





In honor of
His Excellency
The Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore
and Mrs. Lee

THE WHITE HOUSE
Thursday, May 8, 1975

EDWARD VILLELLA, a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, was born in Bayside, New York, and began his dance studies at age ten. At fifteen, he withdrew from the School of American Ballet to prepare for a maritime career. He is today probably the world's only ballet star with a bachelor's degree in maritime engineering, a college varsity letter for baseball, and a trophy won as a collegiate welterweight.

In late 1955, Mr. Villella was mugged and suffered a severe concussion; he resumed dancing as therapy for this injury. Two years later, he joined the New York City Ballet, where he has danced in some two dozen roles. Mr. Villella has been a guest artist with leading European and American ballet companies; performed with symphony orchestras throughout the United States; appeared on a variety of television shows, including a one hour network special of which he was the subject; and participated extensively in the New York City Ballet's lecture-demonstration program. He also serves as a member of the National Council on the Arts.

VIOLETTE VERDY, one of the nation's leading ballerinas, was born in Brittany, France; studied ballet in Paris; and made her stage debut in 1944. During her career, she has appeared with a number of major European ballet companies, and has acted on stage, television and in films. Miss Verdy first performed in the United States in 1953. Five years later, she joined the New York City Ballet, where she has danced more than 25 roles, many of which were created for her by the company's director, George Balanchine. Miss Verdy is an active teacher of dance and devotes considerable time to the scholarship program of the School of American Ballet. She has also choreographed three ballets and written a book on dance.



