



LAFF

THE LAFF SOCIETY Promoting Social and Professional Contacts Among Former Staff Members of the Ford Foundation

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PETER F. GEITHNER, A CHAMPION FOR JUSTICE

More than 80 friends and colleagues of the late **Peter F. Geithner**, who worked for the Ford Foundation for 28 years and was a former president of The LAFF Society, gathered in New York City at the Ford Foundation headquarters on September 8 to honor a man described as “a champion for justice who served the cause of human dignity with distinction.”

He died July 29 at his home in Orleans, Mass., on Cape Cod. He was 84.

Peter was Ford's first representative in China and helped develop programs in support of education, public health and economic development there and in his positions as deputy representative in India, representative for Southeast Asia and director of the Development Country Programs.

He was a graduate of Dartmouth College and served four years as a Naval aviator before returning for advanced study, earning a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Views on Latin America

Three articles starting on page 6 deal with Latin America from varying perspectives.

Jeffrey Puryear discusses current trends in the region; **Peter S. Cleaves** and **Richard W. Dye** recount the career of **Kalman Silvert** as it is explored in a new book on his work in Latin America; and **Rebecca Reichmann Tavares** pays tribute to the life and work of the late **J. Michael Turner**, whose obituary is included in this issue.



Peter F. Geithner

He went to work for Columbia Carbon International and then spent six years with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), serving in what are now Zimbabwe and Zambia and in Washington, D.C., before joining the Ford Foundation in 1968. He retired from Ford in 1996.

Among his other activities, he was an adviser to the Asia Center at Harvard University, the China Medical Board, the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. He was on the boards of several organizations, including the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, the China Center for Economic Research and the Center for the Advanced Study of India.

Following are just some of the many tributes to him, some of which are adapted from remarks made at the gathering in New York City and others that were written for the newsletter. They show clearly the scope of his personal interests and professional activities, and the impact both had on a wide range of individuals. A video of the gathering at the Foundation is on YouTube under “Peter Geithner.”

THE GIFTS MY FATHER GAVE ME

By Timothy Geithner

WHEN WE WERE KIDS, living in New York after India, I was 14, riding bikes with my brother Jonathan on a Saturday on the way back from watching a high school football game.

A bike pulled alongside me with two kids, one on the back, both about my age, but larger. The one pedaling asked me to give him my bike. I kept pedaling. He reached over casually and punched me. I fell off. The second jumped off the back of their bike and rode off on mine.

I got on the back of Jon's bike and we rode home.

I told my father what had happened. He said simply, “Let's go get it back.”

We got in the car, my brothers Jon and Dave along for the adventure. We drove through the neighborhood of the incident, slowly tracking the grid. Implausibly, we came upon the two assailants with my bike.

My father calmly pulled alongside them and asked for the bike back. Inexplicably, they complied. Then my father told the one on my bike to get in the car and he did.

With him and my bike in the back of the station wagon, my father said he was going to take him to the police station. I don't know how my father knew where that was, but he drove there.

As we drove, the apprehended kid was quivering in the back. He started to cry and to plead to be let out. I thought we should let him go, too, but my father kept driving.

My father stopped just outside the police station—and let him go.

My father didn't say much then, and I don't remember any attempt to convey deep lessons. He didn't brag or tell others about it. He didn't claim courage or virtue in what he had done.

But he had demonstrated some virtues: The importance of getting close to what is uncomfortable. A willingness to do the uncomfortable thing rather than run from it.

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Peter Geithner

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to protect and defend us. The importance of seeking some accountability. The importance of empathy and forgiveness.

My father grew up in Philadelphia where his father was a carpenter. He went to Northeast High School. Not tall in stature, and before the jump shot, he played basketball in high school and college. They called him “Beetle”; I guess because he was small. And also “the Hershey Kid”, because of his love for chocolate.

He was a life guard on the Ocean City Beach Patrol. Went to college on an ROTC scholarship. Was a pilot for the Navy, flew off carriers and missed the two wars of his youth. He came back to go to graduate school to study international affairs and married the sister of his best friend in college, different from him and his perfect complement.

After a brief experience in business he

CORRECTION

In the article “LAFF, the Early Years” in the Summer 2016 issue of the newsletter, Will Hertz was identified incorrectly. He was, first, the Assistant Secretary of the Ford Foundation and later promoted to Deputy Secretary, working with the late Howard Dressner, who was the Foundation’s Secretary.

The LAFF Society

c/o Nellie Toma

PO Box 701107, East Elmhurst, NY 11370

E-Mail: treasurer@laffsociety.org

www.laffsociety.org

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went to work for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and then, of course, he came to the Ford Foundation, where he stayed for almost 30 years.

Not the typical path to philanthropy, if there is a typical path.

He was conservative, politically, but he chose a field where he would end up working with people with very different views of politics and supporting causes not typically associated with the conservative tradition in American politics.

He didn’t talk about his work much, just as he didn’t talk about himself much, so I didn’t have that much sense of what he did until much later in life.

One of the gifts of the last few weeks of his life was the chance to read about him through the eyes of his colleagues and friends. This is a rare and special thing, to see our parents as they were seen by others.

One wrote: “Only deeply empathetic people listen as well as he did or have his self-depre-
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THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I am in the midst of sorting through boxes of papers that accompanied me when we moved from New York to our home in the Massachusetts hill towns. The papers consist of field notes, questionnaires and interviews, draft articles, maps, drawings, tape recordings and photographs from my ethnographic research in Northeast Brazil and Timor-Leste (East Timor). Over the next several weeks, these will be dispatched, with some ambivalence, to the Anthropology Archives at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, where they will be made available to other researchers, who hopefully will find them of interest.

The research in Brazil was done exactly 50 years ago, in Timor-Leste in 1973-74. I have held on to them all these years in the vain belief that I would go back to them as the basis for further research and writing, but my career took other turns. While I managed to write two books and multiple articles on Brazil and a half-dozen or so articles on Timor-Leste, the activist side of me kicked in, largely around issues of human rights (my research in Brazil coincided with the start of a 24-year military dictatorship and my research in Timor-Leste concluded with the Indonesian invasion and 27-year occupation), and I accepted **Bill Carmichael’s** invitation to join the Foundation with a strong belief that I could be more effective there than in academia.

Which brings me to the point of today’s message. When I left the Foundation in 1996, after 18 years, I did the inevitable office sorting. My office files went to the archives; books and memorabilia (e.g., the honorary doctor of law drawn up by **Lynn Walker Huntley** and **Amy Vance**; the cherished thank you drawing from the National Community Aids Partnership that I suspect **Michael Seltzer** organized) went to my new office at New York University, and personal papers found their way to my Upper West Side apartment, along with two unmarked boxes that went unopened for the last 20 years.

I opened them a couple weeks ago and found scattered office notes, years of annual appointment calendars, field diaries from every overseas visit and thematic meeting I attended, some photos, and all of the heartwarming messages my colleagues wrote at the time of my departure. These are going to the Rockefeller Archives, where

Pat Rosenfield, Rachel Wimpee and Lee Hiltzik assure me they will become a treasured part of the Ford collection.

Looking back on these nearly 70 years of professional papers, I reflect on my good fortune and the satisfaction my diverse careers have provided throughout my adult life. I now understand the full meaning of the Spanish and Russian words for retirement: jubilation. I like to tell people I’m not really retired, I’m just off payroll. However, that is not quite true. The richness of all those years, boxed until now, are largely memories for me to celebrate, and celebrate them I do. And by making them available to the respective archives, I celebrate the possibility that they will be useful complements to the anthropological record in the first case and to the official Ford record in the latter.

I had a call today from John Seaman, who is assisting in the preparation of a five-year comprehensive institutional history, sanctioned by the Foundation, beginning with its founding and going through **Susan Berresford’s** presidency. He called at the urging of our Rockefeller Archives colleagues to establish contact with LAFF in the hope that we could, as time and their archival research dictate, help them identify former staff who carry with them their personal complements to the official archives.

It reminded me first and foremost of the 15 colleagues we lost in the course of this last year. I hope their papers find their way to Sleepy Hollow, if they have not already done so in either written or oral history form.

Then, I began to think about how little I know of the work and thinking of so many of our colleagues who worked with me at the Foundation in the earlier “stove piped” years. Our LAFF members’ directory tells us little about each other beyond our contact information, something I have now reached out to **Nellie Toma** and **John LaHoud** to help think how we can make the directory current and interactive.

More important, I urge each of our colleagues to think about those boxes that move with us and how we can open them to others to jubilate with us, in celebration of our years at the Foundation and the opportunities provided us to have such satisfying careers.

Shep Forman

cating sense of humor when they speak. That, above all, is what I learned from him: unless you erase the self, you cannot be a force for the good.”

Wrote another: “He was candid, clear, dedicated to what he believed in, funny.... I will always be grateful for the way Peter created a space for divergent opinions to interact, and for our work to be made better as a result of this”.

And another wrote: “Peter’s dinner table debating style was patriotic, forensic and grinding. He seemed often to relish being in a minority of one. But an argument was always civilized and orderly, and there was never any animosity or emotional self-indulgence. Quite infuriating actually.... I learned from Peter valuable work habits like loyalty, thoroughness, diligence, tenacity, mutual respect, self effacement, tolerance and constancy.”

The virtues my father passed on, to his children and those who knew him and worked with him, are great and rare things:

Respect for people with different values and beliefs.

The ability to listen and empathize.

The ability to build relationships of deep trust and loyalty.

Quiet humility.

The care to listen and observe.

Deference, which he showed to the aspirations and plans of those institutions and individuals Ford supported.

Patience, the knowledge that the return on the investments Ford was making could take years, perhaps a generation.

Comfort in being separate and apart in his opinions, going against the grain of many.

And the ability to disagree without “animosity”.

He gave us, and the Ford Foundation gave us, the amazing gift of living in the broader world as children—in Africa, India and Thailand—before we all went to college. And we traveled everywhere. All the time. This was all we knew then, but I think even when we were very young we knew it was a rare and special thing. To see early in life the stark differences in how so much of the world lives is a deep and subtle gift. It can help with empathy and humility. It can help you better learn to see things through the eyes of others.

He showed us we could do work that was consequential, that we loved, and that we could work with people we liked and admired.

We loved and admired him.

DEDICATED AND TIRELESS

By Mary Zurbuchen

IN SPRING 1992, I was shopping in a Berkeley electronics store for a desktop computer to ship to Jakarta. The helpful middle-aged

salesman told me he was China-born, and as we looked over the available hardware I explained that I would soon move to Indonesia to head the Ford Foundation’s office in Southeast Asia. He looked at me quizzically for a moment, then asked: “So maybe you know my friend Peter Geithner?” My amazed reply: “Why, he’s my boss!”

The man I encountered in that computer store on San Pablo Avenue was a scholar from a leading Chinese economics faculty. His fellowship from the Ford Foundation had supported advanced study in the United States, but like many Chinese academics abroad after June 1989, he was uncertain about going home. His fellowship was over, but he still felt a close tie to Peter, who had helped and advised him.

This episode was just one of many revealing the reach of Peter Geithner’s influence. I worked with him when I was a Program Officer in the Jakarta (1983-87) and New Delhi (1988-91) field offices, and most closely during the years from 1992 to 2000 when I served as Representative in Jakarta and he was Asia Regional Director in New York.

Peter had worked in Foundation offices in India and Thailand and over time was involved with its work in Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Singapore and Indonesia. He launched the Foundation’s programs in China and spearheaded the opening of its office in Beijing in 1988. As I moved to Jakarta he was working toward re-opening a Foundation office in Vietnam.

He had unparalleled knowledge of the Foundation’s program history throughout Asia and a remarkable memory of particular grants, institutions and individuals across the region. During decades of involvement with Asia, language learning was never his strong suit, yet he could effortlessly recall names and positions of people the Foundation had supported in more than a dozen countries.

Peter’s networks and relationships were an asset for all staff who worked with him, and within the New York office he was a skilled, articulate advocate for field office programs and local decision-making. No matter which dignitary or hopeful official sought a meeting with the Asia Director, Peter would understand relevant context, consider whether a potential request might be considered under field office priorities, and dispatch a note to one or another Representative reporting on the meeting. He made certain that Asian realities and Foundation colleagues were well received and represented on 43rd Street, a role that was hard to replicate after the Foundation eliminated regional director positions.

Peter was not loquacious, and tended to

communicate on a “need to know” basis. Still, he kept a close watch on field-office operations, including the language of mundane documents. On one occasion he took exception to a single phrase in a grant recommendation I wrote in India because it suggested that Tibetans in exile might view Tibet as their “country”. At the time, of course, he was on the verge of final approval for the Beijing office.

He was not always in accord with colleagues in his politics or his perceptions of where the Foundation’s highest interests might lie. He certainly must have felt like a contrarian in the aftermath of the 1989 violence at Tiananmen, when many of his Foundation colleagues were urging that Ford leave China. After rushing back from Beijing for days of hurried meetings in Washington and New York, looking drawn and exhausted, Peter spoke to gathered Foundation staff in the basement auditorium, making a powerful case for keeping the office open in order to stand by the many Chinese who looked to the Foundation as a resource for inspiration and change.

Because he was exceptionally prepared and familiar with field office contexts, Peter’s visits to Jakarta and the Bangkok and Manila sub-offices were genuinely welcomed by Southeast Asia program staff. There was no need to create events to convince him that our work was important, or to impress him that the Foundation had access to the “right” people. Peter wanted to listen to staff talk about their area of responsibility: how they defined and analyzed problems of rural poverty or reproductive health, say, and shaped a strategic approach to issues through a portfolio of grants.

He put close, focused questions to program officers that helped them become sharper and more insightful in explaining their work. He used his understanding of regional issues to draw relevant comparisons and conclusions across different settings. Peter saw that Representatives had unique responsibilities and needed support from peers, so he brought all the Asia Reps together in periodic meetings. These “Rep Raps” became a valued opportunity for building solidarity and shaping cross-region programming.

Working with Peter in Southeast Asia, I learned to be a more careful listener and more nuanced communicator. One experience still stands out: a formal meeting with senior leaders of the Ho Chi Minh National Political Academy in Hanoi in 1992, where I listened to Peter field queries from men who were clearly wary of American foundations yet eager to see their country advance. In order to strengthen and modernize Vietnam’s economy, they asked, what policies did Mr. Geithner think should be put in place? What *Continued on next page*

Peter Geithner

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decisions needed to be made, according to the Ford Foundation?

Peter was unequivocal as he explained that the Foundation did not see its role as telling Vietnam's leaders what to do. Rather, the Foundation could use its contacts and resources to bring Vietnamese experts together with researchers, policy analysts and others outside the country who could be engaged in thinking about Vietnam's concerns, hopefully providing a path for the best answers for Vietnam to emerge.

It was a masterful response that voiced the potentials of the American philanthropic heritage as well as understanding and acceptance of Vietnam's still-cautious opening to the world.

Peter was tireless in his dedication to the Foundation, and for him, I believe, the Foundation was never about advancing a single slogan or vision of international development. He represented the engaged professionals who never take themselves more seriously than they take their work. His colleagues could more deeply feel the privilege of playing their roles in the international sphere through his wise, considerate and insightful example.

Mary Zurbuchen now lives in Santa Barbara, Calif., and is an independent scholar and consultant to the Henry Luce Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies.

WITH GRACE AND GOOD HUMOR

By Joan Kaufman

AFTER I LEFT THE FOUNDATION in 2001, I continued to work with Peter at Harvard University, the China Medical Board and, of course, LAFF.

I met Peter when he hired me as a consultant in the early 1990s, just after receiving my doctorate at Harvard School of Public Health in the department that **Lincoln Chen**, his close friend and Ford colleague from India days, was chairing. As a consultant I worked closely with him, **Jose Barzelatto** and Lincoln to figure out whether Ford should start a reproductive health program and portfolio in the China office, as I had spent four years in the 1980s in China for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). I then joined the Ford China office as the second program officer for reproductive health. Peter had left the Foundation at that point but I looked forward to his visits to China as he always came by the office to schmooze and catch up.

When I returned to Boston and Harvard in 2001, he convinced me to set up the Boston LAFF chapter with him, and we worked to-

gether on that as well as on Lincoln's Health Equity Initiative, the China Medical Board and various Harvard China events.

Peter was always a wonderful mentor and adviser to me on career decisions, China issues and myriad other things. I will miss his counsel and friendship. His contributions and leadership on China philanthropy and civil society work was incomparable and his loss will be felt keenly in China.

He was a wonderful man who made his vast contributions with grace and good humor.

Joan Kaufman is director of Columbia Global Centers/East Asia in Beijing.

HE ASKED GREAT QUESTIONS

By Charles Bailey

PETER GEITHNER INTERVIEWED ME for my first job with the Ford Foundation. It was the spring of 1972 and he was the deputy representative in the New Delhi office. Peter was a thoughtful and quiet guy, and asked great questions. We overlapped for a year in New Delhi before he moved to Bangkok to become Ford's representative in Thailand.

Fast forward a decade and I'd just arrived in Sudan in a new position as program officer for land and water resources. The Trustees met in Nairobi that summer of 1982 and Peter was there. On the way back to New York he stopped in Khartoum to see how I was doing. We spent a couple days together in the Gezira Scheme talking about the possibilities.

Peter was Asia, but this was Africa. No matter. He cared and he of course asked great questions. No place was too remote for Peter.

He believed the Foundation could achieve great things but, as he often observed, "Ideas are fine, but ideas plus money are better."

Later, when he had moved to China and I to Bangladesh, he brought one of his newly minted Chinese staff members to Dhaka, Zhang Ye, and quietly explained to her how such a capitalist place worked. Again the mentor, and he of course had suggestions—mind you, only suggestions—for me.

Much later, when I was in Hanoi and he had "retired", I asked him to evaluate our international affairs grant-making in Vietnam. As usual, he knew the people and the issues and was extremely clear in his vision of what more needed to be done. It was almost always about investing in people and core institutions.

Peter cared deeply, could relate the most complicated issues clearly and elegantly, and always knew what to do next. And he found and brought together the people who could make it happen.

In those occasional moments of the absurd, I'll never forget his appreciative laugh. His eyes would light and he would giggle.

Charles Bailey, an adviser on the effects of Agent Orange in Vietnam, wrote about cooperative efforts between the United States and Vietnam in dealing with the long-term effects of the chemical in an article titled Agent Orange: Looking Forward in the Summer 2015 issue of the newsletter.

A TRUE GENTLEMAN

By William Alford

AFTER HE LEFT THE FORD FOUNDATION and was at Harvard University, Peter continued to offer wise and prudent advice that was much appreciated by myself, **Ezra Vogel**, **Bill Kirby** and all others who were fortunate to work with him.

He was a true gentleman, something I had learned in the early 1980s.

I showed up for my first meeting at Ford a half hour early, dressed, let us say, a tad inappropriately, being a young professor from California at the time and given to dark shirts. Peter, without saying anything about my attire, asked if I would accompany him on a quick errand he had to attend to.

We walked over to Brooks Brothers where Peter surveyed a row of white button-down Oxford cloth shirts and then turned to me, saying that he thought that I would look quite smart in one. He urged me to try one on and then, once I had done so, indicated that, since it looked so good on me and I had already opened it, I might as well buy it and wear it rather than fold it messily in my bag.

And so it was that I appeared at my first Ford meeting "looking the part", without being made to look foolish!

William Alford is a law professor at Harvard University, vice dean for the Graduate Program and International Legal Studies, Director of East Asian Legal Studies and chair of the Harvard Law School Project on Disability.

"A TRUE MENTOR"

By Fran Korten

PETER GEITHNER WAS A TRUE MENTOR for me. In 1978, when he was the Director for Southeast Asia, he hired my husband, **David Korten**, and me as the first couple the Foundation had ever hired. (The personnel office trembled: Do they need two houses?!)

Peter taught me early to focus my grants so they would reinforce each other, adding up to a much more powerful impact than the sum of the grants. He, together with **Walt Coward**, **John Cool** and my husband, guided me as we focused on making significant changes in the Philippines' National Irrigation Administration. We helped that huge

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Raymond Offenheiser speaks at the memorial service. Pictured at the table are Timothy Geithner, Peter Geithner's son, in front in the center; his wife Carol, to his right; and Ian Martin. Behind them, from the left, are David Geithner, another son of Peter; David's wife, Christine; and Leona Forman.

bureaucracy learn to work in a collaborative, rather than a top-down, way with the farmers it intended to serve.

The methods we used were later used by other offices working on community-based strategies in forestry, fisheries and pastures. The Foundation was able to help millions of people get stronger rights over the resources on which they depended and get the support they needed to manage those resources sustainably.

Without Peter's guidance (and his stalwart defense of these approaches from criticism in New York: "too narrow"), I would never have been able to work the way I did in the Philippines and later in Indonesia. By the time I got to the New York office in 1992 and applied these same methods in the U.S. forestry sector, they were well established. **Jan Jaffe** and **Bill Duggan** had incorporated many of these ideas into the training for program officers.

Fran Korten is the Executive Director of the *Positive Futures Network*, which publishes *YES! Magazine*.

A LASTING LEGACY

By Jing Lu

I'M REPRESENTING 618 GRADUATES from the Ford Foundation-sponsored economics training program in China from 1985 to 1994. Mr. Geithner was instrumental in spearheading this 10-year grant-supporting program, as he was the first representative to China for the Ford Foundation.

This program sponsored largely top United States professors to go to China to teach young Chinese scholars economic theories and market practices, as China started to open its door and embarked on economic reforms.

This program was tough to get in. We were

already graduate students at top universities in China to begin with, but needed to pass a series of extra tests to be admitted. We were indeed the chosen ones. We proudly call the program "Ford Class" and label ourselves as Ford Class 1, Ford Class 2...

Most of the 618 graduates are in China, engaging in a wide variety of careers. College professors account for a significant portion, as intended originally by the program. We also have business administrators, government officials, fund managers and many others. I can comfortably claim that there are Ford alumni in all major universities, government ministries and banks in China, making important decisions and contributing to society.

This economics training program had an enormous impact not only on the macro side of economics education and economic reforms in China but also on the micro side of our personal lives and careers. For that, we are eternally grateful for Mr. Geithner and will forever remember him.

TEACHER AND FRIEND

By Junko Chano

WHEN YOU WERE THE DIRECTOR of the Asia Program at the Ford Foundation you kindly invited me to work for you... Although I had only nine months with you as a visiting fellow, I am still struck by how much I learned from you during that period.

I vividly recall your enthusiasm in promoting and supporting philanthropy and the nonprofit sector in Asia, where the Foundation operated several field offices... While you oversaw all these offices, you extended your interest to Japan, where efforts to promote civil society and the nonprofit sector

were in full swing.

The idea to organize a conference in Tokyo with active philanthropic organizations throughout Asia was thus developed, and broadly supported by many philanthropic leaders in Asia who had a great deal of trust in and respect for you.

After you left I moved on to the Peace and Social Justice Program with the project you had initiated. The conference took place a year later and was a great success, something which I still believe owed much to your efforts and extensive network.

Nearly 20 years have passed since then, and I am glad to report to you that philanthropy has been playing a significantly greater role for the betterment of Japanese society these days.

Junko Chano, director of the *Sasakawa Peace Foundation*, wrote this in the form of a letter to Peter Geithner when she learned of his death.

DEDICATION AND ENTHUSIASM

By Junichi Chano

SINCE ITS INCEPTION, the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) has been guided by the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Geithner. In addition, CGP was very fortunate and extremely honored to have the opportunity to work closely with Mr. Geithner in his role of core consultant for our Intellectual Exchange program for more than 10 years.

He will be remembered for his profound dedication and boundless enthusiasm for the work international organizations and institutions were conducting in Japan, in particular, and Asia, in general.

We treasure the honor of having collaborated with him so closely over the years.

Junichi Chano is Executive Director of the *Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership*.

PROFESSIONALISM AND WARMTH

By Charles Keyes

PETER HAD DONE MUCH to encourage me in the development of Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Washington and the Northwest Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies. This encouragement included not only grants that Ford made but also the personal interest Peter took in my efforts. He made several trips to Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

I was struck not only by his professionalism but also by his personal warmth. That the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Washington is one of the major centers for Southeast Asian studies in the United States is very much a consequence of Peter's support and encouragement. ■



As authoritarianism declined in Latin America, new groups emerged to promote civil and human rights, such as the Movement of Rural Landless Workers pictured here at a rally.

LATIN AMERICA SINCE 1980: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES

By Jeffrey Puryear

On April 7, the Inter-American Dialogue invited four of its senior staff and members (Sergio Bitar, Jorge Dominguez, Peter Hakim and myself) to meet with junior staff and interns to discuss their personal and professional experiences, and to suggest how junior staff might prepare for the challenges facing the region.

Hakim, who had worked for the Ford Foundation in several Latin American offices, was asked to speak about the history of the Dialogue, Dominguez about Latin America today and Bitar about Latin America in the future. I was asked to speak about trends in Latin America, and specifically about the major political and economic changes that have taken place over the past 30 years. Here are my remarks:

What is most striking is that Latin America has changed enormously over the past 30 years. On the surface the region I knew as a junior staff member with the Ford Foundation looks and sounds much as it did then. The mountains, pampas, *altiplanos*, jungles and beaches still impress. People continue to speak Spanish, Portuguese and a variety of indigenous languages. The skylines, of course, have been transformed by new construction, but it's clearly Latin America.

Under the surface, however, major changes have occurred.

First, authoritarianism has declined.

In 1980 authoritarianism was the norm in

much of the region, either obviously (as in the military dictatorships of Chile and El Salvador) or more subtly (as in Mexico under the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI). Brazil, Cuba, Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Uruguay, Nicaragua, Mexico and several other countries were all governed by some form of authoritarian regime. Peru had just returned to constitutional rule. Guatemala was on the verge of a coup. Even in countries with democratic governments (with the probable exception of Costa Rica), authoritarian practices and institutions were common.

With authoritarianism, and often because of it, human rights emerged as a key issue. The Organization of American States (OAS) became a player in the human rights debate, a network of national and regional human rights groups appeared, and the U.S. government began to emphasize human rights in its relations with the region. Also, and perhaps because of authoritarianism, corruption was not a key issue. Priorities were elsewhere.

Today, democracy has become the norm. Cuba is the only bona fide dictatorship remaining. The creeping authoritarianisms of Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia are on the defensive. Brazil, Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Uruguay, Nicaragua, Mexico and many others are ruled by democratic regimes. And those democracies, despite their deficiencies, tend to be more liberal than illiberal. It is hard to imagine a military coup taking place. Also in contrast to the 1980s, human rights are much less mentioned, except in conjunc-

tion with Cuba and Venezuela. Instead, we are more likely to hear about civil rights. And corruption has become a key issue, as demonstrated dramatically by events in Brazil, Chile and Guatemala. The political context is very different than it was in 1980.

Second, economic orthodoxy has been transformed.

In 1980, economic orthodoxy in most countries was some combination of government planning, import substitution, price controls, protectionism, state corporations, dependency theory and socialism. Monopolies, oligopolies and other forms of "crony capitalism" were common. Markets, competition and efficiency were not much on the agenda. Economic growth was not impressive and inflation was a recurring problem. The 1980s, with its debt crises and economic stagnation, became Latin America's "lost decade".

Today, those orthodoxies have largely disappeared. There are exceptions: Venezuela and Cuba are the most prominent, along perhaps with the Kirchners' Argentina. But their place has gradually been taken by some version of the Washington Consensus, as originally set forth by John Williamson: macroeconomic stabilization, open economies and the embrace of market forces. In 1980 almost no government in Latin America applied those three principles; today most do. The conventional wisdom regarding economic policy is fundamentally different.

Third, the oligarchs have dwindled. In

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1980, traditional political and economic elites dominated in most countries. National leaders were almost always white, male, well-connected and over 50. Your last name and who your father and grandfather were made a huge difference. Indigenous peoples were largely unrepresented in national (and even regional) politics. Women seldom held major political positions (María Estela Martínez de Perón—Isabelita Perón—was the exception in 1974). Technocrats did not become presidents, and seldom became ministers.

Today, traditional oligarchs have much less influence, and new groups have emerged. We now see leaders from indigenous backgrounds, Alejandro Toledo and Evo Morales being the most obvious. (A recent reference to Toledo in the Peruvian press as a “caudillo” says a lot about how much the political arena has changed.) More generally, the concerns of indigenous peoples have a stronger presence in the political debate than in the past. Women have significantly expanded their influence in politics. Bachelet, Kirchner, Chamorro, Rousseff and Chinchilla are clear examples. But women are also increasingly occupying leadership positions below the level of chief executive in politics and the economy.

Moreover, intellectuals and technocrats now have much more political influence. Fernando Henrique Cardoso was an early example in Brazil. Today Ph.D. presidents like Ernesto Zedillo, Rafael Correa, Sebastián Piñera and Ricardo Lagos are almost commonplace. Many other highly trained intellectuals (e.g., Alejandro Foxley and Sergio Bitar in Chile) have attained major leadership positions. Latin America has a broader and more diverse cadre of leaders than it did in 1980.

Fourth, social policy has evolved.

In 1980, there was plenty of concern for helping the poor and reducing inequality. But the debate tended to be traditional (or ideological) and seldom informed by research or experience. Some assumed that capitalism was the problem and that a transition to socialism was the solution. Others assumed that economic growth, market reforms and low inflation would reduce poverty and inequity more or less automatically. Others simply assumed that more government spending and programs would lead to more social advance (i.e., if you put more money into education and health, you would get more education and more health).

But none of those worked out very well. Measurable social progress was not impressive, and gradually there was recognition that socialism was not a panacea, that a rising economic tide would not necessarily lift all

boats, and that much of government social spending was inefficient and had little impact on poverty or inequality. Gradually there emerged a greater emphasis on experimentation and on measuring results. The World Bank's 1993 World Development Report and the Inter-American Development Bank's 1996 Economic and Social Progress in Latin America report were influential.

These and subsequent analyses, along with the influx of well-trained technocrats into high government posts, generated a much more practical attitude toward social policy. Increasingly, the question became: “What works?” Major innovations like conditional cash transfers appeared, along with a greater emphasis on measuring results via rigorous impact evaluations. Today, social policy is less traditional, less ideological, more dynamic and more results-based than it was in 1980.

Finally, I was asked, “If you were 25 years old today, what would you do to prepare as a leader of the Western Hemisphere?” My answer is that the leaders of tomorrow should move beyond the challenge of promoting good policy to address the challenge of building effective institutions. Policy is about knowing what to do, and is of course fundamental. We must know which policies are best, and we must convince political leaders to adopt them.

But once good policies are identified and adopted, you have to act. Good policy must be implemented, and implementation is done by institutions, not by political leaders (nor by “leaders of the Western Hemisphere”).

Institutions convert policy into services. They get things done. Brazil's court system is currently demonstrating dramatically the impact strong institutions can have.

But institutions in Latin America, particularly government institutions, are often weak, and lethargic, and even corrupt. Their leaders may be mediocre—or worse. They may favor political figures or ideologies over professional principles. They may fail to recruit talented staff and reward success, or sanction failure. Standards may be low, evaluation inadequate and consequences non-existent. For all those reasons they often fail to convert policy into acceptable services.

Increasingly, failures of execution may become more common than failures of policy in Latin America. And failures of execution are caused by weak institutions. Dialogue member Francis Fukuyama has observed that in public policy “...the big failures really come in the execution”. Future leaders of the western hemisphere would be well advised to pay much more attention to building effective institutions. ■

Jeffrey Puryear is a senior fellow at the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington, D.C. He worked in the Latin America and Caribbean office of the Ford Foundation from 1973 to 1990. This article was written originally for Voces, the official blog of the Inter-American Dialogue, and is reprinted here with permission. To read the original article, go to www.thediologue.org/blogs/latin-america-since-1980

VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

Radhika Balakrishnan is featured in a video on LAFF's Facebook page of a conference on Rethinking Economic Policy for Social Justice, sponsored by The Carter Center as part of its Forum on Women series.

The conference was designed to demonstrate how “human rights have the potential to transform economic thinking and policy-making with far-reaching consequences for social justice”.

In the video, Balakrishnan addresses “how this new approach allows for a complex interaction between individual rights, collective rights and collective action, as



well as encompasses a legal framework which offers formal mechanisms through which unjust policy can be protested”.

The Carter Center was founded in Atlanta in 1982 by former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in partnership with Emory University, to “advance human rights and alleviate human suffering”.

Balakrishnan is the faculty director of the Center for

Women's Global Leadership and professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University. She worked at Ford from 1992 to 1995 in the Asia and Pacific program.

J. MICHAEL TURNER, SEEKING SOCIAL JUSTICE

J. Michael Turner, who worked for the Ford Foundation from 1979 to 1985 and was a leading figure in social justice initiatives in Latin America and Africa, died August 24 in New York City.

Mr. Turner began working at Ford as an assistant program officer in the Latin America and Caribbean office and six months later moved to the Brazil office. He became a program officer in the Developing Program Office in 1982, stationed in Brazil, and was transferred to the New York City headquarters in 1984. He completed his assignment at Ford in June 1985.

He studied African and Latin American history at Yale University, Harvard University and Boston University, from which he received a doctorate in 1975. He had taught at Boston University, Clark University, the College of the Holy Cross and the University of Brasilia before joining the faculty of the City University of New York's Hunter College, from which he retired in 2011.

Mr. Turner had been a professor of history at Hunter, director of its Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program, and co-founder of the Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative (GALCI). He also pioneered its Education Abroad Program in Salvador, capital of the Brazilian state of Bahia.

Based in part upon his work for the Brazil office of the Ford Foundation, his interest in social justice for African descendants in Brazil expanded to developing advocacy programs in conjunction with the Franklin H.

Williams Diaspora Institute and Caribbean Cultural Center for Afro Latino NGOs in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay, Panama, Venezuela, Honduras, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Barbados, the Dominican Republic and other countries in the region.

Initially designed to support the work of Afro Latino NGOs attending the United Nations World Conference on Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Social Intolerance,

He combined teaching and academic research... seeking justice for Afro-descendants in two hemispheres.

held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, GALCI also collaborated with its members to provide better and more regular access to such multi-lateral funding institutions as the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Foundation and such private donors as the Ford and Rockefeller foundations.

Kenneth Erickson, a professor of political science at Hunter College who knew Mr. Turner as both a colleague and friend, wrote the following remembrance:

Jerry Michael Turner, known to his friends as Michael and professionally as J. Michael

Turner, combined teaching and academic research with applied policy-relevant work seeking justice for Afro-descendants in two hemispheres. In addition to teaching, he sought policy impact as a program officer and consultant with the Ford Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and on speaking tours.

Michael's pioneering policy work involved agenda-setting that placed Afro-Brazilians and Afro Latinos, long ignored in their established societies and by outside observers, onto the agendas of officials, politicians, social-policy makers, journalists and scholars. As a co-founder of GALCI and in his other work he served as a catalytic contact broker who energized Afro Descendent activists and linked them with international and domestic NGOs, academic colleagues and government agencies.

Michael persisted, with notable success, as the agendas of both academics and policy makers opened. His mordant wit, especially when analyzing cases of injustice, not only entertained but also underscored his arguments.

Michael Turner will be long remembered for his loyal friendship, his supportive good humor, his perceptive analytic mind and his initiative in placing Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Latino realities onto academic and policy agendas so that others could follow in his footsteps. ■

IN MEMORIAM

Peter Zabriskie, who worked in the budget and financial services office at the Foundation, died July 22 at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease.

Mr. Zabriskie went to work for Ford in 1968 as assistant budget manager in the comptroller's office, and was named budget manager in 1970. In 1977, he was named manager of Budgets and Special Projects.

He transferred to the Office of the Budget in 1981 and, three years later, became assistant to the director of financial services.

He resigned from Ford in 1985.

Margaret "Peggy" Toulson, who worked at the Ford Foundation for 30 years, primarily in the Archives/Records Department, died at her home in Queens, New York City, on August 5.

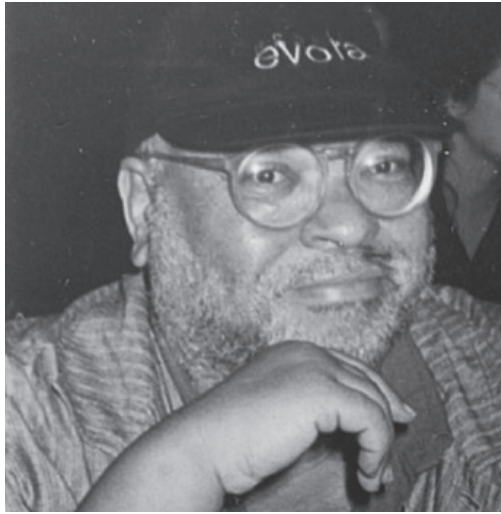
She started at Ford in 1956 as a receptionist and typist in General Services. She became an Information Retrieval Specialist in Information Services in 1969 and remained in that office until her retirement in 1986, promoted first to Assistant Supervisor of the IR Unit in 1972 and then as a Senior IR Specialist in 1982.

In her work with the Foundation's files and

records she interacted with staff at all levels. "Her professionalism, attention to detail and regard for her colleagues won her many friends," said **Jane Dunne**, who had worked in the Foundation's Comptroller's Office.

Patricia Gramby, who worked for the Ford Foundation for more than 20 years, died August 16.

Ms. Gramby started working for Ford in 1988 as a secretary in the Urban Poverty Program. She was an administrative assistant in the Economic Development Program when she retired in 2009.



A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR AFRO-BRAZILIAN RIGHTS

By Rebecca Reichmann Tavares

J. Michael Turner joined the Foundation's Brazil office during Brazil's transition to democracy after over 25 years of military rule. He was a passionate advocate for Afro-Brazilian culture and rights during one of Brazil's most transformative moments. During the authoritarian period, from 1964 to 1985, political organizing of any kind was violently suppressed. Even discussion of race was treated as subversive and could result in detention and torture.

As the authoritarian government ceded military power to civilian democracy, Michael was witness to the flowering of civil society, including the emergence and organizing of Afro-Brazilian movement groups that had survived underground for years. Many of these groups had formed under the auspices of Afro-Brazilian cultural research and advancement, an angle on the Afro-Brazilian experience that was officially sanctioned within the hegemonic Brazilian ideology of "racial democracy".

In this context, when "racism" was still a dangerous epithet, Michael sought out and supported efforts to recognize and celebrate the experience and contributions of Afro-Brazilians. His actions, under the leadership of the Foundation's then-president **Franklin Thomas**, were totally new to Ford's agenda in Brazil.

During this period, the Foundation provided support to several Afro-Brazilian grassroots NGOs, including the Institute for Research on Black Culture (IPCN), led by Januario Garcia

and Julio Tavares; to university-based research programs on Afro-Brazilian culture and religion in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro; and to leading Afro-Brazilian artists and cultural activists, including Zozimo Bulbul, Zeze Motta and Ruth de Souza.

Michael worked with such renowned Afro-Brazilian figures as Senator and Professor Abdias Nascimento, Helena Teodoro, Joel Rufino dos Santos, Helio Santos, Diva Moreira, Lelia Gonzalez and many others.

Michael mused about the thorny reactions to his work with the Foundation of that period in Corinne Lennox's chapter "The Role of International Actors in Norm Emergence: Supporting Afro-Descendants' Rights in Latin America" in the book *International Approaches to Governing Ethnic Diversity*. "I was under pressure," he said, "from both the white academic community and the Brazilian Foreign Ministry to stop 'wasting the Foundation's money with this Afro-Brazilian stuff I was doing'."

Michael persisted, even after leaving the Foundation to return to academia, as the agendas of Brazilian academics and policy makers began to take more seriously the challenges of racial discrimination and inequality.

A decade later, Michael was a key consul-

tant to the Ford Foundation-supported Comparative Race Relations Initiative led by **Lynn Walker Huntley**, Ford's former Vice President for Rights and Social Justice and, after leaving the Foundation, President of the Southern Education Foundation. The project examined the social construction of race in South Africa, the United States and Brazil and proposed policies to address racial and intersecting mechanisms of discrimination and exclusion.

Michael's academic and policy work subsequent to his years at the Foundation continued to reflect his lifelong commitment to justice for people of African descent and for Africans. In addition to his work at the Foundation, his teaching and his pivotal work in co-founding the Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative (GALCI), Michael spent many years in Africa, including stints as loan officer for Togo at the World Bank (1986-7); project consultant for United Support of Artists for Africa ("We Are the World") in Mali, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique; and as democracy/governance consultant for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Mozambique (1992), where he managed the Democratic Initiatives Project that supported the 1994 democratic multiparty electoral process in Mozambique. He later served as a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) consultant in Mozambique.

As a result of Michael's early leadership, the Ford Foundation has established lasting partnerships with Brazilians engaged in the ongoing battle to combat racial and other forms of inequality in Brazil.

I followed Michael at the Foundation's Brazil office, in 1988, and discovered the groundwork of solidarity Michael had built by recognizing the voices and leadership of Brazil's most excluded citizens. Michael's most important legacy will be his courage and tenacity

Michael's most important legacy will be his courage and tenacity in placing Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Latino realities onto philanthropic, academic and policy agendas, at a time when it was considered too politically sensitive.

in placing Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Latino realities onto philanthropic, academic and policy agendas, at a time when it was considered too politically sensitive.

In the wake of his passing, many of Michael's friends, colleagues, and fellow activists in Brazil have shared tributes on social media to Michael's intellect, his acerbic wit, breadth of historical perspective and impressive global rolodex. The following are just a *Continued on next page*

few excerpts:

Julio Tavares (professor at Federal Fluminense University): “Michael was beloved, a person with a rare kindness found among academics. He was a dedicated analyst of Brazilian racism and a permanent partner of Afro Brazilians of my generation.”

Joao Jorge Rodrigues (founder of Olodum): “...a huge loss of a friend and brother.”

Helena Theodoro (cultural activist): “Michael was a great soldier in our struggle against racism in Brazil. He was a source of energy, supporting the study of Afro Brazil-

ian religions in the country.”

Antonio Carlos Arruda (lawyer, activist): “Michael was a big person, very important for our partnership with the north American black movement.”

Paulo Roberto Dos Santos (Afro-Brazilian Activist): “Michael was a dedicated friend of our cause. To Michael, we owe so much.”

Helio Santos (professor): “Michael Turner’s work in the ‘years of lead’ (a phrase that refers to the country’s authoritarian period) were decisive for the advance of Blacks in Brazil. Always warm, he was an Afro-American who was Afro-Brazilian at heart.”

Diva Moreira (professor and Afro-Brazilian Women’s Movement activist): “Michael was a constructor of networks before the internet. May all the spiritual forces welcome your powerful soul!” ■

Rebecca Reichmann Tavares is the representative for India, Bhutan, the Maldives and Sri Lanka of UN Women, the United Nation’s Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women program. She was a program officer in the Ford Foundation’s Brazil office from 1988 to 1993.

LAFFing Parade

Radhika Balakrishnan, faculty director of the Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University, is the recipient of this year’s Chancellor’s Excellence Awards for her work with New York City’s Commission on Gender Equity.

Ms. Balakrishnan, who also is a professor in the university’s Women and Gender Studies program, was named one of 13 commissioners of the New York agency when it was created in June 2015.

Its purpose is to advise the mayor on initiatives and methods to reduce inequality, and to “advocate for women, girls, transgender and intersex residents and support programs that have been created to remove barriers to full participation in all areas of women’s personal and work lives”.

CWGL, which was founded in 1989, promotes women’s leadership in human rights through leadership institutes, international mobilization campaigns, strategic planning activities, publications and a resource center.

It is also a member of the Institute for Women’s Leadership (IWL), a consortium of women’s programs at Rutgers created to study how and why women lead, and to develop programs to prepare women of all ages to lead effectively.

Ms. Balakrishnan has been executive director of CWGL since 2009, and has expanded its programming to include a focus on economic rights and justice from a female perspective. It is one of the leading organizations working in the “area of economic rights to broaden and deepen the capacity of women leaders and social justice organizations to analyze, comment on and create alternatives to policies shaping the lives of women and girls”.

She has a doctorate in economics from Rutgers and has written and edited several

books, including *Policy and Human Rights: Holding Governments to Account*.

She worked at the Ford Foundation from 1992 to 1995.

Natalia Kanem has been appointed Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

In making the announcement, the organization noted that Ms. Kanem has “more than 25 years of strategic leadership experience in the fields of medicine, public and reproductive health, social justice and philanthropy”.

Of special import was her work at Ford from 1992 to 2005, where she “funded pioneering work in women’s reproductive health and sexuality as the Foundation’s representative for West Africa. She then served in the Foundation’s headquarters, becoming Deputy Vice President for its worldwide peace and social justice programs across offices in the United States, Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe”.

After leaving Ford, Ms. Kanem was the founding president of the ELMA Philanthropies, a private institution focusing primarily on children and youth in Africa. In 2012, she became a senior associate of the Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies, which works on development issues in the Caribbean region. She went to work for the United Nations in 2014 as the UNFPA representative in Tanzania.

She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University with a major in history and science, earned a medical degree from Columbia University and has a master’s degree in public health from the University of Washington, with a specialty in epidemiology and preventive medicine.

Gowher Rizvi, an adviser to the prime minister of Bangladesh, recently warned of a growing water crisis in that country during a conference in Dhaka on “good governance

and the way forward”, as reported in The Dhaka Tribune.

“If we were to pinpoint the crises the country is likely to face in the days ahead,” he said, “water would be the biggest.”

“Many civilizations have been destroyed due to lack of water. We are especially in danger because we do not yet have any concern about our environment. We have to prevent the misuse of water and conserve it. Lots of things should be worked out at many levels if we want to conserve water.”

Rizvi worked at the Foundation from 1996 to 2002 as a program officer in the Asia Programs and in Governance and Civil Society, and as the Representative in the New Delhi office.

Steven Solnick is the new Head of School of the Calhoun School, a co-educational, independent school on the Upper West Side of New York City that is committed to “progressive education and diversity, equity and social justice”. He will assume his duties in July.

In making the announcement of his selection, the school said that Solnick “has shown an innate understanding of Calhoun’s progressive approach to education, informed by his own early educational experience, and further enhanced by his extensive experience teaching students at some of the world’s most dynamic colleges and universities”.

Solnick has been president of Warren Wilson College in Asheville, N.C., since 2012, when he left Ford after working since 2002 as its representative in Moscow and New Delhi. Before then he was an associate professor at Columbia University.

He received a bachelor’s degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1981 and then studied politics and economics at Oxford University in England as a Marshall Scholar. He was a consultant for NASA for two years before earning a doctorate from Harvard University in 1993. ■

KALMAN SILVERT IN THE FORD FOUNDATION

By Peter S. Cleaves and
Richard W. Dye

From 1966 to 1976, **Kalman Silvert** was Senior Social Science Advisor to the Ford Foundation's Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OLAC). He had established himself as a leading United States intellectual on Latin American politics and as a prolific writer on the region, and during his life had been a professor at Tulane University, Dartmouth College and New York University.

He was also a founder of LASA, the Latin American Studies Association. LASA's first congress, in June 1966, was attended by about a dozen academics. Fifty years later, LASA had 7,802 members (43 percent from Latin America), of whom 6,419 attended its fiftieth anniversary congress in New York City.

To commemorate the anniversary, **Abraham Lowenthal** and Martin Weinstein have edited a volume devoted to Kal's career, *Kalman Silvert: Engaging Latin America, Building Democracy*, issued earlier this year by Lynne Rienner Publishers and written with Ford Foundation support. Persons with firsthand knowledge of Kal's life wrote chapters on his contributions to development theory, teaching and mentoring, research methodology, hemispheric relations, and democratic values. There are 13 contributors, including the former president of Chile, Ricardo Lagos. The chapter we wrote covers Kal's important role in the Ford Foundation during a conflictive decade for Latin America.

The chapter draws on a large body of Ford Foundation memoranda and reports deposited at the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. We also conducted interviews with Kal's associates in the Foundation, former grantees and colleagues. Foundation staff who shared their memories are **Peter Bell, William Carmichael, Norman Collins, Robert Edwards, Richard Fagen, Shepard Forman, Barry Gaberman, Peter Hakim, Lowell Hardin, James Himes, Abraham Lowenthal, Jeffrey Puryear, Paul Strasburg, James Trowbridge** and **Evelyn Walsh**. Colleagues and grantees quoted in the chapter include Sergio Bitar, José Joaquín Brunner, Julio Cotler, Alejandro Foxley, Manuel Antonio Garretón, Elizabeth Jelin, Ricardo Lagos and Riordan Roett. (Sadly, between our



interview and the book's publication, Peter Bell and Lowell Hardin passed away.) For their historical value, we plan to place the transcribed interviews in the Ford Foundation archives at RAC.

Kal had considerable influence on the Foundation's mission to strengthen academic excellence in Latin America and the Foundation's response to the assault on academic freedom during the period of brutal military governments in South America. His role with other committed Foundation colleagues was fundamental in rescuing academics whose careers and even lives were threatened. Kal embodied an operating style that influenced Foundation policy even though he did not command budgetary resources or line authority. We argue that his legacy and attributes, as well as the findings in other chapters of the Lowenthal/Weinstein volume, hold lessons for today's professionals in support of academic and international advancement.

In 1966, the social science disciplines were rudimentary in most Latin American universities. Formalistic academic writings offered little of value for designing public policies that addressed poverty, discrimination, economic growth or democratic participation. Silvert considered that building local competence in sociology, economics and anthropology would in turn generate knowledge that well-intentioned governments could utilize for designing practical approaches to their country's development challenges.

The guiding principles were an emphasis on academic quality, democracy and freedom of expression. The practical applications were providing advanced graduate training for promising young Latin Americans in the social sciences at world centers of excellence,

and greatly strengthening academic departments in Latin America's major universities.

After Silvert's arrival, the Ford Foundation greatly expanded its support for the social sciences at Latin American universities through graduate fellowships and research funds for hundreds of scholars and financing for scores of universities, notably in Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Central America. Silvert reported to the OLAC heads, **Harry Wilhelm** and Bill Carmichael, who agreed with a direction that differed from the Foundation's work in Asia and Africa, which relied

heavily on foreign consultants to advise governments on development policy.

The results of discipline- and institution-building have been fundamental and long-standing. Latin American social science today is world-class with robust university departments and high productivity. Senior Latin Americans attribute much of this progress to the Foundation's (and Kal's) early contributions. Of note: 2,748 of the 6,419 attendees at the May 2016 LASA meeting were affiliated with Latin American universities.

During Silvert's tenure, the military overthrew civilian governments in Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia and Peru, and became harsher in Brazil. The Chilean, Argentine and Brazilian regimes were particularly repressive and targeted social scientists as enemies of the state, confronting the Foundation with decisions on how to respond to humanitarian, program and political issues.

The Foundation, led in Chile by the Santiago office and in New York by OLAC, including Silvert, assisted LASA and others to develop a range of employment and study scholarships in the United States, Canada, Europe and Latin America to provide opportunities for those affected. The strategy also included negotiating with the authorities on releasing prisoners so they could accept positions abroad. More than fifteen hundred scholars, intellectuals and political refugees were able to relocate, one of whom, Ricardo Lagos, was destined to become President of Chile and a contributor to the Silvert legacy volume.

The Foundation's response to program issues occurred in two phases. First, the Foundation, as was its long tradition, did what it could to support and sustain grantees negatively. *Continued on next page*

The LAFF Society
c/o Nellie Toma
PO Box 701107
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

Kalman Silvert

Continued from page 11

tively affected by the coups. In a few cases, it was possible to do this, at least for a while, within the context of the universities or other institutional arrangements, but more often grantees were forced or chose to leave to try to develop opportunities in the private sector. In due course, the bulk of the Foundation's original program was closed down, the most significant case being the termination of the multi-million dollar ten-year program of collaboration between the University of Chile and the University of California.

The second program phase was undertaken after heated debate within the Foundation over the merits and demerits of remaining active in these near-totalitarian countries. The Foundation ultimately decided to maintain its presence in Santiago and Buenos Aires in order to execute a radically different program, at least so long as it was permitted to do so by the governments.

This program, which Silvert played a major role in designing, had three components. The first was to help create and support new civil society institutions separate from the military-led universities, founded in some cases

by previous Foundation grantees. The second was research grants that provided institutional support, funded analyses and kept a cadre of social scientists engaged in their specialty. The third was a large graduate fellowship program to train a new generation of scholars from throughout the Southern Cone. The three programs were predicated on the Foundation's hypothesis that the military would eventually return to the barracks and the countries would transition to democracy. The hypothesis subsequently proved correct.

The final set of issues, the political one, revolved around the fact that by taking an active role in assisting refugees from the military regimes and persuading a number of countries to join in doing so, by openly cutting and trimming its programs in response to the coups, and by mounting a new and sustained effort to assist civil society in the two countries to lay the groundwork for future democratic development, the Foundation de facto became a significant political actor. Silvert, who had more to do with the conceptualization and execution of the Southern Cone program than anyone else, clearly was comfortable with the Foundation's activism. It is to the Foundation's credit that there was also broad institutional support for it.

In our chapter, we strove to identify what seemed to lie behind Silvert's influence in the Foundation, despite his lack of formal levels of authority. They include Kal's deeply held values, intellectual integrity, theory of social change, disciplined focus on programmatic outcomes, sympathetic, respectful, engaging personality, success in recruiting like-minded allies, skill in "managing upward" and extreme hard work.

Kal tragically did not live long enough to see the ultimate success of the Southern Cone strategy and the programs he had so much to do with creating. On June 15, 1976, at the age of 55, Kal died of a heart attack. ■

Peter S. Cleaves was with the Ford Foundation's Latin America and Caribbean office from 1972 to 1982, including as Representative for Mexico and Central America. He later held executive positions at First Chicago, University of Texas, AVINA Foundation and Emirates Foundation (Abu Dhabi).

Richard W. Dye worked in the International Division from 1961 to 1981, the last seven years as Representative for the Southern Cone, before joining the Institute of International Education (IIE) as Executive Vice President.