

Speech of  
**King Faisal International Prize Winners**

For Medicine 1984/1404H  
Saturday 25.2.1984 (24.5.1404H)

Presented by  
**Dr. William Greenough III**

Your Majesty  
Your Royal Highnesses  
Your Excellencies  
Colleagues  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a very great honour and pleasure for my colleagues Dr. John Fordtran, Dr. Michael Field and I to share the King Faisal International Prize in Medicine for 1984.

We wish to thank you for bestowing this exceptional honour on us. You do a great service to medical science in making these awards. It not only encourages each of us to continue our own endeavours but more important you focus the attention of health policy makers on seeking solutions to the most pressing health problems.

This year diarrheal diseases which have been long neglected have been given attention. Since each year five millions of the world's

people, mostly small children, die from this scourge. Your wisdom and foresight in selecting this area of research for the 1984 prize give us hope that there will be a major increase in the effort and support to control these diseases.

Dr. John Fordtran, of Baylor Hospital and Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, has provided in his work a basic understanding of the function of the healthy and disordered intestinal tract. Dr. Michael Field at Harvard University and later at the University of Chicago, discovered new ways in which Bacterial Toxins and Hormones cause the intestines to secrete vital body fluids. Dr. William Greenough working at the International Centre for diarrheal diseases research, Bangladesh and at the Johns Hopkins University was able to take the concepts of the basic sciences to the bedside of those afflicted with diarrhea and develop effective measures to prevent death and disability. In making this award the King Faisal Prize recognizes the importance of basic science itself and also of the need that the fruits of research be applied where they are most needed. In this case, we hope our research has been of benefit to patients with acute diarrhea which is often fatal to children in developing countries and to people everywhere who suffer the terrible consequences of chronic diarrhea.

We have contributed in different ways and in different Institutions to advance the understanding and treatment of these diseases. What we have achieved so far was made possible largely through the long term support by Governments and Agencies for research on diarrheal diseases both at Universities and at the International Centre for Diarrheal diseases Research, Bangladesh which is the only International Research Institution in a developing country focussing its attention solely on this problem. These discoveries and their applications honoured today are but a milepost on the long road which will lead to full prevention and control of this most common and destructive group of illnesses.

We hope that through the leadership provided by the King Faisal Prizes that Governments and Agencies in developed and developing countries will be encouraged to make the required effort to support research into those problems which most afflict mankind.

Each of us and our family members have greatly appreciated all of your generous hospitality and consideration in our visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and we wish to thank you for this. Through our visit we have come to know better your own long history of leadership in the sciences which both preserved ancient knowledge and added new knowledge. The current growth of your university system in both size and depth is a most exciting and impressive development. It is our very great privilege Your Majesty to receive this award.

Thank you.