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Feb. 21, 1981

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Papp Urges Replacing U.S. Arts Endowment With State Agencies

By CAROL LAWSON

In the wake of President Reagan's proposed 50 percent cut in appropriations from the \$173 million Carter budget for the arts, Joseph Papp, head of the New York Shakespeare Festival, called yesterday for the abolition of the National Endowment for the Arts. Mr. Papp proposed that Federal money for the arts be channeled instead to state arts councils to administer the funds.

Mr. Papp said he advocated eliminating the 15-year-old endowment on the ground that decisions affecting the arts in New York City — a major industry here — should be made closer to home. "It is not proper for people in Washington to make artistic decisions about the arts in New York," he said. "It is very difficult for New York to make demands on the Federal Government."

Mr. Papp suggested that Federal funds be distributed to state arts councils in much the same way that the National Endowment for the Arts now disburses funds to the states. Each state receives an equal grant, plus additional sums based on population.

Noting that the arts "stimulate \$2 billion in business in New York City," Mr. Papp called on the state and city governments to increase their own budgets for the arts.

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Reagan Aides Discuss U.S. Role in Helping Arts and Humanities

By HILTON KRAMER

An important debate on the future course of Government policy on the arts is in progress in the inner councils of President-elect Ronald Reagan's advisers on cultural affairs. The debate is concentrated on the programs and policies of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Its outcome is likely to determine how the two Federal agencies will allocate funds and establish priorities for years to come.

At the crux of this debate is a firmly held belief, reported to be virtually unanimous among otherwise divided Reagan advisers, that the activities of both endowments have been profoundly compromised by politicization and an accompanying lowering of standards under the Carter Administration.

Divergent Conclusions

Yet from this belief two widely divergent conclusions are being drawn. One calls for the adoption of narrower programs designed to meet stricter standards of professional accomplishment. This, in effect, would mean a significant withdrawal from programs of popularization and mass appeal, and a renewed emphasis on programs encouraging high art and professional scholarship.

The other conclusion is more extreme.

Continued on Page C11, Column 1

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