

economy around and placed Bulgaria firmly on the road to Euro-Atlantic integration.” By early 2000, it had privatized 70 percent of state assets and inflation was down to 6 percent. However, unemployment was still above 18 percent, 40 percent of Bulgarians were in poverty, and corruption remained pervasive.

A disillusioned electorate turned last year to Bulgaria’s ex-king, Simeon II, who had been exiled in 1946 by the Communists. Prime Minister Simeon has promised further economic reform, but his “most daunting task” will be fighting corruption. Barany believes he is ready to do just that.

Beijing Is Watching

“Academic Freedom in China” by Qinglian He, in *Academe* (May–June 2002), American Assn. of Univ. Professors, Ste. 500, 1012 14th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Have the market-oriented reforms and greater openness to the West of the last two decades brought academic freedom to China’s scholars and intellectuals? Not really, writes He, a prominent economist and writer who fled China last year.

Scholars are better off than in the Mao era (1949–76), when critics of the regime could be sentenced to prison or death. However, especially since the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989, the regime has developed “more sophisticated means of ideological control.”

Chinese academics are permitted to read the Western social science literature and employ its techniques, for example, so long as they refrain from direct criticism of the regime. Cooperative academics get salary raises and perquisites. The study of democracy is not allowed; research on the history of the Chinese Communist Party is restricted; and Beijing’s recent reform policies must be shown in a positive light. “Anyone who goes a little beyond the limits set by the departments may face penalties.”

Chiefly because of pressure from international human rights organizations, today’s penalties are hidden. No longer do the authorities formally announce that a scholar has been fired or had his or her books banned—but that is still what happens. Some offenders are put under police surveillance. (He’s own books were officially banned by the government in December 2000, and she left China to become a visiting scholar at the University of Chicago “after months of being followed by security agents who had broken into her home, tapped her phone, and seized documents and personal items,” noted the *University of Chicago Magazine* last year.)

The communist regime also monitors Western scholars who study China. Those who publicly criticize the regime may see “their visa applications rejected without explanation,” losing access that can be vital to a scholarly career. Beijing’s intimidation has been “quite successful,” according to He, “in influencing images of China’s current situation in western scholarship.”

Lessons from Sierra Leone

“Sierra Leone: The State That Came Back from the Dead” by Michael Chege, in *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2002), Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1800 K St., N.W., Ste. 400, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Thanks to British and UN peacekeepers, Sierra Leone finally seems to have left civil war and anarchy behind. The country’s long ordeal offers two important lessons for would-be rescuers of failed states, argues Chege, director of the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida at Gainesville.

The first lesson is not to throw money at corrupt dictatorships that repeatedly break their promises to reform. The International Monetary Fund and other aid organizations increased their development assistance to Sierra Leone from \$18 million in 1975 to \$100 million in 1989, “effectively rewarding the making of a disaster,” says Chege.