

[From the Washington (D.C.) Post, May 9, 1961]

**"MEMORIAL TO 'MARCH KING'—HOUSE BILL TO PRESERVE SOUSA HOME WOULD
BLOCK CAPITOL HILL EXPANSION**

"Legislation was introduced yesterday to preserve the Capitol Hill home of John Philip Sousa. The bill includes a provision which would block efforts of the Government to purchase a block of Capitol Hill property.

"The bill, introduced by Representative Carroll D. Kearns, Republic of Pennsylvania, besides providing for the Sousa memorial, would require a comprehensive plan for development, preservation, and improvement before any Federal money could be spent to purchase or demolish buildings in the area around the Capitol.

"The Republicans' Capitol Hill Club, at 214 First Street SE., has already been purchased for \$600,000 but other residences and small businesses in the area scheduled to be taken over, bounded by Independence Avenue, First and Second Street SE., are still to be affected. The eminent domain proceedings have come under attack by area residents who charge that the payments to be made are both inadequate and inequitable.

"The Kearns bill would establish a 14-member presidentially appointed board to acquire the Sousa residence at 318 Independence Avenue SE. and maintain it as a shrine.

"Kearns submitted the measure after reading in the Washington Post that the residence of the famed bandsman had been condemned by the District as unsanitary.

"If it is razed, it will end years of effort to memorialize Sousa within a home that he knew. His birthplace at 636 G Street SE. is no longer available for a shrine. His birthplace was restored by R. C. King & Associates into a home quite similar to the original home, but with an apartment on the first floor.

"In view of the Condemnation Board's pending action, the Sousa Memorial Committee, which has been entrusted with the preservation of the Independence Avenue dwelling by Sousa's daughter, announced it intended to consider a fund-raising effort to save the home.

"Under Kearns' bill, however, the proposed 14-member board would be authorized to conduct a nationwide fund-raising campaign. The board would include 10 members appointed by the President and the conductors of the Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force bands.

"The proposed legislation, amending the District Redevelopment Act, goes beyond the preservation of the Sousa home and seeks to protect other Capitol Hill residences and businesses."

**WILL DEMOCRATIC APATHY DEFEAT MOVE TO MAKE THE LAFAYETTE SQUARE OPERA
HOUSE A LIVING MEMORIAL SYMBOLIC OF THE SPIRIT WHICH HAS ALWAYS UNITED
AMERICA AND GERMANY IN SPITE OF ALL STORMS AND YEARS OF WAR?**

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

Mr. KEARNS. Mr. Speaker, a German-language newspaper, the Washington (D.C.) Journal reported on May 5:

"During the past weeks talks had been conducted in the congressional office rooms and in the cultural department of the German Embassy, which proved that the project (to restore the old Lafayette Square Opera House in the Nation's Capital as the Beethoven Opera House and as a living memorial to the friendship which unites Germany and the United States in spite of all storms and years of war), which is especially close to the hearts of all Washingtonians, is also of great interest to the German authorities."

This seems to me to be an especially meritorious project, and it is my hope that the familiar Democratic apathy toward the arts will not strangle it in official redtape or smother it with less worthy plans to destroy this great structure in order to build a Federal court building, which could better be located elsewhere.

Only last year the President introduced a bill, S. 3280, to restore the Lafayette Square Opera House, which David Belasco once owned, as a civic theater.

It can be expected that the President, who is known as a great student of our history, will look with approval on the conversion of the Lafayette Square