

certain areas of the arts. Gov. Nelson Rockefeller has requested the legislature to appropriate this year \$450,000 for its use. If granted, the council would no longer be merely an advisory body. Most of the projects proposed would benefit residents upstate, as they should. All grants would be to nonprofit undertakings. The performing arts would receive about 90 percent of the total. The vote on appropriations will be taken toward the end of March. Citizens of New York State are urged to write at once in support of this appropriation to Assemblyman Fred W. Preller, chairman, assembly ways and means committee, and to Senator Austin W. Erwin, chairman, senate ways and means committee. Address both State Capitol, Albany 1, N.Y.

FEDERAL AND STATE POLICIES RE THE ARTS

As a result of our observations during the past 6 years of the selection and the administration of governmental art advisory bodies, attention should be drawn to a few conclusions. Members of such bodies should be persons of professional competence in the field they represent and willing to devote a fair amount of time to the task. The temptation to select persons for "window dressing" or for political affiliations should be resisted. The carrying out of decisions should not be left to the staff director, particularly if those decisions run counter to current administration policy in any way. Recommendations of a governmental advisory body should be "in the public domain" and made available to interested organizations or citizens. All forms of direct or indirect censorship of the arts should be resolutely opposed.

One form of governmental controls is, for other reasons than censorship, being fairly widely discussed, particularly in the dance field. Therefore, the NCAG unanimously adopted the following resolution on February 16, 1961:

"Resolution re licensing teachers of the arts.

"Recognizing the desirability of spreading greater knowledge about higher standards of teaching of the arts and to prevent immature or incompetent persons from teaching any field of art, the National Council on the Arts and Government nevertheless is emphatically opposed to obligatory licensing of teachers and of the arts, with the exception of teachers who are a part of a State's public school or college educational system. The licensing of private or independent artists in any field is an unwarranted infringement upon the essential freedom of the arts. To set State-regulated standards to qualify private or independent teachers of the arts, even under the most favorable system, would involve governmental controls over esthetic matters which should not be tolerated in a free country. Such requirements would tend to enforce mediocrity and inevitably become a serious threat to the development of the arts in our country. Furthermore, licensing per se would in no way prevent fraudulent advertising or misleading promises, or protect the public. There are existing laws for such abuses. Therefore, the National Council urges all professional organizations concerned with the arts to take a strong stand against legislation which would require the licensing of private or independent teachers in any field of the arts."

CONCLUSION

New frontiers in the relationship of government to the arts in the United States seem to be close at hand. Will this tardy dawn become a new day or fade away like a mirage? Now more than ever is the time to act individually and collectively, promptly, and vigorously. A similarly favorable situation may not recur in a decade. This report is issued by the NCAG to provide the necessary accurate, up-to-date information for immediate and effective action.

Respectfully submitted.

HAROLD WESTON, *Chairman.*

The substance of this report was unanimously approved by the NCAG on February 16, 1961.

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