



Contact:
Samantha Vance
(212) 486-7070
samv@bljworldwide.com

Volcker Alliance Calls for Rethinking Effective Government

Distinguished guests—including Bill Bradley, Tom Davis, Anthony Foxx, Barney Frank, Frank Fukuyama, David Gergen, and Jack Lew—speak at daylong symposium on governance challenges and solutions

Washington, DC (November 9, 2017)— Today, in honor of Paul A. Volcker’s accomplished life of public service and his 90th birthday, the **Volcker Alliance** held a daylong symposium at the United States Institute of Peace to address the critical governance challenges facing our nation and to discuss potential solutions.

The program, which brought together dedicated public servants and leading intellectuals, including **Bill Bradley, Tom Davis, Anthony Foxx, Barney Frank, Frank Fukuyama, David Gergen, Jack Lew** and others, served as a forward-looking conversation on “society-wide disruptions changing the context in which our governing institutions operate,” as described by **Thomas W. Ross**, President of the Volcker Alliance, in his opening remarks, as well as “the adaptations required to meet the challenges of the decades ahead.”

The opening panel delved into the social disruptions that will impact government, including big data, artificial intelligence, the changing nature of the economy, and new modes of work. **Frank Fukuyama**, Olivier Nomellini Senior Fellow at Stanford University’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, then delivered an address about the role of government in the 21st century. In his remarks, he defined an intrinsic government function as high government officials exercising “authority, not simply to carry out mandates or instructions from the sovereign people, but to exercise significant judgment on behalf of public interest, and to ‘go where the law does not.’” He concluded his remarks by suggesting that empowering public officials to exercise “executive discretion” in the public interest may be America’s second-best hope for a more effective government. He predicted that the first-choice solution—comprehensive civil service reform—is unlikely.

Bill Bradley gave a speech over lunch about his own public service and the enduring role of public service in American life. Senator Bradley reminded attendees that “our democracy will rely upon a more positive attitude toward careers in government to help ensure that the best and the brightest know to aspire to public service.”

The afternoon program included two panels, featuring practitioners, along with several current and former elected leaders, and a video address by **Mr. Volcker**. In his address, Mr. Volcker described the challenge of an effective government as “a preoccupation” of his for many years, noting that, “we now debate loudly and endlessly the big political and social issues—and the small political and

social issues, but somehow the actual management of the public enterprise—federal, state, and local, day by day, month by month, year by year—does not consistently get the attention that we think it deserves. And it shows: there are simply too many breakdowns in administration at too many levels to sustain confidence in the democratic government of a complex society... That is the challenge of which I speak.” He called for dedicating a new level of attention to public administration and rethinking the role of public service in our society.

Throughout the day, the Alliance featured clips from the forthcoming documentary by AMS Pictures, *Volcker – Saving America from the Brink*, that highlighted Mr. Volcker’s legendary defeat of stagflation while serving as the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, along with his public service within government and in other capacities thereafter.

The full event program can be viewed on the Symposium’s event page at: <https://livestream.com/accounts/13470315/events/7913051>. For more information, visit www.volckeralliance.org.

###

About the Volcker Alliance

The Volcker Alliance advances effective management of government to achieve results that matter to citizens. The nonpartisan Alliance works toward that objective by partnering with other organizations—academic, business, governmental, and public interest—to strengthen professional education for public service, conduct needed research on government performance, and improve the efficiency and accountability of governmental organization at the federal, state, and local levels.

The Volcker Alliance is a 501(c)3 organization.