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Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989): Speech 02

Hilton Kramer

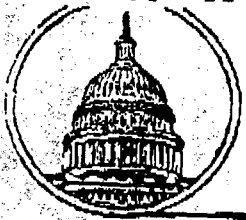
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News Release

by the National Republican Congressional Committee

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LOWEY VOTES IN FAVOR OF FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED OBSCENITY

WASHINGTON -- July 14, 1989 -- Congresswoman Nita Lowey let down the taxpayers of New York when she voted to have Congress support sexually explicit and anti-religious works of art that are offensive to millions of Americans, NRCC Co-Chairman Ed Rollins charged today.

Said Rollins, "Four out of five Members of Congress voted to strip the appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts because of its support for artwork considered obscene," Rollins said. "But Congresswoman Lowey joined with a tiny minority of the most liberal members of Congress to support using your tax dollars to subsidize such outrageously offensive artwork."

Rollins was referring to Congresswoman Lowey's vote against the Arney Amendment (Roll No. 134, Congressional Record, Page H3654, July 12, 1989). This measure stripped \$45,000 from the budget of the National Endowment for the Arts because it is the exact amount the NEA paid for the exhibition of such "artwork" as Andres Serrano's photograph of a Christ-figure submerged in a container of the artist's urine, as well as sexually explicit photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe.

Rollins said, "Some 332 Members of Congress stood up in protest against the NEA's using tax dollars for such offensive material. Yet, Congresswoman Lowey voted to continue the NEA's practice of using her District's taxpayers' hard-earned money to underwrite this kind of so-called artwork."

"Perhaps the people of the 20th District of New York will ask Congresswoman Lowey why she thinks they should pay for an artist to defile a Christ-image with urine. Perhaps it's time for her to tell the people of her District why they should subsidize what the Washington Post called 'homoerotic and sadomasochistic pictures.'"

"As Co-Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, I can guarantee that during the upcoming campaign, Congresswoman Lowey will be asked why she failed to register her outrage at such taxpayer-financed obscenity when she had her chance. The way she voted was truly obscene," Rollins concluded.

*Hil Hor Krause
Federal Ex*