

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, September 21, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY TO MRS. FORD

Contemporary singer and entertainer Wayne Newton will perform at the state dinner tonight honoring His Excellency, William R. Tolbert, Jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, and Mrs. Tolbert.

This will be Mr. Newton's first performance at the White House.

Newton has traveled the world with a performance combining humor, instrumental music and song. His singing includes pop, rhythm and blues, ballads, country and western and rock. He is accomplished at a number of instruments: banjo, guitar, trumpet, violin, piano among othe

Newton is also known for his movie and television appearances and his best selling records. He has sold over 15 million recordings, with "Daddy Don't You Walk So Fast" his last gold record. In 1966 he was summoned to London for a Command Performance for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

The 32-year-old performer was born April 3, 1944 in Roanoke, Virginia. He got his start at the age of five when he sang on a local radio station. His family moved to Phoenix, Arizona, and when he was 12 years old, he hosted his own local television show. At 16, he accepted an offer from the Fremont Hotel in Las Vegas, which formally launched his career.

Newton was well on his way by the 1960's, his career having been boosted by regular performances on Jackie Gleason's television show and cross-country tours with Jack Benny. Also, with the late Bobby Darin's encouragement, Newton recorded his first hit, "Danke Shoen."

In 1975, the Frontier Hotel celebrated Newton's fifth anniversary with them and Governor O'Callaghan proclaimed him "Envoy Extraordinaire" from the State of Nevada. He also received in 1975, the "Golden Plate Award" from the American Academy of Achievement in Utah for excellence in his field and "Male Entertainer of the Year Award" from the Academy of Variety and Cabaret Artists.

Newton and his wife, former Elaine Okamura, live on their ranch, Casa de Shenandoah, in Las Vegas.

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