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Co-organized by the Council on Faith & International Affairs at the Institute for Global Engagement
The three events are part of a broader project on the Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy within the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs. The program addresses the impact of religion on the foreign policies of key states around the world, placing the U.S. case in an international context. Its key components include new undergraduate and graduate courses and symposia that bring together scholars and policy experts around emergent issues, such as the mobilization of religious groups around foreign policy, the intersection between religion, migration, and foreign policy, and the politics of international religious freedom.

**FACULTY LEADER**

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### SYMPOSIUM: October 10, 2008

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- **David Saperstein**, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
- **William L. Saunders, Jr.**, Family Research Council
- **William Schulz**, Center for American Progress
- **Chris Seiple**, Institute for Global Engagement
- **Mark Silk**, Leonard Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life
Introduction

The year 2008 marked the tenth anniversary of a landmark piece of legislation—the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Act, the product of a vigorous two-year debate. Initially opposed by the Clinton administration, the bill was challenged as unnecessary, too religion-centered, or an illicit example of American unilateralism. In the end, however, the IRF Act passed unanimously, backed by a broad coalition of faith-based and human rights groups. Their argument—that America’s “first freedom” was universal in scope and deserved worldwide emphasis in U.S. foreign policy—won the day. Still, some at home and abroad predicted that the initiative was problematic and would mire U.S. foreign policy in the troublesome, divisive subject of religion. Others condemned it as a species of American cultural imperialism.

Who was right? What were the real goals of the law and what was its true potential? How was the new IRF bureaucracy handled in the Clinton and Bush White Houses, respectively, and in their State Departments? How has U.S. IRF policy performed during its first decade? How has the policy been perceived abroad, especially in the lands of Islam? What lessons can be derived from the past ten years and what recommendations can be made for the future? For example, has the policy been too focused on a rhetorical condemnation of religious persecution? Can the IRF initiative be employed more effectively in U.S. democracy promotion, counter-terrorism and public diplomacy strategies? Can it be retooled to counter the enduring charge that it is a front for American missionaries and designed to undermine majority religious communities abroad? Is American diplomacy guilty of a tendency to overlook religion and, if so, what is to be done?

To answer these and other questions, the Berkley Center convened three symposia during 2008 at Georgetown University, co-sponsored by the Council on Faith and International Affairs of the Institute of Global Engagement. A series of other co-sponsors joined us to welcome scholars, U.S. and foreign officials, leaders in the fields of religious freedom and human rights, journalists, legal experts, activists and others to participate in a wide ranging discussion about the origins, promise, performance and future of America’s International Religious Freedom policy.

What follows is a distillation of an incredibly rich series of contributions made by panelists from across the spectrum of American politics, religion, and intellectual life, as well as participants from abroad (see the list of contributors, and other publications that have included their papers, at the end of this publication). Indeed, this volume is suggestive of a phrase once used by the great American Jesuit theologian and political philosopher, John Courtney Murray, in describing America’s religious pluralism: they are examples of “creeds at war intelligibly” within a canopy of civil discourse. As such, they are a tribute to the American system of religious freedom.
Religious Freedom as Understood and Practiced in America

Allen Hertzke, University of Oklahoma

In a genuine sense, religious liberty is the “first freedom” in the American canon. Not only is the struggle for religious freedom woven throughout American history, but the first clause of the Bill of Rights enshrined its protection in the Constitution. The First Amendment embodied over a century of struggle and experimentation in the colonies. And it represented a dramatic break from fourteen centuries of European practice by prohibiting an official state church and simultaneously protecting religious “free exercise” from state harassment.

In attempting to capture the significance of this, scholars have described the United States as creating the first “free marketplace” of religion in the modern world. Here churches and other houses of worship are genuine voluntary societies, anchors of civil society. Dependent on the support of members and the entrepreneurial energies of leaders, they thrive in ways not seen in other developed nations. Homegrown sects combine with immigrant faiths to produce a dizzying pluralism and vitality. By every measure, religious adherence in the United States is robust.

While American denominations must compete for the faithful in this marketplace, all have a stake in a system that protects their freedom to operate. Diverse faiths in America, consequently, are deeply predisposed to support the protection of religious freedom, both at home and abroad. In other words, no First Amendment, no IRF Act.

Another crucial dimension of the American religious consciousness reflects a view of church-state relations quite distinct from many European societies. Seared by the memory of devastating religious wars, many Europeans see religion as a divisive “problem” and thus something not to be celebrated or promoted. In the U.S., religion is widely viewed as a positive societal force—a seedbed of morality, civic virtue, and cooperative norms.

Ruth Wedgwood, Johns Hopkins University

Now we have been an establishment country for quite some time. The Congregationalist church in the state of Connecticut did not get disestablished until 1819 or 1820. And the history of why people immigrated to different states has a lot to do with religion. Presbyterians were happy in New Jersey. Episcopalians liked North Carolina and South Carolina. Congregationalists liked Connecticut, and nobody liked the Quakers. Jews were kind of scattered around. Religious schism and intolerance was very much afoot in the early days of the republic, and the First Amendment was really just an agreement to let the states deal with it, and to avoid it at a national level. We weren’t going to have a national church, even if we might have had state churches at the time. So I think the evolution of the 20th century as a more open, tolerant, inclusive space is perhaps more delicate a phenomenon than one wishes to acknowledge and this might explain reluctance to address these issues.
States came not as a cherished gift handed down from one grateful and far-seeing generation to the next, but as the result of many contentious struggles. Some of the advances came through the efforts of religious groups that, like the Jehovah’s Witnesses in the 1930s and 1940s, used the courts to help bring themselves within the laws protections. Some secular groups, such as the ACLU, also used the courts to argue that government officials should not be permitted to use the authority of the state to promote religious beliefs. Ultimately, it was not until the 1960s that many separate factors (both at home and abroad) coalesced to create the assumptions that give the U.S. its present aspect of being a country that protects religious freedom.

Jennifer Marshall, The Heritage Foundation

The American model of religious liberty, in combination with its thriving religious culture, is unique in the world. These features characterize and sustain the American order as much as our democratic political system or market economy. The American constitutional order produced a constructive tension between church and state—not a radical separation. One of the major reasons for the success of the American experiment is that it reconciled the dual authorities of religion and secular government, balancing citizens’ dual allegiances to God and to earthly authorities without forcing believers to abandon or to compromise (or “to moderate”) their primary loyalty to God. The habit of not only reconciling civil and religious authorities but also harmonizing the interests of competing religious groups helped to fortify the discipline of self-government.

Jeremy Gunn, American Civil Liberties Union

Americans often imagine that their country was founded by people who came to its shores in search of religious freedom, and who then passed it down from generation to generation. As with other myths, there is a recognizable sliver of truth in this one. Many European settlers did come in pursuit of religious freedom, though it was a freedom that they sought for themselves rather than a principle that they wished to establish for all. Many—perhaps most—of the seventeenth century settlers came in pursuit of wealth rather than religious freedom. The Puritans of Massachusetts, who fled Europe in pursuit of the freedom to worship, immediately enacted laws to expel and even execute those who did not share their particular religious beliefs, including Quakers, Catholics, and Native Americans. A hundred years later, at the time the U.S. Constitution was adopted, the majority of states enforced laws that restricted Catholics from full participation in the political process. While in America there were some fledgling attempts to promote religious freedom as a principle, as in Rhode Island and briefly in Pennsylvania and Maryland, the more typical pattern was for majorities to enact laws to promote some religious beliefs and to discriminate against others. As late as the 1940s, Jehovah’s Witnesses were actively persecuted in the streets of the country in part because of their belief that they should pledge allegiance to God rather than to a flag. Profound societal prejudices against Catholics and Jews persisted into the 1960s.

The religious freedom that is now enjoyed in the United States came not as a cherished gift handed down from one grateful and far-seeing generation to the next, but as the result of many contentious struggles. Some of the advances came through the efforts of religious groups that, like the Jehovah’s Witnesses in the 1930s and 1940s, used the courts to help bring themselves within the laws protections. Some secular groups, such as the ACLU, also used the courts to argue that government officials should not be permitted to use the authority of the state to promote religious beliefs. Ultimately, it was not until the 1960s that many separate factors (both at home and abroad) coalesced to create the assumptions that give the U.S. its present aspect of being a country that protects religious freedom.
that of most countries. Just as it is taking some other countries now, it took years and years for us to break out of insular religious communities—Puritans, Anglicans, Baptists, Quakers, whatever—to overcome hostility and suspicion, and to adopt the Constitution and the First Amendment. For most of our history, there was a robust presence of religious people in the public square and I think that was all to the good. One need only recall the abolitionist movement, child welfare laws, labor reforms, etc., to understand that the religious perspective was an important part of the public dialogue.

The fundamental principle of our system is accommodation of religion. It is seen as a good thing that contributes to the common good. Our particular legal doctrines of church/state separation are acknowledged by nearly all scholars and judges as a mess, and they need not be a model for our understanding of how other nations should organize themselves. I would note in this regard while establishment of any particular religion is forbidden by our constitution, it is not so under international law. However under international standards, if one religion is established, others must not be discriminated against.

Abdolkarim Soroush, Georgetown University

Especially in Europe, freedom of religion was a response to religious intolerance: persecution and religious wars among different sections of Christianity, particularly Protestantism and Catholicism. Thinkers, politicians, statesmen, and citizens in all walks of life came to a common conclusion that perhaps we have to leave this situation of intolerance and anti-religious sentiments. Christianity and the institutional Church became weaker and weaker. That was due to many causes: religious wars and friction, a conflict between science and religion, and other reasons. Therefore, religious freedom came along with a form of religious weakness. I would like to argue that it was not a virtue that the thinkers in Europe and philosophers came to the conclusion that there should be a freedom of religion, that there should be tolerance in religion—it was already there. When religion is no longer powerful, you can tolerate it, you can declare it a religion. It is thus not altogether a virtue to tolerate something which has become virtually harmless, which is powerless, which does not cause harm to you. Religious freedom was not a virtue per se. It was the offspring of the situation in Europe. Of course, then it was imported to America …

William Saunders, Family Research Council

… [O]n a practical level the U.S.’s experience with religious freedom will largely shape how we understand the obligations of IRF Act [and] the meaning of religious freedom itself … By and large I think that is a very good thing because I think the American experience parallels that of most countries. …

David Saperstein, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

[T]he U.S. System … is comprised of … no religious test for office, and the free exercise clause (the notion that religious freedom, the right to freely exercise our religion, is a fundamental right) … [T]here are many promises in our aspirational documents and founding
the notion of separation of church and state took on a primary purpose of protecting the state from religion. In America where we didn't have that history, it much more took on a notion of a wall of separation that would end up protecting religion from the state.

Now there's a great deal of debate in the academic literature regarding the extent to which the two-prongs of the first amendment are self-sufficient, free-standing, equally important prongs or whether one is subordinate to the other and whether the separation of church and state is an end in itself or only a means for religious freedom. But one thing seems to me to be clear about the American experience: the wall between church and state is a one-way wall; it primarily restrains government. It does little to restrain religious individuals or religious groups. Further, it is precisely that wall that has kept government out of religion, that has protected religion, allowed it to develop with a robust strength in power in America, unmatched anywhere in the democratic world today. Far, far more people regularly go to worship, far more people believe in God, far more people hold religious values central to their lives. Of the democratic countries of the world only India and Ireland come close to where the United States is on this. Most other democratic countries that have government preferred, sponsored, established religions have seen religions significantly weaken.

And in terms of the promise of free exercise, as one of those pantheons of fundamental rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights, the way the American system developed, this was not a right like other rights. The rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights required the government not to state any state interest, but a compelling state interest, a compelling state interest being something more than just an important interest, an interest of the first order. And that when the government went to pursue that interest, it would do so in a manner that had the least restrictive impact on the exercise of your basic right, whether it was freedom of speech, freedom of publication, assembly, petition the government for redress of grievances or free exercise of religion. …

And then of course there is separation of church and state. It began as a way to protect both religion and state. In Europe, where there was a continuation of wars fought for religious causes or with religious overtones, constitutional documents that were not fulfilled for generations. But if you look at the arc of American history, it moved more with all the ebbs and flows including decades of state establishments and religious tests for offices after the Constitution was passed and Article 6 was implemented at a national level. Nonetheless, history brought us more and more to that point where there was a robust promise of religious freedom and for those of us who are part of religious minorities, nowhere in our history have we known more freedoms, more opportunities than we have here in the United States because of the scheme that by the 1940s was becoming the norm in American life.
The Importance of International Laws and Norms

Allen Hertzke, University of Oklahoma

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the United States took the lead in developing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, passed by the United Nations in 1948. Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the U.N. committee that drafted the declaration, which included Article 18 on religious freedom, which states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.”

This document was followed by almost identical language in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Since virtually all of the globe’s nations are signatories to the Universal Declaration and subsequent covenants, U.S. officials can legitimately claim that they are not attempting to impose “our values” on the rest of the world. Rather, in implementing IRF Act, the United States is merely calling upon other nations to live up to the covenants that they have ratified.

During the Cold War, the denial of religious freedom was a subtext of relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. In the 1970s, the cause of Soviet Jewry captured the attention of both Jews and many Christian groups. Together they successfully backed the Jackson-Vanik Act that tied normalized trade relations to the freedom of Jews (and others) to emigrate from the Soviet Union. Similarly, the Helsinki Accords of 1975 tied territorial sovereignty of the Soviet Union to advancements in human rights, including religious freedom. Advocates who backed religious freedom legislation in 1998 took inspiration from these measures, which were seen as opening cracks in the Iron Curtain and buoying those persecuted for their faith.

William Saunders, Family Research Council

It is interesting that the two chief examples of religious freedom guarantees are international, one in a treaty, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and one in a non-treaty, a “declaration,” that is, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Both protect religious freedom robustly. Religious freedom is, for example, one of a very few rights that cannot be impinged, even in wartime, under the ICCPR.

The UDHR and ICCPR are very similar, though not identical. The ICCPR permits some limits on “manifesting” religion “as are prescribed by law and necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.” However, though those conditions might suggest great leeway for the government of, say, a majority religion to infringe religious freedom, the Human Rights Committee (not
a judicial but an advisory body) advises that the right to limit the manifestation of religious belief should be very strictly construed by governments.

In fact, the Human Rights Committee supports a very robust understanding of religious freedom, particularly in its General Comment 22. Regarding what at least semantically is a difference between the UDHR and the ICCPR—that is, that the right to change one’s religion is express in the first but not the second—the Human Rights Committee interprets the right under the ICCPR to “have” a religion of one’s choice to include, and by necessity, the right to change that choice.

To the extent anything has become “customary international law” through adherence by the nations of the world over decades, it would be the UDHR. Most everyone who works in the human rights area would say that it sets the standard—the ICCPR was in fact designed to put it into effect. So one could argue that its terms, if more generous on religious freedom, ought to govern our understanding of what international law requires.

Jeremy Gunn, American Civil Liberties Union

Whatever unilateral influence the United States might have with regard to military and economic matters, it does not command immediate respect from others with regard to religion. Thus its wish to promote religious freedom would best be enhanced by working cooperatively with other countries that have corresponding interests, particularly Norway, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, and through the latter two, the European Union. At this point a concerted effort by the European Union to promote religious freedom in, for example, Kazakhstan, is more likely to be successful than unilateral steps taken or proposed by the United States.

It is better to promote “freedom of religion or belief” rather than “freedom of religion.” There are two major reasons for this. The first is that because the international norm is already accepted as the formulation, it is less to raise the very suspicions that need to be overcome: that the United States really is attempting to promote American-style religion rather than attempting to promote a recognized human freedom. The second reason is that when countries identify “religion” as the protected right at issue (rather than the protection of “religion or belief”), it often follows that there is an attempt to define “religion” in a restrictive way that excludes those religious groups that are not part of the history and traditions of that country. Some European countries in the past have created lists of so-called “sects and cults” that are excluded from the protections of religious freedom. Rather than debate whether Baptists, or Mormons, or Scientologists, or Buddhists, or non-believers, or Jehovah’s Witnesses are truly “religions,” it is better to say argue that they should be protected regardless of how one chooses to define “religion.”
The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 was a hard-fought legislative battle between advocates who wanted a policy with real teeth and advocates who argued that quiet diplomacy would best advance the cause of religious freedom. How did IRF Act develop and evolve legislatively? What did the bill establish and mandate?

Nina Shea, Hudson Institute

Incensed that reports of persecution were habitually ignored by the American foreign policy establishment, the movement including Members of Congress, activists, and religious leaders of various faiths coalesced around what became known as the Wolf-Specter bill. Introduced in Congress on September 8, 1997 by Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA) as H.R. 2431, this bill was the catalyst for the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRF Act). Without Wolf-Specter and the grassroots movement behind it, there would have been no International Religious Freedom Act.

A crystallizing moment for this movement was at a Washington summit on worldwide religious persecution for American religious leaders, organized in January 1996 by Michael Horowitz and me. At the summit, the National Association of Evangelicals, a membership organization of over 42,000 congregations, released a Statement of Conscience. In it, the group solemnly pledged “to do what is within our power to the end that the government of the United States will take appropriate action to combat the intolerable religious persecution now victimizing fellow believers and those of other faiths.”

This marked the beginning of the broad, faith-based mobilization that was able to overcome a decade of inertia and even active opposition on religious freedom issues by foreign policy makers. The backbone of this movement was foremost defined by those in attendance—100 key evangelical leaders, including Chuck Colson, Richard Cizik, Richard Land, Don Argue, Janet Parshall, Gary Bauer, Ravi Zacharias, and many others. Its success depended on churches taking action. A faith-based grassroots mobilization was the only hope for the besieged religious believers abroad. The goal was to defend persons persecuted for their religious beliefs—Christians, but also Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, Baha’is, traditional African believers, and many others.

Laura Bryant Hanford

The first seeds of IRF Act were sown in the late 1980s on Capitol Hill, where a handful of congressmen and senators and their staff, including Senators Richard Lugar and Don Nickles, and Congressmen Frank Wolf, Chris Smith, Tony Hall, and Tom Lantos, shared a deep concern for victims of religious persecution abroad and led various endeavors to relieve their plight. In 1987, John Hanford joined the staff of Senator Lugar as the first full-time U.S. government advocate on behalf of religious believers, mobilizing bi-partisan Congressional and government initiatives. Other members of Congress
 joined these efforts, including Senators Sam Nunn, Dan Coats, and Joe Lieberman, and Congressmen Tom DeLay, Joe Pitts, and Bob Clement.

General awareness and attention to the issue of religious persecution abroad, particularly persecution of Christians, was limited. Outside Capitol Hill, in the late 1980s Washington boasted only two or three NGOs fully dedicated to religious freedom work, in addition to a handful of NGOs addressing a wider range of issues, such as Nina Shea’s Puebla Institute, and Kent Hill and Diane Knipper’s Institute for Religion and Democracy, which both grew to focus increasingly on religious freedom. Over the next few years, to these were added Christian Solidarity International, the late Steve Snyder’s International Christian Concern, Ann Buwalda’s Jubilee Campaign and Just Law International, Sam Ericsson’s Advocates International, Joseph Grieboski’s Institute for Religion and Public Policy, and other long-standing advocates such as Lauren Homer, Keith Roderick, and Stan DeBoe, to name but a few. Several religious organizations were focusing on the issue as well, including World Evangelical Fellowship, Kit Bigelow with the Bahá’ís, Jere Skipper and Tom Hart with the Episcopal Church, and the U.S. Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church.

In the mid-1990s, Hudson Institute scholar Michael Horowitz became aware of Christian persecution worldwide and began to raise the profile of the issue. Momentum also increased in Congress, as twin resolutions were passed in the House and Senate in September 1996, entitled “Condemning the Persecution of Christians Worldwide.” Also during the mid-1990s, the World Evangelical Fellowship sponsored the first International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church; the National Association of Evangelicals issued a Statement of Conscience on religious persecution; numerous meetings and conferences on religious persecution were held in Washington; and the State Department issued a report on Christian persecution and recommendations by its new Advisory Committee on International Religious Freedom.

Writing legislation, debating it in Congress

Nina Shea, Hudson Institute

Personal conviction, not electoral politics, led Congressman Frank Wolf to introduce the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act in 1997, usually referred to as “Wolf-Specter.” Wolf had been seared by memories of his visits with Jewish refusniks in Perm 35 prison camp in the Soviet Urals and with Pentecostals serving time in Siberia. He had been a congressional leader on issues concerning Sudan, China, and many other religious persecution hot spots that he had personally visited.

The bill aimed to institutionalize concern for religious persecution in American foreign policy making. It aimed to do this through the automatic cutoff of non-humanitarian assistance to countries determined to be religious persecutors by an “Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring” within the administration. By relying mainly on State Department human rights reports, the office was to identify and report on governments that
actively engaged in or passively allowed the “abduction, enslavement, killing, imprisonment, forced mass resettlement, rape or crucifixion or other forms of torture” of “persons because of their membership in or affiliation with a religion or religious denomination, whether officially recognized or otherwise.” Such a designation then was to trigger a mandatory cutoff of non-humanitarian assistance, a U.S. veto of non-humanitarian assistance and loans at multinational organizations, and “smart sanctions” targeted to ban the export of “persecution facilitating products” and all exports to the offending government’s precise “persecuting entity.” Under the legislative scheme, these automatic measures could be waived by the President for national security reasons, but only with explicit justification.

The House bill, which was amended several times, had a number of miscellaneous other provisions, including one facilitating asylum for religious refugees, others on training for State Department and immigration officials, and another extensive section, eventually stripped out under trade pressure, to institutionalize and expand sanctions against the government of Sudan much like the sanctions against apartheid South Africa.

It is important to note that from its introduction in the House, Wolf-Specter applied to all who were persecuted. Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, Jews, Bahá’ís, and Hindus were some of those explicitly mentioned in the “findings” section of the original bill. The debate outside Congress quickly became acrimonious, and the bill immediately faced fierce opposition from the Clinton Administration, the foreign policy establishment, and a massively-funded trade lobby. Ultimately, a different bill—the Senate’s version—was accepted by Congressman Wolf on the final day of the Congressional session and became the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

Laura Bryant Hanford

In the spring of 1997, Michael Horowitz proposed the “Freedom From Religious Persecution Act” (FFRPA or “Wolf-Specter”) to Congressman Wolf for sponsorship. There was some discussion of the draft, and a few changes. Congressman Wolf stated that others were welcome to bring forward alternatives, but that he wanted to proceed without delay. He and Senator Arlen Specter introduced FFRPA in May of 1997. While the bill languished in the Senate, in the House Congressman Wolf’s human rights record won the support of numerous members … and many evangelical and conservative groups with whom he had close relationships.

It is difficult to convey just how inextricably the FFRPA debate and the emergence of an alternative bill were tied to the personalities, alliances, and tactics involved …. There are numerous reasons why the bill stalled in the Senate, but among them were weaknesses in Wolf-Specter itself. Many felt that FFRPA was both too blunt an instrument and too narrow in scope—likely never to be implemented because of its automatic, uncalibrated sanctions, yet paradoxically holding the potential to wreak havoc if its measures were imposed with no regard to context, likelihood of success, or potential backlash.
Some of us had concluded that the bill was so deeply flawed it would be difficult to fix. Yet the political reality was that if we were genuinely concerned and believed other measures would be more effective, we would have to provide a viable alternative.

The effort to produce such a bill was led by John Hanford and included William Inboden, on staff with Congressman DeLay, and myself. Later, we were joined by Steve Moffitt from the staff of Senator Nickles, who was to become the bill’s lead sponsor, along with Senator Lieberman … In March of 1998, Senator Nickles and Senator Lieberman introduced the International Religious Freedom Act. The Act established:

• An Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom at the State Department, heading an Office of International Religious Freedom, and invested with the authority to negotiate with offending governments.
• An Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, covering every country in the world and including, for accountability, a description of U.S. measures taken to address violations of religious freedom. To ensure more objective reporting, we did not attach consequences to the reporting per se.
• Definitions of religious freedom and its violations firmly based on international statutes and existing U.S. law, thus enabling us not only to widen the scope of the bill to all countries, but to prevail over bitter objection.
• Requirements for action in every violator country and an annual review and designation of the worst violators as “Countries of Particular Concern” (CPCs). In every country violating religious freedom, the President was to take action from a menu of 13 measures, to be calibrated to the offense and context. For CPCs the President was limited to the more severe actions. These designations, bitterly fought by IRF Act’s opponents, served to force a decision at the highest levels, generating action from the U.S. and leverage abroad.
• Escalating leverage and binding agreements. Drawing on a process proven effective in redressing trade violations, we created several stages for negotiation and leverage. One of IRF Act’s most innovative measures was to try in a human rights context the concept of a binding agreement to stop the offending behavior. If such an agreement were reached and implemented, sanctions would not be imposed.
• The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) to make independent recommendations to the President and Congress.
• Training and guidelines for foreign service officers, asylum and refugee officers, interpreters, and immigration judges.
• Positive measures to promote religious freedom, including awards for foreign service officers, visitor exchanges, broadcasting, and others.

Allen Hertzke, University of Oklahoma

While all activists believed in the promotion of international religious freedom, the legislative battle revealed conflicts over how to best do that. Indeed, two competing visions emerged. One view, generally shared by advocates of the original House bill, Wolf-Specter, sought a tough and blunt remedy. The idea was to expose, shame, and potentially punish nations that violate the rights of religious believers. Wolf-Specter focused on egregious persecution, not mere discrimination. It also mandated automatic sanctions, unless the President publicly waived them. The automatic triggering of sanctions reflected a lack of trust in routine diplomacy.

The other view, embodied in Nickles-Lieberman (the Senate bill that became the basis for the final legislation), focused on the broad promotion of religious freedom. It created a new State Department Office on International Religious Freedom and mandated an annual report on the status of religious freedom in every country. Crucially, it involved a more calibrated set of responses than Wolf-Specter and envisioned quiet diplomacy as one of the primary tools of implementation.

Intriguingly, these contrasting visions did not conform to traditional partisan or theological divisions. Indeed, the fierce and at times bitter intramural struggle between advocates of the two bills involved competing teams of Christian evangelicals, among others. Owing to the Madisonian wizardry of the congressional system, the final legislation embodied elements of both visions. In particular, a provision in Nickles-Lieberman creating a U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was strengthened by Wolf-Specter partisans to provide the body with a separate budget that made it truly independent of the State Department.
broadly subscribed to the secularization thesis. Traceable to the Enlightenment, widely shared by western intellectuals over the ensuing two and a half centuries, predominant among American intellectual, cultural, and political elites by about the 1920s, the thesis claims that religion is becoming extinct at the hands of economic development, technological and scientific progress, and autonomous reason. Translated into American foreign policy, the secularization thesis means that religion in global politics is either irrelevant or a remnant—that is, an archaic, irrational, and often violent force that must be tamed.

Philip Gordon, The Brookings Institution

It is true that the major schools of international relations theory have not focused on religion. Realists tend to focus on states and their desire for power and security, not individual beliefs. Liberal internationalists believe in the individual desire for prosperity and freedom and the natural human tendency toward cooperation rather than conflict, regardless of faith. Neoconservatives insist that all people can benefit from freedom and democracy if given the chance; to the extent they focus on religion at all, it is on the notion that fundamentalist Islam results from the lack of freedom—all the more reason, they argue, to use American power to promote democracy. Marxists were in fact the international relations theorists who focused the most on religion, which they saw primarily as a mechanism of social control and a means for suppressing class consciousness.

Religion has not been a major factor in the study of international relations primarily because it has not
been the leading cause of war and peace—the central concern of the study of international relations—since the 17th century. To simplify greatly, the 18th century was dominated by monarchism; the monarchs may have had religious affiliations, but they were driven by power, glory, and the search for security far more than by any beliefs. In the 19th century, nationalism was the driving force; state formation and competition between nation-states explained the dynamics of war and peace from Napoleon through the First World War. In the 20th century, secular ideology took over as the main fault line between major (super) powers. Neither the broadly secular capitalist West nor the virulently anti-religious Communist East was motivated primarily by religion. The world wars of the 20th century were not religious wars, and religion has played little role in their study. Not surprisingly, then, scholars who have been trained to study international relations have devoted most of their attention to these broad forces that have shaped the past three centuries.

Joshua Muravchik

[For many years international relations was dominated by realism, epitomized by] Hans Morgenthau’s, The Power Amongst Nations, summed up as politics operates according to laws, which are impervious to our wishes. This is an essential idea of realism, that politics is somehow, especially politics amongst nations, derived from imperatives that grow out of the size and geographic positions of the various states, and each state has its innate interest arising from its size and geographic position, and therefore nothing that the inhabitants of that country thinks is of any impact whatsoever. If you believe that, then it is quite apparent why you would not think how people worship or how intensely they worship matters.

Realism dominated the field for a couple of decades and then when I was a student it got put aside for behaviorism, which was a useful criticism of realism in that it was empirical where as Morgenthau never quite explained where it was these laws came from. But the problem with behaviorism is its emphasis on empiricism, which is that aimed to make the study of international relations as rigorous as the study of physics or chemistry and therefore was interested in focusing on areas in which you could do experiments on countless things. And if your framework for studying politics is things you can count, I think you are likely to pay a limited amount of attention on how people worship. Of course you can count how many Christians and Jews and Muslims there are, but in my view you cannot readily count some of the most important things. [Third], to top this off there has been a neglect of this subject. I feel extremely confident in saying that the largest number of academics in this field are themselves agnostics or atheists or people for whom religious faith is not a central part of their lives.

What changes in the world challenged this indifference to religion among scholars?

Philip Gordon, The Brookings Institution

One could argue that the 1970s marked an important turning point. In the West, a crisis in capitalism after decades of successful material pursuit apparently led
modernization would lead to secularism. That certainly seems to have been the case in Western Europe, but the process of modernization can also have the opposite effect of promoting religious belief—especially in the conservative Muslim world. Modernization challenges and disorients many people in traditional societies, leading them to turn to the familiar and the reassuring, which can often be found in religion. In other words, scholars have not focused on religion as a major factor in international affairs, because it has not been one until recently. Now it is time to catch up.

For ten years the United States has had a formal policy of promoting religious freedom abroad. What is your own critique of U.S. IRF policy, including its strengths and weaknesses? In particular, how should the next administration strengthen that policy?

Laura Bryant Hanford

The combined influence of IRF Act’s wide range of provisions is impossible to fully measure. Yet reports from around the world indicate their impact has been substantial, including in the following areas:

- The Annual Reports have become the gold standard for religious freedom reporting. In addition to the solidarity conveyed to embattled victims around the world, they serve as a springboard for negotiations with host governments and as evidence in refugee or asylum adjudications.
- The critical significance of the Ambassador at Large

many to begin looking for something else in their lives. A deeply religious president, Jimmy Carter, seemed to embody a national desire for redemption after the “sins” of Vietnam and Watergate. In the East, Communism was clearly failing—many in Eastern Europe had turned to the Church as the one place where they could assemble and organize without being under the control of the detested state. This movement was spurred on by the election of a Polish Pope in 1978.

Religion took on even greater political importance in the postcolonial situations in Africa, South Asia, and especially in the Middle East around the same time. In the Middle East, the independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s were driven by secular Arab nationalism. That model began to fail visibly; the 1967 Six Day War revealed its deficiencies in the eyes of the Arab world. Having seen the failure of colonialism and then secular nationalism, many Muslims turn to religion—to Islam—as “the Answer.” In Iran, this led to Ayatollah Khomeini replacing the corrupt Shah in 1979, and in Egypt it was manifested by the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists, including the assassins of Anwar Sadat in 1981. In Afghanistan, with Western support, religion was tapped to help motivate anti-Soviet Mujaheddin; their victory over the godless Soviets led many Muslims to believe that religion could deliver in a way that a secular system could not.

Finally, modernization and globalization of late 20th century seems to have contributed to the role of religion in international affairs—at least, or especially, in the Muslim world. For years, scholars believed that
issue in the public eye and offering a perspective independent of official U.S. policy.
• Asylum and refugee adjudications have benefited from more accurate information and better training in religious freedom issues.
• Positive measures are making inroads into perceptions through visitor exchanges, dialogues, and other programs.

The task is still immense and daunting. Yet IRF Act’s mechanisms and structure will continue to ensure the issue is addressed at a level unthinkable a decade ago, and countless religious believers today enjoy a greater measure of freedom as a result. There has been a sea change.

Philip Gordon, The Brookings Institution

IRF Act, now in place for ten years, has arguably helped bring attention to the cause of religious freedom around the world. By focusing on repression of religion and bringing it to the attention of the U.S. government, it has encouraged Washington to exert pressure on other countries that may have led to the release of some prisoners of conscience, or deterred cases of religious repression. At the same time, IRF Act has also suffered from some of the problems critics identified from the time of its passage. One problem with the concept of a specific Act and bureaucracy designed to promote religious freedom is that it suggests a hierarchy of freedoms, with religious freedom placed above other important rights, such as press free-
freedom, women’s rights, minority rights, and free speech. Does the creation of a separate law, office, and ambassadorship not imply that these other freedoms are of secondary importance to the United States? Shouldn’t the consideration of how to use pressure, sanctions, or other forms of political leverage take all these freedoms into account? How should the United States balance the need to defend freedom of religion with the need to defend the principle of freedom from religion—as when strict Islamic rule is enforced on secularists who would prefer not to practice it, in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, or elsewhere?

A second, and arguably growing, problem of IRF policy is that it runs the risk of reinforcing the stereotype of a hectoring, moralistic, and even imperialistic U.S., which casts itself as the arbiter of fairness around the world.

**William Inboden, Legatum Institute**

Looking back over the past decade since the passage of IRF Act, both the Clinton and Bush Administrations took notable measures to help carry out the letter and spirit of the law. Considering the previous marginalization of religious freedom in U.S. foreign policy and the formidable national security challenges that continue to burden senior policy makers, these steps are not insignificant. But are they sufficient? The next administration will have much to build on, but much more to do.

Unfortunately, of the hundreds of millions of dollars devoted to a vast array of democracy promotion programs across many sectors and in many countries, the amount devoted to religious freedom promotion is so small as to hardly even be accounted. While the White House arguably could have done more to set religious freedom programs as a budget priority in democracy promotion, this neglect largely stems from two other factors: (1) the indifference of most State and USAID career foreign assistance officials towards religious freedom promotion; and (2) the relative dearth of organizations who conduct such religious freedom programs. In other words, even if the U.S. Government decided to elevate religious freedom promotion as a priority in democracy assistance, there currently are very few religious freedom NGOs with the expertise and capacity to receive such funding and implement religious freedom programs. The recent appropriation by Congress of $4 million to the State Department to fund religious freedom promotion is a small but significant step, and could herald an effective new tool.

**William Schulz, Center for American Progress**

The U.S. through the Commission on International Religious Freedom as well as its other human rights mechanisms must continue to identify and deplore such things as Indonesian President Yudhoyono’s restrictions on the practices of the Ahmadiya sect of Islam or Iran’s torment of the Bahá’ís or Saudi Arabia’s harassment of Shi’as and of non-Muslims, particularly the seven million foreign workers there. Indeed, the truth is that for all the Commission’s noble efforts, the U.S. has repeatedly failed to make religious freedom a policy priority, failed to utilize the power authorized by the International Religious Freedom Act to prohibit visas to religious persecutors, for example, or to restrict economic and security assistance to gross violators.

**Daniel Philpott, University of Notre Dame**

I follow [Thomas] Farr in commending the State Department’s Office of International Religious Freedom and the independent U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (both created by IRF Act) for their thorough annual reports and their tireless travels around the globe to improve the lot of the persecuted. But Farr then argues for a far more robust religious freedom policy in which the U.S. would seek not only to free religious prisoners but also to cultivate religiously free regimes—ones where the state permits full religious practice and belief and where religions refrain from controlling the state and respect minority religions. Such reciprocal respect is what political scientist Alfred Stepan has called “the twin tolerations,” which is a critical feature of modern liberal democracy. Its promotion, then, would go hand and glove with America’s promotion of democracy and stability, and, indeed, its fight against terrorism.
Religious Freedom in the Muslim World

Does the principle of religious freedom have philosophical grounding within the Islamic tradition? Is Islamic democracy possible, especially one grounded in religious freedom?

Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam & Democracy

Belief in freedom of religion is very strong in the Muslim conscience and in Muslim theology. History demonstrates that people in Muslim countries were free to practice other religions, such as Christianity and Judaism, Hinduism in India and even Zoroastrianism in Iran. People were also free not to believe in God and not to practice any religion. In fact, there were cases when Muslim scholars discussed the existence of God with atheists in mosques and in public gatherings. The Quran does support religious freedom, freedom to disbelieve, and the right to change one’s belief.

2:256 Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.

18:29 “The truth is from your Lord.” Let him who will believe, believe, and let him who will, reject (it).

4:137 Those who believe, then reject faith, then believe (again) and (again) reject faith, and go on increasing in Unbelief, God will not forgive them nor guide them on the way.

10:108 “O ye men! Now truth hath reached you from your Lord! those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls; those who stray, do so to their own loss: and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs.”

Asma Afsaruddin, University of Notre Dame

In practically every discussion of “religious freedom” in an Islamic context today, the famous Qur’anic verse 2:256 which states, “There is no compulsion in religion,” will be proffered by most Muslims. This verse in its obvious meaning mandates that no one may be coerced into adopting a religion against his or her will.

But the modern understanding of religious freedom has expanded to include the right of any individual to willingly adopt another religion and abandon his or her religion. And this is where we do run into problems, especially within the context of the classical Islamic legal discourse on what is termed in English apostasy, defined as the renunciation of one’s natal or traditional religion. The Arabic term that is discussed in this context is *ridda*, and it does not correspond exactly to the English term apostasy. Apostasy, in English, refers to a simple change in faith and implies nothing more. *Ridda*, however, is not and has never been plain and simple apostasy. The earliest usage of *ridda* was in the
context of the political revolts that occurred during the reign of Abu Bakr, the first caliph, immediately after the death of the Prophet. The punishable offense in this case was the political rebellion and the act of disloyalty to the government in Medina, not renunciation of Islam. In fact, the tribes implicated in the ridda wars did not in fact apostatize (in the English sense of the word) but were deemed guilty of treason against the state, which is a punishable offense, even to the extent of death … In the legal understanding of the term, ridda implied treasonous behavior against the state as a consequence of conversion to a different faith. The Qur’an has no prescribed penalty for mere renunciation of faith. For example, Qur’an 2:217 says: “And whoever among you turns away from their religion and dies as an unbeliever, their works have failed in this world and the next; these are the inhabitants of the Fire; therein they shall dwell forever.” The Qur’an thus warns of punishment in the next world for renouncing one’s religion and dying as an unbeliever. According to this verse, punishment for such an act is clearly God’s prerogative, however, and cannot be administered by any human being. It should be pointed out that even when deemed a political offense, ridda did not always merit the death penalty in the view of the pre-modern jurists; it was left to the discretion of the presiding judge who took the specific circumstances of each case into consideration.

With regard to a hierarchy of sources for all Muslims, the Qur’an is the first and unassailable source for making ethical, moral, and legal determinations, followed by the sunna, as expressed mainly in hadith, which are the transmitted sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Historically, the hadith has been used to amplify upon selected verses from the Qur’an, and sometimes even to drastically qualify the purported meanings of specific Qur’anic passages. It is on the basis of hadith that more draconian legal measures were developed in response to ridda, which also progressively came to be understood as equivalent to mere apostasy. Today many liberal and modernist Muslims are insisting that this trend should be reversed so as to privilege the Qur’an over textual hadith. Such an approach allows for religious freedom to emerge as a valued basic human right within the Islamic context, even when defined as the right to alter one’s religion.

**Abdolkarim Soroush, Georgetown University**

Let us make a distinction between freedom of faith and freedom of religion. Here we are mainly talking about freedom of religion rather than freedom of faith because freedom of religion has never been an issue in Islamic law, but freedom of religion is something that one has to take more seriously. Religion is a public thing, but faith is private. Faith regardless of whether one is Christian, Muslim or something else does not create problems for individuals. But when faith is publicized and institutionalized, it can create some problems.

**William Schulz, Center for American Progress**

There are approximately 1.2 billion Muslims in the world. Of the countries with the five largest Muslim populations—Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Turkey, representing more than half that
movements can be found elsewhere in Islam as well—in Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, and Malaysia, for instance… Not all are strong proponents of religious freedom for minorities though. Turkey’s treatment of Christians, for instance, even under the AKP, falls short of religious freedom. Still, these movements are moving in the right direction.

Rick Santorum and Keith Pavlischek, Ethics and Public Policy Center

[W]e need to consider the possibility (without fear of being accused of “Islamophobia”) that Islam may be incapable of reforming. What if religious freedom in Muslim majority countries is a bridge too far? What if Article 18 of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights simply cannot be accepted by an Islamic regime? What if religious freedom is not a universal right but an artifact of the Judeo-Christian West?

These questions are not pleasant, but neither can they be ignored. If Islamic countries are incapable of embracing religious freedom and religious freedom is a necessary component for a stable, Islamic democracy, and a stable democratic democracy is the only hope to kill off Islamic terrorism, then we better keep our powder dry. For we will be fighting Islamic radicals for generations, and it won’t be merely a “war of ideas.”
There is a widespread perception in the Muslim world and elsewhere that U.S. religious freedom policy was designed to advance the interests of Christian missionaries. How can U.S. diplomacy help overcome that perception while also advancing religious freedom in the Middle East?

Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam & Democracy

The problem is that when we stand for these principles we have to stand for them across the board and for everyone, and not just for Christians or Jews in the Muslim world. If we start to use these ideas and these principles selectively only when it suits our needs or fits our interests, we discredit the whole idea and people become very suspicious of our motives. We have seen across the Arab world as simply using the idea of democracy, whenever it suits our needs (like Iran or Syria), but when it does not suit or needs or interests (like in Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia or Jordan), then we forget about it.

Asma Afsaruddin, University of Notre Dame

Several polls conducted in Muslim countries in recent years document that one of the consistent complaints voiced by many Muslims against Westerners is that the latter do not respect Islam. The Danish cartoon controversy, allegations of Quran copies being flushed down toilets in Guantanamo Bay, and the flap over Pope Benedict’s Regensburg speech have all recently reinforced this image. The Danish newspaper, Jyllands Posten, enthusiastically published the cartoons denigrating the Prophet Muhammad in the name of free speech but refused to publish cartoons that similarly lampooned Jesus Christ. The reason they gave was that the latter set of cartoons would give offense to their Christian readers. Such an obvious case of double standards is deeply hurtful to Muslims, making them painfully aware that their religious sensibilities are usually not accorded equal deference in many Western societies.

In general, the Western unilateral insistence on the universal adoption of its understanding of religious freedom that is the result of uniquely Western historical and religious experiences could be counter-productive and is often reminiscent of Western colonial bullying in the recent past. The concepts of tolerance and religious freedom were born in Europe after bitter religious wars, resulting in secularism, leading to the strict separation of church and state and the relegation of religion to the private sphere. Western muscular promotion of religious freedom wedded solely to secularism is bound to make hackles rise among Muslims.

Abdolkarim Soroush, Georgetown University

The talk of religious freedom is important. Religious freedom should not be exported to other countries. American foreign policy should not do this because it has proven much more harmful than beneficial. Exporting democracy, religious freedom, human rights, at least as far as it is related to us in the Middle East, must be on the abstract level. If you export and impose it, it will produce an opposite effect. So one has to be very careful if one is sincere about these things.
Religious Freedom and Stable Democracy

To what extent can religious freedom contribute to the stability and durability of democracy? Can societies with powerful or large numbers of religious communities achieve durable democracy without religious freedom?

Brian Grim, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life

To judge from international survey data, people the world over want to be able to practice their religion freely. In the 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, ninety-three percent of people surveyed in thirty-four countries indicated that it is important to be able to live in a country where they can practice their religion freely.

Is religious freedom correlated with socio-economic well-being? Yes. The presence of religious freedom in a country mathematically correlates with the presence of other fundamental freedoms, including civil and political liberty, press freedom, and economic freedom, and with the longevity of democracy. But can we say there is a causal relationship? Most advanced statistical tests suggest that there is indeed a critical independent contribution that religious freedom makes. A growing body of research supports the proposition that the religious competition inherent in religious freedom results in increased religious participation; and religious participation in turn can lead to a wide range of positive social and political outcomes.

Furthermore, as religious groups make contributions to society and become an accepted part of the fabric of society, religious freedom is consolidated.

[In contrast] the attempt to restrict fair religious competition results in more violence and conflict, not less. Specifically, we found that social restrictions on religious freedom lead to government restrictions on religious freedom and the two act in tandem to increase the level of violence related to religion—which in turn cycles back and leads to even higher social and government restrictions on religion.

Daniel Philpott, University of Notre Dame

[What is desirable is when a] state permits full religious practice and belief and where religions refrain from controlling the state and respect minority religions.

But such a policy requires that foreign policy makers understand better—contra secularization theory—both that religion affects politics around the world and how it affects politics around the world … Two large factors, I am convinced, explain a great deal about why religious actors take on the form of politics that they do—peaceful or belligerent, democratic or authoritarian. They are political theology and differentiation. Political theology is the set of doctrines through which the core claims of a faith are translated into political conclusions. Such theologies often call for certain regime types and, because they generally also have a conception of justice, they oftentimes fundamentally shape the agendas of those regimes … Differentiation, a term that I borrow
In an environment of global denominationalism, proselytizing groups would have appropriate amounts of respect for the religions of other cultures and, because of the knowledge and the desire to not offend that comes with respect, they would thus adapt their proselytizing methods to be culturally specific. Mother Teresa is a great example of culturally contextualized evangelizing. She did not proselytize by explicitly trying to convert Hindus to Catholicism—she was just a witness of a Christian mission doing Christian work in India. This is a way of “proselytizing” that did not cause a negative reaction of groups in India who may have felt that overt proselytism was tied to Western imperialism.

William Galston, The Brookings Institution

A common-sense reading of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration does not suggest that religious freedom implies the unfettered right of foreign missionaries to cross international borders for proselytizing purposes. In addition, prudence suggests that we not sacrifice religious freedom as a whole on the altar of its most controversial aspect. As José Casanova points out, the uninformed enthusiasm of American missionaries has often backfired, driving indigenous religious forces into a tighter alliance with repressive regimes. We will do the cause of religious freedom no good if we identify it with the willingness of majority non-Christian societies, many of them scarred by the experience of colonialism, to admit missionaries. Instead, we should focus on promoting liberty for indigenous religious minorities that already exist. The fact that every human being is guaranteed the right to change his religion does not imply that citizens of other countries enjoy an equally fundamental right to persuade him to do so.

José Casanova, Georgetown University

The principle of individual religious freedom is in tension with another principle: the right of indigenous people to protect their culture from external pressure. This right, which the United Nations has recognized, is part of what I would call an emergent global denominationalism, a system of global society where religious groups respect others’ religions, even as they defend and promote their own truth claims. This system would respect the right of cultural self-preservation not through crude instruments, such as blasphemy laws and censorship regulations, but rather through a civil society that understands the need for cultural sensitivity. Global denominationalism would also defend the principle of individual religious freedom, which includes the right to conversion and the attendant right to evangelize, but would recognize that there are both appropriate and inappropriate ways to evangelize.

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**TABLE 1: POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND DIFFERENTIATION**

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<tr>
<th>High Differentiation</th>
<th>Consensual</th>
<th>Conflicntual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Communist Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>States with “Engaged Buddhism”</td>
<td>Chile under Pinochet</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Kemalist Turkey</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Postcolonial Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Differentiation (Integrationist)</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Communist Bulgaria, Romania, Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colonial Latin America</td>
<td>Postcolonial Arab nationalist regimes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Medieval Christendom</td>
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José Casanova, Georgetown University

My principle on blasphemy laws would be we have the right to blaspheme our own God, our own religion, but we have no right to blaspheme somebody else’s gods. And this is what is happening in Europe, where people very easily can be blasphemous against Islam while protecting their own sacred values of freedom of expression. And they are reacting with the same kind of sacred animosity that other people react with when their own gods are being attacked. Now, nobody today would dare to publish caricatures of anti-Semitism that were published in every European newspaper up to the 1930s. The same Danish newspaper that published the caricatures of Islam refused to publish caricatures of the resurrection of Jesus because he was afraid the Danish public would not appreciate the humor … I don't want to have blasphemy laws; I want to have a civil society that understands the need for cultural sensitivity. So, I don't want censorship; what I want is societies that are not so self-righteous about their own values that they are going to impose their values upon others.

Jeremy Gunn, American Civil Liberties Union

International law clearly protects “proselytizing” as an aspect of religious freedom, and all persons, whether they are religious or not, have the fundamental right to express and promote their religious, philosophical, and political viewpoints in public debates. Unless the speech is sufficiently abusive so as to interfere with the freedom of others, the expression should be protected by international human rights norms … Two other important factors should be kept in mind. First, for many people in the world, “religion” is something different from (and more than) a cluster of beliefs about the divine that should be open to vigorous debate and exchanges in the “marketplace of ideas.” For most Americans—and many others as well—one’s religion is thought of as being the result of a “choice” (or a “faith commitment”) … People want to be free to change churches, religions, pastors, and to be free to make such decisions throughout their life. While many understand this as a core human right, there are others who understand their religion to be a part of their identity in a way similar to their gender, their race, their nationality, and their family. In this worldview, one does not “choose” one’s religion any more than one chooses one’s parents. For individuals and communities that adhere to this alternative understanding of religion, proselytism may be not only unwelcome but deeply insulting. Missionaries would be perceived not as people who are sharing their faith and ideas, but as people who are undermining part of the fabric of society. While those who think of religion as a personal choice have a right to express their religious beliefs, sensitivity to others might prompt them to exercise care and prudence in how they do so.
ruled in Kokinakis v. Greece that under the principle of protecting the “rights and freedoms of others” and people’s “morals” there could be quite strict regulation of proselytism. The Court made a distinction between “acceptable” and “unacceptable” forms of proselytism. It seems this decision is something of a European-deviant branch of religious liberty law that is out of line with international standards. International standards are clear that proselytism is permitted, but if coercion occurs that is not. In other words, manifest your religion as you like so long as you do not coerce others to follow you. Further, the Human Rights Committee has said government’s right to limit “manifesting” under its obligation to protect “morals” must be strictly interpreted so as not to give leeway for a majority group to oppress a minority group.

How are countries that are going through economic or political transitions dealing with religious freedom?

Viktor Yelensky, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

Even in those times when the ruling regime brutally violated basic freedoms and human rights, Ukraine had relatively decent standards in the sphere of religious freedom, and it enjoyed one of the most liberal church state laws among the former Soviet states. In addition to religious diversity—Ukraine has three distinct Orthodox denominations, a strong minority Greek-Catholic church, and vibrant evangelical Protestant communities—another reason Ukraine has maintained...
a good record of religious freedom is the absence of any strict correlation between denominational and national identity. Religion is not a core element of Ukraine’s national narrative. When we speak about the “True Ukrainian,” we do not mean the religious identity as we do when we speak about Poles, Serbs, Georgians, or Croatians … the founding fathers of Ukrainian nationalism considered religion as a stumbling block, rather than a reliable source, for nation-building.

Liu Peng, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

During meetings between the top leaders of China and the U.S., religious freedom is nearly always raised as a problematic issue. A partial list of concerns raised in these meetings includes: the activity of missionaries from various U.S.-based religious organizations in China; the extent to which the attitudes of religious leaders and lobbying of religious organizations in the U.S. have influenced China policy in Congress and the White House; the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, under which China has been named by the U.S. as a “country of particular concern” (CPC) because of its religious freedom violations since 1999; and the negative coverage of China’s religion policies in the U.S. press. China has expressed indignation over the U.S. “concern,” and has alleged that the U.S. intends to use religion as an excuse to interfere in China’s domestic affairs … To understand why religion is having such a long-term negative influence on the relations between these two countries, we need to examine the underlying assumptions and reasoning of both sides.

Chinese officials need to understand the unique, public role and “marketplace” conception of religion in American society and foreign policy as well as the internationalism of U.S. religious groups. The U.S. needs to better understand the historical secular nature of Chinese society and culture, the political (viz. private) nature of religion in China (e.g. its association with imperialism and rebellion), the absence of religion from China’s public sphere and the domestic focus of religion in China, and the way that religious affairs are governed within the Chinese government.
The Future of U.S. International Religious Freedom Policy

Can a democratic form of political Islam contribute to stable, durable Muslim democracies of the kind that can contain or eliminate Islamist terrorism and extremism? Or is political Islam by definition a cause of terrorism and extremism?

Daniel Philpott, University of Notre Dame

[A] bolder pursuit of democracy may in fact be one of our best strategies against terrorism and in this pursuit one of our best assets will be one of democracy’s most important features: religious freedom—a religious freedom that allows a broad participation of religious actors in politics.

What makes these [Islamist terrorist] groups tick? They merit the name Radical Islamic revivalist because they are rooted in the belief that Islamic civilization has descended into jahiliyya, a state of barbaric darkness, both through its internal corruption and through domination at the hands of outsiders. Their solution is a revived moral commitment to sharia, the way to God, in all areas of life, including politics. Such was the claim of revivalism’s founding fathers: Hassan Al Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Maulana Maududi, founder of Pakistan’s Jamaat-e-Islami, and Egypt’s Sayyid Qutb.

Most majority Muslim countries in the world today are governed undemocratically. Only three out of 47—Mali, Senegal, and Indonesia—are ranked “free” by Freedom House; none of these are in the Arab world. About a quarter have democratic elections, though most in this group, like Pakistan, lack democratic freedoms in other respects. But if authoritarianism prevails in Islam, Islam is not necessarily the cause of authoritarianism. In fact, far more authoritarianism in the Muslim world stems from the ideals of the French Revolution than from those of the Iranian Revolution. These ideals include social equality, nationalism, economic modernization, and, not least, secularism. Unlike the secularism of the U.S. Constitution, which provides for religious freedom from government control, this form of secularism involves strong government control. In a common pattern, the government supports and officially establishes but also co-opts and sharply regulates a moderate form of Islam that is compatible with its ruling purposes all the while suppressing and marginalizing more conservative and traditional forms of Islam.

The prototype for this approach was the Republic of Turkey, founded in 1924 by Kemal Ataturk, whose determination to modernize Turkey led him to regulate sharply the speech, practice, leadership, and even dress of Turkey’s Muslims. Today, the Turkish Government sharply regulates the leadership and activities of mosques, even composing a weekly Friday prayer to be read out there, prevents Sufi and Alevi Muslims from constructing places of worship, controls the teaching of religion in schools and universities, and curtails the rights of non-Muslim minorities to associate and to construct worship spaces. This was the pattern in Egypt, too. After he took over in 1954, President Gamal Abdel
Nasser banned all independent political groups; those that survived were forced underground. The same sort of denial of religious freedom out of secularist ideals of modernization and social equality took place in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Syria, Jordan, Qatar, Yemen, Iran under the Shah, Iraq under Saddam Hussein, elsewhere in Middle East, and in Indonesia under the dictatorship of Suharto up until 1998.

But this subordination and sanitization of religion proved to be just the atmosphere that radicalized revivalists and led them to violence and sometimes terrorism. Denied the role in politics that democracy can provide, not only were they marginalized but they were never subjected to any of democracy’s moderating effects—the practice of arguing and being argued against, the business of forming coalitions and brokering deals. … Authoritarianism incubated terrorism in the rest of the Arab Muslim world as well.

An aggregate look at contemporary terrorist groups reveals the role of authoritarianism in motivating them. To be sure, the evidence is not without ambiguity. Three studies in the last fifteen years show that terrorists strike more often in democracies and free countries than in unfree countries. But then a strong correlation between authoritarianism and the risk of terrorism is reported by economist Albert Abadie of Harvard University in his 2004 study. Even more relevant to the argument here is where terrorists originate, the focus of a Freedom House study showing that 70% come from regimes that are considered “not free” while only 8% come from “free” countries. Then, my own analysis of religious terrorist groups shows that a disproportionate number hail from “not free” countries and countries with governments that strongly control religion.

Dictators like to justify their rule with the argument that they are keeping extremists at bay. Allowing Islamists to participate in democracy, they argue, will bring an end to democracy: one man, one vote, one time. But there is evidence that such groups are willing to participate in democracy when given the chance. The Muslim Brotherhood has renounced violence and has responded to its being banned from political contestation by seeking majority control of civil society organizations and by supporting nominally independent candidates for parliament, as it has in the past four elections. Jamaat-e-Islami, the powerful Islamic revivalist group in Pakistan, has stood for elections and has been willing to participate as an opposition group throughout Pakistan’s history. Over the past decade-and-a-half, traditional Muslim parties have participated in elections in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Turkey. To date, there has not been an instance of an Islamist party winning an election and then reneging once in power. In Indonesia, it was Muslim groups that most powerfully brought down the dictatorship of Suharto—and now participate in democracy. In Turkey, the Muslim opposition became more democratic over time and is today a strong force for democracy.

What does all of this mean for American foreign policy? A greater willingness to encourage the religious freedom dimension of democracy should also strengthen our efforts to counter-terrorism and our relationships with
I want to begin with three stipulations. First, I want to stipulate that there exist within Islam elements that pose significant threat not only to free societies around the world but to their fellow Muslims who disagree with them. To deny this is just plain stupid. Second, I want to stipulate that terrorism in any form—the intentional targeting of civilians for some religious or political purpose—is a profound human rights violation, an evil act and an abomination. Third, I want to stipulate that government authorities have not only the right but the responsibility to use their intelligence-gathering, criminal justice and military resources to prevent terrorism and punish its perpetrators … Estimates [suggest] that no more than 10–15% of all Muslims condone terrorism … Let’s assume that something like that number are sympathetic to terrorism—constitute the terrorists’ retinue. Well, here is one indisputable fact that we know from studies of terrorist movements like the IRA or the Shining Path or Abu Sayyyaf in the Philippines: in addition to using your intelligence, police and military resources to go after the terrorists themselves, you’ve got to convince the sympathizers who hide them, finance them, promote them and provide them a pool of recruits, to abandon them as well. Ironically enough, Mao Tse Tung is helpful here. “Guerillas are the fish,” he famously said, “and the people are the sea.” You’ve got to both catch the fish and dry up the sea.

So how do we do that? Well, first I’ll tell you what doesn’t help. It doesn’t help to conflate all uses of terror by Muslims, whether in Bali or Beslan … It doesn’t help to use inflammatory language and tactics that both exacerbate the fears of Americans and offend the very people we’re trying to persuade to stand up to terrorists in the first place … The third thing that doesn’t help is for the United States to play right into the terrorists’
In the long run, the threat from extremism will only go away when the frustration, resentment, and feeling of humiliation that turns some Muslims into extremists have themselves been eliminated. In that context, IRF policy can contribute to U.S. national security goals to the degree that it helps Americans understand the role of religion in the Muslim world and contributes to greater individual freedom in the Middle East. But we must also be realistic. Religious freedom may well correlate with other social, economic, and diplomatic goods, but the causality of that relationship probably works in the other direction—free and democratic societies tend to allow for religious freedom more than the development of religious freedom tends to create free and democratic societies. Promoting religious freedom is a worthwhile goal. IRF policy is best judged on its ability to achieve that goal, rather than as a central tool in the “war on terror.”

Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy

Muslims want Islam and democracy, i.e. democracy that is compatible with Islam. [In the Muslim world], secularists are mostly isolated and discredited. We must deal with, engage, and support moderate Islamists—and not lump all Islamists together with extremists and terrorists.

Rick Santorum and Keith Pavlischek, Ethics and Public Policy Center

President Bush and advocates of the “freedom agenda” associated with democracy promotion got part of it right. The antidote to Islamic terrorism would be stable democracies in those Middle Eastern countries where this Islamic terrorism is incubated and exported. Unfortunately, the “freedom agenda” paid too little attention to the religious element in those cultures, particularly the Islamic religious culture that allows such terrorism to flourish. And because insufficient attention was paid to this religious culture, a robust religious freedom agenda was never seriously integrated into the democracy promotion agenda.

Philip Gordon, The Brookings Institution

The “war against Islamist extremism” is a long-term challenge that will require a multi-faceted strategy: defending the homeland; stemming weapons proliferation; using intelligence and law enforcement to identify and apprehend terrorists; the targeted use of military force; diplomatic engagement in Middle East disputes.

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**William Galston, The Brookings Institution**

In recent years, I have engaged in extensive conversations with Muslim intellectuals from the Middle East and North Africa. One of my most startling discoveries is that they tend to view the U.S. through their millennium-long encounter with Europe. This has bred two opposing misunderstandings: first, that the U.S. is the latest of the Christian crusader nations entering their region to crush Islam; and second, that the U.S. is a godless, militantly secularist regime like revolutionary France. My stock description of the United States as religiously vibrant and diverse genuinely surprised my Muslim interlocutors, who were well-informed in most other respects. In this context, it would be useful for American public diplomacy to explain our distinctive approach to the world, not necessarily as an example for other nations to emulate, but as a description of how a large nation has been able to accept, and even celebrate religious diversity, and to link that diversity to the strength of constitutional government.

**Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam & Democracy**

When President Bush started talking about democracy in the Arab world, many of us got excited and said that “speech” is important because it sends a message, and sooner or later it will have an impact. We discovered that speech does not always affect foreign policy, and that when you talk about democracy without changing policy, it discredits the whole idea of democracy and the genuine democrats. [The U.S. should] fund education...
and dialogue on the meaning of Islam, shariah, and how to modernize shariah for the twenty-first century. An example is the Center for Islam and Democracy’s “Manual on Islam and Democracy-Towards an Effective Citizenship,” and training seminars, which trained 2,000 people. U.S. government funding for the initiative dried up in 2006. We must also support genuine Muslim reformers, even if [we do not agree with them on everything].

Jennifer Marshall, The Heritage Foundation

U.S. foreign policy should systematically engage religious ideas and individuals as it seeks to win hearts and minds, advance freedom and promote stability. At present, however, this engagement is isolated and inconsistent … The international freedom agenda requires better integration of the on-going work to promote religious liberty, the “first freedom.” The vision of religious liberty must be robust. Condemning and curtailing religious persecution is an important goal. But a more expansive agenda should seek to promote political conditions that consistently apply religious liberty tenets rooted in constitutional government.

Jeremy Gunn, American Civil Liberties Union

It is better to promote “freedom of religion or belief” rather than “freedom of religion.” There are two major reasons for this. The first is that because the international norm is already accepted as the formulation, it is less to raise the very suspicions that need to be overcome: that the United States really is attempting to promote American-style religion rather than attempting to promote a recognized human freedom. The second reason is that when countries identify “religion” as the protected right at issue (rather than the protection of “religion or belief”), it often follows that there is an attempt to define “religion” in a restrictive way that excludes those religious groups that are not part of the history and traditions of that country. Some European countries in the past have created lists of so-called “sects and cults” that are excluded from the protections of religious freedom. Rather than debate whether Baptists, or Mormons, or Scientologists, or Buddhists, or non-believers, or Jehovah’s Witnesses are truly “religions,” it is better to say argue that they should be protected regardless of how one chooses to define “religion.”

To what extent should religious communities be seen as elements of democratic civil society?

Andrew Natsios, Georgetown University

U.S. government policy should support the development of civil society, including its religious manifestation, around the world through its public diplomacy, foreign aid programs, and traditional diplomacy. It should support the U.S. government’s foreign aid program which is deeply rooted in the civil society model of international development (more than other aid programs which are often focused entirely on governments), and the faith-based initiatives which seek to build alliances with organized religious communities around the world in support of human rights, development, and poverty alleviation. U.S. diplomacy should systematically engage with religious communities in all societies, so that U.S. policy is based on a clear understanding of the dynamics and evolutions of the great religious traditions.

Jennifer Marshall, The Heritage Foundation

U.S. foreign policy should systematically engage religious ideas and individuals as it seeks to win hearts and minds, advance freedom and promote stability. At present, however, this engagement is isolated and inconsistent … The international freedom agenda requires better integration of the on-going work to promote religious liberty, the “first freedom.” The vision of religious liberty must be robust. Condemning and curtailing religious persecution is an important goal. But a more expansive agenda should seek to promote political conditions that consistently apply religious liberty tenets rooted in constitutional government.
Elizabeth Prodromou, Boston University

A useful definition of civil society is those spheres of activity that are not the state: these spheres include, then, politics, economics, and culture ... religion cuts across, informs, and plays a role in all of those three spheres ... I think that what's most relevant for us to consider is the fact that advances in religious freedom depend on advances in civil society, but likewise, on advances at the state level. In other words, civil society and state are equally important when it comes to the promotion and protection of freedom of belief, conscience, worship ... The most complicated challenge for efficacious religious freedom policy derives precisely from the fact that engagement with either state or civil society is not enough: each one is necessary, but neither is sufficient on its own. [There are] four spaces that stand at the interstices of state and civil society, and these four spaces are central to decisive and sustainable advances in religious freedom: judiciary, policing, judiciary, and public health.

Carroll Bogert, Human Rights Watch

[D]emocracies abuse human rights. There is human rights abuse in the United States of America. There are human rights violations taking place in all countries—all governments are tempted to abuse power. And it is civil society that really reigns in the excess and abuse of power, not only of states, also of rebel groups, you know, non-state actors, of corporations, of various powerful actors in society. So, I guess I would pursue a definition of civil society that maybe focused less on democracy and more on the ways in which civil society that protects human rights in ways that governments cannot. And that by its nature it is independent of, not necessarily hostile to, but independent of, and a watchdog of, the powerful in society; it reveals official wrongdoing.

Civil society also protects a diversity of viewpoints and makes sure that minority rights are heard. ... [M]ajoritarianism, ... rule by the many, can also violate the human rights of the few.

Certainly civil society is a way for citizens in any country to express their views in between elections. And I think sometimes our vision of democracy and our promotion of democracy abroad has focused excessively on voting and what happens when you cast a ballot and not enough on what happens in between and all of the institutions and mechanisms and practices and civil society organizations that help citizens to express themselves in between those times that they go and vote.

So the question was asked are religious groups part of civil society and I think they clearly are. And I wanted to talk about two different ways in which they are. One is at the level of international civil society. I mentioned a couple of human rights groups with which Human Rights Watch works. But I think there are many religiously inspired groups that work on a range of issues in international affairs that may go beyond their own predilections. You know, the best example of this right now is the really inspirational way in which evangelical Christians, Jews have come to the defense of people in Darfur. That the focus on South Sudan that was a product of gross violations of the human rights of Christians in the South, you know, the issue didn't end there for Christian groups who got involved in that issue and they, many of them, I think admirably stepped up to the plate and defended the rights of people in Darfur who were Muslim but who were being abused by the same government in Khartoum. Certainly, you mentioned the work of Christian groups on refugees coming out of North Korea. There's been admirable spokesmanship by religious figures on the issue of debt relief, the economic rights of people around the world.

Having said that, it is sometimes difficult to mobilize groups that are concerned with international religious freedom to focus on the violations of religious freedom of other religions. So we do find in places, for example in Africa, where Islam and Christianity are coming into conflict with each other, that Christian groups are often more concerned with the violation of the rights of Christians in those conflicts. We see that Christian group who are engaged in China tend to pay less attention to the religious rights of Tibetan Buddhists or Uyghur Muslims, who are also a target of the Chinese government. For the Shi’a inside Saudi Arabia, the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt. There are many examples where we have not seen the kind of engagement for religious believers of another religious belief in the international sphere as we would’ve liked.
With regards to public diplomacy, should the U.S. government advance religious freedom as a U.S. foreign policy goal?

Andrew Natsios, Georgetown University

Peter Berger once commented that the West is an island of secularism in an ocean of religious devotion. Secularism is the exception rather than the rule in much of the world. Western diplomacy which ignores or misunderstands the religious movements of a society can not effectively interact with it. Our public diplomacy should seek to explain to other societies struggling with multiple faith traditions in conflict with each other, the tradition of American constitutional protection for the freedom of worship, tolerance of multiple traditions of religious devotion, and public policies which nurture and support religious institutions.

Asma Afsaruddin, University of Notre Dame

American focus on international religious freedom, if handled with sensitivity, could play a beneficial role in fostering critical discussions among Muslims about religious freedom and democracy. The results of a recent extensive Gallup poll conducted in over 40 Muslim-majority countries between 2001 and 2007 show that a majority of Muslims desire and value fundamental human rights such as the freedom to practice their religion unmolested in both the private and public spheres and their right to representative, accountable, democratic forms of government.

Jennifer Marshall, The Heritage Foundation

Religion defines the worldview of many whom U.S. policy seeks to influence. Strategies for communicating with deeply religious audiences are critical. Public diplomacy should present a positive vision for religion’s contribution to ordered liberty and tap religious traditions for principles that support civil society and limited, constitutional government. Engaging religious individuals and communities in developing the habits of a free and civil society is essential to promoting liberty in much of the world. Facilitating cross-cultural communication between faith-based groups can help toward that end … Religious believers seeking peaceful, strong, stable communities can find considerable common ground in their views of human life, family, and ordering society with respect for the transcendent. They share concern about radical secularism that would marginalize religious practice from public life. At the United Nations, NGOs representing Catholic, evangelical, Mormon and Muslim perspectives have worked together to advance policies related to the life of the unborn child, marriage, family, and civil society. These and other good-will interactions provide a starting point for expanding a vision of religious liberty in the interest of religious faith and values.

Daniel Philpott, University of Notre Dame

[What is desirable is that the] … U.S. would seek not only to free religious prisoners but also to cultivate religiously free regimes—ones where the state permits full religious practice and belief and where religions
To what extent is the American experience a useful example or model for American diplomats to suggest to other countries?

William Galston, The Brookings Institution

It makes sense, I believe, for the United States to include the advancement of religious freedom in its publicly stated foreign policy goals. It is important, however, to do this in the right way. We should not rest our case on the American example as a model for others; the rest of the world has had more than enough of that. Instead, we should recur to established international agreements, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This should be part of a broader strategic shift: the United States should behave less as a self-styled exceptional nation that can make its own rules, and more as part of a global system struggling to establish and strengthen norms of domestic and international conduct.

Jeremy Gunn, American Civil Liberties Union

For reasons rooted in European history, I am not optimistic that public diplomacy alone can do much to convince majority religious communities that religious freedom will promote their interests better than religious monopoly. It took centuries of sometime bloody religious strife to convince political communities that a *modus vivendi* based on religious toleration might be a better approach. The road from toleration to actual endorsement of religious diversity was longer still. It was not until my lifetime, for example, that the Catholic Church accepted religious liberty and diversity as a matter of principle rather than as a disagreeable necessity. If the Shi’a majority government that seems likely to persist in Iraq is not convinced that decent treatment of minority religions will better serve its interests than discrimination or suppression, I fear that it will take more violence and death over an extended period to drive the message home. This is not an argument for us to stop making our case. But we should be realistic about the prospects for early success.
offer Americans than Americans have to offer them... We need only ask ourselves how many American judges and politicians would seriously be interested in learning about the French, Indian, Greek, or Australian experience in order to enhance religious freedom in the U.S.?

Rather than suggesting the merits of an American model to others, I believe it would be more useful to propose certain aspects of the American model to the extent they cohere with the legal and political systems abroad. For example, it might be appropriate to recommend the use of the courts to challenge laws that discriminate on the basis of religion in a way that is inconsistent with the state constitution or international human rights standards. It also may be of use to encourage minority religions to work cooperatively with each other and take common positions on a neutral enforcement of the laws. Another possibility would be to work with open-minded religious leaders in dominant religions of the country.

**What practical steps might the U.S. engage in to promote religious freedom? More specifically, which government departments and agencies are best suited for this effort?**

**Jennifer Marshall, The Heritage Foundation**

Effective ideological engagement ... should begin by mustering the full force of the ideas on which the United States was founded. U.S. policymakers must understand and be able to articulate the role of religion in the American constitutional order. Foreign Service training should promote that end. Public diplomacy leadership, in particular, should have a strong understanding of the continuing significance of religious liberty and religious culture in the United States.

Religion defines the worldview of many whom U.S. policy seeks to influence. Strategies for communicating with deeply religious audiences are critical. Public diplomacy should present a positive vision for religion's contribution to ordered liberty and tap religious traditions for principles that support civil society and limited, constitutional government. Engaging religious individuals and communities in developing the habits of a free and civil society is essential to promoting liberty in much of the world. Facilitating cross-cultural communication between faith-based groups can help toward that end.

**William Inboden, Legatum Institute**

The President's role in implementing the International Religious Freedom Act (IRF Act) is indispensable. Though most of IRF Act's imperatives apply to the State Department for day-to-day execution, almost every dimension of religious freedom policy—as with foreign policy in general—emanates ultimately from the presidency. The President is, after all, chief executive, chief diplomat, chief of the bully pulpit, and commander-in-chief. In turn, the White House can play a key role in several areas of religious freedom policy. These include defining strategic priorities, personnel appointments, diplomatic activity and gestures, policy decisions, and budget and programming priorities.

Budgets often serve as a proxy indicator of a government's priorities, under the logic that money flows to what matters. While funding is at best an imperfect measurement and should not be overemphasized, it can also provide some insights. In particular, the question of religious freedom in foreign aid and development assistance is another angle from which to evaluate the Executive Branch, and also an area in need of further exploration.

**Andrew Natsios, Georgetown University**

The U.S. government could take a more operational or programmatic role in supporting faith-based NGOs around the world whose purpose is to support religious freedom. We do something like this now through our foreign aid program's support for human rights organizations. The major structural impediment to this happening in the U.S. system is the location of this function organizationally. The current office addressing religious freedom issues from a diplomatic and political perspective is properly located in the State Department. However the business model and culture of the State Department is not conducive to the development of operational strategies, program management and grant-making systems. State can process the grant paper work, but the institution tends to take a much more short term view of this sort of support, State tends to be reactive rather than proactive in trying to use aid funds, and it is not organized to develop and measure the outcomes of aid funding. While I do not think this function properly belongs in USAID, it is there that these strategic and program management skills are concentrated in the federal system. Any such program of grant making should be geared to achieving three objectives essential
to the process of building institutions—sustainability, ownership, and capacity building—which in this case would be the private institutions of civil society which would nurture and protect religious freedom.

**Robert Seiple, Council for America’s First Freedom**

First, the “promotion” methodology takes time. One cannot rush relational diplomacy. Annual reports, election cycles, five-year plans, and other self-imposed time constraints work against the kind of sustainable progress we all desire.

Second, the State Department has never been known for speed. Every new thought is held hostage to a protracted clearance exercise. Multiple agendas sometimes suffocate new ideas. The wise foreign service employee restricts his/her agenda to a few items that have the best chance to be advanced during their tenure. Usually the tyranny of the urgent works against someone’s longer term objectives.

Third, turnover is intentional. Diplomats are moved from place to place to avoid “clientitis.” Celebrity players (appointed diplomats) also come and go relatively quickly. If a problem cannot be fixed in three years, it is often pushed to the back of an agenda. It is exceedingly rare for decision makers to “stay at the table” for over five years.

**William Saunders, Family Research Council**

[T]he United States should promote religious freedom, not just oppose persecution, and I think it should do so through main-streaming that goal more fully in our foreign policy. The Ambassador for Religious freedom, for example, should be integrated into State Department decision-making.

With real religious freedom, stable democracies can grow; without it, I don’t think democracy can flourish. If we think back to the example [of] India, you have the world’s largest democracy but it is suffering with problems of religious intolerance. The habits of mind that can accept the difference of “the other” are still being built in India. I think the U.S can do a real service, not just to particular suffering groups, [but also] to the growth of stable democracies around the world by promoting religious freedom.

**Daniel Philpott, University of Notre Dame**

The U.S. can advance religious freedom by encouraging [liberal Muslim] movements and by pressing secular authoritarian states to create room for more of them to develop, emerge, grow, and participate. Such states are less likely to incubate religious terrorism, radical religious revolution, and civil war, and are more likely to be friendly to the United States. To be sure, we must not assume that radical Islam will simply disappear with an opening up of such regimes, that terrorists will simply go away, or that we should cease to oppose them where they exist. But, if we follow a more far-sighted policy of (a) recognizing that religious communities can be positive change, and (b) encouraging those that are, we might well find more success in engaging majority-Muslim and in promoting the best ideals of our own founding.
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Thomas Banchoff is Director of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, and Associate Professor in the Government Department and the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. His research and teaching center on the politics of religious pluralism, both nationally and internationally. Banchoff is editor of *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (2007) and *Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics* (2008). He is currently completing a manuscript on the religious and secular politics of embryo and stem cell research in Europe and the United States.

Carroll Bogert is the Associate Director of Human Rights Watch. She oversees the organization’s external relations and runs the communications department, publicizing the work of Human Rights Watch, and drawing attention to human rights issues in more than 70 countries. She is also responsible for the Human Rights Watch website.

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William Galston of The Brookings Institution is a political theorist who studies American politics and domestic policy. Galston was Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy during the first Clinton Administration and Executive Director of the National Commission on Civic Renewal. He has served as Director of Economic and Social Programs at the Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies and worked for or advised the campaigns of John Anderson, Walter Mondale, and Albert Gore, Jr.

Philip Gordon focuses on U.S. strategies for confronting global terrorism, with a special emphasis on the Middle East and Europe, at The Brookings Institution. He is a former director for European Affairs at the National Security Council. His most recent book is Winning the Right War: The Path to Security for America and the World.

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Robert A. Seiple is President of the Council on America’s First Freedom and founder of the Institute for Global Engagement. Prior to its foundation, he spent two years at the State Department as the first-ever U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. Previously he served as: president of World Vision, president of Eastern College and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and director of athletics and the vice president for development at his alma mater, Brown University. He
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**William Schulz** is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, where his work focuses on human rights and religion in public policy. He is a former executive director of Amnesty International, USA and former president of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. He travels throughout the country and the world to advocate for universal human rights, and to investigate and detail human rights abuses.

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**Robert T. Smith** is the Managing Director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University. He has worked with law firms in Chicago, Illinois, and Washington, D.C. and has international law experience. He worked as Executive Vice President and General Counsel to CaseData Corporation in Utah before joining the Center at BYU.

**Abdolkarim Soroush** was a visiting fellow and scholar in residence with the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs during the spring 2008 semester and is a researcher at the Institute for Cultural Research and Studies in Iran. One of the Muslim world’s most influential thinkers for his analysis of the relationship between religious and secular knowledge and authority, Soroush has also been a Visiting Professor at Harvard, Princeton, and Yale Universities and the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin. In 2005, *Time* magazine listed him as one of the world’s 100 most influential intellectuals.

**Tad Stahnke** is currently the director of the Fighting Discrimination Program at Human Rights First. From 2000 to 2007 he served as Deputy Executive Director for Policy at the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, where he frequently participated in fact-finding missions and represented the United States at international human rights conferences. Stahnke also led training sessions on international human rights law for the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security.

**Ruth Wedgwood** is Director of the International Law and Organization Program and the Edward B. Burling Professor of International Law and Diplomacy at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. She was a member of the U.S. Secretary of State’s Advisory Committee for International Law and the Pentagon’s Defense Policy Board. Wedgwood was recently elected as the U.S. member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva.

**Viktor Yelensky** is a Senior Researcher at the Philosophy Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and President of the Ukrainian branch of the International Religious Liberty Association. He is also Editor in Chief of the Journal for Religious Studies *Lyudina i Svit* (Individual and World). Yelensky was a visiting Fulbright scholar at Brigham Young University in 2004–2005.
Appendix 1

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, part of the International Bill of Human Rights, is a declaration that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. It is not legally binding.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 18
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Created in 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is a United Nations treaty that took on the force of law in 1976. This treaty is legally binding.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966

Article 18
1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.

3. Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 established the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent commission that would make recommendations to the State Department; an ambassador at large for international religious freedom within the State Department; annual reports that detail the status of religious freedom around the globe; and the ability to put sanctions on a country for gross violations of religious freedom.

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998

1. The right to freedom of religion undergirds the very origin and existence of the United States. Many of our Nation’s founders fled religious persecution abroad, cherishing in their hearts and minds the ideal of religious freedom. They established in law, as a fundamental right and as a pillar of our Nation, the right to freedom of religion. From its birth to this day,
the United States has prized this legacy of religious freedom and honored this heritage by standing for religious freedom and offering refuge to those suffering religious persecution.

2. Freedom of religious belief and practice is a universal human right and fundamental freedom articulated in numerous international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Helsinki Accords, the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, the United Nations Charter, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

3. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.” Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognizes that “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice, and teaching.” Governments have the responsibility to protect the fundamental rights of their citizens and to pursue justice for all. Religious freedom is a fundamental right of every individual, regardless of race, sex, country, creed, or nationality, and should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government.

4. The right to freedom of religion is under renewed and, in some cases, increasing assault in many countries around the world. More than one half of the world’s population lives under regimes that severely restrict or prohibit the freedom of their citizens to study, believe, observe, and freely practice the religious faith of their choice. Religious believers and communities suffer both government sponsored and government tolerated violations of their rights to religious freedom. Among the many forms of such violations are state sponsored slander campaigns, confiscations of property, surveillance by security police, including by special divisions of “religious police,” severe prohibitions against construction and repair of places of worship, denial of the right to assemble and relegation of religious communities to illegal status through arbitrary registration laws, prohibitions against the pursuit of education or public office, and prohibitions against publishing, distributing, or possessing religious literature and materials.

5. Even more abhorrent, religious believers in many countries face such severe and violent forms of religious persecution as detention, torture, beatings, forced marriage, rape, imprisonment, enslavement, mass resettlement, and death merely for the peaceful belief in, change of or practice of their faith. In many countries, religious believers are forced to meet secretly, and religious leaders are targeted by national security forces and hostile mobs.
6. Though not confined to a particular region or regime, religious persecution is often particularly widespread, systematic, and heinous under totalitarian governments and in countries with militant, politicized religious majorities.

7. Congress has recognized and denounced acts of religious persecution through the adoption of the following resolutions:

A. House Resolution 515 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the persecution of Christians worldwide.

B. Senate Concurrent Resolution 71 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding persecution of Christians worldwide.

C. House Concurrent Resolution 102 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the emancipation of the Iranian Bahá’í community.

It shall be the policy of the United States, as follows:

1. To condemn violations of religious freedom, and to promote, and to assist other governments in the promotion of, the fundamental right to freedom of religion.

2. To seek to channel United States security and development assistance to governments other than those found to be engaged in gross violations of the right to freedom of religion, as set forth in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, in the International Financial Institutions Act of 1977, and in other formulations of United States human rights policy.

3. To be vigorous and flexible, reflecting both the unwavering commitment of the United States to religious freedom and the desire of the United States for the most effective and principled response, in light of the range of violations of religious freedom by a variety of persecuting regimes, and the status of the relations of the United States with different nations.

4. To work with foreign governments that affirm and protect religious freedom, in order to develop multilateral documents and initiatives to combat violations of religious freedom and promote the right to religious freedom abroad.

5. Standing for liberty and standing with the persecuted, to use and implement appropriate tools in the United States foreign policy apparatus, including diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, and cultural channels, to promote respect for religious freedom by all governments and peoples.
Religion is a critical but neglected factor in world affairs. The Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs, announced in 2005, seeks to deepen American understanding of religion as a factor in international policy issues. The Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University is the recipient of a two-year grant that funds the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs, implemented in collaboration with the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University.

The Luce/SFS Program focuses on two thematic areas: religion and global development and religion and U.S. Foreign Policy. Luce Foundation support enables innovative teaching, research, and outreach activities in both areas, as well as innovative publications and web-based knowledge resources.
THE EDMUND A. WALSH SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE

Founded in 1919 to educate students and prepare them for leadership roles in international affairs, the School of Foreign Service conducts an undergraduate program for over 1,300 students and graduate programs at the Master’s level for more than 700 students. Under the leadership of Dean Robert L. Gallucci, the School houses more than a dozen regional and functional programs that offer courses, conduct research, host events, and contribute to the intellectual development of the field of international affairs. In 2007, a survey of faculty published in *Foreign Policy* ranked Georgetown University as #1 in Master’s degree programs in international relations.

THE BERKLEY CENTER

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, created within the Office of the President in March 2006, is part of a university-wide effort to build knowledge about religion’s role in world affairs and promote interreligious understanding in the service of peace. The Center explores the intersection of religion with contemporary global challenges. Through research, teaching, and outreach activities, the Berkley Center builds knowledge, promotes dialogue, and supports action in the service of peace. Thomas Banchoff, Associate Professor in the Department of Government and the School of Foreign Service, is the Center’s founding director.

COUNCIL ON FAITH AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AT THE INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

The Institute for Global Engagement (IGE) promotes sustainable environments for religious freedom worldwide. As a faith-based organization, IGE believes firmly in universal human dignity and is committed to the protection of all faiths through the rule of law. IGE pursues this mission with a balanced approach, encouraging governments to protect religious freedom (top-down engagement) and equipping citizens to exercise that freedom responsibly (bottom-up engagement). IGE also sponsors two educational divisions focused on the role of religion in public life worldwide—the Council on Faith & International Affairs and the Global Engagement Network. IGE publishes *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, which included a theme issue on U.S. International Religious Freedom Policy in 2008. *The Review* was generous in allowing this Report to utilize portions of many of those essays.
About The Berkley Center Religious Literacy Series

This paper is part of a series of reports that addresses the impact of religion on the foreign policies of key states around the world. These reports explore emergent issues, such as the mobilization of religious groups around foreign policy, the intersection between religion, migration, and foreign policy, and the politics of international religious freedom.

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