

## The Fulbright Program and the Philosophy and Geography of U.S. Exchange Programs since World War II<sup>1</sup>

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The end of World War II, the beginning of the Cold War and its conclusion, and the beginning of the global war on terror have been defining moments for U.S. foreign policy. They provide a framework for dividing the history of U.S. governmental education exchange into four distinct periods, each of which reflect different exchange philosophies, policies, and geopolitical interests. A brief liberal internationalist phase after the end of World War II in 1945 lasted until the beginning of the Cold War in 1947-48, and it was followed by a protracted Cold War period of East-West conflict that dominated and defined the institutions of U.S. public diplomacy for over four decades until 1989-91. A transitional post-Cold War period of disorientation and reorientation lasted just over a decade and ended abruptly on September 11, 2001, which marks the beginning of the current post-9/11 era that has been driven by an array of North-South defense, security, intelligence, and development concerns related to the so-called global war on terror.

The optimistic philosophy of liberal internationalism and the ideological demands of Cold War propaganda both informed the inception of U.S. postwar government exchange programs. Between 1946 and 1948, U.S. Congress passed two pieces of landmark legislation that laid the foundations for U.S government exchanges. J. William Fulbright, a junior Senator and Democrat from Arkansas who had studied in Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar in 1925-28, said that “the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki focused his thoughts” on international educational exchange,<sup>3</sup> and less than one year later on August 1, 1946 President Truman signed an act into law that brought the visionary academic exchange program that came to bear Fulbright’s name into being. The Fulbright Program was a quintessential expression of the liberal internationalist optimism that *antedated* the Cold War and informed international institution building in the immediate postwar period.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Randall Bennett Woods, *Fulbright: A Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 129.

<sup>4</sup> See Randall Bennett Woods, “Fulbright Internationalism” and Harry P. Jeffrey, “Legislative Origins of the Fulbright Program” in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 491, May 1987 [The Fulbright Experience and Academic Exchanges], 22-35 and 36-47; Kurt Tweraser, “The ‘Operational Code’ of Senator Fulbright and International Education: Belief Systems, National Missions, Political Contexts” in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft (ÖZP)*, 41 Jg. (2012), H.1, 23-35.

By 1948, however, the Cold War was in full swing, and the United States saw the urgent need to vigorously counteract Soviet propaganda in a global struggle for allies and for hearts and minds. The U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 – better known by the names of its Congressional sponsors Smith-Mundt – laid the foundations for the U.S. government’s institutionalization of public diplomacy, and it provided the basis for the establishment of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1953 that encompassed “fast media,” such as radio and film, and “slow media,” like publishing, libraries, and exchanges.

The Smith-Mundt Act also provided the basis for the United States’ second big post-war exchange program: the Foreign Leader Program (FLP) that was inaugurated in 1949-50. This visitation program was conceived to identify up-and-coming foreign elites and to bring them to the United States on shorter term programs tailor-made to meet their professional needs (and renamed the International Visitor Program (IVP) in 1965 and the International Visitor Leadership Program (ILVP) in 2004).<sup>5</sup> In this respect, the history of U.S. government postwar exchange programs is a history of the Fulbright and the FLP-IVP-ILVP programs to a great extent: by 2015 Fulbright as the “flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government”<sup>6</sup> had over 360,000 alumni, and ILVP as “the U.S. Department of State’s premier professional exchange program”<sup>7</sup> over 200,000.

However, there are important philosophical and structural differences between Fulbright as government-sponsored *academic exchange* program and FLP-IVP-ILVP as a government sponsored *professional visitation* program. Academic exchange ultimately has been based on the idea of bilateral reciprocity, entailed the joint articulation of interests and objectives and driven by non-governmental actors: students, scholars, and institutions of higher education. Governmental visitation programs are substantially unilateral, informed by specific policy objectives, and frequently entail the identification of existing or potential “elites” with the intention of exposing them to specific U.S. values and institutions or – as is the case of the extensive visitation programs of the Department of Defense<sup>8</sup> – for advanced training.

The history of U.S. government exchange programs also is a history of the presidential administrations that have funded them, U.S. government agencies entrusted with their oversight and management, and the on-going struggle between the non-partisan advocates of the diffuse, long-term benefits of educational and cultural exchange and the usually partisan

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<sup>5</sup> See Giles Scott-Smith, *Networks of Empire: The US State Department’s Foreign Leader Program in the Netherlands, France, and Britain, 1950-70* (Brussels: PIE Peter Lang, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> This is the classic formulation on the U.S. Department of State’s website at <http://eca.state.gov/fulbright>, accessed on January 21, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> See the U.S. Department of State’s ILVP website at <http://eca.state.gov/ivlp>, accessed December 26, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> The “civilian” exchanges funded by the U.S. Department of State are dwarfed by the military “exchanges” funded by the Department of Defense. See Carol Atkinson, *Military Soft Power: Public Diplomacy through Military Educational Exchanges* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

proponents of short-term, results-oriented information programs driven by policy objectives and messages and informed by the prevailing definition of a presidential administration's definition of the American national interest. Any history of exchanges must take the recurrent tensions between these philosophies of cultural exchange and "information" into account. Furthermore, the exchange philosophy of the Fulbright Act antedated the Cold War whereas the information philosophy of the Smith-Mundt Act was an immediate reflection and product thereof.

The tensions between these two philosophies are reflected in the administrative history of U.S. government exchange programs, too, which can be divided into three periods: from 1945 to 1977, from 1977 to 1999, and from 1999 to the present. It is an underexposed fact that Senator Fulbright went to great lengths to keep U.S. government exchange programs out of the portfolio of programs managed by the United States Information Agency when it was established in 1953, and he objected to their incorporation into USIA in 1977 because he felt that their independence and integrity would be compromised if they were subordinated to an agency responsible for message-driven "information."<sup>9</sup>

Fulbright noted in the mid-1960s that "[T]he objectives of the educational exchange program cannot be quickly realized and are not measurable in immediate tangible returns." And he added: "Unfortunately, the distinction between education and propaganda is sometimes forgotten and pressures are brought to bear to use educational exchange for short-range and shortsighted political purposes."<sup>10</sup>

However, in the course of a major reorganization of governmental agencies in 1977, the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs was transferred from the State Department to USIA, and this migration brought a different set of institutional pressures to bear on exchanges. They became more closely associated with the centralized planning and the messaging that was part of USIA's central task as an information agency conceived to inform and influence international public opinion: "telling America's story to the world."<sup>11</sup>

### **The Foundational Years**

The establishment of the Fulbright Program in 1946 was based on Fulbright's ingenious amendment to a piece of legislation that had nothing to do with educational exchange: the

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<sup>9</sup> See Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005), 258-287.

<sup>10</sup> Fulbright in the foreword to Walter Johnson and Francis J. Colligan, *The Fulbright Program: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), viii. On the desire to dissociate "exchange" from "information" in the early 1950s, see the chapter on "Information or Cultural Exchange?", 68-87.

<sup>11</sup> This was the motto of USIA. For an overview of recent scholarship on U.S. propaganda and public diplomacy, see Harilaos Stecopoulos, "Telling America's Story to the World," *American Quarterly*, Volume 63, Number 4, December 11, 1025-1037.

Surplus Property Act of 1944. With amazing brevity, a two-page amendment provided funding for an educational exchange program from revenues generated by the sale of U.S. stockpiles of war-related materials overseas. It funded the first U.S. government postwar educational exchanges without recourse to the federal budget because it fundamentally involved spending off-shore windfall foreign currency income. The Fulbright Program also initially only could be funded in a handful of countries – predominantly in Europe and Asia – where such surpluses and revenues were available.<sup>12</sup> However, the location of these surpluses corresponded well to the geopolitical interests of the United States in postwar Europe and Asia. A list of the 27 countries that concluded Fulbright agreements with the United States between 1947 and 1953 reads like a catalogue of the United States’ postwar European and Asian friends and allies, large and small: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Burma, Ceylon, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.<sup>13</sup>

One of the structural challenges for the Fulbright program was to identify funding for exchanges where revenues from the sale of wartime surpluses were not available (as was the case, for example, in most of Africa, the Near and Far East, and Latin America). Indeed the importance of the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 for the Fulbright Program was that it provided for regular U.S. government funding for exchanges in U.S. dollars from the federal budget thus providing funding in *U.S. dollars* for the *stateside* operating costs of the program as a two-way exchange (with U.S. universities bearing the lion’s share of costs for incoming grantees in the United States in the form of tuition remissions, scholarships, and grants). This also included funding for Fulbright awards managed by U.S. embassies in countries without executive agreements or binational Fulbright commissions and provided the basis for smaller contingents of “post-based” or “embassy-based” Fulbright grantees.

The Fulbright Act consisted of four major points. First, it provided for the foundation of a presidentially appointed “Board of Foreign Scholarships” (BFS)<sup>14</sup> responsible for the articulation of program policy. There was no grand statement of purpose in the Fulbright Act about the objectives of the program, and it was initially unclear how the program would be structured in detail. The philosophy of the program was inherent in some of its organizational principles but ultimately articulated in detail as gradually.<sup>15</sup> The truly promethean achievement of the

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<sup>12</sup> See Sam Lebovic, “From War Junk to Educational Exchange: The World War II Origins of the Fulbright Program and the Foundations of American Cultural Globalism, 1945-1950,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 37, No.2 (2013): 280-312.

<sup>13</sup> For a list of historical dates for conclusion of agreements with current commissions, see the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board, [2014 Annual Report](#), 21-55.

<sup>14</sup> Later renamed as the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board or FFSB.

<sup>15</sup> See Donald B. Cook and J. Paul Smith, “The Philosophy of the Fulbright Program” in *UNESCO: International Social Science Bulletin*, Vol. VIII, No. 4, 1956, 615-627. This article provides an overview of the philosophy and architecture of the program as it emerged *ex post facto* from the sparse guidance provided by the Fulbright Act.

founding members of BFS in the initial years of the program was to establish the principles and guidelines for its execution and to orchestrate the various governmental and non-governmental institutions responsible for the recruitment of outgoing U.S. students and scholars and in-country management and funding of incoming foreign grantees.<sup>16</sup>

Second, one of the unique and far-reaching provisions of the Fulbright Act was that it called for the conclusion of “executive agreements” between the United States and the governments of participating countries. Third, these agreements established “commissions”: binational entities capable of receiving and disbursing funds that also assumed a wide range of responsibilities for the execution of the program. These commissions were based on the establishment of binational boards of experts and academics with U.S. members appointed by U.S. ambassadors on behalf of the Secretary of State (and usually including the local embassy U.S. cultural affairs officer) and partner government board members appointed by foreign governments.

Fourth, these commission boards, in turn, were responsible for hiring “executive directors” and staffing secretariats responsible for the on-site administration of the outgoing and incoming grantees. The “local” tasks of the first generation of the 27 Fulbright commissions established by the conclusion of binational executive agreements between 1947 and 1952 were analogous to the tasks of the BFS in the United States. They had to reach out to the audiences it was conceived to serve and to establish “local” procedures and institutions to manage program. Furthermore, in 1953-54, U.S. Congress authorized the use of other U.S.-owned foreign accrued overseas for educational exchange: for example, from the sale of U.S. agricultural surpluses. This led to the establishment of a “second wave” of 15 new commissions between 1955 and 1960, eight of which were in Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Spain, the United Arab Republic, and Uruguay.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the Fulbright Act called for the establishment of binational commissions based on inter-governmental executive agreements had a number of enduring consequences. Although the initial funding for the Fulbright Program came exclusively from the U.S. government revenues, it embodied an exchange philosophy that was based on the ideas of collaborative decision-making, joint proprietorship, and bilateral reciprocity. Furthermore, the Fulbright Program was highly decentralized because it entrusted the binational commissions on the ground with the responsibility for “local” decision-making, and its governance structures relied predominantly on nongovernmental actors. Above all, binational commissions provided partner governments with a tremendous incentive to buy into and identify with the program. The establishment of some 50 binational Fulbright commissions in the first two decades of the program’s history and the larger volume of grantees participating in these programs is the

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<sup>16</sup> For the standard history of the program’s early years, see Johnson and Colligan, *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup> Board of Foreign Scholarships, *International Educational Exchange: The Opening Decades: 1946-1966*, 4-5.

structural explanation for the fact that grantees from programs managed by binational commissions account for almost 80% of the Fulbright Program's alumni to date.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, the Fulbright Program was conceived as an *academic* exchange program. The overwhelming majority of the appointees to the BFS from the late 1940s through the late 1960s were representatives from leading universities in the United States. The role of *academics* in articulating the principles of the exchange program made *academic freedoms* – such as the freedom of expression and the freedom on inquiry – guiding principles of the program from the very start, and, in turn, they made the Fulbright Program incompatible with most short-term partisan policy concerns. According to the BFS, the purpose of Fulbright commissions was to “administer the educational exchange program on an impartial and binational basis, to assure that the grantees and educational institutions participating in the program are qualified to do so, and to plan and propose educational exchanges that are in keeping with the needs and educational resources of each country.”<sup>19</sup>

### **The Consolidation of the Fulbright Program**

The exhaustion of the initial wartime surplus funding for the Fulbright Program in the 1950s made it necessary to place the program on a new statutory basis to fund the program in the future. The Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 (Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act), which provided funding as a line item appropriation in the federal budget, reflected the experience of 15 years of program administration. Its preamble also eloquently rearticulated the principles of liberal internationalism: a statement of which was missing in the initial Fulbright Act.<sup>20</sup> It also reaffirmed binational commissions as the core organizational principle of the program.

Fulbright-Hays not only provided the basis for renegotiating binational agreements with countries that had “older” Fulbright commissions from the late 1940s and 1950s to put them on this new statutory basis; it also facilitated the establishment of nine new binational commissions that brought the global total of Fulbright commissions to 51 by 1966. Most importantly, it put the funding of the Fulbright program on a new binational basis by providing foreign governments as well as other private and public entities inside and outside of the United States with opportunities to contribute to the program, and many foreign governments enthusiastically began to support the program with their own resources.

The initial consolidation of the Fulbright Program is perhaps best expressed by the fact that federal funding for the program peaked at \$38.8 M in 1966. However, it began to slip

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<sup>18</sup> Based on 1949-2014 “Fulbright by Numbers and Regions”: on-line Excel sheet addendum to the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board's [2014 Annual Report](#).

<sup>19</sup> For this formulaic language see Board of Foreign Scholarships, *Toward mutual understanding: Sixth Annual Report*, October 1968 (U.S. Department of State, 1968), 22.

<sup>20</sup> See the [Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961](#), Congressional Statement of Purpose, Sec. 2451.

immediately thereafter and was subject to a dramatic cut from \$32 M to \$20 M in 1969 (with the number of Fulbright grantees dropping over 30 % from 4,556 in 1968-69 to 3,146 in 1969-70).<sup>21</sup> This cut was precipitated in part by a falling-out between President Lyndon B. Johnson and Senator Fulbright, who had become a leading critic of LBJ's foreign policy and the Viet Nam war.<sup>22</sup> According to an analysis of the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs, the "immediate results" of the cuts were "bad publicity, the disappointed applicants, disrupted plans and total uncertainty surrounding the future, . . ." which jeopardized "in many cases the existence of the binational commissions."<sup>23</sup> The provisions of the Fulbright-Hays Act that enabled foreign governments to co-fund the program were extraordinarily important at this critical juncture. As a response to the 1969-70 U.S. cuts, governments of countries with binational Fulbright commissions in Europe maintained or increased their contributions to the Fulbright program and thus collectively funded the Fulbright Program better than the U.S. government.<sup>24</sup>

This illustrates the prescient nature of the Fulbright-Hays Act's provisions for partner country co-funding and the establishment of pattern of partner government funding early on that has proved to be enduring: a critical but underexposed fact in the Fulbright Program's historical narrative. Support for the Fulbright Program from abroad has increased from zero in 1961 to close almost \$110 M in FY 2013: 44% of the U.S. government allocation of \$242.8 M. The overwhelming majority of foreign governmental as well as foreign private and in-kind support – 94% of \$109.6 M – came from the 49 countries with binational Fulbright commissions,<sup>25</sup> many of which contributed more to the program than the U.S.<sup>26</sup>

Starting in the late 1970s, USIA embarked on an expansion of the Fulbright Program based on development of embassy-based programs "with neither country Fulbright agreement nor binational commission, . . ." <sup>27</sup> They relied on the established Fulbright Program infrastructure in

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<sup>21</sup> Board of Foreign Scholarships, Eighth Annual Report, *Continuing the Commitment*, October 1970, 5.

<sup>22</sup> See Randall Woods standard biography, *op. cit.*, 385,490.

<sup>23</sup> "Effects of the FY 1969 Budget Cut: Backup Budget Statement" University of Arkansas Special Collections Division, MC 468, Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs Historical Collection (CU), Box 41-4.

<sup>24</sup> Unclassified Cable, No. CA 10930, September 17, 1968, Austrian-American Educational Commission Archives, General Files, 9/67-74. The U.S. government allocation for the Fulbright programs in Europe was \$1,318,981, and European partner countries with Fulbright Commissions contributed \$1,565,886. The countries that out-funded the U.S. were, in alphabetical order, Austria, France, Germany (\$500,000 to the USG \$136,000), Italy, Netherlands, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>25</sup> J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board [2014 Annual Report](#) (U.S. Department of State), 56. Percentages based tallying the Fulbright commission numbers reported for FY 2013, 57-58.

<sup>26</sup> Based on self-reported numbers European Fulbright Program executive directors meeting in Lisbon, April 15-17, 2015, the ratio of the overall cash and in-kind contributions of countries with Fulbright commissions to the U.S. government allocations for commissions was 2:1. Individual countries exceeded the U.S. contributions in bilateral terms by higher multiples in many cases.

<sup>27</sup> See Richard T. Arndt and David L. Rubin, *The Fulbright Difference, 1948-1992*, 249. Parallel to 50 binational commissions, USIA had 75 for the most part smaller "embassy-based" Fulbright programs by the late 1980s – and there are over 110 thereof today.

the U.S., but they were a different kind of Fulbright Program insofar as they were devoid of “local” binational governance, funded unilaterally by the U.S. government for the most part, and managed by U.S. USIA cultural affairs officers and embassy personnel in-house.

It took 25 years for educational exchange funding to re-approach the level it had been at before the 1969 cuts in inflation-adjusted terms. The recovery of funding was fueled by the public diplomacy ambitions of the two presidential administrations of Ronald Reagan, who took a more confrontational stance with the communist world between 1980 and 1988 after years of detente, and by the George H.W. Bush administration before and after the collapse of communism in Europe, 1988-1992. Between 1981 and its peak year of 1994, USIA funding increased almost threefold (from \$458 M to \$1,268 M) with the ECA budget increasing over fivefold (from \$67 M to \$351 M).<sup>28</sup> In the wake of 1989, six new binational Fulbright commissions were established in the “new democracies” of Poland, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria; Fulbright “offices” opened in Moscow, Kiev, and Beijing; and existing and new programs for young and midcareer professionals and scholars – the Hubert H. Humphrey Program and the Edmund S. Muskie Program – were extended post-Communist Eastern Europe. Exchanges were a key public U.S. diplomacy tool in the “transitions to democracy.”

### **From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Global War on Terror**

Ironically, the end of the Cold War deprived USIA of one of the most important arguments it had articulated to justify itself and its funding during the Cold War. If the purpose of USIA primarily had been to wage the Cold War on the all-important front of information, the end of the Cold War explicitly called the existence of USIA into question. The logic of this argument was devastatingly simple. The Cold War was over. The U.S. had won. Therefore, it was not necessary to spend as much time and energy and money on public diplomacy: a manifestation of “big government” was no longer necessary.<sup>29</sup>

The fate and the funding of exchanges were institutionally bound to USIA which slid into a political and an institutional crisis in the mid-1990s, and a variety of politically divergent interests coincided to create a perfect storm. President Clinton, who had been mentored by Fulbright and had served on his Congressional staff as a student at Georgetown, fought a protracted series of budget battles with Newt Gingrich and a Republican controlled Congress about “right-sizing” government. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the

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<sup>28</sup> For comparative budget figures from 1981 to 1996, see United States General Accounting Office, *Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives: U.S. Information Agency: Options for Addressing Possible Budget Reductions* (GAO: Washington, 1996) = [GAO/NSIAD-96-179](#), “Funding for Public Diplomacy by Account,” 18-19.

<sup>29</sup> For a detailed analysis of the demise of USIA see Nicholas J. Cull, *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency: American Public Diplomacy, 1989-2001* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).



conservative Republican U.S. Senator Jesse Helms agreed – albeit for different reasons – that it would be a good idea to “consolidate” USIA with the State Department, and it ceased to exist as an autonomous government agency in 1999 when it was folded into the State Department under the supervision of a newly created Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Between 1994 and 1996, total funding for public diplomacy fell over 25% from \$1,478 M to \$1,077 M with broadcasting – Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty – taking the biggest hit (from \$210 M to \$70 M) followed by the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs (with cuts from \$351 M to \$200 M).<sup>30</sup> It had taken the Fulbright Program 25 years to incompletely recover from the 1969 cuts of the Johnson administration. The 1994-96 cuts of the Clinton administration brought it down again over 20% from \$120 M to \$98.9 M. They also corresponding increased the relative levels of partner government funding for the program.<sup>31</sup>

The “consolidation” of USIA with the State Department in 1999 and the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 thrust exchange programs into a dramatically different hierarchical, partisan, and short-term-results-oriented institutional culture at a time of national crisis. The global image of the United States began to deteriorate dramatically in the wake of the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and of Iraq in 2003, and the United States urgently needed to explain its policies to foreign audiences and to marshal support in those world regions that historically had been of subordinate interest to the United States. As part of its post-9/11 public diplomacy, the G.W. Bush I and Bush II administrations steadily increased funding for educational and cultural exchanges, especially for the Muslim world.

Under the auspices of the Fulbright Program, the State Department subsidized a substantially enlarged Foreign Language Teaching Assistants Program (FLTA) to bring teachers of “critical languages” (those spoken between Morocco and the Philippines as well as Chinese and Russian) to American colleges and universities as well as an enlarged U.S. English Teaching Assistant Program (ETA) conceived to bring young Americans into contact with school-aged populations all over the world. Additional funding also bolstered exchange programs in the Baltic States, Russia, Ukraine, former Yugoslavia, and Turkey.

The budget for the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs increased dramatically from \$205 M in fiscal year 2000 to \$635 M in fiscal year 2010 and globally recovered ground lost by the Clinton-Gingrich cuts in the mid-1990s. However, the regional distribution of the funding inside the Fulbright Program meant that “traditional” policy regions in most of Europe, the Americas,

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<sup>30</sup> For figures see GAO, *U.S. Information Agency: Options for Addressing Possible Budget Reductions*, 18-19.

<sup>31</sup> For a tabular representation of U.S. government support for the Fulbright Program in annual and constant dollars, consult the *Fulbright Fiftieth: 1946-1996 [The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the J. William Fulbright Scholarship Board]*, (USIA: Washington, D.C.), 29. This table has been updated as “U.S. Government Support of Fulbright, 1947-2013” in constant (1971) and current dollars in the FFSB [2014 Annual Report](#), 10.

and parts of the Pacific barely participated in increases because increased funding flowed into the “new” priority regions of the Muslim world in the Near East and Asia or the former Soviet Union.

The reasons for the major policy shifts of U.S. foreign policy after 9/11 from Europe and the Western Hemisphere to the Near East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Pacific are obvious. Combatting global terrorism and outreach to Muslim communities go hand-in-hand with traditional U.S. foreign policy objectives such as the promotion of democracy, human rights, and economic opportunity. The “3Ds” of diplomacy, development, and defense “provide the foundation for promoting and protecting U.S. national security interests abroad,”<sup>32</sup> and the demographics of these regions with their young and rapidly-growing populations make reaching out to youth and empowering women high-priority concerns.

U.S. federal budget proposals for exchanges since 2010 illustrate two trends. First, federal funding for exchanges has slipped from its post 9/11 peak of \$635 M in 2010 to \$590 M for the fiscal year 2016. Funding for Fulbright has fallen 7% from \$253.8 M to \$236 M – 15.6 % in inflation adjusted terms – in this time period due to sequestering, budget consolidation measures, the desire to divert funding to other or newer programs, and benign neglect.<sup>33</sup> Second, the National Security Council has shown an unprecedented interest in the detailed planning of exchanges in recent years, and it has attempted in this restrictive budget environment to fund new initiatives at the expense of established programs.

The FY 2015 federal budget proposed to move \$43.5 M out of traditional long-term educational and cultural exchange programming (\$30 M or 13% from the Fulbright budget and \$13.5 M or 14% from Citizen Exchange Programs) to fund new short-term “signature presidential Youth Leadership Initiatives targeting young private, public, and civil society sector leaders”<sup>34</sup> from Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas as well as an “exchanges rapid response fund.”<sup>35</sup> However, the respective Congressional appropriations committees restored the funding for Fulbright and Citizens Exchange Programs in the federal budget proposal for 2015 – partially informed by the advocacy of an on-line, global, grassroots Fulbright alumni platform and

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<sup>32</sup> See the USAID *3 D Planning Guide* (July 31, 2012), 4, <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1866/diplomacy-development-defense-planning-guide>, accessed December 30, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> The ups and downs of the funding history of the Fulbright Program is analogous to a roller coaster ride. It is worth noting that it is still 15% below its peak funding level of 1966 in constant dollars: 38 M 1996 dollars would be \$277 M in 2016 according to the CPI Inflation Calculator of the U.S. Department of Labor at [http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm).

<sup>34</sup> This is the diction in *FY 2016 Congressional Budget Justification - Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs*, 31.

<sup>35</sup> The Young Africans Leaders Initiative (YALI, then renamed the Mandela Washington Fellowships for Young African Leaders) and the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) were established in 2015 and the Young Leaders in the Americas Initiative in 2016.

initiative [www.SaveFulbright.org](http://www.SaveFulbright.org)<sup>36</sup>– while modestly funding the new youth leadership initiatives. In doing so, they explicitly criticized the “lack of long-term planning”<sup>37</sup> the proposed cuts reflected.

This episode illustrates three interlocking issues: the dramatic regional shift of emphasis in U.S. public diplomacy since the end of the Cold War; the budgetary, institutional, and political pressures that have been brought to bear on traditional exchanges since 9/11; and either an institutional lapse of historical memory or an intergenerational change of opinion among policy makers regarding the value of the Fulbright Program. Fulbright traditionally has been acknowledged as the “flagship” of U.S. exchanges: a global and globally recognized, bilateral, non-partisan, academic exchange program with an established reputation for long-term impacts. How it will fare in the future in a political and policy environment driven by an apparent preference for specific partisan, regional, unilateral, shorter-term, and policy-driven visitation programs is an open question that the powers that be in Washington, D.C. will decide in the process of their budgeting exercises in the future.

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<sup>36</sup> See [www.SaveFulbright.org](http://www.SaveFulbright.org) for details on the alumni initiative and the Congressional restoration of funds.

<sup>37</sup> Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill, [Report](#), June 19, 2014, 23, cited in the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange [Policy Monitor](#), June 19, 2014.