

12-11-1954

Henri Temianka Correspondence; (wpaepcke)

Walter P. Paepcke

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December 11, 1954

Mr. Richard P. Leach
33 West 54th Street
New York 19, New York

Dear Dick:

While in Europe I was sent a copy of your amazing letter of November 1st addressed to Mack Harrell. You mention in it that you are documenting, for the benefit of members of the music group and all of your friends in Aspen, your reasons for your resignation. This forces my hand. When the large meeting in the seminar building took place in late August there was a good deal of outspoken conversation on a variety of matters. Perhaps this was for the best. As far as your position with the Aspen Institute was concerned I felt, largely for your sake, I should simply state that the expense of the New York office and the difficulties of supervisory control at great distance made its continuance impossible. I believed it would be embarrassing to you, in front of all our mutual friends, to go into specific reasons for my decision. I did not think it would be helpful to you in finding a new position as it might conceivably have raised some doubts. It seems now that this reticence on my part was ill-advised.

For the clarification of the minds of those who received a copy of your letter to Mack, and in fairness to myself, your letter cannot go unanswered. However, as the issues raised are largely between you and me, and as we have worked rather closely together for a number of years, I prefer to address my answer directly to you.

I feel, Dick, that you have taken an extremely subjective and personal position. Furthermore, you have made a great many statements which are simply not correct factually. In some instances you have taken quotations out of context which have the effect of being quite misleading--perhaps unintentionally so. It seems that you have made up your mind that I was unwilling to cooperate with you and that you have read into various situations a purely personal antagonism which did not exist. Naturally, between the 15th of September and October 22nd, when I left for Europe, I was unusually busy: three trips out of town to New York, Louisville and Aspen, and very important Container Corporation negotiations; all sorts of pre-trip preparations. Nevertheless, the complete silence which you complain of is not a correct statement.

1. You wrote Mack:

"Since he left Aspen in early September, Mr. Paepcke has replied to no letter I have written him in behalf of the new Music Institute."

As a matter of fact, I received only two from you, one from Aspen dated September 17th, the other dated September 30th from New York. The first one did not explicitly require an answer. It was in the form of an interesting report: You mention about the tent at the Amphitheater being taken down. You say:

"Joan Bass completed thank-you letters, individually addressed, to all donors of the current campaign. With the help of the Chamber of Commerce (small help!) I mailed same to those from whom actual checks had been received, yesterday afternoon."

You state that you had deposited all checks thus far received in a savings account in the Pitkin County Bank. You then stated the following:

"It did not include checks received by the Institute since August 23 as follows: Kalmes - \$500; the Humes - \$200; Milton Connor - \$200; Frank Myers - \$50; Gerry Gagne - \$100; Edie's - \$137; Tisdeman - \$15; and maybe a few others not processed by me. Neither did it include a \$500 contribution "reallocated", Henry Stein tells me, from the Spachners' contribution."

These add up to the \$1702 of donations received and deposited in the account of the Aspen Institute. You are quite correct that this money, in accordance with my original proposition, should go to the new music group. However, until a mutually acceptable proposition had been arrived at I did not think it timely to turn the funds over. Rest assured that this will be done, but also please recognize that in your letter no request to that effect was made. The balance of your letter of the 17th simply expresses your worry about the deposited funds being considerably short of the \$29,000 which the Chamber of Commerce believes to be the grand total of the campaign to date.

Your second letter dated September 30th asked for a list of the foundations which I would prefer you not to approach. As it happens, I wrote you a two-page letter on September 29th (which you do not mention) which crossed yours in the mail, and of which I sent a copy to Mack Harrell. In it I wrote at length about foundations which should not be approached. You never acknowledged receipt of this letter although I know you received it because in it I told you about my receipt of a letter from Bob Stearns of the Boettcher Foundation and my telephone call to him which gave you the information for paragraph 3 of your memo to Mack.

In your letter of the 30th you also asked me to have Lloyd Gould supply you with certain cost information on the festival folders, Music School brochures, etc. I had Lloyd do this and he wrote you on October 7 giving all of the information requested. In the postscript you mention that you were puzzled by an item of \$21,507.25, paid out for students' room and board. On October 22nd I wrote Mack Harrell giving him the answer. It was simply that Aspen Institute of Music collects monies from students for room and board which it lists as income and on the other hand it pays the Aspen Company a slightly larger amount for room and board that has been provided and this is listed as an expense or outgo. The reason why the outgo is somewhat higher than the income is largely due to the fact that some orchestra and staff members were provided with rooms and meals for which the Aspen Institute of Music received no money (it was an obligation in some instances to furnish room and board) but the Aspen Company naturally had to make a charge. In the friendliest spirit, Dick, I feel that as vice president and treasurer of the AIHS you should have understood this as it appeared on all statements and budgets that we used to go over every year. It is just this lack of familiarity and concern with financial matters that made me feel I was the only one really worrying about the funds that were needed and where they would come from.

This question then of our correspondence, might, in fairness to me, have been stated more correctly by saying that you had written only two letters (the implication was that there might have been many others); that I wrote one which crossed yours in the mail and that Lloyd Gould wrote another as you had requested; and lastly that I wrote another to Mack answering one of the questions raised; I may not have sent you a copy of this; if I did not, I am sorry; however, the information was available to the group and you through Mack.

2. In this paragraph you state:

"Also on September 30, and again acting on the specific instructions of the Finance Committee, I wrote Mr. and Mrs. Babin a letter offering for their consideration a new and, in the unanimous opinion of the committee-members, including yourself (meaning Mack), eminently fair financial agreement for the summer of 1955."

If you will check with Mack he will tell you that he was in favor of offering the Babins a lower basic guarantee due to Mr. Babin no longer being Dean of the Music School, and 50% of the tuition of the students whom he and Mrs. Babin would teach over and above the first eight. I agreed with this approach completely and so told Mack. When I was in Aspen I phoned the Babins who were in Santa Fe and told them I hoped that they had received the proposition and would accept it. I was surprised to learn that the proposition had been changed, not as to the basic lower guarantee, which the Babins thought was proper, but that the 50% of student fees started only after the first twelve had been taught without any financial participation on their part. In essence twelve students paying \$250.00 each, or \$3000 total would equal the entire basic guarantee. I told Victor Babin on the phone that if all of the artists were going to be required to take as many free students as would equal their total basic guarantee then I thought this would be entirely fair in their case; however, in view of the fact that I knew that in 1953 only three artists (with higher basic guarantees) out of the entire group had had such an arrangement, I questioned that it would be the general policy in 1955. (I could not speak about 1954 because for the first time you did not send me copies of the contracts.) Consequently, I felt that the original figure of eight free students mentioned to me by Mack would be fairer. I believe this must be self-evident to everyone. If you will check with Mack I think he will tell you that he did not feel that twelve free students was "eminently fair" otherwise, why would he have suggested eight and tell me he was sorry that the majority of the group had not gone along with his recommendation? The fact that the Babins participated in two or three benefit concerts and appeared by themselves in two or three more, all of which concerts brought in some \$8000 in funds should, I believe, have underscored the need for fairness.

3. Regarding the Boettcher Foundation you state:

"When Mr. Paepcke learned of my interview with the Boettcher Foundation, he called Mr. Stearns from Chicago, and apparently complained that my visit had not been authorized by him. * * * * * As a result of his telephone conversation with Mr. Paepcke, Mr. Stearns offered to withdraw any consideration of any request for funds made by the new Music Institute."

In my letter to you of September 29th I state:

"Upon my return from New York I found a letter from Bob Stearns of the Boettcher Foundation in which he described the visit he had had with you and the request for a grant to the Music Department exclusively. This is the sort of possible conflict I think we should plan to avoid in the future. As you may remember, Bob Stearns is one of my oldest Colorado friends. He was a trustee of the Goethe Bicentennial and has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Aspen Institute since its inception. I talked with him about possible grants from the Boettcher Foundation even before he joined as president. * * * * * This year alone, I think I have had either lunch or dinner with the Stearns three or four times; had shown Bob the plans of the new lodges and previously of the seminar building when it was still in the planning stage and had asked for both building and general Aspen Institute operating fund support---thus far without success. * * * * *

"With all this activity going on, I think we have to be very careful not to cross wires; if nothing else, it is confusing to Bob because as I am working on him as president of the Aspen Institute and you, for the present and for the next few months, as vice president and treasurer, if we ask for grants for different purposes, it seems a little less tidy as far as the Aspen Institute is concerned. I phoned Bob last night to explain the situation. As long as there is no money forthcoming from the Boettcher Foundation to the Aspen Institute on its original request for 1954, I told him I had no objection to your request for the music part, although Bob asked me whether I wanted that withdrawn. However, in the future it seems clear that we will have to check our lists of people we are going to see so as to avoid crossing wires."

Your comments would have been fairer and more factual if you had stated that Bob Stearns had written me; and that I had phoned him to explain the situation, not complain; and finally, that I had made "no objection to your request for the music part, although Bob asked me if I wanted that withdrawn."

4. I am sorry that your regular monthly or semi-monthly salary check did not go forward at the end of October. I had left explicit instructions that a check would be sent out the end of October and the end of November. Dean Merten tells me that due to the fact that he went away on vacation he was not there to see to it, and that very probably he neglected to pass my instructions on to John Burton, the man who was taking over his duties. It then even happened that John Burton resigned to join Col. Dutton at the Milwaukee Country Club, I am told, and his successor was completely in the dark. All of this was a regrettable comedy of errors. When I learned about the non-payment I cabled from Europe on November 9 instructing immediate payment of the amounts due up to and including November 30. Aspen informs me that this check was forwarded to you on November 10 and that they have the cancelled check so I am glad that you received it, although I regret the delay. I cannot agree that separation pay is "usually payable in a lump sum". If separation pay involves only two weeks or thirty days it naturally would be paid in a lump sum; however, when it continues two and a half months it is probably more usually than not paid as before in monthly or semi-monthly installments.

5. This paragraph is taken out of context. I distinctly remember, and I think Mack Harrell will bear me out, when I talked with him by phone from Aspen to Lubbock, Texas we were discussing, among other matters, the difficulties in having staff at the Roaring Fork Cafeteria, and house-mothers and house-fathers "mutually acceptable". In this connection I told Mack that because of some of the disagreements on policy which had arisen between you and me I might consider some other

general manager more "mutually acceptable" but that I was not making an issue of this. I went on to ask Mack how the music group would feel if I, in this instance insisted---which I was not doing---on a general manager who was entirely "mutually acceptable". To this question Mack answered that the group would not like it. I saw no reason why "mutual acceptability" in the fullest sense should not be reciprocal and if not demanded in one instance it should not be required in the other.

6. My statement in the memorandum to the music group that it would prefer that you "not be a trustee or officer of the AIHS" is entirely correct. Both Mack Harrell as chairman and Roman Totenberg told me explicitly that they and others---not necessarily everyone---wanted to be sure that you would be employed by and working for the Executive Committee and in order to have this crystal clear, particularly in your mind, they definitely preferred that you not be an officer or trustee of the parent organization. For confirmation I refer you to Mack and Roman.

You further state: ".... only recently (as recently as two weeks ago) learned of the existence of an Executive Committee of three members, of which I am one member."

I have before me the Minutes Book of the AIHS. There was a meeting of the Executive Committee on January 31, 1952, attended by Glen Lloyd and myself for which you signed, in your own handwriting, a waiver of notice under the caption which begins: "We, the undersigned, being all of the Members of the Executive Committee of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies"; etc. There was another meeting on June 12, 1953 for which you signed a waiver of notice, again under the caption which begins: "We, the undersigned, being all the Members of the Executive Committee of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies"; etc. I suppose one is expected to know what one is signing. However, we all forget at times some facts such as these. Nevertheless, I do not think it proper to make a flat statement which creates a false impression (whatever the motive may have been) when one's facts are quite wrong.

7, and 8. I have no comments on these paragraphs or on the rest of the letter.

* * * * *

Over the last two years I have been thinking a great deal about wherein the fundamental disagreements between us lay. By the end of last summer, I had come to some rather definite conclusions.

There are in particular three areas where we are in philosophical disagreement and where I, as founder and president of the Aspen Institute, have felt increasingly that your position was inuring to the disadvantage of the Institute and made difficult, in fact impossible, our continued cooperation in our respective positions. I had talked to you, indeed had pleaded with you, as far back as two years ago to change your viewpoint, but to no avail.

FIRST - As illustrated in the forepart of this letter which answered some of the specific points raised in your memorandum to Mack, I have been deeply concerned about statements which were made in letters or in conversations by you which were often misleading, unfactual, or confusing. As a not too important

but further illustration of what I mean, I refer you to your letter of May 25, 1954 written after your return from Istanbul. This could almost qualify for "The New Yorker" under the caption of "Our Forgetful Authors." You knew that several of us were questioning the timing of your trip, coming just as it did during the months almost immediately preceding the summer festival. To assure me that everything was in good shape on your return, you wrote, "Thanks in part to my own pre-vacation planning, in part to Miss Bass's valiant services two days a week during my absence, I find my desk in remarkably good shape." On the next page in the same letter you refer to "the voluminous correspondence in front of me" and in a letter written to Mr. and Mrs. Nikolai Graudan on the same day, copy of which you sent me, you state, "Mountainous is the word for the correspondence on my desk and I have not yet struggled through it all." It is perfectly understandable that when one has been away for five or six weeks one's desk is in awful shape---mine is right now---but why not either say nothing about it or frankly admit it?

As much as two years ago when we had the Town Hall Benefit I urged you time and again not to tell the various ladies and others who were supposed to sell tickets that the ticket sale was going along beautifully, when in fact it was not. It just caused everyone to relax, lulled into a false sense of security that all was well. From a ticket sale point of view, the concert was more or less a flop. A large number of the boxes which were occupied had been sold by Bea Spachner, you, and myself to close friends; but the general public sale was disappointing.

You will also remember that in the summer of 1953 I pleaded with you not to help create the impression in Aspen that because we had a few more music students and the concerts were somewhat better attended that our financial problems were practically nil. When there is a box office increase of \$2,000 or \$3,000 for the whole season, but the total deficit is still over \$50,000, it makes it difficult to obtain the necessary financial support if everyone has been given the impression that there is no longer much to worry about.

In the case of the already too often mentioned "Histoire du Soldat" you thought the cost of putting this on would be nominal and so assured me; we have just received some additional and final bills of almost \$500 and we now know that the total extra cost of the two performances was about \$2,100. I fully realize that these two performances had a comparatively good box office income of \$1,600; however, this still entailed a \$500 out of pocket loss, whereas if we had simply had one of our regular concerts that afternoon without any extras, there would have been the usual \$400 to \$500 box office income; so the total difference is very close to \$1,000.

SECOND - You had often told me, as had your attractive Kay, that friends meant more to you than probably anything else in life. Certainly no one can quarrel with this viewpoint. However, philosophers throughout the ages have agreed that there can be an excess or immoderation in the pursuit of any goal, no matter how worthy it may be in itself. If one wants to spend a disproportionate amount of time or money on long distance telephone calls, congratulatory telegrams, attending innumerable concerts or performances where

some of our musical friends are appearing, and giving personally conducted tours to the new arrivals in Aspen and the environs when there are undoubtedly more important things to do, and if one is working for oneself, one is certainly privileged to do so. But when one is working for an organization, particularly a non-profit institution which is struggling with large deficits, it is quite another matter. For then the organization is penalized by additional and avoidable costs; these extra costs are either direct penalties or if assumed by an individual then sooner or later his own personal expenses become insupportable, so that an increase in compensation seems necessary and the organization again falls heir to the additional expenses indirectly. The time and energy used in putting in untold hours in being unusually solicitous and extravagantly thoughtful in personal relationships deprives the employing organization of that much time and energy for discharging the more essential responsibilities of the job. Naturally, we all like to have someone show great interest in us, agree with us, extend exceptional privileges to us, change policies in our behalf, etc. It is much harder to keep friends when one has to disagree with them. Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice" thought Portia during the first part of the trial a most intelligent, agreeable individual: "Oh wise and upright judge! how much more elder art thou than thy looks." But then when Portia came to a conclusion disadvantageous to Shylock, his friendly feeling and admiration disappeared completely.

The real accomplishment is to make and keep friends without injury to the institution for which one is working. Its best interests must come first. I like to think that Aspen, and I, if you please, have good and durable friends in some of the scholars and educators, such as Clarence Faust, Met Wilson, Champ Ward, Jasha Klein, Mortimer Adler, and many others. They have sacrificed for the Aspen idea a good part of their vacation year after year; in most cases they have given of their time, wisdom, and enthusiasm without honorarium and only transportation, food, and lodging were provided. I am not suggesting this to be an appropriate or fair arrangement in the case of our musical artists. I do suggest that the Aspen Institute, and we as individuals, can have friends without going to unusual lengths which are needlessly costly in one way or another.

THIRD - I have been concerned about many fundamental decisions which you believed it necessary to make without advising me and without discussion or approval. You and I agreed two or three years ago that our artists should not perform in Colorado and neighboring states during the months of June, July, August, and September. In fact, the prohibition was written into the contracts, accepted and agreed to by the artists; however, this year when a number of exceptions were made, you simply told me that you had adopted a new policy and had committed the Institute to these various exceptions.

When I was in Aspen last time several of our people were concerned about your having loaned to the School some 85 folding chairs used by the orchestra and all the property of the Aspen Institute. We were concerned that some 300 or 400 youngsters using these chairs for nine months would probably result in unusual wear and tear, breakage or loss. Furthermore, The Aspen Company had

in the past needed extra chairs during the winter for special banquets, movies in the Blue Lounge, or what not. The Aspen Company management states that you told them that if we needed the chairs we could send trucks to the school and move them and then return them to the school. I would not have thought, Dick, of loaning the office furniture or equipment of the New York office, which belongs to the Aspen Institute, to let's say, Hunter College during the summer when you were not using it, without at least mentioning it to you.

I was embarrassed when a change of program was made for last summer's concert on August 25, eliminating Felix Borowski's "Elegie for Violoncello and Chorus" and I was not informed about it. I realize that you notified the Borowskis; I also realize that there were compelling reasons why this had to be done. However, as the Borowskis are very good friends of ours and as I saw and talked to them in Chicago immediately before they went out to be present at the performance, they naturally wondered why I had not said a word to them about it. Eventually they discovered that I had said nothing about it until I came to Aspen for the very good reason that I had not been informed. I submit that one short sentence in a telegram or a briefly worded note would have been fully as appropriate as and in this case more necessary than congratulatory telegrams to an artist who is performing somewhere far removed from Aspen.

This year for the first time you did not send me any copies of contracts with artists, which you had done in the previous two years. Surely I am quite busy and may not go over every contract, but it is informative to have either copies or a summary in the files to which I can refer should the occasion seem to require it.

These, then, are the three areas where there is disagreement. A supervisory control from Chicago over commitments and policies that are established or changed in New York is inherently difficult and creates an insoluble problem. It is for this reason that I was unwilling to continue the arrangement. However, I felt that an executive committee of artists consisting of many living in New York and others who are there from time to time might remove most if not all problems.

I am delighted to know that you have a good new position---I knew you would--- and I wish you every success and happiness for the future.

Sincerely,

Walter P. Paepcke