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Special Message to Congress on Education

[37] Feb. 6 1962 *Public Papers of the Presidents*

tions—including our own—have shown that this problem can be attacked and virtually wiped out. Unfortunately, our State school systems—overburdened in recent years by the increasing demands of growing populations and the increasing handicaps of insufficient revenues—have been unable to give adequate attention to this problem. I recommend the authorization of a five-year program of grants to institutions of higher learning and to the States, to be coordinated in the development of programs which will offer every adult who is willing and able the opportunity to become literate.

4. *Education of Migrant Workers*

The neglected educational needs of America's one million migrant agricultural workers and their families constitute one of the gravest reproaches to our Nation. The interstate and seasonal movement of migrants imposes severe burdens on those school districts which have the responsibility for providing education to those who live there temporarily. I recommend authorization of a five year Federal-State program to aid States and school districts in improving the educational opportunities of migrant workers and their children.

5. *Educational Television*

The use of television for educational purposes—particularly for adult education—offers great potentialities. The Federal Government has sought to further this through the reservation of 270 television channels for education by the Federal Communications Commission and through the provision of research and advisory services by the Office of Education. Unfortunately, the rate of construction of new broadcasting facilities has been discouraging. Only 80 educational TV channels have been assigned in the last decade. It is apparent that further Federal stimulus and leadership are essential if the vast educational potential of this medium is to be realized. Last year an educational television bill passed the Senate,

and a similar proposal was favorably reported to the House. I urge the Congress to take prompt and final action to provide matching financial grants to the states to aid in the construction of state or other non-profit educational television stations.

6. *Aid to Handicapped Children*

Another long-standing national concern has been the provision of specially trained teachers to meet the educational needs of children afflicted with physical and mental disabilities. The existing program providing Federal assistance to higher education institutions and to State education agencies for training teachers and supervisory personnel for mentally retarded children was supplemented last year to provide temporarily for training teachers of the deaf. I recommend broadening the basic program to include assistance for the special training needed to help all our children afflicted with the entire range of physical and mental handicaps.

✓ 7. *Federal Aid to the Arts*

Our Nation has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. We are justly proud of the vitality, the creativity and the variety of the contemporary contributions our citizens can offer to the world of the arts. If we are to be among the leaders of the world in every sense of the word this sector of our national life cannot be neglected or treated with indifference. Yet, almost alone among the governments of the world, our government has displayed little interest in fostering cultural development. Just as the Federal Government has not, should not, and will not undertake to control the subject matter taught in local schools, so its efforts should be confined to broad encouragement of the arts. While this area is too new for hasty action, the proper contributions that should and can be made to the advancement of the arts by the Federal Government—many of them outlined by the Secretary of Labor in his decision settling the Metropolitan Opera labor

dispute—deserve thorough and sympathetic consideration. A bill (H.R. 4172) already reported out to the House would make this possible and I urge approval of such a measure establishing a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts to undertake these studies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The problems to which these proposals are addressed would require solution whether or not we were confronted with a massive threat to freedom. The existence of that threat lends urgency to their solution—to the accomplishment of those objectives which, in any case, would be necessary for the realization of our highest hopes and those of our children. "If a nation," wrote

Thomas Jefferson in 1816, "expects to be ignorant *and* free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." That statement is even truer today than it was 146 years ago.

The education of our people is a national investment. It yields tangible returns in economic growth, an improved citizenry and higher standards of living. But even more importantly, free men and women value education as a personal experience and opportunity—as a basic benefit of a free and democratic civilization. It is our responsibility to do whatever needs to be done to make this opportunity available to all and to make it of the highest possible quality.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

38 Remarks at Ceremony on the Signing of Equal Opportunity Agreements by Leading Employers. *February 7, 1962*

I WANT to express my thanks to all of you for taking part in this morning's effort, and particularly to express, I think, the country's great appreciation to the Vice President and the Secretary of Labor.

Beginning with the effort which was made by the Lockheed Company last May,¹ which in the last 6 months has made an intensive national company drive to improve the employment opportunities for members of minority groups at all levels, not only in percentage of those who might be at the manual labor capacity, but professional, supervisory, and all the rest, it has done a most impressive job. And since that effort, other companies have joined.

We really feel that this can be a tremendous factor in building our national strength. It is a voluntary effort by all of you. You are associating yourselves and your companies, by your own choice, with a tremendous cause—which means that everyone should have the right to develop his talents freely without regard to any other factor. That is

what all of us believe in. As leaders of the private enterprise system, you believe in freedom of choice and freedom of opportunity. And by this partnership, really, between yourselves and the National Government and the American people, I think we have a chance, through freedom, to really build a much stronger and more viable economy and society.

So I express my thanks to you all. This is really a national service, and I am hopeful that all of you, as the presidents of these companies, will follow the progress made month by month and see whether, at the end of the 6-month period—9 months or a year—we can really show in every classification substantial improvement.

I cannot imagine anything more helpful to the country and to your companies than an indication that through this freedom of choice you are able to make this great progress, and it will be an important blow in a whole variety of ways for progress in our private enterprise system and in the things in which we believe.

So I want to thank you all and I hope that

¹ See 1961 volume, this series, p. 396.

239 Remarks Commending the Tools for Freedom Program.

June 12, 1963

I WANT to express a warm welcome to our friends from the Philippines, to the Ambassador, to Mr. Adams, Mr. Sprague, and representatives of the Boston Chamber of Commerce.

I think that this effort to improve the economic development, economic education, technical training of our very old friends, the people of the Philippines, is an effort which I want to endorse strongly.

This represents another substantial contribution to this program, which Mr. Sprague has headed, which has resulted in the giving of tools to, I believe, over 24 schools.

The United States has the greatest backlog of tools of any place in the world. There is a great need for them all around the globe, particularly in the newly developing countries, and I think that if we could put young students together with these tools that it would give them an opportunity to understand how industrialization can materially improve the lives of their people. This is the only way that their lives can be substantially advanced in these communities which

have had too long a dependence upon agriculture and one or two agricultural crops.

Now, if we can accomplish in this decade what it really took the West 150 years to develop in the Industrial Revolution, we can make a most significant contribution, and I want to commend the companies involved—the Raytheon Company, and the others—for taking the leadership in this regard, not merely depending upon the National Government to take action in this very vital area but doing it themselves.

So, I commend the business community for this effort.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon in the Flower Garden at the White House. In his opening remarks he referred to Amelito R. Mutuc, Ambassador to the United States from the Philippines; Charles F. Adams, president, the Raytheon Co.; and Mansfield Sprague, president, Tools for Freedom.

Following the President's remarks Mr. Adams presented to Ambassador Mutuc a plaque representing his company's gift of tools to equip the Magsaysay Memorial School of Arts and Trades in Iba, Zambales. The text of Mr. Adams' remarks and those of the Ambassador was also released.

240 Statement by the President Upon Establishing the

Advisory Council on the Arts. June 12, 1963

ESTABLISHMENT of an Advisory Council on the Arts has long seemed a natural step in fulfilling the Government's responsibility to the arts. I acknowledge the support of Members of the Congress in both Houses for this measure. I am hopeful that the Congress will give the Council a statutory base, but meanwhile, the setting up of the Council by executive action seems timely and advisable.

Accordingly, I am establishing the President's Advisory Council on the Arts within the Executive Office, to be composed of heads of Federal departments and agencies con-

cerned with the arts and 30 private citizens who have played a prominent part in the arts. Private members will be drawn from civic and cultural leaders and others who are engaged professionally in some phase of the arts such as practicing artists, museum directors, producers, managers and union leaders. An Executive order is being issued today defining the scope and structure of the Council and I shall shortly announce the names of those private citizens I am asking to serve.

The creation of this Council means that for the first time the arts will have some formal government body which will be spe-

cifically concerned with all aspects of the arts and to which the artist and the arts institutions can present their views and bring their problems.

It is my hope that the Advisory Council will keep the state of the arts in this country under survey, and will make recommendations in regard to programs both public and private which can encourage their development. I trust that the Council will recommend such permanent procedures and programs as they consider necessary in this field.

I should like to summarize briefly my reasons for believing that the establishment of such a Council by the Federal Government is both appropriate and urgent.

Widespread public interest in the arts has not always been accompanied by adequate concern for the basic institutions of our cultural life. Increased attendance at museums, for example, has not eased long-standing financial problems but has actually increased the strains on these institutions as new services have been expected by the public. Of the thousand and more symphony orchestras of which we are justly proud as a nation, only a comparatively few have serious professional status and offer a season of sufficient length to provide a living wage to performers. The same is even more true of opera and dance groups. For some years American singers have been going in large numbers to find in Europe opportunities for employment which institutions at home cannot provide. The professional theatre—despite the development of amateur groups—reaches only a limited part of the population. Indeed children are growing up who have never seen a professionally acted play.

A recent estimate by the Department of Labor presents a gloomy forecast of employment opportunities for the next decade. Although the demand for concerts and performances is bound to grow, there is no evidence that employment opportunities for the professional artist will increase. This is a situation which deprives Americans of the cultural opportunities they deserve and want,

and discourages the development of creative talent.

I emphasize the importance of the professional artist because there is danger we may tend to accept the rich range of amateur activities which abound in our country as a substitute for the professional. Without the professional performer and the creative artist, the amateur spirit declines and the vast audience is only partially served.

Art is no exception to the rule in human affairs—that of needing a stable and ample financial and institutional base. As education needs schools so art needs museums, actors and playwrights need theatres, and composers and musicians need opera companies and orchestras.

The Government has a responsibility to see that this important aspect of our lives is not neglected. The concept of the public welfare should reflect cultural as well as physical values, aesthetic as well as economic considerations. We have agencies of the Government which are concerned with the welfare and advancement of science and technology, of education, recreation and health. We should now begin to give similar attention to the arts.

Specific problems and areas which I hope the Council will look into include the following:

I am particularly interested in the opportunities for young people to develop their gifts in the field of the arts and also to participate in an active cultural life. The Council will, I hope, examine the degree to which we are now meeting our responsibilities to young people in this area.

The Council should evaluate the many new forms and institutions which are developing. For example, the growth of State arts councils is significant, as is also the planning of community cultural centers in many cities and regions of the country.

The impact of various general governmental policies and programs on the arts is an area to which I hope the Council will give special attention. This includes such specific fields as tax laws, copyright laws, disposition

of surplus property, public works and community development, public buildings, housing and urban renewal and others.

Public recognition of excellence in the arts is one effective way of giving encouragement. I am sure that the Council will want to give consideration to various possibilities in this field, including such forms of recognition as prizes, competitions, festivals, traveling tours and exhibitions.

Although the international cultural exchange program will not be a responsibility of the Council, the link between the vitality of our national cultural life and institutions and the success of our international programs is obvious. Our international programs are a direct reflection of our cultural achievements at home. I hope that the Council as it looks at the national cultural scene will consider its implications for our exchange programs.

The cultural life of the United States has at its best been varied, lively and decentralized. It has been supported—often with great generosity—by private patrons. I hope these characteristics will not change, but it seems well to assess how far the traditional sources of support meet the needs of the present and the near future. In giving form to this reassessment the President's Advisory Council on the Arts will be making a most important contribution to the national life.

NOTE: The statement was issued in connection with the signing of an Executive order establishing the President's Advisory Council on the Arts (EO 11112, later amended by EO 11124, 28 F.R. 6037, 11607; 3 CFR, 1963 Supp.). The President first recommended legislation establishing a Federal Council on the Arts in his special message on education of February 6, 1962 (1962 volume, this series, p. 116). The membership of the Council had not been announced at the time of the President's death.

See also Item 246.

241 Statement by the President Following Defeat of the Area Redevelopment Bill. June 13, 1963

THE TRAGIC defeat of area redevelopment legislation could not have come at a worse time. Unemployment persists—our distressed areas need help—and scores of hard-hit communities in Pennsylvania, Michigan, West Virginia, eastern Kentucky, upstate New York, upstate Minnesota, and southern Illinois were counting on an ex-

pansion of this program.

The people of these and other affected States need more than speeches to help their depressed communities and jobless workers. This program must not be allowed to die—and it is my intention to give the Congress another opportunity to support it.

242 Letter to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House on Development of a Civil Supersonic Air Transport.

June 14, 1963

Dear Mr. ———:

The Congress has laid down national aviation objectives in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. These include the development of an air transportation system which will further our domestic and international commerce and the national defense. These ob-

jectives, when viewed in the light of today's aviation challenges, clearly require the commencement of a national program to support the development of a commercial supersonic transport aircraft which is safe for the passenger, economically sound for the world's airlines, and whose operating per-

great, the task of achieving disarmament is not an impossible one. Each day its importance and urgency increases.

The U.S. Delegation headed by Ambassador Arthur H. Dean, returns to Geneva with instructions to pursue the objective of negotiating a sound disarmament program. The full support of the Government and people of the United States is behind this effort.

We cannot and must not underestimate the difficulties which are presented by the Soviet Union's resistance to the minimum of inspection necessary to ensure effective disarmament steps. The renewed sessions in Geneva present one more opportunity to persuade the Soviet Union that in a nuclear age, all nations have a common interest in preserving their mutual security against the growing perils of the arms race.

In the resumed negotiations the United States will continue to seek agreement which

will meet the dangers of the nuclear threat. These dangers will only increase if early action is not taken to halt the growth of stockpiles of modern armaments, the spread of nuclear weapons into the arsenals of a widening number of countries and to outer space, and the possibilities of outbreak of war by accident, miscalculation, or failure of communication.

As these vital negotiations resume, we express our hope that the USSR will respond constructively to the proposals we have made and will join with us and the other members of the Geneva conference in a creative search for ways to end the arms race and to devote our common skills and resources to the enlargement of the peaceful opportunities of mankind.

NOTE: The statement was released at Hyannis, Mass.

✓ 291 Article by the President: The Vigor We Need.

July 16, 1962

WHEN a citizen of Greece returned home after a victory in the Olympic Games he was escorted triumphally into the city through a hole which had been ripped in its wall. Thus the city-state was symbolically assured that any *polis* possessed of such a hero had no need of a wall to defend it. Although we may be sure that the wall was repaired when a hostile army threatened, the symbolic act had a meaning which is as true for the America of today as it was for the ancient Greeks, a meaning expressed by Disraeli when he said, "The health of the people is really the foundation upon which all their happiness and all their powers as a State depend."

Our own history, perhaps better than the history of any other great country, vividly demonstrates the truth of the belief that physical vigor and health are essential accompaniments to the qualities of intellect and spirit on which a nation is built. It was men who possessed vigor and strength as well as

courage and vision who first settled these shores and, over more than three centuries, subdued a continent and wrested a civilization from the wilderness. It was physical hardihood that helped Americans in two great world wars to defeat strong and tenacious foes and make this country history's mightiest defender of freedom. And today, in our own time, in the jungles of Asia and on the borders of Europe, a new group of vigorous young Americans helps maintain the peace of the world and our security as a nation.

At the same time, young Americans are attaining new standards of excellence in athletic contests. Only last month four men ran the mile in less than 4 minutes in a single race. Hardly a month passes that some new record for speed or strength, stamina or competitive skill, is not shattered. Never in history has the United States been represented by a more gifted group of athletes in national and international competition. Yet

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we must not allow our pride in these few men to obscure the fact that over the past decades the level of physical fitness of much of our citizenry has been far below any reasonable national standard.

A year and a half ago in this magazine I reviewed the results of the Kraus-Weber survey, which showed that American youths lagged far behind young Europeans in basic levels of physical fitness (SI, Dec. 26, 1960). Almost 58 percent of Americans were unable to pass these tests, while only 8.7 percent of Europeans failed. Since that time the President's Council on Youth Fitness has conducted a survey which indicates that more than 10 million of our 40 million school children are unable to pass a test which measures only a minimum level of physical fitness, while almost 20 million would be unable to meet the standards set by a more comprehensive test of physical strength and skills.

These figures indicate the vast dimensions of a national problem which should be of deep concern to all of us. It is paradoxical that the very economic progress, the technological advance and scientific breakthroughs which have, in part, been the result of our national vigor have also contributed to the draining of that vigor. Technology and automation have eliminated many of those physical exertions which were once a normal part of the working day. New forms of transportation have made it unnecessary to walk to school or to the office or the corner store. New forms of entertainment have consumed much of the time which was once used for sports and games.

No one can deny the enormous benefits which these developments have brought—the reduction of drudgery and tedious tasks, the opportunity for greater leisure, the increased access to intellectual stimulation and quality entertainment. But at the same time we must not allow these advances to become the instruments of the decline of our national vitality and health. We cannot permit the loss of that physical vigor which has helped to nourish our growth and which is essential

if we are to carry forward the complex and demanding tasks which are vital to our strength and progress.

It was in response to this problem that President Eisenhower urged immediate attention to our deteriorating level of physical fitness; and that this administration established a nationwide program of cooperation with state, city, and town officials to raise our fitness level.

First, we reorganized the President's Council on Youth Fitness and placed that council under Special Presidential Consultant Charles B. (Bud) Wilkinson, football coach of the University of Oklahoma. Under Mr. Wilkinson's extraordinarily able leadership the council developed—in cooperation with 19 leading school and medical organizations—the basic concepts for a program of physical fitness now in use by more than half the country's public schools.

In addition, the council helped to initiate special pilot fitness projects, involving more than 200,000 students in five States. The results were a dramatic proof of the value of carefully designed school physical fitness programs. After only six weeks 25 percent of the students who had failed the basic fitness test passed. A similar gain was measured each succeeding 6 weeks until, by the end of the school year, an average of 80 percent of those who had failed were able to pass. There could be no more effective proof of the fact that efforts by local school authorities can vastly improve the physical fitness level of America's youth.

Secondly, the council has designed a nationwide campaign to alert Americans to physical fitness needs and provide them with the information needed to conduct fitness programs. More than 340,000 copies of the school physical fitness program have been distributed; and during the past school year the number of schools offering such a program rose by 13 percent. The Advertising Council, private film makers and professional athletic organizations have joined campaigns to increase public attention to physical fitness needs, and a conference of

governors' representatives, with 44 States represented, was held last April to enlist the help of State Governments in this nationwide effort.

Third, the council is now going forward with a wide range of physical fitness activities in the fields of recreation and health education. Special programs are being developed for college students and for adults. A series of recommendations has been made to leaders of the armed forces, and those recommendations are now being put into effect.

This is heartening progress, and has helped to chart the course for our future activity. But it must be viewed as only a small beginning in a Nation where 60 percent of the school children do not participate in regular physical fitness programs, where millions of adults neglect their needs for regular exercise, where general levels of physical vitality are being surpassed by other developed nations.

Writing on this subject a year and a half ago, I stressed the importance of physical fitness to our national strength, the subtle but undeniable relationship of physical vigor to our capacity to undertake the enormous efforts of mind and courage and will which are the price of maintaining the peace and insuring the continued flourishing of our

civilization. And this importance still exists. But fitness is vital for a still more basic reason. It is vital because it is the basis of the health and vitality of the individual citizen. And these are qualities which are essential if each American is to be free to realize fully the potential value of his own capabilities and the pursuit of his individual goals. In the final analysis, it is this liberation of the individual to pursue his own ends, subject only to the loose restraints of a free society, which is the ultimate meaning of our civilization.

The Federal Government will continue to focus national attention on this problem. But it is absolutely clear that the ultimate responsibility for the fitness of the American people rests on the cooperation and determination of school boards and town officials, on thousands of community leaders, and on millions of fathers and mothers. Only through your effort can we hope to continue to move steadily toward a stronger and more vigorous America.

NOTE: The President's article was published in the July 16, 1962, issue of Sports Illustrated, together with a statement on "The Whys and Hows of Fitness" by Charles B. (Bud) Wilkinson and a test for minimum physical fitness.

The article is reprinted by special permission of Sports Illustrated, Time Inc.

292 Statement by the President on the Defeat of the Medical Care Bill. July 17, 1962

[Telecast from the Fish Room at the White House]

THE Medical Care for the Aged Bill was defeated in the United States Senate. A switch of two votes in the Senate would have provided, I believe, for its passage.

I believe this is a most serious defeat for every American family, for the 17 million Americans who are over 65, whose means of support, whose livelihood is certainly lessened over what it was in their working days, who are more inclined to be ill, who will more likely be in hospitals, who are less able to pay their bills.

I think they have suffered a serious setback today. But this issue is not confined to them. All those Americans who have parents, who are liable to be ill, and who have children to educate at the same time, mothers and fathers in their 30's and 40's, I believe they have suffered a serious setback. In 1960, with Senator Anderson, I introduced the Medical Care for the Aged. A change of four votes in the Senate in 1960 would have provided for its passage. This year we came closer.

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setback. But I must say after being here for 2 years, and having the experience of the Presidency, and there is no experience you can get that can possibly prepare you adequately for the Presidency, I must say that I have a good deal of hope for the United States. Just because I think that this country, which as I say criticizes itself and is criticized around the world, 180 million people, for 17 years, really for more than that, for almost 20 years, have been the great means of defending first the world against the Nazi threat, and since then against the Communist threat, and if it were not for us,

the Communists would be dominant in the world today, and because of us, we are in a strong position. Now, I think that is a pretty good record for a country with 6 percent of the world's population, which is very reluctant to take on these burdens. I think we ought to be rather pleased with ourselves this Christmas.

NOTE: The interview was recorded on December 16 in the President's office at the White House. It was telecast on December 17 at 6:30 p.m. by the Columbia Broadcasting System and the American Broadcasting Company, and at 8:30 p.m. by the National Broadcasting Company. The program was also broadcast by the major radio networks.

✓ 552 Magazine Article "The Arts in America."
December 18, 1962

ONE AFTERNOON in the fateful year 1940, the President of the United States had two callers. The first was Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador, who had just flown in from London to give Franklin D. Roosevelt an eyewitness account of the bombing of London. The second was Francis H. Taylor, museum director and authority on the history of art.

Taylor waited for 2 hours while the President and Lothian talked. When he finally entered, he found the President "white as a sheet." Yet the President, we are told, kept Taylor in his office that afternoon for another hour and a half. Turning from a grim preoccupation with the war, Franklin Roosevelt talked about the arts in American life. He spoke of plans for broadening the appreciation of art and looked forward to a day when "every schoolhouse would have contemporary American paintings hanging on its walls."

George Biddle, the distinguished American artist who records this meeting, adds on his own: "Roosevelt had little discrimination in his taste in painting and sculpture. [But] he had a more clear understanding of what art could mean in the life of a community—for the soul of a nation—than any man I have known."

In the year of 1941, Roosevelt himself recalled another President who also found time in the midst of great national trials to concern himself with artistic endeavors. It was in the third year of the Civil War, as Roosevelt told the story in a speech dedicating the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., and men and women had gathered to see the Capitol dome completed and the bronze goddess of liberty set upon the top. "It had been an expensive, a laborious business," Roosevelt said, "diverting labor and money from the prosecution of the war and certain critics . . . found much to criticize. There were new marble pillars in the Senate wing of the Capitol, there was a bronze door for the central portal and other such expenditures and embellishments. But the President of the United States, whose name was Lincoln, when he heard these criticisms, answered: 'If people see the Capitol going on, it is a sign that we intend this Union shall go on.'"

Both Roosevelt and Lincoln understood that the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of a nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose—and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization. That is why we should be glad today that the interest of the Ameri-

can people in the arts seems at a new high.

Looking at the American scene, I am impressed by its diversity and vitality—by the myriad ways in which Americans find enlightenment, exercise, entertainment, and fulfillment. Everyone, young and old, seems to be busy. Our roads and seashores are crowded; the great parks draw visitors in unprecedented numbers. Sports thrive, and even such formerly humdrum activities as buying groceries for the family take on a holiday aspect in the new shopping centers. In the midst of all this activity, it is only natural that people should be more active in pursuit of the arts.

The statistics are gratifying: books have become a billion-dollar business; more money is spent each year in going to concerts than to baseball games; our galleries and museums are crowded; community theaters and community symphony orchestras have spread across the land; there are an estimated 33 million Americans who play musical instruments. And all this expresses, I believe, something more than merely the avidity with which goods of all kinds are being acquired in our exuberant society. A need within contemporary civilization, a hunger for certain values and satisfactions, appears to be urging us all to explore and appreciate areas of life which, in the past, we have sometimes neglected in the United States.

Too often in the past, we have thought of the artist as an idler and dilettante and of the lover of arts as somehow sissy or effete. We have done both an injustice. The life of the artist is, in relation to his work, stern and lonely. He has labored hard, often amid deprivation, to perfect his skill. He has turned aside from quick success in order to strip his vision of everything secondary or cheapening. His working life is marked by intense application and intense discipline. As for the lover of arts, it is he who, by subjecting himself to the sometimes disturbing experience of art, sustains the artist—and seeks only the reward that his life will, in consequence, be the more fully lived.

Today, we recognize increasingly the es-

sentiality of artistic achievement. This is part, I think, of a nationwide movement toward excellence—a movement which had its start in the admiration of expertness and skill in our technical society, but which now demands quality in all realms of human achievement. It is part, too, of a feeling that art is the great unifying and humanizing experience. We know that science, for example, is indispensable—but we also know that science, if divorced from a knowledge of man and of man's ways, can stunt a civilization. And so the educated man—and very often the man who has had the best scientific education—reaches out for the experience which the arts alone provide. He wants to explore the side of life which expresses the emotions and embodies values and ideals of beauty.

Above all, we are coming to understand that the arts incarnate the creativity of a free society. We know that a totalitarian society can promote the arts in its own way—that it can arrange for splendid productions of opera and ballet, as it can arrange for the restoration of ancient and historic buildings. But art means more than the resuscitation of the past: it means the free and unconfined search for new ways of expressing the experience of the present and the vision of the future. When the creative impulse cannot flourish freely, when it cannot freely select its methods and objects, when it is deprived of spontaneity, then society severs the root of art.

Yet this fact surely imposes an obligation on those who acclaim the freedom of their own society—an obligation to accord the arts attention and respect and status, so that what freedom makes possible, a free society will make necessary.

I have called for a higher degree of physical fitness in our nation. It is only natural that I should call, as well, for the kind of intellectual and spiritual fitness which underlies the flowering of the arts.

A nation's government can expect to play only an indirect and marginal role in the arts. Government's essential job—the or-

ganization and administration of great affairs—is too gross and unwieldy for the management of individual genius. But this does not mean that government is not, or should not be, concerned with the arts. A free government is the reflection of a people's will and desire—and ultimately of their taste. It is also, at its best, a leading force, an example and teacher. I would like to see everything government does in the course of its activities marked by high quality. I would like to see the works of government represent the best our artists, designers and builders can achieve. I want to make sure that policies of government do not indirectly or unnecessarily put barriers in the way of the full expression of America's creative genius.

The arts in the United States are, like so many other of our activities, varied and decentralized to a high degree. Private benefactors, foundations, schools and colleges, business corporations, the local community, the city and the State combine in widely differing proportions to organize and support the institutions of culture. I would hope that in the years ahead, as our cultural life develops and takes on new forms, the Federal Government would be prepared to play its proper role in encouraging cultural activities throughout the Nation.

In the Nation's Capital, the Federal Government, of course, has special obligations. There is, first, the fact that the District of Columbia lies directly within Federal jurisdiction. Beyond this, there is the fact that, as the Capital of our Nation, Washington inevitably becomes to a degree a showcase of our culture. In other countries, capitals have been located in great cities with an historic identity and cultural life of their own. But Washington, it has been remarked, is a single-industry town, and that industry is politics and statecraft. Such an environment, some have said, provides barren soil for the arts. Yet, despite this, the community of Washington has done much to welcome and encourage cultural activity.

Still, our vision must look beyond the

pleasure of the community to the leadership of the nation. In this vision, the National Cultural Center will play a vital role. The Center, which Congress has chartered and for which it has given land, aims to be part of a broad effort to stimulate the performing arts. It was not conceived as a group of halls and theaters to benefit Washington audiences alone. Here, visitors and tourists will come throughout the year, bringing back to their communities a sense of what the performance of great works can mean in their lives—and a proud realization that their Nation's Capital is a focus of creative activities. In many other ways, the National Cultural Center will interact with the cultural life of communities across the country. The finest of our symphony orchestras will play here; local repertory theaters and opera and ballet groups, increasing in numbers and professional status, should find their appearance in the Nation's Capital a distinction eagerly sought. The Center will, I hope, become in the broadest sense an educational as well as a cultural institution, helping to stimulate the formation of similar groups in other cities.

Other countries have their national theater and opera, permanently situated in the capital and singled out for their government's special concern. Better fitted to the needs of the United States is the idea of the Cultural Center, a great stage hospitable to the best coming from this country and abroad, an institution encouraging the development of the performing arts in all their diversity of origin and variety of form. I earnestly hope that the backing of citizens across the country will make possible the fulfillment of these plans.

To work for the progress of the arts in America is exciting and fruitful because what we are dealing with touches virtually all the citizens.

There will always be of necessity, in any society, a mere handful of genuinely creative individuals, the men and women who shape in words or images the enduring work of art. Among us, even this group tends to be

enlarged. "I hear America singing," said Walt Whitman. He would certainly hear it singing with many voices if he were alive today.

Outside the group of active participants stands the great audience. Perhaps no country has ever had so many people so eager to share a delight in the arts. Individuals of all trades and professions, of all ages, in all parts of the country, wait for the curtain to rise—wait for the door to open to new enjoyments.

This wonderful equality in the cultural world is an old American phenomenon. De Tocqueville, in the 1830's, described how on the remotest frontier, in a wilderness that seemed "the asylum of all miseries," Americans preserved an interest in cultural and intellectual matters. "You penetrate paths scarcely cleared," said de Tocqueville; "you perceive, finally, a cleared field, a cabin . . . with a tiny window." You might think, he continues, that you have come at last to the home of an American peasant. But you would be wrong. "The man wears the same clothes as you; he speaks the language of the cities. On his rude table are books and newspapers."

The cabin with its tiny window has vanished. Yet we might expect to find its counterparts today in homes which would seem quite as remote from the arts. The suburban housewife harassed by the care of her children, the husband weary after the day's work, young people bent on a good time—these might not appear in a mood to enjoy intellectual or artistic pursuit. Still on the table lie paper-bound reprints of the best books of the ages. By the phonograph is a shelf of recordings of the classics of music. On the wall hang reproductions of the masterpieces of art.

To further the appreciation of culture among all the people, to increase respect for the creative individual, to widen participation by all the processes and fulfillments of art—this is one of the fascinating challenges of these days.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

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553 Exchange of Remarks With Prime Minister Macmillan Upon Arriving at Windsor Field in Nassau, the Bahamas. *December 18, 1962*

Prime Minister:

I want to express my appreciation for your warm words of welcome. As you say, this is the sixth meeting that we have had—Key West, twice in Washington, once in London, once in Bermuda, and now in the Bahamas. And I do think it fair to say that we really do much better in warmer climates, so I am delighted that we are here today.

I am not sure that the world is so much better off after our previous five meetings, but I feel that at least as President I have been better off, and have benefited greatly from the counsel and friendship which you have shown to me, Prime Minister, to my predecessor, your old friend General Eisen-

hower, and also to the American people who have a heavy claim laid on you from earliest birth.

I want to express our appreciation to the people of the Bahamas for their welcome. The world looks better today than it did yesterday, and I am sure it's due to our pleasure in being on this island in the sun.

We thank you all for your warm welcome.

NOTE: Prime Minister Macmillan's remarks of welcome follow:

Mr. President:

It is a very great privilege for me to be asked to welcome you most heartily to the Bahamas on your visit here today. We hope that you will enjoy your stay.

I would like to add perhaps that these forms of