

tradition of religious tolerance advocated by Locke, Montesquieu, and Jefferson,” or with the formal separation of church and state found in the United States and other Western liberal democracies.

What is needed, he contends, is “a new and more inclusive ‘social contract’ that addresses the cultural diversity of Turkish society.”

But that may be easier said than done. “Neither the country’s élites, with their generally corrupt, inefficient, personalized and ineffective system of political

parties, nor the masses have moved far from the authoritarian traditions of the Ottoman Empire and its weak civil society,” write Buzan and Diez. The elected government has only limited influence on Turkey’s security forces, they note and “the military still functions as a quasi-autonomous entity.”

And the military has widespread support, notes the *Economist* (Apr. 10, 1999). The army is largely a conscript force, and opinion polls “consistently show the armed forces to be the country’s most popular institution.”

Where China’s Water Goes

“Is China Living on the Water Margin?” by James E. Nickum, in *The China Quarterly* (Dec. 1998), School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG.

From the Worldwatch Institute came a warning last year that China’s farmers are running short of water, as the demands of the nation’s cities grow. Ultimately, institute analysts said, China could be forced to boost grain imports, pushing world market prices higher and thus threatening the lives of impoverished people around the globe. Nickum, an institutional economist at the University of Tokyo, says the situation is not as dire as all that.

Droughts, floods, polluted flows, and urban water shortages are nothing new in China, he notes. But conditions vary greatly from one region to another. China’s “monsoonal climate concentrates precipitation in the summer months,” Nickum says, an effect especially pronounced in the north and northeast, where average precipitation is less than in the south and southeast. “Some places, especially in the north and along the coast, have been under high levels of stress for some time; others, in the central and southern areas, remain more liable to damage from too much water than from too little.”

More than two-thirds of all the water consumed in China is used for irrigation. Virtually all of China’s rice—whether grown in paddy fields (where irrigation is supplemental) or on irrigated dry land—is officially considered irrigated. Even in Beijing, half the water used in 1993 was for irrigation and other farm production purposes. Industry

used only one-fourth of the total.

Economic development and all that it entails—industrialization, urbanization, chemical agriculture, and livestock production—has indeed increased the demand for water and threatened its quality. But “the primary pressure on irrigated [farmland] now, and probably for some time into the future,” Nickum says, comes from the obsolescence of short-lived tubewells and other structures employed in irrigation, not from competing users.

Moreover, Chinese farms use water very inefficiently. The fees charged for irrigation are almost always less than the costs of delivering the water. But if “water becomes sufficiently valuable to make the additional costs worth bearing,” Nickum says, more efficient use of it could easily be made. “‘Green revolution’ high-yielding varieties of rice, with their short stalks and brief growing seasons, actually tend to use less water per crop than traditional varieties,” although the water has to be applied at the right times.

Industrialization need not strain agriculture. In Japan and the United States, Nickum points out, government regulation of wastewater discharges has cut industrial water use since the 1970s, despite continued industrial growth. Even in China, the total reported industrial water use dropped during the 1980s, Nickum says, and it could be reduced further by reforming or closing state-owned enterprises that use water heavily.

Nickum's conclusion: "further economic growth and accompanying institutional

change" are more likely to relieve China's water woes than to aggravate them.

Afghanistan's Agony

"Afghanistan under the Taliban" by Barnett R. Rubin, in *Current History* (Feb. 1999), 4225 Main St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19127.

Once a bloody battlefield in the Cold War, Afghanistan under the murderous Taliban is now an arena for regional rivalries—and still ravaged by warfare, writes Rubin, author of *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (1995).

Pakistani-Iranian competition is the main outside force fanning the flames of civil war in Afghanistan. Pakistan has the closest and strongest ties to its northern neighbor. Historically, Islamabad worried about the Pashtun tribes that occupy both southeast Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan. But dur-

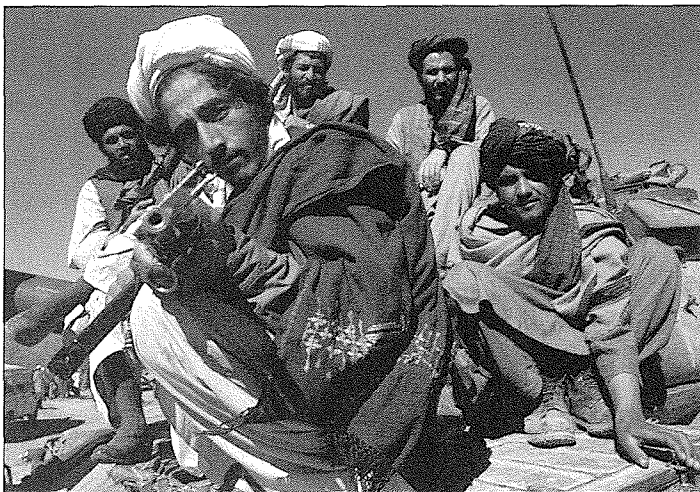
"Upon capturing Mazar," Rubin says, "the Taliban killed thousands of civilians, mainly Shia Muslims from the Hazara ethnic group." Eight Iranian diplomats and an Iranian journalist also were slain, prompting Tehran to post troops on the Afghan border and threaten military action. Tehran is the main supplier of fuel and weapons to the half-dozen or so groups fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, Rubin says. It's not just solidarity with their coreligionists that motivates the Iranians. They also worry

about, among other things, rival Saudi Arabia's influence in Afghanistan.

Until last summer, the Saudis supplied fuel and money to the Taliban through Pakistan. But Saudi-Iranian relations have warmed since the election of Iranian moderate Muhammad Khatami as president. The fact that the Taliban has been harboring wealthy Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden, who has funded militant Islamic groups in Afghanistan,

Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, also gave Riyadh second thoughts. The Saudis, Rubin says, have terminated, or at least scaled back, their aid.

Ever since pro-Soviet communists came to power in a bloody coup in 1978, Afghanistan "has moved from one stage to another of civil war and political disintegration," Rubin observes. The Afghan groups arrayed against the Taliban in the National Islamic United Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan appear united in name only. But thanks in part to its neighbors, Afghanistan's agony appears far from over.



Welcome to Afghanistan

ing the jihad against Soviet forces in the late 1970s and '80s, many Pashtuns rose to leadership positions in Pakistan, Rubin says, and Islamabad came to welcome Pashtun rule "of the right kind" in Afghanistan. It was largely military aid from Pakistan that enabled the radical Islamic Taliban movement—led by Mullah Muhammad Umar and other Pashtuns from Qandahar—to seize control of that city in southeast Afghanistan in 1994, then expand its authority until, with the capture of the northern city of Mazar-i Sharif in August 1998, it controlled virtually the entire country.