

cert halls in cities. It is no wonder that the situation today has been referred to as everything from a "cultural revolution" and a "cultural breakthrough" to a "cultural explosion" and a "cultural bender."

Yet the picture is still not entirely rosy, even in the music field. As Howard Mitchell, of the National Symphony, noted earlier this year, there is the problem of those for whom the "products" of the musicians are still "too exclusive."⁷ There are still the many economic difficulties involved in bringing more good music to more appreciative citizens. Although the price of symphony tickets has gone up in many cases, some of our finest orchestras still cannot keep up with rising costs. Thus, without additional aid, they face the same plight as the universities with their ever-increasing tuition fees. We know, for example, that concert ticket sales usually only cover from 40 to 50 percent of the year's expenses for our major orchestras.

Moreover, with standards of performance and the degree of competition on the upgrade, we are told also that there is a shortage of orchestral players and a great demand for full-time professional music teachers. Some of the orchestras, it is true, receive financial assistance from local governments. Most of the leading symphonies, however, must rely mainly on gifts from individuals and business firms.⁸

I do not suggest at this point, however, that the Federal Government merely step in and buy a solution to such problems facing music and the other arts. This is something neither you nor I want to see happen. Rather, I have chosen this close-to-home example as only one illustration of the many serious deficiencies which will continue to exist unless we can develop in citizens a greater appreciation of the significance of artistic endeavor in our national life. Our State and local governments play important parts in this task, but I believe that the impetus for a broad program of national cultural awareness must come from the national level. I am convinced that our democratic society must accept responsibility for preserving and promoting the arts as it has done in other areas of universal human need—in health, in welfare, and in education.

In this regard, I share the view expressed last year by a member of a family that has afforded substantial financial support to the arts. In emphasizing the concept of community responsibility for the arts at the dedication of the magnificent Lincoln Center for the performing arts in New York, John D. Rockefeller III stated that " * * * today creative fulfillment is as important to man's well-being and happiness as his need for better physical health was 50 years ago."⁹

Let us look now at some of the Federal legislation enacted during the 86th Congress. One bread-and-butter problem for many musicians was helped with the passage of a bill which reduces the cabaret tax from 20 percent to 10 percent (Public Law 86-422). As you know, the American Federation of Musicians had vigorously opposed this Federal tax for years on the grounds that it was confiscatory and discriminatory and that it greatly reduced the number of job opportunities for some musicians.

Another bill passed in 1959 would amend the National Cultural Center Act by permitting donors to the center to name an alternate recipient for tax deduction purposes if the total amount of donation in 5 years is insufficient for the construction of the center. As you are already aware, national cultural history was enhanced in 1958 when the Congress chartered a National Cultural Center to be located in the National's Capital and constructed with private funds on Government-donated land. The National Cultural Center Act, incidentally, received wholehearted, bipartisan support and can be an excellent example of cooperative public-private efforts to encourage cultural activities.

You in the music field will surely be pleased to know that the hall of this multi-million-dollar project scheduled for completion first is an opera house. Until the other projected facilities are constructed, symphonies and theatrical performances will probably also be held in this hall. Trustees recently announced plans to start building by 1963 a complete shell of the center and to finish a multipurpose hall by that date. A plan is now under consideration which proposes using the center as a showcase for the performing arts—presenting rather than producing shows, with a clearinghouse for art information, an arts museum, and a library.

⁷ Christian Science Monitor, Apr. 20, 1960.

⁸ Economist, July 24, 1957, p. 219.

⁹ New York Times, Oct. 7, 1959, p. 45.