Press Release: 9th May 2016

GEORGE TAKEI SPEAKS AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNION

“I know that efforts to impose discrimination will not endure”


Mr. Takei proudly described himself as a ‘Brittanophile’, having once made the mistake of using the term ‘anglophile’ in Scotland. He was named after George VI by his father, and was introduced to Britain in Stratford-upon-Avon, home of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Since then he visits the UK often due to the abundance of British ‘geeks and nerds’ who are fans of the Star Trek franchise.

On Star Trek, Takei stated that he believed that its portrayal of a utopian, idealistic society went hand-in-hand with the civil rights movement of the time, a movement with which he has been involved for a number of decades. In particular, Takei spoke of his time growing up as a Japanese American during the internments, when, aged just five, he and his family were incarcerated in a prison camp in Arkansas. “Children are incredibly adaptable”, he said, speaking of how in those terrible conditions the camp became his norm.

Takei was extremely proud of how, later in the War and despite their treatment as “enemy non-aliens”, Japanese Americans were amongst the bravest fighters and suffered the highest casualties defending America. “These are my heroes,” he said, “they are the people who made the America that I see today.”

When asked about the current problems faced by Asian-Americans as a whole, Mr. Takei drew attention to the ‘yellow-facing’ that occurs in Hollywood, whereby Asian characters are played by Caucasian actors, removing the chance for Asian-Americans to succeed in the film industry.

Finally on the American election and the controversy surrounding candidate Donald Trump, Takei firmly stated “I frankly and honestly believe that Donald Trump will not be president… After November we won’t be saying Mr. President, but Madam President.”

--END--