



Fair Observer^o

Independence, Diversity, Debate



SECOND QUARTER UPDATE

2024



Dear FO^o Supporter,

As you can imagine, the Indian, British and French elections have been a roller coaster for us at Fair Observer. The American elections are only a few months away, but election fever has gripped the country with Joe Biden's withdrawal of his candidacy.

The evening after our last FO^o Meetup, I saw Joe Biden and Donald Trump debate from a New York bar full of Democrats. As their erstwhile candidate stammered, they headed for the door, leaving their chicken wings and French fries behind. A few days ago, I watched the Republican National Convention with Capitol Hill Republicans. Morale was sky-high. Unlike the Democrats, these Republicans see the November elections as a slam dunk.

Joe Biden has now stood down for Kamala Harris. We are in uncharted territory and everything is up in the air. I expected this to happen. The postwar world has been experiencing enormous strain in recent years. Institutions have lost credibility; current elites are out of touch, and people are hurting, insecure, and angry. Demagogues who promise simple solutions to complex problems are taking advantage of the situation. Yet, these demagogues are the symptoms, not the causes, of a broken system that fails most people.

One big problem for democracy has been the implosion of journalism. These days, few people read, and even fewer pay to read. Journalism has lost both its legs: advertising and subscriptions. Tech has devoured journalism. Google and Facebook are laughing all the way to the bank because they capture over 90% of all online advertising revenue.

Ironically, tech money is now buying reputed media organizations: Jeff Bezos owns *The Washington Post* and Laurene Powell Jobs controls *The Atlantic*. The media organizations that dominate the world news space are either owned by billionaires or funded by governments, in the case of Al Jazeera and the BBC. Small, independent nonprofit organizations like Fair Observer provide a global public good but struggle to win eyeballs, find capital or gain revenues.

Therefore, we have spent the second quarter of 2024 working hard to create a new business model. For years, we have functioned on a shoestring budget. In 2013, we launched our 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization after raising [\\$35,001 on Kickstarter](#). In our best year of fundraising, we raised [\\$195,000](#) and we have set the goal to \$300,000 this year. We also aim to have at least 1,000 recurring donors by the end of the year. We have focused on editorial matters in the first half of the year but are now turning our attention to fundraising.

In the following pages, you will find details about how we have done so much with so little. In a time of filter bubbles and echo chambers, we provide an antidote to polarization and parochialism. We publish perspectives from 3,000 authors in 90 countries. This year, we aim to do much more.

Thank you for supporting us in our journey so far. Please tell us how we can do even better.

My warmest regards,

Atul

FO° Editorial Update

The crowdsourced editing model we highlighted in the [previous update](#) is going well. We have increased the quantity and variety of content by broadening our editorial team to include 20 individuals from across the globe. The breadth and scope of our team allows us to give further insight and depth to the articles we publish.

Our young editors get a top-class education not only in journalism but also history, philosophy, geopolitics, economics and everything related to world affairs. They also develop a portfolio of work and become part of a world-wide community.

Until 2023, we kept our editing in-house because we wanted to make sure that everything we published was fact-based and well-reasoned. Moving to a crowdsourced editing model took some thinking and some tinkering.

To be honest, this model came through because of teamwork. Rebecca Zhuo has rich experience of finding and managing volunteers. She came up with a recruiting process for top-level candidates. Anton Schauble rose up to the situation by coming up with an editorial workflow and managing process for volunteer editors from around the world. We now have the right people in the right places that enable us to punch well above our weight.

FO° Content Update

We have been publishing three pieces of content daily. These include articles, podcasts, videos and interactive content. The best of our content makes it to our monthly magazine as well, which you can find [here](#).

Money Matters is a fascinating discussion on the role of the dollar and monetary issues in the modern global economy. A product of our crucible of collaboration involving [Alex Gloy](#), [Peter Isackson](#) and an author using the *nom de plume* of [Edward Quince](#), this effort is attracting some erudite readers.

The [episode](#) of *The Dialectic* on the Indian elections has won plaudits from many diplomats and political pundits for its insights, nuance and fairness. Another [episode](#) on the *Mayflower* has won recognition for a deep dive into America's founding.

As ever, we continue to bring you perspectives from around the world. Former student athlete Hungarian [Vivien Ábrahám](#) worked closely with our team of student interns to transform her thesis on the challenges faced by young women in sports into an engaging and informative article.

We are home to debate and discourse, context and contemplation. You can listen to Israeli political insider Josef Olmert analyze the Israel– Hamas war in three interviews. He delves into Israel's [airstrike exchange](#) with Iran, the crisis in the Israeli [war cabinet](#) and the looming threat of [Hezbollah](#) on Israel's northern border. You can also read the Iranian [perspective](#) in Mehdi Alavi's article, which is naturally different from Olmert's view.

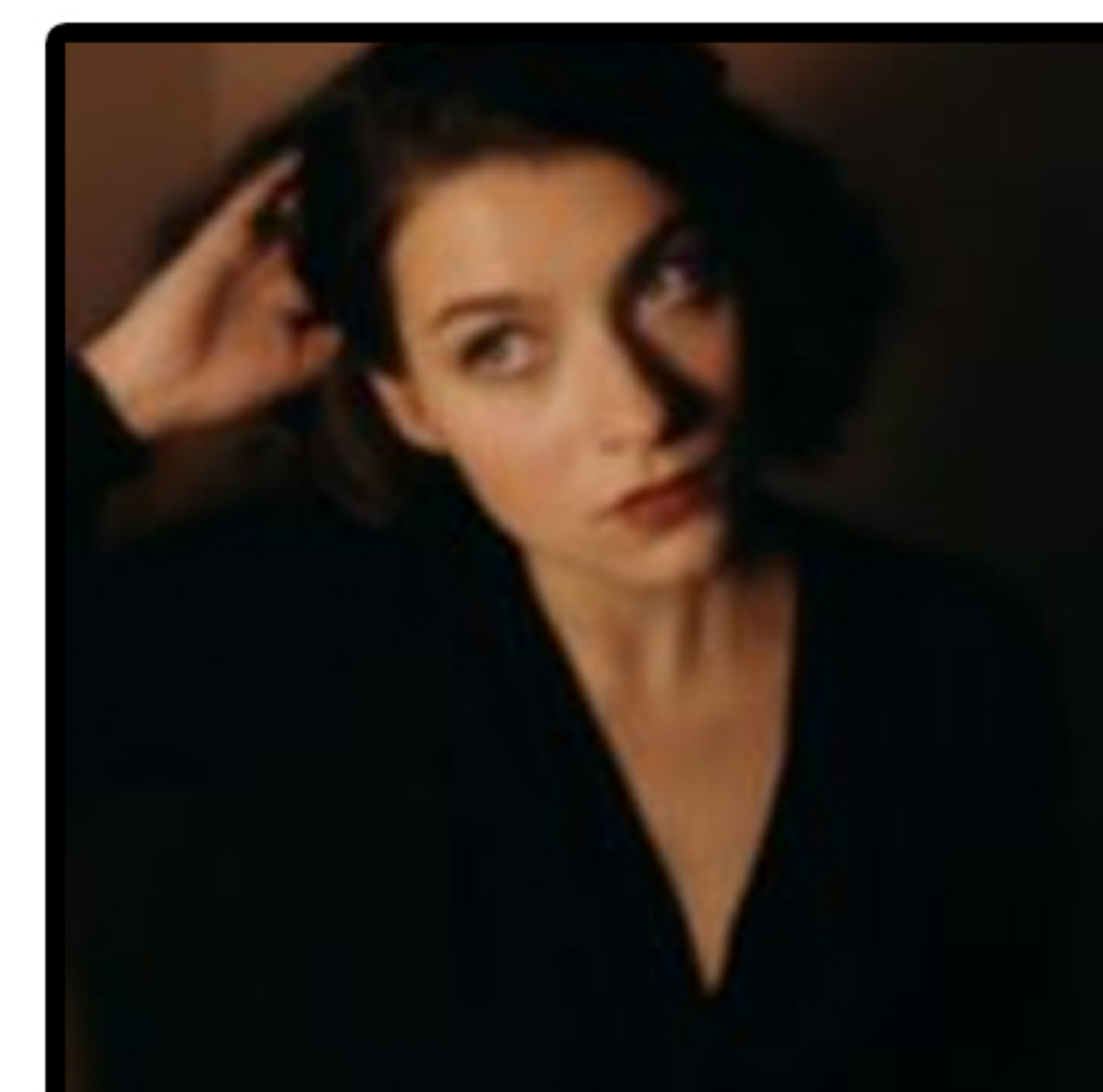
For a long view of history, few of our authors rival Gary Grappo, a former US ambassador and an FO^o board member. His two-part interview on the new fast-changing role of the US in the Middle East is a must watch for anyone interested in international relations in general and the region in particular. You can see [part one](#) and [part two](#) on our YouTube channel.

FO^o Team Update

Lee Thompson Kolar has joined our editorial team and assists Anton Schauble, increasing our editing capacity.



Elizabeth Tate has joined our team as an assistant editor. She has already penned four articles for *Fair Observer* and will be recording videos and podcasts with our authors from around the world.



Alexander Gloy has now joined us as an Editor-at-Large who shines the light on finance and economics. Together with Peter Isackson, he has kicked off Money Matters, a product of the crucible of collaboration that one of our supporters suggested two years ago.



Stephen Day has joined us as an adviser. With his extensive experience in business and on boards such as NASA, he has provided invaluable advice on how Fair Observer can grow as a nonprofit organization .



FO° Partnerships Update

Fair Observer is creating an ecosystem of partner institutions from around the world. Our partners include the Vienna-based Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe and the Delhi-based United Service Institution of India. Both institutions are prestigious in their parts of the world, but neither would have known much about the other. Many of our American readers have not even heard of either. We see our role as bringing together people and institutions from around the world, and forging a global conversation.



FO Meetup in NYC

Why Supporting FO^o Is a Jolly Good Thing

In 2024, we aim to increase our impact. One key goal is to approach foundations and donor-advised funds for support. We would be grateful for any introductions. We are also looking for grant writers and, if you know any, send them our way.

As you know, we rely on your support. Here's what you can do:

- Ask people in your circle to **sign up** for our [newsletter](#) and **follow us** on social media: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

- Introduce us to those who might want to **publish** with us.

- **Share** our newsletters, articles, podcasts and videos to your circle.

- **Download** our [e-publications](#): **monthly magazines, yearbooks** and more. You can read them on your e-reader or print them out. (That will save your eyes from overexposure to blue light.)

- **Ask your friends to [support us](#)**. Remember, a free press is not free. The number of donors and their level of engagement makes a large difference. A monthly or even an annual contribution of \$5, \$3 or \$1 goes a long way. Keep in mind that companies like Visa and Google **match your donation** because we are a 501(c)(3) organization. Our EIN is 46-4070943.

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Thanks to your support,
Fair Observer examines global issues through local lenses. In a world of filter bubbles, echo chambers and polarization, Fair Observer is a forum for discussion, debate and dialogue across borders, backgrounds and beliefs.

Thanks to you, we are educating young authors, young editors and young readers, and plan to do much more.

With gratitude,

Claire, Atul, Peter, Roberta, Anton, Cheyenne Torres, Gwyneth Campbell, Lee Thompson-Kolar and the rest of the FO^o Team

