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NEW YORK TIMES
3 MARCH 1981

New Team at U.N.: Common Roots and Philosophies

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Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., March 2

The new team running the American mission here resembles an extended family whose lineage extends from Jeane Kirkpatrick, the chief delegate.

There is Carl Gershman, a counselor who sits in the office directly across from Mrs. Kirkpatrick. Like her, he made his mark urging a stern, anti-Communist stance in Commentary magazine, the neoconservative bible. They first met at a gathering of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, a group aimed at rescuing the Democratic Party from the George McGovern liberals.

Another key appointee is an old family friend, Charles M. Lichenstein. He fills one of the five posts that have ambassadorial rank and will deal mostly with press affairs and with the security and other problems of the 153 foreign missions here. Like Mr. Gershman, Mr. Lichenstein is a Phi Beta Kappa from Yale. A onetime officer in the Central Intelligence Agency and a ghost writer for Richard M. Nixon, Mr. Lichenstein regularly vacations with Mrs. Kirkpatrick and her husband in Europe.

Jose S. Sorzano, 40 years old, presently ranked as a counselor, is a protégé of the new mission chief. He studied political science under her at Georgetown University and she was one of three professors who read his doctoral thesis. Mr. Sorzano was a research assistant in the preparation of Mrs. Kirkpatrick's book on Argentina under Juan D. Perón, and, most recently, a colleague on the Georgetown faculty.

Career Diplomat in No. 2 Post

The Commentary-Georgetown-friendship network does not embrace Marshall Brement, the second-ranking member of the delegation and a career Foreign Service officer. But in a mission whose directors often echo each other, he said, "I am compatible." The 39-year-old Mr. Brement is fluent in seven languages, including Russian and two Chinese dialects, and comes here from a post in the National Security Council.

The sense of common purpose binding her group is Mrs. Kirkpatrick's design. She has the tidy mind of a professor whose lectures are easy to outline.

The President has said he wants to staff the Government with those who share his philosophy," Mrs. Kirkpatrick said. "What I've tried to do is add on people who share the orientation of this Administration."

She and her aides stress what Mrs. Kirkpatrick calls their intention "to speak here with greater clarity." But precisely what they will be clear about is still obscure. At her first news conference, held last week, Mrs. Kirkpatrick said that the Administration was still reviewing every foreign policy question, from the global economic bargain that poorer countries are seeking to a Western plan for independence of South-West Africa, also known as Namibia.

No 'Communications Gap' Seen

Even so, the new mission cannot imagine falling into the sort of pit dug for Donald F. McHenry, Mrs. Kirkpatrick's predecessor, who voted in the Security Council against expanding Israeli settlements last March and was promptly disavowed by President Carter. A "communications gap" was blamed.

Mr. Lichenstein, a 54-year-old specialist in communications, said, "When in doubt, we'll be on the secure telephone and telex requesting guidance." The guidance, he and the rest of the team make clear, will come from Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr.

Mr. Lichenstein ran his own consulting firm on policy analysis and mass communications in Washington. He wrote the first drafts for four of the "Six Crises" of Mr. Nixon's book. He also served as a special assistant in the Nixon White House, taught political science briefly at Notre Dame University and was a vice president for public relations for the Public Broadcasting Service.

"This will be an effective team, more so than in the past," said Mr. Brement, the deputy. It will be marked, he said, by "consistency" and "reliability."

Mr. Gershman, who is 37, has a master's degree in education from Harvard to go with his Yale diploma. Last year he was a resident scholar at Freedom House, a private organization in New York, writing on totalitarian threats to American democracy. For six years, he ran Social Democrats, USA, a political action group supporting liberals concerned with Soviet power.

'Conceptual Clarity' Sought

Mrs. Kirkpatrick, who is 54, is particularly uncomfortable with common United Nations terms like "the third world," "North-South" and "nonaligned." These terms, she said, cover groups of nations "that are not a monolithic, integrated whole" but "disparate nations with disparate interests." What she seeks, she said, is "conceptual clarity."

What will she do with the six Security Council members from Latin America, Asia and Africa who typically work out common positions as members of the third world?

"We bargain with them," she replied briskly. But this will not stop her from seeking to deal with the six separately, through the United States embassies in their capitals. "I will use all the legal, morally acceptable tools at hand," she said. "The notion that I will be less concerned with the so-called third world than my predecessors is absurd."

"Speaking is action," Mr. Brement said. "Words matter. This team is united in feeling that." The mission, he said, resists the notion "that it doesn't matter what you say here." It will not accept unwanted phrases in resolutions simply to accommodate others, "cynically going along to influence people," he declared.

Mr. Brement, who graduated from Brooklyn College and has a master's degree from Maryland, has served in Spain, South Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore and twice in the Soviet Union. His other languages are Indonesian, French, Spanish and Hebrew.

To avoid appearing obdurate, the five permanent members of the Security Council usually hesitate to invoke their power of veto. But Mr. Brement suggested that "there will be a willingness to use the veto "if it is needed."

Mrs. Kirkpatrick and her aides slip easily into the patriotic language of an earlier era.

"I fell on the side I considered pro-American," he said. "I recognized the nature of totalitarianism."

Even a professional like Mr. Brement talks in a similar fashion. The new team, he said, shares "a basic feeling that the United States is the best hope of the world, and what we do in the U.N. should reflect our vision of the world."