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Kerr, John Hoare (1978-1984): Correspondence 65

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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the
National Council on the Arts

October 20, 1978

The Honorable Esteban Torres
U.S. Permanent Representative
UNESCO Headquarters
Delegate's Building
7 Place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris, France

Dear Ambassador Torres:

I am happy to learn that my friend and colleague, John Hoare Kerr, has applied to UNESCO (see attached copy). John and I have been closely associated in the years of the Endowment's existence and I have been in a position to observe John's work carefully. It is thanks to John being our Director of Education these past nine years that we have achieved the advances we have in arts education.

What would John bring to UNESCO? First his mature enthusiasm, knowledge and dedication. Beyond this he has many contacts and good friends here and abroad in the cultural and education world. Second, his buoyant personality, ability to get along well with others and his good sense of humor, and third, I would note a characteristic which is important in our work here and which I suspect UNESCO may be looking for too. John is a good listener. While maintaining his own good judgment, he lets others have their full say and seeks to find the best in the comments of others whose accomplishments he prizes and whose loyalty to a common goal he encourages. He has had some of America's most distinguished artists and educators work with him to develop excellence in programming, and education, and has been received well abroad by comparable groups. I am enclosing a recent report of his from a trip the British sponsored.

During my many years in Washington and with my trips around this country, I have met many administrators (both men and women) under different circumstances and with many objectives. Many of them have struck me as capable, friendly and genuinely able but, that element of something "extra" a capacity to

enter into the cultural and educational programming of diverse cultures sympathetically and with humor, I have found only in very special people, and John is one.

After nine years of dedicated service as Director of Education under three Endowment Chairmen, we would miss John here at the Endowment but hope to call on him for advice and counsel in the future.

Sincerely,

Livingston Biddle

Livingston L. Biddle, Jr.
Chairman

Enclosure