
LETTER *from the* CHAIRMAN

Since I first became a member of this institution in 1971, I have had the extraordinary privilege of seeing it develop in ways that I could not have imagined. As we approach the eighty-fifth anniversary of the Council's founding, I find it worthwhile to take stock—where we stand, what we once were, and what we aim to become.



Chairman Peter G. Peterson

Twenty years ago, the Council was primarily New York- and Washington-based, with a membership of just under 2,400. Today, it has increased to over 4,200 individuals across the nation. The Term Member Program consisted then of just 135 young men and women. Today, our valued term members number close to 500. Women and minority members have more than doubled.

In 1992, James F. Hoge Jr. joined *Foreign Affairs* as editor, where fourteen years later he continues his remarkable work leading the most influential magazine in the world concerned with U.S. foreign policy and international relations. Since the early 1980s, the circulation of *Foreign Affairs* has grown from 80,000 to more than 140,000, and the magazine now appears in Japanese, Spanish, and Russian versions.

In 1993, the Council welcomed Leslie H. Gelb to its presidency. During Les's tenure, the Council

developed exponentially. Among his biggest accomplishments: first, redefining the foreign policy community to include experts from the nongovernmental organization world, experts in health care, drugs, and the environment, younger people, and business leaders with direct experience abroad; and, second, putting the Council at the public center of the policy debates in the United States and helping to define what those debates should be.

In 1995, the Council's International Advisory Board was founded. Chaired by David Rockefeller, whose deep involvement with and commitment to the Council has been of immeasurable benefit, this distinguished group of international statesmen and business leaders helps invigorate international dialogue and provides international insights on the Council's programs and its strategic direction. This period also saw the establishment of the Harold Pratt Associates to recognize our most generous donors.

Programmatically, the Council continued to increase its work in New York and Washington, DC, while expanding the scope of its National Program. In 1996, the Council held its first National Conference, bringing together members from across the country for two days of activities at the Council's New York headquarters. This important milestone helped transform the Council into a truly national organization.

The Council's work in the twenty-first century has evolved to reflect the changing international and domestic landscape.

The launch of the Council's website, CFR.org, in 1997 is a prime example of efforts to develop the Council's technical capacity and outreach. Two years later brought the opening of the Center for International Studies, a new building that provides the Council with state-of-the-art technology and primary meeting space for both staff and members—a landmark expansion and enhancement of the Council's New York headquarters. In 1996, we celebrated the Council's seventy-fifth anniversary, an occasion highlighted by the endowment of several new chairs in the Studies Program and the publication of a history of the Council, *Continuing the Inquiry*. That history was reprinted this year, with a new foreword by President Richard N. Haass, to mark the Council's eighty-fifth anniversary.

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We are equally fortunate to have a most capable successor to Les, for much of the Council's recent success is due to the efforts of Richard N. Haass. In his three years at the Council, Richard has overseen many notable developments, including strengthening the Studies Program; the introduction of a series of Council Special Reports to supplement the work of the Council's Independent Task Force program; the redesign and improvement of the Council's web-



Vice Chairman Carla A. Hills



Vice Chairman Robert E. Rubin

site, CFR.org; and an expansion of the Council's outreach to new constituencies, something Richard details in his contribution to this annual report.

The Board of Directors continues its efforts to secure a new home for the Washington Program, a necessary step to enhance the Council's operations in our nation's capital. We are also in the initial phase of the Campaign for the Council, which will help us build the capacity and resources necessary to solidify a robust future for this organization. Over the past year we have worked hard on the leadership phase, and as we formally mark our eighty-fifth anniversary this fall, we will be sharing more good news regarding this campaign.

Lastly, I would like to extend my deep thanks to the other members of the Board of Directors and to our committed and talented vice chairmen, Carla A. Hills and Robert E. Rubin. We bid a fond farewell and warm thanks to departing directors Jeffrey L. Bewkes and Lee Cullum. We welcome new directors Colin L. Powell and Christine Todd Whitman, and look forward to working closely with them in the years to come.

Peter G. Peterson
Chairman of the Board