

**Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission**  
**Meeting #8, July 7, 2003, Noon**  
**Hildene, the Robert Todd Lincoln Home**  
**Manchester, Vermont**

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler, Dr. Darrel Bigham, Dr. Gabor Boritt, Joan Flinspach, Harold Holzer, Hon. Jesse Jackson, Jr., Hon. Tommy Turner, Hon. Frank Williams, Michael Bishop, executive director, and Jackie Williams, staff of the ALBC. Congressional Staff included Pat Souders from the Hon. Richard Durbin's office and Kenneth Edmonds from the Hon. Jesse Jackson's office. Guests attending the meeting were Edith Holzer, Beverly Jerman, Ned Bandler, Seth Bongartz, Sarah Bishop, Al Jerman, Nate Boone, and Virginia Williams.

Mr. Holzer called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m. He recognized and thanked Al Jerman and Nate Boone of Hildene for sharing their knowledge of Hildene with us.

Mr. Holzer asked for approval of the minutes from the April 25, 2003 meeting. Dr. Bigham noted that there was a correction. On page 3, paragraph 2, the minutes were corrected from "Dr. Bishop" to read, "Dr. Bigham." Dr. Boritt moved and Judge Turner seconded a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion passed.

Mr. Holzer welcomed Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. to the Commission and thanked him for attending on such short notice. Mr. Holzer also thanked all the members of Congress for their assistance in adapting the legislation to extend the life of the Commission through 2010, when its final report is due.

**Executive Director Report**

Mr. Holzer asked Mr. Bishop to report his activities as Executive Director. Mr. Bishop reserved some items from his report for later in the meeting. He noted our financial status and projected a year-end balance. (See his report for exact financial figures.) Remaining funds will be used to afford a contract with a public relations firm, to enhance the website, and to print promotional materials. Mr. Holzer requested discussion of the budget. Mr. Souders noted that the appropriation requested for fiscal year 2004 will probably be \$250,000, since we have adequate funds at this point in time. Congressman Jackson asked why we have not spent more of our funds. Mr. Bishop responded that we used an IMLS grant to set up the office and received another appropriation of \$500,000, but that we would be spending a portion of the remaining funds on the three projects he listed earlier.

**Education Committee Report**

Mr. Holzer asked for the Education Committee report. Dr. Bigham, committee chair, will distribute the latest list of ideas to all the members of the Commission. He urged them to prioritize the ideas and link them to federal and non-federal resources. He noted the majority of the proposals are for short-term projects and recommended that Commissioners submit long-term proposals, too. Dr. Bigham will circulate the list after

he has comments from the Commissioners. Mr. Holzer asked about a timeline for turning the proposals into action plans. Dr. Bigham said that that would happen, but that first he needed the Commissioners to comment, rank, and suggest resources. Mr. Bishop stated that the staff will need the draft committee reports by the February 2004 meeting in order to construct the June 2004 interim report to Congress. In response to a question, Dr. Bigham noted that the Education Committee report will take two forms—one for Congress and a longer one that is planning-based for our use. Dr. Bigham explained that there are a number of proposals for K-12 audiences and that more should be developed for libraries. He reminded Commissioners to think about resources to which proposals could be delegated.

On the subject of resource delegation, Mr. Holzer raised a question about the status of state Commissions. Judge Turner stated that Kentucky has formed a task force. Mr. Holzer added that Illinois has a state Commission. Indiana has a task force. Dr. Boritt said that Pennsylvania is in the process of forming a state Commission. Mr. Holzer asked Dr. Boritt if one of his students could make a national list of all the Lincoln groups. Dr. Boritt committed to creating such a list for the state of Pennsylvania. Mr. Holzer said that he would work to make one for the state of New York. As a final comment on resources, Mr. Bishop added that he had a successful meeting with the director of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The director wants to combine some of our proposals with the President's "We the People" initiative. Mr. Holzer thanked Dr. Bigham for his report.

### **Mandate Committee Report**

Before giving her report, Dr. Bandler requested that Mr. Bishop meet with all of the committee chairs to create a unified format for their reports. She and Mr. Holzer then noted that the amended legislation changed the "redesignation" of the Lincoln Memorial to a "rededication" of it. The committee would like such an event to reflect not only Abraham Lincoln but also the role the monument itself has played in Civil Rights. As for the Joint Session of Congress, Congress itself will plan this. The Commission can, however, make recommendations. Traditional activities of past Congressional Joint Sessions have included an actor re-enacting Lincoln and a speech by a major historian. Other ideas from the committee are having a panel of young people speak and/or featuring an international speaker such as Nelson Mandela. Regarding the postage stamp mandate, Abraham Lincoln meets all the criteria for a stamp series. The committee can send a letter to the postal Commission before September in order to start the process. A decision still needs to be made about a general issue stamp and an international stamp. Lastly, the legislation requires the ALBC to oversee options about the penny. The committee has met with the mint. Decisions to be made include: do we recommend a series of pennies; a new permanent penny or a new penny for 2009 only; and do we proceed with a commemorative coin?

Mr. Bishop informed Commissioners that the more specific we are about the design in our letter to the postal Commission, the better our chances of influencing the final design. Mr. Bishop suggested photographs of Abraham Lincoln be used for the stamp series. Mr. Holzer added that photographs could be featured on the stamps, and Lincoln sites on the

pennies. Dr. Boritt asked what the lead-time was for stamp design. Mr. Bishop responded that it is three years, so now is the time to act. Judge Williams asked if we could request that Lincoln be on the general issue stamp, a stamp series and on an international stamp. Mr. Holzer and Mr. Bishop both indicated that more research is necessary to answer that question. Mr. Bishop will undertake that research. Dr. Bandler requested a decision be made about sending a letter in September. Judge Williams moved and Dr. Bigham seconded a motion to do so. The motion passed.

Dr. Bandler reminded the Commissioners that the US Mint is already committed to redesigning the penny, so it is best that we all work together. A discussion about the procedures for a commemorative coin followed. Mr. Bishop noted that the procedures are: Congress passes legislation requiring a commemorative coin; the Mint creates the coin and sells it, making back its expenses; any further proceeds can go to private organizations that can raise matching funds. The organizations that have raised matching funds may receive any additional funds generated by the sale of the coin after the Mint has met its expenses, as a profit. Dr. Bandler stated that the committee will move forward and have a report for the Commission next February at the latest.

#### **Public Outreach Committee Report**

Mr. Holzer asked for the Public Outreach Committee report. Ms. Flinspach requested that Commissioners respond to the document in their notebooks two weeks before the upcoming fall meeting, so that she can incorporate their input. She encouraged edits and opinions from other Commissioners because the current report only includes the input of two Commissioners to date. Mr. Bishop reported on his meeting with the Director of the National Endowment for the Arts. His ideas include: a performance of classical music featuring Abraham Lincoln and working with the Winnebago Company to develop traveling exhibits.

#### **International Committee Report**

Mr. Holzer invited Dr. Boritt to provide a report from the International Committee. Dr. Boritt will be contacting the Cultural Attaché of all of the US embassies for ideas. The committee will also pursue the translation of Lincoln's words into the languages of the world. Judge Williams urged Dr. Boritt to contact Bill Peterson who heads the International Abraham Lincoln Association. Dr. Boritt asked Commissioners to send additional ideas to him.

#### **Unfinished Business**

Mr. Holzer brought up the topic of Unfinished Business. Mr. Bishop reported that amending legislation had passed Congress and is on its way to the White House for signature. This legislation will extend the life of the Commission through 2009 with a final report due in 2010. He applauded the appointment of Congressman Jackson to the Commission. The website has been updated and is now hosted outside of the Library of Congress which will ease its expansion. Committee reports are due to staff in February 2004.

### **Old/New Business**

Mr. Holzer asked about Old Business. There was none. He then asked for New Business. Mr. Bishop distributed mock-ups of a rack card and a media folder. The Commission has been asked to endorse a Lincoln conference to be held at East Carolina University on September 8-11, 2004. Dr. Bandler raised the issue of procedure or criteria for endorsement. After discussion the Commission reached consensus that two disinterested Commissioners would be appointed to vet current requests for endorsement. Ms. Flinspach and Dr. Bigham will complete this process and develop a template for making the decision. This template will be distributed by email for voting by the Commissioners. The Commission also reached consensus that endorsement language would be "in cooperation with." Congressman Jackson rose to speak. He thanked Nancy Pelosi for appointing him to the Commission. He also thanked Congressman LaHood and Senator Durbin for their leadership. On the issue of endorsements he urged us to encourage debate and cautioned us not to be bogged down with the details of who is speaking, etc. He would like to see the National Park Service Civil War sites highlight the role of Abraham Lincoln and distribute information about the Commission. Congressman Jackson also recommended that we include the Department of the Army to examine Lincoln's role as Commander-in-Chief.

Mr. Holzer raised discussion of a motto for the Commission. Commissioners should consider "Dedicated to the unfinished work before us." This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Mr. Bishop noted as another New Business item, that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has asked us to endorse the restoration of the Soldiers' Home. Per our new process, Judge Turner and Judge Williams will vet this project and make a recommendation. Dr. Bigham strongly encouraged us to support it. Mr. Holzer formalized the new process by making an omnibus motion to create two mini committees to vet scholarly and public events. Following vetting, an email will be sent with specific recommendations on the issues. The email will allow the Commissioners to vote on this recommendation. Dr. Bigham moved this and Dr. Bandler seconded the motion. It passed.

Mr. Bishop discussed the new Public Relations contract. Such a contract would be for a year—August 1 to August 1, and incorporate a plan for fundraising, marketing and event planning. An event for February is needed and it might take place at Ford's Theatre with the First Lady present, focusing on education. Mr. Souders noted that Senator Durbin had urged the Commission to use a formal RFP with a minimum of three bids. Discussion followed and Mr. Bishop said that this would be the procedure, however, he noted our success in working with Susan Davis International for our past event and told the Commissioners that he favored this firm. Judge Williams moved that we go ahead with the procedure of obtaining three bids pending approval from our Congressional representatives not present. Dr. Bandler concurred. Congressman Jackson seconded the motion and added that any public relations firm hired must have knowledge of non-traditional marketing outlets, because we cannot divorce ourselves from the slavery issue.

**Future Meetings**

Mr. Holzer raised the last agenda item of future meetings. The Commission agreed that the fall meeting will be either October 20 or 27, whichever is better for our Congressional members. It will be held in Washington, D.C. The Soldiers Home has extended an invitation to host the meeting or to tour the home as a part of the meeting. Former Senator Paul Simon will be making a presentation on international scholarship. In February, the meeting will be on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>, again pending input from the members of Congress. Dr. Bigham stated that the spring meeting will probably be held on a Sunday evening and a Monday the last week of April at the Boyhood Home in Indiana.

An announcement was made about the upcoming Lincoln Forum beginning on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. This is the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gettysburg Address.

Mr. Holzer asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Boritt moved this, and Dr. Bandler seconded it.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan L. Flinspach  
Secretary