1. Arts and Humanities: Culture Agency Is Emerging from Infancy

I must study politics and war that my sons have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture. . . . —PRESIDENT JOHN ADAMS

With the passage of the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, the United States government undertook for the first time to become a continuing patron of the nation's cultural activities. In the years since the act was passed, a total of some $50.5 million have been expended under the Act. The effects of these expenditures are difficult to evaluate as a whole: in many instances the individual sums are small and the impact of many of the activities cannot be measured in physical terms. But the organization that implements the Act, the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities (NFAH), appears destined for an increasingly large role in the economics of American culture; therefore, at this half-decade mark, it may be useful to examine the structure of the NFAH and its pursuits.

The legislation created two separate but adjacent organizations, or endowments, one for the arts and one for the humanities. It provided for a staff for each and a 26-member council, composed of well-known figures from a variety of disciplines, to preside over each. The chairman of each council, who is also chairman of the endowment, was to receive the same salary, $28,500, as the director of the National Science Foundation (the salary has since been raised to $40,000 for council chairmen and $42,500 for the NSF director). To coordinate the endowments and provide liaison with other government departments a Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities, made up of selected government administrators, was appointed. The endowments were each allotted $5 million for the first year of operation, with as much as $5 million more apiece promised to match private gifts.

The arts endowment was directed to supply fellowships and matching grants to individuals and groups engaged in study or performance in all fields of the performing and creative arts, including film-making, architecture, and fashion design. The mandate to the humanists was to assist the study, teaching, and public dissemination of knowledge in history, philosophy, law, languages, literature, religion, and archeology.

The law governing NFAH is designed to keep federal participation minimal, both spiritually and financially. It contains the usual language forbidding interference with the policies of grantees. Most grants to institutions or groups made through the arts endowment require that at least 50 percent of the necessary money be put up by the recipient; no such stricture pertains in the humanities endowment. But both operate under the assumption that federal funds are to act as "seed" money, not as primary support of any project.

Like NSF, NFAH underwent many changes and reversals between conception and birth; but, unlike NSF, whose budget has blossomed from a few million to almost a half billion dollars, funding levels have remained small by federal standards.

This year has seen the Foundation's first big jump in appropriations—the fiscal year 1971 allocation is $31,310,000, an amount exceeding that allotted for fiscal 1970 by more than 50 percent. Of this, $11,060,000 is earmarked for humanities programs, and $12,590,000 will go to the arts, of which $4,125,000 is designated for the use of state arts councils. $2.5 million in matching funds is available for each endowment. The rest is for administration.

No one now seems to question the Foundation's right to exist, but many regard its acceptance by Congress as little short of miraculous. Attempts to create a federal arts agency go far back in the nation's history, but success can finally be attributed to the 89th Congress, which, rich with the liberal harvest of the 1964 Democratic landslide, supplied a friendly environment to arts legislation. In addition, President Johnson, whose cultural philistinism was generally exaggerated, gratified enthusiasts by his strong endorsement of an administration bill that combined the arts and humanities in a single agency. The mood of the nation —activist and optimistic—was ripe for the idea. "Arts have a way of moving ahead when people feel this way," observes a National Gallery official, "and this was a time when in the unconscious sense this was a great society."

The bill was not without its critics, some of who feared the enstatement of a "culture czar," the propagation of "committee taste," and the danger that the arts would be dragged into a slough of mediocrity. However, the Foundation has not only failed to justify these expectations but has, despite its modest appropriations, apparently surpassed the hopes of its fondest adherents.

The arts endowment, which got a year's head start in planning, has perhaps scored the most significant advances. In 1966, its first full year of operation, it faced what the arts council likened to a cultural desert in America. While great metropolitan centers such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco were teeming with creative activity, the rest of the country was relatively barren of professional artists.

Greenberg Resigns from Science To Produce New Publication

Daniel S. Greenberg, a member of the News and Comment staff since 1961 and head of it for most of that time, has resigned, effective 18 December, to publish an independent, specialized newsletter, *Science and Government Report*. To be issued twice monthly, starting in February, the new publication will concentrate on science-government relations in Washington, and is intended for scientists, research and academic administrators, and industrial research executives. Subscriptions, at $25 per year, $35 for foreign addresses, are now being accepted. (Science and Government Report, Inc., Post Office Box 21123, Washington, D.C. 20009.)