

Unlike the capital cities and even the larger provincial cities of Europe and the U.S.S.R., Washington has never enjoyed the distinction of such a monument to the performing arts. It is hoped that the proposed cultural center would not only be an inspiring, useful, and tangible project in which our own citizens could take pride but also an international meetingplace of world renown in the arts.

We have looked at some of the recent legislative enactments. Surely, the progress to date is notable. Yet much more remains to be done. Numerous other bills which would affect the cultural life of the Nation were left pending at the end of the last session. I call your attention particularly to a proposal which would provide for the preservation of the Dolly Madison House, Benjamin Tayloe House, Decatur House, and the famous old Belasco Theater—historic landmarks in the Nation's Capital. The Senate (Committee on Labor and Public Welfare) held hearings on such proposals this spring. And yet, despite the overwhelming evidence in favor of the preservation of the historic buildings, and despite the efforts of the General Services Administrator to recommend another site for the proposed court building, the Senate Public Works Committee voted to authorize new construction on Lafayette Square. The one final hope now is intervention by the new administration next year. Since GSA will not be ready to raze the buildings for about 2 years, the new President would be able to save these historic buildings by refusing to spend the money authorized for the new courthouse.

I am certain that Mr. Kennedy will fully support every effort to preserve these buildings which have such deep connections with America's cultural past. These efforts have the support of some 30 national and local organizations representing millions of Americans—among them several large music organizations. President-elect Kennedy introduced a splendid measure in March of this year to preserve and maintain buildings for historical, cultural, and civic purposes. In introducing this bill, he said:

"* * * The Dolly Madison house, the Benjamin Tayloe house, and the Belasco Theater have long served as an inspiration to generations of Americans who have visited their Capital City. Certainly, before any irrevocable action is taken to destroy these buildings to provide a site for a courthouse, other sites should be investigated."

The bill also authorizes that the National Park Service and the District of Columbia Recreation Department shall advise and assist the Administrator in the restoration and management of the Belasco Theater as a municipal art center. I also introduced a similar bill in the Congress this year.

In my opinion, it would be an act of folly to destroy these important symbols of our cultural heritage as a Nation. In this city of Chicago, the famed Garrick Theater, built in 1892, the same decade the Belasco Theater and Carnegie Hall were built, was recently saved through the efforts of a citizens' committee headed by Mayor Richard J. Daley. Concerted effort and the cooperative interest of professional organizations such as your own often lend important support to such projects.

Another significant piece of proposed legislation was that relating to a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts, which I have already discussed. As I indicated, the bill was favorably reported in the House. In the Senate, it was left awaiting action by the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

I also sponsored, as did Senator Humphrey, a bill to provide that 1 mill out of each \$1 of tax revenue of the District of Columbia government be set aside in a special fund to be administered by the District Recreation Board in order to help defray the expenses of the National Symphony Orchestra, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Washington Opera Society, and other nonprofit art and cultural programs of the Nation's Capital. This is not a new idea in municipal support of culture, and it certainly could do wonders for Washington's artistic and cultural activities.

You may be surprised to learn that the municipal government of Washington spends for less on the fine arts than most other major U.S. cities. A survey conducted in 1959 by the Library of Congress at my request showed that the Nation's Capital gives only \$16,000 in municipal funds for cultural activities as compared with much larger amounts in other cities of comparable size and less per capita income. It is no wonder that, in culture, Washington has been called a "hick town." Certainly our Capital does not compare favorably with the capital cities of other nations throughout the world where much higher