

1966

## National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967): Speech 02

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NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES



1800 G STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

National Endowment for the Arts

National Council on the Arts

April 6, 1966

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Following are excerpts from statements supporting the National Endowment for the Arts made during debate on the floor of the House of Representatives on appropriations contained in the Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for 1967, April 5, 1966:

WINFIELD K. DENTON (D-Ind.): "I trust their (the National Council on the Arts) judgment. Fortunately we have a very able council that has made recommendations for the arts program. Now, some people are inclined to ridicule art. I do not. I respect the arts... I have been to Rome and I have been to Greece. In the past they were great countries. Today the most notable monuments to their great past is their art and their literature... America has grown up. Other countries finance such projects as this. For instance, the United Kingdom spends \$38 million annually on the arts; Austria spends \$12 million annually... West Germany spends \$11 million annually on the arts; France, \$8.5 million, and Italy \$8.5 million... They have this fine Council to review the projects, and Congress has decided that we will embark upon this program."

JOHN E. FOGARTY (D-R.I.): "The creation of this foundation (National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities) which is concerned with the quality of American life was one of the highmarks of the first session of this Congress... These two great councils (National Council on the Arts and the National Council on the Humanities) have made excellent starts; let's give them the tools so that they may continue to get the job done."

PETER H. B. FRELINGHUYSEN (R-N.J.): "I believe it is self-evident that the arts scene in the United States today is one of great variety and richness. We are producing much for which we are honored and respected throughout the world. We

do not lack for talent. We do not lack for creativity. We do not lack for public interest. What is lacking, for almost every artistic enterprise we can mention—professional, semi-professional and amateur—is adequate financial support... Without a modest Federal contribution, the arts scene in the United States, despite all its dynamism and vitality, will continue to be in trouble. Through leadership, which the National Foundation will provide, we can hope to develop the magnitude and kind of support for the arts which will permit the development of stable, mature, and civilized activities and creations which will reflect the greatness of this Nation."

ROBERT GIAIMO (D-Conn.): "The creation of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities is a credit to this Nation and to the men and women who have worked with dedication to bring it about. It is testimony that we can build beauty as well as bombs. We have splendid opportunity in the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, and we should give it the support and the opportunity to function."

JACOB H. GILBERT (D-N.Y.) on April 6: "When we sat here a few months ago and listened to the annual state of the Union message, we heard our President say: 'We must change to master change...!' Last year, recognizing the rapid changes for which it has, in part, been responsible, the Congress took steps to help us master that change when it created a National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities. We decided that it was high time we recognized our true scholarly heritage, for this Nation was founded by scholars—humanistic scholars, if you will—men who appreciated knowledge and were not afraid of creativity, innovation, and original scholarship."

MRS. JULIA BUTLER HANSEN (D-Wash.): "...The ballet, plays, paintings, music and literature—all the Nation will enjoy them, but particularly to our urban dwellers, these potential programs offer a tremendous opportunity to enjoy the creative and performing arts...look back across the centuries of history. What has survived? Art, music, literature, theater. The battles that have been won in many instances are almost forgotten; alliances and lands have changed; but Shakespeare, Brahms, Michaelangelo, Da Vinci are immortal. America will be remembered in the centuries ahead for her ideals, and her surviving culture."

FRANK HORTON (R-N.Y.): "For a long time I have been a supporter of the concept of Federal encouragement for the arts..."(The following excerpts are from an article for the ARS Antiqua Society by Mr. Horton which he read into the Record.) "It is my strong conviction that the arts and humanities are matters of crucial importance to our society. Those qualities which make us wiser, more humane, more understanding and more appreciative of beauty and truth are the products of a deep kinship with the arts and humanities and a flourishing cultural life. I believe that these are the qualities which must be sought in greater measure to realize national success and individual fulfillment. While the arts and humanities, through the ages, have sustained man at his most profound level of being, we are growing increasingly aware of the need for their broader and deeper influence. More and more, we recognize their values not only in terms of national prestige, utilization of leisure time, but also as a necessity for man in an age of science and technology. As significant as a rich cultural environment may be, the evidence is quite clear that our cultural development lags far behind scientific development and that support and encouragement for the arts and humanities must be increased to satisfy requirements for expansion and excellence in these areas. Convinced that the arts and humanities have a role equal in importance to the national interest in science, I am concerned over the existing imbalance in our national life and feel that the Federal Government has a responsibility for giving limited, but constructive support and encouragement for the development of our cultural resources."

CHARLES S. JOELSON (R-N.J.): "...I believe that when the history books are written on this 20th century, we are going to be judged not by how many screaming missiles or bombs we can produce. Bombs and missiles will determine, of course, whether we do survive—but we are going to be judged also on how we survived. I think this will be dependent upon what type of scholars and what type of artists we are able to produce..."

JOSEPH M. McDADE (R-Pa.): "I am one who walked in reverence past the painting called the Mona Lisa. I walked past the Pieta at the World's Fair. I have luxuriated in magnificent plays and musicals on Broadway, and in other theaters when these plays were on the road. I read fiction and nonfiction as much as the limited time permitted me allows. I am an unabashed enthusiast for the arts and humanities. I am reminded of a story of Dr. Johnson who was once invited to dinner, and who, when asked about the meal later, remarked: 'It was a nice

dinner, but not the sort of dinner you would invite a man to.' I feel about the arts and humanities section of this bill much as Dr. Johnson felt. Without this section it would still be a fine bill, but not the sort you would invite a man to examine."

OGDEN R. REID (R-N.Y.): "I hope that a principle will be made clear...that is basic and of paramount importance— autonomy for the arts. The Congress must be disinterested as between particular grants. There must be a clear insulation from Federal control and from the dead hand of the Government. Congress should support the arts in my judgement, but without attempting to influence artistic judgment or direction. The Congress must not interpose its ideas on artistic questions. This should be left entirely to the talented and public spirited men and women who serve on the National Council on the Arts and its several distinguished panels on the theater, the dance, and the visual arts... We must, as the House of Commons has for two decades, uphold independence for the arts free from political interference."

WILLIAM F. RYAN (D-N.Y.) : "The spiritual needs of a civilized society must not be neglected while we provide the guns of warfare and the butter of nourishment. Today we should provide a full portion for the Nation's cultural life... I think we must be very careful to insure complete freedom for the arts in this country. Congress should not attempt to exercise a role which would be tantamount to Government interference in the arts, something which has been decried time and time again... We are fortunate to have a distinguished Council on the Arts to advise in this area. I believe that we should leave questions of type or style of art to its discretion..."

FRANK THOMPSON, JR. (D-N.J.): "It (the National Council on the Arts) represents a group of 26 men and women who have dedicated themselves to the development of the arts in this country, who are nationally and indeed internationally recognized as outstanding leaders in their field of the arts, and who have worked long hours—often without any pay whatsoever—for a cause in which they and countless others deeply believe.

We are not talking about luxuries, or window dressing, or frills or furbelows, for the American scene and our way of life. We are talking about the essential quality of American life, the kind of quality that is absolutely basic to our goals for the future—basic to young people and their development as better

human beings, basic to the middle aged and to our older citizens, basic to the whole fabric of our country in terms of both the present and the future.

All leading civilizations throughout history have placed great emphasis on the arts. They have done so because the arts translate into lasting, permanent form man's highest aspirations. These facts are beyond debate. For centuries the arts abroad have been supported at a State or National level. Today the taxpayers in all leading European countries support the arts. Austria, for example, spends \$1.70 per person per year for the arts, including aid to arts festivals which attract thousands of visitors to that country annually...private support is simply no longer adequate to meet the growing demands our people are making on arts organizations all across the Nation...(but) it is ridiculous to suggest that government support will diminish private giving for the arts. Just the opposite has been true in those States which have already established programs financed in part by State funds...

May I remind my colleagues that in the darkest days of World War II, the British Government—with a budget far more limited than ours and under the gravest kind of duress—brought its Arts Council into being, to boost morale, to affirm that there is more to life than guns or butter and that the values of the human spirit and the creative mind are deserving of support, especially in times of crisis. In view of the achievements that Council has brought to Great Britain, achievements which have been projected internationally throughout the free world—are we to call this action foolish, or misguided, or in error?

That is what we are discussing—the kind of civilization we want to make possible for the future of our own country, and the image we project beyond our own shores."

From House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior Department and Related Agencies hearings on the fiscal 1967 appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts, March 1, 1966:

MICHAEL J. KIRWAN (D-Ohio): "I have come to realize in recent years through my associations with men like you (Roger Stevens) and my experiences that we should do more to promote the arts in our country. I was very impressed, for example, during a recent trip to Mexico with what the Government is doing to

encourage music and the arts. The cost is small compared with so many things we are doing and I am impressed by the great interest there is in this program. If it is administered properly, I feel it will mean a great deal in the development of artists, especially among the youths. We have got a lot of youngsters that have a lot of talent and I think this is a good way to start them out on the right road."