John Curtin’s vision and leadership: Lessons for today

Jeffrey L. Bleich, Ambassador of the United States of America, will present the 13th JCPML Anniversary Lecture on Monday 8 August 2011. Ambassador Bleich will speak on the lessons that John Curtin’s forward-looking vision holds for today’s society and leaders, and the future challenges we should begin addressing now.

‘One of the qualities that made John Curtin one of Australia’s finest Prime Ministers was his visionary leadership. Curtin had an uncanny ability to see far beyond the immediate challenges, and the courage to prepare his country to meet future demands.’

Before taking up the post of Ambassador in November 2009, Mr Bleich had previously served as Special Counsel to the President at the White House. From 1995 to 2009, he was a litigation partner in the San Francisco office of Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP, where he was recognised as one of the nation’s top lawyers.

Outside of his legal practice, Ambassador Bleich has a long-standing commitment to international law. He has taught international human rights at the University of California Berkeley’s School of Law, and written and lectured extensively on the international criminal court.

Your invitation to hear Ambassador Bleich present the 2011 JCPML Anniversary Lecture is enclosed. Hon Paul Keating, JCPML Patron, will introduce Ambassador Bleich.
Display focuses on Curtin’s Empire

A small display in the Kandy-Jane Henderson Foyer of the JCPML until the end of July explores John Curtin’s views on the British Empire.

Featured is the silver box presented to Prime Minister Curtin after he received the Freedom of the City of London on 11 May 1944.

The display opening coincided with the national launch of James Curran’s book Curtin’s Empire in May, presented by Stephen Smith, Minister for Defence.

Art of the Possible exhibition at the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library

Developed to commemorate the 60th anniversary of John Curtin’s death, this JCPML travelling exhibition explores the development of Australia’s foreign policy between 1935 and 1950.

The displays include three bronze figurines of John Curtin and can be viewed at the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library at Deakin University in Geelong, Victoria, until the end of July.
Bob Wurth (the JCPML’s 2009 Visiting Scholar) is writing a book on John Curtin’s wartime legacy, seeking to assess and clarify Curtin’s actions before and during the war with Japan.

Caryn Coatney, a Curtin University academic, is addressing the question ‘How successful was John Curtin in developing innovative prime ministerial journalism strategies that made a lasting impact on successive Government-media relationships?’.

Sam Malloy, Coordinator of the Chifley Home and Education Centre in Bathurst, New South Wales, is undertaking a comparative study of the homes of Prime Ministers Ben Chifley, John Curtin and Joseph Lyons. (The Lyons’ family lived at Home Hill in Devenport, Tasmania.)

Sam visited Perth in May and spent time at the JCPML and the Cottesloe home where the Curtin family lived.

The Bathurst City Council purchased the Chifley house and its contents in 1972 as a memorial to Prime Minister Chifley. Opened by Prime Minister Whitlam in March 1973, the property has been maintained as a house museum since.

Ben Chifley was Treasurer in the Curtin Government and following John Curtin’s death on 5 July 1945, Deputy Prime Minister Frank Forde acted as Prime Minister until the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party elected Chifley as its new leader. Chifley served as Prime Minister from 13 July 1945 to 19 December 1949.