

- (10) The Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts;
- (11) The Director of the National Park Service;
- (12) Ten distinguished educators and other cultural leaders to be appointed by the President and to hold office at his pleasure.

SEC. 3. The Commission shall submit the plan provided for in the first section of this Act to the Congress on or before February 15, 1962. Such plan shall include ways and means of using the existing Government-owned buildings on Lafayette Park as well as other existing buildings (whether public or private) in the Nation's Capital which shall be formulated after taking into consideration the experience of the capital cities of other nations in the encouragement and development of the fine arts as well as the internationally recognized need for a proper setting for the White House consistent with the historic setting for the White House. Pending the submission of such plan no funds, whether heretofore or hereafter appropriated, shall be expended for the demolition of existing buildings, or for the planning or construction of new buildings, on Lafayette Park in the District of Columbia.

[From the Congressional Record, May 9, 1961]

THE JOHN PHILIP SOUSA HOME IN NATION'S CAPITAL NOW THREATENED WITH
DESTRUCTION BY OFFICIALS INSPIRED BY PROPOSED RAZING OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
ON LAFAYETTE SQUARE

Extension of Remarks of Hon. Carroll D. Kearns, of Pennsylvania, in the House
of Representatives, Tuesday, May 9, 1961

MR. KEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 6893, to provide for the preservation and maintenance of the home of John Philip Sousa, one of America's most beloved composers. The home is located at 318 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, D.C.

The building was the first home Mr. Sousa owned, and he occupied it from about 1900 to World War I. The home, a Victorian-type house, has been condemned by the officials of the District of Columbia despite the fact that it has been planned as a shrine by those concerned with the advancement of American music for at least 20 years.

The destruction of the Sousa home by insensitive officials is just one more example of the present disregard for America's historic and culturally important buildings by top Government officials. During the past 20 years one-fourth of our significant buildings have been destroyed, many of them by Government action.

Last week William Walton, a painter, was revealed as the gentleman who, despite his lack of any official status, had advised leading Federal Government officials to destroy the Dolly Madison House, and the Benjamin Tayloe House, and the Belasco Theater on Lafayette Square. Various groups of citizens of this Nation have been trying to save the historic buildings on Lafayette Square for 20 years.

Mr. Walton was reported by the Washington (D.C.) Star, of May 3, 1961, as saying that "The Dolly Madison House was completely gutted by the Cosmos Club in 1895 so that it no longer has any historical meaning. Inside of the outside stucco are some original brick walls, that's all. If rebuilt it would be essentially a replica. The same thing is true of the Tayloe House, which is of less historical importance."

The Washington (D.C.) Star report went on to say:

"As for the Belasco Theater, it is so outdated, he said, no theater company would want it. And since its facilities are too limited for theater, the stage would be hopelessly inadequate for the opera."

The argument over whether the John Philip Sousa Home, and the historic buildings on Lafayette Square should be preserved will doubtless continue until the present criteria are revised, or until some new and more competent advisers are found.

Miss Gertrude Carraway, honorary president general, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, indicates that the problem is really a national problem in a recent letter in which she declares:

"I am having a similar argument with the National Park Service over their failing to include Tryon Palace in their Registry of Historic Landmarks that you seem to be having in Washington over the failure of 'some national authorities'