



## Scholars debate

# Prospects for Peace

Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.  
Chuck Scheer photos

By Jocelyn Fannin

"The time of change is now on us. What we do with it will depend on our leaders and on ourselves."

With this forceful challenge, world-renowned historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. brought Prospects for Peace, BSU's sixth annual Frank Church Conference on Public Affairs, to a resounding conclusion.

Conference ideas had come full circle, beginning with the opening address from F. Forrester Church, son of the late senator, who keyed the discussions to follow.

"There are always two sides to every story. There are no impartial observers. Even though sometimes the enemy is as evil as our representatives make them out to be, we must avoid the reasoning which tells us, 'We are against them; therefore, we are good,'" Church said.

Those themes echoed throughout the day's panel discussions on peace prospects in Central America, the Middle East and between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Conference speakers' credentials were impressive.

**Church.** Senior minister of New York City's Unitarian Church of All Souls, author of the syndicated *Chicago Tribune* column "Fundamentals," subject of a recent CBS documentary, author of *Father and Son: A Personal Biography of Senator Frank Church of Idaho* and of the

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**Rev. F. Forrester Church**

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newly released and highly publicized *Everyday Miracles*.

**Schlesinger.** Twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize with *The Age of Jackson* and *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*, Albert Schweitzer professor of the humanities at the City University of New York, and special assistant to Kennedy.

**Joel S. Beinin.** Stanford University expert on Middle Eastern affairs, and on the board of directors of the Middle East Research and Information Project.

**Herbert L. Bodman, Jr.** Director of the Islamic Teaching Materials Project, American Council of Learned Societies, professor, Islamic history, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

**Jeff Boyer.** Appalachian State University anthropologist and specialist on Honduras.

**Basil Dmytryshyn.** Portland State University professor of history, specializing in Western civilization, Russia and

Eastern Europe.

**Jo Ann Ruckman.** Chairman of history department, Idaho State University, specializing in Russia, women and modern Europe.

**Allan Wells.** Bowdoin College Mexicanist, specialist on the Yucatan.

Known as one of the leading religious philosophy teachers in the modern world, Forrester Church recalled, "My father preached the gospel of the founders of this country, who didn't have to wave the flag to prove their patriotism. It is in our lives and not in our words that our religion must be read."

Church also emphasized the cultivation of relationships. "Rarely in our history has the political rhetoric been more out of sync. Each time the means we use are wrong, the strength that makes us free is lessened.

"It is a new truth. All of us are part of one body. Today what threatens the survival of an individual endangers us all. Every war is a civil war.

"In a nuclear age to preserve our families and their people, we must somehow preserve our enemies and their people. What is called for is a new spiritual consciousness of our interdependence," Church said.

Boyer agreed, citing the virtues and failures of last year's Arias peace plan, which produced, he said, a Pan-Latin American effect among the five Central American countries El Salvador,



F. Forrester Church

Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras who all "have a lot at stake in bringing about peace."

In all five countries, there are some fundamental problems that must be solved if the Central American economy is to go forward with a sense of human dignity, said Boyer.

Among those problems are displaced persons (in Guatemala alone, a country of 7 million, about 1 million have been displaced), polarization of classes and militarization of the economy.

Those problems are extremely evident in Nicaragua, a pluralistic society where contradictions abound, Wells said.

From 1980-87, 43,176 on both sides of the Nicaraguan revolution have been killed.

The war has also ruined the Nicaraguan economy, and the government has been forced to abandon long-range strategies with bare bones measures, as damages are estimated to be over \$3.6 billion. The Sandinistas are making serious mistakes and have overlooked the basic laws of supply and demand, Wells said.

It is difficult for Nicaragua to believe that the U.S. is willing to let bygones be bygones. "If they (the Nicaraguan government) overreact, they do so because they remember the overthrow (U.S. backed) of Allende in Chile," Wells said.

"Change is inevitable. The U.S. pathological obsession with Nicaragua has

to end. Then and only then will the Arias peace plan succeed," Boyer said.

"The Middle East, highly complex and volatile, could easily become more so," said Bodman, who noted the area's diversity of cultures and religions and a history of conflicts have made an even more flammable mix, and modern nationalist ideologies have resulted in major conflicts such as the Iran-Iraq war.

## Church exhibit

**"The Public Image of Frank Church," a free exhibit at BSU's Hemingway Western Studies Center, runs through Dec. 2. The center is open Monday-Wednesday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., and Sunday, 1-4 p.m.**

The exhibit covers the breadth of the late Idaho senator's public life, beginning with the 1941 speech that won the American Legion National Oratorical Contest. Church's 24 years in the U.S. Senate are reflected in autographed photographs of his Senate colleagues, original political cartoons and awards, including the Boise Peace Quilt presented to the senator. One case in the exhibit deals with Church's image as an outdoorsman. Videos of Church on television news programs are also included in the exhibit. □

"This war, of considerable unequals, has been disastrous and was miscalculated by both sides," he said, explaining that even though Iran has three times the population and four times the area of Iraq, it was plagued during the war by the scism between the revolutionary guard and the army.

Peacemaking in the area will be "long and arduous," Bodman believes, even though there is considerable pressure toward moderation.

The U.S. Department of Defense found the war an "opportunity to maintain visibility" in this highly strategic region, after giving up its state of neutrality in the early 1980s, Bodman said.

By contrast, the U.S. has never been neutral in its relations with Israel, said Beinín, who noted that current U.S. policy stems from the Nixon-Kissinger era when the Middle East was viewed as a "hot" region in the Cold War.

Critical of both U.S. and Israeli policies, Beinín was accused by one attendee of being anti-Semitic, but retorted that he is a Jew who has lived three years in Israel.

He pointed out that even though the U.S. has "steadfastly" supported Israel, more countries now recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization than recognize the Jewish state.

Palestinian nationalism is not a figment of imagination or a product of terrorism,

Beinin said, noting that there is an international consensus for general resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian situation.

The U.S. support for Israel is primarily rooted in the concepts of its role of containment, and U.S. policy, he said, has viewed the formation of a Palestinian state as a pro-Soviet threat.

Beyond the November elections in the U.S., Beinin said, "Whoever is president may be forced to see things differently."

Americans' view of Russia should also be seen differently, according to Dmytryshyn.

"What troubles me is that the media — and sometimes politicians — expect too much of such events as last June's summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev," he said.

Gaps of understanding between the two powers cannot be eliminated through administrations, resolutions or praying, Dmytryshyn said, but by establishing ways to influence each other, by modifying current perceptions.

He expects that Sino-Soviet and Soviet-Japanese relations will improve, and that the Soviet Union will continue its economic inroads in the Pacific Basin, will continue to have good relations with India, and will establish relations with Saudi Arabia. And without the cooperation of the Soviet Union, he said, no Middle East solution is possible.

"We must work out a new way of looking at the Soviet Union; otherwise, the initiative will be on the other side," Dmytryshyn said.

Ruckman is in full accord:

"Somehow, we see the world as potentially Americanizable. We need to understand how they see the world. Americans are notorious in their difficulties in understanding other countries. It's a matter of understanding cultural differences," she said. "If we are going to have peace to avoid war, the horrors of nuclear war, we must work against anti-communist feeling in this country. We must be developing attitudes of optimism, rather than pessimism."

Speaking, as did Church, to a full Student Union Ballroom, Schlesinger criticized the Reagan administration's attempt to exclude Congress from matters of foreign policy in all three areas of the world.

"Congressional criticism alerts a president to flaws in his policy," he said. "Secrecy is the bane of democracy because it is the enemy of accountability."

He cited the Iran-Contra affair as a scheme "made possible by the work of a reckless and duplicitous administration."

Such covert acts, he said, are at best a marginal instrument of policy easily detected and hard to control. "Covert



Bethine Church accepts the Award for Western Life and Letters from BSU President John Keiser.

## Church receives BSU award

The late Senator Frank Church and his wife, Bethine, have received the President's Award for Western Life and Letters from Boise State University.

The award was established by BSU President John Keiser to honor individuals who have preserved Western values through their writing, research or public service.

"What Frank and Bethine contributed together is inseparable from their individual achievements," said Keiser. "This award is made in recognition of the compelling eloquence with which they represented the natural beauty and wealth of Idaho, and the need to perpetuate that."

"Their appreciation and advocacy of this precious resource during a remarkable partnership in public service created a wellspring of inspiration and real value that can flow forever.

action should be carefully controlled, reserved for only the most acute and demonstrable emergencies," he said.

Schlesinger drew from Kennedy's philosophy "that enmities between nations do not last forever," and warned the audience not to see conflict as inevitable.

And citing the late Senator Church's well-known opposition to the Vietnam War, Schlesinger said, "The falling domino theory is not more valid in Central America than in Vietnam. It's time to live with Third World revolution. We

"As long as the relationship between man and nature is an important theme in American life, Senator Frank Church and Bethine will be recognized as major contributors to it."

The couple was married in 1947 while he was attending Stanford University. He was only 32 years old when elected to the U.S. Senate in 1956, and served until 1980. He died of cancer in 1984.

Bethine Church lives in the Washington, D.C., area, where she is active in the Democratic National Committee and several other organizations.

The President's Award for Western Life and Letters has been presented to writers Ted Keith, Salmon, and Ted Trueblood, Nampa; raptor expert Morlan Nelson, Boise; Senator Len and Grace Jordan, Boise; and singer Rosalie Sorrels, Boise. □

should understand the bitterness bred of oppression and poverty."

Schlesinger said, "the U.S. faces new situations, new opportunities, including "incredible changes" in the Soviet Union. The Gorbachev revolution of economic and political reforms is a truly historic opportunity to wind down the nuclear arms race.

"Democracy, I believe, has won the Cold War." □

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