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CAN ESTABLISHED DEMOCRACIES NURTURE DEMOCRACY ABROAD?: LESSONS FROM AFRICA

by

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Can established democracies nurture the establishment of democracies abroad? Should they do so? What issues--ethical, strategic, scientific, operational, and diplomatic--accompany this exercise? What are the prospects for success? This paper seeks to sketch out some tentative answers to these questions based mainly on the author's participation in, and observation of, the process by which established democracies--acting as nation states or via surrogate organizations--currently seek to nurture democratic transitions worldwide, particularly in Africa.[1] It is a process informed by social science, but not, on the whole, designed or implemented by scholars of democracy or transitions to democratic rule. It is also an exercise in which those responsible for arranging such assistance are "learning on the job" but have sought the advice of the social science community. In some cases, it has afforded a few individuals the opportunity to straddle, and in some instances join two realms--the realm of the academic political scientist informed by the literature and one's own research in several countries emerging from authoritarian rule, and the realm of the policy-maker, bureaucrat and provider of assistance to support this process. As those who have previously straddled these realms know well, the interface between these two cultures is not always smooth nor does it necessarily result in more effective policy. Putting theory into practice is rarely automatic.

BETWEEN FOREIGN POLICY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Although current programs by established democracies to nurture democratization date their existence from the end of the Cold War, the promotion of transitions to democracy and the consolidation of democracy worldwide has been a foreign policy objective of the Western democracies, especially the United States, since the end of World War II. While the exigencies of the Cold War often led Western democracies to cooperate with non-democratic regimes to advance the policy of containment, the policy itself was driven by the objective of defending the Western variant of democracy against its non-democratic adversaries, and replicating its manifestation wherever possible. Promoting democracy as a foreign policy objective, in short, is not new. What is new is the higher priority now accorded to this objective and the provision of more systematic and sustained forms of technical and financial assistance to nurture democratic transitions and/or the strengthening of democratic institutions. Even now, some elements of current bilateral portfolios to support democratization are replications or partial replications of earlier efforts in selected countries (e.g. in Germany and Japan after World War II, in Vietnam and Latin America during the 1960s).

What is different today is the scale and explicitness of these initiatives, and the fact that they are being pursued simultaneously, in varying degrees of sophistication, expenditure and coordination, by at least eight "like-minded" established democracies: Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom

[1] From 1992 through 1993 the author served as the first regional democracy and governance adviser for East and Southern Africa to the United States Agency for International Development.

and the United States.[2] Each currently devotes a small but growing portion of its foreign assistance budget to nurturing democracy. Since 1991, most have established units within their foreign assistance agencies and/or semi-autonomous entities funded by these agencies to design and mount programs that support the process of democratization abroad. In addition to these bilateral efforts, multilateral organizations including the World Bank, the UN, the Commonwealth as well as regional organizations such as the European Community and the Organization for African Unity, have begun to incorporate a concern for political reform--especially guarantees of human rights as well as improved governmental accountability, transparency, and a reduction of corruption (what these organizations usually label as "good governance" [3]) --into their agendas. Bilateral and multilateral assistance to nurture democracy and improved governance has been complemented--and in several instances predated--by an expanding array of programs mounted by foundations and NGOs, some of which work closely with or are directly or indirectly funded by one or more of the "like-minded." These include (but are not limited to) Amnesty International, the Carter Center, the Ford Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the Human Rights and Development Center, Human Rights Watch, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, the International Foundation for Election Systems, the National Endowment for Democracy, Transparency International, the Westminster Foundation, and the proposed International Electoral Institute Commission. Finally, an array of foundations and NGOs is also emerging in countries which have recently experienced democratic transitions--in Chile, in the Philippines, in Benin--to support democratic transitions in neighboring countries and consolidate their own.

Virtually none of this programmatic activity existed five years ago. Indeed, the promotion of democracy has become something of a "growth industry"--within established democracies and within countries emerging from authoritarian rule. New organizations have sprung up in the former to assist democratic transitions or prospective transitions in the latter where a diversity of organizations, both public and private, have stepped forward to request and receive donor support. The fact that the established democracies are now the only providers of conventional development assistance has not only led them to establish these programs, but to require progress towards democratization and/or "good governance" as a condition for aid. Whereas during the Cold War, bilateral donors were hesitant to condition development assistance on the fulfillment of political criteria, today they are not. This is particularly true in respect to the provision of so-called "quick-disbursing" aid or non-project assistance (NPA)--cash disbursements to cover balance of payment and budget deficits in the world's poorest countries. Regimes that require NPA, including many in sub-Saharan Africa, are especially dependent on the international donor community for their survival

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[2] The most active members of this group in terms of programmatic assistance are the US, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries. In addition to the eight "like-minded" democracies, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Finland and Japan periodically join the enterprise, especially when it comes to providing international observers for transitional elections.

[3] It is noteworthy that the multilateral organizations, whose member states include several under authoritarian rule or others which are not enthusiastic about the promotion of democracy, have limited their official policies to the promotion of "good governance." However, these organizations are also beginning to take up the challenge of nurturing democratization.

and thus vulnerable to donor pressure for political reform. While multilateral institutions such as the Bank and the IMF remain reluctant to invoke political criteria, some democratic member states are beginning--at least informally--to push the international financial institutions (IFIs) in this direction.[4]

The current initiatives by established democracies to promote democratization and their willingness to condition aid, together with support for these policies from within countries in the midst of democratic transitions, reflect a second factor that distinguishes these efforts from the past. During the Cold War and the heyday of alternative socialist strategies for development (e.g. Cuba, Ghana, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Vietnam), Western notions of democracy were frequently challenged as "false" or "bourgeoisie" conceptions that did not result in systems that were responsive to the needs of their peoples.[5] Any efforts by the established (i.e. Western) democracies to support democratic transitions in non-democratic societies were invariably viewed as a direct interference in the internal affairs of these countries. Today the Western conception of democracy is more or less accepted throughout the world, while Western programs to support democratization are welcomed by all save those who would be dislodged by the process. The Western conception of democracy with its emphasis on individual rights, limited and accountable government, and the periodic opportunity of the governed to replace their current rulers via free and fair elections, has become the universal standard--albeit in various permutations--of what democracy entails.[6]

A series of parallel caveats can be made with respect to social science research on the conditions under which transitions to democracy and the consolidation of democracy are most likely to occur. Notwithstanding the recent proliferation of research literature and the emergence of journals such as the *Journal of Democracy* and *Democratization*, the study of comparative politics as a sub-field of political science has been long dominated by inquiries into the conditions under which democracy is most

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[4] The IFIs have historically limited their conditions to economic criteria for two reasons. First, as economic institutions, the IFIs have not been particularly concerned with the need for political reform, particularly when the experience of several high growth countries (e.g. the Southeast Asian "tigers") suggested that economic growth could occur first, and indeed might require, a period of authoritarian rule. Under this scenareo, political liberalization and democratization follow rather than precede or accompany initial periods of economic growth. Second, multilateral organizations such as the IFIs are composed of a diversity of political systems, including many under authoritarian rule. Invoking political criteria for economic assistance has been customarily regarded as an infringement of the sovereignty of a member state. The African experience, however, challenges this reasoning. Here, authoritarian rule or at least its neopatrimonial variation, has crippled the economies of virtually every country on the continent leading many to conclude that economic improvement will only occur when regimes become more accountable to the governed. It is in this context that the new pressures for political conditionality have emerged. The established democracies--who also happen to be the major financial underwriters of the IFIs--increasingly realize that their bilateral programs have the potential of being undercut by these organizations. Indeed, when it comes to "quick-disbursing" aid, the Bank and the Funds provide more than half to two thirds of what is currently being provided.

[5] See, for example, Ralph Miliband, *The State and Capitalist Society* (1986).

[6] Even regimes that reject the Western definition of democracy rarely speak of "peoples democracy" or some other variation of democratic rule; rather they simply argue that democracy is not appropriate for their society (e.g. Daniel arap Moi in Kenya, the military regimes in Burma and Haiti).

likely to flourish. The same can be said of the related fields of comparative political sociology and political economy. Beginning after the end of World War II and throughout the 1950s, students of comparative politics and related fields have been preoccupied with identifying the conditions under which democracy is most likely to flourish. The desire to avoid a repetition of the breakdown of European democracy that characterized the inter-war era period coupled with the specter of the Soviet Union and its East European allies, resulted in a literature that sought to explain why some democracies had failed, why others had remained robust, and how some could be strengthened. Some students of this period focused on the constitutional requisites for sustaining democracy (e.g. Carl Friedrich). Some examined voting behavior and electoral procedures to determine what type of an electoral system would best facilitate the stability of democracies (e.g. Maurice Duverger). Others (e.g. Seymour Lipset and Barrington Moore) focused on the economic requisites and the requisites of class. Still others subsequently examined the requisite dimensions of political culture (e.g. Edward Banfield, and later, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba).

The second historical impetus for identifying the conditions supportive of democracy during the post-War period, was the decline and eventual demise of the European colonial empires, and the emergence of the "new states" of the "Third World." Beginning with David Apter, Almond and James Coleman and the members of the SSRC's Committee on Comparative Politics, and continuing throughout the 1960s, many of the leading social scientists of the period sought to determine how these emergent polities would develop and modernize into viable systems. Notwithstanding the politically neutral terminology employed by these scholars,[7] their perspective was fundamentally Westerncentric and developmental--how to transfer Western democratic institutions to non-Western soil and make them work.[8] They assumed that responsive, authoritative, and legitimate government was democratic government. The scholarship of the 1950s and 1960s on the conditions for democracy paralleled and to some extent reflected Western foreign policy objectives of the times, but rarely informed the policy-making process. Apart from Lipset's correlation that democracy was most likely to flourish in countries which had achieved economic development, a correlation which may have influenced US policy towards Latin America during the Kennedy Administration (e.g. the Alliance for Progress), and perhaps the writings of Walt Rostow and Max Milikin, few attempts were made to translate the insights of the social science research on the requisites for democracy into programs of technical assistance which promoted democracy abroad. Similarly, in the 1970s and early 1980s, the United States Agency for International Development made a series of research grants to support research on selected democratic institutions and aspects of the democratic process in developing countries, but the Agency rarely mounted programs in the field to strengthen democracy or programs based on this research and related research.[9]

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[7] I refer particularly to the language of "structural functionalism," i.e. "interest articulation," "interest aggregation," "outputs," etc.

[8] See, for example, Apter's introduction to his landmark study, *The Gold Coast in Transition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), and Almond and Coleman, *The Politics of Developing Areas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

[9] For example, the Agency supported an extensive research program on the functions and operations of legislatures which was carried out at Duke University, the University of Hawaii, the University of Iowa and the State University of New York (Albany). USAID also supported a large

Current scholarship on democratization is thus a continuation of an exercise that dates back at least fifty years. What is different, is that today's scholarship is not only concerned with identifying the conditions for democracy, but also with the nature and sequencing of events via which democratic transitions occur, and how new democracies are consolidated. The virtual explosion of research on these and related topics since the mid-1980s is a reflection of the times--that there has been the demise or weakening of authoritarian regimes worldwide (not only in the former and remaining states of the socialist bloc) coupled with the fact that many emergent democracies are fragile systems whose futures are in doubt. The concerns underlying today's research are thus as much normative and operational as they are theoretical--what actions should and can be taken to facilitate democratization given our explanations of the process. Bureaucrats charged with mounting programs to support these transitions also appear to be more receptive and interested in what social scientists have to say, because they need answers to the same questions. To a much greater extent than in the past, the current exercise to promote democratization falls between the realm of the policy maker and the realm of social science research. How has this fact structured the enterprise, and what are its likely outcomes?

THE INITIATION OF DONOR PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE DEMOCRATIZATION

Notwithstanding the abundance of recent social science research on transitions from authoritarian rule, the impetus for donor programs in support of these transitions came not from the social science community but from the political realm, particularly the makers of Western foreign policy. While the end of the Cold War was the principal catalyst, the collapse or weakening of authoritarian regimes in Latin America and Southeast Asia, and the prospect of an end to minority rule in Southern Africa combined to move several key policy makers, most notably former US Secretary of State James Baker to include democratization as a key element in their conception of an evolving "New World Order." Apart from the usual diplomatic pressures in support of democratization, Baker asked what the United States and other established democracies could do to directly facilitate democratic transitions and the consolidation of democracy in countries where a regime change had already occurred. Other countries, especially the Scandinavian countries (whose foreign policies had been less driven by Cold War imperatives than that of the United States, and whose support for fledgling democratic movements and a concern for human rights had long been cornerstones of their policies) became increasingly interested mounting programs to support democratic transitions.

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research program on the nature of political participation implemented by Cornell and the University of California at Berkeley, and on various aspects of public administration. However, to the knowledge of this writer, no grants were made which focused explicitly on the process of democratic transitions--their causes, and the conditions under which they were most likely to succeed. Nor, with one or two exceptions, were the scholars who participated in these exercises ever brought back to design and/or implement a program of assistance in a country in which USAID maintained a mission.

The initial programs were limited and reflected an oversimplification of what was required. These efforts also reflected the limited capacity, on the part of the established democracies to mount such programs. To a greater extent than their counterparts in other established democracies, American policy-makers have long regarded the holding of "free and fair" multiparty elections as the litmus test of democratic transitions. According to this view, a respect for human rights, the establishment of the rule of law, a vibrant civil society, a free press, and increased transparency and accountability of government, etc.--all critical ingredients of any democracy--are not as important as the opportunity of the governed to choose between alternative groups of leaders to serve as their rulers. As a result, initial American efforts to promote democratic transitions consisted mainly of support for transitional elections. This took two forms: the provision of technical assistance and supplies to facilitate the administration of these elections, and the recruitment, training and deployment of international observers, and in some instances domestic observers, to monitor them.

American emphasis on the holding of multiparty elections was the result of at least five considerations: First, the belief that one-party regimes were inherently non-democratic, notwithstanding the fact that in some countries (e.g. Kenya during the Kenyatta period, and the United States[10]) meaningful electoral competition that affords citizens the opportunity to choose between alternative representatives (if not between alternative regimes), occurs within parties as often as between. American fixation on the need for inter-party competition is no doubt a result of the absence of such competition in the former Soviet Union and other states ruled by communist parties as well as the experience in most African one-party states. Second, the significance of free and fair multiparty elections in countries that had recently made the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule, seemed to confirm to American policy-makers that such elections were the bottom line of any transition. The Aquino election in the Philippines, as well as the transitional elections in Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua, South Korea, and Zambia--all suggested that elections were the single most important component of transition.

Third, external assistance to support transitional elections was usually welcomed in these countries, and particularly by the democratic challengers to incumbent regimes. One of the ironies surrounding this assistance is that the very individuals and groups which have been most eager for external involvement, are those which were once among the severest critics of the Western democracies for supporting the status quo. As the number of transitional elections increased from the late 1980s onward, the challengers to authoritarian rule realized that these "first-time" events could be manipulated and hijacked by those in power.[11] This specter of election fraud gave rise

[10] Americans need to be reminded that roughly 85 percent of their congressional districts are one-party districts and that their only opportunity for replacing their representatives is the primary election of the dominant party; in short, via intraparty competition.

[11] The 1989 transitional election in the Philippines which brought Cory Aquino to power was probably the most significant in this regard, and set the standard for other transitional elections which followed. International observers and media poured into the country to put the elections in the international spotlight. Local groups organized thousands of independent poll watchers to insure that the elections were "free and fair." The methodology of observation was perfected to a new level via the procedure of parallel vote counts. These procedures set a precedent that was later replicated in other countries.

to one of the more interesting accouterments of democratic transitions worldwide: the international election observer. As those pressing for multiparty elections became sensitive to the potential for election fraud, they sought assistance from sympathetic organizations and governments in the established democracies to guarantee that these events would be "free and fair." Whereas in an earlier period, the provision of technical assistance and involvement by foreign observers might have been construed as interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state, in the context of transition this involvement was eagerly sought, or at least tolerated.[12] Indeed, the demand for such involvement was at times so strong that the contestants of transitional elections became overly dependent on "international referees." More about this tendency will be considered below.

Fourth, assisting elections was feasible within the existing capacity for supporting democratization. Because the provision of support for democratic transitions is a new and unfamiliar exercise for the principal donor agencies of the established democracies (i.e. USAID, CIDA, DANIDA, GTZ, ODA, NORAD, SIDA, etc.[13]), many have reached outside their bureaucracies for assistance to mount these programs--to a small number of NGOs which had become involved in this type of work during the mid-1980s, and to academic specialists knowledgeable about the political process in countries in the midst of transition. Such expertise, and especially the existence of organizations with which the donor agencies could work, has tended to be concentrated in the area of election assistance. By the early 1990s, several non-governmental organizations including the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the Carter Center, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), had already provided various forms of support to transitional elections around the world. The Commonwealth Secretariat had also assisted several elections of its member states. The provision of technical assistance in the form of consultants experienced in election administration and/or the provision of critical supplies (e.g. ballots, ballot boxes, indelible ink, etc.) could be quickly accomplished via organizations like IFES and the Commonwealth. Others, such as NDI, developed a wealth of expertise in mounting, deploying, and coordinating delegations of international observers, and in recruiting and training cadres of local volunteers to serve as independent poll-watchers (monitors) in their own countries. These organizations had become involved in supporting multiparty elections before the bilateral development agencies of the established democracies started to provide electoral support on a direct and programmatic basis. Some, such as the Carter Center, mounted programs with their own funds. Others, such as NDI were indirectly funded by the US government via the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and/or became involved in providing electoral support via the United Nations (e.g. the 1989 elections in Namibia, and the 1992 elections in Angola). Once the US and other established democracies put the promotion of democratization on the agendas of their development assistance agencies,

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[12] While never eager for external observers, incumbent regimes realized that unless they let observers in, the international community would assume they had something to hide.

[13] For those not conversant with the acronyms of these agencies they are the United States Agency for International Development, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Danish International Development Agency, GTZ (Germany), the Overseas Development Authority (United Kingdom), the Norwegian Agency for Development, and the Swedish International Development Agency).

it is not surprising to whom they first turned. Indeed, these organization had developed more than a passing interest in the emergence of the "democracy industry."

A fifth and related reason why initial efforts to promote democratization was concentrated in the area of election assistance was that such assistance was relatively short-term. Stated simply the donor could get in and out with minimal entanglement in the political life of the recipient country. Because programs to nurture democratization require a direct intervention in the political system of the recipient country, many administrators of conventional development assistance programs have not shared the enthusiasm of the architects of Western foreign policy when it comes to the design and implementation of such programs. This is particularly true of the country directors of bilateral missions in the field. To them, DG programs are high risk and open-ended compared to conventional programs, and thus programs to approach with extreme caution. In this context, support for elections may be fraught with risk, but it does have an end date. And, as noted in the previous paragraph, support can be quickly provided by simply drawing on one of the extant organizations that has a track record in this area.

Not all of the established democracies have emphasized support for transitional elections to the extent of the United States, but most--as well as some multilateral organizations such as the Commonwealth and the UN--are periodically swept up by the process.[14] This is particularly true in respect to "high profile" elections which attract the attention of the world community, and are fueled by the international media. While the non-governmental organizations which specialize in electoral assistance are mostly American, all of the established democracies have provided and continue to provide support for transitional elections. International participation in the recent South African elections (for which all of the "like-minded" democracies provided financial support and/or international observers) is a case in point. Many countries are also beginning to provide support for "consolidating elections", the second and third rounds of the electoral process that is already following the initial multiparty contests.

While elections have been the principal focus of American efforts to date, other donors, particularly Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Germany via its party foundations, have placed greater emphasis on strengthening civil society in countries undergoing democratic transitions as well as those in the process of consolidating democratic rule.[15] While these countries have provided support for transitional elections, they have found that they can make a greater contribution to the process of democratization by

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[14] In response to increasing demand from member states, the UN has established a small Electoral Assistance Unit within its secretariat. The unit serves as a conduit for providing consultants to electoral commissions charged with administering elections as well as a coordinating body for delegations of observers from member states that go out to monitor these elections. The unit sometimes recruits international observers directly when they operate solely under UN flag (e.g. Angola, Cambodia). The configuration of international observer delegations varies widely. For example, for the Kenyan elections in December, 1992 the US, Commonwealth and UN all mounted their own independent delegations with the last composed of approximately a dozen mini delegations from UN member states. At the same time the UN served as the point of coordination between itself, the Commonwealth and the US. Such arrangements are often ad hoc and thus vary considerably from one election to the next.

[15] A notable exception to this generalization about American assistance are the programs in human rights and governance of the Ford Foundation.

establishing portfolios of very small to medium size grants ($10,000 to $300,000) which they make to nurture the development of local NGOs. These include associations that monitor various aspects of public policy, trade unions, groups which provide legal assistance to poor, human rights organizations, journalist associations or trusts to accelerate the growth of a free press, women's associations, civic education groups, election monitoring organizations, and on rare occasions, political parties. These donors often supplement such grants with short-term technical assistance appropriate for the recipient group. For example, Denmark has funded and provided instructors for workshops designed to improve the skills of journalists in countries where it has provided grants to press associations, independent periodicals, etc. These donors have also provided grants and technical assistance to selected governmental agencies where it is clear that such support is likely to increase the accountability and accessibility of the state to its citizens. For example, the provision of grants to the Justice Training Centre in Namibia for the purpose of improving the skills of local magistrates, or support to the Office of the Attorney General in Tanzania to update the legal code of that country, and support for improving decentralized planning and budgeting at the district level in Kenya.

Compared to support for transitional elections, these programs to strengthen civil society are "low profile," indeed so low that they are largely unknown to all except the recipient organizations and the regimes challenged by these organizations. Their impact may also be more enduring, because they strengthen the capacity of *local* organizations--especially in the private sphere--to carry out a wide range of vital activities over relatively long periods, both before and after elections. Put differently, these programs are more likely than electoral assistance to nurture institutions of countervailing power, institutions which in turn increase the level of state accountability to the governed. Compared to support for transitional elections, these programs are also of longer duration, and personnel intensive. They are also personnel intensive compared to conventional development assistance programs; that is to say, the proportion of a program's budget spent on administrative and advisory personnel is high relative its overall cost. European bilateral assistance agencies which have mounted these programs appear to have accepted these costs by assigning (on average) a half or full-time program officer or advisor to administer their democracy and governance portfolios in each country where such assistance is provided. Such officers are also normally individuals of middle to senior diplomatic rank.

The contrast between American and European approaches to promoting democracy and governance should not be overdrawn. Indeed, one of the ironies of the current situation is that the United States is moving rapidly, and in some countries, more comprehensively towards the type of programming heretofore associated with European assistance while European donors appear to be moving towards greater involvement in transitional and consolidating elections. Since 1979, beginning in the Carter Administration, the United States has implemented a modest program of small grants known as Human Rights Development Grants (HRDG) under section 116e of the Foreign Assistance Act. This program, which is jointly implemented by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has facilitated grants of the type that characterize the country portfolios of the European donors. Unlike the latter, however, HRDG are limited to one or two, sometimes three, grants per country per year, and each grant is limited to one year of support. HRDG

cannot, therefore, be used to nurture the development of a given organization or program over several years. As such, the impact of the program, in terms of institution building has never realized its potential.[16]

In 1991, the United States via its Agency for International Development moved to significantly expand its democracy and governance ("DG") programs, and to devote an increasing proportion of these efforts to the establishment and strengthening of democratic institutions over the medium (if not the long) term. While US support for transitional elections continues, the US commenced a series of bilateral programs which resembled those of the European democracies, but which were often more ambitious in scope. In a small number of African countries in the midst of democratic transitions, the US began to design and implement multiyear programs of institutional support that, depending on the size of the country, provided assistance in three to five related areas of activity. For example, a three year $5 million program was initiated in Ethiopia in 1992 to both support and encourage the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) to move forward with its stated program of establishing a multi-ethnic federal and democratic state in that country. Consistent with initial US thinking, this effort devoted roughly a third of its program budget to supporting the establishment of an electoral commission and the observation of Ethiopia's first nationwide multiparty elections which were held in June, 1992. The elections, which were seriously flawed and compromised by government intimidation of the principal opposition party, the Oromo Liberation Front, raised questions about the wisdom of concentrating so much effort on the electoral process.[17] Other components of this program which have continued since the elections, are assistance to the Constitutional Commission charged with writing a new Ethiopian constitution; funding for the Ministry of Justice to proceed expeditiously and fairly with its prosecution of former officials of the Mengistu regime accused of war crimes; support for the development of a independent press; and funds to design a future program of assistance to strengthen the thirteen regional governments specified in the transitional constitution. Because it remains unclear whether President Meles Zanawi and other key leaders of the TGE[18] are truly committed to establishing a democratic system in Ethiopia, progress that country has been mixed yet instructive in respect to how programs intended to support democratic transitions are likely to unfold.

A second example of this multiyear multifaceted approach to supporting democratic transitions in Africa is USAID's democracy and governance project in Zambia. More ambitious than its Ethiopian counterpart and launched late in 1992, this project is intended to operate for five years with a budget of up to $15 million. As in Ethiopia, programmatic support has consisted of a combination of technical assistance

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[16] The HRDG has been a relatively modest effort. From 1979 through 1990 the program had a budget of only $500,000 per year for Africa, with similar amounts for Asia and Latin America. As a reflection of the times, the annual budget for Africa was increased to $2 million in 1992, and raised again to $3 million in 1993.

[17] For a comprehensive report of the events surrounding the election as well as the election itself, see *An Evaluation of the June 21, 1992 Elections in Ethiopia* (Washington: National Democratic Institute and the African American Institute, 1993).

[18] The TGE consists of a broad coalition of ethnic based guerrilla movements which overthrew the Soviet backed Marxist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam in May, 1991. The dominant member of the coalition was and continues to be the Tigrayan Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) headed by Meles Zanawi.

and grants in several discrete yet related areas of activity. These include the constitutional commission charged with drafting a new Zambian constitution consistent with the return to multiparty politics; the Zambian National Assembly for the purpose of improving its internal procedures, strengthening its committee system and its professional staff; a media institute to train Zambian journalists and to facilitate the emergence of new periodicals and broadcast media independent of state control; the organization which recruited and trained domestic monitors for Zambia's return to multiparty elections in October, 1991, and which is now engaged in campaigns of civic education; and a team of American and Zambian political scientists who are conducting a series of public opinion and related studies over the life of the project to determine its impact on the Zambian public.[19]

A third example of US bilateral assistance is Kenya where a four year project to be funded at level of between $5 and $7 million will provide support to the National Assembly (for staff training and improvement of the Assembly's library); the Ministry of Finance to extend a computerized system of budget monitoring down to the district level; and a newly created and private Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR). In addition, the Kenya project will support a rolling portfolio of small to medium size grants to strengthen civil society in Kenya via a series of grants to local NGOs including one that monitors the country's record on human rights, another engaged in civic and voter education that is the successor to an organization which monitored the 1992 multiparty elections, several organizations that provide legal assistance including the local chapter of the International Federation of Women Attorneys (FIDA), and an NGO that seeks to advance the principal of judicial review by litigating potentially precedent setting cases. Grants to support civil society in Kenya are also likely to be made to the secretariat of an association of businesspeople and professionals which is attempting to improve the quality of municipal government in Nairobi, and a press association. Many of the groups to be supported by these grants, as well as IPAR will be assisted in close coordination and on the basis of co-financing with other donors. More about the utility of such arrangements will be said below.

Finally, no description of US initiatives in this area would be complete without mention of USAID's program in South Africa. Space does not permit an extensive discussion. Suffice to say, this program predated the current array of programs in support of democracy and governance in the rest of Africa, and was one thrust on the Agency by the enactment (over President Reagan's veto) of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) in 1985. Under the CAAA, USAID was charged to provide assist the majority population and hasten the end of apartheid without providing funds to any entity of the South African government or other public institution (e.g. universities and other educational institutions). The result was a major effort to strengthen civil society although it was never termed as such. Most assistance was provided to local NGOs. While much of this support was "conventional" in so far as it financed education and other training programs for black South Africans, a significant proportion of the aid went towards strengthening "the civics" in the townships, community-based organizations

[19] This research exercise is very atypical of most DG projects funded by USAID, but reflects a recognition on the part of the Agency that it has embarked on a new form of assistance which must itself be carefully monitored. This is also consistent with the Agency's new policy of pursuing programs that yield "measurable results."

which were part of the ANC-allied United Democratic Front. Support was also given to groups providing legal defense to those charged under the security acts, human rights organizations, and organizations such as the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy and the Institute for a Democratic South Africa which laid the basis for the first all-race elections held in April, 1994. Like other donors, the US became heavily involved in the transitional elections, including funding for the South African Election Support Project, the provision of grants for campaign consultants to any party which eschewed violence, and a delegation of international observers.[20] Ultimately, the US spent $35 million on the election.[21]

To design and launch these extended projects of bilateral assistance, USAID has found it necessary to recruit short and medium term expertise from outside the Agency. Following the example of the principal European donors, the Agency has recognized the necessity of a full-time resident staff person in the field; that these programs cannot be run from Washington and that they are relatively personnel intensive compared to conventional programs of developmental assistance. In marked contrast to the procedures of other donors to date, the Agency has also established the position of a resident "democracy and governance adviser" for each bilateral project, and (with one exception) has recruited political scientists drawn from the academic community to fill these posts. Whereas until recently, European donors (the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, the UK and the EEC) have relied on career foreign service officers to run their democracy programs in the field--usually as part of a broader portfolio of responsibilities as diplomats or administrators of development assistance programs--the US has consciously employed academics with significant field experience and/or established records of research in the country or regions to which they are posted. While European donors have tended to rely more on generalists from within their foreign policy and development assistance establishments, the US has relied on specialists from the social science community. Here again, the differences should not be overdrawn. As its portfolio of democracy and governance grants have expanded, Sweden has begun to draw on its social science community to serve as periodic field advisors to refine its assistance. In a related move, the United Kingdom is presently in the process of appointing four "Commonwealth and Foreign Office Fellows" to serve as democracy and governance advisors for Asia, Middle-East, East and Southern Africa, and the Balkans. While the fellows will be based in London rather than overseas, all are academics on extended leave from British universities. These moves on recruitment, however limited, reflect a growing measure of coordination and mutual interest and observation between representatives of the "like-minded" democracies that are working in this field. I shall return to the process of coordination below.

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[20] The South African Election Support Project was a joint effort of NDI, IRI, and the Joint Center for Economic and Political Studies which was principally concerned with mounting voter education efforts to insure a high turnout for the elections. The ANC used its grant to employ Stanley Greenberg, a former member of the South African Research Program at Yale, but more widely known as Bill Clinton's pollster.

[21] Statement by U.S. Vice-President Albert Gore to the White House Conference on Africa, Washington, DC, June 26, 1994. Notwithstanding the Vice-President's statement, this figure seems high in terms of direct assistance to the election. It is probably valid in terms of total US assistance since 1990 to South African organizations and political parties concerned with the election as well as funds used to support US NGOs involved with various aspects of the elections.

Though I was not able to obtain budgetary data for the democracy and governance programs of the eight principal donors, it would appear that the size of most have increased (and certainly not diminished) over the last two to three years. At a time when most donors are reducing the overall size of their foreign assistance programs, the emergence and growth of donor efforts in this area represents a change in priorities and a significant reallocation of funds. This is especially true when one remembers that conventional bilateral aid is becoming increasingly tied to progress towards democratization,or at a minimum, political liberalization and improved governance. While the proportion of donor assistance spent on nurturing democracy remains modest--indeed probably no more than 8 to 12 percent of total aid budgets are spent on programs explicitly defined as DG--considerations of support for democracy are clearly more prominent now than ever before. More systematic thought and specialized expertise is also being brought to bear on the implementation of these programs as the "like minded" learn what type of interventions work and which do not, and as they scrutinize each others' approach.

American policy is illustrative of these trends which other donors manifest to varying degrees. Following the election of Bill Clinton, the new administration decided to elevate democratization to become one of five strategic objectives of US assistance policy in the post-Cold War era.[22] The administration also moved to reorganize USAID and rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act to facilitate implementation of the new policy. This policy is basically an expansion and refinement of the policy initially articulated by James Baker at the end of the Bush Administration. Perhaps most significant was Clinton's appointment of J. Brian Atwood to be the new administrator of USAID. Prior to heading AID, Atwood was president of the National Democratic Institute, and the person most responsible for NDI's emergence as a major non-governmental provider of technical assistance to transitional elections around the world. Although the Administration's proposal for a new Peace, Prosperity and Democracy Act is bogged down in Congress, Atwood and his colleagues have made slow but steady progress towards establishing support for democratization as a cornerstone of US developmental assistance. Under Atwood, the United States has begun to concentrate its conventional development assistance programs as well as its democracy and governance programs on those countries which have made a genuine commitment to both economic (i.e. structural adjustment) and political reform. As such, these programs focus increasingly on the consolidation of democracy rather than on the initial phases of transition including elections.

Countries to which the US currently provides assistance have been divided into three categories: (1) "sustainable development countries" or countries where there is a clear commitment on the part of the host government to democratization and economic reform (i.e. to structural adjustment for those countries that are in economic trouble; to the expansion of a market economy by those which are not); (2) "transitional countries," or countries that have recently experienced a national crisis and where timely assistance

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[22] The others are protecting the environment, stabilizing world population growth and protecting human health, encouraging broad-based economic growth and providing humanitarian assistance and aiding post-crisis transitions. For the complete statement of these objectives see *Strategies for Sustainable Development* (Washington: U.S. Agency for International Development, March, 1994).

is needed to reinforce institutions and national order; and (3) countries "where USAID's presence is limited, but where aid to non-governmental sectors may facilitate the emergence of a civic society, help alleviate repression, meet basic humanitarian needs, enhance food security, or influence a problem with regional or global implications."[23] Not withstanding the open-ended caveat for the last category, the major bilateral programs are being reserved for the first. Based on these criteria, the number of countries with bilateral programs is being reduced from over 85 to between 60 and 65,[24] and the Agency will probably fund democracy and governance programs in roughly half to two thirds of these. In respect to Africa, the United States began to reduce the number of its missions in FY1994 from 30 to 21. Another six to eight closures are expected next year. Support for these missions will total approximately $760 in FY1995 of which $85 million or 11 percent is reserved explicitly for the promotion of democracy.

This reorientation of policy, however, poses several policy dilemmas and numerous operational problems. Some are obvious, but bear restating; others are not. I now turn to a discussion of the most salient of these dilemmas as well as to a discussion of the principal lessons learned from the donor experience at promoting democracy since mid-1991 when the "like-minded" democracies began to formalize their democracy programs. While this discussion is based mainly on observations from sub-Saharan Africa most of the lessons learned are generic and should be applicable, in varying degrees, to democracy and governance programs pursued elsewhere.

DILEMMAS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. The promotion of democracy requires a consistent foreign policy--but such is usually impossible to pursue.

   If the promotion of democracy is to be a cornerstone of a nation's development assistance program, it must also be a cornerstone of a nation's overall foreign policy. Support for democratic transitions, particularly contested transitions where established democracies weigh in on the side of insurgent reformers, involve donors in the political life of the recipient state. While it is possible to maintain the figment of an "apolitical" program in respect to conventional programs of development assistance (even through they produce clear "winners" and "losers"), it is impossible here. Programs to nurture democratization often become highly controversial precisely because they are intended to alter the current rules of the game, and may place donor countries in a confrontational position vis a vis the host government. Even where this is not true, those charged with implementing these programs in the field cannot proceed with their assignment unless they can count on appropriate political backing--from their embassy, and from their foreign ministry at home. Assistance programs in support of democratization blur the traditional distinctions

[23] Ibid., p. 5. Within the bureaucracy, the Agency has established a new Center for Democracy whose purpose is to design and assist in the implementation of its democracy programs worldwide.

[24] The exact numbers vary with the definition of what is a "bilateral program." At the end of 1993, USAID maintained a presence of some type in 108 countries, but supported resident in country missions in only 86.

between the roles of the diplomat and foreign ministry on the one hand, and roles the aid officer and development assistance agency on the other. In this exercise they are, or are perceived to be, one in the same.

Given this reality, it is highly desirable that countries seeking to nurture democracy articulate a clear and consistent standard of what democracy entails lest the purpose of these programs be either misunderstood or lose credibility. States which press hard--diplomatically and/or programmatically--for progress towards democratization (e.g. for an end to human rights abuses, for a free press, for "free and fair" multiparty elections, etc.) must do so on a consistent basis worldwide, or at a minimum be consistent vis a vis categories of polities with similar characteristics,[25] lest the policy cease to be viable. It is very difficult, however, for any nation--especially for the world's remaining superpower--to articulate and apply a single and consistent standard of what democracy entails to every country with which it does business. This is not because there is no single institutional configuration of democracy--we all know that democracy takes many forms; but we also "all know a democracy when we see one." Rather, it is because support for democratization is just one of several objectives that form the basis of the foreign policies of the established democracies that now share this concern. Maintaining peace and security, halting the spread of nuclear weapons, promoting and protecting a nation's share of world trade, protecting investments in a country that was once part of one's former colonial empire, controlling drugs, conserving the environment--all compete to varying degrees and depending on the locale, with democratization as a foreign policy objective. The particular ranking accorded to the promotion of democratization by each of the "like-minded" also varies from one country to another, a situation which sometimes complicates the prospect for donor coordination. To the extent that a nation's commitment to democratization varies as a result of other foreign policy objectives, the prospects for effective political backing for programs to nurture the process is reduced.

This situation begs the question of whether it is possible for each established democracy to formulate a viable set of decision rules so that all will know--the other established democracies as well as countries in the midst of transition or resisting reform--when and where each principal donor will be most supportive and/or aggressive in pursuing democratization and where it will not. If there is a "rule" it would appear to be as follows: that the "like-minded" will be most supportive of those countries where there is a genuine commitment on the part of the government to respect human rights, increase political liberalization, and accommodate competitive politics. However, the converse of this rule--that donors will apply substantial pressure and condition aid where these commitments are not present will *not* be invoked automatically but on a case by case basis. This in turn suggests that countries seeking to promote democracy will need to distinguish between programs and forms of assistance that are possible in countries that have demonstrated a commitment to democratization and those which have not. As noted above, the

[25] Under this decision rule, the policy might best be described as "picking on the weak;" that is to say, the policy is pursued aggressively vis a vis countries that are either most dependent on the donor community such as the African states, or vis a vis countries where competing interests weigh less heavily--again, the poorest countries.

United States is beginning to make such distinctions; other established democracies are beginning to do so too.

2. Democratization is fundamentally a process of institution-building and political socialization, and not the occurrence or non-occurrence of single events.

When established democracies mount initiatives in support of democratization, whether as part of their bilateral assistance programs or via NGOs, they must not become overly preoccupied with single events or activities, but remain sensitive to the fact that democratization requires the building of appropriate institutions of countervailing power and the establishment of a supportive political culture. Both are processes that occur over relatively long periods. The holding of a single multiparty election, even if free and fair, does not a democracy make—witness the aftermath of elections in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Russia and probably South Africa. Indeed, in the last case, one can argue that although the elections were essential for the future evolution of democracy, they would not have been held in the first place if a more basic precondition had not been established, namely the willingness on the part of the principal protagonists to bargain and accommodate each other on a new set of rules under which South Africa will operate during an extended transition.

Elections are not unimportant, but it is the periodic holding of elections over many years—the institutionalization of the process—that establishes one foundation for an enduring democratic system. Programs to support the electoral process must be conceived accordingly. The same perspective must be maintained in designing programs to strengthen other institutional arenas—legislatures, the judiciary, civil society, a free press, etc. The observation of a transitional election, a study tour to Westminster by a group of MPs, the holding of a single workshop on human rights, or short-term support for a single magazine that thoughtfully considers economic policy in a country faced with structural adjustment--all activities recently funded by one or more of the established democracies--do not go very far in providing sustained support for the desired institution. Those responsible for nurturing democracy abroad must begin to question whether their agencies should continue funding such activities, and if not, what forms of assistance can be designed to address the fundamental needs of the process.

A few examples suggest that at least a conceptual level, support for institution-building is possible: (1) A multiyear grant and the provision of technical assistance to nurture the development of a local NGO for the purpose of monitoring elections and conducting campaigns of civic education is more likely to make a lasting contribution to the electoral process (and be much less expensive) than flying in several hundred international observers the week before an election. (2) The funding of a comprehensive program to provide supplemental and sustained training for selected members of the judiciary, staff support (e.g. prosecutors and court reporters), and needed reference materials (e.g. the updating, publication and dissemination of a country's legal code to its local courts), will do far more than a single two to three day workshop on human rights, or even a series of such exercises. (3) A program to design, establish, and staff an appropriate system of revenue generation for local government, will do more to enable these bodies to function on an autonomous basis, than a single grant to a municipality to build some needed facility.

(4) Assistance in the area of curriculum development in social studies at the primary school level, including the writing of textbooks, is likely to have a more lasting impact on young citizens than occasional programs in civic education. Put differently, programs to nurture democratization must be more sustained and broader in scope than most current initiatives even if limited to the strengthening of a single institution or institutional arena.

3. Nurturing democracy will take time; progress will be uneven and uncertain.

Given the inherent nature of the process of democratization, nurturing democracy will take time. The time horizons for measuring progress in this area are decades and half-decades--as long or longer than the duration of the average presidential administration or premiership in the established democracies, and much more than the period of service of an ambassador or an aid director in a country in the midst of transition. Progress, especially when measured at the country level, will also be halting with many ups and downs. In some instances, the transition to democracy will be stalled. These realities are sure to test whether the established democracies are truly serious about assisting the process. If they are, the "like-minded" must get into the game for the long-haul, design programs accordingly, commit appropriate personnel to the field, and above all, be patient.

Having just spent two years observing the culture of one of the worlds largest development assistance agencies, and mindful of the political pressures such agencies are subjected to back home, I am not overly sanguine that these implementing bodies will be able to do what is required. Nor, for the same reasons, am I overly confident that such agencies can bear the risks associated with this approach. If these conclusions are valid, then policy-makers in the established democracies should ask whether this form of foreign assistance is best left to foundations and NGOs--entities that are not under as much pressure to perform in the short-term. Germany, which channels most of its funding for democratization, via its party foundations, appears to have answered this question in the affirmative. The United Kingdom via the Westminster Foundation has taken the same stance, while the United States has taken a two track approach. Although all major programs are now initiated by USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy also operates as a foundation in the field. Compared to the programs of the major bilateral agencies, however, the budgets of all these foundations are relatively small with the result that although they can accept risk, they do not have the capacity to support programs of institution-building over long time periods.[26]

4. Most donor agencies will need to change the ways they do business if they are to make a significant impact in this new area of development assistance

In addition to taking a long-term/institution building perspective and a willingness to accept risk, the principal bilateral and multilateral agencies need to make several

[26] The Ford Foundation, a wholly private entity, may be the one exception to this generalization. However, the Foundation operates in a comparatively small number of countries.

additional adjustments in the way they conduct their business to become effective in this new area of development assistance. The first is to recognize that these programs are inherently personnel intensive. Because most democracy and governance programs are multi-faceted in content, a typical program requires continuous or near continuous oversight and adjustment by an appropriately trained program officer. A related reason is that most forms of assistance are small and non-replicable compared to conventional programs of development assistance. For example, a program to establish a cadre of appropriate staff for the Namibia National Assembly and National Council will require a sequencing of different types of training for different types of personnel (clerks, budgetary analysts, committee staff, librarians, etc.) that are appropriate for that legislature. While programs that have succeeded in strengthening the legislature in other countries might serve as a guide, the particular configuration of assistance is country specific. Moreover, unlike conventional development assistance programs, for example in family planning or agriculture, there are no economies of scale. Successful programs are not those which expand and repeat initial interventions after a period of testing and refinement of a single package of assistance. Rather they are programs that simply proceed on to the next unique stage of implementation. As a result, a typical democracy and governance program requires that many small amounts of money be obligated on a continuous basis--to local institutions, for specialists brought in to provide required services, etc. This too raises personnel costs relative to the overall cost of these projects, a fact which troubles most bureaucrats for whom the nurturing of democracy is a new and unfamiliar exercise. It should not and must not. Indeed, it is clear to this writer that the bilateral agencies and foundations which are most effective in nurturing democratization in the African context are those which appreciate the personnel intensive nature of the work.

Second, bigger is not better. Although programs to nurture democratization are personnel intensive, their overall cost are not expensive compared to conventional development programs--and need not be. The average annual costs of the major bilateral democracy programs described earlier in this paper (excluding South Africa) is roughly $2 million per year, a level of funding that is adequate for the types of assistance provided. This is particularly true in respect to the level of funding to strengthen civil society. Most organizations worthy of support in a typical African country are small and incapable of utilizing grants larger than $25,000 to $100,000. per year. Indeed, larger grants particularly at the early stages of these organizations' development are not only wasteful, they undermine the donors' purpose of nurturing the emergence of autonomous organizations. Organizations which obtain excessive donor support before raising funds on their own have little incentive to become self-supporting. Agencies which mount democracy and governance programs, must therefore exercise restraint, and to provide funds on a matching grant basis. Put differently, doing less often increases the prospects of giving rise to a sustainable institution.

Third, there is the need to recruit appropriate personnel to design and implement this new form of assistance. I have already discussed USAID's tendency to draw on political scientists and academic specialists from outside the Agency to establish its initial DG programs, and that other bilateral agencies may also be moving in this direction. For the most part, the IFIs have not. A basic problem in all these agencies

is that they are staffed mainly by generalists or economists, few of which are particularly sensitive to the institutional variables that structure the developmental process, particularly political institutions. But as suggested throughout this paper, the nurturing of democracy is inherently an exercise in "getting the political institutions right."[27] Virtually none of these officers are students of students of neopatrimonial politics, state-society relations, regime change, voting behavior, etc., all of which determine the prospects for democratization and the interventions required to nurture it. While it would be a gross oversimplification to argue that these programs will succeed as soon as the established democracies recruit a cadre of political scientists to run them, it is likely that they will fail if knowledgeable personnel and the literature of the discipline are not brought to bear on the exercise.

In sum, the first place to begin a program to support democracy and governance abroad, may be in altering the internal systems of governance of the agencies charged with mounting this initiative.

5. It is desirable that the "like-minded" democracies increase coordination between themselves, and with the International Monetary Found and the World Bank.

There are several reasons why increased coordination, if only on an informal basis, is desirable among the "like-minded." The first and most important is that democratization is a universal value. Initiatives taken by the established democracies to promote democracy are likely to be more persuasive and possibly less threatening in countries making in transition when they are conducted in concert, and even on a joint basis via parallel programs mounted by multiple donors. Authoritarian regimes which drag their feet on liberalizing their systems find it more difficult to do so when confronted by a united front of like-minded donors. For the same reason, political reformers in these countries who seek the support of the established democracies, enjoy a greater measure of political cover when more than one donor supports their efforts.

Second, no one donor can do it all. Depending on the type of institution to be strengthened and the country, some donors have a comparative advantage over others in which case it is useful to arrive at a division of labor that capitalize on their respective strengths. Coordination is also desirable in the few instances where it is necessary to fund large and relatively expensive interventions (i.e. the establishment of IPAR in Kenya which is expected to cost $5 million over a five year period).

Third, coordination avoids duplication as well as smothering recipient organizations with excessive support.

Fourth, coordination is desirable simply to share information about "what works and what does not" in this still infant area of foreign assistance. One must remember again that most administrators of such programs in the field--and certainly their heads of mission-- are learning on the job. As a result, coordination is most effective

[27] This may become the new mantra of political adjustment, and corollary of the mantra of economic adjustment, i.e. "getting the prices right."

when it occurs in the field; that is to say, between the relevant staff of the "like-minded" missions. A successful example of such information exchange has been the "Donors Democracy and Governance Group" in Kenya formed in early 1992 during the run-up to the country's first multiparty elections in 26 years. The group, which includes representatives of the eight "like-minded" as well as the European Community, the German foundations and the Ford Foundation initially formed as a defense against the duplicate funding proposals that all had received from various Kenyan groups seeking to participate in the anticipated transition. Over time, the individual members of the group, some of whom had served in Zambia at the time of that country's transitional election the previous October, realized that the sharing of information about the nature of such exercises around the world, the literature on African elections, where to obtain needed expertise, etc. was beneficial to all. The group, which sometimes met as often as twice a week, became the principal policy forum of the "like-minded" with respect to the elections and eventually drew in the UN and other diplomatic and development assistance missions. The group still functions to coordinate assistance in the post-election period, and has been replicated, albeit on a much smaller scale in Uganda.

However valuable, coordination in the field should be complemented by greater coordination and sharing of information between the headquarters of the agencies pursuing these programs. The principal reason is to enhance the institutional memories of a diverse number of agencies, memories that ebb and flow with the movement of individuals between overseas assignments and assignments back home. High turnover of key personnel, as is now occurring in Nairobi, weakens the donor effort in the field, while a weak institutional memory at home means that field officers are often reinventing the wheel in respect to program design.

Finally, and not least, coordination between the "like-minded" is becoming increasingly necessary to arrive at a common position on how to deal with the IFIs on the one hand, and selected recipient countries on the other on questions of political conditionality. An appropriate discussion of the issue of political conditionality is beyond the scope of this paper. Since 1991, however, most if not all of the "like-minded" as well as Japan have suspended quick-disbursing aid, and in some instances conventional assistance, to the Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria and Zaire pending progress towards political liberalization and multiparty democracy. Such suspensions are normally effected at the annual meetings of the Consultative Group of donors that take place in Paris under the aegis of the World Bank. As previously noted, the IFIs are the major providers of quick-disbursing aid, but have historically been reluctant to enter the thicket of political conditionality. In this context, the bilateral donors of the "like-minded" must hang together if they are to persuade the IFIs to follow their lead. Coordination is also important when it comes to the resumption of assistance. The exercise of conditionality is a very blunt instrument, and aid flows can't be turned on and off like a faucet. It conditionality with respect to political reform is to be employed in a nuanced manner, the donors must speak with one voice.

6. Even if well designed, donor initiatives in support of democratization operate at the margin.

The final observation is one that perhaps should have been made at the outset of this section, or even at the outset of this paper: It is also an observation that should be obvious, but is sometimes forgotten: *Regardless of whether **all** of the aforementioned considerations are applied to the exercise of nurturing democracy, it is important to appreciate that these programs are at best programs that operate at the margin of the process*--as facilitators of transitions that are driven mainly by the internal dynamics of the societies in which they occur and/or by the internal dynamics of the regimes that govern these societies. In other words, progress towards democratization or the lack of it is a home grown phenomena. While "like-minded" donors can provide useful support to accelerate or consolidate the process, they cannot do so without indigenous democrats. Indeed, one of the principal tests for any potential donor intervention is the quality of the local leaderships and their commitment to the exercise over the long pull. Not every country, in short, should have a democracy program(s) supported by one or more of the "like-minded." Some are not ready to absorb such assistance, while those that are should not become so dependent on the donors to achieve what in the final analysis they must achieve for themselves.

CONCLUSIONS:

What Impact? What Likely Impact?

So what is the proverbial bottom line? Can the established democracies nurture democracy abroad? Probably, but in a limited and nuanced manner and only if they refine their operations. Should they do so? As discussed above, the issue is all but moot; democracy's "victory" may not be an accomplished fact, but democratization has become a near universal value among those who participate in the political process. As for actual accomplishments, while I regret the necessity of stating that it is too early to make any definitive judgments, it would be imprudent to do otherwise. On this question the results are both mixed and well-known. There have clearly been many major successes in terms of an initial transition to democratic forms of governance, and the donor community can justifiably claim some credit in facilitating these transitions--in Malawi, in Namibia, in South Africa, in Zambia, and possibly in Tanzania and Uganda. International presence, if not donor programs, probably also made a difference in Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. The consolidation of democracy, however, is a more problematical exercise, one that is even more dependent on internal conditions than the first stages of transition. Again, the "like-minded" are at best facilitators at the margin. Their programs can assist and nurture, but they are no substitute for local commitment and political will. Does this mean that the established democracies should simply sit back let events unfold--especially given the operational problems they face in nurturing the democratic process? The answer is obviously a judgment call made on an individual basis, but for those of us who have witnessed successful or even partial transitions countries previously marked by political repression, the choice is not difficult.

What Role for Social Science?

Finally, is there a role for social science in this exercise? Is the accumulated literature of the last fifty years simply the stuff of academics, or can some of it be distilled and put to use at an operational level? Here I return to observations from recent experience, as a long-time practitioner of field research turned short-term policy adviser. There is much in the literature, particularly that grounded in empirical research, that speaks to the exercise of nurturing democracy. If nothing else, it suggests "the dos and don'ts"--the broad parameters of what to attempt and what to avoid, as well as what is essential for democratization to occur. As the literature becomes increasingly refined, for example, Michael Bratton's and Nicolas Van de Walle's recent comparative essay on democratic transitions in Africa, or Robert Putnam's study of Italy,[28] we become more cognizant of the particular configuration of conditions that are necessary for democracy to occur in one type of context as distinct from another, and that knowledge alone may assist one in avoiding serious mistakes in what is an uncertain enterprise. This is not a plea for an activist or interventionist social science. Rather it is simply an observation that social science has something relevant to say for the nurturing of democracy and that some in charge of the exercise are listening.

[28] "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," *World Politics*, 46, 4 (July, 1994), 453-89; Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).