

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Council members around the country fill my mind this year, particularly. Our Board of Directors and staff did me great honor in January with an evening I shall never forget—a dinner celebration of the first nationwide linking of our membership through videoconferencing based in our new meeting room called, yes, Peterson Hall.

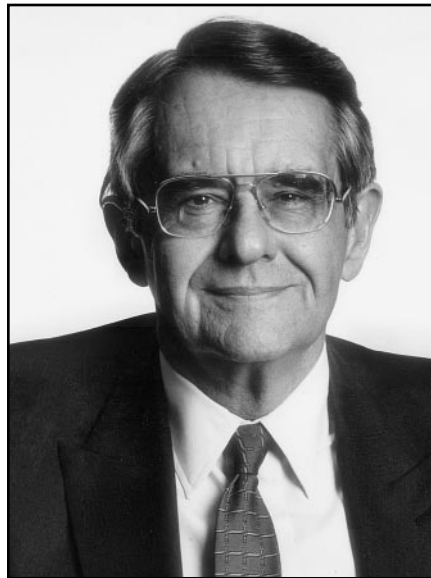
It was the kind of event only the Council on Foreign Relations seems able to stage. With our beloved Honorary Chairman David Rockefeller presiding, the following Secretaries of State, Council members all, glittered onto the video screen: George Shultz from San Francisco, James Baker from Houston, Warren Christopher from Los Angeles, Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance from New York, and Madeleine Albright from Washington. For good measure, President Clinton greeted us from Washington, Council Vice Chairman Hank Greenberg joined us from Hong Kong, and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan delivered the keynote address. All, as you would expect, did a splendid job of talking about new world challenges and opportunities and answering questions from our members. It demonstrated the quality discussions the Council, almost uniquely, can generate. It showed as well the technological possibilities now open to us for conversations among our members.

Permit me one aside here before I go on further about our national program. One of the evening's attendees who rose to roast me was Ted Sorensen, a very helpful Board Director, fellow Nebraskan, and good friend . . . well, sometimes. Ted could not resist calling attention to *Gray Dawn*, a book I recently wrote about the social economics of aging in America and around the world. Of that book, Ted commented, "Once you put it down, you won't be able to pick it up." Thanks, Ted.

The opening of new offices for Council Senior Fellows and the videoconference facility this year were a kind of dream come true, not just for me, but for the Board and everyone who works at the Council.

The debating and making of U.S. foreign policy used to be a New York thing a long time ago, and then it was mainly a Washington matter. But as the world turned more complicated and as an increasing number of interests asserted themselves, it became clear that a national dialogue would be needed to create a useful and coherent U.S. foreign policy. New voices around the country are demanding to be heard, and they ought to be heard because of their knowledge and importance in the new global economy. The Council

understands this need and is working hard to expand and engage its national membership. We have already used our videoconferencing capabilities to connect our study



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groups with members in key cities, and we also used it to incorporate George Shultz and Marty Feldstein into one of our Economic Commission meetings.

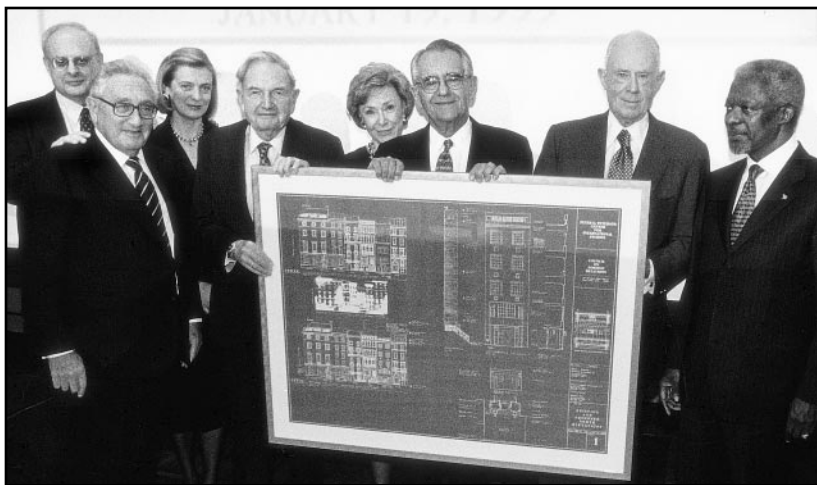
The Council now has more national members (i.e., members outside of New York and Washington) than in either New York or Washington. But we are not about to stop there. National membership now totals about 1,200, and the Board has agreed to increase that number by 500 over the next five years. As always, our new national members will be leaders of this country and will represent varied backgrounds, expertise, and political points of view.

Many of our members have been helping us to enlarge and improve our national membership and programming, but let me note a few who have made special efforts. I refer here to Linda Brady of the Sam Nunn School at Georgia Tech in Atlanta; Board Director Lee Cullum in Dallas, with support from Rebecca Mark in Houston; Board Directors Ken Dam and Mike Moskow in Chicago; and Warren Christopher and Peter Tarnoff in California. Also of importance is our expanding partnership with the Pacific Council on International Policy, ably led by Abe Lowenthal.

I call special attention as well to our annual National Conference. We started this enterprise four years ago, and it has grown stronger each time. Our theme this year was the global financial architecture. This theme fit perfectly with a prominent commission we established to examine the same subject. Board Director Carla Hills and I co-chaired this commission, and Morris Goldstein of the Institute for International Economics was its project director. We and our fellow commissioners used the opportunity of the National Conference to present our preliminary findings and recommendations. I think everyone felt there was a very good two-way exchange.

Special thanks go to Mike Peters, the Council's Senior Vice President and National Director, and to Irina Faskianos, the Deputy National Director, for the care and precision they brought to the proceedings. Even the meals weren't too bad!

Five years ago, Council President Les Gelb came to the Board with the proposal to transform the Council into a truly national organization—and to make this goal one of



President Leslie H. Gelb, Speaker Henry A. Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State, Nane Annan, President David Rockefeller, Joan Ganz Cooney, President Peter G. Peterson, Speaker Cyrus R. Vance, former U.S. Secretary of State, and Speaker Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, at the January 19, 1999, Peter G. Peterson Center for International Studies Inaugural Event.

our top three priorities, along with adding value to the foreign policy debate and nurturing the next generation of foreign policy leaders. The Board enthusiastically agreed and set to working with the staff through the Board's new committee on National Programs, headed by Director Bob Zoellick. At our Board meeting in June, we set the final stages of our strategy into motion—authorizing more national members, continued dinner seminar meetings around the country with our Senior Fellows, and more regular contact among all of us through our new website and videoconferencing facilities.

In the messages that follow, Hank Greenberg, my full partner in all that goes on at the Council, will tell you more about adding value to the policy debates through our Senior Fellows, and Les Gelb will bring you up to date on our programs for younger members. But I wanted to share with you my joy about our future as a national organization and about that night in January when, through videoconferencing, the Council had its first national dialogue.

Peter G. Peterson
Chairman of the Board