

John Fayerweather

A Memorial by Jean Boddewyn

There are many ways to remember him, and the memories of those who knew John Fayerweather reveal his multiple contributions as leader, teacher, researcher and mentor. He helped found the AIB in 1958, and he was our first President in 1960-1961 – a distant time which explains why many post-1980 AIB members know or remember little of him. Throughout his academic career, he was a great organizer tirelessly writing notes, memos, letters and reports to pull people in and bring them together and to build consensus instead of imposing his will on others.

He wrote the first IB textbook in 1960: *Management of International Operations; Text and Cases* (McGraw-Hill). It had few adoptions because there were hardly any IB courses outside of international economics, finance and foreign-trade (import-export) management. John helped fill this gap by organizing summer programs in the mid-1960s to guide the new young teachers of international marketing and management, comparative systems, area studies and business-government relations.

His crowning academic achievement was his 1969 monograph *International Business Management: A Conceptual Approach* (McGraw-Hill) which gave unity to the IB field by presenting major themes that remain valid and inspiring today. From economics, he drew the notion of unique resources - the source of competitive advantages - that could be fruitfully transmitted by international firms to host nations. Putting these resources to local use required adaptations to the foreign cultures and social systems analyzed in the social sciences. These two processes of "resource transmission" and "relations with host societies" often generate mutually benefits for both the multinational firm and the affected nations but sometimes they result in conflicts involving the power-based confrontation of the interests of the firm with different national interests and nationalistic attitudes - the political dimension of his conceptual framework. These transactions, relations and conflicts in diverse foreign countries lead toward a fragmented pattern of policies and activities that weaken the effectiveness of the multinational corporation whose unique potential vis-à-vis local national firms lies largely in its unified global capabilities. Achieving a balance between such "fragmentation" and "unification" composes the final organizational focus of his conceptual framework.

Thereby, he gave us the conceptual framework that guided or can be used to interpret the subsequent studies by many IB researchers of "global integration versus national responsiveness," of "conflict resolution," of "resources" and "advantages" and of the "structure and functioning" of multinational enterprises.

John Fayerweather was a voracious reader who shared his readings with IB scholars through his publication The International Executive for which he wrote book and article reviews as well as classified bibliographies at a time when it was difficult to locate materials for the new IB courses then being designed and offered.

His rectitude was striking. Thus, he did not hesitate to leave the AIB which he had helped found because it had accepted grants from the U.S. State Department and the Egyptian Government and given the use of its mailing list to business associations on the side of multinational enterprises in their conflicts with governments. He returned to our flock only after the AIB Constitution had been amended to ban such dangerous liaisons. These and other events of his life are recounted in his 1986 monograph *A History of the Academy of International Business from Infancy to Maturity: The First 25 Years* (South Carolina Essays in International Business). He also wrote his professional autobiography for JIBS in 1994 (Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 1-44).

His moral and intellectual authority shines through the recent condolence messages - ranging from a student who was asked by his Japanese teacher to translate John Fayerweather's 1969 book and who derived his IB vocation from this assignment which ultimately led him to become an AIB Fellow, to a member who thinks he is John Fayerweather's "grandson" for having studied under a teacher who had been John's doctoral student! As one mourner said: "What an enormous family we are!" - thanks to him. John Fayerweather's legacy is broad and deep and we can extend it by contributing to the IB field which he loved so much and to which he gave of himself repeatedly, in many guises and so fruitfully.