



Prince Mahidol Award

Newsletter

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**Royal Address of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
on the Occasion of
the Presentation Ceremony
of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000
on Monday, 29th January B.E. 2544 (A.D. 2001)
at Chakri Throne Hall, Bangkok**

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be presenting the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 at today's ceremony. I should like to thank the Board of Trustees and all concerned who have done such good work all along to honour His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla, so that his accomplishments are widely recognized by people of the world.

In the area of research and study for the aetiology of any disease and apply the findings for the benefits of mankind, those concerned must have great compassion for their fellow human beings as well as possess strong and unwavering commitment so as to be able to persevere until success is finally achieved. The discoveries of the importance of nutrition of the cognitive and behavioural functions of children by Professor Ernesto Pollitt and the finding that coronary heart disease in adults could result from fetal adaptation to malnutrition in utero by Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker, as well as the significance of the researches by Sir Richard Peto in persuading doctors and physicians world-wide

to use tamoxifen for the treatment of breast cancers together with the establishment of the international organization, Cochrane Collaboration, by Sir Iain Chalmers, are all significant achievements that the four of you have devoted yourselves entirely to, both physical and mental, involving strong perseverance until successes have been achieved for the benefits of all mankind.

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you who are recipients of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 on this occasion. I believe that yours is a good example to follow for the further development and progress in the fields of medicine and public health.

I should also like to extend to all of you my good wishes for your happiness and success. May you be blessed with good health, physical and mental, as well as intellectual capability, so as to be able to contribute further to the well-being of people the world over. I also wish all of you who are gathered here today great happiness and prosperity for always.

Royal Speech

By

**Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
on the Occasion of the Presentation Ceremony
of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000
on Monday, 29th January B.E. 2544 (A.D. 2001)
at Chakri Throne Hall, Bangkok**

May it please Your Majesty,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, as well as the Privy Council, the Cabinet, Diplomats, and distinguished guests who are gathered in this Throne Hall, I feel deeply grateful to Your Majesty for Your gracious presence in presiding over the Presentation Ceremony of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000, today.

May I humbly request Your Majesty's Permission to report that in the Year 2000 the Board of Trustees of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation has selected those who have done excellent works of great benefit to the world population and thus deserving the Awards. They are as follows:-

Professor Ernesto Pollitt from the United States of America jointly receiving the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 in Medicine with Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker from the United Kingdom.

And Sir Richard Peto together with Sir Iain Chalmers, both from the United Kingdom, jointly receiving the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 in Public Health.

May I ask for the Royal Permission to read the citations and call upon the Awardees to receive the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 as follows:-

In the field of Medicine

Professor Ernesto Pollitt, originally from Peru, graduated in psychology from Catholic University in Lima, Peru, and has a Ph.D. in Human Development from Cornell University, the United States of America.

At present he is a Professor in Human Development, Department of Pediatrics, University of California at Davis, the United States of America. Professor Pollitt is a citizen of both Peru and the United States of America.

Professor Pollitt has done researches on the importance of nutrition to the learning and behaviour of children. He was the first to demonstrate the permanent effect of subclinical iron deficiency on cognitive performance in young children. He also found out that the supplement of iron to children at two months to two years of ages would improve the condition.

Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker, from the United Kingdom, graduated in Medicine from Guy's Hospital, in London. He then studied for six years in clinical and epidemiology training at the University of Birmingham. He is currently the Director of Medical Research Council Environmental Epidemiology Unit, University of Southampton, the United Kingdom.

In series of epidemiological studies, Professor Barker has shown that people who had low birth weight or who were thin or stunted at birth, have a high rates of coronary heart disease and other related disorders such as stroke, diabetes and hypertension in adult life. This led to the hypothesis that some coronary heart disease originates through fetal adaptation to undernutrition while in the uterus (womb).

These discoveries and the overall works of Professor Ernesto Pollitt and Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker resulted in tremendous benefits to the medical health of mankind all over the world, thus, very much deserve to receive the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 in the field of Medicine.

Professor Ernesto Pollitt

Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker

In the field of Public Health

Sir Richard Peto, from the United Kingdom, received a Bachelor degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Cambridge, and a Master of Sciences degree in statistics from the University of London, the United Kingdom.

Sir Richard Peto developed a new technique in statistics, called "meta-analysis", to analyse both published and non-published studies throughout the world. His summary especially on tamoxifen, persuaded doctors world-wide to use tamoxifen in the treatment of breast cancer, resulting in the saving of hundreds of thousands of lives all over the world.

His works also demonstrated the harmful effects of tobacco, thereby influencing national policies against tobacco, such as in China and several other countries.

Sir Iain Chalmers, from the United Kingdom, graduated in Medicine in 1960. He spent seven years in clinical practice in the United Kingdom and the Gaza Strip before becoming a full time health service researcher. His early research challenged some aspects in obstetrics. Later on he was appointed the first Director of National Health Science Research and Development Programme. Sir Iain Chalmers was the founder and the first Director of Cochrane Collaboration in 1993 which is an international organization, consisting of some 50 member countries including Thailand, to study and systematically review health care interventions the world over in order to summarize and set a standard of diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The result of the works were published electronically in the Cochrane Library which is regarded as the best source of evidence-based medicine.

The works of Sir Richard Peto and Sir Iain Chalmers render great benefits to the health care system in every country all over the world and thus very much deserve to receive the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000 in the field of Public Health.

Sir Richard Peto

Sir Iain Chalmers



Prince Mahidol Award



The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation

The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation was established on January 1st, 1992 in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol. The Foundation is under Royal Patronage, with Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn as President.



The Award

Two Prince Mahidol Awards are conferred annually upon individuals or institutions which have demonstrated outstanding and exemplary contributions to the advancement of medical, public health and human services throughout the world. Each Award consists of a medal, a certificate, and US\$ 50,000.



Nomination

An individual or group of individuals or an institution may be nominated by national medical or health authorities or by individual or group of individuals as candidates for the Award. Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary General of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation before May 31st each year.

PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD 2000 AWARDEES



Professor Ernesto Pollitt

Speech by Professor Ernesto Pollitt

Excuse me, I have been asked to make a speech and it is extremely difficult to make a speech in the circumstances like this because the feeling of excitement that one has all rights all possible adequate reasoning that is burden at this point of time.

I will just say that this experience, this award, represents for me personally a major milestone in my professional life to have been selected as a recipient of the Prince Mahidol Award for the year 2000. Academic importance and prestige around the world and the opportunity of sharing this experience with great scientists honors me. Besides it's also a reason of a great personal happiness for the last 15 years I have been valued enormously, personally and professionally the opportunity I had of working with other researchers in the study on Iron deficiency anemia and cognitive performance in Chonburi.

I sincerely thank the Mahidol Foundation, its Board of Trustees and its International Award Committee for the honor that has been bestowed upon me.

Thank you.



Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker

Speech by Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker

I am honored to accept the Prince Mahidol Award and grateful to the distinguished committee who recommended it. The award recognizes the work of my colleagues of the Medical Research Council Epidemiology Unit, University of Southampton, over the past 15 years and my colleagues who had to struggle to introduce new ideas into an area of science that is bounded by the rigid orthodoxy.

An English poet wrote "Man brings all that he has or can have into the world with him. Man is born like a garden, ready planted in soul". Those are the words of William Lake and we have known for a long time that the human body is more or less complete by the age of 1 year and we have known that under nutrition before that age has profound lasting consequences for the body and for the lakes of life and now we know that in this phenomenon lies the origin of western diseases which includes coronary heart diseases, diabetes. A person who was poorly nourished as a baby will be less able to deal with the high-energy Western diet, which we all now enjoy. If we are to nourish babies better in order to prevent coronary heart disease in the next generation we are going to have to protect young women. The ability of the women to nourish her babies depends on her lifetime experience, on her nutrition and growth as a girl and as an adult before pregnancy. I think this is a message which we have to take on board not just in country where chronic malnutrition is common but also in the West where many babies are still born, thin or stunted and where the diet of young women are impoverished by fashion of the food industry.

Prince Mahidol said, "true success exists not in learning, but in its application for the benefit of the mankind". This week sees the first world Congress on this new area of science. We are getting together from around the world to try and see how to put these new ideas into public health practice. The Prince Mahidol Award is a wonderful herald for this meeting and I thank you very much.



Sir Richard Peto

Speech by Sir Richard Peto

Well, I too would like to thank very much those who have made this award. The Prince Mahidol Award is a great honor and if Prince Mahidol himself had been alive and could see the situation in Thailand now, he would be amazed at the changes that have taken place.

When Prince Mahidol was young, a hundred years ago, depending on where you were in the countryside or the town about a third or a half of young children would have died before they reach their fifth birthday. When you were born, Princess, still maybe 20-25 per cent of young children would have died before their fifth birthday and now in Thailand is about 3 per cent. The change is enormous and the things that were the great threat, but now much less so and Thailand has been better than other developing countries in making such changes and this also means better than many other developing countries in starting to deal with the new monster with the things like tobacco and, particularly, HIV. Thailand has taken these epidemics more seriously than, I think, any other developing countries and has limited the spread of HIV in a way that is much more effective than might have happened and might have been expected 10 years ago. The increase that has happened in many parts of Africa hasn't happened here over the last 10 years. This is because it was taken seriously by the government and smoking which is a cheap cause of death in many Western countries or is a cause of a third of death in middle age. Thailand is the one developing country that has

actually taken effective action on smoking as introduce all sorts of litter stations for much of which I think users were responsible, and the prevalence of our men has gone down from the three quarter of many middle age smoking down to back 50 per cent. Well, that kind of decrease has not been seen in other countries and if this continues that it would avoid very large number of deaths over the next 25 or 50 years.

So, it is a great honor to get an award from Thailand because Thailand is in many senses an example to the world on how it has dealt with diseases of the past and how it is dealing with the problems of the present.

Thank you.



Sir Iain Chalmers

Speech by Sir Iain Chalmers

Your all Highness, Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to express my very sincere thanks for the privilege of sharing the Prince Mahidol Award of Public Health with my friend and colleague, Richard Peto. The most formative years of my professional life were spent working in a Palestinian refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, that unhappy place. At the end of the two years I spent there I concluded that my Palestinian patients and colleagues had helped me more than I had been able to help them, and so it is against that background that this award, Prince Mahidol Award, means so much to me.

I think that the endorsement of the work of someone like me from the North by people from the South is a very special accolade, and I want to stress that I think that the endorsement is for the international organization with which I am associated. Dr. Scottish Doctor who died 15 years ago criticized doctors for not assembling the reliable evidence about the effect of their treatments. So the Cochrane Collaboration is now assembling, maintaining and disseminating systematic review of reliable evidence about the effect of treatments and they are encouraging

numbers of Thai contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration, one of whom, Pisek Piboonkanon from Khon Khen is here tonight, and their contributions range across an enormous range of subjects ranging from snake bites to schizophrenia.

So Thailand is already contributing to the organization very importantly, which I am associated. Some of the most active contributors of the Cochrane Collaboration live in Chiang Mai, the city where Prince Mahidol of Songkla practiced his clinic in the years before his untimely death. There are 2 ways in which I have been identifying with what I have come to learn about Prince Mahidol. Like me, he went to a boarding school in England, which is a peculiarly British form of institutional sadism. For his sake, I hope that his experience was less awful nearly a century ago than mine was nearly half a century ago, but I thought may not have been.

The other way, in which I identify with Prince Mahidol, relates to a parallel with an 18th century Scottish compatriot of mine. Prince Mahidol joined the Royal Thai Navy before qualifying as a medical doctor and then made a very substantial contribution to medicine and public health. This pattern mirrors the career of James Lind, a Scottish doctor whose career began as a Navy surgeon with no medical qualification. He went on

to qualify as a doctor in Edinburgh and to have a profound effect on medicine and public health. His greatest contribution was the controlled trial he designed and reported in 1753, which shown that citrus fruits which we enjoy so much in your country was an effective cure for scurvy, a very devastating disease among sailors that was killing more of them, the sailors, than was military action.

I want to conclude these brief comments by saying that I really value the work with Thai contributors to my organization, the Cochrane Collaboration, are making. They are making of an enormous numbers of contribution, and I hope that the recognition of the Cochran Collaboration, represented by the award of the Prince Mahidol Prize for public health, will result in a rapid increase the numbers of Thai contributors to the work at the Collaboration and to further numbers of Cochrane reviews of health care research which is relevant to the people living in this country and beyond. These developments that I hope for would be wholly consistent with the life long mission of Prince Mahidol of Songkla, and I certainly pledge my personal commitment to promoting them in anyway I can.

Thank you again very much indeed.

Note from the Editor

Welcome to the third issue of the Prince Mahidol Award Newsletter.

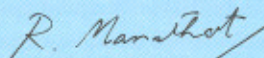
First of all, permit me to join in extending my sincere congratulations to the four recipients of the Prince Mahidol Awards for the Year 2000, namely Professor Ernesto Pollitt, Professor Doctor David J.P. Barker, Sir Richard Peto, and Sir Iain Chalmers. Their outstanding work and research have made tremendous impact in the fields of medicine and public health.

For the 2001 Awards, the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation received a total of 47 nominations, which include outstanding individuals and institutions from over 25 countries. As has been the practice, the presentation of the awards will take place towards the end of January 2002. The year 2002 will be significant not only for the fact that it will be the 10th anniversary of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, but will also be the 110th anniversary of the birth of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol. To commemorate these two important milestones, the Foundation will organize various activities and events. The Presentation Ceremony for the 2001 Awards will be followed by a Congress entitled "Medicine and Public Health in the Postgenomic Era". Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has graciously consented to be the Chairperson of the Congress to be held from 1 to 3 February 2002 at the Imperial Queens Park Hotel, Bangkok. The Congress will cover such topics as Health and Humanity, Bioinformatics, Emerging Disease Surveillance, and many more. Confirmation of participation has been received from a number of distinguished and internationally renowned scholars who will be sharing their knowledge and views on subjects of special interest. It is, therefore, with much pleasure

and enthusiasm that I can inform our readers of these upcoming events in this Newsletter.

On a sad note, the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation wishes to pay tribute to a distinguished member of the International Award Committee, Dr. Vulmiri Ramalingaswami, who passed away on 28 May 2001, after a long battle with prostate cancer. Dr. Ramalingaswami was a member of the Committee for nine years, during which he served with distinction, facilitating as a conciliator and catalyst for synthesis and consensus. He once delivered a most eloquent address on the Prince Mahidol Award at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand even though the subject was rather unusual for such a venue and audience. His address was part of the effort to generate wider interest in this Award during the early years. On behalf of the Foundation, I extend our most sincere condolences to his bereaved family and all his associates for having lost such an accomplished and able individual.

Finally, should any of our readers have comments or suggestions concerning medicine, public health and related matters, the Foundation warmly welcomes them for possible publishing in the Newsletter.



Rathakit Manathat
Director-General of the Department of Information
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Chairman of Sub-Committee on Public Relations
Prince Mahidol Award Foundation

Prince Mahidol Award Foundation

Office of the Dean, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University
2 Prannok Road, Bangkoknoi, Bangkok 10700, Thailand, Tel. (662) 418-2568, Fax. (662) 412-9717
E-mail: pmaf@mahidol.ac.th, www.kanchanapisek.or.th/pmaf/index.html
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