

There are evidences that the United States government is becoming aware of its own inconsistencies. It is beginning to realize that musicians who are fanfared abroad also deserve to be cared for at home. The WPA initiating a Federal Music Project in 1935 was the first faint sign of this, even though this project was instituted as an emergency measure, tiding over musicians together with other segments of the jobless for the sake of the nation's economy.

In 1951 came the first real murmurings of concern for musicians for their own sake, with the passage of a bill allowing tax relief to non-profit symphony orchestras and opera companies. Then, in 1956, legislation was passed granting a Congressional Charter to the National Music Council, which was at the time an organization of forty-five nationally active musical associations that had a combined individual membership of some 800,000. It had been founded in 1940 for the following purposes: to provide a forum for the free discussion of problems affecting the musical life of the country; to speak with one voice for music; to provide for the interchange of information between the member organizations, and to encourage coordination of effort among these organizations; to organize surveys of fact-finding commissions whenever deemed necessary; to encourage the advancement and appreciation of the art of music; and to foster the highest ethical standards in the musical professions and industries. There are now fifty-three member organizations (of which the A. F. of M. is one), which have a total individual membership of over 1,228,000. General meetings are held twice annually, and the Council's Executive Committee meets six times a year. The Council is the only national musical organization to hold a Congressional Charter.

Then, on September 2, 1958, Congress authorized the National Cultural Center and set aside nine acres along the Potomac for its construction. The law directed President Eisenhower to appoint a Board of thirty Trustees and an Advisory Committee on the Arts. The American Federation of Musicians' President Kenin, one of the members of this board, stated, on receiving the appointment, "I welcome this opportunity to aid in building a national home for the American living arts, and commend the President and the Congress for taking this long-needed action. The United States has been the only major country in the world which does not recognize and support its native arts and artists in any organized degree. There is much to be done in this field,