

peared together on the stage was here in Washington, D.C., in "A Young Man's Fancy." Is that correct? Close to correct? And then 50 years later they came back to the White House for another performance when they received from the President the Medal of Freedom. And between that first appearance on a Washington, D.C., stage and receiving the highest award that a President can give, they created together and also individually a legend of artistic excellence, an inspiration to us all, and we love you.

And I've deliberately saved Leontyne Price till last. She's been described as the Stradivarius of singers—[laughter]—and I think of all the performances that I've heard in the White House, the greatest thrill of mine was when Leontyne Price came here to perform. And I realize that Vladimir Horowitz is here—has been here—and Baryshnikov is here tonight. The only single exception that I can think of was the first time that Amy got her violin and played "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." [Laughter]

But I remember the shock that swept through an audience at a funeral service when Leontyne Price sang, "The Lord's Prayer." It was almost like a blow in the solar plexus, and a gasp of emotion and exhilaration went through that group. And when she came and sang when the Pope was here and the other performances that I've heard, she's been truly an inspiration to us all. She's won 15 Grammy Awards. I won't go down the list of awards that others have won, but all the way from "Porgy and Bess" to "Cleopatra" she has exemplified the finest in superlative performance. When she made her debut at the Met the ovation lasted 42 minutes, and that's an example of performance above and beyond the exemplary performances of those others who perform in the Metropolitan in such a fine

way. But I'm grateful to her not only for what she does in the performing arts but for what she means in insisting upon the finest values of our country, human rights, equality of opportunity, the commitment to overcome handicap and the deep concern about others who are struggling to achieve the same degree of realization of the American dream.

These five honorees share superb talent, but they also share something special, and that is the gift of creation, an ability to exceed what is normally expected from a talented person, to look at the daily struggle that all of us human beings experience, and to give to us as a constant reminder the ideal of perfection. As President of a great country, I'd like to say again that we are honored to have them here, because they epitomize the finest elements of the character of the people of the finest nation on Earth.

Thank you, and God bless you all. We'll see you at the Kennedy Center.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Following the reception, the President and Mrs. Carter attended the awards ceremony at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Juvenile Justice Amendments of 1980

*Statement on Signing S. 2441 Into Law.
December 8, 1980*

On July 1st of this year, I sent a message to Congress indicating my deep commitment to the goals and objectives of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. I am pleased to reiterate that commitment by signing S. 2441, the Juvenile Justice Amendments of 1980. This

legislation will continue the authorizations of both the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act for 4 years.

The children of America are our most precious resource. One negative experience with the justice system can permanently mar a young person's future. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act is particularly important, because it establishes a program to prevent young people from having that first negative experience with the criminal justice system, rather than reacting to incidents after their occurrence. Six years after its enactment, we can take great pride in its accomplishments. It has demonstrated many new alternatives to traditional methods of dealing with children in the juvenile justice system and contributed to substantial progress in providing fair and effective treatment for our young people.

The report of the House Committee on Labor and Education found that since passage of the original act, the proportion of serious crimes committed by juveniles has steadily dropped.

The major share of funds under the act is allocated to the States to implement the programs each State decides are most appropriate and effective for that particular State. I am particularly pleased that Congress accepted an amendment advocated by the administration which will result in the removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups. This provision will go a long way toward addressing what the Deputy Attorney General termed a "national catastrophe" when testifying before Congress last March.

It is also satisfying that provisions of the law which call for the coordination of Federal juvenile delinquency programming have been strengthened. The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and De-

linquency Prevention has provided Federal agencies with an effective means of marshaling their forces and acting in a unified and consistent manner. These efforts to reduce duplication and promote interagency cooperation should serve as a model for all levels of government.

Other provisions of S. 2441 authorize assistance for children who have run away from home or who are otherwise homeless, establish a separate Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention within the Justice Department assuring the independence necessary to effectively do its job, and reduce redtape at the local level.

Since first enacted in 1974, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act has enjoyed a broad base of support from public agencies and private organizations and strong bipartisan support in the Congress. I would like to give particular credit to Senator Birch Bayh, an author of the original 1974 legislation. The children of the country will lose an effective advocate when he leaves the Congress. I would like to thank Senator Strom Thurmond, Congressman Ike Andrews, and Congressman E. Thomas Coleman, who managed the bill and were instrumental in assuring that the legislation was not ignored in the closing days of the congressional session.

NOTE: As enacted, S. 2441 is Public Law 96-509, approved December 8.

Death of John Lennon

*Statement by the President.
December 9, 1980*

John Lennon helped create the music and the mood of our time. His spirit, the spirit of the Beatles—brash and earnest, ironic and idealistic all at once—became the spirit of a whole generation.