2017

Conference Material (1976): News Article 02

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Way Cleared
For Okay of
Arts Fundings

By Phillip M. Kadis
Washington Star Staff Writer

The breaking of a month-long logjam on federal arts and humanities legislation has cleared the way for congressional approval before September legislative and funding deadlines.

In a demonstration of statesmanship that was no less welcome for its elephantine gestation period, House and Senate conferees yesterday swapped and amended provisions of the two sections of their differing bills that had stymied a conference committee for four weeks.

Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., chairman of the conference committee and one of the patriarchs of arts and humanities legislation, was visibly pleased with the results.

"IF THE staff can prepare language on the compromise proposals put forward here and draw up a table showing how they compare with the original provisions of each bill, I think we could come to a conclusion pretty quickly," said Pell in a spirit of accommodation that was not often present during other meetings of the conferees that began in July.

The big dividing issue was Pell's plan to make the existing self-perpetuating state humanities committees accountable to elected governmental authority in each state. Grant funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities are often funneled through the state humanities committees. The House and the humanities endowment has resisted the plan on the grounds that it would politicize an area of federal financial support that should be immunized from governmental interference.

Another issue in contention has been Pell's insistence that parity in federal funding of the humanities endowment and the National Endowment for the Arts be ended in favor of the arts endowment.

At yesterday's two-hour meeting, Rep. John Brademas, D-Ind., another progenitor of arts and humanities legislation and the chief House conferee, "suggested outlines for resolution of the impasse" on the state humanities committee issue in return for maintaining parity between the twin endowments. At least for the next year or two, while the whole question is given further study.

While Pell went through the motions of arguing that the arts endowment deserves more money because it has been, in his view, more successful, Brademas gently twitted him.

WATERGATE, Vietnam and a host of recent social ills indicated that the ethical and moral concerns of the humanities deserved more financial support that the arts, said Brademas, seconded by
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ranking House Republican conferee
Albert H. Quie of Minnesota.
Well, if the humanities are educa-
tional Congress has not been nig-
gardly, countered Pell. Afterall, it is
now considering a $36 billion educa-
tion bill. (The combined arts and
humanities authorization would not
exceed $300 million at most)
What about federal funding of the
National Gallery of Art? asked
Brademas. Or the Hirshhorn?
Both sides were beginning to enjoy
the exchanges when Sen. Jacob
Javits began to grumble that "every-
body will be in trouble if we don't do
something soon about this bill.
Without approval of the "Arts, Hu-
manities, and Cultural Affairs Act of
1976," said Pell, "both endowments will run out
of money by the end of September.
An emergency extension of the ex-
piring appropriation would restrict
the federal culture patrons to the low
appropriations levels of the transi-
tional budget quarter.
"To solve this dilemma," said
Javits, "I am willing to consider
going for parity in basic funding and
deferring the issue for two years."
"The quid for the quo, he made clear,
would be for the House to concede
something on the humanities com-
mittees."
It was then that Brademas outlined
his suggestion or suggested his out-
line.
Instead of permitting the states to
appoint a majority of the members of
the state committees, as contemplat-
ed in the Pell plan, the states would
be allowed to appoint only half of
them under certain conditions.
THE CONDITIONS
would be that states which opt for making the
appointments would be required to kick
in state money to match half the
$200,000 annually allocated to each
state committee the first year and a
full $200,000 the second and each suc-
ceeding year to keep the political ap-
pointments on the state committees.
Members of the committees would
still be rotated, as in the original
House bill to keep the committees from becoming ingrown, and each state
would still be mandated to ap-
point two members to the state com-
mittee if it decided not to appoint the
full five per state.
Quie added that some language
would have to drafted setting qualifi-
cations for the appointees, but he
agreed with Pell that these need not
be restricted to academic pedigrees.
Pell has criticized the humanities
endowment and its chairman, Ronald
Berman, whose reappointment the
senator opposes, for what he views as
the overly elitist makeup of the state
committees. Too many professors, in
particular. Berman has denied that
the committees are unduly weighted
with denizens of the nation's academ-
ic ghettos. High standards, he
argues in response to the charge of
cultural elitism, are embodied in the disci-
plines of the humanities. Maintaining
standards is not mandarism.
"We don't want the governor of a
state to appoint some political hack
to help him win an election," empha-
sized Quie. "We've seen how mem-
bers of state arts councils spend their
time carying political favor to win
appointment to the Federal Council
on the Arts," he added.
Brademas said it was his
intention to make the state humani-
ties committees like the state arts
councils.
"I have tried instead to respond to
your deep feelings about the humani-
ties committees," he said, speaking
directly to Pell. "I have not used the
state arts councils as models."
PELL BELIEVES that linking the
state humanities committees to the
governmental structure of the states
would result in greater grass roots
support for the humanities, and that
this would be reflected in a rapid
growth of non-federal contributions
to humanities programs. He is con-
vinced that this is what has happened
with the arts councils which have de-
veloped a constituency that politicians
are finding it impolitic to in-
gnore.
Brademas said he shared Pell's
views that humanities programs
should not be directed by "a narrowly
constituted elite." State appointees
to the committees should include
representatives from ethnic groups
and the public at large as well as
scholars, he said.
"We need a fellow or two of rela-
tively little accomplishment," said
Pell. "We need to help people who are not going to be a Michelangelo or
a Shakespeare but who can get turn-
ed on to the humanities.
Rep. Peter Pepey, a New York
Republican who is a member of the Brademas-chaired subcommittee
that oversees legislation on the
endowments and who wandered in
for a portion of the conference, volun-
teered that an Endowment club in his
district had won a hu-
manities grant for a grass roots lec-
ture program for the main
cospital. But Pell was looking none of
it. Atypical, he snorted, evoking
groans from the committee and a
roomful of staff members and on-
lookers.
But occasional glints of hostility
from partially intrenched battle axes
were hardly noticed in the sunny
concord that dominated the meeting.
It was obvious that Brademas and
Pell had worked things out privately
before the meeting, talks so recent or
so confidential that staffers were still
pessimistic about the meeting the
day before it was to take place.
STILL TO be worked out is a
proposal dealing with 11 states
that have dual humanities-arts coun-
cils.
A proposal for a Bicentennial film
and photo portrait of America, intro-
duced by Democratic vice presiden-
tial candidate Walter Mondale, was
agreed upon at an authorized funding
level of $4 million the first year and
$2 million the second.
Javits said he would have ready at
the next conference meeting lan-
guage on his pet project: a
Bicentennial study proposed by John
D. Rockefeller of problems facing
the Republic in its next two centur-
es.
Pell's concession to the House on
putting the new Museum Services
Institute under the Department of
Health, Education and Welfare
stocked. The Senate's Arts in Educa-
tion program, to train teachers of
the arts in new techniques, goes under
the Office of Education instead of the
arts endowment.
Next Tuesday, the arts and hu-
manities solons will confer again to
tie up loose ends.
Once agreement is reached by the
conferees, the fall Senate Committee
on Labor is committed by its chair-
man, Sen. Harrison A. Williams,
N.J., to finally hold a confirmation
hearing on the reappointment of Ber-
man to head the humanities endow-
ment.

PRESIDENT FORD nominated
Berman last February. Berman's
term ended last December.
When Pell announced his opposition
to Berman earlier this year, he said
the onetime Shakespeare
scholar had done an acceptable but
not an outstanding job.