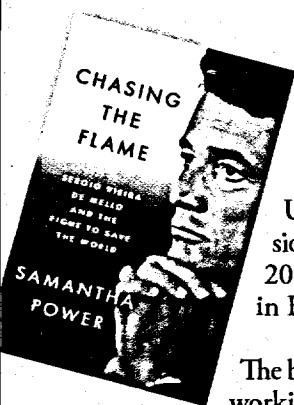


A Life—and Death— in Internationalism

By Kelly Morgan



Chasing the Flame, by Samantha Power, follows the career of Sergio Vieira de Mello, the Brazilian-born UN diplomat and former high commissioner for human rights who lost his life in the 2003 terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad.

The book tells the story of the frustrating internal workings of the UN and the failure of member governments—particularly the five major powers—to provide sufficient or appropriate resources to accomplish the mandates set there. This is seen through a captivating account of Vieira de Mello's personal and professional life and experiences in the international community over the years.

Vieira de Mello was the Zelig of international diplomacy, specifically in peacebuilding, human rights and humanitarian assistance, finding himself at the centre of what seems like every crisis since the 1960s. A complex and fascinating man, he loved fieldwork and was miserable whenever he was assigned to UN headquarters in New York.

By the time of his assignment as the UN's special representative to Iraq, "he was deeply worried that the system he had joined 34 years before was not up to the task of dealing with the barbarism and lawlessness of the times," writes Power, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and professor at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. "Twentieth-century rules were no match for twenty-first-century crises." Vieira de Mello saw a UN in need of transformation.

Power demonstrates the personal price that the diplomat and his family paid for his dedication and devotion to peacebuilding, culminating in his tragic assassination in Baghdad. It was a terrible blow for Iraq, for the UN and for our profession. A must-read.

Kelly Morgan is a senior policy analyst in the Office of Transformation (EXIT).

Chasing the Flame: Sergio Vieira de Mello and the Fight to Save the World, by Samantha Power. Penguin Press, 622 pages, \$32.95.

Five Recent Must-Reads

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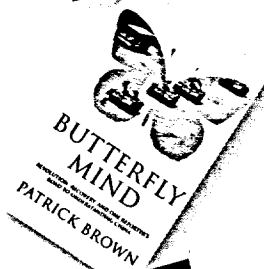
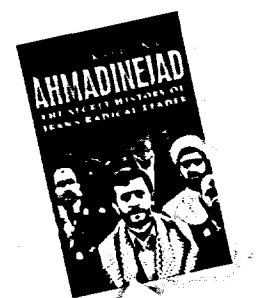
1. Ahmadinejad: The Secret History of Iran's Radical Leader by Kasra Naji. Written by a former Iranian journalist, this biography covers Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's rise to power, his complex character and his motivations. An informative portrait of Iran today.

2. Butterfly Mind: Revolution, Recovery, and One Reporter's Road to Understanding China by Patrick Brown. A fascinating memoir by a Canadian reporter in China who has witnessed the rise and fall of nations around the world.

3. Israël confronté à son passé : essai sur l'influence de la "nouvelle histoire" by Sébastien Boussois. History has been rewritten since Israel and the U.K. opened their archives on the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. This book studies the effect the new interpretations have had on Israeli society.

4. The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order by Parag Khanna. This book contends that the United States, the European Union and China have emerged as imperialistic superpowers, competing to partner with and exploit the resources of developing countries.

5. The Soviet Ambassador: The Making of the Radical Behind Perestroika by Christopher Shulgan. This biography reveals the role Canada played in transforming an influential Soviet ambassador from a devout Stalinist to a force for democracy.



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