

JANUARY 13, 1977

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

President Ford announced today his endorsement of the formation of a volunteer corporate support group for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the appointment of Donald S. MacNaughton, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Prudential Insurance Company of America, as chairman of its board of governors.

Recognizing the economic dilemma faced by the performing arts and the need for the creation of new works as well as the revival of dramatic and musical classics, The Corporate Fund for the Performing Arts at Kennedy Center is expected to provide the sustaining support necessary to accomplish this objective.

The President praised the leaders of American business for devoting their time, efforts and financial support to the advancement of the performing arts in the Nation's Capital. The President said the new Corporate Fund represents the highest tradition of public concern and public service by American business.

Appointed as vice-chairmen of the group, according to the White House, were: Thornton F. Bradshaw, President, Atlantic Richfield Co.; Frank T. Cary, Chairman, International Business Machines Corp.; John D. de Butts, Chairman, American Telephone & Telegraph Co.; Howard C. Kauffmann, President Exxon Corporation; William F. May, Chairman, American Can Co.; Thomas A. Murphy, Chairman, General Motors Corp.; Irving S. Shapiro, Chairman, E. I. Du Pont deNemours Co.; Rawleigh Warner, Jr., Chairman, Mobil Oil Corp.; Harold Burson, Chairman, Burson-Marsteller, will serve as Secretary to the Fund.

"Kennedy Center is unique in that it operates on a balanced budget without public subsidy while offering a broad range of artistic programs. Funds to finance artistic presentations are derived from ticket sales and from contributions by individuals and organizations in the private sector," Roger L. Stevens, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, said. Mr. Stevens pointed out that the costs of maintaining those portions of Kennedy Center which serve as a memorial to President Kennedy are, as in the case of other Presidential memorials, borne by the Park Service. However, under an agreement worked out with congressional approval, the Center pays a pro rata share of maintaining the building.

"Kennedy Center--itself an institution operating within the private sector--welcomes the continuing support of American corporations who were so helpful in providing construction funds and more recently in underwriting substantial portions of our successful Bicentennial season," Mr. Stevens added.

Mr. MacNaughton said corporate leaders who understand the importance of supporting cultural activities in their own communities will recognize the value and need for supporting the performing arts in Washington, where the local corporate base is limited. "By helping make the Nation's Capital a world leader in artistic and cultural events, American corporations will enhance our national status to overseas visitors, many of them our customers and business associates," he said.

He added that corporate support of Kennedy Center will also "enrich the travel of our employees and their families, as well as the lives of the millions of visitors and students who make Washington the Nation's first choice as a tourist and educational attraction." "American business," he continued, "has a major stake in helping Kennedy Center project the meaningful message that our private enterprise system is concerned not only with the bottom line but also with the total enrichment of our lives." Mr. MacNaughton said a first year goal of \$1 million has been set for The Corporate Fund for the National Center for the Performing Arts to be realized in corporate subscriptions ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. A board of governors of approximately 20 corporate chief executive officers is in process of formation.

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