

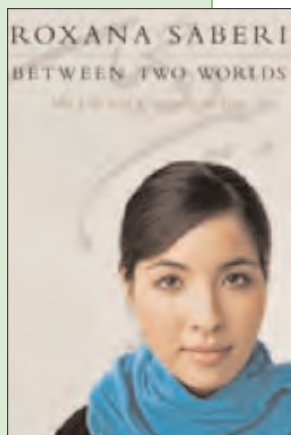
**BETWEEN TWO WORLDS:  
My Life and Captivity  
in Iran**

**ROXANA SABERI**

**Author and Journalist**

**TIME/PLACE:**

**Tuesday,  
March 15, 2011,  
7:30 PM,  
Mount Vernon Country Club**



## OUR UPCOMING MEETING

A former Miss North Dakota and a freelance journalist in Tehran, contributing to NPR and ABC Radio, Ms. Saberi was abducted by 4 men in Iran in January of 2009 and placed in solitary confinement in Iran's most notorious prison. She was falsely accused and convicted of spying for the U.S. in a half-hour trial, which resulted in an 8-year prison sentence. Ms. Saberi presents a riveting account of her ordeal including the inspiration she gained from her fellow political prisoners and the lessons about life and faith that gave her the strength to deal with her mental and physical imprisonment. She also provides insight into Iranian society and the events unfolding in Iran today. Her gripping memoir will be available for sale and autographs at the lecture. ■

## FEBRUARY MEETING REVIEW

By Debra Pearce, Secretary, Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council



### **How We Fight – Crusades, Quagmires, and the American Way of War**

*by Prof. Dominic Tierney, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore College*

At first glance, each of America's wars seems unique. However, while they don't repeat themselves, they do rhyme; there is a distinct pattern to the way America fights. According to Professor Dominic Tierney, we love to overthrow tyrants and leave quickly without rebuilding. America typically wins the war but loses the peace.

The size of our national defense budget indicates to some America's love of war. Yet, on the other hand, America has a long history of anti-war protest and lit-

erature dating back to Mark Twain and Ernest Hemingway. The truth regarding America's sentiment toward war lies somewhere in the middle, Americans only love a certain kind of war.



Imagine sitting on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial looking out at the Capitol. To your right are symbols of the noble causes for which we fight, wars in which we won decisive victories; the World War II Memorial dedicated in 2004 and at the base of Capitol Hill stands a monument to Ulysses S. ("Unconditional Surrender") Grant. However, in your peripheral vision on the left side of the Mall stands the Vietnam Memorial, a dark vision of war set in black stone.

American wars follow either a crusade or quagmire tradition. We rally behind the flag to fight against foreign countries that we oppose, as was evident in World War II and the First Gulf War. However, once we find ourselves fighting against local insurgents, as was the

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## FEBRUARY MEETING REVIEW *(Continued)*

case in the Philippines, Vietnam, and now Afghanistan, national support for the war quickly dissolves.

America's crusade tradition is enumerated in the words of the Battle Hymn of the Republic, our second national anthem, "He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat." We fight for total victory and expect a ceremonious celebration to unconditional surrender. Our missionary impulse to spread freedom and democracy is symbolized on the back of our dollar bill. The Latin phrase *NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM*, is interpreted to mean "a new order for the world," recognizing the American era against tyrants. America's first true crusade was the Civil War, which set the precedent for failed attempts at nation building. Within three decades of Reconstruction, Americans struggled with the moral decision to fight against insurgents in the Philippines after crushing the Spanish Empire. The First World War was supposed to be the war to end all wars, a peace without victory that would make the world safe for democracy. Between the

World Wars, America engaged in the Banana Wars of the Caribbean which Roosevelt tried to rectify through his Good Neighbor Policy. The Second World War was to be the perfect crusade, set in majestic idealism but shadowed by the atomic bomb. The First Gulf War, with less than 150 American deaths, is a perfect characterization of the American crusade. National opinion polls showed that seventy percent of Americans wanted Saddam Hussein out of office, but because President George H.W. Bush resisted regime change, Americans did not consider the seven month war a victory.

While America sows the seeds of liberty with one hand, we wave the sword of vengeance with the other. In the words of Julia Ward Howe, "Let the Hero, born of woman; crush the serpent with His heel." National opinion polls show that we are happier crushing our enemy than reconstructing the peace. We can readily name the heroes of war, but the peace-keepers of the world remain anonymous. Perhaps this is because the American ideal of nation-build-

ing is unachievable. Americans hold their sacred freedoms and the bar for success so high that no level of progress can meet the expectations. In some instances, such as in Bosnia and Kosovo, and to a lesser extent Somalia, American humanitarian interventions have been successful. To further complicate the issue, Americans on the left see nation building as imperialism, while those on the right see it as a big government social engineering project to extend the welfare state. Nation building is similar to the Pottery Barn rule, you break it – you own it; we don't like owning it. If war is hell when fighting a crusade, nation building is the hell of war.

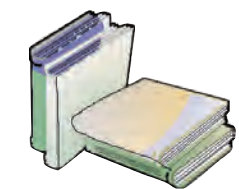
America's dislike for nation building, like an epic song, follows a predictable rhythm. It begins with division over the merits of war, followed by a rally behind the president when the first shots are fired, questions surrounding the benefits of regime change, and finally a morally confusing debate over how to win the peace. ■



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## SUGGESTED READINGS

*By Fred Nyland, News Editor*



Michael Scheuer, *Osama Bin Laden*, Oxford University Press, 2011. The events of 9/11 almost instantaneously changed American politics and foreign policy. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Patriot Act, water boarding and Guantanamo are examples of its profound and far-reaching effects. But despite its impact and a deluge of books about al-Qaeda and Islamist terrorism, no one has written a serious assessment of the man who planned it, Osama bin Laden. Available biographies depict bin Laden as a historical figure, the mastermind behind 9/11, but no longer relevant to the world it created. These accounts have contributed to a widespread and dangerous denial of his continuing significance and power. Scheuer

provides a hard headed, closely reasoned portrait of bin Laden, showing him to be a figure of remarkable leadership skills, strategic genius, and considerable rhetorical abilities. Scheuer was the first head of the CIA's bin Laden Unit and draws from a wealth of information about bin Laden and his evolution from a peaceful Saudi dissident to America's "Most Wanted." The author makes use of all the speeches and interviews bin Laden has given, testimony, and previously untranslated documents written by those who grew up with bin Laden in Saudi Arabia, served as his bodyguards and drivers, and fought alongside him against the Soviets. The bin Laden who emerges

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## SUGGESTED READINGS

(Continued)

from these accounts is devout, talented, patient and ruthless. Fouad Ajami, a professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in his review commented, "Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri and their followers dreaded and loathed the regimes in their homelands. They couldn't bring down these regimes, the near enemy they called them. So they struck at the far enemy, the United States in particular." (Sources: Amazon.com, Faud Ajami, "The Specter," *New York Times*, February 13, 2011)

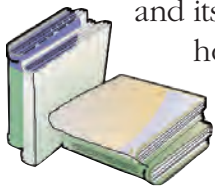
Ian Frazier, *Travels in Siberia*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010. In this book, the author trains his eye for unforgettable detail on Siberia, that vast expanse of Asiatic Russia. He has long been fascinated by vast empty spaces and the people who live in them (*Great Plains*). Frazier explores the many aspects of this storied, often grim region, which takes up one seventh of the land on earth. He writes about the geography, the resources, the native peoples, the history, the forty-below midwinter afternoons, and the bugs. What he loves about Siberia is its tragedy and its humor, its stoic practicality

and its near-insanity: he calls it "the greatest horrible country in the world." Siberia

is swampy, often frozen, and strikingly empty. This book brims with

Mongols, half crazed Orthodox arch-

priests, fur seekers, ambassadors of the czar bound for Peking, tea caravans, German scientists, American prospectors, intrepid English nurses, and prisoners and exiles of every kind. *Travels in Siberia* is an account of Russia since the end of the Soviet Union and a personal reflection on the all around amazingness of Russia, a country that still somehow manages to be funny. Joshua Hammer in his review tells us, "Frazier learned Russian, immersed himself in the literature and history of the territory and embarked on more journeys across the taiga and tundra. The result is *Travels in Siberia*, an uproarious, sometimes dark yarn filled with dubious meals, broken-down vehicles, abandoned slave-labor camps and ubiquitous statues of Lenin --- *On the Road* meets *The Gulag Archipelago*." (Sources: Publisher notes, Amazon.com review, and Joshua Hammer, "Cold Case Files," *New York Times*, October 28, 2010)



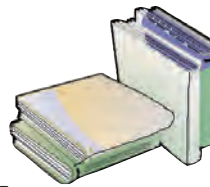
## WORLD QUEST COMPETITION

On February 15th, CFWAC sponsored an elimination tournament to select a high school team from the west metro Denver area to represent us in the World Affairs Councils of America's international Academic WorldQuest competition in Washington, DC. The two teams competing for the national contest were from Colorado Academy and Standley Lake High School. The competition was very close; however, the Standley Lake team took the lead and will be representing CFWAC for the second year in a row. Our congratulations go to Charlena Chhay, Ryan Johnson, Sohan Shah, Paris Mitton, Sheridan Classick, and their teacher Mr. Shawn Collins. Good luck in Washington, D.C.! For more information on the Academic World Quest, visit <http://www.worldaffairsCouncils.org> and select Programs.

Douglas Waller, *Wild Bill Donovan: The Spymaster Who Created the OSS and Modern American Espionage*, Free Press, 2011. He was one of America's most secretive and controversial generals and became Franklin Roosevelt's top spy in World War II. Wild Bill Donovan was director of the Office of Strategic Services, the father of today's CIA. William Donovan's life contained an overflow of personal drama. The son of poor Irish Catholic parents, he married into Protestant wealth and fought heroically in World War I, where he gained the name "Wild Bill," and earned the Medal of Honor for his heroism. After that war he made millions as a Republican lawyer on Wall Street. Donovan was revered by his agents. Yet, at times he was reckless, risking his life unnecessarily and engaging in extramarital affairs that became fodder for his political enemies. This book has stories of daring young men and women in his OSS sneaking behind enemy lines for sabotage, breaking into Washington embassies to steal secrets, plotting to topple Adolf Hitler, and suffering brutal torture or death when they were

(Continued)

## SUGGESTED READINGS *(Continued)*



captured by the Gestapo. It is also a tale of political intrigue and infighting at the highest levels of government. Donovan fought enemies at home as often as the Axis abroad. It wasn't long before Donovan and J. Edgar Hoover were keeping files on each other. Generals in the Pentagon plotted against Wild Bill. Donovan stole secrets from the Soviets before the dawn of the Cold War and had intense battles with Winston Churchill and British spy chiefs over foreign turf. The author describes the successes and the occasional spectacular failures of Donovan's intelligence career. Jennet Conant, author of the book, *A Covert Affair: Julia and Paul Child in the OSS*, in her review comments that the OSS's "many successes and debacles are only hastily sketched here. Waller is more concerned with the politics of personality, and the legacy of Donovan's complex, larger-than-life character. As he amply shows, Donovan was a combination of bold innovator and imprudent rule bender, which made him not only a remarkable wartime leader but also an extraordinary figure in American history." (Sources: Publisher's notes, Jennet Conant, "Swashbuckling Spymaster," *New York Times*, February 13, 2011) ■

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### VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

[www.ColoradoFoothillsWAC.org](http://www.ColoradoFoothillsWAC.org)

The Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council is a non-profit organization which meets to provide a forum for those in our community wishing to keep abreast of developments in international relations and to discuss them on a regular basis with those having similar interests.

For more information, call Walter "Joe" Shaw 303-979-5927. ALL COLORADO FOOTHILLS WAC MEETINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. RESERVATIONS ARE NOT REQUIRED.

**DIRECTIONS** to Mount Vernon Country Club: Exit I-70 at Genesee Park (Exit #254). Go North on Mount Vernon Country Club Road, Staying on the paved road and curving to the right. The Club entrance will be on your left, 1.1 miles from the I-70 exit.

**DINNER AT 6:00 PM** in the main dining room at Mount Vernon Country Club is optional. Reservations have to be made no later than the Sunday before the event. Call Mt. Vernon Country Club at 303-526-0616 and ask for seating with the Colorado Foothills WAC. Cost of dinner will be collected by the Club.

**TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS, AND MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Information can be sent to: Ned Biggs, P.O. Box 1602, Evergreen, CO 80437-1602.



*Newsletter Design: Brenn Lea Pearson*

The Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council (CFWAC) is a non-partisan organization and does not endorse any political affiliations. The views and opinions of speakers, members and guests expressed at the Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council presentations as well as the press releases, summaries and reading list included in this newsletter do not necessarily constitute or imply the endorsement, recommendation or favoring of the Colorado Foothills WAC or any of its officers, or contractors acting on its behalf.

Student memberships: \$5; Individual memberships: \$30; Family memberships: \$45; Supporting memberships: \$75; Contributing memberships: \$100; Patron memberships: \$250; Corporate memberships: \$400.

**HAVE YOU MOVED?** Please let the Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council Treasurer, Ned Biggs, know about your move so your mailing information can be updated. Send change of address requests to: CFWAC Treasurer, P.O. Box 1602, Evergreen, CO 80437-1602.



**SEND YOUR IDEAS** and articles for the newsletter to the Editorial Committee: Beatrice Szadokierski, Editor in Chief, 1923 Parfet Estates Drive, Golden, CO 80401, email: szadokierski@comcast.net or call 303-279-2638.