



The Passport

World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (www.wacmb.org)

December 2022

Ethiopia: Understanding the Conflict and the Prospects for Peace

Colonel Bruce Sweeney
U.S. Army (Retired)

Monday, December 19, 2022

11:30 am: Registration 12:00 pm: Luncheon 12:45 pm: Program
***** Hilton Garden Inn, 1000 Aguajito Road, Monterey*****

The Horn of Africa, which includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan, is one of the world's most conflict-prone and fragile regions. This strategic area has been immersed in conflict in one form or another since 1974. In addition, both protracted conflict and climate-driven drought have also propelled widespread famine of crisis proportions in the Horn of Africa. Recently, a ceasefire appears to have been established in Ethiopia and peace talks have started, allowing food aid to be delivered to starving people in the Tigray region of the country. Thus, in at least one part of the world, politics may end on a hopeful note at the close of 2022.

Our December speaker, Colonel Bruce Sweeney, served as Defense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 2012 to 2014. In his talk, Colonel Sweeney will discuss the strategic area of the Horn of Africa, with a



special focus on Ethiopia, its history, and the difficulty of keeping its neighbors and provinces at peace.

Thomas (Bruce) Sweeney retired from the U.S. Army with the rank of colonel. Most recently, he served as a Military Professor and the Foreign Area Officer Chair in the Department of National Security Affairs at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey. An Army Foreign Area Officer, Colonel Sweeney speaks French, Hungarian, and Russian. His most recent assignment before NPS was as Defense Attaché and Senior Defense Official in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He has also served as Defense Attaché in Paris, Kabul, and Budapest. Colonel Sweeney has extensive overseas experience in almost every region of the world: Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Pacific, and South Asia.

During December, don't forget to make a donation to WACMB through MCGives! in support of Academic WorldQuest. For more information, see November's *Passport* or go to www.wacmb.org.

Program Report: Francis Fukuyama

Your World Affairs Council was honored to have one of America's foremost public intellectuals, Francis Fukuyama, speak at our November luncheon. Fukuyama's topic was "Liberalism and Its Discontents," and he gave a full-throated defense of liberal values. By "liberalism," Fukuyama meant neither the U.S. definition of center-left politics nor the European definition of center-right politics; instead, he spoke about the classical understanding of liberalism, meaning a polity based on the rule of law, constitutional checks and balances, and a respect for human dignity and human rights. It was these liberal values that created the United States and made it the envy of the world, and these same values have "come under attack in recent years," particularly by the "populist right." The target of attack has often been the restraints on state power built into the American constitutional system.

Serious attacks on liberalism by the populist right have occurred not only in the U.S., but also in a number of countries around the world, including Hungary, India, Russia, and Turkey. While the undermining of liberalism has primarily been a project of the populist right, the political left has also contributed to the undermining of liberalism through identity politics, which Fukuyama described as "profoundly illiberal." Those who practice identity politics bestow rights onto groups, not individuals. They also hold other illiberal ideas, such as the notion that science is not an objective method of discovery, but rather an institution that reflects power imbalances in society. While the left began the discrediting of objective science, this disease is now found in large quantities on the right, as well.

Fukuyama argued that we should all embrace liberalism for pragmatic, moral, and economic reasons. Pragmatically, liberalism is the only form of modern governance that can effectively

govern diverse societies. Morally, liberalism posits the equality of human dignity and the idea that we are moral beings, in a way that authoritarian forms of government do not. Economically, liberalism has produced the wealthiest societies known to human history.

Fukuyama remains bullish on liberalism's future. He noted that authoritarianism tends to narrow over time to one decision maker, and it is much more likely for one man to make a significant mistake than a system of checks and balances. Putin in Russia has largely destroyed nascent democracy in Russia, and in Ukraine has made the kind of mistake that will haunt Russia for many years. China under Xi Jinping seems like it is heading down that same path of cult of personality.

Finally, Fukuyama argued that liberalism was harmed by rampant globalization prior to the Covid pandemic. He believes that economic globalization will likely not return to those levels as the pandemic subsides, but will continue to be a major driver of the world's economy. This is fine, he said, as long as smart and good reforms are taken as needed to protect liberal society.

- by Glenn Robinson

New CSUMB Liaison

WACMB is delighted to welcome John Binkley to the Board of Directors as the new liaison for CSUMB. Mr. Binkley is the Dean of the College of Extended Education and International Programs. Before arriving at CSUMB, he served on the faculty and administration at CSU Northridge for 19 years. He holds a BFA from Western Kentucky University and an MFA from Southern Methodist University, and is currently pursuing an Executive PhD from Italy's Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. Please join us in welcoming John Binkley to the WACMB Board!

RESERVATION FORM

Reservations due December 14. Luncheon is at the Hilton Garden Inn.

Registration: 11:30 am

Mail form and check to:

Members @ \$36 _____

Luncheon: 12:00 pm

WACMB, PO Box 83, Monterey, CA 93942

Guests @ \$41 _____

Program: 12:45 pm

or register online at www.wacmb.org

Total \$ _____

If you wish to register using a credit card, please do so online.

Ethiopia

Name/s _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Number of Vegetarian Entrees _____

Note: No refunds or credit will be given for cancellations received after the due date

Discussion Groups

Please use discussiongroup@wacmb.org for any Discussion Group-related email.

The WACMB monthly Discussion Group will meet virtually at 5:00 pm on Monday, December 5, when it will address Francis Fukuyama's topic of "Liberalism and its Discontents." All WACMB members are invited to participate. If you have never attended this Discussion Group, email a request to receive log-in information. Background materials for each meeting are posted on the WACMB website at <https://www.wacmb.org/discussion-groups/>

The WACMB/OLLI Discussion Group will hold its final meeting of the fall semester on Monday, December 12, at 4:00 pm. Registration through OLLI is required; go to <https://olli.csumb.edu> to sign up.

Come join the conversation!

LUNCHEON MENU

- Caesar Salad
- Grilled Chicken Caponata Topped with Olives and Capers and Served on a Bed of Creamy Polenta
- Seasonal Vegetables
- Fresh Bread and Butter
- Classic Tiramisu
- Coffee, Decaf, and Tea

VEGETARIAN OPTION

Grilled Portabella Mushrooms
Topped with Olives and Capers and
Served on a Bed of Creamy Polenta

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This is the monthly newsletter of the World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (WACMB). WACMB is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization established to promote the presentation, discussion, and study of international affairs. WACMB is a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization, EIN-770301206. Contributions are tax deductible as permitted by law. WACMB sponsors monthly luncheons, discussion groups, and student scholarships.

Corporate and institutional support for the World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area is provided by
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Names/s: _____
Street: _____
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*** Student rates are for full-time students at accredited colleges, universities, or graduate schools, as well as for enlisted military personnel in Grades E1 to E4.**

Vaccination Requirements

- All those attending WACMB in-person events must show proof of full Covid-19 vaccination, including a booster.
- To prove your vaccination status, you can present either your vaccination card or your State of California QR code.
- You only need to present such proof once. Your documentation will be noted, and that box will be automatically checked for future meetings.
- ***For the time being, no auditors will be permitted to attend any WACMB in-person meetings. This is to ensure that every person in the room has been vaccinated and boosted.***
- Thank you for your cooperation with our efforts to keep our members healthy!

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