

I have introduced a bill, H.R. 1942, to establish a program of grants to States for the development of programs and projects in the arts. This measure has been cosponsored by Senator Joseph S. Clark, Jr., and by Representatives Frank Thompson, Jr., Adam Clayton Powell, Frank Chelf, and Emanuel Celler. It calls for only \$5 million a year to aid the arts, which is roughly what Great Britain gives the arts through the British Arts Council. There are 30 or so Federal grant-in-aid programs going forward to assist in building hospitals, highways, etc., etc. Surely the arts—as well as education—deserve Federal recognition and support. This is a program with which the Congress is familiar, and which is sponsored by leading Democrats. A message from the President could get this program underway by next year at the latest. When it is remembered that every other major nation in the world aids the arts except the United States, it is hard to explain why America has done so little to assist the fine arts in a way which will make our fine words have meaning. Our people need vision at all times, and the typical movie and television fare which our young people are subjected to makes it mandatory for our great Nation to provide a nobler fare for all of our people—not just for those who can pay the inflated box office prices of operas, theater, and symphony concerts today. Last fall, during the political campaign, President John F. Kennedy was asked to express his views on a bill to provide \$5 million a year for art through a federally supported foundation. He was a Senator at that time and he replied: “I am in full sympathy with the proposal for a federally supported foundation to provide encouragement and opportunity to nonprofit, private, and civic groups in the performing arts. When so many other nations officially recognize and support the performing arts as a part of their national cultural heritage, it seems to me unfortunate that the United States has been so slow in coming to a similar recognition.” I shall look forward with keen anticipation to an early message to the Congress from President Kennedy on this subject, and shall only note that 5 months have already elapsed without a word from him on this.

In February 1961, I introduced a bill to establish a Commission on the Cultural Resources in the Nation's Capital, and to provide a comprehensive plan for the effective utilization of such resources in carrying out a long-range program to make the Nation's Capital equal in cultural matters to the capital cities of other nations.

Similar measures were introduced by Senators John Sherman Cooper and Wayne Morse, and by Representative Adam Clayton Powell. So here, too, is a bipartisan measure which deserves Presidential support. In fact, in a speech to fund-drive workers of the National Symphony Orchestra, the new Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Philip H. Coombs, called for a great overall plan to give the significant overarching cultural climate needed to make it possible for the Nation's Capital to take its rightful place beside other capital cities of the world with regard to the fine arts.

A study by the Library of Congress, which Congressman Harris B. McDowell, Jr., of Delaware, and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, of Minnesota, inserted in the Congressional Record last year, showed that the municipal government of Washington spent annually the piddling sum of \$16,000 on fine arts. This can be compared to the \$800,000 which San Francisco, which is 100,000 smaller than Washington in population, spends on the arts. Facts such as these led the New York Times, Time magazine, the Reporter magazine, the Christian Science Monitor, and other publications to deplore the cultural progress of the Nation's Capital. The Federal City of Washington has been called such unflattering things as “hick town,” and “cultural backwater” by national publications. W. H. Kiplinger, publisher of the Kiplinger Newsletters, a native Washingtonian, declares that Washington has no homegrown culture such as London, Vienna, and other European capital cities have.

In 1942 the Congress established the District of Columbia Recreation Department and gave it extensive authority to conduct programs in the fine arts. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed this act into law. The President and other leading Democrats of those years saw this Department as the vehicle to provide creative opportunities for the hundreds of thousands of Federal employees, many of them single men and women of tender ages, living in rooming houses of uncertain vintage. Until the last few years, the Congress provided little or no funds to carry out the ambitious cultural program in the fine arts provided in this act. Now, the Congress provides the \$16,000 which I mentioned earlier through this act's authority. Now I admit that \$16,000 is better than nothing, but I think that is about all one can truthfully say about such a piddling amount.