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THE MONGOLIA DEMOCRACY PROGRAM (MDP) STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

FINAL REPORT

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Prepared for: Asia/DR/TR

Prepared by: Dr. Raymond D. Gastil

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Executive Summary

The situation the Asia Bureau faces in Mongolia is quite different from that in other countries for which the Bureau has developed a Democracy Program Strategy. Mongolia is a relatively developed country with a well-educated population that is nearly all "mobilized" in the political science sense. Comparisons of the challenges facing its democratic development have much more in common with those facing many of the breakaway states of the former Soviet Union or Soviet Satellites than with those in the rest of Asia.

Historically, Mongolians have had essentially no contact with Western institutions, particularly those of democracy. Its recent history has been dominated by Communist ideology and the struggle of Russia (and later the USSR) and China for control over the country. Mongolia's "Western" language became Russian and its script Cyrillic. Aside from its nomadic and feudal past as a highly militarized society, Mongolia has been heavily influenced for centuries by Tibetan Buddhism. As in Tibet, a high percentage of males and essentially all of its literate high culture before the advent of communism was developed within this restrictive, spiritual environment.

Building democracy on this basis is highly problematic. Yet the Russians developed a broad modern educational base for change in the country. Mongolians are united as a people in their determination to put the Communist period behind them and make "democracy and the market economy" work for them. They have taken on the formal trappings of both, but are intensely aware that they have both the wrong educational background in the social sciences and the humanities and the wrong foreign language to understand the new systems and put them meaningfully into practice.

The first task of a democracy program in this context is to help the country acquire the missing background of democratic institutions as fast as possible. In order to do so, it is proposed that USAID concentrate its efforts on English language training to provide a much broader window on the West than they have had previously and on helping through curricula development, teaching training, and adult education to open up the world of Western social science and humanities that has been closed to them in the past. We have the opportunity to make on a small scale the kind of effort made after World War II in Germany and Japan, and we should make every effort to use it.

The second task is to identify specific areas in Mongolia's institutional or organizational life where more technical aid might be of greatest use. Some of the areas identified include training programs for journalists and public policy seminars. Few efforts should be made in a still very underdeveloped NGO area, although support for a human rights organization and the women's movement are singled out as offering special opportunities. Since elections do not appear to offer important problems, a small observation effort at the time of the next election should be sufficient. Aid to political parties, if undertaken, should remain primarily educational.

concentrating on promoting the idea of parties as representing popular interests and as tools for the development of national leadership.

In the area of governance, special attention should be given to helping to develop a common research library for all three governmental branches. Care should be taken in this area, both because of the flux of institutional change and the probable desirability of a strong and relatively centralized system to meet current crises. For these reasons, no aid to local or regional government should be undertaken at this time. Problems of human rights violations and lack of accountability seem not to be serious. Nevertheless, the new system requires the development of an independent judiciary and legal profession. A small educational effort in this area is already planned and should be further developed. Accountability problems are surfacing as the old system collapses and a period of relative anarchy ensues. USAID should work through its aid to the media, the legislature, and the judiciary to see that the accountability roles of these branches of the system are fully understood. It should also examine with Mongolian counterparts the desirability of an ombudsman type function for the investigation of citizen complaints.

The Mongolia Democracy Program (MDP) Strategic Assessment

I. Historical Background

The present area of Mongolia formed the eastern heartland of the cultures of the steppe and forest of Central Asia. Out of this huge, sparsely populated, cultural area, stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Japan one nomadic people after another rose to challenge the settled peoples to the south, only to be progressively absorbed by their cultures. The most famous of these steppe peoples were the Mongols under Chinggis Khan and his successors in the thirteenth century: their conquests stretched from Hungary and the Mediterranean in the West to Korea in the east, Vietnam, Burma, and the Persian Gulf in the south. Since Mongol populations were always small, even when the adult male population was completely devoted to military affairs, this huge realm could only be conquered and held by the organizing of many other steppe and settled peoples into an effective and highly disciplined military machine. The organizational genius was magnified in the initial stages of conquest by the use of brutal destruction and terror on a scale never before recorded in history. After the conquest, the "new world order" of the Mongols brought for some generations a previously unknown level of peace, religious tolerance, and freedom of commerce to this vast area. Within a century after the conquests, the successor states of the Mongol Khans began to be absorbed into the cultures of the conquered peoples (especially Chinese and Iranians), first administratively, then religiously, and finally linguistically. Only those tribal sections continuing to inhabit the steppes retained their Mongol identity; but even here society relapsed into the feuding of petty princes that had preceded the conquests. Since this golden age, Mongols have looked back to this intensely militarized society for genealogical and cultural legitimacy, and models.

After the age of the Great Khan, Mongolia was the scene of the rise and fall of numerous ephemeral states based on conflicting claims to legitimacy. Increasingly, these states were unable to compete with the growing power of China, particularly after the development of modern weapons such as artillery. As a result, Mongolia came more and more to be seen as a border area of China, with its leaders frequently in the pay of Chinese Emperors. The only alternative was to put the local tribe under the protection of the growing power of Russia.

The other most significant event in Mongolia's history was the conquest of the people by "reformed Buddhism" or lamaism. For centuries, the fortunes of Buddhism and the other religions of the country's more settled neighbors had risen and fallen among the Mongols and other Turkic tribes. The religion of Chinggis Khan and most Mongols had remained the nonexclusive shamanism of the Siberian forests (Japan's modern Shintoism has a similar basis). However, in the sixteenth century lamaist missionaries were able to convert Mongol chieftains who, in turn, then promoted the conversion of entire tribes to the new faith. In many areas shamans were driven out, and elaborate lamaseries were established. From this time on relations with Tibet intensified; Tibetan became the language of the monasteries, much as Latin in medieval Europe. The first Dalai Lama was established by a Mongol ruler. Later another line of incarnations, the Hutukhtu of Urga (later Ulaanbaatar) was established as the titular

religious (and sometimes secular) leader of the Mongols. On a more local basis hundreds of other reincarnations played a similar role. A very large percentage of Mongolian males (perhaps 25%) were sent into the monasteries as children to spend their lives as monks. Much of the land and its livestock was transferred from secular control to monastic control. The lamasteries developed and preserved most of the art, literature, and history in which the Mongols take pride today. Without them, Mongolia's nomadic society, almost devoid of urban centers, would have been left with few records outside Chinese annals.

After the Chinese Revolution ended the Manchu Dynasty in 1911, the Mongol khans who had acknowledged feudal and dependent relationships with Manchu Emperors for over two centuries, declared these relationships dissolved. With Russian support, they declared the country independent under their collective control and the titular leadership of the Hutukhtu of Urga. Later the Russians and Chinese agreed to downgrade this independence and Mongolia again came under a degree of Chinese rule. In 1920-21, the White Russians again freed Mongolia from China, but in subsequent fighting the Red Army and radical Mongolians based in Russia were able to gain control of the country -- although the Hutukhtu was allowed to retain the figurehead until 1924.

Until the late 1920s, the communist movement ruled the country in uneasy association with its traditional leaders. However, traditional leaders were progressively forced out. Then the communists turned against the religious establishment and began a radical attempt to turn the entire herding economy into collectives. When the first attempt at radical restructuring led to widespread and bitter revolts, this process was interrupted in 1932-34 only to be reinstated on the social and cultural plane with increased vigor in the later 1930s. The final result was that all vestiges of the old regime were destroyed, all but a few hundred lamas were killed or secularized, thousands of books burned, and the lamasteries destroyed or abandoned. Education, formerly available only through the lamasteries, was now completely secularized. Although Latin script had been introduced to replace old Mongol script in the early 1930s, by the 1940s Cyrillic was taking the place of the old script, a process completed in 1946. However, in the economic sphere private ownership was allowed to persist until the 1950s; recollectivization of the pastoral economy was not completed until 1960. In general, the period from 1921 to 1990 closely followed the script developed across the border in the USSR, and Soviet agents closely controlled or monitored the process. Soviet troops were sent in to quell the revolts in the 1930s, Mongolia was incorporated into the war effort in the 1940s, and large numbers of Soviets were stationed in the country after the break between China and the USSR in the late 1950s. Although ostensibly under the collective leadership of the Mongolian Peoples Republican Party (MPRP), for many of these years, the country was dominated by two little Stalins (Choibalsan and Tsendenbal). However, since World War II, the face of communism has not been as harsh as in the USSR itself. There seems to have been little widespread imprisonment or torture. While the Soviet Union tied the country's economy closely to its own needs and those of COMECON, it also effectively subsidized the economy for many years. The abrupt termination of the guaranteed trade relationships and subsidies that characterized much of the period after 1960 is a major reason for the economic crisis the country now faces.

The present opening to democracy and market economy has closely paralleled developments in the USSR since the mid-1980s. By the late 1980s, there had been a noticeable freeing of discussion in the media and academic circles. In 1989 the first democracy rallies began. In 1990 a cascade of demonstrations, new party formations, and resignations was followed in the summer by free elections to two houses of a national parliament, which subsequently elected a new president. The old Communist ruling party (MPRP) continued to dominate politics; but it had become so highly factionalized that it was no longer possible to speak of party rule. Its leaders were joined in government by members of other parties. During 1990 and 1991, most of a whole generation of former top officials in government and quasigovernmental organizations was replaced by much younger persons. Often highly educated, their inexperience in the new positions was also evident. All voiced their commitment to democracy and the market economy. At the time of writing, the legislature was engaged in a major effort to devise a new constitution, a process that is not expected to end the flux of institutional change even when completed. There was some indication that the populace was becoming more and more impatient with a system that seemed to be inattentive to growing economic crisis.

II. Historical Experience and Political Culture

Unlike the situation in most post-socialist societies in the Soviet orbit, including the Soviet Union itself, Mongolia has virtually no history of contact with ideas or assumptions that support transition to democracy (and few that offer a basis for a capitalist, market economy). Historically, Mongol society has been characterized by small, hierarchically organized warring tribes loosely organized along feudal lines. This pattern has been overlain by two others. One is the experience of the periodic coalescence of these tribes into highly organized military structures. These periods required absolute obedience from the leaders at each level to directives from above. Although the Empire of Chinggis Khan is the primary reference, echoes of this organization were to be found in the Manchu Empire, particularly in its Mongolian territories. Even today, the current and proposed territorial subdivisions of the country (aimak - army corps, hoshuu - banner, somon - arrow or squadron) reflect essentially military subdivisions. The other overlay on Mongol society was formed by the conversion of Mongolia in the 16th century to reformed Buddhism (lamaism). Subsequently, Mongols were attached as never before to a literate, monastic, and pacifist tradition. Depending on one's viewpoint, this conversion can be regarded as the diversion of the political and economic energies of a large percentage of the male population from worldly to spiritual concerns or as the substantial redirection of primitive, materialistic, and warlike energies to the service of more civilized values. From either perspective, lamaism imposed a structure and system of values that were far from democratic politically or socially. It created alongside the old hereditary ordering of society yet another hierarchical system based on esoteric learning, piety, and spiritual inheritance. Again, roles were thrust on individuals rather than the result of individual choice.

The period after Mongolia's partially successful attempts to achieve independence in 1911 and again in 1921 (with the help, respectively, of the Czarist and Soviet regimes) did little to democratize this cultural inheritance. Perhaps to a greater extent than any other country in the

Communist orbit, Mongolia's economic and political systems were until the late 1980s faithful copies of those in the USSR. Consequently, essentially all political and economic activity is, or has been until very recently, under direct government or Party control. Its economic and political systems were seamlessly woven into one whole.

Today, every aspect of this system is threatened with wrenching change or total extinction. The result is the mass confusion of all relationships: political, economic, and political-economic. Those many state and Party political, economic, and educational institutions that continue to exist have had their mandates radically redrawn in theory and to some extent in practice, while many new institutions have been created to serve "democracy and the market economy". In this situation, massive mistakes have been and will be made, with the likely result of bringing the process of change and those associated with it under increasing criticism. Unlike the situation in most other "post-socialist" societies in the former Soviet orbit, however, the process of change has not been initiated or carried forward with a great deal of bitterness or social division. Most Mongolians have, for example, remained quite friendly with the Russians and are thankful for much that they have done. While demonstrations and protest have played a part in bringing about change, the decision to take the society "overnight" from Communist authoritarianism and state socialism to capitalist democracy seems to have been taken by leaders of all social forces at about the same time -- although the interpretation of this change varies greatly with age and the extent of personal involvement with the previous political-economic system.

Communism imposed an elitist, modernist system in which the people were expected to play little part. Ideally, decisions reflected the consensus of the country's leading bureaucratic and ideological elites. As a result, it is not surprising that the present transformation of the country should be in the hands of elitist factions -- whether they adhere to what is essentially the former Communist Party or to one of the several new parties that have developed in the last two years. It is also not surprising that the democratizing process should have failed so far to produce leaders with identifiable popular support, or to produce parties popularly associated with identifiable popular interests.

III. Programmatic Implications

A. The Guiding Strategic Assumption of the Strategy for Mongolia

USAID programs to provide noneconomic support for sustainable democracy may be categorized as institutional and direct or cultural and indirect.

In developing democracy strategies for most developing democracies emphasis has been placed on direct assistance. In these cases the country's political system is based on extensive contact with, and experience with the operation of, the historical cultures of democracy (for example, through general familiarity with British Institutions, elite knowledge of the English language, and years of experience or contact with political parties and democratic systems). Against this background, it has been reasonable to target specific deficits in the working of the countries institutions. This approach is also indicated in most situations because USAID has had no warrant to believe that emphasis on more global and basic approaches would not be widely rejected by the host country, and therefore be counterproductive.

However, Mongolia's lack of democratic political culture or cultural affiliations, when combined with its highly developed educational base, its broad commitment to democracy and economic reform, and its still undeveloped or untested political and economic institutions, suggests that emphasis should be placed on indirect rather than direct programs in support of democracy. Several arguments may be made for this guiding strategic assumption. First, the probability of achieving sustainable democracy will depend on the rapidity with which the country is able to "fill in the gaps" in its cultural background and cultural allegiances. There are no examples of successful democracy emerging in the short term from a background such as Mongolia's; there is good evidence for a correlation between the depth of democratic background and democratic success. Secondly, the country's new institutional and organizational base is in a state of rapid development and change, and the resulting flux can be expected to last for several years. Some of the institutions, individuals, and groups that we support this year may be of little relevance next year. Third, setbacks in Mongolia's democratic development are to be expected; for example, the country's severe economic problems are likely to lead to reversions to "strong government" that are less than democratic. Programs that build for the longer term by strengthening the country's democratic cultural base will retain their usefulness under such reversions to a greater degree than more specific programs. Fourth, Mongolia's elite and much of its attentive public are ready and willing to change the country's educational and cultural direction and affiliations, lacking only the linguistic and knowledge base on which to make the transition. This offers a "window of opportunity" for effecting major cultural changes that simply does not exist in most countries for which USAID has developed democracy strategies. If the opportunity is not swiftly seized, competing cultural currents may cause the opening to narrow rapidly.

This does not imply that programs for direct, institutional support should not be developed. USAID should help the United States demonstrate an across-the-board willingness to support democratic change. The strategic assumption does imply, however, that the emphasis should

be placed elsewhere, and that the direct programs should be conceived and carried out in large measure as a part of the more general strategy for cultural change.

B. Indirect Programs

As pointed out above, democracy in Mongolia has essentially no historical basis. (This is in the strictly political science sense of the term: a case might be made that the country has considerable background in social and economic democracy). It lacks the colonial experience and direct elite ties to the modes of thought and assumptions of democratic colonial powers that have supported democracy in much of the third world -- or the corresponding ties to France and the United States so important in the development of the Latin American democracies. It lacks even the quasi-colonial experience so important to the democratic experiments in Thailand and Iran. The primary foreign language of educated Mongolians is Russian, a language representing a culture not known for democracy. A measure of the country's isolation was the assertion in several interviews that the most "Westernized" Mongolians are those who have attended Moscow University -- ironically, the best available chance for Mongolians to break out of their isolation from the world. (Another quite different aspect of Mongolia's situation is the belief of its elites since the seventeenth century that the country must choose between Russia or China if it is to avoid being crushed. This affiliative belief has not been, and is unlikely to be, supportive of democracy.)

To change cultural affiliations and meet immediate needs for cultural redirection, USAID should emphasize English language training and materials and support for the transformation of humanities and social science training and educational materials at secondary and higher levels of the educational system.

English Language Training

Mongolians are strongly committed to overcoming their cultural isolation by joining the larger world. Most Mongolians see general acquisition of the English language by the educated population to be the most important means to this end. While emphasis on English should not be thought of as "replacing Russian", which because of geography will always remain important, only rapid and general acquisition of English will serve current Mongolian interests. As an expression of commitment, but not as an expression of realistic capability -- given the lack of texts and teachers -- many secondary and high educational institutions have decided that their faculties should become literate in English almost overnight. It need hardly be added that concentration on English education will also serve the economic need of the society to increase its competitiveness in the international marketplace, whether in tourism or trade. The need is felt to be pressing not only because of a desire to read and communicate with the English-speaking world. Closer to home, most Mongolians see English as a means to communicate with other Asians -- Koreans, Japanese, and even Chinese (few Mongolians speak Chinese; almost none read it). The shift to English as the major means of communicating with the outside world will also become a more natural step as the country shifts from the Cyrillic to the Old Mongolian script, a shift now taking place.

Many efforts are currently underway to meet this need. Aside from Mongolia's own efforts to engage teachers and develop educational materials, the Americans (through the Peace Corps) and the British are seriously engaged. The government is working with a missionary group in California to develop a textbook for English training. The Ministry of Education has a project to retrain Russian teachers as English teachers. New English programs have been undertaken by the Foreign Language Institute and within several ministries; new programs are planned by the Mongolian State University. Most of these efforts are in initial or planning stages and the distance to be traveled can hardly be overestimated -- there is, for example, essentially nothing to be bought in Ulaanbaatar book stores in English, not even magazines. Most schools have few if any individuals that understand English. Therefore, because of its urgency, both from the democratic and economic development viewpoints, the American Mission in Mongolia (as well as the British, Canadians, Indians, and others) can make additional and extensive efforts to help Mongolia achieve this objective with little fear that its efforts will not be welcomed and put to good use. (Of course, before delineating specific projects, coordination and careful definition of responsibilities will be necessary to avoid duplication.)

Currently, the Peace Corps is engaged in English education. Their program could be greatly expanded, especially in terms of teacher training and the development of educational materials. For schools that already have the equipment, the introduction of computer-aided language instruction might also be welcomed. Mongolia lacks an up-to-date English-Mongolian dictionary that would adequately mediate between the modern concepts of democratic, economic, and technological life and the Mongolian language. A rapid effort to produce a reference of this kind that could be distributed inexpensively should be considered. The Peace Corps sees this as a project that they might take a major hand in. The distribution of English language materials must be an important aspect of an effective program. In this area, USIS might play an important role. USIS is just beginning a program in the country; playing a significant role in this effort could be an important way to give the service more visibility and credibility than is now evident.

Education for Democracy

Mongolia is faced with the Herculean task of simultaneously rewriting its history, social science, and humanities textbooks at all levels, and of retraining teaching staffs brought up on a steady diet of Marxism-Leninism. Mongolian teaching staffs and political leaders are fully aware that their country's history and culture, as well as the wider world of social science, economics, civics, philosophy, and literature, have been taught to them and embedded in their curricula in ways that were in large part erroneous and ill informed.

The commitment of the system and of its high-level personnel to change is such that given the tools of language and help in understanding new concepts, this task might eventually be accomplished without extensive outside assistance. However, many parts of the system are open to, and could greatly profit from, assistance in this task. Such assistance could help Mongolians avoid what appears to be the major danger in the transition, the replacing of one set of dogmas by another. Only Western involvement is likely to transfer the more nuanced and probing

approaches to questions in the social sciences and humanities that is the essence of the difference between totalitarian and democratic thought.

What should be done must be worked out between American educators and Mongolian institutions. In the area of formal education, task forces might be established in each relevant area of the social sciences and humanities to work with Mongolian counterparts (such task forces might have considerable overlap with groups brought together to help with reformation in other countries emerging from the post-Soviet sphere). Again, it is at the curriculum development, book translation, and teacher training levels that most could be accomplished with limited resources. A large scale program by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences to translate the classics of Western philosophy and social science into Mongolian might be given support. Much of this effort could dovetail with the direct institutional programs discussed below. For example, the projected effort to aid in the restructuring of the legal system could be supplemented by a program to redirect legal training. After World War II, the United States and its allies carried out with marked success a broad and deep reeducation program in Germany and Japan. The task in Mongolia is much the same, although we cannot and should not play as directive a role.

In the area of nonformal public education, programs should be worked out with the Mongolian News Agency and Mongolian Radio and Television Broadcasting System. Both agencies are very aware of their responsibilities to educate the public in the new democratic and educational concepts, and are also aware of their current inability to do so. They do not presently have staff competent in these areas, nor do they have sufficient resources to hire competent people from outside. It may be possible that the United States Information Agency and the Voice of America could assist in helping develop such an educational program with little added expense. The political party branches of NED (NRI and NDI) have also been engaged in civics education programming that may be transferable to public use in Mongolia.

C. Direct Program Suggestions

1. Voice

Need:

Under voice, the first issue is the adequacy of the public media. The previous governmental and party monopolistic control of the media has been to some extent broken in the print area by both the distancing of the sponsoring organizations of the country's many publications from their governmental or party financial base and the establishment of party organs by the new political parties. Broadcasting and media services are also now more independent of government and party. However, nearly all media are supported by government funds and will remain so in the immediate future; in this time period, independent media in the American sense are unlikely to flourish. However, an important basis for a free media is in place: a literate population, concerned with national and international issues. Public opinion polling is common and frequently reported. These range in quality from politically motivated efforts based on small samples confined to Ulaanbaatar to more sophisticated, academically based polls. Both are widely reported in the newspapers. More generally, movement toward greater media freedom and effectiveness is beginning and can be accelerated through training and technical assistance programs.

Another aspect of voice is the extent to which a population has been able to organize and sustain independent groups (NGOs) through which it may bring pressure to bear on the political system in defense of group or wider public interests. Although few fully independent organizations exist in Mongolia, the independence of formerly state-bound organizations is developing rapidly.

A third aspect of voice is the ability of the society to develop and consider effectively policy alternatives, particularly in public organizations outside government control. Until very recently, such a capability has been nonexistent in the country. It is developing now under the auspices of the new parties, but in a highly partisan manner.

Recommendations:

Limited training programs should be developed for journalists, particularly in Mongolia. Reportorial independence, election and political reporting, and the media's role in holding government officials to account should be stressed.

Support for NGOs should generally be limited until the emergence of a truly independent sector able to support itself outside the government structure has emerged. Three exceptions should be made. First, those few truly nongovernmental organizations that do exist should be helped to expand their role and develop an adequate funding base as an example to others. The most appropriate groups here would be in the area of small business and human rights. Secondly, Mongolians might be encouraged through educational or visitor programs to develop producer

and consumer cooperatives on Scandinavian, Swiss, or American models. Producer cooperatives would help to fill the vacuum left by the dissolution of the collectives (locally referred to as "cooperatives"), state farms, and the governmental organizations that formerly represented rural interests. Consumer cooperatives would serve both politically and economically to buffer the transition from the controlled economy with highly regulated prices to the unknown (to Mongolians) world of a free market economy. As economic entities these groups should be able to be based from their inception on member contributions. Third, transition to democracy has resulted in a precipitous decline in the formal political participation of women in both legislature and government; economic change has also impacted particularly negatively on the income of women. For these reasons, the well organized and potentially effective national women's organization should be supported in its efforts to work against these trends.

To a limited extent, support for serious policy analysis and discussion should be fostered through the provision of training and education to selected sectors, an area already being addressed by an IRIS seminar program on topics such as private property, taxes, and prices. It may also be addressed through more effective development of policy analysis at the political party level (discussed below). In the academic institutions, a basis for more disinterested policy analysis seems to be developing; USAID might follow this development and aid in its crystallization when appropriate.

2. Choice

Need

The country has successfully launched its democracy in two especially significant ways: through holding general elections that technically were generally felt to be fair by both local and foreign observers, and the creation of several political parties able to elect representatives and express with some effectiveness different parts of a relevant ideological spectrum. The major deficiency in the elections has been the control of all media by the government, and thus an unfair advantage for the previous communist functionaries that have directed and funded the media. This problem will be much reduced in future elections through both change in access to the media by the parties and change in the management of much of the media. Most new political parties represent reformist spinoffs from the old MPRP or communist party, a process that continues. Whether the MPRP will retain its dominance as the major political party is unknown; in any event lack of party discipline has greatly reduced the significance of its dominance. The origin of most new parties in the MPRP means that considerable knowledge of party organization remains, although perhaps not adapted to the new situation. The inability of most parties to avoid progressive fractionalization or to go beyond serving the intellectual concerns of their founders has made understanding current politics exceptionally difficult, a difficulty that no doubt extends to the average Mongolian. Avoiding the souring of popular political attitudes that continued confusion in the face of mounting problems might produce remains a major challenge.

Recommendations

Since no major problems exist in the electoral process itself, it should be sufficient to assure that coming elections (expected in summer, 1992) be attended by a small observation corps to help maintain fairness and provide a degree of legitimacy if fair. If non-U.S. efforts appear insufficient, USAID should consider mounting an effort.

The fragility and shapelessness of the political parties suggests that a small across-the-board effort might be undertaken to help political leaders develop structures that will allow them to engage and represent significant numbers of potential voters by serving their interests. Training and visitor programs to serve these interests should not concentrate on how to campaign and advertise, but rather on how to organize at the grass roots and how to identify and develop leaders that can generate the popular appeal that the country needs.

3. Governance

Need

The three conventional branches of government (in American terms) are in a process of transition from a unitary system in which all major decisions were made by the ruling political party outside of popular control to a system with greater independence among the branches and between the government and the many "autonomous agencies" that formerly directed the society and provided for services and a degree of balance (labor organizations, youth organizations, women's organizations, radio and television, the national press service etc.). Working out new relationships and funding, without allowing necessary public services to fall through the cracks is a monumental task. It will inevitably take time and result in many mistakes. In the midst of this restructuring the government has had to deal with two newly elected national legislatures and elected local legislatures. The national legislatures have been accused of incompetence and inactivity, but given the newness of its tasks and the fact nearly all legislators are in their first terms, it has seemed to function well. Much of the criticism is by elitists unused to sharing power with what they consider to be "uneducated" legislators. A tendency by both governmental leaders and legislators to search for consensus on constitutional and other issues rather than to take responsibility for "hard decisions" may either reflect a developing characteristic of a new democratic style or a carryover from a predemocratic system in which unanimity (however attained) was the political norm. Regional and local legislatures and the governments they have spawned have been accused, on the other hand, of being overly assertive, of claiming an autonomy from central directives that is supported by neither law or custom.

Recommendations

Since the country will for the near future need a strong governmental system, the establishment of a fully balanced American-style democratic system of executive, legislature, and judiciary should not be a first priority. To the extent that educational and exchange programs to strengthen the legislature's ability to operate effectively as an independent branch of government

are already underway, they should be continued. Particularly important is the project to establish a national research library for all three branches of government. A library of this kind appears essential for the development of effective policies both inside and outside government. Fortunately, since a number of other foreign aid organizations are also interested in this project, USAID's contribution need not be excessive to make the project a success.

Although the country's democracy will eventually require the development of effective local institutions, the geographical definition of local units and their responsibilities is not yet clear -- and may not be even after constitutional changes are enacted. Until the relations of central government to its constituent units are defined, and until pressing problems of allocation and supply are solved, USAID should probably avoid becoming involved in supporting local governmental levels.

4. Redress

Need

The judicial and executive systems have not been fully separate under the communist system. Police, prosecutorial, and judicial functions have tended to be part of the same system. For example, the new director of the Police Academy, a high ranking police officer, is also head of the Mongolian Lawyers' Association. The idea of independent lawyers is very new, and to date few such lawyers exist. However, discussions with human rights advocates and others suggests that there have in recent years been few if any serious human rights violations. Accusations of torture are absent; even false imprisonment seems to have been no more likely than in the West. Of course, certain levels of denials of rights will only become evident when the society becomes educated in Western assumptions at all levels.

Recommendations

A small, educational program is being developed to provide training and focus to the judiciary as they take on new roles. Part of this effort should be concerned with working toward the development of an independent legal profession.

5. Accountability

Need

Neither a critical media or the operation of a system of checks and balances has held government officials or the party to account. However, it is remarkable that there seems to be few accusations of massive corruption under the old system. Communist officials were favored by the system, and had special stores and privileges in the Soviet style, but great disparities in wealth do not seem to have occurred as the result of massive misuse of position. Now in the transition period, when the rules of the old bureaucracy and its "morality" have partially broken down and the new rules have not yet become legitimated, opportunities and inclinations toward

misuse of position appear to have been intensified. This is particularly true since there is a tendency of many to regard "capitalism" as a license to accumulate money by any means. This suggests that accountability will become an important need for the new economic and political system if it is not to rapidly lose credibility.

Recommendations

The major responses to the need for accountability are to be found through strengthening the role of the media, legislature, and judiciary as watchdogs on the bureaucracy. In addition, USAID should investigate the development of an ombudsman with responsibility for investigating citizen complaints of the misuse of authority.

Appendix A

PEOPLE CONTACTED OR INTERVIEWED

(in approximate order of contact)

Phyllis Forbes, ASIA/DR

Walter North, ASIA/A

Dennis Robertson, Asia/DR/PD

Mary Nourian (?), Asia Bureau (econ-financial)

David Keegan, State Desk Officer for Mongolia

Paul Cohn, AID desk officer for Mongolia

Cinnamon Dornsife, The Asia Foundation

Charles Cadwell, Director, IRIS

Lionel Johnson and Michael Ratner, NDI

Jeffrey Crouse and Edward Stewart, NRI

Paul Henze, RAND Washington (by phone)

Robert Friedline, AID Representative in Mongolia

Joseph Lake, Ambassador to Mongolia

Thomas Dowling, Political Officer, U.S. Embassy to Mongolia

Ganbad, USIS Assistant in Mongolia

Naidangin Baatorjav, President, Mongolian Lawyers' Association (and Director, Police Training Institute -- also a high ranking police officer)

D. E. Baljinnyam, former Mongolian Ambassador to the United Nations (and field assistant)

Yanjemaa, Consultant to IRIS

Batbayar, Chairman, Social Democratic Party

Such-Jargalmaa ("Jamaa"), Press Secretary to the President

D. Ganbold, Chairman, National Progress Party; First Deputy Prime Minister

S. Zorig, Chairman, National Republican Party; Director, Market Research Institute

Bayarsuren, Chairman, Believers' Party

Dash-Vondon, Chairman, Central Committee, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party

Bat-Ull, Chairman, Mongolian democratic Party

Altai Zorig, Director General, Mongolian Radio and Television Broadcasting System

Sandagdorj, General Coordinator of the Mongolian Conferderation of Free Trade Unions

P. Jasray, President, Union of Mongolian Production and Service Cooperatives

Erdene, Director, Mongolian News Agency (Montsane)

Burenbayar, Editor in Chief, The Mongol Messenger

Chuck Howell, Director, Peace Corps in Mongolia

Atarbaatar, First Deputy Chairman of the People's Khural of Tov Aimag

Byambadash, Deputy Director, Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Tov Aimag

Yunden, Principai, Secondary School No. 2 of Zunmod

Naimoanjing, Chief, Sargelen Somon

Batayar, Chief, Council of Mongolian Trade Unions

N. Utnasen, Minister of Education, with Tseveensuren, assistant

Surmaajav, Human Rights activist

Altangerel Chief of the Foreign relations Department of the Baga Khural

S. Nyamzagd, Director, Government Center for Pontical and Social Research

Hangai (or Khangai), Deputy Chief of the Secretariat and Head of the Organizational Department of the Baga Khural

Otgon, Director of the Central Library

Amarkhu, President of the Mongolian Association for the Conservation of Nature and the Environment

Bodsho, Editor and Publisher of Mongol Un Jiran (The Mongolian Century)

Dorji, Rector of the Mongolian State University (with Sumya as head of English department as translator)

Bayar, Chief of the Standing Committee on State Structure

Jantsen, Chief of the Standing Subcommittee on Local Administration

Dolgorjav, Director of the Academy of Public Administration and Social Studies of the Small Khural

Dashaa, Vice-President of the Central Council of the Mongolian Women's Federation

Dall, Chairman of the Free Labor Party

G. Lodoi, Director of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Academy of Sciences

S. Gombo, Secretary of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Academy of Sciences

Tsevegmid, Chairman, Mongolian Human Rights Committee

G. Chiaggis, Researcher, Economics College

Boldsukh, General Scientific Secretary, Mongolian Academy of Sciences

Nergui, Director, Informatics Center, Academy of Sciences

George Korsun, IRIS representative in Mongolia

B. Enebish, Consultant to Baga Khural (with special responsibility for elections)

Khurts, Director, Institute of Geology and Natural Resources (former dissident)

Appendix B

MATERIALS CONSULTED

Books:

Akiner, Shirin (editor), *Mongolia Today* (London: Kegan Paul, 1991).

Bawden, C. R., *The Modern History of Mongolia -- with afterword by Alan Sanders* (London: Kegan Paul, 1968, 1989).

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This is Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar, 1991).

Vreeland, Herbert H., III, *Mongol Community and Kinship Structure* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1957).

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National Concept of the Mongolian Small Economy

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Proclamation of the Mongolian Social Democratic Party

Political Report of the First Congress of the Mongolian Social Democratic Party

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Christopher Clague, "The Journey to a Market Economy", pp. 1-22.

Thomas N. Haining, "Land of the Immortal Blue Sky", Review of Information Mongolia, JRCAS (old name), pp. 68-73.

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