COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
MINNESOTA

75 YEARS AND COUNTING: THE ENDURING JOURNEY OF THE MINNESOTA COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

1940 was not a very good year. Hitler's troops had overwhelmed France and the Low Countries, seized control of most of the rest of Europe and become intent on bombing England into surrender. America was mired in an angry standoff between interventionists determined to rescue the British and isolationists who wanted no part of another European war. Authoritarian governments were ascendant and on the move. Traditional western democracies found themselves weakened by years of insularity, economic stress and lack of military preparedness.

Such were the circumstances that led to the birth that year of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee on Foreign Relations, now known as the Minnesota Committee on Foreign Relations. The Council on Foreign Relations, based in New York City, formed the Committee and similar entities throughout the country to help counter the isolationism that prevailed in the U.S. during the years leading up to World War II. In 1995, the Council parted ways with the committees, but the original format for the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee -- a dinner speaker followed by discussion -- remains intact today. And the myriad topics addressed by the Committee's many hundreds of speakers have mirrored well the shifts in U.S. foreign policy as the country has navigated through war, peace and all manner of less easily defined conditions.

The Committee's first chairman was George W. Morgan, long the dominant force at the prestigious St. Paul law firm that was the predecessor to today's Briggs & Morgan. Its first secretary was University of Minnesota economist Arthur Upgren. Other early members of the executive committee were Charles Lesley Ames, treasurer of West Publishing Co. in St. Paul; J. Cameron Thompson, president of Northwest Bancorporation in Minneapolis; Gideon Seymour, editorial director at the Minneapolis Star-Journal; David J. Winton, who headed his family's lumber business in Minneapolis; and Herbert L. Lewis, Seymour's counterpart at the St. Paul Dispatch. The original roster also listed a number of influential business executives, attorneys and bankers. Among the many luminaries in the group: Gov. Harold Stassen; the presidents of the University of Minnesota, Macalester College and Carleton College; William L. McKnight, president of Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co. in St. Paul; John Cowles, president of the Star-Journal; Minneapolis grain merchant Peavey Heffelfinger; Minneapolis physician Walter Judd, who would soon be elected to the first of 10 terms in the US House of Representatives; Gunner Nordbye, who would later serve for 12 years as Minnesota's chief federal judge; John Peyton, who led the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank through the Great Depression; George Lawson, secretary-treasurer of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor; Harold Deutsch, a history professor at the University of Minnesota and Raymond Bragg, minister at the Unitarian Church near downtown Minneapolis.

The Council on Foreign Relations, founded in 1921, grew out of the post-World War I concerns of financiers, lawyers and scholars about the need to achieve lasting world peace and an international climate suitable for the growth of American businesses. Elihu Root, a corporate lawyer who had been secretary of state under President Theodore Roosevelt, was the Council's first leader. In 1922, Root wrote the lead article in its new journal, Foreign Affairs, calling for America to exercise

leadership in world affairs. The Council became highly influential, attracting as members many powerful figures in government, business and leading universities. Often, the members socialized with one another. They represented the American elite. Henry Kissinger led a Council study group on "nuclear weapons and foreign policy" in the mid-1950s. Foreign Affairs published his first major article, on national security. His work with the study group launched him on the trajectory that took him to the highest reaches of diplomacy. In his 1992 biography of Kissinger, author Walter Isaacson described the Council as "a discussion club for close to 3,000 well-connected aficionados of foreign affairs. Beneath the chandeliers and stately portraits of its Park Avenue mansion, members attend lectures, dinners and roundtable seminars featuring top officials and visiting world leaders," Isaacson wrote. "The most exalted enterprises at the Council are the study groups, which consist of about a dozen distinguished members and wise men who meet regularly for a year or so to explore a particular subject in depth."

As war clouds gathered in Europe and the Far East in the late 1930s, leaders at the Council, generally internationalists, became more concerned about the convictions of so many Americans that the country could somehow remain detached from events abroad. In 1937, Frederick Keppel, president of the Carnegie Corporation, and Walter Mallory, executive director of the Council, came up with the idea of establishing regional affiliates. The Carnegie Corp. provided financial support to identify and bring together local leaders to organize the committees. By the winter of 1939-40, they had launched a dozen of them. Five were in the Midwest (Chicago, Cleveland, Des Moines, Detroit and St. Louis), one in the Northeast (Providence) and the rest in the South and West (Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Louisville, Nashville and Portland). In 1940-'41, the Twin Cities committee became the 13th affiliate.

In 1963, the Council published and distributed to all of the members of its regional committees a book, These Are the Committees. Joseph Barber, the Council's longtime liaison to the committees, was the author. Barber described how the committees got started.

Typically, the Council enlisted one or two leading citizens in each city to organize the committees. One of the earliest committees, in Detroit, set the pattern. William F. Knudsen, the president of General Motors Corp., was the Detroit committee's first chairman. Knudsen presided at the organization's first meeting, on Nov. 1, 1938. Twenty people signed up and attended including a number of presidents of large corporations, the archbishop of Detroit, the president of the University of Detroit and the secretary-treasurer of the Michigan Federation of Labor. Two visitors from the Council also attended: Allen Dulles, chairman of the Council's research committee, and Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor of Foreign Affairs. The Council reported that the membership of the early committees was limited to "25 to 35 responsible men who have an interest in or knowledge of international affairs." Mallory said the committees should be autonomous rather than branches of the Council, that all meetings should be off the record and that the work of the committees should not be publicized. The concerns of the Council went beyond isolationism. It recommended and supplied books, pamphlets and magazines to the committees on wide range of foreign relations topics. John W. Davis, who served as the Council's first president from 1921 to 1933, said shortly before the end of World War II that the committees "extended the influence of the Council" to the entire country. "Many of the men who have taken a leading part in the American war effort have been prominently associated with the work of these committees and through them in no small measure have gained an appreciation of America's role in foreign relations," Davis wrote.

These Are the Committees took particular note of the isolationism in describing as a "major disappointment" the collapse of the short-lived Chicago committee. Barber wrote that this committee met only three times during its first year, in 1939-40. He singled out the role of its chairman, General Robert E. Wood, then the chairman at Sears Roebuck in Chicago, as one of the reasons the Chicago committee folded before the 1941-42 season began. Barber described Wood as "an ardent advocate of the isolationist outlook" and a leader of America First, then the most

prominent organization urging U.S. policymakers to stay away from alliances with Britain and other foreign nations.

At its first two meetings, in the winter of 1940-41, the Twin Cities committee did not feature speakers. Instead, Herbert Lewis recounted, members got to know one another and swapped views in wide-ranging discussions of foreign policy. "It is interesting to notice that this Committee represents the metropolitan center of the region which is supposed to have some inherent difficulty in appreciating that the earth is round," Lewis observed. He went on to dispute that image, instead stressing the broad perspectives of the members. "It is certain beyond doubt" that the region's reputation for isolationism is undeserved," he argued.

But since the two initial meetings, the speaker/discussion format has been established practice. Generally, the speakers have reflected the foreign policy concerns of the times. The Council's archives and others that touch on the Committee's history lack information for various periods when important events occurred -- for example, the Berlin Blockade, the Soviets' Sputnik space satellite launch, the Cuban missile crisis and the fall of the Iron Curtain. But the Council's archives do cover much of the period from 1944 to 1982. Other archives yielded still more details about the Committee and its speakers. While this may seem an ambitious claim, the speakers and their topics and other happenings at the Council and the Committee offer helpful context from which to consider U.S. foreign policy and the events that influenced it over the 75-year life of the Committee. This can be seen as a grand saga that unfolded in six installments: the run-up to World War II and the war itself; the Cold War from 1947 to the Vietnam War; the domestic turmoil triggered by that war; the Cold War after Vietnam; and the post-Cold War era before and after the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001.

THE EARLY YEARS

Two somewhat contradictory attributes marked the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee's formative years. On the one hand, the organization operated almost totally "under the radar," following the advice and indeed the policy of the Council itself. There is no sign that the Committee ever sought publicity for its speakers or other activities. On the other hand, at least two of its charter members -- Macalester College President Charles Turck and Arthur Upgren -- took high-profile roles in encouraging intervention to help beleaguered Britain in 1940 and 1941.

Turck led the St. Paul unit of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. Mrs. John Cowles, whose husband was a charter member of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee on Foreign Relations, was one of the two largest donors to the Minneapolis unit of the Defend America Committee. This was a nationwide, pro-British political action group that came together almost overnight in May of 1940 as the Nazis rolled across France. By January of 1941, it had grown to 700 chapters across the country. It was often referred to as "The White Committee," named after William Allen White, the nationally known editor of the Emporia Gazette in Kansas. At least seven other charter members from the Twin Cities foreign relations group were active with the White Committee in Minneapolis. They joined others in writing and monitoring letters to editors, recruiting members through phone banks and attending speaking events. Many years later, history professor and Committee on Foreign Relations member George Garlid would describe the political environment that confronted the Minnesota White Committee units. "Not a single influential political leader in Minnesota was willing to attack the isolationists directly during the (election) campaign of 1940," Garlid wrote. He identified the Minneapolis unit's most ambitious effort as a mass rally, in January of 1941 at the Minneapolis Auditorium, to drum up support for the Lend-Lease bill then being debated in Congress. The rally, led by Charles Turck, drew about 4,000 people; at least 8,000 had been expected. Four months later, Garlid noted, Minnesota native and famed aviator Charles A. Lindbergh Jr. was the star attraction at an America First rally in the same venue. Lindbergh, then the country's most prominent isolationist, had been accused of being sympathetic to the Nazis, but he

still had an enormous following. Garlid wrote that the rally "filled the Minneapolis Auditorium to overflowing."

Planning the Peace While at War

Arthur Upgren earned a doctorate in economics at the University of Minnesota in 1937 under the supervision of Alvin Hansen, an influential Keynesian economist credited with helping to create the Council of Economic Advisors and the Social Security system. Hansen and Upgren become key players in the War and Peace Studies Group, pulled together by the Council on Foreign Relations immediately after the German invasion of Poland in 1939 ignited World War 2. The Council had formed tight ties with US foreign policymakers in Washington soon after Franklin Roosevelt was elected president in 1933. Under the War and Peace project, experts from the Council's and FDR's brain trust became close partners in determining the national interest in shaping foreign policy. This five-year project enlisted nearly 100 experts in five specialized groups to provide expertise for the Roosevelt administration in mapping and executing strategy for World War II and its aftermath. Upgren worked closely with Percy Bidwell, the Council's director of studies. Bidwell would go on to become deeply engaged with the regional committees. In January of 1941, Upgren and Bidwell collaborated on a prominent article -- A Trade Policy for National Defense -- for Foreign Affairs. They warned that Germany's early successes in the war could soon enable it to dominate the world economy. "American aid to Britain should be extended immediately by every means in our power," they concluded. "We should set in motion now plans for an economic union which would include the Western hemisphere and the British Empire."

Upgren served as research secretary for the Economic and Financial unit of the War and Peace project. He shuttled between Washington and New York during the war, working for both the U.S. Commerce Department and the Council. He also served as a vice president and economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis during the war. At the Bretton Woods world economic summit in 1944, he was co-secretary of the commission that set up the framework for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (now the World Bank). After the war, he returned to the Twin Cities to become an associate editor at the Cowles-owned Star-Journal and to teach at the University of Minnesota. Sometime before 1952, he became the chair of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee on Foreign Relations. Then he left Minnesota to become dean of the business school at Dartmouth College. Upgren co-authored a popular economics textbook, Economics for You and Me.

The Council frequently provided discussion leaders for the regional committees. In 1941, the committees were considering U.S. policies in the Far East and for aiding the British. In April of that year, all 13 committees sent representatives to a Council meeting to consider the challenges of protecting convoys of U.S. ships loaded with supplies for the British. Without singling out specific committees, Joseph Barber wrote that the principal topics considered by the committees in 1941-42 dealt with postwar reconstruction. Bidwell argued that the committees were important because "No such groups of well-informed, representative citizens keenly interested in our foreign relations were in existence in 1918. This time, we shall be better prepared to 'win the peace.'"

Reflecting on Bretton Woods

One of the earliest references to the St. Paul-Minneapolis affiliate in the Council's archives for the Committee is an unsigned two-page summary of the Committee's 1944-45 season. The summary described two meetings with speakers that season as "undoubtedly the most valuable ever held by this committee" because they led to comprehensive discussions of contradictory views voiced at Bretton Woods. The speakers were Edward K. Brown and Randolph Burgess. Brown, president of the First National Bank of Chicago, was one of only two US delegates at Bretton Woods not from the government. He was well-regarded by British economist John Maynard Keynes, whose views on

international monetary policy were largely rejected at Bretton Woods. Burgess, an officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, reflected the perspective of New York bankers often critical of Keynes. Other speakers that season included Thomas K. Finletter, a leading economic advisor to FDR during the war, on the foundation and conduct of U.S. foreign policy, and Charles W. Bunn Jr., president of a national council that raised money for war relief causes, on problems with postwar commercial policy.

This report also said it was difficult to estimate the impact of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee on public opinion. Nonetheless, it concluded that the members were so influential that "they must have played a part in the development of more mature international attitudes and opinions" in the region. The summary also noted that "it is impractical to attempt an integrated agenda for a year in advance" because the Committee "has never been able to conform closely to any such agenda and has been obliged to proceed more or less by improvisation and adaption."

COLD WAR: 1947 TO VIETNAM

The worldwide euphoria that broke out once the war ended quickly faded as relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union deteriorated. Winston Churchill framed the new reality in a memorable speech at Fulton, Missouri, just six months after World War II ended. "An iron curtain has descended across the (European) continent," he declared. But it was left to George Kennan, a U.S. diplomat stationed in Moscow, to introduce into the lexicon of foreign affairs another word -- "containment" -- that would define American foreign policy throughout the Cold War. A month before Churchill's speech, Kennan sent his famous "long telegram," a private treatise outlining the scope of the Soviet threat, to State Department officials in Washington. In July of 1947, he followed up with a prophetic article in Foreign Affairs under the byline of "X." His article, titled "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," argued that the Soviet government was by nature expansionist, but could be contained by a tough-minded U.S. policy that might eventually lead to the demise of the Soviet Union. Soon it became apparent that George Kennan was the mysterious Mr. X. Kennan made the rounds of Council's regional committees during the 1946-47 season, according to Joseph Barber. No record could be found of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee's speakers that season, but it seems likely that Kennan did address the Committee then, given Arthur Upgren's deep ties with both the Council and the Committee.

Throughout this period and for many years to come, the Cowles family's Minneapolis newspapers gave the Committee strong support. Executive editor and Committee member Gideon Seymour oversaw extensive international coverage. Seymour did a stint as president of the Foreign Policy Association (now part of the Minnesota International Center) in Minneapolis and launched the Star-Journal's World Affairs Program. After his death in 1954, the Cowles papers inaugurated the Gideon Seymour Memorial Lecture series, which brought in famed speakers such as British historian Arnold Toynbee and New York Times columnist James Reston. Toynbee's drawing power was on a par with the magnetism of today's rock stars. His 1955 talk attracted a capacity crowd of nearly 8,000, according to Bradley Morrison's book, Sunshine on Your Doorstep, about the Cowles dailies. "No single individual of his time did more than Gideon Seymour to impart an awareness of world affairs and their importance to a region long known as a stronghold of isolationism," Morrison wrote. The early stretches of the Cold War also saw the emergence at the Committee of two more top hands at Cowles, Carroll Binder and Robert W. Smith. Binder served as the chair from 1952 to 1956; Smith was secretary in the 1960s and chair from 1970 to 1975. He was married to Rosalie Heffelfinger Hall, a well-known socialite whose son by an earlier marriage, Wendell Willkie II, was the grandson of 1940 Republican presidential candidate and celebrated internationalist Wendell Willkie.

By January of 1953, the number of regional committees had doubled to 25 from the 13 operating in 1941. Two decades of Democratic control of the presidency had just ended with Dwight Eisenhower moving into the White House. The Council tried to keep abreast of public attitudes on foreign policy

in the regions through annual surveys of committee members. Many of its members were executives and lawyers representing large corporations that wanted to expand abroad. Lower trade barriers would enhance these companies' prospects for expansion. Thus the Council sought out its members' views on how U.S. trade policy could and should change given the political shift in Washington. "Do we carry on much as we have in recent years, or do we adopt a different approach?," the Council asked in a cover letter accompanying the survey. "What is to be U.S. policy on existing barriers to trade? Is there need for revision of our tariffs? How best can we preserve our own strength? How advance the purposes of the free world?" The letter noted that the results of its past surveys had been closely studied by policymakers in Washington and abroad. While no report on the results of the survey turned up in the archives tapped for this project, the choice of that year's survey topic undoubtedly reflected a major concern of Council members.

Reaching Out to Winnipeg

The Council's archives contain several references to a lengthy, off-again, on-again attempt by the Committee to forge closer economic ties between the U.S. and Canada once the war ended. This effort, which the Council encouraged, gained traction in 1943, after the governor of Minnesota and the premier of Manitoba asked the Universities of Minnesota and Manitoba to study the idea. Their report, directed by Arthur Upgren and titled "The Midcontinent and the Peace," called for enhanced trade between the northern prairie states of the U.S. and Canada's west central provinces once the war ended. In 1953, Jule Hannaford, then secretary of the Committee, described a weekend trip eight Committee members made to Winnipeg to meet with 40 members of a similar group there. "The Canadians are very interested in continuing the series of meetings and we have invited them back here next spring," Hannaford wrote to the Council's Joe Barber. "However, I am afraid that the interest in our group is considerably lagging on this matter. Most of (the members) are no longer willing to take a weekend away from their families. We have not decided to end the series yet, but don't be too surprised if that is the final outcome." Barber wasn't ready to give up. A few days later, he wrote Hannaford that "I understand the reluctance of your people to spend a weekend away from their families, but I think that a representation of eight at Winnipeg was not too bad. After all, you expect the home team to show up with plenty of reserves." Seven years later, the Committee was still pursuing this effort. "Every poll we have made of member sentiment regarding another meeting" with the Winnipeg group "has favored such a meeting," Robert Smith, then secretary of the Committee, told Committee members. "Anyone who has made the Winnipeg trip in the past will testify that these are intellectually stimulating and socially pleasant occasions." Smith booked a block of double bedrooms and roomettes on a Great Northern train that left the Twin Cities on a Friday night and returned home on Sunday night. The Minnesota contingent and the team from Manitoba met at the Fort Garry Hotel in downtown Winnipeg. The agenda for the meeting listed two topics: The Impact on North America of External Economic Forces and Continental Defense. By 1963, Smith was singing a different tune in his annual report to Barber. He wrote that "the Winnipeg thing fell through...again. I am just about ready to give up on the idea. Or maybe turn it over to some enthusiastic Committee member to organize, promote, etc." That may have been the end of it; there are no further references to the Canadian initiative in scores of available letters and reports exchanged by Council and Committee officials.

Concern About Goldwater

On a few occasions, this correspondence offered candid insights into the views of Council officials. On July 14, 1964, as the Republican Party was about to name Barry Goldwater as its presidential nominee at its convention in San Francisco, David MacEachron, the Council's director of programs, expressed his frustration in an outspoken letter to Smith. "The lunatic Right fringe has been fastening on the Council for the past three or four years," MacEachron wrote. "Now that they are out from under the rocks under Barry's banner, I assume that we may hear more of them. I find the Republican platform depressing. It is a real irony that just at the moment when we seem to be

moving toward some acceptable modus vivendi with the Russians, along comes a man like Goldwater prepared to risk war if necessary over demands which are totally unacceptable to the Russians. It is really frightening that one of the major parties could have gone so far with ideas which are so dangerous."

The speakers during this era frequently dealt with Cold War-related topics. Kurt Edgar von Schmidt-Pauli kicked off the 1953-54 season with a look at Germany, the divided land that was at the gravitational center of the continuing battles between Communism and capitalism for global supremacy. Schmidt-Pauli, then a lawyer in Munich, had been drafted into the German Army in 1937. He rose through the ranks to become a major before the Russians captured him in 1945 and held him in Russian labor camps for five years. Next up was Francis O. Wilcox, the chief of staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, speaking on "Who Makes Our Foreign Policy." His talk came just 11 weeks after the Soviet Union sent a chill through America by carrying out its first successful test of a thermonuclear bomb.

In the fall of 1964, Bob Smith mentioned several recent speakers on Asia in a letter to one of them, Lindsey Grant, who then headed the Mainland China Affairs section of the State Department. The list cited Al Ravenholt, a war correspondent who went on to a career as an author and expert on Asia, and Phillips Talbot, a U.S. journalist and diplomat known for his mediation of crises in India and Pakistan and his role in founding the Asia Society.

Speakers in 1965-66 included William Rodgers, a leading member of the British Parliament, on the decline of the British Empire and the need for more cooperation among the Western allies on economic planning; M. Jean-Louis Manderau, the French consul general in Chicago, on Franco-American relations; and John K. Emmerson, a counselor for the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

De Gaulle Speaker Draws Crowd

The following season, the Committee broke with tradition to schedule a Friday night dinner so members could hear from former Costa Rican President Jose Figueres, a leading Latin American statesman. Other speakers that season included Robert Roosa, a Council on Foreign Relations leader who had been a top monetary policy adviser to President Kennedy and later would serve for 11 years as chair of the Brookings Institution, and French diplomat Gerard de le Villesbrunne on Franco-American relations. De la Villesbrunne spoke at a time when French President Charles de Gaulle was rocking the West's NATO alliance by steering his country onto an independent course. He drew the year's largest crowd.

A summary of the Committee's activities for the four seasons ended in 1966-67 showed membership ranging from 82 to 91. Average annual dinner attendance ranged from 30 to 38, for from six to eight meetings a year. Most of the meetings then were at the Minneapolis Club. The Committee began its 1967-68 season with a bank balance of $928.38.

The Committee hosted speakers from Time magazine, which then had one of the world's most extensive networks of foreign correspondents. Hedley Donovan, Time's editor-in-chief, spoke in 1969 on US foreign policy; John Scott, assistant to the magazine's publisher, came twice, first to speak on Eastern Europe and then on "The Soviet Union at Bay."

In June of 1970, Secretary Bob Smith noted in his last report before becoming chairman that the Committee's treasury had become "somewhat depleted...solvent, it is true, but not intoxicatingly so...headed into the new year almost totally unburdened by money in the bank." Smith attributed the tight situation to rising expenses for meals and speakers. He noted that the Council's basic fee for providing a speaker had recently gone up to $125 from $100. In the previous season, the Committee had ended up getting all of its speakers from the Council, Smith explained, while in

earlier years it had managed to get speakers through other channels free or at substantially reduced cost. This report turned out to be a harbinger of the days to come as both the Committee and, more particularly, the Council itself, moved into more turbulent times.

THE STRESS OF VIETNAM

The seeds that led to U.S. engagement in the Vietnam War took root in the 1950s. President Eisenhower argued that if Indochina fell, all of Southeast Asia would "go over very quickly" to the Communists "like a row of dominoes. The possible consequences of the loss are just incalculable to the free world." In August of 1964, after years of rising tension between North and South Vietnam and increasing U.S. involvement, North Vietnamese patrol boats fired on American naval ships, which the U.S. claimed were in international waters. Congress reacted promptly by passing almost unanimously the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which gave the president blanket authority to help the South Vietnamese as he saw fit in their battles against North Vietnam. Three months later, the Council on Foreign Relations sought out the views of the members of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee and its other regional affiliates committees, by then numbering 33, on U.S. policies in South Vietnam. Three-fourths of the respondents generally agreed that defending South Vietnam was the key to preserving a non-Communist Southeast Asia, and that the region must be defended because of its great strategic significance to the U.S.; that Communist success in its "war of national liberation" in South Vietnam would greatly enhance the danger of similar guerilla wars in all developing countries; and that as a leader of the free world, the U.S. must assist others who seek to preserve their independence. Joe Barber presented the results in a 24-page pamphlet titled American Dilemma in Vietnam. Barber had edited 11 similar Council reports, dating back to 1947, of committee members' views, mostly on Cold War issues ranging from Communist China to containment of Soviet expansion. But soon, the majority views summarized in this particular report would face serious challenges in an increasingly divided America.

- The Committee began hearing from a growing cast of speakers offering different takes on Vietnam. Among them:
- In January of 1965, Col. George Jacobson, an Army counterinsurgency expert who had served tours of duty in South Vietnam in 1954-57 and again in 1961-64.
- In May of 1965, Robert Hewitt, an award-winning Minneapolis Tribune foreign correspondent stationed in the Far East.
- In September of 1965, M. Tran Van Dinh, a long-time political insider who had been engaged in underground activities against French and Japanese occupation forces in Vietnam and had recently severed ties with Saigon,
- In February of 1966, Jack Raymond, a Pentagon correspondent for the New York Times.
- In November of 1966, Col. Michael J.L. Greene, who had been an Army commander in Vietnam and was on a fellowship at the Council.

War Divides Nation

Meanwhile, as culture wars raged in the U.S. and opposition to the U.S. role in the war heated up, Council leaders supportive of the conflict faced growing scrutiny. In March of 1965, antiwar groups launched "teach-ins" as an organizing tool. Two months later, McGeorge Bundy, a one-time Council leader who went on to serve Presidents Kennedy and Johnson as the U.S. National Security Advisor from 1961 until 1966, was scheduled to speak at one of the largest teach-ins as the leading advocate for the administration's Vietnam policies. He cancelled the appearance at the last minute, but the event went on via closed circuit television linking more than 100 college campuses.

Peter Grose, managing editor and then executive editor of Foreign Affairs from 1984 to 1993, described how the Vietnam era played out at the Council. The organization authorized and published his history in 1996. Study groups had long been a tradition at the Council, but Grose noted

that "not a single Council study group study" was convened on Vietnam between 1964 and 1968. Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the venerable editor at Foreign Affairs, did devote large sections of three successive issues of the publication to discussions of Vietnam. In April of 1968, Armstrong wrote that Americans had "failed to understand the people and the society we were setting out to help." He warned against ignoring "how much the Vietnam war is isolating us from other nations." Yet the Council's first comprehensive analysis of the war would not appear until 1976. Grose wrote that the mid-1960s were crucial years when American military support for the South Vietnamese government "turned into an American land war on the continent of Asia." At the Council and across the nation, he wrote, "passions were too high and visions too deep to permit extensive presentation of diverging views in the civilized encounters that had previously characterized the Council." Grose recalled the "open insurrection" that erupted at the Council in 1971, when its new chairman, David Rockefeller, offered a family friend -- William Bundy, McGeorge's brother -- the prestigious job of editor of Foreign Affairs. "Anti-war dissidents within the membership promptly rose in protest" that someone with the record of William Bundy -- a high-ranking official at the CIA, Defense and State Department during the war -- "would be entrusted with an independent foreign policy journal," Grose recalled. At the Council, hastily called meetings "revealed unprecedented anger; members branded Bundy a 'war criminal'; his defenders branded the protestors 'left-McCarthyites.'"

Rockefeller's response was also unprecedented. He broke from the Council's "no publicity" stance by sending a five-page memo to the New York Times, along with a press release outlining both sides of the controversy and staunchly defending Bundy. Until then, the Council, which had been targeted by critics from both ends of the political spectrum during the 1960s, had managed to almost entirely stay out of the mainstream media. Suddenly, after half a century under the radar, its internal acrimony over Vietnam was big news. John Franklin Campbell, a one-time fellow at the Council, picked up on the Bundy controversy for New York magazine under the headlines: "The Death Rattle of the Eastern Establishment...The Bundy Affair at the Council shapes up as the establishment's Dreyfus Case. The power-brokers made a bad mistake." The New York Times Magazine assigned star reporter J. Anthony Lukas to dissect and demystify the Council in a lengthy story. The newspaper billed the Lukas report this way: "The Council on Foreign Relations: Is it a Club? Seminar? Presidium? 'Invisible Government'? This remarkable group, suspected by both the left and right, counts among its 1,500 members those who have significantly influenced US foreign policy in the last 30 years. It still has clout, but its critics are growing louder and more numerous."

Council, Committee Diversify

Mail from Council members overwhelmingly supported the Bundy appointment. The uproar faded, but the divisiveness at the Council helped lead to major changes there. A reorganization created the new position of president; Bayless Manning, who had been dean of the Stanford Law School, got the job. The Council launched a youth movement by creating a new category for members between the ages of 21 and 27. It opened its membership rolls to women. By 1971, 18 women had been invited to join. The St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee began a similar push for diversity, with Barbara Stuhler becoming one of its first women members in 1972. By 1973-74, four women were on its roster.

In 1974, Bill Bundy came to Minneapolis to speak on international security. In sending out a notice of the meeting and summarizing it, Minneapolis Tribune journalist Bob White, the Committee's secretary, did not mention the tremors that rocked the Council when Bundy took the helm at Foreign Affairs. Instead, White praised Bundy, saying his talk drew the largest crowd since he had become secretary four years earlier. Bundy went on to serve as the journal's editor until 1984.

The changes that reshaped the Council in the wake of its fissures over Vietnam policy presaged shifting relationships between the Council and its regional committees. The Council had subsidized the committees since founding them, but in the spring of 1973, it had to tighten its belt. Thus it

proposed new terms that cut the subsidy. Initially, White feared that the new terms were so harsh that they would make "dissolution of this Committee a strong possibility." He sent details of the new proposal to members of the Executive Committee, and called them to a meeting at the Minneapolis Club to discuss "a matter of crucial importance" to the Committee's future. The Council wanted to raise its annual speakers' fund fee and eliminate the $400 annual honorarium it had paid to each of the committees' secretaries. It proposed to boost income from the committees by asking their members for annual tax-deductible donations -- $1,000 from each of the larger committees such as its Twin Cities affiliate.

No Free Lunch

On closer analysis, White and other leaders concluded the new terms were manageable. In October, White wrote Committee members that "substantial changes in financial relations" with the Council had led the Executive Committee to double the assessment fee it sent to the Council. But he went on to describe the changes as the result of "the working of a principle described by more sophisticated economic thinkers as: There's no free lunch." Then he ticked off half a dozen benefits the Council provides to Committee members:

- Helping to get speakers.
- Advance evaluations of speakers thanks to experiences with them at the Council or other committees.
- Clout in landing particularly hard-to-get speakers, such as senior State or Defense Department officials and ambassadors from major nations.
- Free subscriptions to Foreign Affairs.
- Use of Council facilities. Committee members were welcome to visit the Council when in New York and, by prior arrangement, to attend Council meetings.
- Intangible values such as stimulating foreign policy discussions among community leaders.

On April 30, 1975, the Vietnam War ended with a strikingly different outcome from that once envisioned by so many members of the Council and its regional committees. U.S. military helicopters evacuated South Vietnamese and U.S. citizens and foreign nationals from the rooftop of the American embassy and throughout Saigon, which was rechristened as Ho Chi Minh City. All told, some 58,000 Americans died in the Vietnam War. But while the North Vietnamese communists emerged triumphant, worldwide communism was splintering into many iterations. The thesis that if Vietnam was lost, many other countries would turn into satellites of the Soviet Union, did not come to pass. The dominos did not fall.

In 1976, Bob White became the Committee's chair, a position he would hold for 20 years.

COLD WAR: VIETNAM TO 1991

The Committee heard from a steady run of speakers on a remarkably broad array of topics in the 1970s and 1980s. Many dealt with various aspects of the Cold War, as the standoff between the U.S. and the Soviet Union continued to dominate foreign policy around the world. Others addressed topics ranging from monetary policy and multinational corporations to agriculture and environmental advocacy. Meticulous records from 1971-72 to 1984-85 list all of the Committee's dinner speakers for each of those 14 seasons and their topics. Among the more prominent speakers:

- Phil Goulding, a public affairs aide to President Johnson during the Vietnam War, in 1971 on Pentagon-press relations and the Pentagon Papers.
- Charles Bailey, editor of the Minneapolis Tribune, in 1972 on Moscow and Peking.
- Bruce MacLaury, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, in 1972 on world monetary problems.

- Herbert Scoville Jr., former CIA assistant director and noted arms control expert, in 1972 on the path forward after the first Strategic Arms Limitation Talks treaty.
- Nobuhiko Ushiba, Japan's ambassador to the U.S., in 1972 on Japanese-American relations.
- Dennis Meadows, leader of the Club of Rome project, in 1973 on the limits to growth.
- Frank Pace, former director of the Bureau of the Budget and ex-chairman of General Dynamics Corp., in 1974 on the private sector's role in foreign economic development.
- Col. Merrill McPeak, an Air Force leader who was a fellow at the Council, in 1976 on the nuclear deterrence dilemma.
- D. Gale Johnson, economist and provost at the University of Chicago, in 1977 on international agricultural trade issues.
- Ray Cline, executive director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in 1978 on China's external policies since Mao.
- Donald Rumsfeld, then CEO at G.D. Searle & Co., in 1979 on the U.S. in an untidy world.
- Fernand Spaak, head of the European Economic Community's delegation to the U.S. in 1979 on European economic integration.
- John Turner and Philip Raup, faculty members at the University of Minnesota, in 1979 on the Soviet Union revisited.
- Ezra Vogel, chairman of the Council for East Asian Studies at Harvard University, in 1979 on China, Japan and the U.S.
- James Yuenger, foreign correspondent for the Chicago Tribune, in 1979 on the coming storm in Iran.
- Richard Holbrooke, assistant secretary of state for Asia, in 1980 on East Asian and Pacific affairs.
- Thomas Hughes, a Minnesota native who from 1971 to 1991 was president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in 1980 on collective irresponsibility in American foreign policy.
- Harlan Cleveland, former U.S. ambassador to NATO and founding dean of the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, in 1982 on the illusion of impotence in U.S. foreign policy.
- Charles Maynes, editor of Foreign Policy magazine, in 1983 on a new era of Soviet-American relations.
- John Temple Swing, vice president and secretary of the Council on Foreign Relations, in 1983 on the law of the sea.

Peeking Behind Iron Curtain

Visitors from behind the Iron Curtain were among the most intriguing speakers during this period. Historian Leonid Kutakov, senior advisor to the Soviet mission at the United Nations, spoke to the Committee in 1967. Two more Soviet bloc speakers, Romanian Ambassador to the U.S. Cornelieu Bogodan and V.L. Issraelyan, also with the Soviet mission to the UN, addressed the Committee during the 1969-70 season. Five years later, with talk of detente in the air, Evgeniy Bugrov, the economic affairs counselor stationed at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, came. For the Council's Rolland Bushner, that occasion was special. It had been nine years since he had secured a speaker from this embassy. Planners had to take care not to violate U.S. travel restrictions on Soviet diplomats. Neither Minneapolis nor St. Paul were off-limits, but the rest of Hennepin and Ramsey Counties were as well as all of Dakota and Anoka Counties. Bugrov visited with a top corporate officer from Control Data Corp. and met with economists at the University of Minnesota. His talk to the Committee drew one of the biggest crowds of the year. In 1980, Bulgaria's ambassador to the US, Konstantin Grigorov, came. Committee secretary George Thiss was not impressed. "He painted an 'all is well' rosy picture," Thiss reported in his summary of Grigorov's remarks. The biggest draw that season was Robert Legvold, a Russian specialist for the Council who spoke on Soviet-American relations. This was a time when the U.S. and the USSR competed intensely with each other to win

support from developing lands. The Committee heard from specialists on Indonesia, Angola, Portugal, Rhodesia, India, the Philippines and other lands.

Seven speakers spoke to the Committee in the 1970s about the ongoing tensions in the Mideast, sparked by the Yom Kippur War in 1973 and the Arab oil embargo the following year. The biggest crowd of the 1974-75 season turned out to hear Shaul Ben-Haim, foreign editor of Israel's largest daily newspaper (Maariv), speak on war and peace in the Mideast. The speakers list during this stretch was also notable for drawing two top executives from privately held Twin Cities-based Cargill. The company had long focused on staying out of the public eye. But in 1972, the U.S. government, seeking to improve relations with the Soviets, eased restrictions on trade between the two countries. Cargill and other grain exporters then made huge sales to the Soviets. Critics charged that the sales, which were subsidized, unduly benefited the exporters. Controversy about these deals attracted widespread media attention, and became an issue in the presidential election campaign that year. In order to get its side of the story out, Cargill departed from its typical "no comment" stance to release details of its grain trading. In November, William Diercks, vice chairman of Cargill's board, addressed the Committee on "Selling to the Soviets." His talk drew the largest audience of that season. Bob White called the discussion one of the best in recent years. Two years later, another long-time Cargill executive, William Pearce, spoke to the Committee on "Trade and Food in 1975." Pearce had returned to Cargill in 1974, after serving for a year as the trade representative for the White House.

The Rise of Winston Lord

The emergence of Winston Lord as a power at the Council strengthened ties between the Council and the Committee. Lord's mother was a member of the Pillsbury family, which founded and built Minneapolis-based Pillsbury Co. into one of the largest grain millers in the world. He knew business leaders in the Twin Cities. Lord had accompanied Henry Kissinger to China in 1971, on a legendary trip that led to the normalizing of U.S.-China relations. In 1978, Lord spoke to the Committee on U.S.-China relations. That year, he succeeded Bayless Manning as president at the Council on Foreign Relations. In a letter to Lord shortly after he took over at the Council, White suggested that the Council sponsor conferences away from New York with the help of the Committees. Lord took up the idea, arranging such meetings in 1979 in San Francisco, 1980 in Denver and 1981 in Houston. In 1982, the Council and the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee chose the Hyatt-Regency Hotel in Minneapolis for such a meeting. The topic was U.S.-Soviet Relations, with panels on the Soviet Challenge, the U.S. Response and Poland. Admiral Bobby Inman, then the U.S. deputy director of central intelligence, delivered the keynote address. "This is another major step in our efforts to do more for both the Council and Committee members beyond the East Coast," Lord said in a letter inviting all of the Council's regional committee members to the meeting. More than 80 participants came, including many from across the country. Lord returned to speak to the Committee early in 1985, shortly before he left the Council to become the U.S. ambassador to China. He billed his talk as "A Strong Hand to Play: The Next Four Years in American Foreign Policy."

Indeed, the U.S. did gain the upper hand a few years later as the Soviet economy crumbled. Mikhail Gorbachev, who would soon draw large crowds of admirers on a visit to the Twin Cities, emerged to lead reform efforts. Dissidents flooded into the streets of Moscow and other Soviet bloc cities. The Berlin Wall came down. The dominos that fell turned out to be the Soviets' satellite nations in Eastern Europe. And by 1991, the Soviet Union itself would collapse. After nearly half a century, many argued that George Kennan's containment strategy generally had worked.

NEW WORLD DISORDER

The uneasy stability of the Cold War ended with the demise of the Soviet Union. Great expectations arose that the catastrophic threat of nuclear annihilation, so long a part of the faceoff between the

two major world powers, would give way to a cheery era marked by peace and prosperity. At first, that seemed to happen, but by the mid-1990s, things were getting messy. Ethnic and religious disputes and various forms of nationalism, pent up for decades, were surfacing once again. A confusing, ever-shifting patchwork of tensions, stretching from Somalia and Iraq to the Balkan Peninsula and the former Soviet states, replaced the more straight-forward grand strategies of a world with two big powers. The term "failed states" entered our everyday language.

The Committee's speakers mirrored the new complexities. In 1997-98, their topics included U.S. policy on landmines, diplomacy in the information age, managing Saddam Hussein, religion as the missing dimension in statecraft, economic sanctions as foreign policy and lessons from Latin America. The following year, speakers addressed the eurodollar, the global currency crisis, reviving Russia, the international criminal court and war in the Balkans. In 1999-2000, they dealt with U.S. relations with China and Russia, Eastern Europe, NAFTA, Y2K, the Japanese economy, the IMF and Colombia. The next year: U.S. intervention in Africa, globalization, stability in South Asia, genetically modified organisms, corporate responsibility and the Mideast.

Meanwhile, the Committee was adjusting to a major change in the way it got many of its speakers. In mid-1995, as the leadership of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Committee shifted from Bob White to Barbara Frey, the Council on Foreign Relations suddenly announced it was dropping its regional committees. Two years earlier, the Council had tapped Les Gelb to be its president. Gelb had strong credentials as a former State and Defense Department official and as a journalist at the New York Times. He led a reset, as the Council shifted its resources to study programs, endowed fellowships for high-powered scholars and a new push for a more diverse and younger membership.

The St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee on Foreign Relations, and all of its sister committees, no longer fit into the Council's strategy. Alton Frye, senior vice president, explained the move in a Council newsletter. "At the Council, as elsewhere, change is at once exciting and unsettling. In launching the innovations of the past two years, we have worked hard to energize, rather than debilitate, the Council's inner community and fraternal ties to other organizations. One of the hard calls has been the decision to phase out the Council's longtime role as programmer for the affiliated Committees on Foreign Relations. With more than a third of the Council members now spread across the country, it makes sense to concentrate on strengthening programs for our own nonresident members. Understandably, the decision was distressing to the Committees and to a number of Council members." But Frye went on to say that "instead of yielding to the distress," the committees responded in the most constructive way imaginable -- regrouping to form their own independent organization with financial assistance from the Council for transitional programming. "Thus," Frye wrote, "a painful choice has evoked a surge of vitality among an important network of leaders in many cities." A few months later, the Council hired a 27-year-old full-time press secretary to spread the word about its activities. It was a 180 degree turn from the secretive, keep-your-head-down stance that had been so deeply ingrained into its culture in earlier years.

The American Committees on Foreign Relations, the new organization created by the regional affiliates, moved quickly. It picked up on the speaker recruitment role of the Council, designed a cost-sharing arrangement with the committees and replaced the annual meeting the Council had convened in New York City with a yearly conference of its own in Washington. The ACFR also hired an executive director, opened a headquarters in Washington, sponsored study trips abroad, published a hard-copy newsletter, started an online news group, inaugurated a distinguished service award and created an endowment. It was adding regional committees, 33 by 2006 vs. 27 when it began operations. In 2000, the ACFR's newsletter described the organization as "the preeminent broker of international relations talent between the U.S. coasts." At that time, the St. Paul-Minneapolis Committee was experiencing a boom in membership that roughly paralleled the strong economy of the 1990s. Its 2000 roster listed 146 members, up from 101 in 1987-'88 and 102 at its

highest point in the 1970s (1978-'79). Then came the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in Manhattan and at the Pentagon.

AFTER 9/11

Much changed after the attacks. While many of the new uncertainties of the 1990s remained, anti-terrorism concerns and security measures muscled their way to the top of both foreign and domestic policy agendas. In May of 2002, the ACFR chose "The War on Terrorism and Beyond" as the theme for its first annual conference after the attacks. In the Twin Cities, the Committee scrambled to assemble a panel on terrorism for its September 2001 dinner after an out-of-town speaker was forced to cancel because security concerns prevented him from coming to Minnesota. The Committee went on to do three more programs on terrorism during its 2001-02 season and four more the following season. In the years to come, national security and anti-terrorism topics would become more common, but not to the extent that Cold War topics had prevailed earlier.

The Committee turned more often to speakers from universities, think tanks other than the Council and non-government organizations than it had during the years of its ties with the Council. It heard from China experts Kenneth Lieberthal and Harry Harding. Gillian Tett, the U.S. managing editor for the Financial Times, spoke on restoring credit after the financial meltdown. Journalist James Fallows talked about media coverage of the Iraq War. A few popular speakers came back for return engagements: Walter Mondale on the 2006 U.S. midterm elections; Adam Garfinkle, the editor of The American Interest journal, on "True or False: The World is Going to Hell in a Handbasket;" Rolf Willy Hansen, former Norwegian consul general in Minneapolis and later Norway's ambassador to Syria, on the wrenching conflict in Syria. Members heard from specialists on Russia, Iran and Iraq, Afghanistan, Mexico, Turkey, Russia, Pakistan, Mali, the United Kingdom, North Korea, India, Israel, Morocco and Indonesia. Topics became more wide-ranging and sometimes edgy: "Why America Is Such a Hard Sell," "Offshore Outsourcing: the Clash of Government and Business;" "Globalization and Global Poverty;" "Torture and U.S. Foreign Policy;" "Is War Necessary for Economic Growth?"

In 2002, Barbara Frey handed the leadership of the Committee off to Roger Prestwich, who had joined the faculty of the College of Management at Metropolitan State University to teach international business. Metropolitan State began providing secretarial support at no charge, and continued to do so until 2015.

Prestwich is a British native who holds a graduate degree in international relations from the University of Cambridge and masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Minnesota. He came to the Twin Cities from England in 1987, then worked for 12 years as director of the education outreach program at the Minnesota Trade Office.

Becoming Independent

As the first decade of the new millennium wound down, the economy tanked and the financial waters got rougher for the Committee, the ACFR and countless nonprofits across the country. Corporations, tightening their belts, had become less likely to pay their members' dues. The recession, deeper than any since the Depression, was making it harder for the Committee to retain and attract members who did pay their own dues. In 2010-11, the roster bottomed at 67 members. Plane fares for speakers and venue costs were rising. The ACFR, facing a growing deficit, was urgently seeking more financial support from the committees. In the spring of 2012, the ACFR escaped a possible shutdown by coming up with a less expensive business model. The reshaped organization offered new terms for getting speakers for the committees, but the deal didn't add up for the Committee.

Says Prestwich: "This placed us in a quandary because, while we valued the speaker services and travel support that the ACFR provided, we couldn't meet our own expenses after deducting the tithe that would be imposed by the ACFR. But then we realized that by removing our financial obligations to the ACFR, we could handle the expenses of bringing out-of-town speakers on our own and at the same time build up a reserve. Since we are in a large metropolitan area, we can find high-quality speakers here. And some of our members can help us land out-of-town speakers." Another factor: the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport has frequent flights with good connections to many cities. That makes it easier for speakers to get into and out of the area than to and from many of the other committee cities. Also, the Committee found that it has become easier to search for speakers today, by using the Internet, than ever before.

Weighing all of these factors, Committee leaders concluded it would be too expensive to sustain ties with the ACFR. In 2013-14, they dropped that affiliation to become a free-standing independent organization. The revamped ACFR has restored some of its former services. It continues today with 14 affiliates, all in metropolitan areas smaller than the Twin Cities region. Of course, the Council on Foreign Relations has continued as well, now with 4,900 members worldwide, a staff with much expertise and a mission to inform the public through Foreign Affairs and a wide variety of other print and online material. Today, many view the Council as the country's leading foreign affairs think tank, but much has changed there. As Peter Grose noted in his 1996 history of the Council, it is no longer unique in its purpose. Now many research institutions around the world analyze the changing global scene and its policy implications for their respective governments. Peter Grose credited them for publishing good journals "just as the lonely voice of Foreign Affairs set out to do 75 years ago." He added that the study and discussion groups the Council pioneered in the 1920s are now commonplace. The Council, once so renowned for its influence, focuses more on informing the public today.

Since 2011, the Minnesota Committee has launched its first-ever Web site, cut its dues and guest fees and built up its surplus. By mid-2015, its roster had rebounded to 95 members thanks to a spring recruiting drive that generated a 23 percent increase in membership. Its stronger financial situation has given it the flexibility to seek higher-quality speakers and consider new initiatives. "What has not changed is the enthusiasm and ability of members to engage in spirited, well-informed discussions with speakers," says Prestwich.

In 2014, the Committee asked members for feedback on its most recent speakers in a formal survey. Among the most highly rated: Rolf Willy Hansen, Norway's ambassador to Syria at the time, now to Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman; James Bamford, author of The Shadow Factory, who spoke on "The NSA: From No Such Agency to Not Secret Anymore;" John Adams and Theo Stavrou (both members of the Committee) on "Crisis in Ukraine: Some Geographic and Historic Perspectives;" and Barbara Slavin from the Atlantic Council on "Time to Play Chess, not Checkers, With Iran." Another popular program, just after the survey was taken: the Honorable John Tunheim, U.S. District Judge for Minnesota, on international rule of law projects.

In May of 2015, the Committee celebrated its 75th anniversary with David Cole, the George Mitchell professor of law and public policy at Georgetown University, as the speaker. Cole, also a litigator, teaches constitutional law, national security and criminal justice at Georgetown and writes frequently for the popular press and legal journals. He is frequently quoted on the challenge of striking a reasonable balance between democracy and security -- an appropriate topic to consider and a pivotal issue unlikely to go away anytime soon. As Prestwich notes: "We are now entering what will probably be another era of major U.S. international involvement in response to the threats of ISIL/ISIS and other terrorist organizations, new trade initiatives and developing security issues around the world. Our members need to be better informed about what has gone before in U.S. foreign relations, and what could lie ahead. We intend to achieve these objectives through our speaker programs, our networking and an enhanced website. The oft-quoted phrase 'to live in

interesting times,' relates to yesterday, today and tomorrow, and to gaining a better understanding of and appreciation for the ways the U.S. relates to the rest of the world. That's what the Minnesota Committee on Foreign Relations is all about."