

transatlantic

Association of Commonwealth Universities
36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF
tel: 020 7380 6704, fax: 7387 2665
email: harkness@acu.ac.uk

REPORT

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SUSTAINING ANGLO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP IN HARD TIMES

In October 2005, the Association organised a dinner with a theme. The theme was

SUSTAINING ANGLO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP IN THE BUSH ERA

"Given that many people, to whom the United States and its values are important, are (rightly or wrongly) deeply unhappy with recent developments in the United States and in its relations with the rest of the world, is there anything that we can or should do within the UK or in our own dealings with the United States and with Americans to prevent developments from driving our countries apart?"

The dinner was kindly hosted by the Nuffield Trust at their offices in London. Introductory remarks were made by a prominent US academic, long resident in Britain; those present included Fellows and some invited guests, including directors and trustees of several trans-Atlantic scholarship programmes. Following the established practice of the Nuffield Trust, the evening was conducted according to "Chatham House rules", whereby remarks may be reported but not attributed to any named individual. The account below therefore follows that rule.

The introductory speaker asked if a "US/UK dialogue" had ever been really possible. He instanced the extremely hostile comments habitually made by the British media about Presidents Ford and Reagan, while Americans were almost totally ignorant about Britain and British politics in particular.

But although our two societies were strikingly different in many ways – class and religious observance being two of the most obvious – the much-lampooned special relationship did still exist. It was far easier for Americans to live in Britain, and vice versa, than for citizens of any other pair of countries. In the Falklands war mutual understanding had helped to bridge an initial gap. The affinity waxed and waned: high points had been the Thatcher/Reagan relationship and that between Blair and Clinton. But although the political dimension was always important, there was usually some serious dialogue at official level no matter who was in power.

Today's alienation of many individual Britons from the United States had developed at a time when the two governments were united on some major issues of foreign policy. It should be remembered that many Americans

were equally alienated from their own government. But how could the two societies avoid drifting apart? For a start British critics should make an effort to understand the basis of George W Bush's popularity. This was no fluke. He, very different from his rival Al Gore, had made an idealistic as well as a practical case for toppling Saddam Hussein. His strong, simple stance had great political value. He had benefited from the spectacular blunders committed by his more talented predecessor. Religion was also important here. But although some of his support was from hard-line conservatives, much of it was mainstream; there was no major difference in kind between his supporters and those of his father. In any case, his popularity seemed to be fading.

In summary, ways of preventing our two countries from drifting apart might include lowering our expectations; keeping in mind how many Americans dislike their present administration but also recognising the legitimacy of the views of those on the US right; fostering those parts of the trans-Atlantic dialogue that continue independently of politicians, including the activities of programmes such as Rhodes, Fulbright, Kennedy, Thouron and others.

In discussion one speaker suggested that we should not see differences where these did not exist. London was much closer to New York than to Paris, Berlin or Rome. This closeness, derived from a common language, had now been enormously enhanced by the events of 9/11. Even among Democrats living in London critics of George W Bush were seen as anti-American. As for the Iraqis, they simply saw Britain and the USA as being engaged in a common endeavour.

In further discussion it was suggested that the relationship between the two countries would not be damaged by British dislike of George W Bush, wide and deep though

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that was; communication between us continued on many levels. But the two countries were not very similar, as S M Lipset had pointed out in *American Exceptionalism*. Young people's current antipathy towards the USA might seem incomprehensible to an older generation, but there were reasons for it which went far beyond Mr Bush. Americans were against big government, public services, regulation and against paying taxes for these purposes. Big business was far more dominant in the USA. American attitudes to energy consumption and pollution, or to employees in the workforce, furnished non-political reasons for anti-American attitudes. American cities were managed very differently from those in Britain.

The relationship was on a cusp. Harkness Fellows in the 1970s had been naturally fascinated by the USA, but today their equivalents were more interested in China. If the USA as a whole became more like the several states that had supported Mr Bush, or if the religious right became more dominant, there could be a real drifting apart; young people would, even more than now, prefer to travel to Australia, India, other Commonwealth countries. Following the "catastrophic intervention" in Iraq, we should in any case be reviewing the role of the West and especially our relationship with Islam, as well as with other Asian countries. (The great value of Turkish membership of the European Union would lie in enlarging Europe with a secular, non-Arab Islamic state.)

In the continuing discussion several other points were made. Whatever tensions were present in the current

political relationship, elsewhere links were close: popular culture, industrial techniques, some aspects of urban life. In the context of climate change, one of the big themes in the coming decade (the other being the rise of China), much work and research being done was American in origin. In the field of science, Europe was beginning to turn against "rational science"; young scientists now found greater rapport with scientists in the USA than in other European countries, Scandinavia perhaps excepted, and expected to spend time in American laboratories.

Even if some of us disliked the policies that had persuaded so many Americans to vote for Mr Bush, we had to acknowledge that their numbers were very large, and that their views were legitimate; we should try to understand their point of view. We should cease to think, anachronistically, in terms of relationships between nation-states. (The differences, cultural and political, between different parts of the USA were enormous.) Nor should we accept and be unduly influenced by stereotypes, which were at the root of much crude anti-Americanism, now and earlier, among university students and others. Such stereotypes could be dispelled not by the activities of politicians, whose interests were too short-term, but by prolonged cultural engagement of the kind fostered by international scholarship programmes. Such engagement could both help visitors to understand the differences between our two societies, and to see the value of these. Relationships with a firm base of this kind were ultimately more important than those between individual political leaders, who by their very nature could be only transient.

Harkness Fellows News

Publications etc

Sir Bryan Cartledge (CFF 1956-58) has written *The Will to Survive: A History of Hungary*. It will be published by Timewell Press in March 2006 (£25).

Sir Geoffrey Chandler (CFF 1953-54) has contributed a chapter "Towards a responsible capitalism" to *Business Ethics and the 21st Century Organisation* (British Standards Institution, 2006)

Anthony Curtis (CFF 1959-60) has written a biography of Virginia Woolf, to be published probably in May 2006. He appeared in *SohoBoho* – a television documentary about the bohemian world of the Fitzrovia pubs in the 1940s and 1950s, shown in BBC Four in November 2005 and to be repeated on BBC2 this year.

Roger March (HF 1976-78) is Professor of Music and Head of Department at the University of York. He is a composer and, recently, a producer of audio-books for Naxos Audiobooks. He has produced all the novels of James Joyce, including an unabridged reading of *Ulysses* which was nominated for audiobook of the year in New York in 2005. His two-hour vocal work *Pierrot Lunaire* is to be performed at the SPOR Festival at Aarhus, Denmark, in May 2005 and will be recorded later in the year.

Tim Morris (HF 1987-98), now Professor of Physics at Southampton University, won the audience prize at the first national Pianist-Yamaha competition for outstanding amateurs. *Pianist Magazine* said that he gave "one of the greatest Liszt performances I have ever heard – the total effect was absolutely exciting."

John Polkinghorne (CFF 1955-56) has published *Quantum Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press).

Angus Ross (CFF 1954-55), Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Sussex, has published *The Correspondence of Dr John Arbuthnot* (Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2006). Dr Arbuthnot was a mathematician and friend of Gay, Pope, Swift and the Scriblerians, the inventor of "John Bull" and a proponent of inoculation against smallpox.

Neil Smith (HF 1966-68) has published *Language, Frogs and Savants* (Blackwell).

Kieran Sweeney (HF 1991-92) has written *Why Complexity? Implications of Complexity for Medical Care*. It will be published in April 2006 by Radcliffe Medical Press.

Hugh Stephenson (HF 1962-64) has recently published *Secrets of the Setters: How to Solve the Guardian Crossword* (Guardian Books, £12.99).

Appointments, Awards etc

Sir Michael Atiyah (CFF 1955-57), became President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in October 2005 (having previously been President of the Royal Society of London, 1990-95). The same year he retired as Chancellor of the University of Leicester. In 2004 he had been awarded an honorary degree by the American University of Beirut, and the Order of Merit of Lebanon and also the Abel Prize of the Norwegian Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2004 the Oxford University Press published volume 6 of his collected works.

Christine Bell (HF 1989-90), Professor of Public International Law at the University of Ulster, in January 2006 became Director of the Transitional Justice Institute there. The Institute examines the role of law in countries emerging from conflict. In December she acted as an

advisor to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the role of human rights in peace processes. An article, "Peace Agreements: Their Nature and Legal Status", is due to appear in the April issue of the *American Journal of International Law*.

David Bell (HF 1993-94) has been appointed Permanent Secretary, Department for Education and Skills.

Richard Bolsin (HF 1990-91) was appointed General Secretary of the Workers Educational Association in 2004.

Della Cannings (HF 1982-84), chief constable of North Yorkshire Police was awarded the Queen's Police Medal in the 2006 New Year Honours for distinguished service.

Margaret Deuchar (HF 1974-76) was appointed to a Personal Chair in Linguistics at the University of Wales, Bangor, in September 2005.

Colin Drummond (HF 1975-77) was appointed Chairman of the UK Government's Environmental Sector Advisory Group.

Simon Duffy (HF 1994-95) has been appointed Director of In Control; he coordinates a national programme to change the system of social care so that people can control their own services using individual budgets. His book *Keys to Citizenship* has been republished in a second edition.

Matt Dunkley (HF 1975-77) was appointed Director of Children's Services for East Sussex County Council in August 2005.

John Dupre (HF 1978-80), currently Professor of Philosophy of Science and Director of the ESRC Centre for Genomics in Society at the University of Exeter, will this spring hold the Spinoza Chair in Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam.

Nicholas Falk (HF 1967-69) has produced a report for the Town and Country Planning Association on *Spreading the Benefits of Town and City Centre Renewal* (summary available on www.urbed.com)

Pamela Gillies (HF 1992-93) has been appointed Vice Chancellor, Glasgow Caledonian University.

Richard Gray (HF 1967-69) published *A History of American Literature* in 2005 (Blackwell). The same year he gave the Sarah Tryphena Phillips Lecture in American Literature and History at the British Academy. He is due to give the Lamar Lectures in the USA this year.

George E Griffin (HF 1974-76) has been appointed chairman of the government Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens. He has also been appointed Vice-Principal of St George's Hospital Medical School, with responsibility for research.

Dame Rosalyn Higgins (HF 1959-61) became in February 2006 the first woman to be elected President of the International Court of Justice.

Sir Christopher Hogg (HF 1960-62) became Chairman of the Financial Reporting Council in January 2006.

Stanley Johnson (HF 1963-64) having failed to win Teignbridge for the Conservatives in May 2005 against a Lib Dem incumbent, had four months as a *Guardian* weekly columnist. He is now one of the four regular presenters of the nightly chat-show *The Last Word* on the TV Channel More 4.

Grant Lewison (HF 1964-66) has left City University and, with a partner, has set up his own biometrics consultancy company, Evaluametrics Ltd.

Michael Liebreich (HF 1988-90) is the founder and CEO of New Energy Finance, a specialist provider of financial information and services to investors in renewable and low-carbon energy technologies. The company was formed in 2004 and has recently closed a round of expansion funding.

Stephen Littlechild (HF 1965-67) is now Emeritus Professor at the University of Birmingham and Senior Research

Associate at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. He is a member of the Civil Airports Authority Review Advisory Panel. He appeared in the "Defying Distance" exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, London, July-September 2005.

Judith Masson (HF 1981-82) has moved to a new post as Professor of Socio-Legal Studies at Bristol University after 14 years as Professor of Law at Warwick University. She has been appointed to the Family Justice Council and the Judicial Studies Board.

John Mohan (HF 1992-93) has been appointed an Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences. He is now Professor of Social Policy, University of Southampton, where he is currently on a Leverhulme Fellowship (2005-6). His recent books have included *Planning, markets and hospitals* (Routledge, 2002, an historical study of hospital policy in the UK), *Social capital, place and health* (London: Health Development Agency, 2004) and a forthcoming study, *Mutualism and health care: British hospital contributory schemes in the 20th century* (with Martin Gorsky, Manchester University Press, 2006). He acted as a specialist advisor to the House of Commons Health Committee in their inquiries on NHS Foundation Trusts and NHS charges.

Michael Morgan (HF 1969-71) was Chief Executive of the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus, Hinxton, Cambridge, from 1998-2002. In October 2005 HRH Princess Anne opened an extension to the campus; a major computing centre there was named the "Morgan Building".

Dame Pauline Neville-Jones (HF 1961-63) is to lead a policy review for the Conservative party on international security.

Stephen Potter (HF 1973-75) has been Chairman of the R & D Society for the past two years and has also been on the Council of the Licensing Executives Society and of the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) Alumnus Club. He left his position as Managing Director, Europe, for QED Intellectual Property Ltd in December 2004 and since March 2004 has been carrying out the acquisition of software in patents and telecommunications for Intellectual Ventures, a private US company. He and his wife Kerstin have sold their house in the UK and have moved to Switzerland. From November/December they would be delighted to see any Harkness friends at La Maison Blanche, Route de Champ Fleuri 9, CH-1823, Glion, Switzerland.

Andrew Rabeneck (HF 1967-69) writes: "I have spent the last three years as Assistant Director of Estates at Imperial College, responsible for the operation and the maintenance of what is Britain's largest university estate. While there I developed a joint venture project for a £60M imaging centre at Hammersmith Hospital, jointly funded by Imperial, GSK and the Medical Research Council; the project will be completed in April 2006. Abandoning the life of administration, I am now studying for a MSc in Imperial's Centre for the History of Science Technology and Medicine."

Anne-Marie Rafferty (HF 1994-95) became Dean of the Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery at King's College, London, in 2005.

Kieran Sweeney (HF 1991-92) has been appointed Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer in General Practice at the Peninsula Medical School, and lead practitioner delivering the leadership programme for the Royal College of General Practitioners. *See also Publications.*

Richard Templer (HF 1986-88) became Head of the Chemistry Department at Imperial College, London, in 2002. He reports that since 2003 some of his attention has turned back to the USA, as he heads up an Alliance between Georgia Tech, Oak Ridge National Labs and Imperial College.

FORTHCOMING EVENT

“Can News ever be Objective?”

An evening with
DAVID EDMONDS,
award-winning Journalist
with the BBC World Service
and best-selling author.

David Edmonds will give a talk
and take questions. There will be a
reception with wine and canapes.

23 March 2006 at 7.00pm
Venue: The Athenaeum, Pall Mall,
London SW1

Cost approx. £22.50 per head.
Members and guests welcome.

RSVP to Natasha Bevan
email: harkness@acu.ac.uk
telephone: 020 7380 6704

APPEAL FOR HELP

We are seeking interesting / attractive venues for future Harkness Fellows functions with space for 20-40 people, preferably close to central London. These functions could take the form of a reception, a lecture or a formal dinner. If any Fellow is able to offer the use of such a venue, we would be delighted to hear from him/her.

Please contact Natasha Bevan in the first instance (harkness@acu.ac.uk)

KEEP IN TOUCH!

If you have any news to report on your own career, offers of new articles, or have simply changed your address, please do let us know. Email harkness@acu.ac.uk, or contact Natasha Bevan at Association of Commonwealth Universities, 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF.

In Memoriam

Alan Betts (CFF 1955-56, Cornell, Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies) died in November 2005, aged 78. He had been Principal of the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, from 1970 to 1988. Subsequently he was a member of the council of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. He was for many years a consultant to the World Health Organisation. His widow writes: “As Principal of The Royal Veterinary College...he had introduced fund-raising in the American style, despite academic colleagues’ initial distaste. It proved the saving of the College when government cuts or closure were threatened in the late 80s. How could anyone close a college which had raised millions and established the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals – recently featured in the TV series, ‘Supervets?’”

Alex Currall (CFF 1954-55, University of Chicago) died in October 1979, aged 88. He joined the civil service before World War Two and, after a break for war service, returned to the public sector for the rest of his career. He became director of the Department for National Savings and then managing director at the Post Office. His obituary described him as an “imaginative and diligent managing director...who took the business into profit.”

Albert Fitch (CFF 1930-33, UC Berkeley) died in January 2005, aged 97. He was a geologist and geophysicist. His career had taken him to the then Gold Coast, Kenya and, as a UN adviser, Ecuador.

John Hayes (CFF 1958-59, New York University) died in December 2005, aged 76. He had been director of the London Museum and then, for 20 years, of the National Portrait Gallery in London. Described in one of his obituaries as “a quietly innovative scholar”, he was a leading expert on Thomas Gainsborough.

Donald Hindson (CFF 1948-49, Pittsburgh) died in February 2006, aged 85. His biographical note in the printed directory of Fellows records that he was a coal-miner 1939-66, a school master 1966-81. He was President, North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, 1954-55.

Angus McIntosh (CFF 1936-38, Harvard), died in October 2005, aged 91. His field was language and literature. He taught at Swansea, Oxford and Edinburgh, where he was Forbes Professor of English Language and General Linguistics, 1948-79.

John Meek CBE (CFF 1938-40, UC Berkeley) died in May 2005 aged 93. He was Professor of Electrical Engineering, Liverpool University, 1946-78.

Richard Peel (HF 1979-81, Harvard) died in January 2006, aged 51. After working as a consultant in London he had formed his own consulting firm, COBA, in the 1980s; COBA was subsequently bought by a US consultancy, Renaissance. David Duffill (HF 1975-77) writes: “I came to treasure Rick’s quick mind and deep strategic thought. He was always intensively and genuinely interested in people with whom he was in contact.”