



UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

WASHINGTON

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Note of President's qualifications

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The President
The White House

In view of your having invited Van Cliburn to the White House in recognition of his winning of the first piano prize at Moscow, you may be interested in knowing that Van Cliburn's victory was the end result of an idea developed in connection with the People-to-People Program.

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The need for qualified United States participation in foreign competitions is one of the main concerns of the Music Committee of the People-to-People Program. Many unqualified candidates have entered competitions, often merely because they happened to be travelling in the vicinity of one. This has served to lower United States musical standards in the eyes of the musicians of other countries.

The Music Committee undertook (1) to see that complete information on special competitions reached selected lists of schools, teachers, etc. and (2) to assist qualified candidates regarding travel to the competitions.

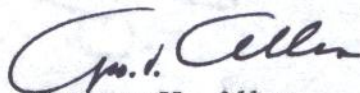
A representative of the Music Committee approached the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music about assistance to qualified candidates. As a result, a selection panel was set up within the Institute of International Education to choose persons for assistance from the Fund for Music.

In the case of the Tchaikovsky Competition at Moscow, funds were set aside for six United States participants. The panel, however, found only two sufficiently endowed to enter

such an important contest. Both won prizes. Joyce Flissler placed seventh in the violin section of the contest and Van Cliburn carried off the first piano prize.

Because the money raised was not actually put in the hands of the Music Committee, the sending of Van Cliburn to Moscow has not been claimed as a Music Committee achievement. However, the Committee can rightly take credit for initiating the idea which eventually resulted in Cliburn's going to Moscow.

This is a good illustration of the way in which the activities of People-to-People committees can be the inspiration of projects that will be carried out by older and more firmly established organizations.


George V. Allen
Director