

[Press release Thursday, June 6, 1957]

NEW YORK CITY, June 6.—Strongly supporting President Eisenhower's statement that "The Federal Government should do more to give official recognition to the importance of the arts and other cultural activities," 400 men and women prominent in the arts and public life today signed an appeal to Congress asking that bills establishing a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare be enacted during the 1957 session. The appeal was made public by the National Council on the Arts and Government, representing all the arts, through its chairman, Clarence Derwent.

Among the signers of this appeal are: Nelson W. Aldrich, Rose Bampton, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Van Wyck Brooks, Al Capp, Paddy Chayefsky, Marc Connelly, Mrs. Norman Chandler, Stuart Davis, James T. Farrell, Walter Gropius, Helen Hayes, Celeste Holm, Clare Boothe Luce, Henry R. Luce, Burt Lancaster, Howard Lindsay, Joshua Logan, Dr. Earl J. McGrath, Stanley Marcus, Raymond Massey, Gilbert Miller, Grandma Moses, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Marianne Craig Moore, Paul Muni, Charles Munch, Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop G. Bromley Oxman, Vincent Price, Mrs. Ogden Reid, Fritz Reiner, Elmer Rice, Edward G. Robinson, David Smith, Rise Stevens, Gladys Swarthout, Ruth St. Denis, Charles Sheeler, Mark Van Doren, Mies van der Rohe, Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, Darryl F. Zanuck, Fred Zinneman, Hon. Frank P. Zeidler.

"The primary purpose of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts" said the appeal to Congress, "is to propose methods to encourage private initiative and its cooperation with local, State, and Federal departments or agencies to foster artistic creation and appreciation and the use of the arts both nationally and internationally in the best interests of our country."

It was pointed out that the bills under consideration have bipartisan support in both Houses of Congress, do not request subsidies for the arts and require only modest administrative appropriations.

The complete statement and the list of signers follow:

ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE NATION'S ARTS—AN APPEAL TO CONGRESS

"President Eisenhower in 1955 declared that 'the Federal Government should do more to give official recognition to the importance of the arts and other cultural activities.' He recommended 'the establishment of a Federal advisory commission on the arts in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.' Last year a bipartisan bill to carry out this recommendation passed the Senate, but the House failed to take action.

"The President's 1957 budget message again requested action by Congress. Senators and Congressmen of both parties have introduced bills for this purpose:

S. 1716 by Senator H. Alexander Smith, Republican, of New Jersey, cosponsored by Senators James E. Murray, Democrat of Montana, Irving M. Ives, Republican of New York, Thomas C. Hennings, Jr., Democrat, of Missouri, John Sherman Cooper, Republican of Kentucky, and Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York; S. 930 by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat, of Minnesota, cosponsored by Senators Paul H. Douglas, Democrat, of Illinois, and Jacob K. Javits, Republican, of New York; H.R. 6374 (identical to S. 1716) by Congressman Stuyvesant Wainwright, Republican, of New York; H.R. 6642 (identical to S. 1716) by Congressman Edith Green, Democrat, of Oregon; H.R. 3514 by Congressman Frank Thompson, Jr., Democrat, of New Jersey; and H.R. 1089 by Congressman Emanuel Celler, Democrat, of New York.

"The primary purpose of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts is to propose methods to encourage private initiative and its cooperation with local, State, and Federal departments or agencies to foster artistic creation and appreciation and the use of the arts both nationally and internationally in the best interests of our country. The Council would upon request advise Federal departments and agencies which administer art programs, exclusive of those areas of responsibility of the Commission of Fine Arts.

"These bills do not request subsidies for the arts and require only modest appropriations for administrative expenses.

"Effective international use of the arts is a permanent policy of our country, but the United States lags behind 38 nations in considering the development and enjoyment of cultural resources a matter of concern to the Government. As work days shorten and life expectancy lengthens the arts will play an ever more important role in the lives of our citizens.

"We urge that this legislation be favorably considered and enacted by this session of Congress."