

artistic masterpieces. It is not surprising, of course, that many of the masterpieces that have survived are great buildings.

There is, of course, a danger here. As Senator MacKenzie has pointed out, the building of performing arts edifices has been going on in Canada for some time. He drew attention to the magnificent start made in Alberta with the building of the great auditoria in Calgary and in Edmonton. Some wit recently put that danger in these words: "We may be nationally in danger of developing an edifice complex." There is some possibility of that, but as Senator Cameron has pointed out, the edifices alone are not enough.

We have, on the other hand, the Canada Council, which has been doing an excellent job for many years and has developed some of the culture that we can expect to put into these cultural palaces. It might well be—and I think most people interested in the arts will agree—that this building would be premature had it not been for the development of artistic performing groups in Canada, which development occurred largely through the sponsorship and assistance of the Canada Council.

I see no reason to view this very expensive plunge into support of the arts, and this granting of a huge subsidy for the building of an art centre here, with greater alarm than the participation by the state in developing the interests of Canadians in other sociological and economic fields.

I would be the first to admit that this is by no means a national priority, and perhaps it had to wait until we had reached our present stage of affluence when we could say with some justification that we can now afford it.

Honourable senators, the bill itself is a good one. It has been well designed to meet its objectives realistically. I think this is partly, if not wholly, due to the fact that the concept was worked out in great detail by people who were personally involved in the problem, that is to say, some 65 organizations here in Ottawa, as I remember, who banded themselves together into what was called the National Capital Arts Alliance. The alliance raised the money to commission a feasibility study which it presented to the Prime Minister. Mr. Hamilton Southam, the distinguished co-ordinator of the centre, told us that the Prime Minister said, "Yes, this should be it." The go ahead was given by the Government in December 1963, one month after the presentation of that feasibility study—which is some kind of record for promptness in Government decision.

Unfortunately, Government action to follow up the decision was not as decisive. There have been delays of one sort and another, and the Government of Canada's centennial project, which was designated by the Government as its major centennial project in the City of Ottawa, will not open its doors, we are told, until the spring of 1969 instead of 1967. We can only look at this as another sorry example of administrative inertia and red tape.

I am sure many honourable senators who have been in Ottawa much longer than I will regard as amazing the fact that the City of Ottawa, the national capital of Canada, has been without any kind of adequate theatre since the old Russell Theatre, on Queen and Elgin Streets was demolished after the fire of 1928. Until then Ottawa did have some fine performing arts centres which if not national were at least a source of local pride.

Senator Connolly (Ottawa West) will be interested to recall that 112 years ago Her Majesty's Theatre was built on Wellington Street on the site of the Norlite Building, which now houses his Commonwealth Parliamentary Association staff. The theatre cost \$7,500 and seated 1,000 people—quite a contrast to the \$30 million or more which our newest art centre is going to cost.

There were other theatres. The next was the Grand Opera House, which I do not remember. It was built 80 years ago at a cost of \$40,000 and seated 1,000 people. That theatre was superseded by the Russell Theatre which at one time was managed by that mysterious and exciting figure in Canadian history, Mr. Ambrose Small.

The centre therefore has a tradition in Ottawa. It is not something entirely new, it is something that fills a long vacant gap.

I am glad to see that this bill goes a long way toward making the management of the centre independent. As I read the bill I think there is in it a studied avoidance of what Shakespeare, drawing from his own experience with the Puritan element 350 years ago in London, referred to as "Art made tonguetied by authority." There is evidence in the wording of the bill that the hand of authority will not be excessively heavy in the management of the theatre. On the other hand, I would hope that this wide freedom will not be interpreted by the management as a mandate for licence. I think most honourable senators will agree that in recent years there has been enough of that in connection with the performing arts on the part of private