

Education - Arts

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE

Assistant to the President and
Director of Communications

Eni -
This is what
we will be
discussing
tomorrow @
2pm with
Dick and
Bill.

Frank



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The Nancy Hanks Center
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
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MEMORANDUM

January 10, 2000

Sent by fax -- 456-1213
One of three pages

To: Loretta Ucelli
Asst. to the President and Director of Communications
The White House

From: Dick Woodruff
Congressional and White House Liaison
National Endowment for the Arts

Attached is a concept paper outlining the initiative that Bill Ivey wants to talk about in our meeting tomorrow. I look forward to seeing you then.

EDUC -
ARTS

**America's Recorded Legacy:
A 21st Century Gift to Our Nation's Youth**

On the evening of September 18, 1998, as he improvised remarks concluding the White House Millennium Jazz Evening, President William Jefferson Clinton issued this challenge:

"You know, one of the things that I'd like to say. I'd like to compliment the recording companies who had put out CD's recently – all of Ella Fitzgerald's recordings for example. And I would like to encourage all of the people who are involved in this business to think about, as a way of celebrating the millennium, to look at all the great jazz music that is still available in any condition over the last decades and think about packaging anything that is not, yet, now in mint condition – the best available condition – and make it widely available because I think that is very, very important."

Even as the President spoke, the National Endowment for the Arts was developing its Challenge America Initiative, a special program designed to place creativity and cultural heritage at the center of community and family life. Challenge America, when funded, will connect the arts with young citizens both in and after school, will provide increased access to the arts in geographically isolated and underserved areas, and will create partnerships intended to preserve our nation's rich cultural heritage.

Working within the framework established by Challenge America, the Endowment immediately responded to the President's request by initiating discussions with the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), the professional organization which represents the very industry challenged by President Clinton.

Following more than a year of preliminary discussions and planning, the NEA and RIAA have developed **"America's Recorded Legacy: A 21st Century Gift to our Nation's Youth."**

A panel of experts will select the most-significant recordings of the 20th Century. The finest and most-influential recording will be included, covering all genres of music and the spoken word – from Tin Pan Alley to Rock 'n' Roll and from George Gershwin to Arnold Schoenberg.

These recordings will be painstakingly annotated with historical and biographical information, and the final product – remastered audio recordings and interpretive material – will be made available at no charge to young people throughout the nation.

Many people accuse the entertainment industry, especially record companies, of contributing to what is wrong with our culture today. Conservatives like to blame incidents like Columbine on the influence of Hollywood as a way of deflecting criticism away from the primary problem – the easy availability of guns.

But the recording industry is also the caretaker, in fact, the owner, of a rich segment of our nation's creative legacy. President Clinton has challenged leaders in the entertainment industry to develop socially constructive projects and use their influence to promote and protect the best parts of America's cultural heritage. NEA and RIAA have responded, by assembling the finest historical recordings, and conveying these recordings to millions of young Americans.

The proposed roll-out event for "America's Recorded Legacy..." features the President, the Chairman of the NEA, leading artists and recording company executives at the White House. The President will indicate his interest in leading the record industry in a positive direction, reinforce his challenge to citizens and industries to the well-being of young people and the quality of life in communities. He will outline the features of this major initiative, a first and important step in engaging our nation more fully in its rich heritage, and he will stress the importance of Challenge America, the NEA's special program that will place creativity and cultural heritage at the center of community and family life.