

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SYMPOSIUM ON THE ARTS

Austin, Texas

September 29, 1975

Occasions such as this serve a number of useful purposes. Above all, they help us to remember how far we have come.

I was here when the civil rights papers of this Library were opened. It was a moving occasion, made all the more so by President Johnson's address, and by his courage in the face of mortal illness.

Together we looked back to a time when human rights were denied and to the struggles that won them, and we looked ahead to what was still to be achieved in the great march toward equality.

Some of the young people there had not lived through the earlier period; only the short-comings of this day had meaning for them. That is all right. They helped to prevent the rest of us from becoming complacent about the victories of other years.

But it was important for all of us, while we concentrated on the present, to understand how much had been gained in the past. Free men and women need constantly to be reminded that nations can be made more just and more humane, if enough people of good will determine to make them so.

The same experience marked the opening of the education papers. We had come from a time when only a lucky few attended college, to one in which the opportunities of advanced education were available to millions. Again, there were short-comings; but so much had been done.

In almost every field of human experience -- medicine and health, the natural environment, economic growth and justice -- the papers in this Library tell a story of struggle and achievement, of change for the better in the life of our country.

However, in meetings like this one, while the past is celebrated, the needs of the future fairly shout for recognition.

President Johnson wanted it that way. Those of you who worked with him know that while he was proud of what he and his colleagues in the Congress and the Executive Branch had done, he was never satisfied, never content, so long as the inequities that he had recognized in our society were unremedied.

The same story can be told of the arts in America.

Effective support for the arts and humanities has been one of my primary concerns, not only during my term as Vice President where the leadership and encouragement of President Johnson were of decisive importance in this area, but also during 21 years as a U. S. Senator.

In 1957, I introduced the first of several bills which culminated 7 years later in the enactment of legislation establishing the National Council on the Arts.

It was also my privilege to be involved in the promotion and development of the National Portrait Gallery, the Kennedy Center, the Museum of African Art, new directions by the Smithsonian Institution, and international cultural exchange programs.

So I have been through the school of hard knocks in learning how far we still need to go in the arts, despite the tremendous distance we have traveled in a short time.

Many of you can remember from first-hand experience -- as I can -- a time when the idea that public funds should be devoted to supporting the arts was regarded by a lot of people as either foolish, or outrageous, or both.

The fact that the Europeans and the Canadians had a completely different outlook was regarded as irrelevant. Many Congressmen regarded the Europeans as a decadent lot, what you might call effete snobs. Let them spend their tax revenues on opera houses and museums and symphony orchestras -- we had more practical things to do, and besides, only New York and Boston really cared about such things as painting, sculpture, serious music, theatre, and ballet.

By the middle of the 20th century, anyone listening to Congressional talk about the arts might have concluded that we hadn't moved very far from the America of the early 19th Century -- when Tocqueville saw us as a people with little interest in the fine arts, far more concerned with the useful than with the beautiful. So it was, he said, with democracies. It was in aristocracies that respect for elegance and taste, for the creative and speculative realms of the spirit, might flourish -- not in the hurly-burly of egalitarian life.

But there had been a brief period, in the 1930's, when that general opposition to spending public funds for the arts yielded to something better. Artists and performers were out of work along with factory workers and shop clerks, and somebody had the bright idea that they might be put to work within their own disciplines.

They might paint murals on post-office walls, as Ben Shahn did, or adorn other public places, as Jackson Pollack and Stuart Davis did. They might write books about the regions of this country, or form theatre companies, producing both the classics of drama and new works that spoke to the conditions of the times.

Forty thousand people were engaged at one time in the publicly supported art programs of Federal One, under the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

It has been said that a majority of the leading painters and sculptors of the 40's and 50's were employed by those programs in the 30's. They might have raked leaves or poured concrete instead, and still survived; but we can be thankful that under Franklin Roosevelt, the government had the courage and foresight to help them develop their talents while they were feeding their stomachs. As a result, not only they, but we, the observing and listening public, benefitted. I want to come back to the lessons of this period in a while.

Despite the successes of Federal One, opposition continued to the notion that hard-earned tax dollars should go to produce poems and pictures and dance. It wasn't just opposition in Congress and the Executive Branch. Whatever constituency there was out there in the state and districts was too weak to demand support for the arts.

Congress was willing to provide tax deductions for wealthy people who contributed to the symphony and the regional theatre. But it was reluctant to appropriate revenues for the same purpose. The idea that a community is enriched by the presence of art, and impoverished by its absence, had still not gained political currency.

But in the 1960's it did. Partly, that was because of Lyndon Johnson and progressive Congresses. More importantly, I believe, it was because people throughout the country came to sense that the arts gave added meaning and dignity to life.

I will not attempt any kind of curb-stone sociological explanation of that development. Yet it interests me that the conventional belief, that art is supported chiefly in time of surplus -- when there is surplus wealth to support it and surplus leisure to enjoy it -- may not be altogether true.

The gross national product and per capita income were rising during the 1960's, but the opposite was the case in the 1930's, when Federal One was operating. What is similar about the two periods is that they were times of turmoil, of rapid change, simultaneously full of hope and despair.

It may be that people were looking for something beyond the circumstances of everyday life, something that brought order out of chaos, as visual art does; that added grace to life, as the dance does; that offered meaning and coherence, as both literature and music can do.

I mean something more than simple entertainment, more than mere assistance in passing time -- the "visual chewing-gum" that much of television has been aptly called.

I mean that which answers the deepest spiritual needs of men and women, teaching and giving pleasure at once. In a time of unrest and trouble, the need for that enrichment is stronger than ever.

The people's physical well-being is highly important, and it is the government's first obligation to advance it; but it does not answer the quest for meaning and beauty in the human heart.

The beginnings of a Federal arts program were modest, as you know. We had to start with so little that public funds made no appreciable difference to the major institutions that needed help -- to the great symphony orchestras, to the Metropolitan and the museums.

But it was a start. And under the skillful direction of Roger Stevens and later, Nancy Hanks and Michael Straight, the benefits began to be felt.

Some people thought more should go to the already proven institutions on the East and West coasts, meaning less should be spread around to the admittedly less advanced hinter-land. Coming from Minnesota, where we think rather well of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, I had rather definite and contrary ideas about that.

In any event, I thought Roger and Nancy were practicing the art of politics pretty well when they offered help to people and groups in a large number of Congressional districts. I was sure of it when the Endowment commissioned that Calder sculpture for Grand Rapids -- President Ford's hometown. I decided that the Corps of Engineers had nothing on the Endowment for foresight!

As people everywhere saw what could be done with Federal help, the level of their expectation began to rise.

At about the same time, the stock market started down, and this baffling animal call "stagflation" -- a stagnant, yet inflated, economy -- came over the horizon. The cost of theatrical and musical productions shot up. The salaries of art gallery attendants shot up. So did what it costs poets and composers and sculptors to keep alive.

The traditional sources of support for the arts -- private donors, foundations, and corporations -- began to restrict their contributions at precisely the time when the cost of encouraging and presenting the arts was rapidly expanding, along with public interest in them.

Here I want to say a word in praise of former President Nixon. Despite the deeply troublesome aspects of his administration, he did offer substantial encouragement for our national arts effort. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge his initiative in raising the Endowment's budget from the \$10 million range, when he took office, to its 1975 appropriation of \$75 million.

But even the present level of Federal funding -- ten times what it was when we began, back in 1965 -- is insufficient to meet the needs of the arts. It might have been enough in the days when only a few thousand people on the Eastern seaboard, and other thousands of Texans and Minnesotans who traveled East to enjoy the shows and galleries, really cared about the state of the arts.

But now everyone wants a part of that treasure. And they want it at a time when the Federal deficit is already high; when private contributions have reached a plateau, or declined; and when production and maintenance costs are staggering.

Well, there is no way to put the genie back in the bottle. People everywhere have seen and felt the impact of the arts now, and they will not be satisfied with the occasional trip to the East or West coast metropolis, or the infrequent presentation of great drama or dance on television. They want to see paintings, and to hear Beethoven in live performances.

There are enough young people in America now who want to make movies, to fill another Los Angeles. People want their public buildings made more attractive; no more long gray corridors and bland facades. They like having their young children taught to respond to life in verse, by poets hired for that purpose, because the poet's eye quickens life and reveals its inner meanings.

According to a Lou Harris poll, a large majority of the American people would be willing to pay an additional \$5 per year in taxes in order to increase support for the arts. Even half those with incomes under \$5,000 would do so. And nearly half of those polled would pay \$25 more a year.

Think of what even \$10 more from every tax-payer would mean!

It would more than wipe out the deficit of all the great artistic institutions, and enable thousands of artists to work at their art full-time. It would enable us to surpass even the European countries, which have for years assumed that the quality of life depended in substantial degree on the ready availability of fine art to their people.

There is in my view no question about it: The level of public appropriations for the arts must rise to meet the awakened needs of our citizens for them.

However, I would not be candid if I did not say that, despite the much greater political strength that the arts now carry into Congress, it will be difficult, given the present and forthcoming budgetary cycles, to increase funding for them to the levels they merit. But we can, and I believe will, achieve those increases in time.

In the meantime, there is much that can be done. The present unemployment figures -- the highest we have seen in decades -- include a great many actors, set designers, painters, writers, musicians, camera-men, graphic artists, ceramicists -- artists and artisans of every variety. They must eat and clothe themselves just as auto workers and salesmen must do.

Under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, several hundred have been employed in roles that reflect their talents and experience. There is no reason why, with determination and imagination, we cannot increase this figure.

Congress designed the CETA in such a way that the responsibility for structuring public service employment should be fixed at the local level. This is basically a good idea.

I think an imaginative city government could produce a remarkable employment program under the current CETA authority:

- Hiring unemployed actors and stagehands to perform in veterans' hospitals, schools, and homes for the aged;
- Hiring artists to produce works for public buildings; sculptors to adorn the parks and playgrounds and the subway stations; craftsmen, graphic artists, designers and decorators to make public places more attractive;
- Hiring potters, and men and women skilled in weaving, needlework, ceramics, and other handi-crafts to teach their skills to others;
- Hiring musicians and dancers to teach and to entertain.

The possibilities are limitless.

Those of us who care about the arts ought to urge such programs, for various practical reasons. Perhaps the most compelling of these is that the public would benefit directly from them.

I have always supported the Endowment's program of grants to individual artists, and I still do, because I know that the creative artist is the cutting edge of the human imagination. Among those grantees may be a Picasso, or a Stravinsky, or a Joyce, and I am selfish enough to want a role in encouraging them.

But it takes time, and perseverance, for the work of the experimenters to be appreciated by the public. In the meantime, taxes are high, inflation grows, and unemployment continues. Public enthusiasm for any government spending is limited, unless the benefits are obvious and compelling.

That is why I would like to see artists paid for performing services which the public can feel and see and hear -- which make immediate and obvious improvements in the conditions of public life.

We must get our economy out of its present trough. Only then can we generate the public revenues that we need for adequately supporting the arts. Only then can corporations and foundations and individuals have the means to increase their vital contributions.

But as we work to end this long and costly recession, we can see to it that the upward thrust of the arts, which has already enriched the spirits of so many Americans, continues unbroken.

There is so much still to be done. The operas and symphony orchestras are all facing heavy deficits; the future of some of them is in doubt. Regional theatres are struggling. The American Film Institute, which President Johnson proposed, is counted among those programs struggling to fulfill their initial expectations. Small literary magazines are as ever an endangered species. There are still vigorous arguments over whether the Endowment should focus its support chiefly on artists and institutions of proven high quality, or whether aid should be broadcast to a wide variety of performers and budding talents.

But while the future is rife with problems, it would be foolish to ignore how far we have come, and in such a short time.

Not long ago, the voices of hesitation prevailed in the Congress on questions of support for the arts. But now it is the voice of Claiborne Pell and John Brademas and Frank Thompson that carries the majority; and President Ford, thanks to Alexander Calder and the Endowment, is more sympathetic.

Ten years ago the Kennedy Center was only an idea; today it is a living reality -- thousands of Americans go there every evening to lift their hearts and deepen their understanding.

Ten years ago the options on television were cowboys, give-away shows, and situation comedies; today, at least, there's a chance of seeing good theatre or dance. So, along with the budgetary headaches, there has been remarkable progress.

There will always be those who see the arts as unnecessary frills, as superfluous to the needs of society. But they are fewer now, and fewer still among the coming generations who quest for more than material well-being.

The arts themselves have always been fragile creatures, a few notes of music in the winds of history, a glimpse of color in the gray of ordinary life.

But what strength there is in that fragility! Nations pass from the scene, great business endeavors rise and fall, manners and customs change, but Mozart and Botticelli endure.

And the creative spirit of man endures, even in wars and recessions.

What we must try to do is enable that spirit to express itself in all its forms, so that it may quicken the individual spirit in each of us, and ennoble the civilization of which we are a part.

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Mr Johnson
Harry Middleton

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

✓ Beaverly Sills —

SYMPOSIUM ON THE ARTS

Elspeth Rostow —

AUSTIN, TEXAS

President Lorene Rogers

SEPTEMBER 29, 1975

Panel - Art & Politics

① Panels Reversed } Small
AM to PM } morning hr
PM to AM } in
 Afternoon

L OCCASIONS SUCH AS THIS SERVE A NUMBER OF USEFUL PURPOSES.

ABOVE ALL, THEY HELP US TO REMEMBER HOW FAR WE HAVE COME.

L I WAS HERE WHEN THE CIVIL RIGHTS PAPERS OF THIS LIBRARY WERE

OPENED. L IT WAS A MOVING OCCASION, MADE ALL THE MORE SO BY

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S ADDRESS, AND BY HIS COURAGE IN THE FACE OF
MORTAL ILLNESS.

L TOGETHER WE LOOKED BACK TO A TIME WHEN HUMAN RIGHTS WERE
DENIED AND TO THE STRUGGLES THAT WON THEM, ^{then} AND WE LOOKED AHEAD
TO WHAT WAS STILL TO BE ACHIEVED IN THE GREAT MARCH TOWARD

EQUALITY.

L SOME OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE THERE HAD NOT LIVED THROUGH THE
EARLIER PERIOD; ONLY THE SHORT-COMINGS OF THIS DAY HAD MEANING
FOR THEM. ^{and} L THAT IS ALL RIGHT. L THEY HELPED TO PREVENT THE REST
OF US FROM BECOMING COMPLACENT ABOUT THE VICTORIES OF OTHER
YEARS.

L BUT IS WAS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US, WHILE WE CONCENTRATED
ON THE PRESENT, TO UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH HAD BEEN GAINED IN THE
PAST. L FREE MEN AND WOMEN NEED CONSTANTLY TO BE REMINDED THAT
NATIONS CAN BE MADE MORE JUST AND MORE HUMANE, IF ENOUGH PEOPLE
OF GOOD WILL DETERMINE TO MAKE THEM SO.

L THE SAME EXPERIENCE MARKED THE OPENING OF THE EDUCATION
PAPERS. L WE HAD COME FROM A TIME WHEN ONLY A 'LUCKY FEW' ATTENDED
COLLEGE, TO ONE IN WHICH THE OPPORTUNITIES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION
WERE AVAILABLE TO MILLIONS. L AGAIN, THERE WERE SHORT-COMINGS;
BUT SO MUCH HAD BEEN DONE.

L IN ALMOST EVERY FIELD OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE -- MEDICINE AND
HEALTH, THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JUSTICE --
THE PAPERS IN THIS LIBRARY TELL A STORY OF STRUGGLE AND
ACHIEVEMENT, OF CHANGE FOR THE BETTER IN THE LIFE OF OUR COUNTRY.

*I'm proud to have been a part of
this struggle - A great time to be alive!*

HOWEVER, IN MEETINGS LIKE THIS ONE, WHILE THE PAST IS
CELEBRATED, THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE FAIRLY SHOUT FOR RECOGNITION. ^{cry out}

and PRESIDENT JOHNSON WANTED IT THAT WAY. THOSE OF YOU WHO
WORKED WITH HIM, KNOW THAT WHILE HE WAS PROUD OF WHAT HE AND

HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAD
DONE, HE WAS NEVER SATISFIED, NEVER CONTENT, SO LONG AS THE

INEQUITIES THAT HE HAD RECOGNIZED IN OUR SOCIETY WERE UNREMEDIED.

THE SAME STORY CAN BE TOLD OF THE ARTS IN AMERICA.

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES HAS BEEN
ONE OF MY PRIMARY CONCERNS, NOT ONLY DURING MY TERM AS VICE

PRESIDENT WHERE THE LEADERSHIP AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRESIDENT

JOHNSON WERE OF DECISIVE IMPORTANCE IN THIS AREA, BUT ALSO

DURING 21 YEARS AS A U. S. SENATOR.

IN 1957, I INTRODUCED ^{one} ~~THE FIRST~~ OF SEVERAL BILLS WHICH
CULMINATED 7 YEARS LATER IN THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS.

↳ IT WAS ALSO MY PRIVILEGE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PROMOTION
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, THE KENNEDY
CENTER, THE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART, NEW DIRECTIONS BY THE
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, AND INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE
PROGRAMS.

↳ SO I HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS IN
LEARNING HOW FAR WE STILL NEED TO GO IN THE ARTS, DESPITE
THE TREMENDOUS DISTANCE WE HAVE TRAVELED IN A SHORT TIME.

↳ MANY OF YOU CAN REMEMBER FROM FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE -- AS
I CAN -- A TIME WHEN THE IDEA THAT PUBLIC FUNDS SHOULD BE
DEVOTED TO SUPPORTING THE ARTS WAS REGARDED BY A LOT OF
PEOPLE AS EITHER FOOLISH, OR OUTRAGEOUS, OR BOTH.

↳ THE FACT THAT THE EUROPEANS AND THE CANADIANS HAD A
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT OUTLOOK WAS REGARDED AS IRRELEVANT.

MANY CONGRESSMEN REGARDED THE EUROPEANS AS A DECADENT LOT,

WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL EFFETE SNOBS. LET THEM SPEND THEIR TAX

REVENUES ON OPERA HOUSES AND MUSEUMS AND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS --

WE HAD MORE PRACTICAL THINGS TO DO, AND BESIDES, ONLY NEW

YORK AND BOSTON REALLY CARED ABOUT SUCH THINGS AS PAINTING,

SCULPTURE, SERIOUS MUSIC, THEATRE, AND BALLET.

BY THE MIDDLE OF THE 20TH CENTURY, ANYONE LISTENING TO
CONGRESSIONAL TALK ABOUT THE ARTS MIGHT HAVE CONCLUDED THAT

WE HADN'T MOVED VERY FAR FROM THE AMERICA OF THE EARLY

19TH CENTURY -- WHEN ^{De} TOCQUEVILLE SAW US AS A PEOPLE WITH

LITTLE INTEREST IN THE FINE ARTS, FAR MORE CONCERNED WITH

THE USEFUL THAN WITH THE BEAUTEFUL. SO IT WAS, HE SAID,

WITH DEMOCRACIES IT WAS IN ARISTOCRACIES THAT RESPECT FOR

ELEGANCE AND TASTE, FOR THE CREATIVE AND SPECULATIVE REALMS

OF THE SPIRIT, MIGHT FLUORISH -- NOT IN THE HURLY-BURLY OF

EGALITARIAN LIFE.

L BUT THERE HAD BEEN A BRIEF PERIOD, IN THE 1930's, WHEN THAT
GENERAL OPPOSITION TO SPENDING PUBLIC FUNDS FOR THE ARTS YIELDED
TO SOMETHING BETTER. L ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS WERE OUT OF WORK
ALONG WITH FACTORY WORKERS AND SHOP CLERKS, AND SOMEBODY HAD THE
BRIGHT IDEA THAT THEY MIGHT BE PUT TO WORK WITHIN THEIR OWN
DISCIPLINES.

L THEY MIGHT PAINT MURALS ON POST-OFFICE WALLS, AS BEN SHAHN
DID, OR ADORN OTHER PUBLIC PLACES, AS JACKSON POLLACK AND STUART
DAVIS DID. L THEY MIGHT WRITE BOOKS ABOUT THE REGIONS OF THIS
COUNTRY, OR FORM THEATRE COMPANIES, PRODUCING BOTH THE CLASSICS OF
DRAMA AND NEW WORKS THAT SPOKE TO THE CONDITIONS OF THE TIMES.

L FORTY THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE ENGAGED AT ONE TIME IN THE
Federal Arts Project
PUBLICLY SUPPORTED ART PROGRAMS OF FEDERAL ONE, UNDER THE WORKS
PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA). (I was a State Director *writers arts music*)

*walked gallery
in ropes*

-7-

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT A MAJORITY OF THE LEADING PAINTERS AND
SCULPTORS OF THE 40'S AND 50'S WERE EMPLOYED BY THOSE PROGRAMS IN
THE 30'S. *There some people*
they THEY MIGHT HAVE RAKED LEAVES OR POURED CONCRETE
INSTEAD, AND STILL SURVIVED BUT WE CAN BE THANKFUL THAT UNDER
FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE COURAGE AND FORESIGHT
TO HELP THEM DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS WHILE THEY WERE FEEDING THEIR
STOMACHS. *As* AS A RESULT, NOT ONLY THEY, BUT WE, THE OBSERVING AND
LISTENING PUBLIC, BENEFITTED. *I will*
want I WANT TO COME BACK TO THE LESSONS
OF THIS PERIOD IN A WHILE.

L DESPITE THE SUCCESSES OF FEDERAL ONE, OPPOSITION CONTINUED
TO THE NOTION THAT HARD-EARNED TAX DOLLARS SHOULD GO TO PRODUCE *music,*
POEMS AND PICTURES AND DANCE. *L* IT WASN'T JUST OPPOSITION IN
CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. *L* WHATEVER CONSTITUENCY THERE
WAS OUT THERE IN THE STATE AND DISTRICTS WAS TOO WEAK TO DEMAND
SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS. *(*

CONGRESS WAS WILLING TO PROVIDE TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR WEALTHY

PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SYMPHONY AND THE REGIONAL THEATRE.

BUT IT WAS RELUCTANT TO APPROPRIATE REVENUES FOR THE SAME

PURPOSE. THE IDEA THAT A COMMUNITY IS ENRICHED BY THE PRESENCE

OF ART, AND IMPOVERISHED BY ITS ABSENCE, HAD STILL NOT GAINED

POLITICAL CURRENCY.

BUT IN THE 1960'S IT DID. PARTLY, THAT WAS BECAUSE OF LYNDON

JOHNSON AND PROGRESSIVE CONGRESSES. MORE IMPORTANTLY, I BELIEVE,

IT WAS BECAUSE PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY CAME TO SENSE THAT

THE ARTS GAVE ADDED MEANING AND DIGNITY TO LIFE.

I WILL NOT ATTEMPT ANY KIND OF CURB-STONE SOCIOLOGICAL

EXPLANATION OF THAT DEVELOPMENT. YET IT INTERESTS ME, THAT THE

CONVENTIONAL BELIEF, THAT ART IS SUPPORTED CHIEFLY IN TIME OF

SURPLUS -- WHEN THERE IS SURPLUS WEALTH TO SUPPORT IT AND SURPLUS

LEISURE TO ENJOY IT -- MAY NOT BE ALTOGETHER TRUE.

L THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT AND PER CAPITA INCOME WERE RISING
DURING THE 1960's, BUT THE OPPOSITE WAS THE CASE IN THE 1930's,
WHEN FEDERAL ONE WAS OPERATING. L WHAT IS SIMILAR ABOUT THE TWO

PERIODS IS THAT THEY WERE TIMES OF TURMOIL, OF RAPID CHANGE,

SIMULTANEOUSLY FULL OF HOPE AND DESPAIR. —

*This is the productive
environment for the
arts.*

L IT MAY BE THAT PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING BEYOND THE
CIRCUMSTANCES OF EVERYDAY LIFE, SOMETHING THAT BROUGHT ORDER

OUT OF CHAOS, AS VISUAL ART DOES, THAT ADDED GRACE TO LIFE, AS

THE DANCE DOES, THAT OFFERED MEANING AND COHERENCE, AS BOTH

LITERATURE AND MUSIC CAN DO. — yes,

L I MEAN SOMETHING MORE THAN SIMPLE ENTERTAINMENT, MORE THAN

MERE ASSISTANCE IN PASSING TIME -- THE "VISUAL CHEWING-GUM" THAT

MUCH OF TELEVISION HAS BEEN APTLY CALLED.

I MEAN THAT WHICH ANSWERS THE DEEPEST SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF
MEN AND WOMEN, TEACHING AND GIVING PLEASURE AT ONCE. IN A TIME
OF UNREST AND TROUBLE, THE NEED FOR THAT ENRICHMENT IS STRONGER
THAN EVER.

THE PEOPLE'S PHYSICAL WELL-BEING IS HIGHLY IMPORTANT, AND
IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRST OBLIGATION TO ADVANCE IT; BUT IT DOES
NOT ANSWER THE QUEST FOR MEANING AND BEAUTY IN THE HUMAN HEART.

THE BEGINNINGS OF A FEDERAL ARTS PROGRAM WERE MODEST, AS YOU
KNOW WE HAD TO START WITH SO LITTLE THAT PUBLIC FUNDS MADE NO
APPRECIABLE DIFFERENCE TO THE MAJOR INSTITUTIONS THAT NEEDED
HELP -- TO THE GREAT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS, TO THE METROPOLITAN AND
THE MUSEUMS.

that first step which is the longest journey
BUT IT WAS A START! AND UNDER THE SKILLFUL DIRECTION OF
ROGER STEVENS AND LATER, NANCY HANKS AND MICHAEL STRAIGHT, THE
BENEFITS BEGAN TO BE FELT.

SOME PEOPLE THOUGHT MORE SHOULD GO TO THE ALREADY PROVEN
INSTITUTIONS ON THE EAST AND WEST COASTS, MEANING LESS SHOULD
BE SPREAD AROUND TO THE ADMITTEDLY LESS ADVANCED HINTER-LAND.

COMING FROM MINNESOTA, WHERE WE THINK RATHER WELL OF THE TYRONE
our main symphony orchestra + Fine Arts Park,
Walker gallery
GUTHRIE THEATRE, I HAD RATHER DEFINITE AND CONTRARY IDEAS ABOUT
THAT.

IN ANY EVENT, I THOUGHT ROGER AND NANCY WERE PRACTICING THE
ART OF POLITICS PRETTY WELL WHEN THEY OFFERED HELP TO PEOPLE AND
GROUPS IN A LARGE NUMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS. I WAS SURE
OF IT WHEN THE ENDOWMENT COMMISSIONED THAT CALDER SCULPTURE FOR
GRAND RAPIDS, ^{*Michigan*} -- PRESIDENT FORD'S HOMETOWN. I DECIDED THAT THE
CORPS OF ENGINEERS HAD NOTHING ON THE ENDOWMENT FOR FORESIGHT!

AS PEOPLE EVERYWHERE SAW WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH FEDERAL
HELP, THE LEVEL OF THEIR EXPECTATION BEGAN TO RISE.

AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, THE STOCK MARKET STARTED DOWN, AND
THIS BAFFLING ANIMAL CALL "STAGFLATION" -- A STAGNANT, YET
INFLATED, ECONOMY -- CAME OVER THE HORIZON. THE COST OF THEATRICAL
AND MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS SHOT UP. THE SALARIES OF ART GALLERY
ATTENDANTS SHOT UP. SO DID WHAT IT COSTS POETS AND COMPOSERS AND
SCULPTORS TO KEEP ALIVE.

THE TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS -- PRIVATE
DONORS, FOUNDATIONS, AND CORPORATIONS -- BEGAN TO RESTRICT THEIR
CONTRIBUTIONS AT PRECISELY THE TIME WHEN THE COST OF ENCOURAGING
AND PRESENTING THE ARTS WAS RAPIDLY EXPANDING, ALONG WITH PUBLIC
INTEREST IN THEM.

HERE I WANT TO SAY A WORD IN PRAISE OF FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON.

DESPIITE THE DEEPLY TROUBLESOME ASPECTS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION, HE DID
OFFER SUBSTANTIAL ENCOURAGEMENT FOR OUR NATIONAL ARTS EFFORT. IT
WOULD BE REMISS OF ME NOT TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIS INITIATIVE IN RAISING
THE ENDOWMENT'S BUDGET FROM THE \$10 MILLION RANGE, WHEN HE TOOK
OFFICE, TO ITS 1975 APPROPRIATION OF \$75 MILLION.

BUT EVEN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF FEDERAL FUNDING -- TEN TIMES WHAT
IT WAS WHEN WE BEGAN, BACK IN 1965 -- IS INSUFFICIENT TO MEET THE
NEEDS OF THE ARTS. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ENOUGH IN THE DAYS WHEN
ONLY A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD, AND OTHER
THOUSANDS OF TEXANS AND MINNESOTANS WHO TRAVELED EAST TO ENJOY THE
SHOWS AND GALLERIES, REALLY CARED ABOUT THE STATE OF THE ARTS.

BUT NOW EVERYONE WANTS A PART OF THAT TREASURE. AND THEY
WANT IT AT A TIME WHEN THE FEDERAL DEFICIT IS ALREADY HIGH; WHEN
PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE REACHED A PLATEAU, OR DECLINED; AND WHEN
PRODUCTION AND MAINTENANCE COSTS ARE STAGGERING.

But, I'm happy to say,

L WELL, THERE IS NO WAY TO PUT THE GENIE BACK IN THE BOTTLE,

L PEOPLE EVERYWHERE HAVE SEEN AND FELT THE IMPACT OF THE ARTS NOW,

AND THEY WILL NOT BE SATISFIED WITH THE OCCASIONAL TRIP TO THE

EAST OR WEST COAST METROPOLIS, OR THE INFREQUENT PRESENTATION

OF GREAT DRAMA OR DANCE ON TELEVISION. / THEY WANT TO SEE PAINTINGS,

AND TO HEAR BEETHOVEN IN LIVE PERFORMANCES.

L THERE ARE ENOUGH YOUNG PEOPLE IN AMERICA NOW WHO WANT TO MAKE

MOVIES, TO FILL ANOTHER LOS ANGELES. / PEOPLE WANT THEIR PUBLIC

4 BUILDINGS MADE MORE ATTRACTIVE; NO MORE LONG GRAY CORRIDORS AND

BLAND FACADES. / THEY LIKE HAVING THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN TAUGHT

TO RESPOND TO LIFE IN VERSE, BY POETS HIRED FOR THAT PURPOSE,

BECAUSE THE POET'S EYE QUICKENS LIFE AND REVEALS ITS INNER MEANINGS.

✓ ACCORDING TO A LOU HARRIS POLL, A LARGE MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY AN ADDITIONAL \$5 PER YEAR IN TAXES
IN ORDER TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS. ✓ *Beverly S. 115*
INCOMES UNDER \$5,000 WOULD DO SO. ✓ AND NEARLY HALF OF THOSE POLLED
WOULD PAY \$25 MORE A YEAR.

✓ THINK OF WHAT EVEN \$10 MORE FROM EVERY TAX-PAYER WOULD MEAN!
✓ IT WOULD MORE THAN WIPE OUT THE DEFICIT OF ALL THE GREAT
ARTISTIC INSTITUTIONS, AND ENABLE THOUSANDS OF ARTISTS TO WORK
AT THEIR ART FULL-TIME. ✓ IT WOULD ENABLE US TO SURPASS EVEN THE
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, WHICH HAVE FOR YEARS ASSUMED THAT THE QUALITY
OF LIFE DEPENDED IN SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE ON THE READY AVAILABILITY
OF FINE ART TO THEIR PEOPLE.

✓ THERE IS IN MY VIEW NO QUESTION ABOUT IT: THE LEVEL OF
PUBLIC APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE ARTS MUST RISE TO MEET THE AWAKENED
NEEDS OF OUR CITIZENS FOR THEM.

HOWEVER, I WOULD NOT BE CANDID IF I DID NOT SAY THAT, DESPITE
THE MUCH GREATER POLITICAL STRENGTH THAT THE ARTS NOW CARRY INTO
CONGRESS, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT, GIVEN THE PRESENT AND FORTHCOMING
BUDGETARY CYCLES, TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR THEM TO THE LEVELS THEY
MERIT. BUT WE CAN, AND I BELIEVE WILL, ACHIEVE THOSE INCREASES
IN TIME.

(State - Local - Political Clout)
(Bicentennial - Bicentennial Comm)
IN THE MEANTIME, *yes* THERE IS MUCH THAT CAN BE DONE. THE PRESENT

UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES -- THE HIGHEST WE HAVE SEEN IN DECADES --

INCLUDE A GREAT MANY ACTORS, SET DESIGNERS, PAINTERS, WRITERS, *Teachers*,

MUSICIANS, CAMERA-MEN, GRAPHIC ARTISTS, CERAMICISTS -- ARTISTS

AND ARTISANS OF EVERY VARIETY. THEY MUST EAT AND CLOTHE THEMSELVES

JUST AS AUTO WORKERS AND SALESMEN MUST DO.

L UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACT, SEVERAL
HUNDRED HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED IN ROLES THAT REFLECT THEIR TALENTS AND
EXPERIENCE. THERE IS NO REASON WHY, WITH DETERMINATION AND
IMAGINATION, WE CANNOT INCREASE THIS FIGURE.

L CONGRESS DESIGNED THE CETA IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR STRUCTURING PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE FIXED AT THE LOCAL
LEVEL. THIS IS BASICALLY A GOOD IDEA.

L I THINK AN IMAGINATIVE CITY GOVERNMENT COULD PRODUCE A REMARKABLE
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM UNDER THE CURRENT CETA AUTHORITY:

-- HIRING UNEMPLOYED ACTORS AND STAGEHANDS TO PERFORM IN
VETERANS' HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, AND HOMES FOR THE AGED;

-- HIRING ARTISTS TO PRODUCE WORKS FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS;

SCULPTORS TO ADORN THE PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS AND THE SUBWAY

STATIONS; CRAFTSMEN, GRAPHIC ARTISTS, DESIGNERS AND DECORATORS

TO MAKE PUBLIC PLACES MORE ATTRACTIVE;

-- HIRING POTTERS, AND MEN AND WOMEN SKILLED IN WEAVING,
NEEDLEWORK, CERAMICS, AND OTHER HANDI-CRAFTS TO TEACH THEIR
SKILLS TO OTHERS;

-- HIRING MUSICIANS AND DANCERS TO TEACH AND TO ENTERTAIN.

↳ THE POSSIBILITIES ARE LIMITLESS.

THOSE OF US WHO CARE ABOUT THE ARTS OUGHT TO URGE SUCH PROGRAMS,
FOR VARIOUS PRACTICAL REASONS. / PERHAPS THE MOST COMPELLING OF THESE
IS THAT THE PUBLIC WOULD BENEFIT DIRECTLY FROM THEM.

↳ I HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED THE ENDOWMENT'S PROGRAM OF GRANTS TO
INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS, AND I STILL DO, BECAUSE I KNOW THAT THE CREATIVE
ARTIST IS THE CUTTING EDGE OF THE HUMAN IMAGINATION. / AMONG THOSE
GRANTEES MAY BE A PICASSO, OR A STRAVINSKY, OR A JOYCE, AND I AM
SELFISH ENOUGH TO WANT A ROLE IN ENCOURAGING THEM.

h BUT IT TAKES TIME, AND PERSEVERANCE, FOR THE WORK OF THE
EXPERIMENTERS TO BE APPRECIATED BY THE PUBLIC. / IN THE MEANTIME, TAXES
ARE HIGH, INFLATION GROWS, AND UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES / PUBLIC
ENTHUSIASM FOR ANY GOVERNMENT SPENDING IS LIMITED, UNLESS THE
BENEFITS ARE OBVIOUS AND COMPELLING.

h THAT IS WHY I WOULD LIKE TO SEE ARTISTS PAID FOR PERFORMING
SERVICES WHICH THE PUBLIC CAN FEEL AND SEE AND HEAR -- WHICH
MAKE IMMEDIATE AND OBVIOUS IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CONDITIONS OF
PUBLIC LIFE.

But WE MUST GET OUR ECONOMY OUT OF ITS PRESENT TROUGH / ONLY

THEN CAN WE GENERATE THE PUBLIC REVENUES THAT WE NEED FOR ADEQUATELY
SUPPORTING THE ARTS. / ONLY THEN CAN CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS
AND INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE MEANS TO INCREASE THEIR VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

✓ BUT AS WE WORK TO END THIS LONG AND COSTLY RECESSION, WE CAN SEE
TO IT THAT THE UPWARD THRUST OF THE ARTS, WHICH HAS ALREADY ENRICHED

THE SPIRITS OF SO MANY AMERICANS, CONTINUES UNBROKEN.

✓ THERE IS SO MUCH STILL TO BE DONE. ✓ THE OPERAS AND SYMPHONY

ORCHESTRAS ARE ALL FACING HEAVY DEFICITS, THE FUTURE OF SOME OF THEM

IS IN DOUBT. ✓ REGIONAL THEATRES ARE STRUGGLING. ✓ THE AMERICAN FILM

INSTITUTE, WHICH PRESIDENT JOHNSON PROPOSED, IS COUNTED AMONG THOSE

PROGRAMS STRUGGLING TO FULFILL THEIR INITIAL EXPECTATIONS. ✓ SMALL

LITERARY MAGAZINES ARE AS EVER AN ENDANGERED SPECIES. ✓ THERE ARE STILL

VIGOROUS ARGUMENTS OVER WHETHER THE ENDOWMENT SHOULD FOCUS ITS SUPPORT

CHIEFLY ON ARTISTS AND INSTITUTIONS OF PROVEN HIGH QUALITY, OR WHETHER

AID SHOULD BE BROADCAST TO A WIDE VARIETY OF ^{new} PERFORMERS AND BUDDING

TALENTS.

L BUT WHILE THE FUTURE IS RIFE WITH PROBLEMS, IT WOULD BE FOOLISH
TO IGNORE HOW FAR WE HAVE COME, AND IN SUCH A SHORT TIME,

L NOT LONG AGO, THE VOICES OF HESITATION PREVAILED IN THE CONGRESS
ON QUESTIONS OF SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS. BUT NOW IT IS THE VOICE OF
fact favors
CLAIBORNE PELL AND JOHN BRADEMAS AND FRANK THOMPSON THAT CARRIES THE
MAJORITY; AND PRESIDENT FORD, THANKS TO ALEXANDER CALDER AND THE
ENDOWMENT, IS MORE SYMPATHETIC.

L TEN YEARS AGO THE KENNEDY CENTER WAS ONLY AN IDEA; TODAY IT
IS A LIVING REALITY -- THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS GO THERE EVERY EVENING
TO LIFT THEIR HEARTS AND DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING.

L TEN YEARS AGO THE OPTIONS ON TELEVISION WERE COWBOYS, GIVE-AWAY
SHOWS, AND SITUATION COMEDIES; TODAY, AT LEAST, THERE'S A CHANCE OF
SEEING GOOD THEATRE OR DANCE. L SO, ALONG WITH THE BUDGETARY HEADACHES,
THERE HAS BEEN REMARKABLE PROGRESS.

1
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THOSE WHO SEE THE ARTS AS UNNECESSARY FRILLS,
AS SUPERFLUOUS TO THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY. BUT THEY ARE FEWER NOW, AND
FEWER STILL AMONG THE COMING GENERATIONS WHO QUEST FOR MORE THAN
MATERIAL WELL-BEING. (Art Shows - even in shopping centers)

THE ARTS THEMSELVES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FRAGILE CREATURES,
A FEW NOTES OF MUSIC IN THE WINDS OF HISTORY, A GLIMPSE OF
COLOR IN THE GRAY OF ORDINARY LIFE.

BUT WHAT STRENGTH THERE IS IN THAT FRAGILITY! NATIONS
PASS FROM THE SCENE, GREAT BUSINESS ENDEAVORS RISE AND FALL,
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS CHANGE, BUT MOZART AND BOTTICELLI ENDURE.

AND THE CREATIVE SPIRIT OF MAN ENDURES, EVEN IN WARS
AND RECESSIONS.

WHAT WE MUST TRY TO DO IS ENABLE THAT SPIRIT TO EXPRESS
ITSELF IN ALL ITS FORMS, SO THAT IT MAY QUICKEN THE INDIVIDUAL
SPIRIT IN EACH OF US, AND ENNOBLE THE CIVILIZATION OF WHICH
WE ARE A PART.



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