

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Passage of the modern art import bill, which Senator Javits (R.N.Y.) calls of very great importance to us all, will be celebrated today (Thursday, Dec. 10 at noon) in the galleries of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. The pen used by President Eisenhower to sign HR 2411, a bill with Javits amendments liberalizing and modernizing the tariff law for works of art, will be presented by the Senator to Dorothy H. Dudley, Registrar of the Museum. Miss Dudley testified at Congressional hearings on the bill last summer and was active in the formation of the National Committee to Liberalize the Tariff Laws for Art organized last spring.

The presentation will take place in a gallery where the last two sculptures imported by the Museum under the old legislation are on view in an exhibition of Recent Acquisitions. Both works - a piece of Bacarrat crystal called Sky and Sea by Emile Gilioli and a mobile construction by Takis, a Greek artist living in Paris - had to be entered under bond because they do not represent "natural forms." If brought into the country by a private collector they would have been dutiable at 20 per cent of its value. Under the new law they enter duty free as works of art and the Museum does not have to post bond.

The co-chairmen of the National Committee's Executive Committee, Mrs. E. Powis Jones and Mrs. Louise R. Smith, and Mrs. Jacob Javits, who was an active member, will also be present at the brief ceremony. The National Committee consisted of more than 25 museums and art organizations from various parts of the country. Under its leadership 70,000 leaflets urging citizens to write their congressmen in support of the tariff bill were distributed.

The former tariff laws, not revised since 1930, defined sculpture solely as the representation of a natural form; and collages and mosaics no matter what they represented were denied free entry because they were not composed of traditional artists material. The new law for the first time permits free entry for all works of art, including abstract sculpture, original mosaics, and collages.

At the Museum, Senator Javits will say: "The development of cultural interests in the United States is one of the great factors in the maintenance of high national morale so important to us in the struggle in which we are now engaged. Also essential is the development of a community of interest in art with the whole world. Therefore the enactment of the modern art import bill is of very great importance to us all."

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