

1995

## WCL Professor Participates in Election Monitoring in Nepal

Angela Collier

*American University Washington College of Law*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/hrbrief>



Part of the [Human Rights Law Commons](#), and the [International Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Collier, Angela. "WCL Professor Participates in Election Monitoring in Nepal." Human Rights Brief 2, no. 3 (1995): 15.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Washington College of Law Journals & Law Reviews at Digital Commons @ American University Washington College of Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Human Rights Brief by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ American University Washington College of Law. For more information, please contact [kcley@wcl.american.edu](mailto:kcley@wcl.american.edu).

American Interests, continued from previous page

be, the imposition of peace and stability from outside the zone of conflict itself. Ultimately, within states, so long as the nation-state system survives, people have to learn to live in peace with their fellow countrymen. They cannot be taught, and ethnic tranquillity cannot be imposed

from the outside, no matter how high-minded the motives of the outsiders, or how tragic the situation they are trying to alleviate. This reality may not be pretty, but it is accurate. 🌍



## WCL Professor Participates in Election Monitoring in Nepal

by Angela Collier

**A**ndrew Popper, Associate Dean of Administration and WCL Law Professor, travelled to Nepal in November 1994 to monitor the country's mid-term elections. The monitoring program was conducted under the direction of the National Election Observation Commission (NEOC), an indigenous Nepalese organization, and involved observers from every continent.

The observers were divided into teams of three or four and dispatched throughout the country. Popper, who acted as spokesperson for his team, was assigned to monitor the election process in vari-

The election was "moving, irregular, exciting, full of hope and democracy, but at the same time full of problems."

ous polling stations in the province of Dhading. Following the election, a coordinating committee assessed the teams' reports and made recommendations to the Nepalese Congress regarding election certification.

Popper recalls that the election was "moving, irregular, exciting, full of hope

"In a three-year-old democracy, even twenty percent voter fraud may have to be tolerable."

and democracy, but at the same time full of problems." He believes that voters were intelligent and highly interested in the election process, but lacked good sources of information on the issues and ideologies of the parties. Popper notes

that some of the election practices were questionable, including underage voting, rough treatment by riot police, and the breaking of some ballot-box seals. "The very form of government may hang in the balance when such forces are in conflict," states Popper. "Thus, the election becomes a civil form of decision-making, in sharp contrast to violent revolution."

Despite the problems, the NEOC Coordinating Committee ultimately recommended certification of the election in which the Marxist-Leninist party received a majority of votes. Concurring with the NEOC's decision, Popper states, "Besides the fraud, I was taken by how strongly everyone felt they were affecting an outcome." He adds, "In a three-year-old democracy, even twenty percent voter fraud may have to be tolerable. There were improprieties, but they did not reach the level to de-certify." Overall, Popper recalls his experience in Nepal as rewarding. "It is humbling and a privilege to be part of a process that goes to the heart of public governance." 🌍



Dean Popper with voters at the Gajuri polling station in Dhading province, Nepal

Dean Andrew Popper



Local officials at the Negalpanini polling station in Dhading province, Nepal review the registration qualifications of voters. Nonetheless, some individuals below the legal voting age were permitted to vote.

Dean Andrew Popper

Indigenous Peoples' Rights, continued from page 5

Assembly Resolution. That is, the declaration, once approved, can be used by adjudicative and administrative bodies for its interpretive value of indigenous peoples' rights as a reflection of the collective "state of mind" of the Member-States of the OAS. 🌍