The 1995 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding was awarded to Franz Vranitzky, federal chancellor of the Republic of Austria on Nov. 11. In a ceremony at the State Department, Dr. Vranitzky (continued on page 12)
he Fulbright Prize was created to recognize and to honor outstanding individuals who have made enduring contributions toward bringing about greater understanding between peoples, greater understanding between diverse cultures, and greater understanding between nations.

In 1993, the Fulbright Association presented the inaugural prize to South African President Nelson Mandela. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter received the prize in 1994.

Today, we honor another leader on the world stage—Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, a quiet but powerful force for democracy, human rights, and economic progress in Eastern and Central Europe.

In his student days at Vienna's College of Commerce, Franz Vranitzky showed a clear talent in the field of economics and a passion for democracy and for adherence to democratic principles in the conduct of human affairs.

After a distinguished career in banking, his expertise—and his character—led to his appointment as Austria's minister of finance in 1984. Just two years later, he was sworn in as chancellor.

Under Chancellor Vranitzky, Austria has maintained a very special role in Europe as a bridge of peace between East and West.

With its proud history, its resources, and its commitment to freedom, the Austria of Chancellor Vranitzky has been a beacon to peoples starting down the path of reform—and to their governments.

With his leadership, Austria has been a pioneer, indeed, in forging links between East and West—including the transfer of technology and, in a broader sense, the transfer of people and ideas through groundbreaking cultural exchanges.

In 1989—a year that changed our world forever—it was Dr. Vranitzky's initiative, throwing open the border between Austria and Hungary, that allowed thousands of East Germans, hungry for freedom, to make it to the West.

This was a dramatic event in a dramatic season of democracy and change. This was an event that fostered the peaceful re-unification of Germany. And the decision leading to this event was clearly the act of a statesman.

That was just one example of Chancellor Vranitzky's profound commitment to human rights, a commitment seen earlier in his help for Soviet Jews seeking to emigrate in the 1980s and a commitment seen again today in his vigorous efforts to help refugees from the war in the former Yugoslav republics. For this commitment, we are all indebted to Austria—and to the chancellor.

And, on a personal level, I want to say that I am especially indebted since my wife is one of those refugees who made it to the U.S. via Vienna and Ladispoli, Italy.

She came from the Ukraine. Her passport, issued by the U.S.S.R., stated under citizenship: "Jew."

Will it ever end?

Chancellor Vranitzky—and Austria—will long be remembered for playing a key role in building the new Europe in other tangible ways. Under his leadership, Austria has provided the second greatest
per-capita level of economic assistance to Eastern and Central Europe.

And just as his efforts have resulted in crucial assistance to Europe's new democracies, he has been a powerful force for the new Europe in his own nation, leading Austria to membership in the European Union.

Earlier this year, he was recognized for his contributions to European unity with the presentation of the Karlspreis, one of the highest honors a citizen of Europe can receive.

Chancellor Vranitzky's career—and his life—have been testament to the very qualities recognized by the Fulbright Prize.
Chancellor Franz Vranitzky

Born on October 4, 1937, in Vienna, Franz Vranitzky studied at the College of Commerce (now the University of Economics) in Vienna from which he graduated in 1960. In 1969, after several years of practical work, he received a doctorate in economics.

In 1961, Dr. Vranitzky joined the Austrian National Bank and was assigned to the economic research department. In 1970, he became adviser for economic and fiscal policy to the Austrian minister of finance. Dr. Vranitzky was named deputy chairman of the board of directors of Creditanstalt-Bankverein in 1976 and five years later took over the same position in Österreichische Laenderbank. In 1981, he was promoted to chairman of the board of Laenderbank.

Dr. Vranitzky joined the Federal Government of Austria in 1984 as minister of finance, a position he held until June 16, 1986, when he was sworn in as federal chancellor of the Republic of Austria. In 1988, he was elected chairman of the Social Democratic Party.

On November 29, 1994, Dr. Vranitzky was sworn in for the fourth time as head of government by Federal President Thomas Klestil. He headed, from 1987 to 1995, a “Grand Coalition” government of Social Democrats (SPÖ) and Christian Democrats (ÖVP). In elections on December 17, the Social Democrats won seven additional seats in parliament, and Dr. Vranitzky was entrusted by the federal president with the formation of a new government.

As federal chancellor, Dr. Vranitzky led Austria to membership in the European Union. For his efforts on behalf of European unity, he was awarded the 1995 Karlspreis (Charlemagne) Award by the city of Aachen, Germany.

Dr. Vranitzky has been instrumental in helping the countries of Central and Eastern Europe pursue a democratic future for their peoples. Under his leadership, Austria has provided the second highest per capita level of economic assistance to that region and has strongly supported international investment there. Dr. Vranitzky also led Austria’s humanitarian assistance to the victims of war in the former Yugoslavia and to Soviet Jews seeking safe transit from the Soviet Union during the 1980s. In 1989, Austria’s decision to open the border between Austria and Hungary allowed thousands of East Germans seeking freedom to come to the West.
November 9, 1995

Warm greetings to all those gathered to honor Chancellor Franz Vranitzky. I am pleased that the Fulbright Association has chosen to recognize Chancellor Vranitzky with the 1995 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding — he rightly joins a distinguished group of leaders whose courage and vision have earned them this prestigious award.

Chancellor Vranitzky's efforts to break down the political and cultural barriers that divide humankind reflect Senator Fulbright's own commitment to global understanding. He is a leader of extraordinary talent whose achievements are respected around the globe, and his contributions to bringing peoples, cultures, and nations to greater cooperation have made our world a better place now and for the generations to come.

Congratulations to Chancellor Vranitzky, and best wishes to all for a memorable event.

[Signature]
Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky Speaks to Fulbrighters

I am deeply moved and honored for having been selected to receive this year's Fulbright Prize for International Understanding. Joining ranks with Nelson Mandela and Jimmy Carter, two outstanding leaders and two exceptional human beings whose achievements have always been an inspiration to my own work, is, indeed, among the crowning moments of my many years in public service.

I humbly accept the prize not only on my own behalf, but also on behalf of the Austrian people who have built—out of the ashes of war and tyranny—a prosperous and stable democracy which has come to terms with its history and has reclaimed its place in the Europe of the future—a country we have all the right to be proud of.

But we are living in a time of tremendous changes: the globalization of economic relations, demographic and social pressures, the strain on our natural environment, and pathbreaking technological developments like the digital revolution. All these factors challenge the wisdom of our conventional policy-making and render many of our national political instruments and programs inefficient, insufficient, and inadequate.

European Integration

The only way to master these new challenges is through common action and joint strategies, which transcend the patterns of traditional cooperation. This is exactly why Austria decided to join the European integration process and became a member of the European Union in January this year. But European integration to us is much more than free trade or a common social and environmental policy. It means to participate actively in a common endeavor to establish lasting and comprehensive peace and stability on a continent which for centuries had been ravaged by wars and nationalist violence.

European integration is a very complex and sometimes contradictory process. And its vigor has been put to an additional test by the dramatic transformation in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union since 1989.

The collapse of communism has dramatically reduced the threat of a military confrontation. At the same time, new insecurities and potentially destabilizing factors have emerged, such as social and economic disparities, migratory movements, organized crime, unsafe nuclear reactors and aging atomic weapons, and above all, the danger of a new wave of nationalism and the disintegration of multinational states. But the changes in the former communist world have also created enormous new possibilities for cooperation, and we have to take advantage of these opportunities to a much larger extent than we have done so far.

I think we have every reason to do so: every dollar, every ECU which we invest in the success of the democratic and economic reform process is a direct investment in our own stability and security.

Austria, therefore, fully supports the intention of the Central and Eastern European states—and especially our immediate neighboring countries—to join the process of European integration as quickly as possible, and we are prepared to assist them both through national and multilateral programs in achieving this goal.

Economic Reconstruction

But to tackle the immense scope of problems associated with the creation of a "Europe whole and free," we in the West will have to mobilize all our imagination and determination. And we will have to do so for years to come. I know that this is not easy in a time when the public attention span tends to reach no further than to the latest headline.

The task of restructuring the economies of the new democracies is enormous, and the Western assistance which has so far been provided remains a rather sketchy patchwork. Regrettfully, we were not able to mobilize right from the beginning the necessary political will for a coordinated program of reconstruction as was done through the Marshall Plan after World War II.

The success of economic transformation is still the most important precondition to secure permanently the victory of democracy and open societies in the postcommunist countries. There is simply no alternative to continuing our efforts and our assistance for the reform process.

We have to sit down together and to develop new financing mechanisms; set priorities; harmonize policies and strategies; eliminate obstacles to trade and
investment; and win over the private sector for new types of partnership to further this cooperation.

Infrastructure Development

A priority of common action is the development of infrastructure—modern networks of transportation, telecommunications, and energy supply—as a prerequisite for dynamic growth and attraction of investment.

In the framework of the so-called "Trans-European Networks," the European Union has decided to modernize its own infrastructure. I strongly advocate taking the program one step further and including the reform countries in this effort. It will not only give an additional boost to the restructuring of their economies and create important employment opportunities but will also serve as a visible signal that our aim is not to create new dividing lines, but to bridge and eliminate old ones.

To speed up this process, I initiated a framework for regional infrastructure projects. Our first focus country was Hungary. Together with interested Western partners, concrete projects in the field of energy, transport, and environment can be identified and brought closer to realization. Next spring, this initiative will be extended to Slovenia, with Slovakia being next in line.

So far, I have concentrated on cooperation between the reform countries and the West. Of equal importance is the improvement of relations among the new democracies in the European East.

Although we have seen encouraging developments like the setting up of the Central European Free Trade Association and the emerging of cooperative structures within the Community of Independent States, there are still many political and historic barriers which hamper the vast potential for cooperation among the countries of the former communist bloc.

Austria has been very active in promoting this kind of cooperation in order to contribute to stability and to mutual understanding in the area. In 1989, we co-founded with Italy a forum for regional consultations which today, under the name of "Central European Initiative," brings together 14 reform countries for regular meetings on a broad range of issues.

In addition, I inaugurated a special trilateral cooperation among Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary. Joint programs in the field of foreign and security policy, home affairs, and cross-border cooperation aim at confidence building to overcome the latent conflict over the issue of ethnic minorities between these two countries.

Privileged by geographic location, long-standing historic ties, and her status of neutrality, Austria started to develop relations with the East long before the historic year of 1989. When the barbed wire fences finally were cut and the mine fields cleared, Austrian business people, journalists, and scientists could rely on a network of well-established contacts and a wealth of know-how in dealing with the reform countries.

Today, Austrian entrepreneurs are among the most active investors and joint venture partners in the whole region, and the Austrian government provides, after Germany, the second-highest per capita rate of financial and technical assistance. These efforts have made Austria the Western country with the closest relations to the new democracies.

Just last month, I opened in Vienna a conference bringing together the deputy prime ministers for economic affairs of all the successor states of the former Soviet Union. During the very same week, an international meeting focused on a huge transcontinental pipeline project that should link Central Asia with Europe, underlining Austria's continuing role as gateway between East and West.

Preventing New Dividing Lines

In all our efforts to strengthen the ties with the postcommunist countries, our most important objective is to prevent the creation of new dividing lines in Europe. And every step taken by the West, be it in economic and trade relations or in the field of security policy, has to be measured against this overall goal.

When focusing on the importance of regional integration, we have to make one point clear: these regional entities—be it the European Union, NAFTA, or the new groupings developing in South America and Southeast Asia—these regional entities must not become self-centered and inward-looking. They must see each other as partners within a global framework, rather than as opponents and competitors.

I have on various occasions warned against this danger of fortress-building, and I will continue to advocate strongly such an open door policy towards all regions of the world.

This includes the development of a comprehensive special relationship with the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, a close cooperation with the Mediterranean, and, above all, a new and enhanced transatlantic partnership. Neither "spaghetti wars" and fishery disputes nor short-lived fads of neo-isolationism will ever be strong enough to break the close historic and cultural ties which bind us together.

Prospects For Peace

In the historic year of 1989, many of us in the West were full of hope that with the end of the great ideological confrontation the time had finally come for global peace and democracy. Some even went so far as to proclaim the "end of history."

But soon these hopes were shattered by Sarajevo and Srebrenica, in Kurdistan, in the Caucasus, and in the refugee camps of Rwanda. And the inhuman cynicism of "ethnic cleansing," which we had to witness in all these flashpoints of crisis has demonstrated in the most drastic way that we still have a long way to go until the solemn commitments of the UN Charter have become living reality for all human beings.

Once the voices of reason and humanism have been drowned out by nationalistic propaganda, once violence and war have broken out, it is a long and painful process to restore peace and reconciliation.

With this in mind, all our expectations and our hopes are focused on the ongoing negotiations in Dayton to bring peace to the peoples of former Yugoslavia. We all wish them success.

Common Bond of Human Dignity

Senator Fulbright once stated, and I quote: "The rapprochement of peoples is only possible when the differences of culture and outlook are respected rather than feared and condemned; when the common
bond of human dignity is recognized as the essential bond for a peaceful world.”

The breakthrough between Israel and the Palestinians and the peaceful transition in South Africa have shown what can be achieved through determination and good will. And the moving words which King Hussein of Jordan spoke at the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin are testimony to the victory of peace and human dignity over destruction and human suffering.

This bond of human dignity, just like the basic rights and freedoms of man, is universal, and its substance remains the same, wherever it is at stake—in a democracy or under a totalitarian regime. And neither level of development nor cultural background should be used as an excuse for its violation or neglect.

Various analyses of international relations have stated that with the end of the Cold War a fundamental new gap has opened between liberal, Western-style democracies and the societies based on Islam or other cultural traditions. It is true, there is a dividing line; but this line is not new, and it is not separating religions and civilizations; it is running between openness and suppression; between tolerance and fanaticism; between cooperation and self-isolation.

I am personally convinced that the best precondition for peace, democracy, and human rights is to secure an acceptable standard of living for all nations in the world. And we in the so-called “wealthy North” have a common responsibility to help create this precondition and to contribute our share to such a global framework of prosperity and stability.

We cannot tolerate poverty and exclusion, unemployment and disease in wide parts of the world and at the same time expect that all those living under such conditions live together peacefully and observe the rules of democracy that we are used to. In the end, democracy and the rule of law, just like durable peace, cannot be transplanted or enforced from outside, but must be achieved and secured by the peoples themselves. What the international community must do is to stand for its ideals and values through a constant process of dialogue and to support all those forces which represent tolerance and understanding all over the world.

Challenges to Peace

But I would like to warn against complacency and self-satisfaction: the realization of peace and democracy is a task which is never finished. It is a challenge which every country, every society has to permanently strive for. And nobody in political office can shy away from this responsibility.

Let me return to Senator Fulbright, who stated: “If ever a universal victory for democratic values comes within reach, it will come not through acts of foreign policy, and certainly not through military policy, but rather through the magnetism of freedom itself. The prospects for freedom depend ultimately on how it is practiced in free societies.”

Especially in times of fundamental change, when people feel insecure about their own future, political developments may occur which run counter to our basic values and aspirations—even in our well-established democracies.

I am thinking of a certain readiness to believe in authoritarian and antidemocratic slogans. I am thinking of intolerance, bigotry, and xenophobia. And I am thinking of individual acts of terror and violence which, unfortunately, we experience—in Europe, in the Middle East, and even here in the United States.

Just as we cannot accept that the people of the Third World are kept outside of global development, we cannot tolerate that broad sectors of our own populations are economically and socially pushed to the fringes of society. Social exclusion not only creates material poverty but also fertilizes the breeding grounds for radicalism and nationalism.

Political Leadership

What we need is political leadership to address these fundamental issues. But we need leadership not only in economic, social, or foreign policy but also to give credibility to our values of tolerance, national consensus, and international understanding. To me, this means political education in its broadest sense.

Senator Fulbright was such a prominent leader who realized the importance of this task. And the program which carries his name has surely done more to advance the cause of peace and understanding than any other initiative in this field.

I hope for all of us that this legacy—the program—will be preserved and kept strong for the years to come, as one of the best investments in our own common future.

In this sense, and in memory of my friend Yitzhak Rabin, I have decided to donate the $50,000 award associated with the prize to an initiative which fully reflects the vision of Senator Fulbright—the Middle East Youth Peace Forum, an Austrian project bringing together young people from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, and Austria to pass on the message of peace and understanding to the next generation.

A few weeks ago, an important Austrian peace price was awarded to Mr. Ken Saro-Wiwa of Nigeria. Mr. Saro-Wiwa could not appear in Vienna to receive the prize but sent his young son. At the receiving ceremony, the young man said he was all but sure he would not see his father, who had been in prison at that time for quite a period, again. The inhuman and criminal Nigerian regime proved very soon that the son’s fear was very realistic. It is with deep concern and with disgust that we will have to reconsider our relationship to those who right now are in command, unfortunately in command, in Nigeria. And I think it is not only our task to express disgust but, again and again, to ask ourselves what have we done? Have we done enough to reach our goals?

Have we done enough over the past 50 years to reach our ultimate goals of peace, democracy, and global development? I think that we achieved a lot. Step by step, we have advanced respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We have encouraged democratic structures and made sustainable development a common task for the international community. But these promising signs are still threatened by regional conflicts and civil wars, by poverty and illiteracy, and by the dangers of nationalism and fundamentalism.

The challenges ahead of us are enormous, but the lesson we have to draw is simple—redouble our efforts and invest more than ever in the greatest potential we possess, our human resources. What we need is twofold: a strong political vision and a determined, pragmatic, hands-on approach to make our dreams become reality.

Senator Fulbright once said: “Our future is not in the stars but in our own minds and hearts.” And, I might add, it is in our own hands.
Scenes from the 1995 Fulbright Prize Events

Chancellor Vranitzky, E. Neville Isdell, senior vice president of The Coca-Cola Company, who presented Chancellor Vranitzky with the statue Tribute, and Donald R. Greene, president of The Coca-Cola Foundation.

Chancellor Vranitzky and Flavia Cigliano, a member of the Fulbright Association’s Board of Directors.

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Chancellor Vranitzky meets Fulbright Association Treasurer Ronald J. Ross, M.D.

Chancellor Vranitzky and Anton Amon, a member of the Fulbright Association’s Board of Directors.
Members Meet Chancellor Franz Vranitzky

Chancellor Vranitzky and Gloria Kast, former board member of the Fulbright Association.

Chancellor Vranitzky and Alan Schechter, vice-chairman of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Chancellor Vranitzky and Loren W. Hershey, former officer and director of the Fulbright Association.

Chancellor Vranitzky meets Richard O. Lundquist, president of the Western New York Chapter of the Fulbright Association.

Chancellor Vranitzky speaks with Jean Hyland, president of the Fulbright Association’s Rhode Island Chapter.
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AVAILABLE FROM THE FULBRIGHT ASSOCIATION

$ _____ One Nation, One Country, (Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1990). Booklet of four speeches by Nelson R. Mandela, recipient of the 1993 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding. ($6.25 members, $8.25 nonmembers; prices include shipping and handling; add $2 for overseas shipment.)

$ _____ The Price of Empire, by J.W. Fulbright (Pantheon, 1989). Senator Fulbright’s last book. ($17.40 members, $20.85 nonmembers; prices include shipping and handling; add $2 for overseas shipment.)

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was recognized as a “quiet but powerful force for democracy, human rights, and economic progress in Eastern and Central Europe” by Maurizio A. Gianturco, Fulbright Association president.

In accepting the award, Chancellor Vranitzky said economic development was the only effective way to overcome “a new wave of nationalism” and other destabilizing forces created by the collapse of communism.

“The success of economic transformation is still the most important precondition to permanently secure the victory of democracy and open societies in the post-communist countries,” he said.

Chancellor Vranitzky announced he would honor the memory of Yitzhak Rabin by donating his $50,000 Fulbright award to the Mideast Youth Peace Forum, an Austria-based organization that brings together young people from Austria, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Egypt. The $50,000 Fulbright prize is made possible by a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation, the philanthropic arm of The Coca-Cola Company. E. Neville Isdell, president, Greater Europe Group, The Coca-Cola Company, also presented Chancellor Vranitzky with “Tribute,” a bronze statue miniature of a sculpture in the company’s permanent collection. It symbolizes homage, gratitude, and thanksgiving.

“The collapse of communism has dramatically reduced the threat of a military confrontation,” said Chancellor Vranitzky. “At the same time, new insecurities and potentially destabilizing factors have emerged: social and economic disparities, migratory movements, organized crime, unsafe nuclear reactors, aging atomic weapons, and above all, the danger of a new wave of nationalism and the disintegration of multiethnic states. But the changes in the former communist world have also created enormous new possibilities for cooperation. We have to take advantage of these opportunities to a much larger extent than we have done so far.”

He added that Austria fully supports the intention of Central and Eastern European countries “to join the process of European integration as quickly as possible.”

“Austria has maintained a very special role in Europe as a bridge between East and West,” Dr. Gianturco said. “In 1989 — a year that changed our world forever — it was Franz Vranitzky’s initiative, throwing open the border between Austria and Hungary, that allowed thousands of East Germans, hungry for freedom, to make it to the West.”

Under Chancellor Vranitzky, Austria has provided the second highest per capita level of economic assistance to Eastern and Central Europe and has been a strong supporter of international investment in that region. Austria was a pioneer in establishing links with Central and Eastern European countries, including joint ventures, technology transfers, and cultural exchange. In addition, Chancellor Vranitzky played an important humanitarian role by helping provide safe transit of Soviet Jews out of the Soviet Union during the 1980s.

Chancellor Vranitzky also led Austria to membership in the European Union. For his efforts on behalf of European unity, he was awarded the 1995 international Karlspreis (Charlemagne) Award by the city of Aachen, Germany.

Serving on the committee that selected Chancellor Vranitzky for the 1995 Fulbright Prize were Stanley N. Katz, chairman of the selection committee and president of the American Council of Learned Societies; Josef Joffe, editorial page editor and columnist for the Munich daily newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung; Kyung-Won Kim, president of the Institute of Social Sciences in Seoul, Korea; and Baroness Shirley Williams, professor at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a founder of the British Social Democratic Party. Dr. Gianturco also served on the selection committee.

The Fulbright Association is a private, nonprofit organization that supports and promotes the Fulbright Program. It also facilitates continuing relations among former Fulbright scholars. The late Senator Fulbright, who sponsored the legislation creating the Fulbright academic exchange program in 1946, was honorary chairman until his death last February.