

**Note on the Presentation of Andrew Natsios to the UAA Development Issues
Committee
January 31, 2019**

Andrew recalled a hearing by the House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Jim Kolbe at the time. The Chair asked how much of the USAID budget was spent through competitive processes and Andrew replied that the answer depended on whether one included the directed projects in Congressional earmarks.

In Andrew's view, USAID really began with the Marshall Plan, which was the source of much of the original USAID staff when the Agency was created in 1961. There has not been adequate dissemination and, therefore, a lack of public awareness of what has been accomplished in this post-World War II era.

The decline in mortality during famines, the decline in population growth, and similar progress were in many cases attributable to USAID's work. For example, in Ethiopia, fertility rates fell from 6 to 4 in a few years after USAID substantially increased its family planning budget for that country. However, USAID is reluctant to claim credit.

Declines in infant and child mortality as well as illiteracy can be attributed to a great extent to the work of USAID. Andrew requires his students to read Steve Radelet's *The Great Surge* and asks them questions about it in class.

Steve Hadley has described the current state of the international system as "under stress." Andrew believes the international system of support for development is now collapsing. He points out that the work pioneered by Normal Borlaug and the green revolution has been sustained over the year by the CGIAR network of agricultural research centers. That system now has declining international support. Another indication of the decline with respect to development support is that the World Bank is cutting its professional economic staff. If we destroy institutions that have had so much success, we are jeopardizing the future of the world.

Bob Kagan's book, *The Jungle Grows Back*, is illuminating. Also illuminating is the turn away from international activism by our political parties. An example is the opposition expressed by some to any US action with respect to Venezuela.

Further evidence is the decline of enrollment in public administration and international affairs in our universities. Far-right parties in Europe (Sweden, Germany, Greece, etc.) are reminiscent of the Nazi era. They are known to engage in violence. The far-left parties are equally extreme. Meanwhile, the middle is hollowed out.

President (George W.) Bush is concerned about protectionism and isolationism and nativism. Andrew would add ultra-nationalism. This is consistent with the John Mearsheimer view. These trends could lead to a new war among great powers.

USAID is still relevant. He calls attention to Dan Runde's paper on the migration crisis. This crisis is causing enormous problems. Migration places big strains on societies where the migrants seek refuge. On a recent visit to the US southern border he encountered Somalis and Chinese migrants. Pew says about 25% of people crossing the border are not from Latin America. Neglected tropical diseases are gaining a foothold in Europe and we could soon see the same problem here.

Andrew recently visited El Salvador, where the USAID Mission is engaged in a number of public-private partnerships. This kind of work should continue. The US should move its southern border for purposes of health to Panama, where it is more controllable. We are at risk of a pandemic resulting from globalization, state fragility, and mass migration. In 1918 we saw a world pandemic. Another one can happen; so, can a food crisis be the result of price instability. State fragility and failure is the situation in about 30 countries. Congress is more willing to support OFDA funding than development.

The issues we confront now are threats to the international order and threats to the interests of the United States. We need to connect what we do to the future well-being of our country.

Q&A:

Q. Dan Runde – There have been important gains in Afghanistan. Tax collections are up; the economy is growing; girls are in school; etc. How should we respond?

A. Andrew agrees with Ryan Crocker. He recalls a discussion with Ryan in Kabul some years ago. Andrew does not favor departure from Afghanistan. As in East Asia, we should retain a small military base for an indefinite period – as we have done in Europe and Korea. He recalls de Tocqueville's observation about the challenge of democracies to maintain consistent foreign policies in the face of periodic elections and changing popular opinion.

Ray Martin – What about the impact of climate change? In addition to all the other factors Andrew cited, climate has become a divisive political issue and that precludes science-based decisions.

A. There remain disputes in the scientific community about the timing of change attributable to climate, such as the pace of rising sea levels. He recalls, when he was at Georgetown, former Governor of California Jerry Brown expressed the opinion that the enormous cost of an effort to do all the things necessary to arrest climate change could lead to a revolution in the US.

He believes we need to look for significant technological change in coming years that will enable a more effective response at a manageable cost.

He agrees the problem has now become so politicized (on both sides) as to inhibit reasoned debate.

Q. What about Venezuela?

A. Venezuela has technically competent people. It has prospects for recovery. Venezuela's transition will have implications for Nicaragua and Cuba for which we should be preparing now.

Q. Gordon West asked about potential for conflict in Asia.

A. China seems less likely to initiate conflict. The country faces internal problems, including a declining economy and extensive corruption. He is more concerned about Russia. Russia's irresponsible conduct is evidenced by its authorship of propaganda that feeds the anti-vaccination movement in the US.

Q. Bette Cook recalls Andrew's talk to SFRC staff in which he mentioned the value of American staff in difficult places because they are accountable to their constituencies in the US. This provoked a dispute.

Q. Paul Isenman – What Andrew advocates requires a long-term view. Notwithstanding De Tocqueville's cautionary view, we have had a lot of consistency in US foreign policy since World War II. Isn't Trump the exception?

A. Trump should understand policy, but he appears not to. Reports about his business interests are troubling. The question today is whether we still have the coherence to be up to the current challenges.

Q. Mike Crosswell asked about the USAID reform that created the "F" Bureau in State.

A. Andrew was fed up with interagency squabbles about USAID's work. The original proposal was to set up a second Deputy Secretary position whose incumbent would also be USAID Administrator. Condi Rice was frustrated by State's inability to deal with the reform issues. Unfortunately, Randy Tobias, who was selected, was more interested in the Deputy Secretary of State role and was less interested in being the USAID Administrator.

Q. What should be the USAID vision?

A. The present strategy by Mark Green is a matter of political necessity. Among possible refinements could be a FEWS network for migration crises. Our health programs should support a chain of multi-disease clinics in developing countries.