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PBS Concert, Washington D.C., 9/17/89

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(Smith/Blessey)  
Draft Two  
September 12, 1989  
CONCERT

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: PBS CONCERT  
EAST ROOM  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1989

Thank you, Miss Redgrave, and the entire cast for this wonderful concert.

First, just for the record, let me say that the Bush family came to this country from England. Believe me, tonight I'm honored by the company.

And second, surrounded by so many household names, let me confess, Lynn, that you have no idea how thrilling it is for me to say the words, "Welcome to the White House."

For this is America's House. And what better evidence than this evening's parade of stars. Performers daring, and exceling, in the best spirit of Columbus Day. Giving of themselves, and of their talents. For you, here in the East Room. And millions through the magic of PBS.

To Lynn Redgrave -- and what a talent -- my special thanks. I just wish I fished as well as you preform. If I did, the Queen Mary wouldn't be big enough to hold my catch.

Then, there's Teresa Stratas. Star of concert, opera, television, film. Teresa, I especially liked your song, "Lost in the Stars." Well, this can be said of each performer: You're not lost in the stars -- you've reached them.

To Benny Carter, Dick Hyman, Milt Hinton, and Mel Lewis you've shown why perhaps nothing is more American than jazz. Which brings me to F. Murray Abraham. Who will ever forget your readings from "American Mosaic"? Our task is to paint that mosaic in every corner of the land.

Thanks, too, to that national treasure, the United States Marine Band. And finally, of course, Roy Clark. And here I have to be careful. After all -- and I speak on behalf of millions -- quoting that great song, "I loved country when country wasn't cool."

You know, like you, the poet Carl Sandburg was an artist. And it was he who said, "The Republic is a dream. Nothing happens first a dream."

Well, it was a dream that brought Christopher Columbus to America -- and so many millions of families in the scores of decades since. They came to build a better life. They came to find a better world. Risking much, they accomplished more. Uplifting this good and blessed Nation -- much as you performers have tonight.

To all of you, my thanks -- and those of your fellow citizens. For your love of music -- your love of oratory -- and for this unforgettable evening. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

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