

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 26, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

Bob Haldeman

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In talking to several people in Philadelphia I heard concern expressed with regard to the Nancy Hanks-Garment operation on the ground that their thrust was to support those activities in the cultural field which were "novel" and broke new ground rather than to put any significant emphasis on the more traditional activities.

This is completely contrary to my views. I do not want to take it up directly with Garment and Hanks but I want you to. As you, of course, know those who are on the modern art and music kick are 95 percent against us anyway. I refer to the recent addicts of Leonard Bernstein and the whole New York crowd.

When I compare the horrible monstrosity of Lincoln Center with the Academy of Music in Philadelphia I realize how decadent the modern art and architecture have become.

This is what the Kennedy-Shriver crowd believed in and they had every right to encourage this kind of stuff when they were in. But I have no intention whatever of continuing to encourage it now. If this forces a show-down and even some resignations it's all right with me. I am not going to have 40 million dollars scattered all over the country in projects of this type.

P.S. I also want a check made with regard to the incredibly atrocious modern art that has been scattered around the embassies around the world. I asked for this several months ago from Shakespeare and have heard nothing but silence since I made the request. I know that Keating has done some cleaning out of the Embassy in New Delhi, but I want to know what they are doing in some of the other places. One of the worst, incidentally, was Davis in Rumania.

We, of course, cannot tell the Ambassadors what kind of art they personally can have, but I found in travelling around the world that many of our Ambassadors were displaying the modern art due to the fact that they were compelled to because of some committee which once was headed up by Mrs. Kefauver and where they were loaned some of these little uglies from the Museum of Modern Art in New York. At least, I want a quiet check made -- not one that is going to hit the newspapers and stir up all the troops -- but I simply want it understood that this Administration is going to turn away from the policy of forcing our embassies abroad or those who receive assistance from the United States at home to move in the direction of off-beat art, music and literature.