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Arts, Humanities, Museums: Background (1973-1976): Memorandum 01

Robert Wade

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Liv Biddle

4/28/76

FROM: Robert Wade

RE: Language for Insertion in Committee Report, Section on Endowment Advisory Panels (Suggested for insertion at end of material second full paragraph, p. 4, House Rept. 94-1024)

Further, the Committee recognizes, to the extent allowed by law, the need for confidentiality regarding advisory panel review of grant applications and discussion of other matters requiring the expression of frank and candid views by panel members. The Committee notes with approval that despite the frequent need for confidentiality, the Endowment has opened to the public a substantial and significant number of advisory committee meetings. It is the view of the Committee that the Endowment and its panels have struck a proper balance between, on the one hand, the interest of the agency in obtaining candid expert advice and, on the other, the interest of the general public in being properly informed as to Endowment activities. Finally, the Committee wishes to commend the Endowment's panels for professionalism and dedication in carrying out this advisory function.

Advice and Consent of the Senate
on Council Members

The House has included a provision that the members of the two Councils -- Arts and Humanities (26 members each) -- be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Background on this is that there has been some dissatisfaction of the representative quality of the two Councils. Specifically, neither has a representative of Labor. It is felt that input from the Senate will help ensure that the two Councils remain properly representative and that any present imbalances can be corrected through the "advice and consent" process.

Sec. 101

Adopted by the House Committee, this Section eliminates "in the United States" from the general mandate of the Arts Endowment, so that there would be flexibility to support American arts activities if sent or taken abroad... i.e. a touring orchestra, a special exhibition, a theater group. Organized labor advocated this change in the House, feeling that the present arts program is now overly restrictive -- and that the State Dept's program, which has been reduced since 1968 to approx. \$1 million per year (slightly up for the Bicentennial year to \$1.2 million) is overly restrictive.

Background:

In the initial legislation (1964-65) the words "in the United States" were added, chiefly because of the testimony of Harry McPherson, then Asst. Secretary of Educational and Cultural Affairs, who testified that the new federal arts program should not conflict or compete with the existing State Dept. program. At that time we were looking for all the help we could get. The State Dept. supported the new program with the words which were added. Since that time, and until the recent hearings, no one has particularly raised the issue. There are cooperative efforts now between the Arts Endowment and the State Dept., with -- for example -- the Endowment doing the United States part of an exhibition and the Dept. doing the actual overseas funding. *of it.*

I believe the usefulness of "in the United States" has passed. John Richardson favors broader efforts than the State Dept. alone can undertake -- he's Asst. Sec. for Educational and Cultural Affairs now.

The Humanities Endowment has never had an "in the United States" restriction -- and, for example, supports archeology abroad.

I'm getting more back-up from the Endowment, which would not object to the removal of the words, "in the United States".

We should have language in the report -- if we do remove these words. Overseas funding of American arts should be done carefully with limited funds.