



SIR JEREMY ISAACS DELIVERS BFSA 2009 ANNUAL LECTURE



Sir Jeremy Isaacs

Following the AGM at the University of Notre Dame in December of last year alumni and guests packed the auditorium for the Annual Lecture. The presenter this year was Sir Jeremy Isaacs who is well known as the founding chief executive of Channel 4 and the Director General of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. Sir Jeremy chose to talk about the subject of his television documentary series and book, *Cold War*.

A previous production, and one with long lasting appeal, *The World at War* (1973) had established Sir Jeremy as a television producer of considerable talent and energy, and the natural choice for American film tycoon Ted Turner to approach with his idea for a big-budget documentary series, *Cold War: A Television History*. The 24-part documentary series (1998-99) examined the period of intense military and cultural stand-off which he dryly referred to as "a strange sort of peace". The opposing ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union unfolded in the arms race, political propaganda and espionage, and the polarization of the globe. During the period of the Cold war, from the mid

1940s to the early 1990's, tensions between the two nations and their respective allies "kept the balance of terror" in a two-player game. The concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) was to keep peace and of course this would and did have the effect of feeding the arms race. It led to costly defence spending and nuclear armament without either side declaring war on the other.

However, whilst 'peace' was maintained the decades did see a number of 'proxy' wars including Korea (often referred to as 'the forgotten war') and Vietnam. The latter had a fundamental and negative influence on American society during the 1960s and 1970s, draining the economy of the United States, and leaders in the Soviet Union had by then realized that the economic burden of the nuclear arms race was unsustainable. These were anything but 'cold' wars. The idea of MAD was strained to the limit during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the world was brought close to the brink of another full scale war. Drawing upon archive film footage selected from the documentary, Sir Jeremy highlighted the increased diplomatic military and economic pressure of the Reagan/Gorbachev years to bring the era of détente to a close. The Soviet Union collapsed, leaving the US the only global superpower.

In the years since "we now live in a more uncertain world of fraught and perilous disorder." The proliferation of terrorism in a post Cold War world, resurgent nationalism and the ease of global movement has not, he argued, made the world a particularly safer place.

The BFSA would like to thank Sir Jeremy Isaacs for a wonderful and informative lecture delivered with authority and insight. Sir Jeremy remained for the reception afterwards and signed copies of his book for members. We would also like to thank the University of Notre Dame for hospitality.

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND CHAPTER TRIP TO LOCH LOMOND, STIRLING CASTLE AND GLASGOW



Loch Lomond photo by David Thomas

Come join the BFSA Scotland and Northern Ireland Chapter for a trip exploring Loch Lomond, Stirling, and the lovely city of Glasgow. We are planning this trip for the bank holiday weekend of the 2-4th of May this year. We are planning on visiting **Loch Lomond**- Great Britain's largest lake, surrounded by green hills and dotted with numerous islands. It features in the song *Loch Lomond* and has attracted visitors for hundreds of years—and the historic castle of Stirling. We'll take a 2-hour boat trip from the town of Balloch and explore the islands of Loch Lomond, (*see above*) before catching the train back to Glasgow. We will visit Loch Lomond on Sunday, the 3rd of May. Please see the flyer for details.

There are home stay opportunities reserved for current Fulbright Scholars and Fellows. Glasgow has a wealth of accommodation available including numerous youth hostels and hotels. Please contact Tahitia McCabe, BFSA Scotland and Northern Ireland Chapter Chair at :

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



I have a number of thank-you messages to bring to this edition of the newsletter. First of all I would like to thank all those members who attended our Annual General Meeting in Decem-

ber. It was an excellent opportunity to meet with you and to speak about the achievements of our organisation over the last year.

There have been some changes to your Committee with Rony Douek coming to the end of his period of office as Deputy Chair, although remaining as a Committee member. Pankaj Sharma has completed six years of service on the Committee, including two years as chairman. Many thanks to Pankaj for his unstinting work and the

important contribution he has made to the association.

The AGM in December was followed by the Annual Lecture which was presented by Sir Jeremy Isaacs on the topic of the Cold War. The lecture coincided with the publication in paperback of his book of the same name, co-written with Taylor Downing. A fuller report appears on the front page of this newsletter and I would like to record our thanks to Sir Jeremy for an interesting and stimulating lecture.

At a recent meeting of the Fulbright Commission the Chairman, Simon Lewis, extended his thanks to those BFSA members who had kindly contributed to the 60th Anniversary Fund. As you know, this fund was set up to support the establishment of a new Fulbright Award.

The total collected so far stands at £94,472 and the contribution to the fund from

BFSA members stands at just over £4,000. Please note that the fund is still open and it is not too late to make a donation. So do please send your contribution to

Ms Penny Egan

Executive Director

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Finally we hope to have one of our interesting debates this coming May, which we will be further in touch about once we have finalised our panel, and of course Tahitia is organizing the trip to Loch Lomond for current Fulbright scholars in the UK that same month. All our members are welcome as well so please let either Muriel or Tahitia know if you plan to attend.

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND CHAPTER RECEPTION IN EDINBURGH



Photo: Michael Kline

The Scotland/Northern Ireland BFSA Chapter's Christmas Reception was yet again a warm and enjoyable evening. As in previous years, the United States' Consulate General in Edinburgh was the venue for the reception and the Consulate staff did a great job of making us feel totally at home. Flickering candles and Christmas decorations welcomed us into the first-floor entertainment area where Lisa Vickers, the U.S. Consul, spoke of the new Scottish Fulbright awards being planned for the coming year and her memories of working with Fulbright

associations around the world. Guests included current and alumni Fulbright Teachers, representatives from the British Council and many BFSA members from around Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. There was much animated conversation fuelled by Californian red wine, mince pies and brassy big-band Christmas carols. We hope to see you at the Reception next year!

In the meantime see page 1 and the flyer for our Easter trip to Loch Lomond. See you there!
Tahitia McCabe

BFSA MENTORING THANKSGIVING



Photo: Amina Merchant

BFSA mentors and current US Fulbright scholars celebrated a wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner in The Albert, Victoria Street, London, on 27th November last year. The dinner was, as usual, very well attended as those far from home were able to get together with their Fulbright family in the UK.

The BFSA would like to thank Dr Sanjay Prasad for his continued sponsorship of the BFSA Thanksgiving evening, which has formed a regular part of our events calendar for the past few years. Due to busi-

ness abroad Dr Prasad was unable to attend so the US scholars have asked us to express their gratitude.

Anyone who would like to put their name forward for the BFSA Mentoring Programme, or would like to sponsor a similar evening for visiting US scholars please get in touch with the BFSA office. It is part of the BFSA Constitution to "arrange for Association members to meet American Fulbright Scholars in the UK" - so any ideas, no matter how small, are appreciated to help them enjoy their stay.



BEIJING CONFERENCE

The Fulbright Association's 31st Annual Conference

"2008: The Interconnected World"



Li Qingsi from the newly established Chinese Fulbright Alumni Association

The Fulbright Association 31st Annual Conference—"2008: The Interconnected World"—took place in Beijing, People's Republic of China in October 2008. The conference this year served as an official activity to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the normalisation of diplomatic relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China. Fulbright alumni in China, through the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE), have now created the first Chinese Fulbright alumni organization and welcomed Fulbright alumni, Federal officials, members of the private sector and representatives of international NGO's to this global conference dedicated to the discussion of international issues and development in the field of international educational and cultural exchange.

After the AGM Alison Friedman (*China 2002*), until recently the international director of the Beijing Modern Dance Company, presented the Selma Cohen Endowment Dance Scholarship Lecture with some awe inspiring short films on Chinese modern dance. Placing emphasis on music and the arts as one of the best means of intercultural dialogue without the need for the spoken language, Ms Friedman challenged the use of political agenda and private profiteering that has left less than 10% of the 400 theatres in Beijing in operation. Innovative creativity has suffered from cuts in China, as it has in the rest of the world, and the international challenge in relation to creativity in an 'interconnected world' was summed up

in Ms Friedman's statement that "governments and private entrepreneurs must resolve to offer resources useful to artists and institutions that are not from a biased agenda, and are accessible to people beyond the political arena." Due to the difficulties of movement and freedom of expression within China NGO's such as alumni associations, and the mentoring they can provide in the arts, while vital, will take time to establish themselves, however she stressed how much their existence in the new China, a country in fast paced transition, is necessary for lasting relationships and global communication.

The afternoon was taken up with Jane Anderson acting as moderator on the panel discussing 'Best Practices for Fulbright Alumni Organisations' with representatives from Pakistan, Korea, China, Germany, Japan and Nepal discussing the diversity of what works within each culture and the ways to implement it. In the evening the Ballroom was the venue for the Annual Banquet when scholars and friends from across the globe were able to catch up on old acquaintances, make new ones, and look around for someone who might shed some light on the very palatable delicacies we were eating.

During the Journalism and Communications Panel the following day Hoyt Purvis, chairman of the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board from 1995 to 1998 and one time press secretary to Senator Fulbright, opened with remarks about the current global communication ease and its effect on journalists. Technology that was once another's responsibility has now to be learned by the 21stC multi-media journalist. IT, video, editing, reporting and research skills are all involved as the modern journalist must explore and verify whether the information they access on the ground and online is accurate and true – the very ethics of news reporting.

CNN reporter Mark S. Leff (*China 2008*) illustrated the history of broadcasting with a short film on the arrival of the Hindenburg in New York in 1937, with the journalist Herb Morrison reporting. It is one of the most memorable, compelling, and distressing reports of all time. Morrison was reduced to tears watching the

airship disintegrates before his eyes. The report was broadcast to the world and is still as emotional today. It can be viewed on www.youtube.com

Accuracy, despite emotion when disaster unfolds, is always a pressure in the news world and agencies can be as nervous about being the first to be wrong as they are about simply being the first. Mark told us an amusing story in relation to a circulating rumour that President Bush Senior had died during his visit to Tokyo in 1992. The President momentarily collapsed during a state dinner and although he recovered within a few seconds, the tragic news of his 'demise' was about to be aired in the rush to be the first with the scoop. One can only imagine the mayhem in the studio until at the very last moment, the truth uncovered, a senior producer ran onto the set shouting 'No! Stop!' and the network dashed to a commercial break – the saviour of so many disasters in broadcasting.

Sitting on the Education Panel later in the morning was John Fitzgerald, (*USA 1988*) from The Ford Foundation, Paul Levine, (*China 2004*) from Shantou University, and Shi Jinghuan, (*USA 1995*) from Tsinghua University. Shi Jinghuan spoke candidly of the challenges in the Chinese higher education sector where in some areas staff have a low level of efficiency, an outdated curriculum and teaching methods vastly unsuitable for the modern world. The question of how to be innovative in the classroom, how to implement rapid development and to improve quality awareness in staff and education boards was put to the board.

Paul Levine replied by praising the success of the International Education Exchange Programmes in those areas. If the exchange programmes and the benefits of world class education are to take off across China then English must be provided in the education system, and seen to be valued. In modern China, released from some of the past propaganda excess, students are being taught to read analytically, think critically and discuss dialogically, from pedlar to professor. He added a personal opinion that the US needed to be less fearful and more pro-active in China.

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BFSA AUTUMN RECEPTION



Rt. Hon. Jack Straw with committee officers Mr Izzet Agoren and Dr Henrietta Lake on the left and Police Fellows Dr Andy Briars and David Lewis on the right.

Members of the association, current scholars and friends were guests of the Metropolitan Police at the BFSA Annual Reception last October in New Scotland Yard, London. Organisation of the event had been in the capable hands of Police Fellows David Byrne, (Pennsylvania, 1997) Dr Andy Briars, (Colorado, 2002) and Ajoy Gosain, (American University, 2007) to whom the BFSA extends thanks. The evening proceedings were opened by Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson who formally welcomed the scholars before handing over to BFSA Chair, Dr Philip Swan. Our speaker for the evening was Lord High Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Jack Straw, and below is a transcript of his speech for members who were unable to attend.

Photos: Tina Nguyen

"During my time as Home Secretary, Leader of the House of Commons and now Justice Secretary, I have been granted an unusually privileged look at the 'guts' of Great Britain – the constitutional mechanics, the systems of governance, and the functioning of our parliamentary democracy. But over the five years in which I was Foreign Secretary, I also had the chance to visit a great number of countries and to see Britain through the eyes of others.

I regard this opportunity to view our country from both inside and out as a tremendous privilege. And I am grateful for the perspective it has given me on Britain's rich interconnections with the wider world.

Something which really came home to me during my time as Foreign Secretary was that international cooperation is as much about personal bonds and lasting friendships as it is about formal accords, bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding. I was particularly struck by the power of human interaction and relationships to heal division, to stimulate debate and even to change the path of a nation's history for the better. This is, of course, the very reason the Fulbright Scholar Programme was established just after the Second World War.

In my remarks this evening, I am going to argue that the *raison d'être* of the Fulbright

Scholar Programme and the means of achieving it is at least as relevant at the beginning of the 21st Century as it was in 1946. And I can think of no better occasion to speak to this theme than on the return of an illustrious group of Fulbright scholars from their year in the United States, and on the 60th anniversary of the UK-US Fulbright Commission.

I'd like first to take a moment to pay tribute to Senator Fulbright – a truly remarkable and discerning man whose wisdom, experience and understanding enabled him to help define the United Nations, shape United States foreign policy and have a lasting influence on the field of international relations. Indeed, people still look to Senator Fulbright's writing for guidance and wisdom today.

Many of Senator Fulbright's qualities were formed and developed over the course of his impressive career. But as you will know, one of his most profound experiences was as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University. These were three very formative years of his life – years during which he became convinced that if only people could get to know one another and exchange ideas, then they would be less willing and ready to exchange bullets and bombs. These were, it seems, the first seeds for the programme that now bears his name.

Senator Fulbright's extraordinary vision was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Truman on the 1st of August 1946. The Fulbright Scholar Programme is today world renowned and universally respected for the opportunity it gives people to live in other countries and to gain insight and understanding into other ways of life.

As Alastair Cooke – a close friend of Fulbright's, and himself the epitome of Anglo-American understanding – observed, the aim must be to capture "in the most vivid terms the passions, manners and flavour of another nation's way of life."

And of course, the process is not simply one-way: it is *mutual* understanding – between individuals, institutions, leaders and future leaders – to which the Fulbright Scholar Programme aspires. At the time the Programme was established, the need for cross-cultural, mutual understanding was both stark and immediate. Fulbright had himself witnessed the devastation caused by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and felt compelled towards this kind of international diplomacy as a means of preventing another World War.

He described the *raison d'être* of the educational exchange programme in this way [in *The Price of Empire*]:

"... the belief that international relations can be improved, and the danger of war significantly reduced, by producing generations of leaders, who through the experience of educational exchange, will have experienced some feeling and understanding of other people's cultures—why they operate as they do, why they think as they do, why they react as they do – and of the differences among these cultures. It is possible ... that people can find in themselves, through intercultural education, the ways and means of living together in peace."

It is true that since the Fulbright Scholar Programme was brought into being – and even since I was a student, [which feels like not so long ago] – we've seen changes of an astonishing degree. Countries around the globe are increasingly connected in virtually all spheres of life, due to the international movement of ideas, communications, media, trade, capital and people.

This global connectedness has been driven by another significant development: the

rapid advancement of technology and industry. The Prime Minister can now track me down at all hours of day and night, wherever I am, by mobile phone, blackberry and a host of other portable devices. Companies which did not exist a decade ago are now everyday verbs: we Skype, we Google, and we even Facebook. We live in an age where vast amounts of information and knowledge are at our fingertips, thanks to the likes of Google and its ilk.

As a younger man I was a keen scholar, or what you might – less charitably – call a ‘nerd’. I would pass hours of blissful solitude in the House of Commons library, reading and researching. Naturally, this put me at a certain advantage over those of my colleagues for whom – unaccountably – the library held less allure. Such was the happy situation for many years until the advent of Google. But in the era of ‘infobesity’ – another new term I heard coined recently – my colleagues can sit at their desktops, effortlessly accessing the same information and much more besides. The opportunities we have today would have been completely inconceivable in 1946.

One might suppose that in these times of progress – of instant communication, of immediate access to information, of technological innovation – Senator Fulbright’s goal would become of diminishing importance. After all, if we can learn all the facts about a country online, if people of a dozen different nationalities can hold a single conversation over the internet, does not the idea of flying across the globe to get to know someone seem rather antiquated? Not in the least. The need for foreign exchanges as a way of gaining insight and understanding into the peoples of other nations is by no means diminished by the

fact that we now benefit from telecommunications and a knowledge economy.

I say this for two reasons.

First, because there is a danger that as communication becomes easier and information becomes more accessible, there is less incentive for real interaction, and we in fact gain a false sense of proximity to other nations. There is an astonishing richness to human interaction which electronic communications inevitably, to some degree or other, miss out on – a gesture, the subtlest change in tone of voice, the corner of someone’s mouth lifting in a smile, or the furrowing of their brow in a frown. This is why no number of emails, or text messages, or photographs provides a real substitute for time spent in another’s company. But such is the convenience of virtual communication that we risk, without fully realising, a gradual forfeiting of genuine understanding for something much more superficial.

And secondly, the need for foreign exchanges is not diminished because knowing *about* a person or a people is not the same as understanding them. The World Wide Web makes it very easy to know all about the population of the country – its cultural traditions, its demographics, its geographical distribution – but to know the character of a people is something entirely different.

Philosophers have long complained that the English verb, ‘to know’, conflates a number of discrete notions. Painful as it may be to admit, the French tongue has one over the language of Shakespeare in this regard: distinguishing, as it does, ‘connaitre’ – knowing someone, being familiar with them – from ‘savoir’ – knowing a fact, knowing about someone or some-



Sir Paul Stephenson

thing. This fundamental distinction is why even in the age of video-conferencing, businessmen insist on taking the time and expense to travel halfway around the world to meet someone in person before making a deal.

So in the early part of the 21st Century – just as in the post-war period – foreign travel and exchanges have no substitute as a means of achieving cross-cultural understanding.

I want now to take a step back to ask what may seem something of a stupid question. Why is cross-cultural understanding taken axiomatically to be a good thing?

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The great team of Westminister Police Cadets who helped out at Scotland Yard with Constable Lee Elton— special thanks!



Dr. Philip Swan and Mr Peter Grosvenor

Is it simply that it allows us to say 'live and let live', 'you do your thing and I'll do mine'? Something like this reasoning is implicit in talk of overcoming differences, and in the view that tolerance and acceptance are the cardinal virtues.

Now, I don't want to deny that tolerance is, *ceteris paribus*, a good quality. But I do want to deny that it is the principal goal of international diplomacy and cross-cultural understanding. Rather, I suggest that the importance of understanding and respect derives from the fact that they form the basis for full and honest debate about our differences.

And I happen to think that William Fulbright – whose Senate career was marked by instances of principled dissent – would have agreed with this sentiment.

In a world as interconnected as the one we live in today, we are not always in a position just to agree to disagree with other countries. Some issues in international policy force themselves upon us. Nations cannot choose completely to 'opt out' of the international community and global development. The key here is to resist the temptation to regard those who disagree with you as somehow 'other' – to abstract away their humanity, and to reduce them to nothing more than their dissenting opinion. This is precisely what Senator Fulbright grasped, and expressed so eloquently:

"Educational exchange can turn nations into people, contributing as no other form of communication to the humanizing of international relations. Man's capacity for decent behaviour seems to vary directly with his perception of others as individual humans with human motives and feelings, whereas his capacity for barbarism seems related to his perception of an adversary in abstract terms, as the embodiment, that is, of some evil design or ideology."

This point is, I think, well understood. But

what some fail to grasp is that avoiding argument and debate over differences of opinion is not a way of respecting others. Quite the contrary; such a position is as disrespectful and devaluing of our shared humanity as it is naïve, failing as it does to take seriously the different views we hold.

I hope I have shown that foreign travel and exchanges as a means of achieving understanding is just as germane, just as relevant in the age of 'infobesity' as they were after the Second World War. But I am also convinced that Senator Fulbright's aim of realising cross-cultural, mutual understanding – of the sort that stimulates honest dialogue – is at least as, if not more, fundamental to the 21st Century as it was to the post-war period.

This is because mutual understanding and enlightened relationships between the people of different nations is a critical part of our endeavour to forge a new global identity for the 21st Century.

Sixty years ago, when the Fulbright Scholar Programme was established, the community of nations was held together by promises, pacts and treaties, and embodied in the young United Nations. At the beginning of my lifetime – in the aftermath of World War II – countries were casting peace in a crucible. In many respects, it was a story of nations looking within themselves to ensure that the atrocities of the deadliest war in human history could never be repeated.

The Book of Remembrance and the Eternal Flame in the foyer of this building – dedicated to the memory of Metropolitan Police Officers and staff who lost their lives in the two World Wars – is a constant reminder of the devastation caused by that conflict.

Sixty years ago, the Fulbright Scholar Programme was borne out of necessity, out of the desperate desire to avoid another tragedy. It was established more in the hope of preventing harm than making positive progress.

But sixty years later, the global community is in a process of transformation. National borders, identities and passports are less significant than they ever have been. International relations extend far beyond the formal ties of diplomacy. And the United Nations is no longer the only glue which holds countries together.

Instead, the international community is increasingly characterised by shared experience, mutual understanding and com-

mon interest. Countries are beginning to mould international personae, alongside their domestic identities. And just as our individual characters are, in large part, defined by our relationships with those around us; our global identities are defined by our relations with other nations.

This means that your time as Fulbright Scholars is of enormous consequence. In however small a way, you – in the relationships you have formed abroad and in your future roles as intellectual, political, scientific and cultural leaders – are shaping our new global identity.

A new global identity requires global leaders – not just presidents and prime ministers who govern a country and rule the world, but ordinary people in business, in the arts, in education who can share their ordinary experiences and can operate on a scale which transcends their parochial interests.

Governments can cooperate. Politicians can exchange good ideas and sign agreements. But global leaders are people who can view the world in a wider sense, who can help it to become a smaller, safer and more constructive place by sharing their passions, their ideas and their experiences.

And a global identity requires global leadership, of a kind in which countries act together to resolve global challenges – from eradicating poverty and tackling emerging crimes, to reducing the pressures of climate change – and to seize with firm hands new global opportunities.

So you – Fulbright scholars and alumni – have a great privilege and a great responsibility. We look to you to develop your chosen fields – whether they are the arts, sciences, politics, or business – whilst straddling the globe with confidence as ambassadors for unity and progress.



Sir Gavin Lightman (Michigan 1961) and Mr Selvyn Seidel at the reception.



The Fulbright Commission would like to invite all BFSA members to visit our redesigned website at: www.fulbright.co.uk

The new website offers expanded information about the Awards, Study in the US and Study in the UK, as well as up-to-date Commission news, event information, case studies of current scholars and more!

Do you know anyone who may be a good candidate for a Fulbright Award? Applications for nearly all postgraduate student and fellows Awards for 2010-11 will be available from this month, February 2009 and have a closing date of 31 May 2009. For more information, please see: www.fulbright.co.uk

**** Fulbright Commissioner to head Russell Group:** The UK's leading research universities have chosen University of Leeds Vice-Chancellor and Fulbright Commissioner Professor Michael Arthur (*Mount Sinai 2002*) to head their association. Professor Arthur is to take over chairmanship of the Russell Group from University College London Vice-Chancellor, Professor Malcolm Grant, in September.

**** US Fulbright alumnus Austan Goolsbee** who did his Fulbright year at the London School of Economics in 2007 has been appointed Senior economic advisor to President Obama.

**** Richard T. Arndt**, who once served as president of the US Fulbright Association and as US Cultural Attaché in Beirut, Sri Lanka, Tehran, Rome and Paris, has a new book out—*The First Resort of Kings*. The book deals with the history and value of American cultural diplomacy, and compares it with other nations.

**** Tony Badger**, (*Emory 1983*) "FDR: the First 100 Days", written by Tony Badger was nominated by Gordon Brown as his best read of 2008.

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**ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS DESMOND TUTU
RECEIVES THE J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT PRIZE FOR
INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING**



Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu was recognized for his "Lifelong Work Promoting Reconciliation, Empathy and Peace" when he received the award at a ceremony in Washington DC in November last year. The Fulbright Prize was awarded to him for his tireless work for peace in South Africa and elsewhere, for his courage in speaking out against injustice, and for his efforts to achieve a democratic and just society without racial division. The Fulbright Prize recognizes Archbishop Tutu's abiding belief in our common humanity and his work to promote respect, forgiveness, and reconciliation among people.



Chang Su performs "The Sweet Fragrance of Jasmine Flower" on the Zheng, a traditional Chinese instrument.

John Fitzgerald agreed that person to person emphasis in education was the key to assisting with the relevant social and human welfare issues in China – not for private benefit but for the public good. Fulbright fellows, ideally placed within this ethos, are most likely to be accepted by modern China as educators and advisors and during the conference it was apparent that many had chosen to do so.. The Ford Foundation, which John represents, has invested heavily in China, assisting with the set up of education facilities with improved access for marginalised groups. In return it expects equity of access to education from the government. The rural poverty reduction programme is a most sensitive issue for politicians only too aware of the huge task of getting the under privileged into education in the first place, then subsequently keeping them there in the face of that sector having the highest drop-out rate. The Ford Foundation remains optimistic about the new China since it rates remarkably high in putting international relations on its agenda, and a more benign and cosmopolitan global identity is really taking off. The same cannot be said of all Far Eastern countries so China's effort in recent years is deserving of tribute.

Shi Jinghuan and Paul Levine, who both work directly in the education sector in China, were both in agreement that the nation realises the importance of progress in education as a basic human need of its population. There has been in the past a lack of freedom for students and a lack of facilities. There has been limited access to books making the internet therefore of precious importance, but it has been, and still is, censored. Shantou University, now with one quarter of its appointed staff international - reflecting their attempts to forward education - has conducted an aggressive internationalisation-orientated programme to cultivate intellectual talents with the motto, "Aspiration, Knowledge, Perseverance, Achievement." Through a series of pedagogical reforms, it aims to offer a platform for the exploration of higher educational reform in China. Comrade Li Lanqing, Vice Premier of the State Council, has praised the University for being "the experimental zone for higher educational reform in China."

Shi Jinghuan, a consultant on various UNESCO and World Bank projects in West China made a poignant final point in ending the discussion by saying that in China children are taught: "Don't do that, it might hurt another." whereas in the US and UK they are taught individuality: "Do what you want, it is your right." Her point, which earned her applause, was that somewhere in between the two humanity would not get lost.

During the Plenary Luncheon, when more puzzling oriental fare was enthusiastically scoffed, James Fallows from The Atlantic Monthly gave a short address on new attitudes in China. He stated that most Chinese would say no to democracy, as in the Western model, but yes to liberties. The people of China do not see themselves as a threat, either nuclear or military, since their budgets are comparatively small, and the villages in the vast interior of the country are home to "people effectively living (*sic*) in a different century." Families survive on very little and it is entirely possible to live one's entire life without reading a book. There is a fascinating article on James's travels to Gansu province in the October

edition of The Atlantic on www.theatlantic.com



James Fallows

Once again the indomitable Jenise Englund (*England 1984*) organised the International Education Task Force with contributions from alumni in the field. Speakers included Judy Shen (*China 2005*) a lawyer who gave up her career in NY to set up an NGO, The Promise Foundation, of which she is Director, for under privileged children in Beijing, and Yen Thi Hoang Nguyen (*USA 2006*) who was decorated by the Vietnamese government for her tireless work with disabled children in that country. Both delegates stressed the importance of these conferences to the emerging societies of the world who are struggling to create productive communities.

Finally, with fantastic visits to the Great Wall and The Forbidden City behind us delegates were guests of His Excellency Carlo Krieger (*USA 1982*) Ambassador of Luxembourg to the People's Republic of China and Mongolia, at the Luxembourg Embassy, one of the last remaining in the historic hutong neighbourhoods of Beijing.

Some said it was the best Fulbright conference ever, and wandering among the lanterns in the grounds of the Ambassador's residence with Jane Anderson, we both agreed. On behalf of the chair of the BFA and all its members I would like to congratulate Jane and her team on a fantastically organised and stimulating conference and I urge alumni to attend forthcoming conferences with great recommendation.

Muriel Macleod