Former Philippine President Corazon C. Aquino Receives 1996 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding

The Fulbright Association awarded the 1996 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding to Corazon C. Aquino, former president of the Republic of the Philippines, on Oct. 11. The prize, which carries a $50,000 cash award, is made possible through a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation.

(continued on page 12)
Editor's Note—The following text is excerpted from remarks made by Fulbright Association President Philip O. Geier and subsequently by Douglas N. Daft, president, the Middle and Far East Group, The Coca-Cola Company, at the 1996 J. William Fulbright Prize award ceremony.

We are delighted to have all of you join us in honoring one of the world’s most significant living women, former Philippine President Corazon Aquino. The Fulbright Association is the national nonprofit membership organization of former U.S. Fulbrighters which in concert with similar associations around the world exists to serve and perpetuate the Fulbright ideal.

Mrs. Aquino and I were just talking minutes ago about the fact that it is the Fulbright Association in the Philippines which is the oldest alumni organization of Fulbrighters in the world, so we are particularly gratified by your being with us today.

This is also a very special year in the history of the Fulbright Program as we celebrate its 50th anniversary. Most of us remember Senator Fulbright and his vision which we’ve benefited from, and there are now over 200,000 of us worldwide as Fulbrighters. This year also marks the 10th anniversary of Corazon Aquino’s election as president of the Philippines, and, I just learned this morning, today is also her 42nd wedding anniversary.

The Fulbright Prize opens doors of dialogue as does the Fulbright Program, which promotes the exchange of information and research, builds networks, and enhances international understanding with the underlying belief that these endeavors will bring us closer to world harmony and peace. It is in this spirit that the Fulbright Prize was created and in previous years awarded to President Nelson Mandela, President Jimmy Carter and Chancellor Franz Vranitzky.

Our objective is to strengthen the Fulbright ideal by recognizing those in the world whose life and work have made outstanding and exemplary contributions toward bringing peoples, cultures, and nations to a greater level of mutual understanding.

**Introduction of Douglas N. Daft**

We have a partnership with The Coca-Cola Foundation that is enormously beneficial, I think, to the future of the Fulbright Program and, I hope, to The Coca-Cola Company as well, and it is my pleasure now...
to introduce a member of the Coca-Cola family to you. Douglas N. Daft joined The Coca-Cola Company in 1969 in his hometown of Sydney, Australia. He has served in several capacities, spanning China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. And in 1991 he moved to the company’s headquarters in Atlanta and was named president of the Pacific Group. In 1995 he became president of the Middle and Far East Group which includes the Philippines.

Remarks of Douglas N. Daft

Through The Coca-Cola Foundation, the men and women of The Coca-Cola Company are very proud once again to support the J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding. And it is my pleasure to be here today with my colleague, Tony Amon, who serves on the Fulbright Prize Selection Committee.

The woman we honor today, Corazon Aquino, was elected president of the Philippines in 1986, the first woman to serve as a leader of a democratic state in Asia. But her legacy far transcends electoral politics.

Corazon Aquino restored democracy to the 50 million people of the Philippines, leading a peaceful and non-violent revolution that ended 14 years of repressive martial law.

Her courageous crusade was based on a simple idea with a simple name: “People Power.” But that simple idea transformed her nation, lifted the spirits of Filipinos and inspired the world.

It is fitting that the Fulbright Association honors Mrs. Aquino in this year, the 10th anniversary of her election.

Just think of what the world has seen since then: In a very real sense, it was her “People Power” crusade that launched a worldwide movement. When democracy was restored in Manila, the echoes were clearly heard in Berlin and Moscow and Johannesburg.

In six years in office Corazon Aquino quickly won passage of a democratic constitution, restored her country’s place in the community of nations, and made life better for her people. She rehabilitated the tattered democratic institutions of her country, restoring an independent judiciary and effective legislative and executive branches of government.

And perhaps her proudest—perhaps her least recognized—achievement came in 1992, as she concluded her term in office and handed over the Philippine government to a duly elected successor, in a peaceful transfer of power.

And just as her political reforms ushered in a new era of freedom, she also brought about an economic reform that ushered in a new era of progress and promise.

Throughout her presidency, Mrs. Aquino worked tirelessly to bring about a better life for the people of the Philippines, young and old, fortunate and unfortunate. She upheld the rights of women and children. She fought poverty and created jobs. And she consistently promoted education as the key to development, empowerment and a better life.

Her crusade continues to this day, through the programs of the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation, which she chairs. As co-president of the Forum of Democratic Leaders, she provides visionary leadership.

And I know from my colleagues at the Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines what a great honor it has been for them to join with Mr. Aquino in promoting the philosophy that is her philosophy—people power through education.

Corazon Aquino embodies the ideals of the Fulbright Association and the Fulbright Prize—the vision of bringing people together in peace and understanding. Her courage and her vision have inspired millions, and she honors us with her presence here today.
Senator Richard Lugar Pays Tribute to President Aquino

During some very chaotic times in 1985 joining Mrs. Aquino in the Philippines was Senator Richard Lugar, then chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and co-chair of the presidential election observer group in the Philippines. He has represented the state of Indiana in the United States Senate since 1977 and currently serves on the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Select Committee on Intelligence as well as chairs the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry and is co-chairman of the Arms Control Observer Group. Throughout his years in the Senate, Senator Lugar has been a strong supporter of the Fulbright Program and, in fact, is, as is President Clinton, a Rhodes scholar.

—from Philip Geier’s introduction of Senator Lugar

Editor’s Note: The following is a transcript of Senator Lugar’s remarks.

How appropriate it is that the Fulbright Association, named in honor of a great senator and statesman—as has been mentioned by Phil Geier, a man for whom our president Bill Clinton worked and gained so much and a gentleman with whom I corresponded as a student at Pembroke College, Oxford, the very same college that Senator Fulbright had attended a generation before... Our association became very close when I came to Washington. He was the longest-serving chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and took great pride in the two years that I served as chairman of the committee. But it is an especially appropriate situation here in the State Department that this award should be given to President Aquino today, because in this department so much occurred that made possible our re-evaluation of our foreign policy in the Philippines and the very strong support of the election of Corazon Aquino, however, which was clearly in dispute at that time.

I’ve mentioned my short tenure as chairman of the [Foreign Relations] Committee, and it was fortuitous that those were the years—1985 and 1986—in which this occurred. Fairly early in 1985, we had testimony from the State Department and from our Department of Defense—conspicuous testimony by Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Armitage—as they outlined growing debate within those two departments as to where our interests lay and where they ought to lie in the future. We were sensitized, both as a committee and as a Congress, and as a public, that we had some hard choices ahead of us.

What we could not have imagined was that the focus of this debate in our country might lead President Marcos to call the snap election which he did on the Brinkley program on a Sunday afternoon in November and in essence, challenged us to put up or shut up. The input of that particular program was to say, “I’m calling a special election and I ask anybody in the world who wants to come and observe it—especially you people in the United States. And you will see that I’m going to win it, and I’m going to win it big, and democracy will be served.”

At that point, the wheels began to move in our committee and within the Reagan administration and particularly in the minds of Secretary George Shultz and of Steve Bosworth, our great ambassador out there on the point. And without going through all of the detail of what occurred, an observer group was named. I was co-chairman with John Murtha, distinguished congressman who still serves the state of Pennsylvania.

With a host of about 30 distinguished Americans assembled to go to all parts of the Philippines, we negotiated with the Marcos administration on such things as how close we could get to the voting booths. A strange law was adopted shortly before we were underway that 150 feet would be our distance. Then we said we won’t come under those circumstances and to the end Marcos was so eager for us to come that essentially almost all of the rules and stipulations we suggested they acceded to, understanding that 30 people in the midst of that vast country were unlikely to see a whole lot. We proceeded and, in fact, had an experience that is indelible in my memory and, I think, that of our honoree today.

Let me just say that the election was one in which our intelligence people told me before I went that President Aquino would be the winner if, in fact, all the votes were counted—at least it was beyond what we (continued on page 10)
Fulbright Prize Address

Corazon Aquino Speaks to Fulbrighters

I am greatly honored yet deeply humbled to receive this award. For I am preceded in this distinction by one who took upon himself, what seemed for centuries, the impossible struggle of a people for equality, dignity and freedom in their own country. Nelson Mandela fought, not just a foe of freedom but the enemy of humanity itself. Racial prejudice exceeds all the evil that men can do to one another. Beyond the denial of rights and the suppression of liberties, racism seeks to cancel the humanity of its victims. And makes them mere things in their own eyes.

The dictatorships of the left and the right, at least, paid to liberty the same homage that vice pays to virtue in hypocrisy. They suppressed liberty only for its own good in the name of national security. But with racism, there is only the naked assertion that some are masters and others less than men. It was this twisted moral order, far worse than an oppressive government, that Nelson Mandela vanquished, so that when he danced on the stage of his inaugural as the first black president of South Africa, good men and women throughout the world followed his steps.

And he achieved this, not by force but with reason; never with hate but with, I think, something like love; not with recriminations but with an unyielding resolve never to look back in anger but forward, with the enemy of his people, to the time when they can regard each other as one.

He had fought another fight altogether—unique already in a world that had sworn racism everywhere else.

I fought a more conventional war—but one perhaps with a wider relevance in the age of dictators just past, but which seems to be returning again with the caudillos.

“Just a Housewife”

It has crossed my mind that this award might have come when I was the leader of an embattled democracy, to impress its enemies that Philippine freedom had important friends abroad. But I am happy that this award comes when I am again an ordinary person. After all, it all began with an ordinary person, placed by Providence at the head of quite ordinary people like herself.

I am not a hero like Mandela. The best description for me might, after all, be that of my critics who said: She is just a plain housewife.

Indeed, as a housewife, I stood by my husband and never questioned his decision to stand alone in defense of a dead democracy against an arrogant dictatorship enjoying the support of the United States.

As a housewife, I never missed a chance to be with my husband when his jailers permitted it. Nor gave up looking for him one day when he was taken away, no one could tell me where.

As a housewife, I never chided him for the troubles he brought on my family and their businesses; nor, I must add, did my family complain. For they saw that his wife loved him very much and indeed, they loved him, too.

And when he challenged Imelda Marcos from his prison cell for the same seat in parliament, I took his place in the campaign. I, who hadn’t the experience on a political stage, nor entertained much hope that he would make it. Yet, how could I doubt his wisdom at the end, when, on the eve of a surely rigged election, the country’s capital city exploded in a deafening noise barrage in his name.

As a housewife, I held his hand as the life drained out of him in a self-imposed fast of 40 days, to protest a fine legal point about the civilian jurisdiction of a military court.

For seven and a half years, I sat outside the gate of his maximum security prison, with his food and his books—when they allowed it—and with forced smiles from our children and myself.

Thanks to the intervention of the U.S. State Department under President Carter the death sentence passed on him by the military court was suspended and my husband went into exile in the United States. I joined him, of course. They were the three happiest years of our lives together.

But just when I was getting used to having him to myself ... indeed, just when our youngest, who was a year old when he was detained, was basking in the special affection he lavished on her to make up for the time he had lost ... I lost him again. He returned to our country, against the advice of his friends and the warning of his worst enemy.

Color of Courage

I followed a few days later, no longer as a housewife but as a widow to lay his body in the grave. A military escort had shot him in the back of the head, in the midst of more than 1,000 soldiers sent out to arrest him.

It was the greatest funeral since Gandhi. An estimated two million people lined the...
streets of the capital from the church to the graveyard. The coffin, on a flatbed truck, was followed by thousands of the most militant self-recruited supporters of his cause. All had answered his call when his mouth could no longer speak.

The government shut down public transportation to discourage people from going out, but the people came out. The government sent out buses when rain started to pour, to show its concern, but the people would not ride.

Everyone wore a strip of yellow fabric, instead of the customary black. They came from the yellow ribbons tied around trees and lamp posts for his return. Ninoy Aquino had made yellow the color of courage.

That night, the dictator lost the country's capital and never got it back again. Demonstrations would continue, and grow in size and boldness, over the next three years, coming to a head in the Snap Election campaign.

**International Supporters**

By then there was another description of me. Perhaps because he grew uneasy calling me the widow he had made, President Marcos turned to calling me “just a woman” instead, whose place was in the bedroom.

Fine, I said; the next time I appeared before a mammoth crowd of supporters, I would do my nails first. But he, I countered, was just a coward and a lonely one at that. A coward for threatening to take me out with a single bullet; and a loser, because I promised him no more than a single ballot in return.

On the night of a bloody election, while he prepared his victory statement, I read mine on the air.

His rubber-stamp parliament immediately convened to declare him the winner. The people staged a mammoth rally to proclaim me instead. European Community ambassadors came to me to congratulate on her victory the officially defeated candidate. I mention this fact to show how crucial to the morale of a freedom movement is international support of its cause. A point we should bear in mind as the freedom struggle of Burma comes to a head.

There were other foreign friends of freedom at the rebirth of Philippine democracy. Congressman Stephen Solarz never wavered in his devotion to the democratic cause in the Philippines, even when it looked most forlorn. Senator Kerry stood guard by the women tabulators who had staged a walkout on the cheating being done at the computer center of the Commission on Elections. Secretary of State George Shultz convinced the U.S. President that this time a policy that was morally right coincided with the geopolitics of realism. Senator Richard Lugar convinced him that it was time to cut a dictatorship loose and take a chance with democracy in fighting communism. The support shown by others like them, too many to name here, needs to be mentioned now because of events in Burma. Such concern and concerted action by the friends of democracy do count in the final political equation.

President Reagan sent a special envoy to broker a truce and offer a compromise. I could have any position in the Marcos government or spend the rest of my days trying to topple it in vain. Basically, I wanted what I won in the presidential election or else, no matter how long it would take, I would not stop until the government fell. I called for a civil disobedience movement and the boycott of all businesses linked to the cronies of the dictator.

Within two weeks, the government fell, between a massive gathering of people power and the military mutiny it went out to protect.

**New Presidency**

As president, I faced three major tasks: rebuilding democracy, reviving the economy, and ending the communist insurgency—the longest running of its kind in the world.

Thirteen years of fighting Marcos had turned the communists into a formidable force enjoying the distant admiration of the nation. Nobody wanted the communists to win, but almost everybody wanted the Marcos government to lose.

According to U.S. analysts, the communists had not suffered a defeat in years and fought the dictatorship to a stand still. But the communists made the mistake of boycotting the elections. I was fortunate; the communist insurgency problem all but dissolved itself with the return of democracy.

The communists committed the strategic error of boycotting the Snap Election, which they regarded as a trap. As a result, when the curtain came down on the Marcos regime, they were nowhere to be seen on the political stage.

While democracy undermined communist threat, it lay open to military challenge. The right-wing of the military was very much on center stage. Because its mutiny had triggered the collapse of the old government, it expected to have a significant share of the power in the new.

**Rebuilding Democracy**

That was out of the question. My first task was to rebuild democracy. And a democracy consists of a separate legislature, an independent judiciary and one president. There was just no room for a junta. And you know how women feel about unwanted guests.

Perhaps the military were also envious that in the first year of my term, I ruled by decree. This was necessary to abolish the rubber-stamp parliament, sequester stolen wealth, annul the Marcos constitution, pare down the powers of the president and
sweep the judiciary clean. Each law I promulgated diminished my powers until, with the last decree, I stripped myself of the power to legislate. Could I have trusted the military to share so much power with me?

I hoped to govern, not from the top down, but from the bottom up, by consultation. I wanted people to have a real sense of what it is like to govern themselves, to live out, and not just live under, the democracy they had put back in place.

Sadly, this only created a sense of drift, and a formless fear that government was losing its grip. After defeating the first major coup attempt, I constituted the presidency into a Committee of One, taking full charge of every detail of the government. It was a step forward in political stability, but a step back in political maturity. I would have to postpone the empowerment of the people for a later time.

I pushed ahead with major, and sometimes painful, economic measures to restructure the Philippine economy, settle its enormous and largely stolen foreign debt, and get it moving forward again.

In the next five years, the country would be shaken by a massive earthquake and covered with ash by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. Three major areas of the country were wiped off the economic map and the temperature of the planet dropped by a full degree. People who said that the peaceful people power revolution which restored democracy was a gift of God began to wonder about Him and His habits of giving.

Yet, after every setback, the economy rallied, and ground painstakingly won and swiftly lost, was taken again. On the verge of a second economic take-off in 1989, the military right-wing launched its last and most destructive coup attempt. The event drained the last drop of confidence in our future from all but the hardiest spirits at home, and shattered the image of our stability abroad.

Yet we persevered, and achieved gains that, admittedly, fell short of the fast-growing needs of a too-quickly growing population. But they were real and substantial gains nonetheless: improved health care, more housing, more classrooms and free secondary education.

We made the first serious effort to arrest environmental degradation, and pushed agrarian reform beyond the point of no return. But each step forward covered familiar ground. Who could help but despair that we might be running in circles? Many wondered if it was worth it to try again and again.

St. Paul says that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance character; and character hope. All the good we do seems lost, but never really is. Some of it remains, perhaps a deeper view of life and what it entails. And we are left with a sense of what it is like to govern, not from the top down, but from the bottom up, by consultation. I wanted people to have a real sense of what it is like to govern themselves, to live out, and not just live under, the democracy they had put back in place.

It seemed that in one thing only were we growing from strength to strength: in the enlargement of our democratic space and the strengthening of our democracy. But, altogether, the country was well on its way.

**Empowering People**

I thought again of how it had started, what I had seen, and how much people power had achieved all by itself. I thought that, not just democracy but the economy itself might be rebuilt, and social institutions reformed, by calling again on the power that made the country free.

But empowering people means more than just giving them elections. It means enlarging their contact with government, and habituating them to the direction of their own affairs. People empowerment, by direct participation in government or by indirect involvement through NGOs, was the surest means of making government mirror the aspirations of the many rather than merely advance the interests of the few.

It is on the work of people empowerment that I now devote the greater portion of my time; particularly through the Institute for People Power and Development of the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation. Its aim is to put in the hands of ordinary people the quite ordinary, but organized, means of effecting major changes in their lives.

This was the force that toppled dictatorships and tore down the Berlin Wall. Can it be made to build up?

In the past, the idea was to give the people just enough political power to make a mistake at the polls; in the future, the idea should be to empower them to decide meaningfully, and throw the full weight of their numbers behind their choice.

Authoritarian government is said to be the Asian formula for success. But we may yet prove that people power can achieve, perhaps more slowly, but more lasting and more widely beneficial effects. Democracy in the end, is the best system for ordinary people. It is the only one that unites them and unites them in peace across all the countries of the world. One can believe in a dictatorship; a few in an oligarchy; but only to democracy can the many, in reason, adhere.

**Democracy's Glory**

I ended my term with less exhilaration but more circumspection than I began it. I realized that I could have made things easier for myself if I had done the popular things, rather than the painful but better ones in the long run. After all, in the long run, I wouldn't be around to be blamed.

I could have invited the military to share in the government, rather than keeping them out and fighting them off to the disarray of the economy. But I was called to restore a democracy, not divide up a country as spoils.

I could have put pressure on the courts when they favored the enemies of democracy, but I felt that the best protection for freedom must lie in strong and independent courts.

I sued a newspaper for libel but never used my office to advance my cause. I lost the case.

I could have rolled back prices with a single word, but I would have distorted the painful wisdom of free markets which keep, it is alleged, economies on the right track.

I couldn't adopt the ideal solutions proposed by those who had the luxury of private life. Quite often, official actions were dictated by the pressing realities of the moment.

I could have rigged the 1992 elections for...
my successor. Instead, I directed the chiefs of the military to do the country proud by assuring a fair and free election, whatever the result.

Better still, I could have run myself. The constitutional limitation of a single presidential term did not apply to me; I had taken office under the old constitution. But that limitation was a cornerstone of the new constitution I had caused to be drafted and for which I vigorously campaigned. How could I serve as the first example of its moral violation?

June 30, 1992, was, therefore, one of the proudest moments of my life. I was stepping down and handing the presidency to my duly elected successor. This was what my husband had died for; he had returned precisely to forestall an illegal political succession. This moment is democracy's glory: the peaceful transfer of power without bloodshed, in strict accordance with law.

As I left the palace for the last time, the sentry at the gate gave a final salute to his commander-in-chief. With the exception of my predecessor, no president had been so deeply involved with the military as I had been. But there was this distinction between us: I had treated the military with trust and respect, and left it with honor. When the story of the many coup attempts against the young Philippine democracy is told, the treason of a few will be seen against the backdrop of the majority who held firm. They repaid my compliment with loyalty.

**Common Pleasures**

When my presidency ended in 1992, I gave myself a few months to do what I told people I wanted to do—travel and enjoy my grandchildren.

I find that those who keep sight of common pleasures—family, friends, travel and companionship—are the most to be trusted with uncommon authority. The most perceptive of my officials knew I would not use the constitutional loophole to seek another term, when I expressed the wish to travel before I was too old to enjoy it.

Thus, one true leader looks forward to friendships he was denied as a prisoner then and as president now. And President Aristide stepped down at the end of a term that was mostly used up by a junta.

Such individuals know that the office does not make the man, but the other way around. That it is strengthened by the forbearance of the incumbent, and becomes more deeply respected when he willingly parts with it at the appointed time. No one can ever be so important, so indispensable, as to call for a change in the constitutional scheme of things for his own sake alone.

So it is with sadness that I view aspiring caudillos who believe that they will become great by holding on, beyond their terms, to power. As though power alone defines their sense of self-worth. Some of us could have done the same, with more justification. But we would be much lesser beings if we succeeded or even tried.

**Triumph of Perseverance & Hope**

My parents, especially my mother, taught me the value of hard work and to persevere in whatever it is that I set out to do. And from my father, I learned what kindness, patience and humility are all about.

When I married Ninoy, my conscious world went beyond that of the family and the family business. I married a dedicated politician in the best sense of the word, a worker in politics. He, too, taught me to persevere in a good cause. I was lucky, for although he died before his persistence paid off, I lived to see it happen.

When I look back now on all those years—waiting outside the prison to see my husband, waiting in the house in Boston for the confirmation of his death, waiting for the dictator to blink in our face-off (because I certainly wouldn’t), facing down the military rebels—I realize how really hard it is to come by freedom and democracy. And that it is mainly by perseverance that one is won and the other is kept.

Some leaders, like Mr. Mandela, had to fight much longer for them. He had to suffer personally much more, too. Twenty-seven years as a prisoner in pitch-black confinement or in the bright blinding wastes of the South African pit mines. But the sweet taste of winning back freedom and gaining democracy for his South Africa must have been multiplied a hundredfold for every minute spent in prison.

There are still a number of leaders who have not lost their will to fight, who still display the proud perseverance to win their country’s freedom. We cannot help but think of Burma and Aung Sang Suu Kyi.

Each national experience of winning freedom is unique. But I offer my country’s story for the hope it offers, in whatever measure, of the triumph of perseverance and hope.

My deepest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the Fulbright Association for this great honor, at this time in my life. It will send the message to my people and to other peoples less fortunate than they, in Burma and other places. The message is that the struggle never ends, the work is never finished, nor does the task devolve mainly on the great. It belongs rather to ordinary people, the improvement of whose lives is this Prize’s main concern.

Today is my wedding anniversary, which brings to mind the other half who may well be here and the words of a moving poem for J. William Fulbright:

"Then think that every time, alone in darkness, someone finds the courage to take a stand against the arrogance of power or lifts one hesitant hand against the tyranny of mad momentum, there is a monument. And there. And there."

Two statues stand in different squares, one in Arkansas, the other in my country; the distance and the years between them gone. One is of a man who worked to make the human spirit nobler, and the other of one who showed it could be done.

Thank you again for this great honor, and God bless you all.
As president of the Republic of the Philippines from 1986 to 1992, Corazon Cojuangco Aquino led her country's difficult transition from dictatorship to democracy. After re-establishing democratic institutions, her administration made them work, bringing about substantive economic and social reforms. Through great personal courage and an unwavering commitment to non-violence, she successfully served her term in office and presided over the peaceful and orderly transfer of power to her duly elected successor President Fidel V. Ramos.

Born in Manila on January 25, 1933, Cory Aquino was educated in exclusive girls' schools there before she left for the U.S. where she completed her high school and college education. Her father was a three-term martyr in the Philippines' struggle for democracy. Senator Aquino, the Opposition leader at the time of his death, had been the first person jailed upon the declaration of martial law in 1972. He suffered incarceration in a military camp for seven years and seven months, with only a brief respite in the U.S. to undergo heart surgery.

For furthering the aspirations of her people for a just society and for a better life while honoring Senator Aquino's memory, Cory Aquino has been conferred 16 honorary degrees by universities in the Philippines and in Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. She was named Time Magazine's Woman of the Year for 1986. Following her administration's international initiatives on human rights and on issues affecting women, children, and the family, Cory Aquino now serves as co-president of the Forum of Democratic Leaders with Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, Sonja Gandhi of India, and Kim Dae-Jung of South Korea. Her leadership and her example have been recognized by the Martin Luther King Jr. Non-violent Peace Prize, the United Nations Development Fund for Women's Noel Award for Political Leadership, and the 1993 Special Peace Award from the Aurora Aragon Quezon Peace Awards and Concerned Women of the Philippines, among other distinctions.

Cory Aquino now serves as chairperson of the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation, which awards scholarships for education and develops linkages for non-governmental organizations to improve the quality of life for Filipinos. She is also chairperson of the Board of Advisors of the Metrobank Foundation and serves as honorary chairperson of the Philippine National Centennial Commission, of the Foundation for Clean Elections, of the Sulong Pampanga Foundation, and of the Piso't Puso ng Tarlac Foundation.
call now in our election campaigns the margin of error. But, they indicated to me, she would not be the winner. I had to understand the realpolitik of the situation. It was simply not in the cards, despite all of our best efforts to observe and to editorialize. And indeed, as the election approached, a very large number of people were disenfranchised and suddenly strange machinations occurred as some polls reported votes of 400 to 0 and other things to which I’ve become accustomed in some of our own elections in Indiana (laughter). We were prepared for the challenge. We were not prepared, I suspect, for the aftermath.

We made our report while still in the Philippines and with a cable from George Shultz in hand, “Come back as soon as possible.” As in the parlance of the game Monopoly, do not pass go, do not collect $200, come directly to the White House because the secretary intimated there was a great debate going on. There were those who shall remain nameless who were suggesting that President Aquino ought to accept the Good Sportsmanship Award. In essence a good faith attempt had been made. Two parties had been established. It hadn’t quite worked out for her on this occasion, but there was still another election to go.

For a variety of reasons, this was very unsatisfactory to our honoree today to accept that particular verdict. I spoke directly to President Reagan in the Oval Office and described, in my best attempt, what had happened. But the president that evening had a nationally televised press conference—the first one he had had in months—six questions on the Philippines and one which caught the attention of President Aquino was one about cheating and fraud and abuse. President Reagan said there appeared to be fraud and abuse on both sides. President Aquino told our ambassador, “This is simply not so,” and was prepared ready to demonstrate that by taking hundreds of thousands of people in regular demonstrations to the streets.

Without going through everything that occurred subsequently, let me just say that by Saturday President Reagan had come to a different evaluation, that the election had been fraudulent, indeed, to a grave extent and set in motion events which led to President Marcos being spirited out of the country through Hawaii and President Aquino being sworn in as president.

As we visited this morning, I reminded her that’s the exciting part but then you have to serve. And serve, indeed, she did. It was magnificent that she agreed to become a candidate in mid-December of the previous year. It was nearly miraculous, for those of you who have followed Philippine politics, that somehow the candidacy became a single challenge to Marcos, because it would not have been successful had there been a number of candidates.

That was available was a testament to her courage. She did not choose to run. In fact, even given the martyrdom of her husband Benigno and given all the circumstances in which she really wanted justice, she herself admitted she was ill-prepared in terms of all the gamut of issues, the problems of handling not only the national press in the Philippines, but by then the international press. That election in February of 1986 was covered by more press than any other election of a five-year period of time, save our elections here in the United States.

And the ultimate judgment of that election, by our friends not only in Asia—in South Korea—but in Latin America, was that there had been a change in our foreign policy, and President Reagan enunciated that in a speech to the Congress not long thereafter in which he said that our policy will now be to fight totalitarianism of the left and authoritarianism of the right equally, evenhandedly, both—not that one is more of a problem than the other. That was a change, and it was noted by people in Guatemala, in Nicaragua, in El Salvador, in many other places of the earth far away from the Philippines. It was certainly noted in South Korea in a hurry, and I will point out, just for the sake of historical accuracy, when I visited Indonesia later in 1986 that President Sukarno sat me down and lectured me for 30 minutes on how he was a grass-roots politician, coming up through the democratic route, so we would not get any ideas while we were visiting Jakarta (laughter).

This award recognizes a world-class achievement, an achievement of courage in the Philippines, a person who had not only to serve but to endure six coups, and they were serious. They could have resulted in her loss of life and that of her family and loss of Philippine democracy. She stayed the course. She made possible a free and fair election of her successor. And what a great successor he is—a great ally of President Aquino and a friend of the United States, really throughout his career—President Ramos. She made possible a vision in our own country of ways in which our foreign policy could be geared to celebrate democracy and to fight authoritarianism of the right as well as totalitarianism of the left—both equally, vigorously.

I am so grateful that she is not only alive but happy—assured today by her own testimony—living in the same neighborhood, the same friends and neighbors. And she surely is in the right neighborhood here today in the United States State Department with the Fulbright Association. It is an extreme honor to be with her on this occasion and to salute her again and to indicate that ten years ago the EDSA revolution for her and for me was, I’m sure, one of the most significant days of our lives. And we’re grateful that so many have celebrated it again and again.
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Former Philippine President Corazon C. Aquino Receives 1996 Fulbright Prize

(continued from page 1)

"President Aquino has emboldened others in her region and around the world to believe that honesty, determination, and adherence to constitutionalism are the means to achieve social and political tranquility," said Dr. Stanley N. Katz, president of the American Council of Learned Societies and chairman of the international prize selection committee convened by the Fulbright Association.

The J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding was created by the Fulbright Association in 1993 to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions toward bringing peoples, cultures or nations to greater understanding of others. Previous recipients of the prize are South African President Nelson R. Mandela in 1993, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in 1994, and Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky in 1995.

"President Aquino's tireless efforts to create a just and fair government in the Philippines have earned her respect and international recognition as a leader of vision and character," said Dr. Philip O. Geier, president of the Armand Hammer United World College and president of the Fulbright Association's Board of Directors. "Ten years after her election to the presidency, we honor Mrs. Aquino's accomplishments in restoring the Philippines' place among the community of democratic nations and, in her private life, in working through the Forum of Democratic Leaders and in other ways to promote peace and understanding. We also celebrate the first time Asia is represented among the recipients of this award."

Dr. Katz noted that President Aquino, the first woman to receive the Fulbright Prize, "is a living exemplar of the capacity of individuals to bear witness to principle by means of unadorned personal courage and commitment. Her steadfast adherence to the ideals of domestic peace and international understanding has brought the Philippines far down the road of peaceful transition to democracy."

In 1986, Corazon Aquino rallied public support for democracy through a non-violent "People Power" revolution, ending 14 years of martial rule in the Philippines. She carried this momentum into her presidency and created a new constitution, which was written and approved less than a year after she assumed office. President Aquino's leadership also brought the restoration of democratic institutions, including an independent judiciary and effective legislative and executive branches of government. She successfully finished her six-year term in spite of seven attempted coups d'état by military rebels.

For her political and social triumphs, President Aquino was named "Woman of the Year" by Time Magazine in 1986 and was awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Non-Violent Peace Prize in 1987, among other distinctions.

Serving on the committee that selected President Aquino for the 1996 Fulbright Prize were Dr. Katz; Dr. Anton Amon, a Fulbright Association director and senior vice president, The Coca-Cola Company; Mr. Pablo Antonio Cuadra, poet and director of the Nicaraguan independent daily newspaper, La Prensa; Ms. Vasso Papandreou, minister of development for the Hellenic Republic; and the Right Reverend Sir Paul Reeves, former governor general of New Zealand (1985-1990). President Aquino is co-president of the Forum of Democratic Leaders with Nobel laureate and former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, Sonia Gandhi of India, and Kim Dae-Jung, a South Korean human rights and democracy leader. President Aquino also serves as chairperson of the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation, which awards scholarships for education and develops linkages for non-governmental organizations to improve the quality of life for Filipinos.

The Fulbright Association is a private, non-profit organization that supports and promotes the Fulbright Program, the international educational and cultural exchange program created 51 years ago through legislation sponsored by the late Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. The Fulbright Association also runs educational and cultural programs for foreign Fulbright scholars during their U.S. stay, linking them with U.S. Fulbright alumni, and collaborates with 50 Fulbright alumni organizations abroad.

The Philippine Fulbright Scholars Association is the oldest Fulbright alumni organization in the world and has been active in projects that benefit Philippine society. Since Fulbright exchanges between the U.S. and the Philippines began, approximately 1,700 Filipinos and 600 U.S. citizens have participated. Worldwide there are now more than 200,000 alumni of the Fulbright Program.