

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
Meeting #9, October 27, 2003, Noon
Members' Room, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler, Dr. Darrel Bigham, Dr. Gabor Boritt, Hon. Richard Durbin, Joan Flinspach, Harold Holzer, Jr., Lura Lynn Ryan, Louise Taper, 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, Frank Watkins from the Hon. Jesse Jackson, Jr.'s office, Diane Liesman and Joan Mitchell from the Hon. Ray LaHood's office, and Emily Mulloy from the Hon. Jim Bunning's office. Guests attending the meeting were the Hon. Paul Simon and Susan Davis and Judy Whittlesey of Susan Davis International.

At 12:15 Mr. Holzer called the meeting to order. He asked everyone to introduce him or herself. He then asked for the approval of the minutes of the July 7, 2003, meeting. Chief Justice Williams moved the approval and Senator Durbin seconded the motion, which passed.

Mr. Bishop gave the Executive Director's report. He noted that Richard Norton Smith had accepted the position as director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and that he wants to work with us. Mr. Bishop distributed a promotional postcard, bookmark, and poster. Our current financial balance is \$750,000. Our gift fund has a balance of \$6,000. Mr. Bishop indicated that Susan Davis will present a fund raising plan later in the meeting. Senator Durbin praised the appointment of Richard Norton Smith. Mr. Bishop commented that he appears regularly on the Jim Lehrer News Hour. Mr. Holzer added that he also appears on C-SPAN.

Mr. Holzer asked Dr. Bigham for the Education Committee report. Resources need to be channeled toward the Near Future Priorities between now and winter next year. Dr. Bigham highlighted the special education section of the website noted on page 3 of his report (attached) and the work with historical societies recorded on page 6 of the report. Dr. Bandler requested that land grant colleges be included in the work of the Education Committee. Mr. Holzer directed the Education Committee to assemble a list of website links. Judge Turner thanked Dr. Bigham for his work. Dr. Bigham also reported on a related matter as chair of the State Liaison Committee. The three Lincoln states (KY, IN, and IL) are meeting and planning activities to occur within each state and across the three states. He cited the report authored by Tim Townsend of the Lincoln Home National Park located at the back of our binders. Dr. Bigham stated that the plans of the National Parks in each of these states will expand to include Ford's Theatre and the Lincoln Memorial. Judge Turner informed us that the Kentucky State Commission will be meeting on Wednesday. Dr. Bigham added that an Indiana Legislative Study Committee will be meeting to recommend or not recommend the establishment of an Indiana Commission on Tuesday.

Mr. Holzer requested Dr. Bandler's report from the Mandate Committee. Dr. Bandler remarked that the US Postal Service Stamp Committee has received the letter requesting both a general issue stamp and a postal stamp series. That committee has acknowledged that they look with favor on a Lincoln stamp. They did not address the issue of a Lincoln stamp series. We must await their decision. Dr. Bandler moved on to report about the Lincoln Memorial. She and the staff visited it and noticed a need for cosmetic repairs. She also urged the distribution of a pamphlet informing visitors of all the Lincoln sites. Dr. Bandler informed the Commission of the progress in working with the US Mint. The metallic content of the penny will not be changed. The director of the Mint seemed receptive to the concept of a series of images for the reverse of the penny. She also suggested that the Commission might want to use the Lincoln Medal for thanking advisors, donors, etc. An image of this medal is included in the Mandate Committee report. On the issue of the Commemorative Coin, the Commissioners have decisions to make. The sale of such a coin could generate between \$2.5 – \$3 million. Our options are to: 1.) partner with other Lincoln groups in the creation of this coin 2.) designate a recipient of the funds 3.) establish a foundation which would receive the funds in 2010. The National Trust has asked to be the recipient. Discussion ensued and we moved to Item #5 under New Business on the agenda. Ms. Flinspach asked when we would need to make a decision. Mr. Bishop responded that the decision needs to be made in February. Ms. Flinspach asked Senator Durbin if it would be controversial or difficult to get Congress to authorize a foundation. Senator Durbin responded that he did not know. He also pointed out that \$2.5 – \$3 million may not be enough to establish a legacy. Dr. Bandler requested that the Commissioners send their thoughts to her by email. Dr. Boritt congratulated Dr. Bandler on her work and asked how to influence the stamp committee. After discussion, Mr. Bishop agreed to distribute the names of the members of the stamp committee. Dr. Boritt also urged consideration of a more contemporary design of the medal.

Mr. Holzer next asked for the Public Outreach Committee report. Ms. Flinspach referred to the charts distributed prior to the meeting (attached.) She indicated that she only had the input of Dr. Bigham, Dr. Bandler and herself. She asked Commissioners to take a moment and write directly upon the chart during the meeting, so that she could have the benefit of more input. Mr. Holzer asked whether this report included the Lincoln Moments—similar to the Bicentennial Minutes program of 1976. Ms. Flinspach asked Dr. Bigham whether that was included in the Education Committee. They agreed that it would be covered by one of the two committees.

Mr. Holzer brought up Unfinished Business and asked Mr. Bishop to update the Commissioners on the Report to Congress due in June 2004. Mr. Bishop stated that final committee reports are due in February. Dr. Bandler asked Mr. Bishop to create a format for these reports and distribute them to the committee chairs.

New Business was in order. Mr. Holzer asked Senator Durbin to introduce our guest Senator Paul Simon. Senator Simon presented his recommendation to the Commission. He noted that the Morrill Act was the GI Bill of the 19th century. He indicated the decline in the study of foreign languages in US schools. The United States is perceived

as arrogant, and this perception affects our foreign policy. His vision is that the Commission establish a Lincoln Fellowship Program for 500,000 college juniors to spend a year abroad in primarily third-world countries. In 10 years, 5 million Americans will have studied abroad at a cost of \$3.5 billion dollars—1/7 of 1% of our federal budget. This will result in greater national security and an economic pay-off in trade. Dr. Bandler asked how this tied into Abraham Lincoln. Senator Simon responded that he viewed it as an extension of the Morrill Act. Senator Durbin asked if there was the possibility of a private sector match. Senator Simon sees it as a federal obligation. Mr. Holzer added that students who travel abroad on these fellowships could speak to students or any groups about Abraham Lincoln. Dr. Bandler added that these US students would need to be taught about Abraham Lincoln before they could do that. Senator Simon thanked the Commission for the opportunity to present his idea.

The next topic under New Business was fund raising. Susan Davis and Judy Whittlesey of Susan Davis International spoke of the need to raise funds. Ms. Davis suggested an annual activity with corporate funding such as an Abraham Lincoln Leadership Award with the first winner being someone from the field of education. The goal would be for the White House to host or bestow the award. If it is a visible, coveted award it will attract other funders and publicity. Senator Durbin stated that he liked the idea. Mrs. Taper asked where would we raise the funds for a prize and spoke together with Dr. Boritt of experience with the Lincoln Prize award. Mrs. Taper suggested that a first recipient might be Nelson Mandela. Ms. Flinspach said that an award would require a set of criteria. Dr. Bigham asked if such an award could be bestowed before a joint session of Congress. Mr. Holzer recommended that we not do this until February 2005. Ms. Davis suggested we could announce the program in February 2004. Judge Turner indicated that he would like to see the concept in writing. After more discussion, Judge Turner moved that we pursue this concept. Mrs. Ryan seconded the motion, and it passed.

Mr. Holzer raised the next item under New Business. Mr. Bishop introduced a concept of Mrs. Taper's—that of a sculpture/statuary garden somewhere in Washington, D.C. The sculptures would include the greatest bronzes of Abraham Lincoln—the St. Gauden's and French's Standing Lincoln. Mr. Bishop thinks a possible location for such a project is the Soldier's Home or at the National Arboretum. Mrs. Taper has volunteered to head a committee to pursue this idea. Mr. Bishop asked for the support of the Commission to explore this. Dr. Bigham asked for more details—how it would impact the Soldier's Home, etc. Dr. Boritt suggested a national competition for one modern piece. Chief Justice Williams moved that this concept go forward. Dr. Boritt seconded the motion. It passed.

Mr. Holzer brought up Dr. Boritt's project of translating Lincoln's words into the major foreign languages of the world. He recommended that the first medium of distribution be through our website. Each Commissioner could choose the Abraham Lincoln quotation that he/she most admires and note what it means to that Commissioner. Chief Justice Williams explained the translation software used in Rhode Island and volunteered to test this idea using it. Senator Durbin suggested that translators at the Library of Congress

could evaluate the translations created by the software. Discussion followed. Ms. Davis suggested involving the Embassies. Senator Durbin urged each Commissioner to email a quotation to the staff. Dr. Bigham recommended a motion that this project proceed. Chief Justice Williams seconded it. The motion passed.

Mr. Holzer raised the last item left to discuss under New Business. Dr. Wilson of the Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College has proposed that we undertake the publication of a new series of Lincoln texts—including a new edition of Herndon's biography of Lincoln, etc. Dr. Bigham requested that this idea be submitted on our endorsement form. Senator Durbin asked whether this idea was requesting federal funds for this project. Mr. Bishop responded that our private funds could be used. Dr. Bigham stated that he believed this discussion was premature. Discussion on this issue ended with no action. At this point in time, Ms. Flinspach, Secretary of the Commission left to return to Fort Wayne, Indiana.

As the last item, Jean Bandler suggested that the Chair appoint an evaluation subcommittee to assess the work to date of staff - Michael Bishop and Jackie Williams - and commission, based on appraisals from all of us. She noted that evaluations are regular and routine in organizations, they help identify strengths and correct weaknesses, are essential for a transparent process, and useful to project future staffing needs; the controversial aspect is that we should also evaluate ourselves and the overall Commission progress. Commission comments indicated that staff evaluations would make an important contribution to Commission management. An objection to evaluating individual Commissioners stressed that we each participate in different, sometimes unnoticed, ways; it was clarified that each commissioner should evaluate him/herself not fellow members. The motion by Jean Bandler, seconded by Judge Williams, passed unanimously and Chairman Holzer appointed an Evaluation Committee of five composed of Commissioners Flinspach, Taper, and Williams, (the original Search Committee) and Bandler and Turner.