

THE EPOCH

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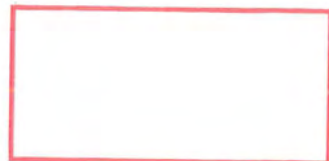
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by Tex Pasley

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CONTENTS

Slavery Ignored Tex Pasley	5
Beyond Farc: 40 Years of Conflict John Vining	11
Special Section: All President Obama's Men	16
Tibet's Unheard Call for Independence Chelsea Adams	21
Modernizing the Church Erin Shadowens Shikshya Adhikari	25
Through the Lens The Year in Pictures	28

Founder, Editor-in-Chief:
Zachary Fryer-Biggs
Managing Editor:
Tex Pasley
Layout Editor:
Eric Honour
Artistic Director:
John Vining
Business Director:
Tyler Clegg
Associate Editors:
Laurel Fischer, Erin Shadowens

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Here, a man visiting China walks across the Sichuan-Tibet Highway,
a road which connects the western Chinese province of Sichuan
with Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. The highway, opened in 1954,
takes a traveler originating in China 1,500 miles across various ter-
rain to the traditional seat of the Dalai Lama located in Lhasa.



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Slavery Ignored

Tex Pasley, Annapolis, '11

“**W**hen I was 15, my parents were killed in the war in Darfur. I came to Ghana with a man who is originally from Ghana. He saw me crying by a bush and he tried to bring me to Ghana. We walked in the forest for five good days with no water eating only fruit. I came to Ghana and he told me that he wants to help me in some way, but said that he was going to look for work, and he couldn't take me to follow him. God bless that man very much.”

So begins the saga of Mary Addai, currently a resident of Techiman, Ghana. “After that, I found an old woman, told her my problems, and she helped me get some food to eat. After she gave me the food to eat, she sacked me from the house, saying she can't let me stay with her, and I looked for a job for myself, but no one would let me work for him or her.”

When *The Epoch* asked Addai why she could not find work, she replied, curiously, “No jobs for slaves

here.” Not because of her gender, or nationality, but because she was a slave, part of a recognized class of people who were not qualified to earn wages.

Slavery is nothing new in West Africa, from the sale of human bodies in the transatlantic slave trade, to the enslavement of native black Africans to their Arab owners. The latter type continues today, despite laws in every African country banning the practice. The Community Court of Justice for the Economic

ISRAEL • The Attorney General of Israel announced he was going to charge outgoing prime minister Ehud Olmert for fraudulent billing of plane flights between 2002 and 2006.

IRAQ • Parliament ratified a security agreement that would require the United States to leave by 2011.

NIGERIA • At least 400 people died, and more than 7,000 fled the town of Jos, Nigeria after Muslim and Christian mobs protested a controversial local election.

SOMALIA • Somali pirates negotiated a ransom for a captured Ukrainian freighter carrying unlicensed arms.



Steps Towards Freedom in West Africa

December 10, 1948

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by UN General Assembly. Article Four states: "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

1948

2008

August 3, 1960

Niger gains independence from France

July 18, 1999

Niger adopts new constitution officially banning slavery

October 27, 2008

Hadjiatou Mani, a Nigerien woman, is awarded \$19,000 in damages by the Community Court of Justice for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The ruling will bolster anti-slavery movements throughout West Africa, where every country already has laws in place banning slavery.

Community of West African States (ECOWAS) ruled in October that the country of Niger failed to protect Hadjiatou Mani, a woman who had been sold into slavery at the age of 12, ordering the country to pay her \$19,000 in damages.

This woman was simply on the bottom rung of a ladder which has existed for centuries among tribal people in the deserted regions of present day countries such as Mauritania, Mali, and Niger.

"The population in Mauritania is split into three groups: White Maurs of Arab descent who have the power, Hatanis (ex-slaves) and blacks from the Senegal River Valley. They are split approximately 30/40/30 - however this is an estimation as the black population is growing and that of the White Maurs stagnating. Physical work is not for the White Maurs - here you will hardly see a White Maur in a kitchen or change a tire or dig a hole for a water line," says a source in Mauritania who wishes to

remain anonymous.

"Despite slavery being abolished in 1960 (upon independence from France), in its constitution and its criminalization in 2003, we estimate that a minimum of 43,000 people are in slavery across Niger," says Romana Cacchioli, Africa Programme Coordinator for Anti-

urban areas, and is practised predominantly by the Tuareg, Maure (Berber Arab, pronounced Moor), and Peule (also known as Pulaar or Fulani) ethnic groups."

Slavery in West Africa takes many different forms. There is the aforementioned traditional slave class that has existed for centuries. The anonymous source from Mauritania puts it simply, albeit crudely, "Slaves are part of their owner's families in the same way you consider your dog to be part of your family - it serves a purpose and you consequently give it something to eat and a basket to sleep in. And those dogs have puppies and those puppies grow up to be dogs."

The situation in Niger and Mauritania is similar, as both countries feature a type of slavery such as the one described above. Cacchioli explains further, "Under Niger's caste-based society, slaves are at the bottom rung of the social hierarchy. Slaves have no rights and no opportunities in life. In



Niger people are born into slavery, and are forced to work without pay for their so-called masters throughout their lives, primarily herding cattle, working on farmland or as domestic servants. Slaves are denied fundamental rights and where their masters exercise powers of ownership over them."

Addai described herself as a "slave," and even though Addai's life is technically not one of a slave in that she was not under the ownership of another person, her experience carries a similar taint of the caste culture that Cacchioli describes in Niger. At least in more traditional slavery, the slave is in some way a member of the system they're in. With Addai, she is forced to work, but receives hardly any benefit from the arrangement.

"It is hard for me to get some place to sleep," Addai says. "We wait until the owner of the restaurant [she works at] closes before we go into the dining room to sleep. I don't get paid and I have to eat the food left over at

the end of the night. Everyone else who works there is under a similar arrangement."

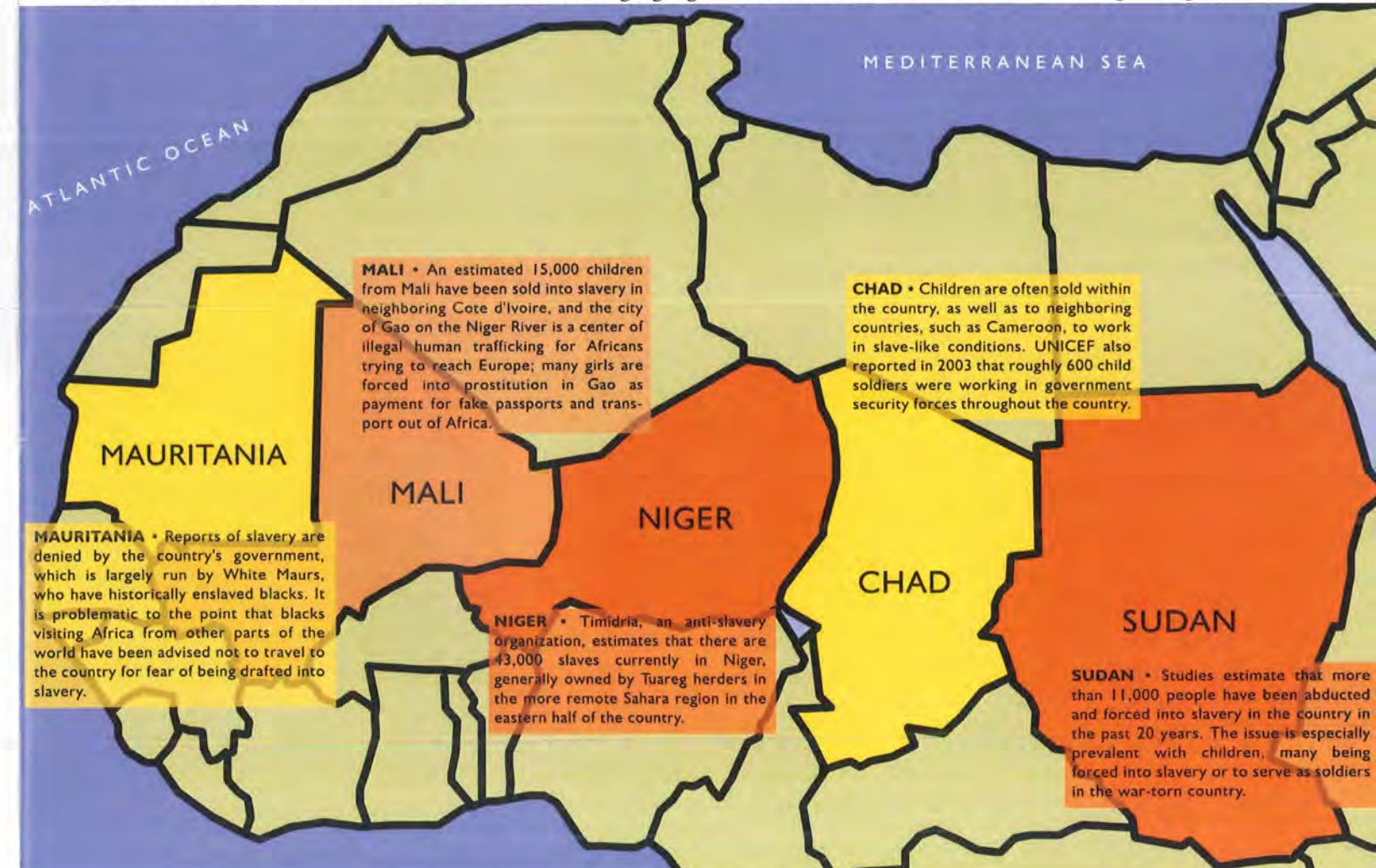
Yet while the definition of slavery is broadening, it's still not a given that slavery is occurring in Niger, or anywhere for that matter. *The Epoch* interviewed numerous people from all over Africa and asked their opinions on the latent presence of slavery that is acknowledged by courts, lawmakers, news publications, and groups such as Timidria. Nearly all denied that slavery is even happening.

"Almost everywhere people deny slavery exists," Cacchioli says. "People often think it was abolished a century ago. The perception is that individuals in slavery are shackled in chains and their only reference is the transatlantic slave trade. But as you know, the reality is that Slavery exists everywhere despite global prohibition. Almost all states deny its existence and it is only with good research, bringing legal cases and work-

ing with the UN, the media, etc. can we prove that unfortunately slavery is alive and kicking."

It seems safe to say, given the extent to which slavery is reported, along with the personal observations of people in the region, that something akin to slavery is still happening. However, the misinformation about it is not surprising given the way governments handle its existence. As the anonymous source from Mauritania relates, "Considering that there are still 'slaves' around you might touch a subject that some people in this area would rather not have exposed - kind of bad PR for the country. Irrespective, slavery has been officially abandoned here, but effectively it still exists, the ball & chains just replaced by 'keep them stupid, ignorant & without say in the public.'"

This attitude among leaders of countries is verified by Cacchioli, who describes a system where the slaves are unable to participate in the



electoral process, thus keeping their voice out of the political arena, perpetuating the current caste system. Furthering the confusion, the officials of these countries have taken extra steps within their laws to show their opposition to slavery; Niger and Mauritania, two countries where slavery persists as a matter of tradition, are also the two countries in Africa that make slavery a criminal offence, perhaps to divert outside pressure on the progress of real reform towards abolishing slavery.

It might be clear that humans are suffering indignity throughout West Africa, but it's a challenge, for all those who wish to change the current system, to determine how change might be achieved. The ECOWAS court ruling in favor of Mani is a step, but many observers do not know what real influence the decision will have, considering the court's limited ability to enforce, and past rulings it has made that have gone unheeded. It

is also unclear how much will there is within governments to change the current situation.

"Development is slow or non-existent because of government corruption and poor management at the presidential level," the anonymous source from Mauritania says. "Salaries to teachers are poor, so if you have a brain you do not want to be a teacher. Idealists who cannot afford to put food on the table do not last long."

With such pessimistic assessments, any change will probably be taking place through a combination of outside help and personal initiative.

"[Anti-Slavery International] works globally to ensure a wide understanding of the different slavery practices which are prevalent today," Cachioli says. "We work with international bodies like the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, UN and ILO to raise issues and seek solutions at the regional and national levels. At the national

stigma she carries as a foreigner, a status that is fraught with its own difficulties.

"An 81 year old woman has given me food and a place to stay," Addai said. "She's also been paying for my education – I want to be a nurse and help people in Ghana, but her son died in a car accident, and since then, she's been unable to pay for me to go to school, and I've been kicked out."

Such are the difficulties facing individuals trying to break through in a system that has operated for centuries. Nonetheless some are spurred on by the bounty of globalization, and successes such as the court ruling in Niger.

These incentives might put an end to the traditional ways that have justified the continuation of slavery into the 21st century, even if fear continues to oppose progress.

Says the anonymous source in Mauritania, "everyone is aware [of slavery] and especially here [in Mauritania] the White Maurs are becoming afraid that one day a black wave will push them into the ocean." ✱

Interviewed for this story:

Mary Addai, Techriman, Ghana
Anonymous source, Nouakchott, Mauritania
Romana Cacchioli, Africa Programme Coordinator, Anti-Slavery International



A Tuareg man sits outside a building in Marrakech, Morocco

level we campaign for legal reform to strengthen the legal framework, we provide legal assistance and help bring test cases, we work to ensure that economic and social accompanying measures are in place to assist those leaving slavery. We work with the judiciary to ensure their understanding of slavery. We also work with local partners providing primary education to children in areas affected by slavery (Northern Niger) as well as micro credit for women to enable them to lead independent lives."

Addai has been taking steps herself through education to acquire the credentials necessary to shed the

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MEXICO • Interior Minister Juan Carlos Mourino was killed in a plane crash, along with eight others in the plane and five on the ground. The crash was deemed not to be intentional.

NICARAGUA • The ruling Sandinista party rigged municipal elections, and banned international observers, prompting European governments to threaten aid cuts. A losing opposition candidate is pushing for a recount.

VENEZUELA • Hugo Chavez's United Socialist Party of Venezuela performed poorly in the largest states in the country in regional elections, despite measures taken to ensure victory, signaling a popular backlash against Chavez's government.

COLOMBIA • President Alvaro Uribe declares a state of "social emergency" after several investment scams fell, leaving many gullible investors angry and poor.

BRAZIL • Nearly 90,000 people were forced from their homes, with at least 110 deaths, after heavy rains in the southern part of the country.

COUNTRY Focus: COLOMBIA

Beyond FARC: Escaping 40 Years of Conflict

John Vining, Annapolis, '11

"Cartagena used to be a quite dangerous city," says Christopher Somers, an American currently teaching in Colombia. "Now, American cruise ships are docking here." Cartagena, a small town on the north coast of Colombia, like many of the country's smaller cities, has a history of violence perpetrated by guerrillas.

Since 1964, Colombia has been torn apart by a rebel group called the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and by violent retaliation carried out by paramilitary groups in response to FARC's increased prominence. FARC, which was created to protect poor rural families, raised money by kidnapping wealthy landowners, who in turn began their own militias for protection.

Colombia is now trying to move on as FARC's more than 40 year old grip weakens, the decline of which many attribute to Colombia's new president, Álvaro Uribe, whose own father was killed by rebels. "Álvaro Uribe is the best president that has worked for Colombia," says Colombian resident Hugo Andres Mera Garzon. Uribe, who is known for his harsh policies towards drugs and militants, won his second term after the constitution was altered to permit another term. He won that second election by 40 points over his closest competitor.

But that does not mean all Colombians are behind Uribe. Colombian resident Daniel Matiz is not confident that Uribe will reform Colombia, "[He is] bad because he cannot eradicate the corruption of the parliament and other parts of

government." The corruption Matiz speaks of is typified by the recent massacre of dozens of civilians, who were afterwards dressed as guerrillas by the military.

At a news conference on Oct. 29, 2008, Uribe said that investigations had found "crimes that in some regions had the goal of killing innocents, to make it seem as if criminals were being confronted." The government under Uribe fired 25 members of the military thought to be connected to the killings, a move that Amnesty International has publicly stated should be only the beginning of a more exhaustive search. "At last, the Colombian government is admitting

there is a human rights problem in the country and that action needs to be taken to solve it. That action should be justice," Susan Lee, Director of Amnesty International's Americas program, said in a press release the day of Uribe's announcement.

This sort of violence is not foreign to Colombia, which has been rife with internal conflict between FARC and other radical groups, and has suffered from political corruption.

The day before the president's news conference, on Oct. 28, Amnesty International published a report called "Leave Us in Peace!" chronicling the deaths of civilians at the hands of the



Translation: no more kidnapping, no more terrorism, no more murders

government, FARC and others. The report said that there have been human rights violations by state security forces, guerrilla groups like FARC, and paramilitary self-defense groups. Two of these groups, the guerrillas and the paramilitary, began in the 1960s, but grew massively in the 1980s. The story of Fidel and Carlos Castaño is representative of the entire conflict.

The two brothers joined the official Colombian military effort against FARC after their father, Jesus Castaño, was kidnapped and murdered by FARC in 1981. But, when one of their enemies, Conrado Ramirez, was released from police custody, Fidel murdered Ramirez himself. The Castaño's affiliation with the official government movement ended there, and they began to fight independent of official support. The brothers continued tracking down FARC members, and, because many of the unofficial paramilitary groups they allied with were protecting

cocaine growers, they eventually found themselves caught up in the cocaine business. Fidel, after a stint with 1980s cocaine-mogul Pablo Escobar, returned, well-funded, to his battle against FARC and other leftist groups, such as the National Liberation Army.

The numerous paramilitary groups in Colombia, all of which are privately funded, began as self-defense groups. They were founded to defend the property and lives of wealthy landowners, including drug-traffickers, from guerrillas like FARC who would kidnap and ransom their family members.

Because they shared a common enemy—namely, FARC—paramilitary groups worked with official Colombian armed forces against guerrillas. This was made possible by a law passed in 1968, which made it legal for the Colombian army to create civilian militias for joint counter-insurgency efforts.

Paramilitary activity reached one of its peaks in 1989, when then-president Virgilio Barco made paramilitary action illegal, outlawing the inclusion of armed civilians in army operations. By that time, these groups, well-funded because of the cocaine trade, were attacking entire populations they believed to be FARC sympathizers.

After the decree in 1989, paramilitary action briefly subsided, but then proceeded to gain strength. Several human rights organizations have reported that paramilitary groups were still connected to the official Colombian military efforts even after the decree of 1989.

Fidel was shot in battle in 1994, and later that year his brother Carlos began the Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, in Cordoba and Uraba (ACCU). That organization, with its first signs of success, expanded into the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), as numerous

A History of FARC and Álvaro Uribe

1964

FARC is formed as a communist militant group, representing the poor against Colombia's wealthy.

1983

Álvaro Uribe's father is killed by FARC.

1989

President Virgilio Barco outlaws paramilitary activity.

2002

Álvaro Uribe becomes president.

1960

2008

1981

Jesus Castaño, father of Fidel and Carlos Castaño is kidnapped and murdered by FARC

1994

Fidel Castaño is shot in battle. Later that year, his brothers created a local self-defense group, which later turned into the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC).

paramilitary groups joined to form the first united national paramilitary force. Constant warfare between FARC and the united paramilitary and state forces was sustained throughout the 1990s, with much of the countryside under the complete control of FARC.

Colombia today is a much safer country than it was in the 90's. Amnesty International reports that between 2000 and 2007 kidnappings have fallen from 3,570 a year to just over 520, and civilian deaths have fallen from 4,000 in 2002 to 1,400 in 2007.

"There are already programs for rehabilitation for ex-fighters and victims," says Steve Baker, an Englishman living in Colombia, working with the British Council. "There are advisors from Ireland with experience in post conflict rehab—[this is how] countries begin the slow recovery process." Baker continues, "I teach English at a university...the government has a program that plans to have most Colombians speaking and/or understanding at least some English by 2019. The country has so many projects to improve itself. [The capital city] Bogotá is really together: Welfare system, recycling, very good policing, etc."

But Colombia is not finding peace nationwide. Baker explains, "Here on the coast things are a little further behind. Things are slower here [in Montería, Cordoba]."

"FARC was a constant threat in the 1980s and 1990s," says, Garzon, who lives in Popayan. "Today this terrorist group is reduced to little

groups in the jungle in the south and east." Amnesty International echoes this sentiment in its "Leave Us" report, which reports that Colombia, especially in the countryside, is still threatened.

"While I lived in Bogotá the FARC threat there was mostly ignorable," says Miguel Jimenez, a Colombian emigrant in the United States who visits Colombia regularly. "You would hear about kidnappings in other parts of the country or of high profile people. However when

I traveled outside of Bogotá I always heard 'be careful, try not to stick out, don't drive at night.'"

One of those high-profile kidnappings was that of Ingrid Betancourt, a Colombian senator and presidential candidate for Colombia's green party. She was kidnapped by FARC in 2002 and held until July 2008, when a military rescue mission freed 15 hostages. "It was very possible that she was going to be Colombia's first female president," says Jimenez. Betancourt is back in Colombia

President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia



marching against kidnapping, after a stay in Paris for security reasons. She is not, however, looking to re-enter politics.

The current state of Colombia, whether devoid of corruption and violence, or suffering the residual influence of the fight between FARC and the paramilitaries, has been greatly shaped by President Uribe, who has held office since 2002. "In my lifetime [FARC] reached a high point in strength about six years ago towards the end of the previous president's [Andrés Pastrana's] term," says Jiminez. "There has been great support for Uribe, he was a majority president. And was also elected by referendum for a consecutive second term. I feel that that this support comes from the fact that since he's been president, the threats about the situation have decreased dramatically, and everyone feels a lot safer."

Nearly everyone, Jiminez included, thinks that Uribe has done a great deal to make Colombians safer. "[Uribe is] good because now we can go to any part to Colombia with no dangers," says Matiz. "He [increases the GDP] of Colombia and gives us peace. And his strategies have been stronger against FARC, Paramilitary groups, narco-politicians and corruption."

Not only are people living in Colombia excited for the progressively more peaceful country, but also those of the international community. A report published in *Military Review* by Thomas A. Marks, a professor at the U.S. National Defense University, praises Uribe's action in Colombia, and praises it as a "model counterinsurgency." Unlike the work done by the previous administration,

which set unreachable goals, the report says Uribe's plan was meant to be acted upon, and had at its base the goal of "integrating" Colombia, fixing the "state's absence from large swaths of national territory."

The goal of Uribe's plan, as

through. They don't think it will with Obama." Somers continues, "I truly think that the people liked the security of having a good friend in the United States, and with Obama, they feel uncertain—especially with Chavez as a next door neighbor."

This uncertainty is compounded with ongoing difficulties. As Amnesty International is quick to point out, there are still problems in Colombia with rebels and with state corruption. Yet the country has been massively transformed within the last 6 years, especially considering FARC's longstanding influence in Colombia.

Still, reform must overcome these military threats, threats which have been a doggedly persistent plague to the people of Colombia. "Now, the current president seems to be doing more than his predecessors," says Jiminez. "And things definitely seem to be reaching some sort of resolution, but we'll see what happens... I grew up with the knowledge of it just being there in the background, part of the norm." ✱



articulated in the *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*, is to have the Colombian Government "gradually restore state presence and the authority of state institutions, starting in strategically important areas."

The future of Colombia will also be affected by the election of Barack Obama, who has voiced opposition to the proposed Free Trade Agreement with Colombia. For supporters of Uribe, Obama's election paints a less-than-perfect scene for the future of Colombia. "Uribe has close ties to the Republicans," Christopher Somers says. "and people really want the Free Trade Agreement to go

Interviewed for this story:

Andrew Flint, Barranquilla, Colombia
 Carlos Cifuentes Caceres,
 Medellin, Colombia
 Daniel Matiz, Bogota, Colombia
 Hugo Andres Mera Garzon,
 Popayan, Cauca, Colombia
 Steve Baker, Teacher, Montería, Colombia
 Miguel Jiminez, Harvard Student,
 Colombian Emigrant
 Christopher Somers, Teacher,
 Cartagena, Colombia

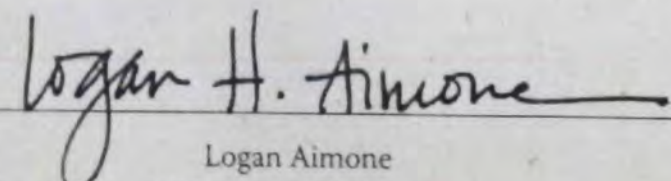
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 Logan Aimone
 ACP Executive Director

All President Obama's Men

Epoch Staff

Barack Obama, primarily because of his Illinois heritage and association with racial progress, has drawn his fair share of comparisons to Abraham Lincoln. Now that Obama has been elected, the President-elect is seeking to further the comparison as he builds his cabinet.

Even before he had clinched the Democratic nomination, Obama spoke about how he would build a "Team of Rivals," referring back to the title of a recently-written book by historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, which profiles the efforts of Abraham Lincoln to build an administration that absorbed his fiercest political adversaries. At the time, Lincoln felt the only way to pull the country through the Civil War was through this inclusive approach.

Calling our current state of affairs equally critical juncture in American history, Obama has assembled his own team of rivals, by naming his two main challengers for the Democratic nomination - Hillary Clinton and Bill Richardson - Secretary of State and Secretary of Commerce, respectively. He also has kept Robert Gates as Secretary of Defense, a position Gates is currently serving under George W. Bush.

The appointment of Clinton has drawn the most interest. Before the selection of Joe Biden, her name was brought up as a possibility for Vice President, based on the speculation that Obama would want to ensure the votes of Clinton loyalists in the general election. Many feared that the Democratic Primary race would destroy the party; when Clinton called for her supporters to get behind Obama after conceding, the crowd audibly booed. By making Clinton Secretary of State, Obama in-

evitably conjures up previous confrontations between Clinton and Obama over foreign policy. Obama and Clinton's first major clash in the primary race centered around a statement by Obama about negotiating with "rogue states" such as Iran and Venezuela. Clinton characterized Obama's stance as naïve, as she subsequently tried to play up her own foreign policy experience.

Yet a large part of the success of the Obama campaign has been in the campaign's ability to communicate ideals

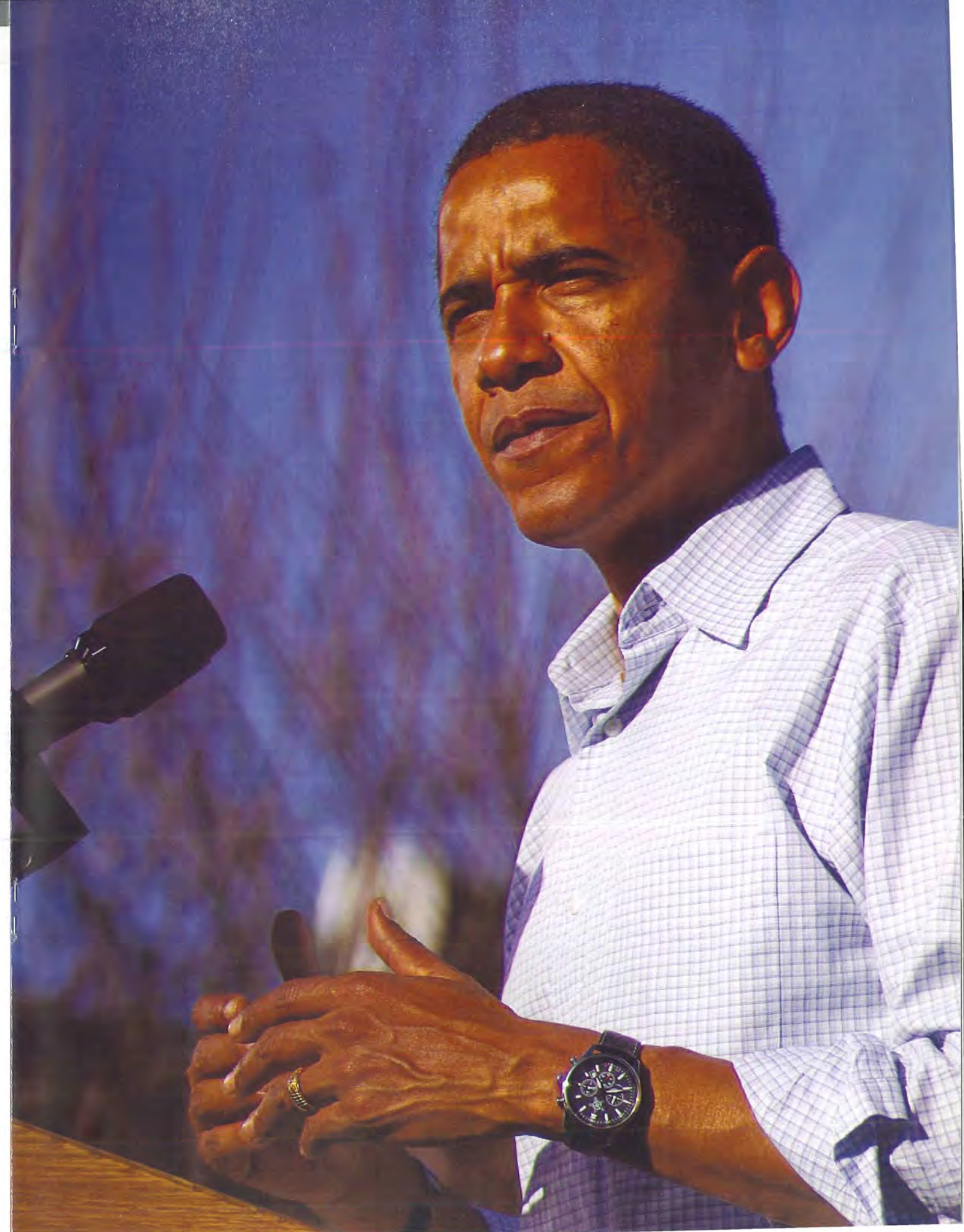
to convey of unity and inclusiveness. He has also unveiled a "National Security Team," and an "Economic Team," giving the public the message that this unity is not being forgotten when approaching the nation's pressing issues.

The sincerity of this approach can probably not be appropriately judged at this point; George W. Bush is still the President. But the momentum that he managed to sustain through more than a year and a half of campaigning has kept going right through his defeat of John McCain.

The manner in which the Transition Team has been unveiled is emblematic of Obama's masterful awareness of the news cycle. By spacing cabinet appointments through the interim between election and inauguration, along with slow leaks to the media - it took more than a week for the rumor of Clinton's appointment to be confirmed - he is keeping himself in the news. And with the emphasis on unity, he's ensuring the coverage spins towards the positive. The official announcement of Clinton as his nominee for Secretary of State, which, if handled incorrectly, could

have dredged up painful memories from the primary race, was bundled with the announcement of his "National Security Team," an association of Cabinet and staff members. He then spoke about his plan for withdrawal from Iraq, outlining a plan which is a far cry from his strong anti-war stance earlier on the campaign trail.

If the election and aftermath have shown us anything, it's clear that Obama and his advisers have a shrewd public relations sense combined with a strong, positive idealism. It's won him the presidency. It is to be seen whether it will transfer into the Oval Office. ✱





Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State

Obama's main contender in the Democratic primary, Clinton has experience as first lady during her husband's administration, and has represented New York in the U.S. Senate since 2000. Her selection as Secretary of State should be placed in the context of President-elect Barack Obama and Clinton's primary battles, where Obama often sought to make Clinton seem a foreign-policy lightweight, and openly questioned her judgment on issues such as diplomatic relations with Iran.



Bill Richardson
Secretary of Commerce

The Department of Commerce is meant to "foster, serve, and promote the Nation's economic development and advancement." This mission will be tested in the midst of the economy's current recession. Richardson, the Governor of New Mexico since 2002, ran in the Democratic primary, pulling out after the voting in New Hampshire. He then threw his support behind Obama, and worked to bring an Obama victory in New Mexico, a crucial swing state, in the general election. He served under Bill Clinton, first as Ambassador to the United Nations, then as Secretary of Energy.



Robert Gates
Secretary of Defense

Gates currently serves in the Bush administration in the same position. Obama announced that he would retain Gates, citing the current situation in Iraq as a need for continuity in the department. Gates was appointed by President Bush in 2006 as the successor to the controversial Donald Rumsfeld. He served as Director of Central Intelligence in the administration for the first George Bush. He has shown support for Obama's plan for withdrawal in Iraq since his appointment. The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will continue to be a top priority for his department.



Tim Geithner
Secretary of Treasury

Given the state of the economy, Geithner steps into a post that will be under intense scrutiny during the early days of Obama's term. Geithner previously served as President and Chief Executive of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and has been active in the current financial crisis, engineering the acquisition of the failing Bear Stearns by JPMorgan Chase. He has favored government intervention through the current financial crisis, squaring with Obama's general approach.



Rahm Emanuel
Chief of Staff

Emanuel will be leaving his post as the Congressional representative for Illinois' Fifth District to serve as Obama's Chief of Staff, a position often considered to be second only to the President in terms of influence in Washington. Emanuel served as a top adviser to Bill Clinton, and cut his teeth in the same Chicago political scene as Obama and David Axelrod, the top adviser in Obama's campaign. In the House of Representatives, he served in a key leadership role in the Democratic majority, and his ruthless style of doing business has proven successful in politics, but has led to some controversy over his selection in such an influential position.



Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General

Holder, an African-American, has not been officially announced as Obama's choice for Attorney General, but is the expected nominee. He was Deputy Attorney General in the Clinton Administration, and will take over a department that has suffered in reputation under the leadership of the Bush administration.



Tom Daschle
Secretary of Health and Human Services

Daschle served as a congressman and Senator for South Dakota for nearly 30 years, serving as the leader of the senate Democrats for 10 years before losing in the 2004 election. He then went to work as a public policy advisor for a law firm, leading people to question his appointment, given Obama's commitment to avoiding conflicts of interest with lobbyists. Daschle's experience in health care policy will be crucial to help implement the sweeping changes to the health care system Obama suggested during the campaign.



Susan E. Rice
Ambassador to the United Nations

Rice, an African-American, also worked in various positions for the entirety of the Clinton Administration, first serving on the National Security Council, and then working as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. She was criticized for her influential role in the decision to keep the US out of Rwanda during the massive genocide of 1994; she has since admitted that her judgment in that matter was wrong.

The Team:

A closer look at Obama's Cabinet nominations

Tibet's Unheard Calls for Independence

Chelsea Adams, Annapolis, '12

The current president of the United States believes that our democratic "way of life is worth defending." The current Dalai Lama believes that democracy is important enough to defend and build from a position of exile.

For one week during November 2008, the leader of the Tibetan Government in Exile and nearly 600 other Tibetan officials met to discuss a course of action for the people of Tibet. Before the meeting, the Dalai Lama released a statement saying that the conference was a nonpartisan attempt "to focus on the aspirations and views of the Tibetan people."

Since the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959, he has been under constant political pressure to build and maintain a stable democracy in his home nation. "[The Dalai Lama] is working towards the conclusion of this episode without bloodshed," says Jonathan Hurst, an Asian Studies major and practicing Buddhist currently studying in Japan.

Officially under the control of the People's Republic of China, the Tibet Autonomous Region, as it has been deemed by the PRC, has been a political hotbed for decades. "The Dalai Lama wants a

compromise, and the Chinese do not," says Hurst.

It is true that the Dalai Lama has sought a peaceful compromise to the situation that started in 1949 when China invaded Tibet. In 1989, the Dalai Lama won the Nobel Peace Prize for his continued efforts in the nonviolent "Middle

of talks that occurred at the recent conference in Dharmshala, India, home of the Tibetan Government in Exile. Representatives of Tibetan freedom organizations from all over the world came to weigh in on the situation, and not all agree with the Dalai Lama's stance. Many favor a stronger position towards China and a totally independent Tibetan state.

"Part of the problem now is that the Dalai Lama has significant spiritual power and recognition, but he lacks the backing of more powerful nations that would force a decision," says Hurst.

Sonam Tsering, a Tibetan student who was forced to leave Tibet and now studies in India, agrees. "It's not a story of a far passed century. The world could interrupt this conflict and provide for human rights and justice, but as far as politics is concerned, the Tibet issue remains untouched." The conference seems to have confirmed this notion, as the Government in Exile

made no real significant shift in policy. Independence for Tibet, however, has received its fair share of attention and media time.

Take the Beijing Olympics, for ex-



CHINA • The country abruptly pulled out of a summit with the European Union, seemingly in response to actions by French President Nicolas Sarkozy supporting Tibet..

INDIA • Terrorist attacks shook the city of Mumbai, attacking many famous landmarks. It is unclear which terrorist group is responsible, although it seems certain that the attackers were Muslim.

SRI LANKA • Floods displaced about 90,000 people. Aid groups were kept from going to rebel-held areas in the north of the country, where most of the flooding took place.

THAILAND • Airports were seized by anti-government protestors for a week, leaving an estimated 230,000 foreigners stranded in the country.



ample. Hurst says, "[The Tibetans] tried to do something when the world's eye was on China for the Olympics, but China brutally suppressed it." Security at the Olympics was tight, and countries around the world were excessively mindful of the volatile eye of the media at the Games. According to reports confirmed by the British Olympic Association, Great Britain's athletes were asked to sign contracts forbidding them to speak out on a range of political issues, including the Tibetan freedom initiative.

Talib Khan, a citizen of Delhi, India, has witnessed dozens of protests held by Tibetan refugees living in the city. Khan spoke of the weeks before the start of the Olympic games, when "large detachments of security personnel were stationed all around the city." He also mentioned one demonstration in which "the protestors were outnumbered by cops." Despite its careful watch of protesting citizens and refugees, India is typically depicted as pro-Tibetan freedom. "We Indians really know the taste of imposed ruling. Indians sympathize with Tibet." Khan's country is no stranger to political disenfranchisement and warring factions.

It is unclear if Tibet is actively seeking foreign aid and confirmation from major

world powers, though the Dalai Lama has given many an address to parliaments and congressional bodies all over the world. "It's like expecting compassion, sacrifices and justice from others when it is written in our own religion," says Tsering. Several countries, including Great Britain and the United States, have made informal proclamations deeming Tibet part of the People's Republic of China. This is enough, say some Tibetans, of a reason to lend a helping hand to the Dalai Lama's cause.

"My view on it is a free election. The Atlantic Charter says that all people have the right to self-determination," Hurst says. On August 14th, 1941, the leaders of the United States and Great Britain met in secrecy on a warship off the coast of Newfoundland in the midst of World War II to discuss the Atlantic Charter, the document which shaped the strategy of the Allies as they prepared to engage in military action against the Axis Powers. The United States did not officially enter the war until December 7th of the same year, but the Atlantic Charter outlined an important component of America's deepest political convictions.

In the charter, America made it clear that it "respects the right of all peoples to

choose the form of government under which they will live," and that "it wishes to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

Fast forward six decades, and zoom in on the controversy that has been brewing in Asia and expanding to the world stage. The United States, in part due to the Atlantic Charter, has a complicated stake in the idea of Tibetan sovereignty, a long-time point of contention in American relations with China, the exiled Tibetan Government, and the international community.

"I know the U.S. has not taken a stance on this issue because of the incredible influence China has on the American economy," says Hurst. As a new presidential era dawns in Washington, many Tibetans are waiting to see what Barack Obama will say about the Chinese occupation. Tibet is a rich country, full of resources that China feels it cannot do without. Tibet's plateau is a mineral-rich reservoir of profit, or so reads an investigative report filed by top Chinese environmentalists in 2007. "In a nutshell," echoes Tsering, "each nation is concerned about their own politics and the welfare of their own countrymen."

Hurst thinks that the "expansionist nature of China" is an unbreakable force, one with which Tibetans have always had to contend. Chinese citizens, however, have prerogatives of their own. Bo Liu, a student in Beijing, represents the opinion of a portion of the Han Chinese population in Asia.

"To be heartfelt and just, I do not like the Dalai Lama. Most Western people would consider him a mere spiritual leader, like a god who is very merciful and forgiving. This is just a superficial phenomenon." Bo supports his claims with a litany of historical references concerning the religious establishment of Tibetan Buddhism, a sect which he claims is radically different from other branches of the religion. Specifically, Bo addresses the practice of slavery, to which some Tibetan Buddhist monks adhered until about sixty years ago. "In my opinion, [Tibetan Buddhism] is not even a religion, but a hell."

Bo's qualms seem to be exclusively with the Dalai Lama and his leadership.

"As a Han, I really love every nationality in China. I do love Tibetan people, and I support the decision to protect their unique cultures."

The Dalai Lama is an interesting amalgam of religion and governmental authority, a mix many Westerners would not understand, let alone tolerate. Tibetans are faced with more of a dilemma than the world is sometimes willing to recognize. To disobey the will of the Dalai Lama is to oppose the temporal and spiritual leader of Tibet. Taking qualms with the Middle Way runs contrary to the very foundations of the religion which Tibet in Exile is trying to protect.

With all this, the Government in Exile continues, uncertain of when it will be able to reinstate itself in Tibet. July marked the breakdown of an eighth round of peace negotiations between the Dalai Lama and Chinese officials. The Chinese government maintained its offer to the Dalai Lama for a safe return to Tibet, provided he give up many of his powers and his title of temporal leader, a

title he is simply not willing to relinquish. Desperate for a strong new voice, the Dalai Lama called for the Dharmshala conference, but the efforts seem to have been fruitless. "Lots of conferences have already been held in Dharmshala," says Talib Khan, "but the result is 'none.'"

Whether or not the world chooses to act on China's occupation of Tibet, it seems that there is still hope for the future of Asia. "I truly embrace the values of democracy, equality, liberty, hope, and the like. We have so much faction, difference, and diversity," says Bo Liu, "but it's not the most important thing. The most important thing is that we are all living on this planet." *

Interviewed for this story:

Jonathan Hurst, American Student of Asian Studies, Chubu University, Japan
Sonam Tsering, Tibetan Student at Delhi University, India
Talib Khan, Citizen of Delhi, India
Bo Liu, Citizen of Beijing, China



Modernizing the Church

Erin Shadowens, Annapolis '12
Shikshya Adhikari, Annapolis '12

"This gathering is a clear sign of our mutual esteem and desire to listen respectfully to one another," Pope Benedict XVI said on Nov. 6, the final day of the inaugural Catholic-Muslim Forum at the Vatican between representatives from the Catholic and Islamic communities.

Idealistic words, sure. But the idealism of the language might be falling on ears that have long ago tuned out the Church's words.

"[Is the Church] influential? Hell no," says William Illoh of Madrid, Spain. "The Church doesn't impose anything on the state or the government; it has no powers."

To such fanfare, the leaders met, spurred by an open letter written last year from 138 Muslim scholars to the Pope. The letter, and the summit inspired by its writing, were responses meant to temper the Muslim backlash to a speech made by the Pope in 2006 which infuriated the Muslim world. In the speech he quoted Manuel II Paleologos, a 14th century Byzantine emperor, who said, "Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his com-

mand to spread by the sword the faith he preached." Although the incident was characterized as a misunderstanding by the Vatican, international outrage against the comments prompted Catholic outreach to members of the Islamic community.

"Was it a poor choice of phrasing? Absolutely. But was Benedict displaying intolerance toward Islam? I don't think so," Alex Pazuchanics, a student at George Washing-

ton University, said. "I think that in some ways I disagree with the entire message of that speech, but I don't honestly believe that the Pope is anti-Islamic."

The Pope's comment undoubtedly stirred Muslims all around the world. The chorus that called on

the Pope to apologize for the remark grew louder. Political leaders, especially the ones belonging to the Islamic community, strongly emphasized that the remark was unacceptable and completely inconsistent with the entire idea of Islam. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Tayyip Erdoğan, said to a Turkish television station, "I believe it is a must for [the Pope] to retract his erroneous, ugly and unfortunate remarks and apologize both to the

Islamic world and Muslims. I hope he rapidly amends the mistake he has made so as not to overshadow the dialogue between civilizations and religions."

Pervez Musharraf, President of Pakistan at the time, called for legislation against the "defamation of Islam" in a speech to the United Nations. The Pakistani parliament

issued a statement saying, "The derogatory remarks of the Pope about the philosophy of jihad and Prophet Muhammad have injured sentiments across the Muslim world and pose the danger of spreading acrimony among the religions."

Nevertheless, Pazuchanics



RUSSIA • President Dmitri Medvedev visited Venezuela and Cuba; it was the first visit of a Russian president to Venezuela. He signed accords with Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's president, promising cooperation on issues such as nuclear power and oil exploration.

POLAND & CZECH REPUBLIC After agreeing to house missile defense systems run by the United States to protect against the nuclear threat posed by countries such as Russia and Iran, international pressure, along with Barack Obama's election, threaten the installation of the structures.

KOSOVO • A protest took place in Pristina, the capital, in response to a European Union judicial mission that the protestors think will heighten ethnic tension between Serbs and Albanians.

ITALY • Venice flooded to 61 inches, the highest flood level in 22 years. Many analysts attribute the dramatic water levels to global warming.

UNITED KINGDOM • The government took majority ownership of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

points out that, "[Pope Benedict] has actually done a great deal toward building inter-religious dialogue, which I think he is right to do."

Besides the November forum, the Vatican has taken important steps towards mending its relationships with several world religions. It has become increasingly clear that these exchanges do have consequences for "regular" people.

The 2006 murder of a nun in Somalia was a direct response to Benedict's controversial statements. The consequence of this remark was violence in countries with a large Christian minority. For instance in Iraq, the flags of Germany, Israel and the United States were burned, along with Christian crosses and effigies of Pope Benedict. Several churches were bombed. A previously unknown Baghdad-based group, Kataab Ashbal Al Islam Al Salafi (Islamic Salafist Boy Scout Battalions) threatened to kill all

Christians in Iraq if the Pope did not apologize to Muhammad within three days. The environment was in fact so dangerous for Christians that Christian leaders in Iraq had to ask their followers not to leave their homes after two Christians were stabbed and killed in Baghdad.

The violence, if anything, demanded the attention and discourse of Catholic and Muslim leaders. The summit's concluding resolution spoke to the idealism of both parties.

It read: "We profess that Catholics and Muslims are called to be instruments of love and harmony for believers, and for humanity as a whole, renouncing any oppression, aggressive violence and terrorism, especially that committed in the name of religion, and upholding the principle of justice for all."

"This [kind of gathering] is only possible in high levels between church leaders, [regular] people don't

move far from the 18th century," says Zdravko Dren, a citizen of Croatia and lifelong Catholic. Dren points to a disparity between religious leaders and the actual practitioners of any faith.

Illoh attributes the Church's waning stature to changes in the nature of European politics and society in the last half century. "Back then the Catholic Church under [Fascist Dictator Francisco Franco] was very important in society and people grew up to 'love' [the] Church and be brought up in a Christian manner. But now the Church doesn't matter and kids don't really know much about church...After Franco's death, the new transitional government tried to get Spain up to Western European standards. It made the power of the Church useless. The new constitution separated state from church and gave them no powers. The new generation of Spaniards weren't brought up in

Catholic-Muslim Relations Through the Centuries

1095

Pope Urban II asks European Christians to organize against Muslim Turks

1948

United Nations creates the Jewish state of Israel despite the violent objections of Arab nations. The Vatican, as well as most Western nations, has been a particularly vocal supporter of Israel.

1000

2008

1095-1272

Nine subsequent Crusades dominate political relations between Catholic Europe and the Islamic Middle East

1365

Ottoman defeat of Christian Army gives them effective control of Byzantium

1683

Defeat at the Battle of Vienna ends the Ottoman encroachment of Europe

2006

Pope Benedict XVI offends Islamic community when he cites a medieval text denouncing Islam.

Christian manners as before."

Illoh, the son of Nigerian immigrants, describes a country historically and currently entangled with Catholicism. Even so, Spain--and Europe, in general--is experiencing a period of demographic transformation. Immigrants comprise a sizable portion of the modern European population, especially countries which have a historical relationship with the Vatican. Moreover, cultural assimilation has not necessarily included the Church.

This then begs the question: Where does the Catholic Church stand as a European establishment? It seems, undoubtedly, that the survival of the Church depends heavily on today's youth and future generations.

"I think [the youth] probably don't know enough about Catholicism to make an informed decision to believe or not to believe," Panzuchanics explains. "Ultimately, it is and should be a choice."

Furthermore, there is the matter of primarily associating the Church with Western Europe.

"Catholicism, though it may be perceived as Western, is not. The very nature of the word itself: universal. The church is the community of all believers, and while it has its roots in the west, it should not be understood as a western religion. It's a

global religion, pulling from and seeking to understand all of the cultures of the world" says Pazuchanics.

Unfortunately, universality remains an issue within the Church bureaucracy. After the death of Pope John Paul II, the Church confronted its Western identity--an identity that in reality transcends a European characterization. Only 27 percent of Catholics reside in Europe, while the vast majority -- 50 percent -- of practitioners live in the Americas. Furthermore, the Church is seeing the most growth in African nations. Nonetheless, the College of Cardinals selected a European, Pope Benedict XVI of Germany, to succeed the Polish John Paul.

"Catholics understand the selection of the Pope as a spiritual vetting, not a political one," Pazuchanics says. "I think that there will probably be a Latin American Pope in the near future. But that's not an example of the church trying to appeal to its demographic base in the way that a president appoints a Hispanic or Asian member of his cabinet to show that he is diverse...But, theoretically, an archbishop from Korea has just as much chance as an archbishop from Milan. The Church is a human institution, which we believe is divinely inspired, but which is very imperfect, as humanity itself is."

However for all its human qualities, this administrative institution remains relatively estranged from Zdravko Dren and his family church of St. Mary's in Vrboška, Croatia. Frustrated with the bureaucratic reality of the Vatican state that represents him, Dren's conception of his own church transcends public misgivings and ministerial blunders. Rather, he recounts a lineage intertwined with St. Mary's for over four hundred years. He made his first steps in church and served in the century for the Pope's visit to Croatia. "My religion is in [the] church where I grew up and where my roots are."

The intensely personal nature of religion clearly eclipses most political considerations. In this light, Pazuchanics' words reverberate: "The Church is a human institution, which we believe is divinely inspired, but which is very imperfect, as humanity itself is." ✱

Interviewed for this story:

Zdravko Dren, citizen of Croatia
Alex Pazuchanics, student at George Washington University
William Illoh, Madrid, Spain
Katie Kolodzie, freshman St John's College
Bernadette O'Hara, citizen of Ireland



TIBET
WILL
BE
FREE

西藏
自由



Through the Lens

THE YEAR IN PICTURES

Four students from America and the UK were detained after unfurling this banner outside the Beijing Olympic stadium. The pictured banner is 140 square feet and had to be attached to the structure by a climber. Many public figures denounced the Beijing Olympics because of China's treatment of Tibet.

A string of terrorist attacks left Mumbai, India shaken. This vigil was dedicated to those more than 170 people killed in the November attacks. The vigil took place at the Gateway of India, a large stone structure built in 1911 meant to be the first thing sea-travelers would see when approaching Mumbai.





Opposite: After several major banks in the US collapsed, the U.S. economy has gone into the deepest recession since the 1980's. The New York Stock Exchange, shown here, has been on pins and needles, seeing some of its worst, and greatest one-day moves. The effect, however, has not been limited to the U.S. A handful of banks abroad have collapsed as well.



Above: Man in Osaka, Japan reads news coverage of Barack Obama's victory in the American presidential election. The race drew worldwide attention, and Obama's win sparked reactions worldwide, both positive and negative, that were more passionate than usual, due to the unique nature of his ethnicity.

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