

9/12 - Hold for next personnel

# THE WILSON CENTER

JAMES H. BILLINGTON, Director



R.F.

8/26  
MST:  
I want to discuss  
w/ Harrington.  
JAB III

FRIDAY

August 11, 1984

NEW APT. S TO BOARD  
IS PURPOSE OF THIS  
LETTER

Mr. James A. Baker III  
Assistant to the President  
and Chief of Staff  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Jim:

Many thanks for the lunch in Houston. It was great to see you again, and I appreciate your support with the excellent group assembled.

On October 24 of this year, three positions for the Board of Trustees of the Wilson Center will come open, and I am writing pursuant to telephone calls we have already had from the White House personnel people to urge above all that you take into consideration two indispensable requirements in making these appointments. I would also respectfully suggest that the work begin soon so that the appointments can be made on or near that date.

The first and most essential requirement for service on this Board is a basic respect for scholarship. Such an attitude is indispensable to continue the effective running and high reputation of the Center. It would be ideal if respect for scholarship be accompanied by a deep understanding of its unrealized potential for national service and some understanding of its foibles and even idiosyncrasies. What we do not need is the pretension of scholarship or a taste for politicized scholarship where there is a selective axe to grind. We have established scholarly procedures and scholarly management well at the Center. Respect and honor for the scholarly integrity of the institution as it already exists are very often better accorded by people who are bright, but not themselves scholars and therefore not inclined to intrude into staff matters in too much detail.

The second requirement is essential if we are to continue our private/public balance and to keep this from becoming yet another government agency. This requirement is, of course, the ability to donate and raise money. We are grateful for the appointment of Bob Mosbacher, who has taken real leadership in this regard, but he has not had very much company on this Board (or indeed predecessors on past Boards) who are able and willing to donate and raise money for the Center. We are determined—and feel we should be—to maintain a public/private balance in the Center, but it is essential to have people who clearly understand that their role is raising money.

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To fulfill this second requirement, among the kinds of names one might suggest for Board position are members of the Wilson Council, who have already served the Center by participating in this national advisory and fund-raising body. John Opel, the chairman of IBM, would be a good example--one who has already given us some help and might give us more if he were to receive this presidential appointment. Dave Packard has, of course, been our principal private donor and was the original founding chairman of the Wilson Council. Since he would probably prefer not to have such a position, I would strongly suggest Lu Packard, if there were any possibility she could be persuaded. Since one of the members whose term comes to an end is a woman, Anne Firor Scott, it might be well to consider a woman. Lu would be ideal, since she and Dave have already done so much for us. Another possibility would be Illa Clement of the King Ranch, whom you know of course. She has been a very active member of the Wilson Council, and her husband, Jim, is on the comparable board of the Smithsonian. Both Jim and Illa have taken quite an interest in the Center.

Other names will occur to you, but I would urge that they be people with access to wealth who could help alleviate the greatest drain on our time and energies here. The amounts we need are not very large, but we need one or two people for whom this is understood to be a primary and not merely a marginal object of support. I believe that the Center now has enough prestige and enough interesting activities to make Board membership an opportunity for someone to benefit from such a Washington connection.

A final possibility might be to add a senior ex-statesman who has a real feel for scholarly values and some clout with funding sources. I thought President Ford's appointment of Dean Rusk was a real act of statesmanship offering Rusk an element of presidential recognition that no one had given him for many years up until that time. Henry Kissinger is certainly not suffering from comparable neglect, but he could make a really good Board member. Since Henry has been denied a board position on the Council on Foreign Relations, it might be a nice stroke to give him this kind of a presidential appointment.

It is not altogether proper for me to be evaluating Board members--all of whom have been supportive in recent years of what we are doing. Anne Scott has been a particular help with scholarly evaluations and Ted Barreaux, who has told me he would like a reappointment, has been increasingly helpful and become more involved in the last year or so. Max Kampelman, the third appointee whose term expires in October, has (like Anne) not indicated anything to me about his desires. He has, of course, been chairman in the past and remains one of the most dedicated and hard working members of the Board. Max has often invited fellows to his house and has performed concurrently a stunning national service to

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the nation (and to the administration) at the Madrid conference. I would think you would want seriously to consider him for reappointment, which I personally would welcome.

Chairman Baroody and Vice Chairman Mosbacher will have other ideas; I urge you to write them both, and I will be happy to write more myself if desired. I urge you to make some appointments that will help them and me with the essential job both of sustaining what we think are the high scholarly standards of this institution and, at the same time, help get it funded more securely on the private side.

With appreciation and all good wishes,

Sincerely,



James H. Billington  
Director  
The Wilson Center

Dictated by Mr. Billington  
and signed in his absence.