

Schiller Institute hosts 'musical tribute to justice' concert

An estimated 2,300 people attended a Schiller Institute-sponsored "Let Justice Ring!" concert at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 15, on the eve of the historic Million Man March. Attendees came from as far away as Mississippi and California, but the core of the audience were District residents who have been organized through more than two years of cultural events which have sought to embody the principles of Classical education that resulted in the Renaissance of the 15th century. The turnout was high despite dirty tricks by the U.S. Department of Justice and the *Washington Post* designed to sabotage the concert (see *EIR*, Oct. 20, p. 57).

The theme of the concert was to root out corruption in the judicial system, that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." The program read, "Corrupted elements of law enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Department of Justice, have targeted and harassed American leaders, in order to silence their political ideas. The time has come to open the 'secret' files on these cases: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement; Malcolm X; African-American elected officials targeted by the FBI's Operation 'Frühmenschen'; Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and associates; Minister Louis Farrakhan; and others."

The concert opened with an invocation and a performance of A.H. Malotte's musical setting of "The Lord's Prayer" by Rev. James Cokley (tenor). Dennis Speed, Northeast Schiller Institute Coordinator, in the opening remarks, referred to the controversy surrounding the concert, and said that the fundamental reason that the activities of the institute are controversial, is that it has stood for these ideas of justice when no one else would.

Speed read greetings to the concert from Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp LaRouche, who emphasized the theme of atonement and the power of music. "This concert . . . takes place at a moment when there is a new spirit of atonement, reconciliation, and drive for freedom of the human person," Zepp LaRouche said.

"This new movement is sparked by the recognition by many people, that right now there is a danger, that all the accomplishments which were won 30 years ago by the civil rights movement, are now in danger of being lost again, and that, even further, the onslaught by the self-proclaimed Conservative Revolution threatens all these inalienable rights guaranteed by the American Constitution—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—for all who do not belong to that

upper crust of the oligarchical elite.

"But sometimes, when man is confronted with great evil, and the vicious persecution of African-American elected officials is part of that, that evil evokes in us a desire for an even greater good, because God has created the best of all possible worlds."

Speed introduced several individuals who have played, and continue to play, leading roles in the struggle for civil rights in the United States.

The person to whom you 'owe your freedom'

Schiller Institute Vice Chairman Amelia Boynton Robinson was introduced by Speed as "the person to whom almost everyone in the room owes their freedom." Mrs. Boynton Robinson spoke on the theme of the battle for the right to vote, describing her run for Congress in 1964. While she drew a substantial vote in the election, she noted that almost none of her votes came from African-Americans, because the continuing reign of terror still prevented African-Americans from registering to vote.

She indicated that this was part of her motivation in inviting Dr. Martin Luther King to Selma. On Aug. 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson would sign the Voting Rights Act into law, as a result of the movement sparked by the 30-year battle of Mrs. Robinson and her deceased husband, William Boynton. It was the battle on Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday in March of that year, in which Mrs. Boynton was beaten and left for dead, which galvanized the country, and the administration, into action.

Former South Carolina State Sen. Theo Mitchell spoke of the need to rally against injustice, and to stand in the Million Man March, called by Minister Louis Farrakhan and entitled "A Day Of Atonement," on the following day. He detailed the plight of black Americans in jails, and in the education system. Mitchell was introduced by Speed as an elected official who had three times been prosecuted without evidence, and finally convicted without evidence in the third mocked-up proceeding. Mitchell would probably have become lieutenant governor of South Carolina, if not for his hounding by corrupt elements of law enforcement agencies. Speed likened Mitchell's treatment to that of the black officials of the 1870s South Carolina legislature, which was removed forcibly from office through corruption trials and the "judicial office" of the Ku Klux Klan.

Mel Evans, head of the Clinton, Mississippi chapter of



Left: William Warfield, baritone, and Lorna Meyers, mezzo-soprano, take a bow at the Schiller Institute's concert, held on the eve of the Million Man March in Washington. The pianist is Dr. Raymond Jackson. Right: Osceola Davis, soprano.

the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, focused on the theme that "not only is injustice anywhere a threat to justice everywhere, but an injustice to one of God's children is an injustice to all." He said that the LaRouche case and the harassment of black elected officials are one and the same thing.

Rev. James Bevel was introduced as the architect of the Children's March in Birmingham, Alabama, and as the architect of the concept of atonement in the Million Man March. He developed the concept that God is the father of us all, which means that we are all brothers and sisters—not black, white, brown, etc. He said that if you are not reconciled to each other, you are not reconciled to God. This is what you have to atone for.

Rev. Richard Boone of Alabama, introduced as one of the main organizers of the 1965 Selma action, greeted the audience and invited them to sing.

The concert then began with a chorus composed of the Neville Ottley Singers, the Schiller Institute Leesburg Choir, and the Schiller Institute Community Choir, directed by Charlene Moore-Cooper, leading the audience in singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and "Oh, Freedom!" After additional selections from the chorus—Verdi's "Va Pensiero" from *Nabucco*, and the spirituals "Steal Away" and "Standing in the Need of Prayer"—the program continued with artists Osceola Davis, soprano; Valerie Eichelberger (Kehembe), mezzo-soprano; Lorna Meyers, mezzo-soprano;

Aaron Gooding, bass; Curtis Rayam, tenor; Kevin Short, baritone; Reginald Bouknight, tenor; and William Warfield, baritone. All were accompanied by Dr. Raymond Jackson, performing selections from Handel, Verdi, Mozart, Schubert, Offenbach, along with traditional African-American spirituals.

Warfield electrified the audience with a dramatic rendering of "Why Do the Nations So Furiously Rage Together?" from Handel's *Messiah*, setting the tone for both younger artists and audience alike, who strived to capture the meaning of each musical piece. Another highlight was a performance of several of the pieces of the "Life of Christ" song cycle arranged by the great African-American singer Roland Hayes, performed by Warfield and Bouknight. The audience was also treated to a recital by Warfield of Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem "When Malindy Sings."

The program ended with all of the soloists on stage performing the song "Great Day," and then joining the chorus in singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah*, directed by Neville Ottley.

As always, the concert advanced the cause of the Verdi pitch of A=432, the natural (not simply "lower") tuning. The "aesthetic education" premise of the institute's work has been successfully shown in the Washington area, to have generated a thirst for what the poet Shelley called "profound and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature," as expressed in musical performance and recitation.