

tensive cultural programs which have become a source of national strength and prestige. Italy and France spring to mind as nations whose cultural life has in a very real sense assured their national survival again and again. And we all recognize the highly effective use the Soviet Union makes of the Russian ballet and other traditional Russian art forms, as Communist propaganda. The British Government, so like our own in its traditional suspicion of anything artistic, since the war has extended direct subsidy and assistance to the performing arts, enabling us to enjoy the Old Vic and the Sadler's Wells Ballet, among other things.

Here in Washington we have the Fine Arts Commission, which passes on the esthetics of various purely Federal construction, and the National Cultural Center, which is heroically struggling to raise private funds to establish a center for the performing arts here in the Nation's Capital. During the depression, there were Federal work-relief projects for writers, theatrical performers, and artists and they were among the most popular programs of the entire New Deal. Frankly, as an amateur artist myself, I reserve judgment on some of the bulging Rivera-and-branchwater frescoes inflicted on various post offices and Federal courthouses in this period. Nevertheless, the 1930's were the only period in our history when creative and performing artists were regarded as a national asset and not a group of rather peculiar citizens who were neither necessary nor inevitable.

I would not ask this committee to believe that America is a howling desert when it comes to the arts. In the last two generations, there has been tremendous vitality, particularly in music and symphony orchestras, ballet and the so-called Little Theater movement. While in my judgment we have yet to equal the great surge of creative writing in the 1920's, our literary life continues to flourish and not all of our young writers are beatniks or pornographers, though they have yet to equal Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser, or Stephen Vincent Benet.

In my judgment, the very vitality of the cultural upsurge which has followed the war calls for an equally vital awareness and a positive cultural program on the part of the Federal Government.

We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on scientific and technological training, research, and development, to a degree which threatens to make our entire cultural life somewhat mathematical and musclebound. The contribution of creative art to the spiritual side of our civilization can keep our society in balance. We do not want to breed a race of engineers and mechanics at the cost of depriving us of the sensitive and esthetic intelligence which can use our tremendous scientific powers with wisdom and humanity.

Moreover, since the war, certain blindspots have developed in our cultural progress. The theater in particular has been threatened by an unwholesome concentration on Broadway, with rising costs that today almost threatens the American theatrical tradition with extinction. The rising costs of book publication have narrowed the opportunities for new writers and are compelling smaller and adventurous publishers to combine with larger firms and play it safe. I will not discuss television or recent American films, except to point out that the most successful recent TV entertainment program was "The Age of Kings," prepared by British Broadcasting Co. and that English