Václav Havel, President of the Czech Republic, Receives 1997 Fulbright Prize for International Understanding

The Fulbright Association awarded the 1997 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding to Václav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, on Oct. 3 at a ceremony at the U.S. Department of State. The prize, which carries a $50,000 cash award, is made possible by a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation. (continued on page 12)
Fulbright Association President Philip O. Geier awards the Fulbright Prize to 1997 laureate Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic.

President Havel is applauded by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright upon receipt of the Fulbright prize.

Neville Isdell, senior vice president and president, Greater Europe Group, The Coca-Cola Company, presents the statue “Tribute” to President Havel.

President Havel; James T. Laney, chairman of the 1997 J. William Fulbright Prize Selection Committee and former U.S. ambassador to Korea; Donald R. Greene, president of The Coca-Cola Foundation; and Dr. Geier.

Dr. Geier and Secretary of State Albright congratulate President Havel.
Thank you very much. What a tremendous pleasure it is for me to be here at this particular ceremony today, for all the reasons that you all can imagine, and some of which I will state.

Dr. Geier, thank you very much for your introduction and, President Havel, it is wonderful to have you here. Mr. Isdell, it is very good that you are here for this very special occasion which you are making possible. Director Duffey, Distinguished guests.

Welcome to the State Department. It gives me great pleasure that you have made our home yours on this wonderful occasion. I am so very glad that the Fulbright Association has bestowed this year’s prize on President Havel. I am happy because he is a man with whom I feel a special sense of kinship.

I think there are a lot of people who may think that I have known President Havel forever, but I didn’t know him until I arrived in Prague in January 1990. At that stage, my good friend, Jiří Dienstbier was foreign minister and he said, “Would you like to meet President Havel?”

I said, “Of course I would.”

I had gone up a delegation of the National Democratic Institute to look at how we could help in the first elections, and I had been with me a book that my father had written on 20th century Czechoslovakia. President Havel had been told that there was an American delegation coming. As I handed him my father’s book, he said, “I know who you are. You’re Mrs. Fulbright.”

And I said, “No, I’m Mrs. Albright.”

And so began a great friendship.

We began our lives, this wonderful man and I, in the same land with many of the same hopes. And though the circumstances of my life carried me far from the trials Václav Havel endured, somehow the mysterious currents of fate have brought us together as friends and our countries together as partners in a way that neither of us could ever have imagined.

We are giving him a prize because, for many years, he was considered by the authorities of his country and their bosses elsewhere to be the most dangerous kind of criminal. That's right. Václav Havel was a serial truth-teller, a recidivist champion of human rights, a man who so stubbornly stuck to his principles that he resisted every effort at rehabilitation until the Czech people intervened and sent him up the river to the presidential palace. We are giving Václav Havel a prize because we are the beneficiary of his wonderful crimes.

Because his nation and his neighbors are free, we too are free; free now from the icy grip of the Cold War, free now to bring the world together around basic principles of democracy, open markets, law, and peace.

But we do not honor Václav Havel simply for his role in bringing down the Berlin Wall; even more, we honor him for what he has helped to build in its place. The concrete and barbed wire that once imprisoned and suffocated Central Europe has been supplanted by the brick and mortar of democratic institutions, elected assemblies, accountable leaders, and laws that respect human rights and give civil society room to breathe. These changes are a product of political choices, yes, but also of moral choices. And it is your journey, President Havel, for moral leadership in one historical era to political responsibility in another that we honor today.

Indeed, we honor you for showing us that it's not only possible to combine these qualities, but necessary. As Senator Fulbright was famous for understanding, leaders are judged not by their power, but by their use of power. It is Václav Havel’s use of power that we applaud today.

After Václav Havel was elected president, he said, “Destiny has played a strange joke on me, as if it were telling me, “Since you think you’re so smart, now is your chance to show everyone you have ever criticized the right way to do things.””

Václav, don’t worry so much. Your country has restored its democratic tradition and built a modern market economy. Soon it will be a member of NATO and the European Union. Through its achievements and your eloquent voice, it has lifted our hearts and given hope to all those still striving for freedom. As we say in Washington, that’s good enough for government work.

Let me also suggest to you today that the Czech Republic’s journey mirrors your own, for it too is traveling a road from moral leadership to political responsibility. The Czech Republic is rejoining the community of democratic nations we used to call the West. As President Havel knows, belonging to the democratic family requires more than membership in institutions, much more than cultural affinity, even more, I dare say in this company, than drinking Coca-Cola. It requires taking responsibility for the freedom and security of others. That is what the Czech Republic will do as a full member of the NATO Alliance. That is what the Czech soldiers are doing today in Bosnia.

President Havel, you were right to remind us some years ago that the war in Bosnia was waged against our values, against our vision of what Europe should become, and I am so happy that we are now defending our values and vision together.

Once, leaders of nations came to Prague to offer the young Czech democracy reassurance, encouragement, and support. Now, thanks in no small part to you, President Havel, others can look to your nation’s example, encouragement, and help as well. You are a pathfinder and so is the Czech Republic and the road you are blazing. The road we are traveling together leads us as far as our common aspirations will take us and as far as the frontiers of freedom will reach.

As all of you know, I was born in Czechoslovakia, but for many years it was not a source of pride. Once President Havel took over, I was very proud to be born Czech. Congratulations, Mr. President.
Václav Havel

Born in Prague on October 5, 1936, into the family of a prominent businessman, Václav Havel completed his primary schooling in 1951. His "bourgeois" background limited his educational options, and he worked as a chemical laboratory technician while attending evening classes at a college preparatory school, graduating in 1954.

From 1955 to 1957, he studied at the Economics Faculty of the Czech Technical University in Prague. After finishing his compulsory military service, Václav Havel worked as a stagehand at the ABC Theater in Prague. In 1960, he began working at Prague’s Theater on the Balustrade (Divadlo Na Zábřadlí), first as a stagehand and later as an assistant director and dramaturge. The Theater on the Balustrade produced his first plays, most notably The Garden Party (1963), his first major international success.

From 1962 to 1966, Václav Havel studied dramaturgy at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. He was active in the democratization and renewal of culture during the era of reforms known as the Prague Spring, which ended with the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968.

Václav Havel actively opposed the invasion and the resulting hard-line Communist policies. His work was banned in Czechoslovakia in 1969. He moved from Prague to the country and concentrated on his writing, also working for a time as a laborer in a brewery. He continued his activities against the Communist regime, including hosting concerts of banned music in his country cottage. In 1975, he wrote an open letter to President Gustav Husák, criticizing the government.

In 1977, Václav Havel became a co-founder and one of the first three spokesmen of the Charter 77 human rights initiative. He was also a member of the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted, which was founded by a group of Charter 77 signatories. From 1978 to 1979, he was under house arrest. In 1978, Václav Havel wrote one of his most influential essays, "The Power of the Powerless."

Václav Havel was incarcerated several times for his beliefs, the last time from January to May, 1989. His longest prison term lasted from 1979 to 1983. After his release in March 1983, Václav Havel wrote three of his major plays—Largo Desolato (1984), Temptation (1985), and Slum Clearance (1987). As part of his continuing resistance to Communist rule, he also was active in the Czechoslovak samizdat press.

In November 1989, Václav Havel became one of the leaders of the Civic Forum opposition movement, which helped bring about the end of Communist rule.

On December 29, 1989, Václav Havel was elected president of Czechoslovakia. The new, freely elected parliament re-elected him on July 5, 1990, for a two-year term. As President of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, he established new relationships with many world leaders and helped lay the foundation for Czechoslovakia’s new foreign policy. After the June 1992 parliamentary elections, when it began to be clear that the federation was headed for dissolution, Václav Havel resigned from the federal presidency on July 20. On January 26, 1993, he was elected the first president of the Czech Republic.

Václav Havel’s plays have been performed around the world, and his books have been translated into many languages. Books in English include Letters to Olga; Disturbing the Peace; Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990; Selected Plays by Václav Havel; Summer Meditations; and Towards Civil Society.

Among his many honors are the Obie Award (USA, 1968, 1970); State Prize for European Literature (Austria, 1968); Prix Plaisir du Théâtre (France, 1981); the Erasmus of Rotterdam Prize (Netherlands, 1986); Olaf Palme Prize (Sweden, 1989); Ordre des Arts et Lettres (France, 1989); the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (1989); Grande Croix de la Légion d’Honneur (France, 1990); Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Medal (USA, 1990); Council of Europe Medal (1990); W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award (USA, 1991); Sonning Prize (Denmark, 1991); Internationaler Karlspreis (Aachen, Germany, 1991); Honorary membership in the Royal British Legion (1991); Athinati Prize of the Onassis Foundation (Greece, 1993); Theodor Huebs Preis (Germany, 1993); Indira Gandhi Prize (India, 1994); Philadelphia Liberty Medal (USA 1994); and Order of the Bath (1996).

Václav Havel has been awarded honorary academic degrees from institutions such as York University, Toronto, Canada; Le Mirail University, Toulouse, France; Columbia University, USA; Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel; Bayreuth University, Bayreuth, Germany; Charles University, Prague, the Czech Republic; Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium; Wroclaw University, Wroclaw, Poland; and Stanford and Harvard Universities, USA.
Oddly enough I still remember the interest with which, almost 30 years ago, I read the book *The Arrogance of Power* by Senator James William Fulbright. I don't know how many people in the United States found the book to their liking, and how many didn't, or how the book was received here. What struck me—a young man living under communist rule but knowing his own mind—was the openness with which the book identified the fundamental dilemma of American foreign policy as it appeared then. According to Senator Fulbright, the dilemma consisted of this: should the great American responsibility to the world, commensurate with the size, strength, and advanced civilization of the U.S.A., assume the form of an arrogant, insensitive, and sometimes even coercive, export of its values and interests into the whole world, and by doing so, should America play the role of a global policeman; or should this responsibility be of a more modest kind, merely offering an example or sober assistance where it is requested, while maximally respecting the “otherness” of others and living with them on good terms, thus unwittingly, as it were—if they seem inhuman to America—humanizing them?

**American Identity**

It seems to me that in this book Senator Fulbright touched upon a theme that reaches far beyond the question of what kind of foreign policy America should pursue. He touched upon the very question of American identity. Or is this not one way of asking the same question that citizens of this country have been asking since the 19th century: what is America? Yes, to ask the questions posed by Senator Fulbright means de facto to ask what America and its spirit are, or rather what this country should or could be and what role it should play in today's world.

I do hope that from me, a person coming from a small country, it will not be seen as a manifestation of the “arrogance of power” if I use this occasion, so closely connected with Senator Fulbright's name, to try to answer Senator Fulbright's American question from a non-American, and thus more distant, perspective.

I wonder how this traditional American dilemma is perceived today by U.S. citizens who are not particularly interested in American history and even less in American foreign policy.

It is highly probable that many of them have been overwhelmed by the feeling that since the main threats looming over America and the whole world, the Soviet Empire and communism, have collapsed, the danger of another world war breaking out can be crossed off the list of potential risks. Consequently, America should pay more attention to itself and to its own problems and should not get too involved in the large and intricate world where every attempt at helping something good is rewarded with ingratitude. The Evil Empire has been defeated, the Good has prevailed: so why take the trouble and invest further and further billions of dollars in the military?

**Isolationism**

Isolationism has a long tradition in modern American history; it has returned in many waves and in different forms. Its current form, I
assume, is the one I have just described, and it is as dangerous for America as any of the previous forms: never in modern times has isolationism protected America from whatever the danger may have been; instead, it has always been responsible for delayed engagement at a time when conflagration was already ablaze and was beginning to pose a vital threat, which eventually meant that Americans had to pay for their initial lack of interest or reluctance a thousand times more than they would have paid, had they become politically and militarily engaged at the very beginning or, if possible, even before. They had to pay for their short-sightedness not only with much larger expenditures but with innumerable lives unnecessarily wasted.

It has often been said that the West and democracy have won the Cold War and that what is at stake now is for them to win the peace, too. Eight years after the collapse of communism I am deeply convinced that this task is going to be much more difficult to accomplish. The threats looming over the world today are to the threat of communism as metastasis is to an isolated tumor: while previously the enemy faced by the free world was sole and apparent, armed to the teeth with weapons known to us and quite predictable, today—after the disintegration of the bipolar world, and to a large extent as an aftermath of its existence—the world is covered with innumerable dangers that are extremely diverse, decentralized, and yet intertwined, and hard to predict. To respond to these by quickly creating different new defense systems is truly more demanding than to continue the arms race with a more or less sclerotic superpower.

To sum up: isolationism is short-sighted primarily in terms of the very interests of America. It has, simply, never paid off and this is all the more true now, when—as I have tried to indicate—the defense of the values that America stands for is in many respects more difficult than in previous times. But that is not the main reason why I am speaking against isolationism. That reason is different: we are entering a world in which it makes less and less sense to focus on individual interests only, because this is a world of a single global civilization which makes us all participants in one common Destiny. Whatever happens anywhere may, in one way or another, have an immediate impact upon the Fate of the whole world—either positive, as in the case of a discovery of a new drug in a California laboratory, or negative, as in the case of the explosion of a nuclear reactor in a Ukrainian village. We are living at a time when humankind can face all the threats looming over it only if we, by which I mean each of us, manage to revive, with new energy and ethos, a sense of responsibility for the world as a whole. It goes without saying that this must include responsibility for its long-term future, too. Under those circumstances, to think only of oneself is suicidal for all—the powerful and the weak, the large and the small alike.

American Responsibility

I am convinced that for these two reasons, that is the general and the very fundamental on the one hand, and the specifically American on the other, America today—perhaps more than ever before—must assume its share of responsibility for the world. For America to close itself off would be impossible, for merely technological reasons, but even if it tried to do so, this would be the worst course it could take for the planet and for itself.

Although it may appear different, what is at stake today is exactly what was at stake at the time of Senator Fulbright, in other words, how America should bear this responsibility.

I believe that for the rest of the world contemporary America is an almost symbolic concentration of all the good and the bad of our civilization—ranging from the fantastic development of science and technology generating more welfare and the profundity of civil liberty and strength of democratic institutions, to the blind cult of perpetual economic growth and never-ending consumption, no matter how detrimental to the environment, the dictates of materialism, consumerism and advertising, the voiding of human uniqueness and its replacement by.

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the uniformity of the round-the-clock noise of TV banality.

For these reasons, the way in which America will assume its responsibility for the world should embody those premises which alone have a chance of saving this civilization as a whole: this way should be imbued with new spirituality, a new ethos and new ethics, hence exactly with the things that should be adopted by all cultures, all spheres of civilization, and all nations of today's world as a condition of their very survival.

**Respect for "Otherness"**

What does this mean in concrete terms? A number of things. For example: deep respect for everything that in today's multipolar and multicultural world constitutes "otherness," a respect resulting from profound understanding of the positive values inherent in the other worlds. At the same time, the courage to step out of the world of pragmatic power considerations and to defend—non-violently—truth and justice wherever they are violated, regardless of whether this could put the most profitable commercial contracts at risk. To be always on the side of the good, without this siding being motivated by one's own power or economic interests and thus bearing witness to its own hypocrisy. To promote all manifestations of tolerance and understanding among nations and religious worlds, to enhance all kinds of international cooperation and regional integration geared towards general benefit, to create space for a wise attitude towards Nature and Earth, an attitude that sees a human being as their integral part, not as their master, owner, or wanton exploiter.

As for security matters, I believe that in extreme cases that are beyond any doubt, the U.S.A., while enjoying the general support of freedom-loving people and peace-loving democratic states, must have the strength to intervene with force—that is by military means, against apparent evil. The U.S.A. cannot and must not give up this obligation, which is a very specific and extreme manifestation of its responsibility for the world.

In the course of the Cold War, America came to understand this, though historians may argue about the situations in which it tested its competence, or the means it employed.

However, that is not what matters now. What matters now is something different, more important, almost a matter of principle.

It seems to me that after all the good and bad experiences America has had in the 20th century it should eventually understand what its enlightened parts have understood for a long time: that the most effective, most ethical, and in the end, also the least expensive way of dealing with these challenges is by investing all its intellectual potential and a significant share of its material strength into what I call "security prevention." Of course, to predict conflicts and to avert them is usually more difficult than to engage in them and often even more difficult than to win them.

However, it is a way one thousand times more meaningful—for the reasons that I have indicated and that, as you may believe, I could develop, specify, and illustrate for hours on end.

Let me quote just one example that is fairly topical, and, as far as I know, is often discussed in American political circles and media.

**NATO Enlargement**

What I have in mind is the enlargement of the North Atlantic Alliance. I am told that there are a lot of people here in this country who maintain that NATO enlargement makes no sense. Why, they say, should we enlarge our defense alliance—on top of that, by taking in countries that were part of the Communist Empire until recently, and therefore, remain somewhat suspicious—at a time when the West is not facing any serious threats? Furthermore, NATO enlargement might allegedly be resented by a certain large Euro-Asian state, which for some reason is afraid of the Alliance, and it would cost taxpayers money that could otherwise be saved or better spent.
This way of thinking—after what we have gone through in the 20th century, in the course of which more than 200 million people have died in wars and in concentration camps—is, in my opinion, extremely naive, short-sighted, even dangerous.

Europe is a strange continent. Today's civilization was born there but so were two World Wars. It is a continent which has always constituted and still constitutes one entity—though culturally, ethnically, and economically immensely diverse. For the first time in its history, this entity has a chance to establish its internal order on the principle of cooperation and equality of the large and the small, the strong and the weak, on shared democratic values. This is also a chance, once and for all, to put an end to the export of wars and coercion and to become an example of peaceful collaboration. Should Europe miss this chance, we might be heading for a new global catastrophe, much graver than the previous ones. For reasons I have described, this time the forces of freedom would not be facing one totalitarian enemy: this could be a strange war of all against all, a war with no clear-cut fronts, a war that would be difficult to distinguish from terrorism, organized crime, and other kinds of civilization crime, a war into which the whole world would be dragged by a number of indirect and hidden means. I don't mean to scare you, but anybody with a little bit of imagination and some knowledge of what has—until recently—been going on, for example, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, must understand that this is not empty talk.

If the ongoing process of European integration were unable to enhance its security dimension, if it were to stop at the gates of NATO, the only functional defense alliance in Europe, it would probably come to a halt. And I would like to assure all Americans who still have their doubts that the unfortunate consequences of such coming to a halt, regardless of what form they would assume, and regardless of whether they would befall us in three or in 15 years, could cost us much more than the two World Wars Europe had “donated” to us in this century. After a long period of hesitation, the West took a major step to avoid such a threat in Madrid not long ago. We will all pay for this step. Any judicious person, however, must admit that such expenditure is worth it. Has it not been established beyond doubt that even the most costly preventive security is cheaper than the cheapest war? Well, such an investment will hardly generate any return in the next elections, but it will be all the more appreciated by generations to come.

Has it not been established beyond doubt that even the most costly preventive security is cheaper than the cheapest war?

Future Generations

This brings me back to the beginning of my argument: who thinks today about future generations? Who is concerned about what people will eat, drink, breathe in 100 years, where they will get energy when there are twice as many people living on this planet as today? Only an idealist, a dreamer, a genuinely spiritual person who, they say, is not modern enough.

These dreamers, who are often at the margin of society, despite the fact that many of their books are world bestsellers, will find their way to the place they belong, among the politicians, only if the very spirit of politics changes in the way I have been talking about, towards deeper responsibility for the world.

For the sake of my country, for the sake of the whole world, and for the sake of America itself, that is said to be a country of unlimited opportunities, I wish that it be among the first to set out on this journey. A journey leading to a genuine, profound interest respecting infinity and eternity, an interest in all that transcends the borders of space and time within which we are destined to live.

Dear friends, allow me, in conclusion, to express my admiration for Senator James William Fulbright's Program, which, I believe, has for 50 years been pursuing the direction that I would like the whole of America to pursue: towards unostentatious and non-violent promotion of the spirit of freedom and responsibility.
Scenes from the 1997 Fulbright Prize Events

Keith Geiger, director, Office of Academic Programs, United States Information Agency, congratulates President Havel. Dr. Geier and Dagmar Havelova, President Havel's wife, look on.

Harriet Mayor Fulbright and President Havel share a moment at the award ceremony reception.

Mrs. Havel; Anton Amon, Fulbright Association officer, member of the 1997 Fulbright Prize Selection Committee, and senior vice president, The Coca-Cola Company; President Havel; Dr. Geier; and John B. Hurford, Fulbright Association director emeritus and chairman of the Fulbright Association's Prize Committee.

Senator Charles S. Robb (Va.) greets Ambassador Laney (right) and Mr. Hurford.

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The Fulbright Program in the Czech Republic

By Hanka Ripkova, executive director, J. William Fulbright Commission for Educational Exchange in the Czech Republic

Since 1991, when the Fulbright Program in the Czech Republic joined Czech reformers in the work of transforming a political, economic, and social system emerging from 40 years of totalitarian control, the Fulbright exchange has brought more than 150 Czechs to the United States and almost 200 Americans to the Czech Republic.

Although the board of the Fulbright Commission in the Czech Republic reviews its priorities every year, the overall stress on fields of study that were under heavy political influence during the decades behind the Iron Curtain remains the cornerstone of the U.S.-Czech Fulbright exchange. It would be too optimistic to link the many successes in curriculum change in the Czech Republic's universities and high schools exclusively to the influence of the Fulbright Program, but Fulbrighters have made a significant contribution to these changes.

A system cannot be transformed overnight, and the transformation of a system which continues to replicate itself by means of an educational system that is only partially reformed remains a formidable challenge. The ability to break this reproductive cycle at several junctures is one of the reasons for the Fulbright success. Through the Teacher Exchange Program, scholarships for graduate study, and awards for research and lecturing, the Fulbright Program penetrates the system at many levels.

Americans do not come here to be role models for their Czech colleagues, but the different approaches to education and to life in society which they embody often give Czechs a good basis for a fresh, critical approach to their own methods of research, teaching and lecturing, or studying. The great potential of the Czech grantees, which made their selection possible, has invariably been increased by their Fulbright experience. The Czech Fulbright Alumni Association, founded in 1996, comprises a group of leading professionals in a wide spectrum of fields, many of whom have been the catalysts of new developments in their respective professions.

The Czech Republic is hosting several U.S. Fulbright scholars this year. Craig Machado and Irene Thomas are helping their colleagues from the Faculties of Education at Masaryk University in Brno and at Charles University in Prague with courses in methodology of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). To provide the opportunity to study American literature with a U.S. professor to the largest number of students possible, Marshall Toman commutes between universities in two Czech cities. Roger Klein came to participate in curriculum development and lecturing in two relatively new fields in the Czech Republic: environmental law and securities law, both critical disciplines at this time in the development of the Czech Republic's legal system.

The reform of the country's health care system is being hotly debated, and the timing of Robert McLean's course in health care management at Palacky University in Olomouc is ideal. Susan Ewing, teaching at the Academy of Applied Arts at the Department of Metal and Jewelry, and Michael Murphy, conducting fetal kidney research at the Academy of Sciences in Prague, are enjoying mutually beneficial cooperation with their hosts in their respective and very diverse fields. We have learned from the three American high school teachers and their Czech partners in the United States that adaptation to their new tasks remains a challenge. None of them has, however, indicated that it is not worth the effort to step directly into the shoes of their partners in a new home, job, and country.

Some U.S. students have chosen fields in which the Czech Republic's preeminence is well recognized. Dana Schnirch is studying glass art, Heather Frost, chemistry, and Sierra Stoneberg, biological sciences. Others have found the transformation of our system a good example for practical experiment. Caroline Vanderkar is examining the privatization process in agriculture, Peter Swartz is investigating the nation's restitution laws, and James Kilian is researching the use of public space in Prague. Laura Davies, who teaches at the school for deaf children in Olomouc, is practicing mutual understanding through sign language at the Department of Special Pedagogy.

At this writing, we have more information about the work of the American grantees here, but thanks to the power of increasing e-mail connections, we are beginning to read stories from our Czech grantees about classrooms in the United States. We look forward to their return and to hearing their accounts in person as they discuss their experiences and the changes they have undergone.

These myriad examples of just a single year's Fulbright exchange illustrate the rich experience the program brings to the United States, the Czech Republic, and their binational and personal relationships. The program itself changes each year—as the grantees change—but the impact of the exchange is always enormous. Witnessing the visible benefits of Fulbright exchanges year after year, we are proud to be part of this "modest program with an immodest aim," which brings so much to so many.

Association Accepts Major Gift

Loren W. Hershey, an officer and director of the Fulbright Association from 1989 through 1994 and a former president of the National Capital Area Chapter, wrote to the association immediately following the recent 1997 Fulbright Prize award ceremony and 20th annual conference lauding the accomplishments of the association and making a contribution of $25,000 to support operations. Mr. Hershey indicated that he will make equivalent gifts each year through 2000.

Mr. Hershey, an attorney in private practice in Washington, D.C., recently renewed the spirit of his Fulbright experience with a mid-career sabbatical at the Georgetown Foreign Service School as a Fellow of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy.

Mr. Hershey received a one-year Fulbright grant to India in 1968. Since 1988, he has provided leadership and support for a variety of major association milestones, including the Fulbright Prize, the 12th annual conference, which he chaired, development of the chapter system, and association-wide strategic planning.

A life member of the association, Mr. Hershey is also active in the political and civic life of the greater Washington, D.C., area, serving on the Board of Trustees of WETA, the PBS affiliate broadcaster, and as chairman of three private foundations.
Czech Republic President Václav Havel Receives 1997 Fulbright Prize
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"In the long process of ending communist rule and ushering in democracy in his country, Václav Havel has promoted liberty and human dignity worldwide," said James T. Laney, former U.S. ambassador to Korea and chairman of the international prize selection committee convened by the Fulbright Association. "Scholar, diplomat, and leader of his country, Václav Havel is a man of great courage and vision. His eloquence and his utter fearlessness gave hope to millions in a time of despair."

The Fulbright Association created the J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding in 1993 to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions toward bringing peoples, cultures, or nations to greater understanding of others. The prize was awarded to South African President Nelson Mandela in 1993, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in 1994, former Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky in 1995, and former Philippines President Corazon Aquino in 1996.

"President Havel has become a symbol of the vast human potential for positive transformation of societies," said Philip O. Geier, president of the Fulbright Association's Board of Directors and president of Armand Hammer United World College. "Over recent years, he has unleashed the momentum of democracy to improve the well-being of the Czech Republic and its citizens by defending human rights, strengthening the economy, and most recently, promoting NATO expansion to include the Czech Republic."

For nearly two decades, playwright Václav Havel rallied public support for democracy and social change in Czechoslovakia. He wrote open letters to the government, focused his literary works on civil society and liberty, and created a human rights manifesto called Charter 77. In 1989, Mr. Havel was unanimously elected spokesman of the Civic Forum opposition movement, which brought about the end of communist rule in the country. Mr. Havel's leadership of the peaceful 1989 "Velvet Revolution" resulted in the rise of democracy.

On December 29, 1989, Václav Havel was elected president of Czechoslovakia. In 1990, he was re-elected president by the new parliament, but resigned the position in 1992 when it became clear Czechoslovakia would be split. He became the first president of the Czech Republic on January 26, 1993.

Serving on the committee that selected President Havel for the 1997 Fulbright Prize were Ambassador James T. Laney; Anton Amon, a Fulbright Association director and senior vice president, The Coca-Cola Company; Gudmund Hernes, minister of health, Norway; Géza Jeszenszky, member of the Hungarian parliament and president, Hungarian Atlantic Council; and Sir Ronald Wilson, president, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Australia. Dr. Amon, Minister Hernes, Dr. Jeszenszky, and Sir Ronald Wilson are all past recipients of Fulbright awards.

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This year, the Fulbright Association celebrates the 20th anniversary of its founding and the fifth anniversary of the Fulbright Prize.
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Czech Republic President Václav Havel Receives 1997 Fulbright Prize

(continued from page 1)

"In the long process of ending communist rule and ushering in democracy in his country, Václav Havel has promoted liberty and human dignity worldwide," said James T. Laney, former U.S. ambassador to Korea and chairman of the international prize selection committee convened by the Fulbright Association. "Scholar, diplomat, and leader of his country, Václav Havel is a man of great courage and vision. His eloquence and his utter fearlessness gave hope to millions in a time of despair."

The Fulbright Association created the J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding in 1993 to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions toward bringing peoples, cultures, or nations to greater understanding of others. The prize was awarded to South African President Nelson Mandela in 1993, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in 1994, former Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky in 1995, and former Philippines President Corazon C. Aquino in 1996.

"President Havel has become a symbol of the vast human potential for positive transformation of societies," said Philip O. Geier, president of the Fulbright Association’s Board of Directors and president of Armand Hammer United World College. "Over recent years, he has unleashed the momentum of democracy to improve the well-being of the Czech Republic and its citizens by defending human rights, strengthening the economy, and most recently, promoting NATO expansion to include the Czech Republic."

For nearly two decades, playwright Václav Havel rallied public support for democracy and social change in Czechoslovakia. He wrote open letters to the government, focused his literary works on civil society and liberty, and created a human rights manifesto called Charter 77. In 1989, Mr. Havel was unanimously elected spokesman of the Civic Forum opposition movement, which brought about the end of communist rule in the country. Mr. Havel’s leadership of the peaceful 1989 "Velvet Revolution" resulted in the rise of democracy.

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