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Humanities, Arts Task Force Formed

By Ruth Dean
Washington Star Staff Writer

Screen actor Charlton Heston was named to head a panel representing the arts on a newly formed Task Force on the Arts and Humanities, the White House announced yesterday.

The president also named as co-chair with Heston, Dr. Hanna H. Gray, president of the University of Chicago, representing the humanities, and Dr. Daniel J. Terra, ambassador-designate for cultural affairs, representing the federal government. Heston said he hoped the task force could hold an introductory meeting here in two weeks, depending, of course, on how he can mesh his schedule with his cochairmen.

In a written statement launching the new task force, President Reagan expressed concern for the arts and humanities in America and characterized the nation's cultural institutions as "an essential national resource" (that) "must be protected." He also cited a proposal by the task force to include "federal support" for the arts and humanities by the private sector, "in the arts and humanities by the private sector." He also referred to "significant areas where the arts and humanities are able to..." and "significantly increase..." in the arts and humanities. He also referred to "areas where the impact will..." and "areas where the emphasis will..." in the arts and humanities.

On the eve of House appropriations hearings on the administration's request for a 50 percent cut in the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the task force's role in the arts and humanities was highlighted. The task force is expected to discuss ways to strengthen support for the arts and humanities, and to highlight the need for the arts and humanities to be considered in budget decisions.

The task force is expected to meet in Washington, D.C., this week to begin its work. The panel will be composed of 25 members, including artists, educators, and representatives of the private sector. The task force is expected to submit its findings and recommendations to the president by the end of the year.

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