

of Washington, D.C., the right to appropriate their own tax funds for the support of cultural activities, and by its control of the major summer cultural facility denies its use for the National Symphony Orchestra, the Washington Ballet Co., the Washington Civic Opera, the Children's Theater, and other local cultural groups.

You must know, Mr. Secretary, that the Watergate is no longer suitable for cultural programs due to the fact that at least one great 4-engine airplane flies immediately overhead every minute as the landing field at the National Airport is approached.

The Federal Government shows not the slightest concern for this situation, and has consistently supported the airplanes over culture. Having made the Watergate unsuitable by the airflight landing patterns, it now says that it cannot afford to use the Carter Barron Amphitheater for major cultural programs.

If this situation doesn't cry for a broad-based inquiry then nothing does.

No doubt sick jokes and burlesque hall humor pays its way. This is the way with things in our society where educational and cultural programs are crowded out of the television programs by soap operas, westerns, and a myriad other items which are able to find wealthy sponsors, who can write their cost off as business expenses.

As I said in my letter of June 1, which I hope you will soon find time to answer even though it might keep you from a hike up the canal in this beautiful weather, the American people want something better than is so easily available to them and their children in the Carter Barron Amphitheater and over the television stations. They want something vital, alive, and close to the American dream and the American promise. I wrote you, too, that "the sweep of history has made the United States the leader of the free world, and we must compete with the Soviet Union for the minds and the hearts of men everywhere in the world." The United States, and its National Capital "must take its place" beside other nations and other capital cities in support of cultural matters. That the Nation's Capital is behind, even such a provincial capital city as Tiflis, U.S.S.R. should and must be a matter of concern to you, Mr. Secretary, just as it is to me if only because of the cold war and the competition of the Soviet Union.

I shall look forward to hearing from you personally on this matter, Mr. Secretary. I enclose herewith a copy of the Library of Congress study to which I have referred.

Sincerely yours,

CARROLL D. KEARNS,
Member of Congress.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, May 12, 1961.

HON. HUBERT H. HUMPHREY,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR SENATOR HUMPHREY: In Mr. Coombs' absence, I am replying to your letter of April 25 in which you ask for his views concerning Harold Weston's proposal for a national conference on the arts and government.

We have studied the outline of the proposed conference as well as the suggestion as set forth in Mr. Weston's letter to Pierre Salinger that such a conference be held under White House auspices.

We believe that a conference which would help to define and clarify the appropriate role of Government in the arts is very much to be desired and agree with you that Mr. Weston's particular suggestion has a great deal of merit.

The conference itself appears to be well conceived. Its objective statement of the issues invites impartial consideration and the broad participation for it appears to include all interests concerned.

Mr. Weston's proposal that the conference be sponsored by the White House is also fitting. That President and Mrs. Kennedy have already identified themselves so closely with the arts has had an exhilarating influence on American cultural life. Their association with such a conference would visibly confirm this personal interest and would symbolize at the highest level of the Government's recognition that this is a national problem in which it must carry a share of responsibility.