

# Culture in New York . . .

Culture is a cash crop in New York; the arts are the basis of \$3 billion in business annually, affecting everything from service jobs to real estate. The fact that this city is one of the creative capitals of the world does not mean, however, that it administers its artistic assets well; a recent report of the Mayor's Committee on Cultural Policy accused the city of inefficiency and impotence in its handling of cultural affairs. That includes \$50 million of direct investment through official programs and budgets for which New York does not remotely get its money's worth. It seems that everyone else is getting a bite out of the big apple except the city itself.

It is good news, then, that the report's recommendations for major administrative changes in dealing with arts institutions and activities is being acted on by the city with reasonable speed. Mayor Beame has appointed a City Commission on Cultural Affairs, headed by Martin E. Segal, who also guided the study, which will create a plan and legislation for consolidating all of the city's cultural efforts in one new agency. This Cultural Affairs Administration will elevate the arts from somewhere below happenings in the park to the top administrative level at City Hall where priorities can be established and budgets and programs can be coordinated to insure their fullest impact on the city's life and economy.

Not only does this raise the municipal cultural consciousness; it can raise revenues as well. The commission is dealing with a unique resource capable of contributing as much to New York's solvency as to its creative reputation. In one area at least, the city is playing from strength.