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Memorial Tribute to the Honorable William Benton

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Memorial Tribute

to the Honorable

WILLIAM BENTON

April 1, 1900—March 18, 1973

3:00 P.M.

June 11, 1973

The Joseph Bond Chapel

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

FOUNDED BY JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

WILLIAM BENTON, 1900-1973

William Benton was born on April 1, 1900, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

From 1937 to 1945 he was Vice-President of The University of Chicago. He was named a Trustee in 1946 and a Life Trustee in 1965. In 1942 he helped organize the Committee for Economic Development and in the following year he became publisher of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

In July 1945 William Benton resigned as Vice-President of the University and as the Chairman of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., to become Assistant Secretary of State under Harry S Truman. During his two years in the Truman administration he organized the program which created the "Voice of America" broadcasts. He also led U.S. participation in UNESCO.

In 1949 William Benton was appointed U.S. Senator from Connecticut; the following year he was elected to fill two years of an unexpired term. After leaving the Senate, William Benton returned to the active Chairmanship of Britannica.

In 1963 President John F. Kennedy appointed him U.S. representative to UNESCO with the rank of ambassador.

In 1968 The University of Chicago conferred upon Mr. Benton the first "William Benton Medal for Distinguished Service." This was the citation:

"William Benton, visionary public servant, perceptive student of foreign affairs, staunch supporter of education, discriminating publisher, astute businessman, co-founder of UNESCO and of the Committee for Economic Development, creator of the "Voice of America," whose talents he has shared freely with his fellow men."

This issue of the *Record* contains the tributes which were paid to William Benton at the memorial service which was held at Bond Chapel on June 11, 1973.

The Prelude

English Voluntaries

George Frederick Handel • William Boyce • Maurice Greene

MR. EDWARD H. LEVI

MR. ORTON H. HICKS

MRS. ANNA ROSENBERG HOFFMAN



Horn Solos

Andante Cantabile . . . Camille Saint-Saëns

Air: *Bist du bei mir* . . . Johann Sebastian Bach

William Klingelhoffer, Soloist

MR. HOWLAND H. SARGEANT

MR. RICHARD H. HOWLAND

THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY



Songs

Nun will die Sonn so hell aufgeh' n! . . . Gustav Mahler

Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen! . . . Gustav Mahler

John Magnuson, Soloist

MR. HAROLD D. LASSWELL

THE HONORABLE NICHOLAS JOHNSON

MR. ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

MR. ROBERT P. GWINN



The Postlude

Horn and Organ: Air . . . Jeremiah Clarke

Edward Mondello, Organist

Mr. Edward H. Levi

This gathering of family, friends, and colleagues held in the University which he served so well reflects the abiding influence of William Benton. We cannot hope in the brief moments we have to encompass the full scope of his life. Each of us has a somewhat different story to tell as, indeed, it would be appropriate for such a gathering. We are bound together by our love and admiration for one unique among us, by the joy of having known one of the great spirits of our time. The incredible diversity of his career broadened the scope and magic of his work, but it reflected at all times the same creativity and enthusiasm, the same courage and intensity of purpose, and, more than that, the same devotion to a set of principles which gave unity and completeness to a life of many patterns.

William Benton was an officer and trustee of this University. "There is something about being a trustee of a college or university. I think it is the highest honor that can be given a man in private life," he said last autumn. Even so, the words "officer and trustee" inadequately measure this relationship. It was from this University that he began the organizing of the committee on Economic Development; created "The University of Chicago Roundtable" as an instrument of public information on an almost international scale; began the bridging of an academic and public life and the seeing of international and domestic issues in a common context ahead of his time; carried the message of this University and gave it new significance as he developed the international exchange of scholars and as he championed intellectual freedom. It was from here that he made possible the relationship between the University and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* pleading with his fellow trustees to recognize the importance of that relationship to the University and to the society as an instrument to help make possible a learning society.

Because of his extraordinary leadership for this University, the Board of Trustees created the William Benton Medal as the University's highest service award to be given not more than once in a five-year period, and conferred the first such medal upon Senator Benton. I know it gave him great pleasure to have Paul Hoffman as the second recipient. Now the University, enabled to take this step through an anonymous donor (matching funds previously given by the Mellon Foundation), has established the William Benton Professorship, and in addition an appropriate area of the Regenstein Library will carry his name.

These signs inadequately express the impact

upon our own lives which William Benton had—the disarming candor, the insistence upon, and devotion to basic principles. But they are in recognition of an influence which will remain and grow. William Benton's reach was always for the future. I welcome you to this gathering knowing that what we shall talk about and think about is not just of the past, but of an abiding meaning for tomorrow.

Mr. Orton H. Hicks

Fifteen years ago when Dartmouth was about to appoint a Vice-President, President Dickey addressed a memo to the college trustees in which he outlined the specifications of the job, touched on my alleged qualifications, but did not hesitate to mention my obvious deficiencies. In connection with the latter, he wrote: "Hicks is not a good public speaker, but he has one great asset: he does not talk long!" Except for my proud claim of being Bill Benton's oldest friend, that is probably my only justification for my appearing in such distinguished company. At least I shall set a standard of brevity for my colleagues who follow.

The early schoolboy days with Bill at Shattuck gave promise of the man who was to come. Even then his persuasiveness was legendary. My senior year pet project as editor of the school paper was to drive the two wholly worthless and entirely political fraternities off the campus. Bill, as head of Tau Phi fraternity, came to dissuade me. One hour later we had not only reversed the editorial policy, but I had also joined Tau Phi and was campaigning for Bill to be class President on the Tau Phi ticket.

Forty years later, that same persuasiveness turned the tide when Bill was negotiating with me for Britannica to acquire exclusive 16mm distribution of Metro Goldwyn Mayer's library of feature films. MGM's President, Arthur Loew, was hesitant to sign the deal because he had heard that Britannica was "not having a very good year." I asked Bill for a rebuttal. He replied: "The rumor is true. Last year EB made \$18 million. This year we will make only \$10 million. But that is still a lot better than your \$5 million profit at MGM!" (Bill had always done his homework.) And then as an afterthought Bill said: "As further evidence of Britannica's inherent stability there is one more thing you can tell Arthur: 'If ever he has made as many mistakes as I have made, MGM would not even have survived.'" Courage was one of Bill's greatest qualities—whether he was standing up to the school bully, or confronting the infamous Joe McCarthy, or telling off MGM. That same boldness founded the first radio-oriented advertising agency

and brought to this great University of Chicago the largest gift in the history of fund raising. Yet with it all Bill had fun! He enjoyed life! He might well have written that line of Robert Louis Stevenson's from *The Lantern Bearers*: "They who miss the joy miss all."

A joyous nature, contagious enthusiasm, bold courage, and inspiring leadership: these are qualities we will always associate with Bill. And at the very top was the quality of his friendship. My own indebtedness to that friendship spans 58 years. Included in that list of debts is the friendship Lois and I enjoy with Helen and her gracious family; the friendship that has brought me the honor of appearing on this program today.

But a far greater debt is owed to Bill by society at large. The world mourns the loss of a truly great man while we in this room mourn the loss of a loyal and honored friend. Bill, our affection for you is best expressed in the final line of Dartmouth's Alma Mater: Bill, "there is no music for our singing, no words to bear the burden of our praise."

Mrs. Anna Rosenberg Hoffman

On Bill Benton's last visit to Lyndon Johnson's ranch, only a few weeks before the President's death, President Johnson gave Senator Benton a copy of his book, *The Vantage Point*, containing the following inscription: "To Bill Benton a man for all seasons. A compassionate leader in all fields that make his country and its people better and stronger. Education, relations with other nations, environment, business, and the plight of his fellow man, benefit from this unique and very unusual man—from his friend through all the years, Lyndon B. Johnson."

All of you here today have in some way shared the excitement of working with or knowing this unique and unusual man.

Many of Bill's accomplishments will be part of America's history.

The Senator who had the courage to be the first to stand up on the floor of the U. S. Senate and tell Senator Joseph McCarthy the truth.

The man who had the vision to create the "Voice of America" when he was in the State Department—a voice that became the voice of hope during the troubled war years.

The Chairman of the UNESCO Delegation who won the respect and leadership for the United States in the many educational and communications areas all over the world.

Yes, Bill Benton dreamed the impossible dream,

and fought the unbeatable foe; but he made the impossible dream come true, and to him there was no unbeatable foe.

He became a leader in business, but his business ventures were not to amass a fortune for himself or his family, but to make a contribution to education and knowledge. Under his leadership the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* became the greatest and the best. Bill Benton would not settle for less. He was a proponent of visual education in the very early years, and his company, Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corporation became a trail-blazer in this field. The Great Books, Merriam Webster, Compton's, Praeger, Muzak, these are all ventures most of you know about and some of you will talk about today.

Some of you will remember the many memos that Bill Benton sent to all of us, and at times we complained about them, and yet, we now all feel that life lacks some of the excitement and inspiration and how we wish we could still receive those memos.

I am sure some of you here today will talk about many of Bill Benton's accomplishments, but I would like to share with you a quiet moment of remembrance of Bill Benton—the man—the man who had a quality of friendship that I have known in no other. Many can bear testimony to this wonderful quality in Bill.

My mind goes back to a year ago last May when Bill Benton sat with me in an airless hot corridor hour after hour, day after day, while his friend Paul Hoffman was fighting for his life in a hospital intensive care unit. Time and time again I asked Bill to leave telling him that there was nothing he could do, but he stayed, trying by the force of his friendship and the strength of his love to help Paul in his fight on the other side of the wall. And I believe that he somehow did help Paul in that fight.

A few days after Bill's death Paul, who read all the editorials and comments; dictated these few lines and, as he cannot be here with you, I would like to read them. They were written by a man who knew and loved Bill Benton as I did:

"As was anticipated Bill Benton's death has resulted in his receiving a large number of eulogies from many parts of the world from many different people. They have one fault in common: they give great emphasis to Senator Benton's accomplishments as an advertising man, a businessman, and a politician, but none stress to what in my mind was his most outstanding characteristic; namely, that he was a great human being and always looked for a chance to help other human beings realize their full potential. I am one of the many

hundreds of people Bill Benton helped in a most effective way because of his human compassion. This explains the reason why he has so many devoted and intensely loyal friends throughout the world. He would do anything to help a friend achieve a worthy objective."

Bill Benton left a proud heritage to his children and his grandchildren, and the great trust and responsibility to his wife, Helen, who I know is proud of this confidence and will carry out his wishes and ideals. And we, Bill's associates and friends, will give Helen the same loyalty and devotion we gave Bill.

Mr. Howland H. Sargeant

William Benton labored long to teach me the value of the short descriptive phrase. I was thinking how he would have phrased his own life in international affairs. Perhaps like this: A founding father of UNESCO. Revolutionizer of America's International Information, Educational Exchange and Cultural Relations Programs in the face of formidable opposition. Organizer of the "Voice of America." Vigorous champion of worldwide freedom of information. Discerning prophet of education as the key to Latin America's future and eloquent advocate of life-long education. Recipient of the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award. First American member of UNESCO's Executive Board to hold the rank of Ambassador.

I don't know whether Bill would have given me a passing grade. He wouldn't have written this about himself, but I think he would have liked the effort to summarize and try to say in short compass some of the things that stand out in a lifetime of diversity. His close friend and colleague from the Senate, Senator J. W. Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, appraised his significance in the field of foreign relations in these words in a letter to Charles: "He possessed an enlightened and humane attitude, which helped our country play a constructive role during the years he was in the Department of State and in the Senate.

"He was deeply interested in the work of UNESCO and recognized that good international relations depend upon factors other than from military might.

"He thoroughly supported the students exchange program and all other activities designed to encourage the interaction of scholars and of citizens of many nations. He had a strong interest in education, and his early reports upon the educational programs in Russia did a great deal to

further the understanding of the people of this country about the Russians. In view of this nation's tragic experience in military intervention, Bill Benton's policies and ideas appear more valid with the passage of time."

Yet Bill Benton came late, in mid-career, to most of these international concerns. The institutions on which he left his imprint are for the most part sublimely unconscious of the profoundly shaping influence that he exerted. It is an influence that becomes more distinct as time passes. For example: UNESCO later rejected its original narrow concept of concentrating on the "elite of intellectuals," and moved toward the position that William Benton had advocated from the earliest days when he pressed for programs, including mass communication, to work toward the "common understanding of the masses of the people in this world." When he came back to UNESCO in 1963, he said his return as a founding father could be likened to that of Thomas Jefferson returning to Washington of today and trying to wend his way through the Pentagon. He found that UNESCO's programs of material aid and assistance in education and science were by then fulfilling a major need of the *developing* member states.

The institutions that he did so much to bring into being as instruments and elements of the worldwide program of information and educational exchange have been fashionably cycled and recycled in intervening years, but I think the bedrock of his conviction has stood the test of time. In his letter of farewell to Secretary of State George Marshall, in the late summer of 1947, submitting his resignation as Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs (and incidentally leaving several lively babies on my doorstep) he wrote: "The security of this nation depends upon an informed opinion at home and abroad, and the truth is that although we have won such support for the principle, we have not yet aroused the imagination of our fellow Americans..."

If the Foreign Service today is not a limited guild of a traditional Foreign Service elite, but instead a broadly based corps of men and women capable of meeting the emerging post-war needs of a new era, only dimly perceived in 1946, then William Benton has a large measure of responsibility for this evolution. Loy Henderson, Career Ambassador of the United States, now retired says: "Were it not for his efforts as mediator I doubt that the Foreign Service Act of 1946, which set the tone of the Foreign Service for the next 25 years, would have come into existence."

Here is a man, who in the field of international affairs, displayed that same great talent for friendship, that same zest for promoting and

backing innovation and individual potential, as in all of his major efforts. His continuing significance in international affairs must be seen in part in the institutions he helped to shape and in the countless individuals—many are in this chapel today—whose lives he enriched and altered, and in that blend of enlightened courage and willingness to take risks that he brought to everything that he did. More than a decade ago, I was in Istanbul with Bill and he asked a perceptive lady who had seen at first-hand successive generations of ambassadors of this and other countries come and go: "What do you think are the three greatest attributes of an ambassador?" This lady replied: "First, courage; second, courage; and again, courage"—an appraisal that William Benton fully shared, often repeated, and fully exemplified in his life.

Mr. Richard H. Howland

I speak the following words on behalf of Dillon Ripley, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, who, alas, is in England today, as well as for myself. At the Smithsonian Institution we remember Bill as a Renaissance man dedicated to improving the quality of life in modern times. He was a man of many interests, both academic and professional; a man who felt at home on the campus as well as in the board rooms; a man who was known among museologists, publishers, government leaders, and the literate for his dynamism, innovations, and enthusiastic endorsements of unpopular as well as popular enterprises.

In a period when there was great discussion about the need for the business community to become interested in art, Senator Benton was a pioneer as an advertising executive and publisher who assembled American paintings of the first half of our century. I recall him saying: "My paintings represent my own taste, strict and unadulterated, without any advice from anybody. I have never sought any guidance on buying a picture nor have I concerned myself with whether the price would go up or down or whether I would be cheated. I buy recklessly and when I like an artist like Tom Benton or Ivan Albright I keep on buying his work." Bill Benton helped to develop the frontier that now is American corporate involvement in the art world. He sponsored exhibitions of paintings in cities across the land as well as overseas. He sought out the advice of distinguished curators in planning these exhibits and his corporation, Encyclopaedia Britannica, was one of the first to employ such a curator to take part in planning corporate

development activities in the Arts. It is said that Bill Benton was the first private collector ever to buy paintings by Reginald Marsh. This was in the 1930s, which reminds us of a story about Bill and his art collections.

During the depression of the 1930s, Marsh came to the Benton country home in Southport to paint portraits of the Benton children. He remarked to Bill Benton: "Do you know that the WPA is giving \$100 a month to artists? And they can paint anything they want. Sometimes I wish I could get a deal like that." To which Benton replied: "Go ahead, I'll be your WPA. Paint anything you want for me and bring it in once a month and I'll give you \$100 for it." Scores of great Marsh paintings were delivered to Benton during a three or four year period.

He was at his best, perhaps, with a small group of friends at his generous table at home or abroad. These were exciting events punctuated by ideas and observations that flowed from him at the rate of almost one or two per minute. Bill had varied lives that covered several worlds. He moved easily and assuredly from the world of economics and politics to the social and educational universe with a deep background of knowledge of many subjects and disciplines.

For a number of years, I was privileged to travel with him and his family along with a variety of stimulating guests on several of the great yachts that he chartered for long voyages to the Mediterranean, seeking the sources and fountainheads of our cultures in ancient centers of civilization now yielding their past to the archaeologists' spades. For me, the most stimulating part of the voyages were probably not the sites themselves, but the informal seminars which Bill organized every evening before dinner on the yacht's deck. These cocktail hours stretched on, stimulated not by the generous drinks provided, but by his reactions to the reports and analyses that he requested of his family and guests, carefully prepared for days ahead, on topics and topography to be enjoyed the following day. The stimulation of Bill's responses, observations, and sensitive questioning led the reporting guest into realizing new depths and relationships that he had not previously suspected in his own topic of investigation.

I recall one of those evenings on the fantail of that great yacht, the "Flying Clipper," when we were discussing what, exactly, the Smithsonian Institution really is. Is it really what it set out to be—fully concerned with the purpose of its founder, James Smithson, who asked in his will that the Institution be devoted to the increase and diffusion

of knowledge among men? This phrase encompasses two objectives and they are distinct: the first implies sponsorship of research, and the second the sponsorship of publications and the widest possible dissemination and exchange of information. Over the years, the Smithsonian has sponsored research into the domains of the planets and of space, into aspects of our environment on earth and in the atmosphere, and after having done so handsomely on the increase of knowledge, the Smithsonian has substantially added to its efforts in the diffusion of knowledge. Diffusion has meant innumerable publications, not just the results of research, but encyclopedic works and compendia.

As we—he and I—considered the millions that flock out of our buildings touched by our research and diffusion, it seemed to us that what we have ended up with is an aspect of a university without walls, an open university so to speak, that seeks to exploit the most modern communications as well as the most lasting ones to diffuse knowledge that is both significant and sensitive to all mankind. Bill Benton was actively concerned all his life with the increase and diffusion of knowledge, and in many ways was a university himself in our Smithsonian definition of the term. He embodied the ideal that James Smithson issued as a challenge to us over 150 years ago.

We shall always honor him as this and as a great world leader concerned with progress and hope. He was an interdisciplinary man with Renaissance tastes and concerns that he shared not only with our generation, but has passed on to those still to come.

The Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey

Five years ago, Mrs. Humphrey and I were privileged to be here at The University of Chicago with Bill and Helen Benton on the occasion when the University was honoring this fine and good man. It was supposed to be a surprise visit on my part. I was occupying another office at that time, and I came flying out here at government expense to share in this wonderful occasion. I have to tell you, however, that Bill Benton had wired me. He didn't expect me, but if I could come, he said, "don't speak more than two or three minutes."

Now can you imagine that loquacious conversationalist, Bill Benton, saying to that super loquacious conversationalist, Hubert Humphrey: "Speak only two or three minutes?" But this was the measure of our relationship. We could speak with great candor, knowing that neither one of us might pay too much attention to any sharpness in it.

I saw in Bill Benton what you have seen in him. Maybe you have seen much that I haven't. But above all, I saw in him a restless spirit, but not an angry one—a restless spirit that was a part of the times, a part of the action of our century.

I saw in him a very, very great love of three eminent institutions—his *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, this great University of Chicago, and the United States Senate.

Of course, for anyone to give a brief glimpse into the life of Bill Benton is like trying to summarize *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in just a few paragraphs. It is literally impossible. So I'm pleased to have this opportunity to hear from several of his friends so that we might at least learn a chapter or two of the "Lives of William Benton."

I like that title of his biography because, truly, when I was asked recently how long he had lived, I said that's not the question. The question is *with what intensity* he lived. Because to Bill Benton, years were just a way that some people charted the course of history. To Bill Benton a year was an opportunity to do several years work and undertake many generations of hopes.

Now, how do you describe this man? How do you evaluate him or judge him? Well, I've tried and I must confess that I haven't been able to do a very good job of it. I have looked over many of the things that others said about him.

They said he was "unique." That's the understatement of the year.

"Courageous?" Indeed.

"Innovative and creative?" Words we use that were just a part of his very being.

"Conversationalist, engaging?" I should say how many hours I have enjoyed the privilege of his company—as we tried to speak, both at the same time.

"Stimulating, exciting?" Surely that is but part of the character.

"Intellectual and a scholar?" Surely, yet he never really wanted to be known as an intellectual. One of his great talents was exciting intellectuals to be more intellectual.

"Educator?" In the best sense of the word. Not only the formal educator, but the educator of the open university, of life itself.

And "administrator, publisher and author, businessman and salesman." He was not just salesman of the product, however, but salesman of the idea, of a theory, of a philosophy.

And, yes, he was Senator and Ambassador. These were honored titles for him.

And, of course, as it has been said, he led with "Voice of America" programs of international ex-

change in culture and education—this is Bill Benton; not government, Bill Benton.

UNESCO was very much his idea and it was one of his joys of private and public life, being Ambassador to UNESCO. He gave so much and I doubt that he received very much except the knowledge or the feeling that he was able to share of his talents with so many people.

As husband and father, he excelled.

And many are in his debt as philanthropist, patron of the arts.

But I will remember him most as a friend, a good friend: accepting you as you are, always willing to help you become something better; a benefactor, a critic, a helper, one who was intensely loyal and who shared openly his love and affection for you.

"Generous?" Yes, I knew him to be very generous, but his greatest generosity was the gift of his friendship. I've never known anybody who knew so many people. You could mention a name and Bill Benton could give you really a full description, his life, his works. He knew everybody, as I used to say, and if he didn't, he set out at once to make the acquaintance.

May I take a few minutes of your time to tell you about his politics? He wasn't just a private man. As a matter of fact, he was very public. He had ideas about everything and he would tell you. How refreshing!

No carbon copy, this man. He was open, candid, opinionated, frank, and informed.

In politics, he was a democrat—another blessing in his life. But he was not only a democrat, he was an independent.

He knew the great men of our time because he was one of them. His love for Harry Truman was known and he everywhere proclaimed his respect for Dwight Eisenhower. His affection for Adlai Stevenson was a rich part of his life. He had deep admiration for John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

These are all chapters in the rich and rewarding life of my friend, Bill Benton.

I met him first in Atlantic City when he was Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and I was Mayor of Minneapolis. We gazed upon each other, wondering what kind of man is this, and out of that meeting came our wonderful friendship.

He came to the United States Senate in 1949. He only served there three years, but he did more in three years than some people do in three decades or three generations. He didn't wait. I don't believe that he knew that he was a freshman senator, and, if he did, it didn't bother him a bit—except to reinforce his view that as a freshman he was supposed to shake up the establishment.

He set to work at once. He was in every debate. The subject of education was foremost in all of his utterances and thoughts.

But above all, this man, this friend of mine, Bill Benton, was a confirmed enemy of any form of bigotry and discrimination and he set out early—in fact his very first speech in the Senate was on the issue of civil rights at a time, may I say, when most were silent and fearful. Bill Benton spoke up for fair employment practices when others were hiding out. He looked upon the immigration laws of our country, saw in them provisions that were an insult to decency and humanity, and fought hard to make those immigration laws worthy of a democracy. He spoke out for effective federal aid to elementary and secondary education. He did this at a time when it was unpopular to be for civil rights, to be for liberalized immigration laws, or to be for aid to education.

Then, how well I remember when he spoke to me of the day, it was in August of 1951, when he decided that he would challenge the late Senator Joseph McCarthy because, as he said, Senator McCarthy represented a pattern of fraud and deceit. He called upon the United States Senate to expel him—an act of immense courage that no one else was willing to undertake. I remember Bill saying to me: "I feel that I'm the one that can do it and I shall."

Yes, this man was a man of moral courage. He was a public man. Some might say that he is best characterized by his efforts in international affairs, his support of NATO, his leadership in the field of assistance abroad—the economic and humanitarian are parts and chapters of this man's life.

But above all, to me, he was a person dedicated to public service. His private enterprise was public service. He shared, he gave. He did "cast his bread upon the water" and it did come back in rich dividends. Not dividends of money, but dividends of rewards to life—a feeling that he was making a contribution to a better world.

Bill was an optimist. I think that I found my friendship with him, in part, because of that characteristic. He believed that humankind could do better, that he could make a difference. He recognized that institutions of democratic government need constant nourishment and constant protection.

He loved Adlai Stevenson, as I said. In fact, some of the happiest hours of my personal life have been in the company of Bill Benton and Adlai Stevenson: the wit, the humor, the arguments, the discussion. How they would work each other over! And then, after they were through, they would turn

on me. And then I would join with one of them as a partner in working over the other. Oh, those precious hours, and they were hours, believe me, and they were wonderful.

Adlai Stevenson summarized for me, and what I think would be for Bill, the meaning of democracy. I read to you what he said in 1963:

"Democracy is not self executing. We have to make it work, and to make it work we have to understand it. Sober thought and fearless criticism are impossible without critical thinkers and thinking critics. Such persons must be given the opportunity to come together to see new facts in the light of old principles and to evaluate old principles in light of new facts by deliberation, debate, and dialogue. This, as we all know well, although some of us forget from time to time, requires intellectual independence in penitent speculation and freedom from political pressure for democracy's need for wisdom will be as perennial as its need for liberty. Not only external vigilance, but unending self examination is the perennial price of liberty, because the work of self-government never ceases."

That philosophy represents well the public man, Bill Benton—a man of penitent speculation, intellectual independence, deliberation, debate, dialogue, and discussion, who recognized that the work of self-government never ceases.

In all of his life, whatever the demands on his time or his resources, he gave of himself, to his friends and family, to the public, to the nation, to the world, and to the great family that he loved the most of all—mankind.

Mr. Harold D. Lasswell

The life of William Benton was a controlled explosion. He could turn a simple game into a tournament, a casual conversation into a commission of enquiry, a vacation voyage into a floating classroom. Strangers might think that all this pressured living would be intolerable. But for those who knew William Benton, there was no more point in resenting his unceasing initiative than there would have been in grumbling about any other natural force. The force of gravity may cause us to fall down from time to time; but mainly it helps to keep our feet on the ground.

Thus if William Benton kept asking, commenting, probing, it was not from the sheer pleasure of interfering with others; it was a by-product of an

all-absorbing compulsion, a devouring commitment to act, and to act with relevancy. He was forever in search of workable ideas. Ideas that would work in the family, the business, the University, foreign service, the democratic party, the Senate. Life's distinctive and glorious moments were the times when ideas struck. Once the blitz of an idea came, off went the inevitable memorandum and the inimitable letter.

In one perspective, this unremitting activity was intensely personal. William Benton specialized in people. He was the center of innumerable pairs and circles. At the core were family and friends. Then the responsible actors in every sphere of operation. He was never more gratified than when these outer circles came closer and stayed intact while the stream of action-oriented communication went on.

Seen in another perspective, William Benton appeared to be remarkably removed from the personal. He spent notably few words on anything that could be interpreted as reviling his enemies or hurling recriminations after those who betrayed his trust. For him, life was too short for such self-dramatizing acts of self-indulgence. He was always inventing the future. What William Benton did is only partially to be understood as the characteristic aggrandizement of an ambitious ego. He gained wealth, though money was no end in itself. Money meant personal independence. It implied freedom from being overlooked or kicked around. It provided a means of fulfilling family obligations, of contributing to the advancement of education, public information, science and the arts, of strengthening moral and political causes and institutions.

The important point is that the ego was disciplined by the loyalties, the beliefs, and the faiths of the larger self with which he was identified. The unifying goal and continuing justification was enlightened effort, particularly in latent communication for betterment of the self and of the human condition.

When we look back at our redoubtable friend and ask how he came to be what he was, we take it for granted that the available answers must be far short of the understanding necessary to account for the distinctive quality of his life. We can recognize partial clues. The most illuminating indications are in the family environment to whose tradition he was so unequivocally attached. It is more than the lifelong impact of the strong-willed educator who was his mother; we must give full weight to the system of ideas in which he was brought up. His fundamental perspectives were shaped in a theological tradition; in his and our epoch the

dogma continued to secularize. In William Benton's life we hear the echo of a world view that coupled commitment to the good with a sense of destiny. This cosmic viewpoint was expressed in any number of familiar biblical texts. Think of the unquenchable courage and optimism of our friend and recall a single quotation: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose."

William Benton pursued a vocation on behalf of love, of enlightenment, of himself, and of others. It was a secular equivalent of a clerical vocation of his forebearers to carry the gospel to all the world. From this background, and the mediating members of the family, came his direction and his strength and his contribution to our future history.

Mr. Nicholas Johnson

William Benton's accomplishments and energy are legion. My father first told me about him—and the spectacular Robert Hutchins—when I was growing up in Iowa City, a couple hundred miles to the west of here.

Benton mastered virtually everything he touched. His restless, curious mind touched almost all that life has to offer during the 73 years we were blessed to have him with us.

He was, in turn, a good student, a super-salesman, creative advertising executive, a successful businessman, an energetic Vice-President of this great University, an architect of major domestic and foreign policy programs as an Ambassador and statesman in the Executive Branch of the federal government, a distinguished United States Senator, and, of course, publisher of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and related ventures—surely one of the most distinguished publishing endeavors in the world.

Throughout this zig-zag life, however, there runs a thread. For most of what Bill Benton did involved, in one way or another, the communications process. And much of the history of mass communication in America shows his hand.

At Yale, he was chairman of the *Yale Record*. As such he early experienced the process of censorship.

In his early years in advertising, radio was just coming into its own. And Benton was personally responsible for many of the program formats and advertising techniques that are still with us today.

I recall his telling me of his walking down a street in Chicago one summer evening in those early days. There was no air conditioning; and the windows of the homes were open. He could hear the

radios playing, and almost all of them he noticed, were tuned in to "Amos 'n Andy." He had earlier made some of the first consumer opinion surveys for advertisers, but this evening stroll was probably the first effort at program ratings. There's some question whether today's methods are really any better!

When he left advertising he soon stopped listening to the programs he had created. But he never really lost his interest in radio, and later television, as educational tools. While here at Chicago, he developed the University's role in educational radio and instructional films. Years later, I recall a luncheon in London with him in which he was encouraging the creation of the Open University. He was one of the first to foresee the role that radio would play in politics. Many years later, he would be one of the first to use television in his own successful campaign for the Senate. A study of the BBC in the 1930s quickly convinced him of the superiority of that system to the one that he had helped create here.

Cable television is the hot item in mass communication today. But Bill Benton was dealing in "cable radio" 35 years ago. He called it Muzak.

Many have forgotten that Benton was also in the newspaper publishing business at one time—and that his paper, *PM*, was the first to carry radio program listings, the predecessor of today's *TV Guide*.

"Pay TV," or "subscription television," is also being talked about today. The FCC has recently authorized some experiments. But, once again, it was Bill Benton who first proposed subscription radio to the Federal Communications Commission in the early 1940s.

He saw the uses of radio by government. He encouraged the short-wave broadcasts after World War II that would become the "Voice of America"—a name he is credited with creating. He urged UNESCO—which he would later serve as an Ambassador—to use radio to educate the people of the world. His maiden speech in the Senate urged the Marshall Plan of Ideas. And, as Assistant Secretary of State, he was to encounter intransigence of the American radio networks in refusing to provide facilities for Secretary Burns to report to the people.

We are today more sophisticated about the role of government in intimidating the media for partisan advantage, for we have watched the process for the last few years. But Senator Benton was one of the first to suggest a non-partisan review of the performance of the media, a press council, about 25 years ago. Only in the last few months was it finally

created, as others caught up with his early vision. For Bill Benton knew, from his own experience as well as his insight, that—and I quote him—“freedom of information . . . means freedom from any monopoly whatever, public or private. . . .”

Recently, a network president gave a speech in Washington angrily denying any possibility of “self-censorship”—only to return to New York to announce that his network henceforth would provide viewers no commentary or analysis whatsoever following Presidential speeches.

Benton knew that freedom of information might be imperiled as much by those who dispense it as by the censors in government.

And so, from his rich lifetime of participation in the process of mass communication, came an understanding of the need to reform—reform of, in some instances, forces which he himself had set in motion. And let history record that he was big enough to acknowledge that fact, and to act upon it. For he, and his family, have generously established the Benton Foundation to make possible some of those badly needed reforms—not in conventional ways but, in the greatest tradition of Bill Benton himself, in bold and innovative ways.

Even in death, he moves us forward with ideas and insights—and actions—in mass communication that are, so characteristically for him, years ahead of their time. A more precious gift to the American people, a more fitting memorial for Bill Benton, could not be imagined.

Mr. Robert M. Hutchins

I have been asked to say a few words about William Benton and his connection with this University. They burst upon each other like a couple of bombshells. The University had never seen anybody like him because there was nobody like him. He had never seen anything like the University because the institutions that he and I had attended bore little resemblance to this one. The University of Chicago ever since its foundation had been pioneering in ways that, forty years ago, few other institutions had begun to think about.

Bill Benton's essential characteristics have been mentioned several times today. He had more energy than any living man, he had more ideas than any living man, he was a learner, teacher, communicator. He was filled with the missionary spirit. He couldn't meet anybody, read anything, or think of anything, and keep it to himself. He became the center of a vast communications network that included an ever growing circle of friends and

associates who he thought ought to be informed about the remarkable things he had encountered. The missionary spirit would not permit him to sit selfishly by and allow those he liked or worked with to remain in ignorance. I have myself received as many as 16 memoranda in a single day. They contained admonitions, reproofs, enquiries, reports, most of which had also been sent to others. He had an aversion to the long-distance telephone, because, I believe, it was impossible at that time, legally at least, to distribute copies of telephone conversations. One thing is certain, nobody who ever worked with Bill Benton could pretend not to know what was on his mind.

When he and I were negotiating his appointment here, I took shameless advantage of all these characteristics. When he agreed to be a part-time Vice-President at a nominal salary, I knew I had at a nominal salary a man who would outwork all the rest of us who are on full-time and full salary. When he insisted that as Vice-President he could under no circumstances have anything to do with the University's public relations, I cheerfully assented because I knew that if he thought well of the University, his missionary spirit would force him to share the revelation he had received with those whose souls had not yet been saved. What he did was to make the University better known to the citizens of this country than it had been at any time since Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Harper, with considerable fanfare, brought it forth in 1892.

The missionary spirit did its work through two radio programs, through countless articles in journals of every kind, through the vast private network of which he was the center. We can say more, I think. We can say that from him the people of this country began to get some glimmer of an idea of what a university might be. The popular view of universities at that date was that they were of two general kinds: there were institutions that were clubs with professional schools attached; these were the elite universities. Then there were those engaged in applied research and vocational training; these were the cow colleges. (Remember this was 40 years ago.) There were, of course, all kinds of gradations in between.

But Chicago, somehow, was a little different. It had been able to maintain the kind of unity and power that comes from some singleness of purpose. It had succeeded in building and preserving some semblance of an intellectual community. Because of Bill's efforts, some notion of the significance of such a community seeped into the public mind and remained there, for a while, at least. Such a community was made for Helen and Bill Benton.

Bill set about learning at once. I've often thought his success in everything he did resulted from his capacity for excitement and his ability to communicate that excitement to others. He had that instant capacity to size up a situation which can only be described as genius. It came into play in every phase of his life, as when he instantly saw the menace of McCarthyism and instantly understood the promise to the University of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. As he gazed upon the University, he was carried away by it. He liked the idea, program, and the people, particularly the people. He formed here some of the most important and durable friendships of his life. Many of them were to be mainstays of his existence long after he ceased to be an officer of the University. He and Helen made their house into an interdisciplinary meeting ground, a learning community within a learning community.

The story of *Britannica* has been told many times and I shall not repeat it here. However, there are one or two things that are often overlooked and that ought not to be forgotten in our effort to elucidate the Benton tradition. In the first place, the object was education and solely education. Bill tried frantically to get others to take financial responsibility for *Britannica*. Neither the University nor the dozens of wealthy men he approached thought it was a good risk. Management came to Bill by default because nobody else had the courage to face it. The conversation in the boardroom after the vote was taken was marked not so much by enthusiasm for the project as by sympathy for Bill Benton who had become the victim of his own propaganda.

And then there is the quality of his management, the countless memoranda the officers of the *Britannica* received from the Chairman over the last 30 years were largely devoted to explaining to them that they must not sacrifice the reputation and name of *Britannica*; they must not indulge in ventures that might be immediately profitable but that might in the long run turn out to be unworthy of the University and of the name and standards of *Britannica*. He would not sanction a project that he thought educationally unsound, and on the other hand, he would insist on enormous expenditures that might not increase sales, but that would raise the educational quality of the product. He regarded himself as a trustee of a great tradition.

The questions of the future are those of the past—how to maintain *Britannica* as an educational institution, complementing and supplementing the work of this University and others; how to develop relationships between *Britannica* and the University in ways that will strengthen them both. We shall have to labor on these questions without Bill

Benton's personal guidance. We know we shall not look upon his like again. Fortunately, for over 30 years, he established the principles we should follow, and their memory, like his, will not fade.

Mr. Robert P. Gwinn

One aspect of Bill Benton's will that seems to me to reflect the man faithfully was a preamble, in which he accepted the legal jargon as inevitable, but defiantly insisted on penetrating it with flashes of his own humanity.

"Under protest by me," he began, "but at the insistence of my lawyers, this will is overwritten with legal gobbledygook of the kind I deplore. If I were personally writing this will, Article First, assuming it is needed at all, would begin something like this. 'Please pay all my debts and all expenses—and be liberal, except with the taxing authorities!' Article Second would run along this line: 'Please give all articles of personal property to my wife, if living; otherwise to my children.' Article Third would read something like this: 'Please give all other articles of tangible personal property to my children in equal shares.' However, here goes the legal language which lawyers are not able to resist. (The lack of training of lawyers in the writing of clear-cut English, in college and law school, must help explain why so many lawyers are continuously kept busy arguing over the language of their predecessors.)"

Now, Bill Benton was not really "down" on lawyers as his indomitable mother was. He liked to quote a letter she wrote him as he was graduating from Yale: "If you can't do something respectable, won't you at least be a lawyer?" It wasn't lawyers that Bill opposed, but lawyers' jargon, or any jargon.

Actually, Benton was a salesman, another calling his mother disdained, but he went on to become the salesman of ideas that we all remember—of ideas and ideals, of noble goals.

Poor as a child, he set out to make money—and became wealthy and famous before middle age. At 35, he retired to devote the rest of his life to "something worthwhile," as he once put it. Here again, he succeeded beyond the dreams of most men—carving out memorable careers in education, Statecraft, and publishing—becoming even wealthier along the way—almost by accident it seems. It was in these later careers that he made the marks of which his mother would have been so proud.

Bill Benton revealed a casual and utilitarian attitude toward money as an implement rather than

a goal, an attitude that was refreshing as it was unusual. He once blandly declined to spell out a plan for repayment when he sought a large loan. "You're in the business of lending money; I'm in the business of borrowing it," he pointed out to a somewhat startled banker—who finally agreed that Benton was a good risk.

I remember a number of occasions on which he rather startled his own Board of Directors at *Britannica* by making similar detached statements about money. "There is only one reason why *Encyclopaedia Britannica* should show a profit," he would say, "and that is to enable the continuing improvement of the educational and editorial excellence of its products." The *Britannica* is his monument and we can dedicate it proudly to him as indeed we shall do in the new 1974 edition.

Yes, excellence was his goal, and not riches, and the fact that his pursuit of excellence brought riches was to him fortunate but irrelevant. He was impatient of anything that interfered with the realization of excellence. He was impatient of committees, which, he would scoff, usually meet to confirm the fears of its weakest members.

He was impatient with the kind of timidity that would keep a man from living up to his fullest potential for fear of making mistakes. "The man that never made a mistake never made anything," he was fond of quoting. Sometimes he urged associates to "make more mistakes." He was impatient with perfectionists and the unceasing quest for perfection, which he considered unnecessary as well as unrealistic, and, worst of all, a waste of time. Improvement, yes; perfectionism, no.

In William Benton, we have had a giant among us, but a giant we could comprehend because he was so human at the same time that he was larger than life. The three months since his death have begun to bring home to us the enormity of our loss. The shadow that he cast remains, and it will affect the worlds he influenced for many years to come—enabling, exhorting, challenging, and cheering on those that would use their potential to educate and to learn, to serve and to enjoy. His shadow dares us to emulate him and leave our society better than we found it.

William Benton's life affected untold millions of other lives. What he set in motion will influence uncounted millions more.

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