

**The original documents are located in Box 21, folder “Medal of Freedom - Rubenstein, Arthur” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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FEB 11 1976  
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## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 10, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

DICK CHENEY  
ROBERT HARTMANN  
JACK MARSH ✓

FROM:

PHIL BUCHEN *P.W.B.*

SUBJECT:

Award of Presidential Medal  
of Freedom to Artur Rubinstein

I have been asked to propose Artur Rubinstein as a candidate for the above award. As you may know, he has had a long and spectacular career as a pianist. He was born in Poland on January 28, 1886, and became an American citizen in 1946. He has earned a worldwide reputation and has been the recipient of numerous decorations from other countries including the Commander of the Legion of Honor (France); Officer of the Order of Santiago (Portugal); Cross of Alfonso XII (Spain); Commander of the Crown and Officer, Order of Leopold I (Belgium); Polonia Restituta (Poland); and Commander of the Chilean Republic.

He has given concerts to raise money for many worthy causes and he undertook a concert tour of the Soviet Union in 1964 as part of the U. S.-Soviet Cultural Exchange Program.

Mr. Rubinstein is scheduled to be in Washington on March 6 which might offer a suitable occasion for the award of the medal, if we can determine well in advance of that time that he should receive one.

On the general subject of awarding this medal, I understand that the proposed Executive Order to



establish an advisory committee to screen suggestions is still being long delayed after many months. Also, in that connection, there have been some proposals pending to honor a group of Americans with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in connection with the celebration for our Bicentennial year and to do so on or close to July 4. The thought was to select people who have made the most distinctive contributions in the arts, sciences and community endeavors at which time we could include others.

In any event, I urge prompt concurrence in the Rubinstein suggestion either by itself or in connection with a Bicentennial awards ceremony.

cc: Robin West

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

FEB 20 1976

RAR

February 20, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: PHIL BUCHEN

FROM: JIM CONNOR

SUBJECT: Award of Presidential Medal of Freedom  
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Staffing on the Executive Order for the advisory committee should be completed shortly. Once the committee is in place, the proposal for a number of awards will be presented to them and they will then make recommendations to the President. The Executive Order is being staffed by the Domestic Council and we have asked them a number of times to expedite it.

cc: Jack Marsh  
Bob Hartmann



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 10, 1976

RBC HAS SEEN

*Comm*  
*handle*

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MAR 2 1976 ✓

March 1, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CONNOR

FROM: PHIL BUCHEN P.

SUBJECT: Award of Presidential Medal  
of Freedom to Artur Rubinstein

After receiving your memorandum of February 20 that Mr. Rubinstein is a suitable candidate for the Presidential Medal, I learned that he will be in Washington not only on March 6 but also 7 and 8, that he will be in this country only until shortly after the end of March. Then he goes to Europe for an extended concert tour, and it appears unlikely that he would be available to participate in a general awards ceremony in July.

Under these circumstances, I would appreciate your consideration of a date some time in March when this award could be made.

cc: Jack Marsh ✓  
Bob Hartmann  
Jim Cannon



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 4, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: JACK MARSH

FROM: RUSS ROURKE *RR*

Jack, despite Virginia Bacon's arguments to the contrary (letter attached), Arthur Rubenstein would not be my first choice for the Medal of Freedom award. I am concerned about how the award to him would be viewed by the Jewish community and the Congress. As you know, there are over one hundred Members of Congress who have recommended Georgie Jessell for the Medal of Freedom. Jessell, though somewhat afflicted with ego-mania, has made tremendous contributions to his country over a period of many, many years. He is, indeed, a true Jewish American super patriot.

Milt Mitler asked the question "what has Rubenstein really done beyond his chosen profession"?

In any event, I would not place Rubenstein ahead of Jessell.

*Bring Jessell to Problem plus' etc m PB-315176*



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Jack -

Recommend  
doing this on March  
8 if it can be  
squeezed into the  
schedule -

Russ

R -  
Does he qualify  
in your opinion?

MAR 2 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 1, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: ROBERT HARTMANN  
JACK MARSH ✓  
BRENT SCOWCROFT  
DOUG BENNETT  
JIM CANNON  
JERRY JONES  
BOB GOLDWIN  
JIM LYNN

SUBJECT: Medal of Freedom to  
Artur Rubinstein

Phil Buchen has proposed (see attached correspondence) that we consider giving the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Artur Rubinstein March 6, 7th or 8th. The President will be in Illinois on the 6th and has a private engagement on the 7th (which is also a Sunday), which would leave only March 8th, assuming there is some time for such a ceremony on his calendar and further assuming there is agreement among the WH staff that such an award would be appropriate.

I'd appreciate having your views, so that a proposal can be made to the President since we have no formal mechanism (in the absence of the Executive Order which is still awaiting completed staffing and comments from various offices) to make proposals for such Awards to the President.

JAMES E. CONNOR  
SECRETARY TO THE CABINET

encls.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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cc: Robin West

METROPOLITAN 1801

1801 F STREET

Dear Mr President;

It has long troubled me to think that the Government of my Country, alone, fails to realize the importance of giving due recognition to its artists. The most flagrant example of this oversight is the case of Arthur Rubinstein. Every other Government of the civilized world has bestowed upon him its very top honors. Only the Government of the United States - his own country by choice - has ignored this artist who, by public acclaim, is our greatest

pianist whose musicianship  
is matched only by his personality.  
He is giving our concert here  
on Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at  
Constitution Hall.

I do hope that you Mr. President  
will seize this occasion  
— perhaps the last opportunity  
as he has just had his 89<sup>th</sup>  
birthday — to award him our  
top honor — the Medal of Freedom.  
That you are aware of the  
dramatic effect of such perfect  
timing I am confident.  
Ever your faithful supporter  
Virginia Bacon

22-II-76