

Fourth Ozark Arts and Crafts Fair at War Eagle, and many others, including ceramics and other crafts.

In the recreational field lies the largest group numerically of craft workers. So large is this group that it certainly merits the help and attention of such a commission as Congressman Thompson's measure would establish. Notable in this field are the retired elderly people. Craftwork for this group is contributing one of the outstanding solutions for their social and psychological problems. Witness the success of the Sunshine University, in Florida, established originally for a few retired individuals, but which already has an enrollment in the thousands, although they have been specializing in weaving and ceramics only.

National social and recreational groups whose programs emphasize the various crafts include the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, YWHA, American Red Cross, American Craftsmen's Council which includes 70-odd National, State, regional, and local groups; the 4-H Clubs; and others. The morale and welfare services of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps provide arts and crafts as an integral part of the off-duty recreation services provided enlisted men, officer personnel, and their families.

Occupational therapy has demonstrated the value of creative craftwork in the treatment and cure of physical and mental illness. All homes for the aged, Veterans' Administration hospitals, industrial hospitals and other hospitals, and hospitals for the Armed Forces now have established craft centers and hobby shops.

One other activity in the field of craft art must be mentioned: that of exhibitions. The impressive list of these and the great number of those who attend them are indicative of the importance this work is assuming in our daily life. Not only are these exhibitions making fine work known to our people, but the U.S. Information Agency has sent quite a number of important exhibitions of American craftwork abroad. These shows have been developed by the Smithsonian Institution and private organizations for the U.S. Information Agency. Early in June, craftsmen, educators, and other leaders in this field from all over the country attended the First Annual Conference of American Craftsmen, in Asilomar, Calif. The conference was held under the sponsorship of the American Craftsmen's Council which last year opened a great Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City at 29 West 53d Street. This is a permanent year-round museum devoted solely to the craft arts.

It seems evident to me, therefore, that this extraordinary growth of interest in this form of art calls for the recognition and encouragement that a Federal commission could give. Such an agency would not only strengthen this ground swell of interest, but provide a foundation for a tremendous renaissance and flowering of the craft arts in our country.

I thank you for the courtesy you have shown me in hearing my statement.