

## Editorial

### *Let America's children sing*

Friedrich Schiller, the 18th-century poet and playwright, said that it is only “through beauty that one proceeds to freedom.” Today, in order to find solutions to a great political and economic crisis like the one we face, men and women will have to summon up the deepest resources of their souls, the qualities of *agapē* and resoluteness that Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. has often discussed in the pages of this magazine. Without a cultural renaissance, that simply cannot be done. LaRouche’s policies for reorganizing the world financial system at a New Bretton Woods Conference, and embarking upon a 21st century of economic and scientific progress, require a change in the way people think. Leaders and citizens who are trapped in pragmatism, banality, and cultural pessimism, cannot effect the momentous changes that are required.

It is precisely for this reason that a new group, the Citizens for Excellence in Education through Music, is now preparing to present a concert and symposium on Feb. 7, in our nation’s capital, by the world’s oldest and foremost boys choir, the Thomanerchor of Leipzig, Germany.

The Thomanerchor has been in existence for over 900 years. Its most famous mentor is Johann Sebastian Bach, who directed the choir from 1723 through 1750, composing many works especially for it.

As the invitation to these events states, “There can be no question that there is a crisis in education today. Not only is the national rate of functional illiteracy (defined as completion of a high-school education) surprisingly high, estimated at 30% nationally, but it is as high as 60% in such inner cities as Baltimore. In addition, the conditions in American schools are notoriously bad. When one has to pass through a metal detector to enter a high school, when many cities have imposed a curfew for teenagers—if a society therefore regards its own young generation as the most dangerous component of society—then there is something horribly wrong.

“If one studies truly successful education models, such as the Humboldt education system of the classical period of the 19th century in Germany, one can see

that excellence in education is not brought about by reducing the intellectual challenge for the pupil to a practical ‘outcome-based orientation,’ but by something totally different. As Wilhelm von Humboldt demonstrated, it is the encouragement of the student to recreate in his or her own mind the creative discoveries in great art and natural sciences, and thereby develop an understanding for the value of the cultural and scientific heritage of all mankind, which sets free the creative potential in the student.

“With the Thomanerchor, we have invited perhaps the best boys choir in the world to participate in this symposium, to demonstrate in one field, music, what a task-oriented education can accomplish.”

In his letter of invitation to the symposium, the world-renowned baritone William Warfield, a leader of the sponsoring coalition and board member of the Schiller Institute, beautifully describes the importance of this undertaking:

“What this country needs, is to let its children sing. The mental discipline, and sheer joy, that a child gains from singing, is what is exemplified in the St. Thomas Boys Choir, which is making its first trip to the United States in over fifty years. Not only will the concert be free, to encourage the maximum attendance by children who want to learn to sing. We want to start an ‘Apollo Project,’ in the image of President Kennedy, which says to America’s children, ‘You are the promise of our future. Sing. You are the fruit of our past. Sing. You are the task of our present. Sing.’

“Every sort of child could be involved in this, and every sort of adult can support it. It may be one of the only ways that children who have believed themselves to be incapable of enjoying learning, might be reached. It’s the way it was done in the Italian Renaissance in the 15th century, and it’s actually the way most great education programs in history have worked. Why don’t we try this in the United States?”

For more information on the concert and symposium, call Diane Sare in Washington, D.C. at 202-544-8704.