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With painting of George Washington as a backdrop, fine arts are discussed by, from left, Barnet Fain, president of the R.I. Fine Arts Council; Roger L. Stevens, chairman of the National Council on the Arts; Governor Chafee; Eddie Dowling, special guest, and House Speaker John Wrenn at the State House.

—Journal-Bulletin Photo

Art for Arts' Sake at R.I. Capitol

By DOUGLAS C. WILSON

There was art for the arts' sake in the state house yesterday as the Rhode Island Fine Arts Council presented a program of slides and music for legislative leaders.

They did it for the sake of the new \$50,000 budget request of the state Advisory Council on the Cultural Arts, which is included in budget proposals to be made this year by the state Department of Education.

"We did not do this last year and it was a big mistake," Barnet Fain, advisory council chairman, said. "The legislature was not aware of the scope and the

importance of the programs to the community," and it failed to grant a \$50,000 appropriation that was sought last year.

Aim of Program

Yesterday's program was designed to show the scope of cultural activities supported in the present fiscal year by \$20,000 from the governor's contingency fund, \$30,000 from ticket sales and private contributions and \$50,000 in matching federal funds.

The fine arts council recruited Eddie Dowling, Governor Chafee and Roger Stevens, chairman of the National Council on the Arts, to help boost the program. More than one hundred persons attended the session in the House chamber, including legislative, cultural and educational leaders.

A slide show prepared by Marc S. Harrison, assistant professor of industrial design at Rhode Island School of Design, was the highlight of the afternoon program. It showed theatrical and musical productions financed in the state-federal program and a profusion of old lithographs and amusing photographs of the state's political leaders.

Commentary by Mr. Harrison and ragtime selections played on the piano by a Brown University graduate student, John Pawelek, accompanied the presentation.

At the reception that followed, Rep. Eugene F. Cochran of Providence, a deputy Democratic majority leader, said he "thought that movie was excellent."

The Democrat said the \$50,000 arts' appropriation might go through the General Assembly this year "if we're not tight for money." And he said he expects that "new basic tax programs will relieve the tightness of the money situation for new and worthy programs."

Matched by U.S.

The \$50,000 sought by the state advisory council is the amount that the federal government will match, providing \$50,000 for each state that raises its share. The chairman added, however, that "none of us feels that the government should bear the entire responsibility for the arts," and he expects that ticket sales and additional private contributions will help out again.

The Chafee administration introduced a bill in the Senate on Friday that would make the advisory council a separate state agency, not one included in the state Department of Education.

Mr. Fain said the council is seeking independent status "because we feel that whereas the arts bear on education, they are a separate entity and are important for themselves."

He said the bill also would repeal last year's legislation that established a Rhode Island Cultural Arts Commission. The commission was established with the passage of a bill introduced by Sen. Pat Nero, D-Cranston. Mr. Fain said yesterday that the existence of two state cultural agencies can only lead to confusion.

Speaking on "Federal-State Partnership in Support of the Arts," Mr. Stevens said, "There has always been some one or some group or some government which intelligently realized that the quality of a nation can be immeasurably enhanced through the works of its artists."

The national chairman said, "The role of government should be a limited one. We must help guide, but not dictate. We must assist, but not dominate. We must cooperate, but not demand. And above all else, the long tradition of freedom in the arts must not be broken, or even slightly bent to suit a particular need or purpose."

In brief remarks, Governor Chafee, as host of the confer-

ence, said it is "important for government as well as private agencies to pitch in and help the arts."

Mr. Dowling said the arts have been "a field in which I spent my life—not through dedication, but for survival, really. We had no subsidy." He praised the work of Mr. Stevens and wished him success in the task of giving national support to the arts: "If it can be done, Roger Stevens will be the man to do it."

Grants approved by state and federal agencies for cultural programs during the present fiscal year have included \$24,225 to establish a touring program of cultural organizations to various parts of the state; \$23,620 to implement certain projects which provide free or low-cost performances to be integrated with school systems in the state or to provide cultural exposure to low-income groups; \$17,500 to strengthen the performing organizations by implementing programs of research and development, and \$2,314 to begin a program of technical assistance to amateur organizations.