a portrait of our colleague

Dr. John Burton, with whom I had worked at University College London in England. Henry was instrumental in bringing John to ICAR in the mid-1980s. Henry looked fit and lively and was as charming and sharp as ever!

On a more personal note, Henry’s generosity extended to giving me a lift to and from campus, since I was without a car during my first year at George Mason University. During those drives, Henry would talk about his time as a young U.S. Army officer at Bletchley Park, England, during World War II, working on cracking the German Enigma code and

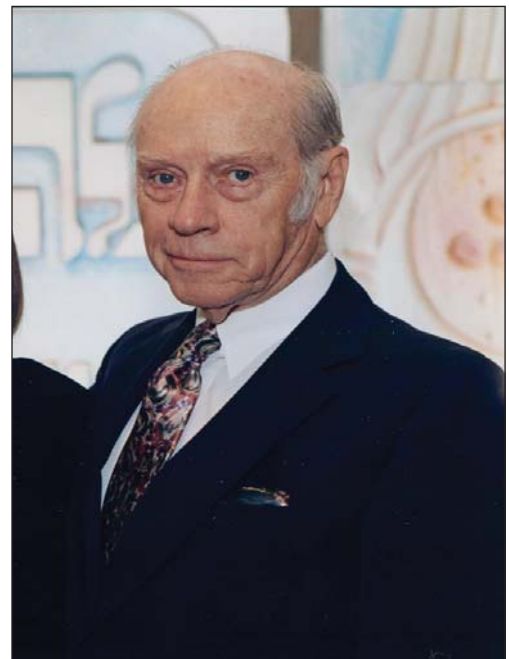
later interviewing German prisoners-of-war, and his experiences as a multilingual American diplomat during the Cold War in Burundi, Columbia, Congo, Denmark, Germany, and Greece.

Although Henry passed away shortly before the inauguration of President Barack Obama, I am convinced that he would have been pleased that, finally, we had a president who would embody what CCR/ICAR -- thanks to Henry and Bryant’s salutary efforts -- was trying to create: new generations of peacemakers.

Henry, we will miss you very much! ■

“Henry was a delightful, generous individual with great vision...”

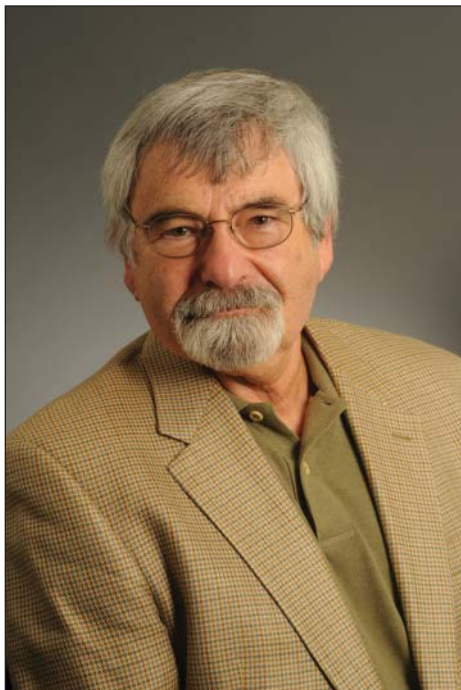
—DENNIS SANDOLE



Henry Barringer.
Photo courtesy of William Barringer.

Obama: A Conflict Resolution-Minded Commander in Chief

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Dennis Sandole is a professor of Conflict Resolution at ICAR. Photo: ICAR.

that different people of different backgrounds bring different perspectives. As a community organizer – and now global community organizer par excellence – Mr. Obama has indicated as one of his strengths: “put me in a room with a lot of different people, and by the end of the day, we will have consensus!” Given the perilous state of the world that he has inherited, nothing could be more important.

Chief among his talents is listening respectfully to people who are not accustomed to being listened to: those who have been marginalized, oppressed, and worse – part of the genesis of post-9/11 terrorism. This is evidenced by his inaugural address, and most recently, by his appearance on Al Arabiya, where he made a broad appeal to the Arab and Muslim worlds as someone who has Muslims in his own family. His message is that the United States is ready to work with them, including Iran. Former Senator George J. Mitchell, Obama’s personal emissary to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has been dispatched to the region with the

charge to listen to all of the parties (with the exception of Hamas).

President Obama’s readiness to work with others at complex problem solving was demonstrated in his article, “Renewing American Leadership,” in the July/Aug 2007 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, and in his first foreign policy speech, “Obama’s Remarks on Iraq and Afghanistan,” (*New York Times* 7/15/08). His core theme has been bringing people together to achieve consensus in order to solve complex global problems. His calls for appropriate changes of mindset plus the demonstration of effective U.S. leadership within multilateral settings represent significant departures from Washington’s ideologically driven policies of the last eight years.

The primary “outlier” in this otherwise “CR-friendly” portrait of the President is his stated position on the war in Afghanistan, where his draw down of U.S. troops in Iraq correlates to an increase in troop strength in Afghanistan, to deal with the resurrected Taliban insurgency. Associated with this concern is the recent attack on suspected Taliban targets in Pakistan, launched during Mr. Obama’s first week in office, which caused a number of casualties, possibly including children.

These concerns are valid, but if we examine President Obama’s Afghan policy in a larger framework, they may be put to rest. This larger framework is compatible with a conceptual device that I call the “three levels of conflict reality”: (1) Conflict as symptoms; (2) Conflict as underlying fractured relationships that give rise to symptoms; and (3) Conflict as underlying deep-rooted causes and conditions of the fractured relationships that give rise to symptoms.

Mr. Obama’s framework for Afghanistan, which corresponds to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s “three legs to the stool of American foreign policy” -- defense, diplomacy,

and development -- includes (1) more troops (defense) to deal with conflict as symptoms; (2) more diplomacy to deal with fractured relationships which give rise to the symptoms; and (3) more

development to deal with the underlying deep-rooted causes and conditions of the fractured relationships.

This reorientation of U.S. policy reflects the sentiments of General

Petraeus, whose CENTCOM responsibilities include Afghanistan and Iraq and who co-wrote the U.S. military’s new guidelines on counterinsurgency.

Mr. Obama’s defense-based “surge” into Afghanistan (symptoms) must occur within a more comprehensive framework inclusive of diplomacy (relationships) and development (deep-rooted causes). The balance of the shifting investments and prioritization across these three interrelated components of his foreign policy “stool” will determine whether Mr. Obama’s conflict resolution promise remains intact or comes under significant challenge. ■

“Chief among his talents is listening to people who are not accustomed to being listened to.”

—DENNIS SANDOLE

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

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There is Hope for India and Pakistan

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
The Christian Science Monitor, 12/04/08

Pakistan's Fragile State

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
International Herald Tribune, 12/04/08

Obama Shouldn't Transfer Bush's Iraq Policy to Afghanistan

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate and Shukria Dellawar, ICAR M.S. Student
The Guardian, 12/03/08

16th OSCE Ministerial Council Needs to Look at Cyprus

By Alfred Farrugia, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Journal Sentinel, 12/01/08

Student Opinion

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activities.

Larger buffer zones already established along the lines of conflict could also become Zones of Peace. Instead of resounding with daily sniper fire, these spaces could become truly demilitarized zones. Unarmed military observers or others invited by the local community could patrol such security zones to prevent illegal activities and protect their demilitarized character.

An even more ambitious regional Zone of Peace would remove military forces from the whole South Caucasus, allowing economic interests to flourish and a culture of peace to develop. With local police curbing crime, the people in the zone would stop allocating precious resources to fight debilitating wars, and development would surge with more open market access. In the absence of the threat of war, travel between the conflict zones would be restored, and a longer-term conversation on settling political differences without the use of force could develop. Only a stable Zone of Peace, and much time, will make real reconciliation possible.

The peace within the European Union was not built overnight. It emerged from the ashes of World War II when a few individuals envisioned the possibility of cooperation.

They started with coal and steel, and grew into more multifaceted cooperation.

The South Caucasus, too, could be dramatically different in time. Zones of Peace could start small with markets along the conflict lines, then build towards whole buffer zones, and eventually include broader regional arrangements. Gradually building Zones of Peace will steer the Caucasus away from a future of ongoing geopolitical struggle and violent conflict, and instead toward one of interethnic and interreligious coexistence.

The Georgian initiative for a weapons-free Abkhazia is only one version of a Zone of Peace. In this tense post-war period, other structures including parallel demilitarization on all sides would be more widely attractive to all parties. Both small and large Zones of Peace can only be built cooperatively, when all parties willingly giving up the option of resorting to violence. The radical transformation from a war-torn region to a beacon of peace will require courageous risks. Are we willing to take risks today so that, in two or three generations, coexistence in the Caucasus will be as obvious as the E.U.'s post-World War II integration is today? ■



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Al Jazeera Forum: "Power, Media, and the Middle East"

By Solon Simmons, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, ssimmon5@gmu.edu

When one thinks of a gathering of representatives of a satellite news channel, it is not common to imagine a heady academic debate about the role that media plays in the structure of power relations. But this is what made the March forum, hosted by Al Jazeera, so strange and exciting; as academics, political leaders and broadcasters gathered to imagine the ways in which the world is



Al Jazeera's Doha Newsroom. Photo: Wikimedia.

changing and to consider what roles opinion makers will play in bringing those changes about. It is worth thinking seriously about these issues and what the conflict analysis and resolution perspective has to offer the debate—all the more since such a perspective was generally absent from the proceedings.

The goal of the fourth annual forum entitled,

"Power, Media, and the Middle East," was to host a mix of journalists, analysts, and academics to discuss a provocative array of topics. The panels were held in a dazzling theater at the Doha Sheraton, festooned with technology, draped with blue-lighted cloth, and piping music reminiscent of Carmina Burana, just under the level of direct experience. The Gothic framework seemed appropriate in a part of the world where history appears as relevant today as does the news.

The speakers were an impressive mix,

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CRDC Leads at ALLMEP Summit

By Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution Staff, crdc@gmu.edu

On March 19, 2009, two weeks after the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution co-hosted a summit launching the idea of a \$200 million annual fund for Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding organizations, the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (IFFIPP) Authorization Act of 2009 (H.R. 1065) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. The introduction of the Bill was the result of the Alliance for Middle East Peace Summit, which convened on March 4th, at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., to consider the creation of the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

The concept of the fund was borrowed from the very successful International Fund for Ireland (IFI), which has funneled \$1.6 billion into Ireland's civil society since its inception in 1986. The hope is that this public-private, multi-national fund, which is seen as an essential component of a holistic, long-term, and sustainable approach to conflict resolution in the Middle East, will deploy the resources and expertise necessary to grow peacebuilding efforts to a level where they have a chance of competing with the myriad violent and unjust alternatives available in the region.

ICAR second year Master's student, and newly appointed CRDC Managing Director, Scott Cooper, was part of the 10 member planning committee that designed the ALLMEP Summit. He facilitated a call in November 2008, which established the core structure for the Summit. With guidance from CRDC Director, Marc Gopin, and invaluable support from CRDC GRA and first year Master's student, Mutsuko Sugita, CRDC Senior Research Associate, Aziz Abu Sarah, and a dedicated group of ALLMEP volunteers, the next five months were spent coordinating the event.

The primary objective of the Summit was to



CRDC's Gopin, Cooper, and Abu Sarah in conversation with IFFIPP Fund stakeholders including Ambassadors from Morocco, Jordan, the PLO, and Director of IFI. Photo: ALLMEP.

“develop and build support for legislation authorizing the creation of the International Fund by governments worldwide.” During the Summit, 75 meetings were conducted on Capitol Hill, advocating the creation of the IFFIPP. In addition, Marc Gopin and Scott Cooper participated in a closed-door, ambassador-level meeting between ALLMEP leaders and chief Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and Moroccan diplomats to discuss the proposed fund. At one point during the conference, the Director General of the IFI, Alexander Smith, spoke poignantly of his hope for Middle East peace based on the successful Irish experience.

The purpose of H.R. 1065 is “to seek the establishment of and contributions to an International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and for other purposes.” To that end, the bill allocates \$50 million annually for Fiscal Years 2010 through 2014, as part of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. CRDC encourages the ICAR community to support the Bill by contacting their legislators. For more information or to get involved in the project, contact CRDC. ■

network

ICAR Faculty and Adjuncts Gather for Joint Meeting

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, ICAR Adjunct Professor, syamin1@gmu.edu

A spirit of camaraderie pervaded the ICAR faculty meeting held on February 6, 2009, in the Truland Building. The joint meeting, representing both the regular and adjunct faculty, was the first such initiative organized to strengthen cohesion amongst the two branches of the teaching staff. Faculty members had an opportunity to mingle and exchange ideas with many of their colleagues over a light lunch. Subsequently, a round of formal introductions took place, and all present were invited to share their views. The gathering acknowledged ICAR's adjunct faculty as a valuable asset to the academic program, as their contributions to both the graduate and undergraduate programs were noted. A suggestion to have an adjunct faculty representative on the Faculty Board was welcomed by all. Members of the adjunct faculty shared stories of successful coordination with ICAR's regular faculty, while others expressed the desire to see more avenues of communication opened to promote a greater sense of community at ICAR. The meeting marked a renewed commitment by ICAR's teaching faculty to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in their efforts. ■

ICAR's Drucie French Cumbie Fellows Ph.D. Students Working Together "To Get There"

By Tetsushi Ogata, ICAR Ph.D. Student, togata@gmu.edu

The Drucie French Cumbie Chair was awarded to Dr. Andrea Bartoli in 2007, when he transitioned to ICAR from Columbia University where he was Founding Director of the Center for International Conflict Resolution (CICR). In his inaugural Cumbie Lecture at ICAR, Dr. Bartoli made his vision explicit:

"The Drucie French Cumbie Chair is the perfect environment for the growth of integration of theory and practice that will develop the field of conflict resolution further. Located at ICAR, the preeminent center of research in the field, the Chair has been served by a wonderful colleague, Chris Mitchell. I am honored to be working in this capacity and contributing to the study and practice of peacemaking."

"How can we get there?" I have been privileged to work with Dr. Bartoli as his graduate research assistant since he arrived at ICAR. He asks this question all the time. Not necessarily to me, but mostly to himself. In fact, he repeats it so often, with his wonderful Italian accent, that many readers may have heard him ask it.

Dr. Bartoli recognizes that the conversation to position (or reposition) ICAR as a leading force in the field of Conflict Resolution must be expansive, rigorous, and inclusive. To that end, we often speak about the need to integrate research, theory, teaching, and practice.

Dr. Bartoli understands that in order to get there, ICAR needs to foster a fertile environment for new and talented researchers to grow in the field. He sees that the source of ICAR's development in the present actually lies in cultivating the future. This understanding led to the formation of the inaugural group of Drucie French Cumbie Fellows, including Ph.D. students: Clement Aapengnuo, Maneshka Eliatamby, Vandy Kanyako, Martha Mutisi, Tetsushi Ogata, and Molly Tepper.

The creation of a group of Ph.D. students who not only think critically based on the foundational values that ICAR espouses, but also act as ICAR—or act in concert with one another as they represent ICAR at conferences and meetings—networking with scholars and professionals and bringing the fruits of that experience back to the Institute for further consideration, advances the goal of *getting there*. Through the



From left to right: Molly Tepper, Martha Mutisi, Andrea Bartoli, Tetsushi Ogata, and Vandy Kanyaku (not pictured: Maneshka Eliatamby and Clement Aapengnuo). Photo: ICAR.

collaborative work of the Cumbie Fellows, not just individual ICAR students, but ICAR as an institution can be *present* in the room, and it can be there with institutional intentionality.

The Cumbie Fellows are currently working with ICAR's faculty to compile a list of their scholarly accomplishments in 2008. The list will appear in GMU's "Celebration of Achievement," an annual publication cataloging each department's academic accomplishments. Through this project, students are partnering with the faculty, working as one institution. Whether this is "Italian style" or "ICAR style," the underlying idea warrants serious attention. The work of the Cumbie Fellows is stimulating an environment that fosters a broad, rigorous, and inclusive culture of conversation, collaboration, and exchange at ICAR. Possibilities abound as to what Cumbie Fellows can and will do in the future.

Although the initial group of Cumbie Fellows was formed spontaneously in order to jump-start the project, Drucie French Cumbie Fellowships are open to all currently enrolled Ph.D. students. The term of the Fellowship is variable, and applications may be submitted to the Chair throughout the year. It is Dr. Bartoli's hope that the Cumbie Fellows will continue to serve as a conduit of communication and facilitation at ICAR, blazing pathways for *getting there*—to ICAR's new era. ■

“The Cumbie Fellows will continue to serve as a conduit of communication and facilitation at ICAR.”

—TETSUSHI OGATA

initiatives

ICAR Hosts Civilian Devastation in War Conference

By Daniel Rothbart, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, drothbar@gmu.edu

EVENTS

Caught in the wake of martial forces, civilians live a strange kind of existence. Cast as objects defined only in their relation to the activities and objectives of military campaigns, civilians are war's weakest participants who, simultaneously, endure the greatest degree of suffering. Military fatalities represent a fraction of those of civilians—their deaths in comparison are calculated at a ratio of one-to-eight on a global scale.

Seeking to draw attention to the plight of civilians in war, ICAR sponsored a conference on March 27, 2009, entitled "Civilian Devastation in War." Researchers, scholars, and practitioners addressed the scale of civilian casualties in war, the sources of such casualties, the current state of practices seeking to reduce civilian casualties, and alternative practices for civilian protection. The conference opened with a keynote address by Chris Hedges whose experience as a war correspondent provided the backdrop for explaining how "good people" at home can succumb to deep psychological instincts and strongly favor violence as a means of solving global problems. Hedges powerfully illustrated how war fosters a kind of religious vigilance in the name of a secular or religious god.

"Civilians are war's weakest participants who, simultaneously, endure the greatest degree of suffering."

—DANIEL ROTHBART

Dr. Hugo Slim, who has written extensively on civilians in war, discussed a new form of consciousness that allows insight into the processes that drive a nation to condone collective violence, as well as inflict and then deny the resultant civilian suffering.

Other speakers addressed the promise and the problems linked to the international humanitarian laws of war. According to Dr. Aaron Fellmeth, such laws seek to minimize civilian casualties by constraining the actions of military leaders and placing limits on the targeting

of civilians. Marc Garlasco, a senior analyst at Human Rights Watch, explained how his organization relies on such laws when confronting military leaders with cases of civilian brutality at the hands of their troops. Humanitarian peace operations also seek to address such suffering, as Georgetown's Donald Daniel demonstrated. Ira Houch, Chaplain in the U.S. Army, discussed how international laws and enforcement mechanisms around humanitarian issues can be strengthened.

The failings of international law to protect civilians in modern war are legend. In his riveting account of the war in Darfur, ICAR's Suliman Giddo recounted atrocities perpetrated by members of the Janjaweed tribe, who work in concert with the Government of Sudan on an ideological mission to Islamize and Arabize Darfur. Their collaboration shows how inadequate international laws are in enforcing restrictions on state-sanctioned violence. Neta Crawford, professor of political science, characterized civilian casualties in state-sponsored wars as systematic, routine, and structural. Her research on U.S. military history revealed patterns of massive civilian devastation in U.S. wars.

Dr. Karina Korostelina offered an original conception of civilians in war, replacing the dualism of groups in enmity with a triplet model involving the ingroup in their relations to BOTH the enemy Other and the civilian Other. This new framing of conflictual relations was illustrated by Neta Oren's narrative analysis of testimony given by the Israeli leadership during an investigation of decisions made in the Second Lebanon War.

The conference concluded with accounts of two modes of practice. Sarah Holewinski, President of Campaign for Innocent Civilians In Conflict, summarized a project in which civilians receive compensation from military forces. Dr. Christopher Mitchell explained how zones of peace have been created to protect civilians who are engulfed by war's tumult.

The success of the conference has prompted ICAR to launch a new program—Civilian Devastation in War—which will serve as a forum for both research and practice. ■

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

Monday, April 20, 2009

Guest Speaker: Michael Bamberg

Dominant Positions: Conformity and Resistance in Narrative Politics

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

ICAR 5th Annual Undergraduate Program Lecture Featuring Sara Cobb

Radicalized Narratives: Immigration in the Shadow of 9/11

4:30 pm - 6:00 pm, Fairfax Campus, Mason Hall, Edward Meese Conference Room

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Celebration of Student Achievements

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm, Truland Building, 555

Saturday, April 25, 2009

3rd Annual Innovations in Student Leadership Conference

Conflict Resolution and Governance

9:00 am - 5:30 pm, Location TBA

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

ICAR STUDENT OPINION

U.S. Aid Should be Conditional on Laws That Protect Women

By Elizabeth M. Murray, ICAR M.S. Student, emurray3@gmu.edu



Afghan President Hamid Karzai effectively legalized marital rape last week by signing a law that allows Afghan Shiite men to demand sex from their wives every four days. The Shia Family Law, widely considered a strategic move by Karzai to gain support from conservative clerics for his reelection in August, also forbids women from venturing outside of the home without the permission of a male relative.

President Obama has decried the new Afghan law as “abhorrent,” and Secretary Clinton expressed her concern both in a private meeting with the Afghan president and in an interview with Radio Free Afghanistan. They were not alone in their condemnation; after worldwide government and civil society leaders expressed their vehement disapproval, Karzai agreed to place the law under review.

Under current policy, however, the firm statements by U.S. leadership will likely amount to little more than a slap on the wrist for Afghanistan. The Obama administration has made no indication that U.S. aid to Afghanistan would be affected if President Karzai were to implement the repressive law. In an interview last week, Vice President Biden made it clear that the United States’ main reason for engaging in Afghanistan is to protect our country from terrorist attacks by defeating Al-Qaeda.

Few Americans would disagree that keeping our country safe is of utmost importance, but many are justifiably outraged that our ally in Afghanistan has shown himself to have such repressive tendencies. Without a clear motivation from the United States to revise the law, it is possible that Mr. Karzai will merely delay its implementation until outcry from the press has died down. The United States should take a firm stance on women’s rights by making a portion of Afghanistan’s aid package conditional on the implementation of laws that respect and protect women. Moreover, such a policy should extend to other recipients of U.S. aid that are failing to do the same.

The plight of women in Afghanistan has been widely publicized in recent years, but Afghanistan is by no means the only country where women’s rights are denied and their abuse is condoned. Worldwide, one in three women will be a victim of violence in her lifetime, and the perpetrator is generally a man whom she knows, oftentimes her husband. Despite this, less than half of the world’s countries have instituted laws that specifically protect women from domestic violence. Many countries that do have domestic violence laws lack the mechanisms to enforce them.

A great deal of the billions of dollars in U.S. aid given every year is granted to countries that fall short of protecting women. This represents an enormous missed opportunity for the United States to promote a women’s right to live free from violence and repression. The Obama Administration, the Department of State, and Congress should move to make certain types of aid conditional on credible evidence that recipient countries possess and enforce laws that protect women, or are making steady progress towards this goal.

Aid that explicitly advances our strategic interests, like strengthening the Afghan military and police, should be exempt from these sanctions, as should aid for humanitarian purposes. In the Afghan case, if President Karzai were to implement the Shia Family Law, the United States should withdraw aid for certain infrastructure and economic development

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Foreign Policy Maze Ahead of Obama

By David Young, ICAR M.S. Alumnus
Le Monde diplomatique - English edition, 4/13/09

Bosnia's International Governor Needs to Flex His Muscles

By Masanobu Yonemitsu, ICAR M.S. Alumnus
The Wall Street Journal Europe, 4/7/09

More Force in Afghanistan?

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
The New York Times, 4/3/09

A Jihadist Worth Emulating

By Michael L. Owens, Special Assistant to the Cumbie Chair at ICAR
PostGlobal on *washingtonpost.com, 4/2/09*

What the Middle East Can Learn From Southeast Asia

By Samuel Rizk, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Common Ground News Service, 3/31/09

Can Washington Help the Palestinians Forming a Unity Government?

By Rawhi Afaghani, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Al Alarabiya, 3/19/09

Turkey's Return to Glory

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor
Today's Zaman, 3/18/09

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ICAR Alumnus: Chad Ford

Educator, Journalist, and Peace Player

By Lori-Ann Stephensen, ICAR M.S. Student, lstephea@gmu.edu



Chad Ford. Photo: BYU Hawaii.

Chad Ford is a multi-tasker by nature. In Spring, 2000, when he graduated with an M.S. from ICAR, he also earned a J.D. in International Law from Georgetown University and he hasn't slowed down since.

After graduation, life took an interesting turn when ESPN bought Sportstalk.com, where Ford was

Executive Editor and co-founder. Sportstalk.com became ESPN Insider and Ford stayed on as a Senior Editor, covering the NBA draft. Caught in the fast pace of professional media, Ford's conflict resolution training seemed sidetracked until NBA star, Dikembe Mutombo, invited him to South Africa in 2003. In Soweto, South Africa, he began to imagine an amalgamation of journalism and peacebuilding. Ford began writing and researching the role of sports in conflict resolution—traveling to the Balkans, the Middle East, and Africa—and ESPN became a forum for more than just sports. (See: <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/eticket/story?page=playingforpeace>).

In 2005, Ford left full-time employment with ESPN and moved with his wife Joanie and their four children to Laie, a small town on the North Shore of Oahu, to accept a position as an Assistant Professor of International Cultural Studies at Brigham Young University Hawaii. He began teaching courses in intercultural conflict, and in 2006, was named Director of the David O. McKay Center for Intercultural Understanding. When BYU Hawaii was dedicated in 1955, its founder stated, "You mark my word, from this school will go men and women whose influence will be felt for good towards the establishment of peace internationally." Ford took the statement to heart and, in his capacity as Director, developed the Intercultural Peacebuilding Certificate in 2008. The Certificate program offers a multidisciplinary curriculum, influenced by ICAR, including 19 credit hours of course work and 20 hours of practicum.

Another important component of Ford's peacebuilding amalgamate was added in 2006, when he was introduced to the work of The

Arbinger Institute, which has developed a conflict resolution model that invites participants to consider, through narrative, the influence of their own self-deception in collusive cycles of conflict. He has used this model in his consulting work with PeacePlayers International, an NGO that builds the capacity for peace in areas of protracted conflict through youth basketball leagues. Ford has also incorporated the model in his work for the Shimom Peres Center for Peace in Israel and The Arbinger Institute, where he works with organizations, families, and individuals in conflict. Ford recently developed, "The Choice in Peacebuilding," an adaptation of the model designed for peacebuilding practitioners, and is currently working on "The Choice in Conflict Transformation," which is due out later this spring.

Ford recalls ICAR as, "an amazing experience! To be surrounded by so many different fields of academic expertise and to have them all focus on one subject—conflict—was unique. I felt like the variety of perspectives I got from professors and students, along with the experience gained from practice, opened up a whole new world and set me on the path toward what I'm doing now."

Regarding what he's doing now: it is spring and the Winter term at BYUH is winding down, the NBA draft is coming into full swing, a publishing deadline with Arbinger is approaching, and planning for the next trip to Israel with PPI is already underway. Regardless of which "hat" Ford is wearing—educator, journalist, or peace player he sports them all for one purpose—building the human capacity for peace. Chad Ford can be reached at chad.ford@byuh.edu. ■



Ford playing for peace in Israel. Photo: Chad Ford..

Middle East Media Forum

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Solon Simmons is a professor of Conflict Resolution at ICAR. Photo: ICAR.

from Seymour Hersh and Ahmed El Sheikh, to Robert Fisk and Azmi Beshara. The conference opened with greetings offered by Wadah Khanfar, the Director General of the Al Jazeera Network, who spoke in Arabic but theorized in English with overt references to Samuel Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Joseph Nye.

The panels of the forum revealed an intriguing worldview, the key assumptions of which were that the world was becoming multi-polar, that regional power in the Middle East was shifting from the current Israeli-American hegemony to a new balance between Turkey and Iran, and that the lessons of history make clear that Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires. The problem with these assumptions, as they were employed, was not that they were wrongheaded or divorced from disinterested inquiry, but that they came off as more aspirational than analytical.

The most powerful speakers—like Abdul Bari Atwan, the Editor in Chief of Al Quds Al Arabi—developed incisive historical condemnations of American policy in the region, which relied on first order historical analogy with little situational empirical support. Atwan argued that, as fell the British, so fell the Soviets and so too will fall the Americans. In this instance, it took an Afghani voice to suggest that the current context in that country may differ in important ways from those precedents. Atwan's response

that the Taliban would return to power and that their problems with women's rights were exaggerated in a biased Western media, provided little comfort.

What became clear through the course of the proceedings was that while Al Jazeera had developed a powerful new global voice, it was, as yet, unclear about how to use it in conversation with its ever present American interlocutor. Media stars from the English and Arabic divisions of the channel led discussions in a balanced and respectful way, but what was striking to this American outsider was how eager the hosts were to interface with a generally Western and specifically American viewpoint, while they had so little success in doing so.

This is a fascinating problem and stands in analogy to the problem of resolution in the region. Well-meaning hosts struggled to wrest the microphones from dilating sheiks and pleaded for communicative action that would bring the moral frameworks of imperial and revolutionary forces into alignment; however, when a space opened for introspection, it was filled with cautious half reflections of salient Western self-understandings. Some were well rehearsed, familiar and grounded, like of those of Seymour Hersh, Seumas Milne, and Robert Fisk. Others emerged organically as seasoned broadcasters sought balance by imploring any American at all to speak after some fiery invocation of Israeli or American brutalities. As one might expect, the typical reaction went something like, "I am rarely called on to represent my country, but I agree with everything you have just said."

The awkward preaching quality of the debate was no fault of the participants, but points to the challenges inherent in open discussion within the simplifying context of violent struggle. For all of the progress Al Jazeera has made in propelling open debate,

one still yearned for an Israeli moderate, an Obama Democrat or a Kurdish rights activist to break through the din and offer a constructive, if unpopular, perspective. In this atmosphere, it was almost possible at times to imagine that there was a consensus on regional policy and prospects for Arab unity, but that image quickly faded when the group was reminded that the rising counterpublics—Iran, Turkey and Pakistan—were non-Arab and in little agreement among themselves.

As a rallying point for critical journalists, the forum was a great success. I was struck by a question asked by an Al Jazeera journalist about how he should cover the upcoming war in Afghanistan, given the size of the country and difficulty of the terrain; it would offer nothing like the conditions that led to the brilliant coverage in Gaza with its tightly packed million and a half quasi prisoners. The audience and panelists offered pragmatic and thoughtful responses on the ways that media could be used to counter American initiatives. In the spirit of Jefferson, it made me tremble for my country to reflect that God is just.

As an intellectual affair, I was much less impressed. The careful and detailed framework of structural realities and historical continuities in the region, proposed by Michael Hudson of Georgetown, came off as a rare breath of fresh air. For

a moment, the conversation seemed less based on an abstract hope that America will fail and more on the harsh realities of the region. These may coincide, but probably not in the spirit of the gathering. To paraphrase the remarks of Claire Spencer of Chatham House, we may wish for a wiser America but perhaps not a weaker one. The odd problematic of the setting was to demand that participants pose as tough-minded philosophical realists, but act as expressive and committed idealists; the disconnect was disconcerting.

Despite the contradictions, there is something exceptional and inspiring about what this social movement with cameras is doing in the Middle East. As one of the participants observed, Al

“As a rallying point for critical journalists, the forum was a great success.”

—SOLON SIMMONS

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Al Jazeera

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Jazeera has helped to create an Arab public sphere where none existed. With the critical acclaim of its recent Gaza coverage in English, there is ever more reason to pay attention to the next act of this absorbing drama—the crafting of Arab identity in a skeptical world—because now, that skeptical world will understand what the players are saying.

What may be yet missing from the Al Jazeera toolkit is a robust sense of how to find the intellectual depth to bridge cultures, how to align Arabic and English narratives, and how to imagine an emerging cosmo-Arabism that breaks the bounds and expands the scope of older reactive and confrontational pan-Arabisms. On a tour of the original and now historical Al Jazeera control room, I noticed a quote that seemed to capture the flavor of the organization and the event: “Reality is a disappointment so I live in dreams.” As this latest Al Jazeera forum made clear, it will be important to come to terms with the new reality that this Qatari news revolution creates for the world. However, from what I saw, dreams will remain important to those disappointed with the prospects for the region for some time to come, and they may weigh on the brains of the living like a nightmare. ■

Student Opinion

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projects. Defense aid, as well as projects to ensure food security and build hospitals, should remain unaffected.

Such a strategy should follow the model set out in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, first passed in 2000, and renewed in 2008, which mandates an annual study of countries’ progress in preventing, detecting, and punishing human trafficking. Countries found to be making unsatisfactory progress towards minimum standards are subject to sanctions that include withdrawal of non-humanitarian, non-trade-based aid.

Barack Obama and Joe Biden campaigned on a platform that emphasized the importance of creating equity for women both at home and abroad. Hillary Clinton has consistently advocated for women throughout the course of her career, and many celebrated her nomination to Secretary of State as an opportunity for women’s issues to be heard at the highest levels of government.

It is time now for the United States to live up to its ideals and uphold women’s rights by requiring that countries that receive U.S. aid take strong steps to protect women. ■



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