JOHN HARVARD’S JOURNAL

ations (each side should “stop expecting automatic unity”) and rhetoric. The allies had to reestablish consultation: “Europe,” he said, “must learn that ‘yes’ is sometimes an acceptable answer to a U.S. initiative” (should the U.S. actually solicit opinions before announcing a course of action). Postwar problems in Iraq would have to be solved (paraphrasing Churchill, “The U.S. always pursues the right policy, after trying all the others first”). Real progress must be made to resolve “corrosive” differences on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Shirley Williams lent a political perspective on whether it would be possible to relieve the “present discontents” even as the post-World War II architecture is “slowly falling apart.” The Kennedy School’s public service professor of electoral politics emerita, now leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords, emphasized the European Union’s effort to end on-the-field wars “by the process of pooling sovereignty.” Because of that success, she discerned “deep suspicion of the assertion of national sovereignty itself,” especially as aggressively asserted by the United States of late. Iraq brought that suspicion to a head, she said, so England, in its traditional role of bridge between American and European interests, “is being torn apart.”

Alliances and true consultation matter, she insisted, because “military power alone cannot lead to nation-building and a change of heart”—a basic lesson the Bush administration, blinded by a “fundamentalist streak of self-righteousness,” has been able to learn “only from practice.”

The questions flew, from alumni participants from Turkey, Liberia, Bulgaria, Mexico, America, Britain, and Norway. At the concluding banquet, J. Dudley Fishburn ’68—former executive editor of the Economist, who in 1990 became the first Briton elected to the Board of Overseers since 1776—moderated even more questions, addressed to President Summers from the audience.

In dinner conversation, Carlos Iglesias García, a self-employed consultant from Barcelona, recapped his conference experiences. He had attended faculty-led symposia in leadership and on business ethics, of professional interest. But he most valued two other opportunities. One was the chance to renew and make contacts at his first Harvard function since completing work at the Extension School in 1996. The other was hearing the analyses at the human-rights panel on “Implications for Intervention: Culture, Religion, and Politics”—especially the personal testimony of the School of Public Health’s Jennifer Leaning, professor of international health and director of the program on humanitarian crises, who has seen the world at its worst in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

García’s impressions recalled Stephen Walt’s observation that morning. In many nations, he had said, the public opposes U.S. foreign policy, yet retains a deep reservoir of admiration for America’s economy, scientific expertise, and political system. At a troubled time, he reminded the international Harvardians present, people around the world “are not worried about Americans because of who we are, but because of what we do.”

War Stories

ROBERT T. TIMS ’47 found the transition between his two worlds in 1943 sudden, dramatic, and disconcerting. “One day I was a beribboned first lieutenant flying bombing missions over Germany and occupied France,” he writes in The Harvard Class of 1947 and World War II, a new collection of wartime memoirs. “The next day I was a lowly corduroyed undergraduate in Harvard Yard.”

His tale—among more than 125 compiled by class secretary Charles D. Thompson at the suggestion of classmate David E. Snow—sums up the experience of many in his generation in describing the difficulty of moving “from the moment of truth over Berlin to the moment of truth at exam time in Memorial Hall…from the making of history to the study of history…from the generous combat pay of $400 a month to the meager support of the GI Bill.”

The 1,050 men who arrived in Cambridge in the fall of 1943 were, as Thompson puts it, “a war-fractured class.” Ninety-three percent of them saw military service, with dozens arriving or departing each semester. Some accelerated their

News from Harvard@Home

Harvard@Home, the University-wide initiative for putting learning on-line, offers several new programs for 2004. They include:

• Diana L. Eck, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies, introducing a major Hindu god in “Manifestations of Shiva.” The program has video of Eck’s course “Hindu Myth, Image, and Pilgrimage” and an interview with Eck, acting director of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School. For details, visit http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/mos.html.

• Florence professor of government Gary King exploring possible solutions for polling problems in “Improving Survey Research.” King describes “anchoring vignettes”—descriptions of hypothetical people or situations that researchers can use to correct survey responses that people from different backgrounds may interpret in different ways. For details, visit http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/vsr.html.

• “A New American Empire?” featuring a presentation by Stephen Peter Rosen, Kaneb professor of national security and military affairs. Rosen, also director of the Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, discusses whether the United States should use its military predominance to regulate interstate relations and to create domestic governments in other countries. For details, visit http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/nae.html.

Harvard@Home provides desktop access to lectures, speeches, presentations, performances, and other events. The Web-based project offers more than 30 edited programs on topics in the arts, the sciences, current affairs, history, literature, and math. Programs, which range from 45 minutes to three hours in length, are free and available to the public. For more information, visit http://athome.harvard.edu.
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D. Champlin III once saw a medic struggling through deep snow to help a wounded soldier. “The Red Cross painted on his helmet was clearly visible, but he was dropped by a single shot from the village. Watching helplessly, I felt a surge of rage unlike anything I had known before,” Champlin recalls. Later, after Champlin himself took a bullet in the hip, he lay for hours in the darkness and the rain, waiting for medics to find him. “The next events, like so many, are what the movies call jump cuts,” writes Champlin, who went on to become the arts editor of the Los Angeles Times. Rescued and moved to a field hospital, Champlin was airlifted to England for surgery. “Another quick cinematic moment. I’m on the operating table to have the shrapnel removed. I ask the surgeon where he went to med school. ‘Harvard,’ he says. ‘Perfect,’ I say.”

Yet these classmates who were strangers share similar memories of a pivotal moment in history. Those memories—some humorous, many poignant, a few bitter—remain vivid enough, six decades later, to fill a 360-page book.

In his preface, Thompson notes that the memoir project attracted submissions from classmates who had never attended a class reunion or contributed to a class newsletter. “Our revolving-door education—the coming and going—hindered our getting to know each other,” he writes. “Now we know each other better.”

To purchase the book, contact Charles Thompson at chuckt47@aol.com or call 781-461-0647. The $50 price includes postage.

Photographs courtesy of Messrs. Champlin, Wharton, and Wheeler