COMMITTEE ON FOLK ARTS APPOINTED

Formation of a Joint Committee on Folk Arts "to explore the folkways of America" by coordinating projects already underway, was announced today by Ellen S. Woodward, Assistant Administrator of the Works Progress Administration.

"We are bringing together and using all the oral, popular, and traditional materials that express ways of living in our country," Dr. B. A. Botkin, committee chairman and director of the folklore studies of the Federal Writers' Project, reported to Mrs. Woodward. "It is a concerted effort to explore the folkways of America."

The materials already collected include legends and folktales, folk music, games, dances, rituals, and folk art.

The committee will be made up of experts employed on the Arts Projects of the WPA, and its principal work will be to coordinate and develop the folklore studies of the Federal Writers' Project, the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Music Project, the Federal Art Project, the Historical Records Survey, and the Recreation and Education Divisions of the WPA.

Plans for the work include the use of recording apparatus by the Federal Theatre Project to record folk songs, folk tales, and conversations. The material recorded will be used in plays and broadcasts.

The Archive of American Folksong, in the Music Division of the Library of Congress, has placed its facilities at the disposal of the
committee so that the materials can be classified and indexed, and preserved.

Educational and artistic institutions, including Columbia University, University of Pittsburgh and Chicago Art Institute, have offered to act as depositories for all or part of the original drawings and photographs made by the Federal Art Project.

Plans also include publication. The Writers' Project expects to issue several folklore volumes in the early spring.

Coordination of the folklore studies was first suggested by Donald Daugherty, of the executive offices of the American Council of Learned Societies, and he is now a consultant of the committee. Among the other consultants are: Dr. Harold Spivacke, Chief of Music Division, Library of Congress; Alan Lomax, Assistant in charge of the Archive of American Folk Song; Dr. George Herzog, Department of Anthropology, Columbia University; Dr. Ralph S. Boggs, Folklore Council, University of North Carolina; and Dr. Reed Smith, president, Southeastern Folklore Society.

Besides Dr. Botkin, the members of the committee are: Charles Soeger, Federal Music Project and vice-chairman; S. B. Child, Historical Records Survey; Ernestine L. Friedman, Education Division of the WPA; C. Adolph Glassgold, Federal Art Project; Herbert Helpert, Federal Theatre Project; and Nicholas Ray, of the Recreation Division of WPA.

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