

theater, ballet, motion pictures, television, and the recording industries for the purpose of achieving a sound and mature national culture and international peace and good will.

#### MUSIC AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

(By Finis E. Engleman, Executive Secretary, American Association of School Administrators)

More than 150 years ago, when discussing his concept of civilization, John Adams said, "I must study politics and war, that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics, philosophy, and commerce so that their children in turn may have the right and privilege to study painting, poetry, and music."

Thus, even before the free public schools of America were established, aspects of their shape and processes were blueprinted by our second President. Fifty years after this statement by John Adams, farsighted humanists such as Horace Mann and Henry Barnard were convincing the new nation that it could not survive except as its citizenry was broadly educated. So the revolutionary institution known as the public schools was born and established.

Its broad purpose of equal opportunity for the sons of all men and its faith in the essential worth of each individual gave it from the very beginning, the humanistic qualities so essential to any nation of free men. This unique institution, which brought reality to the dreams of universal education for all, is probably the greatest contribution to mankind which the Western Hemisphere has produced. The educational content has often been restricted and even barren. But in the farflung reaches of this great country, there has been, in varying degrees, the persistent determination of public school leaders to bring to all children and youth the unique privilege of tasting and digesting an education for living consistent with the liberal tradition of Western civilization.

Slowly but surely progress toward a broad and comprehensive program, with the performing and creative arts playing an ever-widening role, is clearly discernible in the history of American education. It is thus that the cultural level of America has risen, step by step. With much of its support coming from the arts as nurtured and taught in the schools, America has reached a cultural stature of considerable proportions.

Retreat from these purposes, however, seemed to be in full sway in 1959. A space vehicle launched dramatically by a powerful and sinister world competitor threw fear into the hearts of many Americans, tending to cause a retreat from formerly held values and to place new priorities on what should be taught.

Consequently some of the school administrators of the Nation were thrown off balance, as was the educational program which they administered. It is worthy of note, however, that the American Association of School Administrators devoted all major aspects of their 1959 convention to the creative and performing arts, with all general sessions headlined by the master artists in the several fields including fine art, music, drama, poetry, and the dance. Near the close of that convention the association, made up of more than 12,000 of the leaders of American education, voted the following resolution:

"The American Association of School Administrators commends the president, the executive committee, and the staff for selecting the creative arts as the general theme for the 1959 convention. We believe in a well-balanced school curriculum in which music, drama, painting, poetry, sculpture, architecture, and the like are included side by side with other important subjects such as mathematics, history, and science. It is important that pupils, as a part of general education, learn to appreciate, to understand, to create, and to criticize with discrimination those products of the mind, the voice, the hand, and the body which give dignity to the person and exalt the spirit of man."

Even as this resolution was adopted many Americans were crying, "Cut out the frills. Nonessentials such as music and literature must give way to the 'solid' subjects of science, mathematics, and foreign languages." And Congress was passing the National Defense Education Act, which encouraged school boards to buy bargains in science and language programs at the expense of the humanities. Since it was suddenly recognized that America must communicate with all the people of all the world, the Federal Government rushed to aid the teaching of French and German while the one language that is common and universal, the arts, was either abandoned or left to struggle against heavy odds