

artistic director. The board indicated that it had spent almost a full year interviewing a number of applicants, that it had offered the job to a number of Canadians, all of whom turned it down, and that it had finally made the choice of Mr. Dexter, a British citizen, on the ground that he would be the best qualified person to do the job. At that meeting we also asked the board for a specific schedule as to how it conducted the search and to what degree it sought out all possible avenues, and we are still assessing that information.

We will certainly follow the basic policy of the department, which is to ensure that Canadians who are qualified for a particular position have first chance at the job. But we will simply not turn down an application based on some form of public pressure. We will review the decision of the board to determine whether it was fair and impartial and whether it carried out its job according to the law.

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CANADA COUNCIL

STRATFORD FESTIVAL—INQUIRY RESPECTING INCREASE IN GRANT

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): Madam Speaker, would the minister table the information which he received from the artistic directors? I thank the minister for his answer.

I would like to direct my supplementary question to the Secretary of State. I believe there is a last ditch attempt taking place through conciliation at a meeting this afternoon between the opposing parties. In view of his expressed concern for increasing opportunities for talented Canadian artists, does the minister intend to consult with the Canada Council about future grants concerning this matter in Stratford if a foreigner is in fact employed while qualified Canadians are available? If a Canadian is in fact appointed after these last ditch meetings, would the minister encourage Canada Council to increase its grants since inflation has eaten away at the grants which it received over the last three years?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, like my colleague the Minister of Employment and Immigration, I am most interested in seeing that this type of position is filled by a qualified Canadian if at all possible. As to my intervention with the Canada Council, I will ask my officials to get in touch with the people involved to seek their advice on the matter. However, I would be most reluctant to intervene politically and say that the grants should be increased or decreased depending on the name or quality of the artistic director chosen for any group in this country.

Oral Questions

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

INQUIRY RESPECTING ANTI-CORROSION STANDARD

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It has to do with General Motors, Ford and Chrysler pulling out of the anti-corrosion code as established by the minister's department and the provinces in 1978. Given the fact that these voluntary, anti-rust guidelines seem to have worked pretty well up to the end of the 1980 model year, will the government take the lead and come up with a national standard for all auto manufacturers and for the protection of the consumer?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, obviously I will have to confer with my provincial counterparts following this decision by the automakers. The fact is, that after discussions, we may come to an amicable arrangement with the automakers. The program to which the hon. member referred is indeed voluntary and is only useful as long as the manufacturers are willing to implement it. They seem to have changed their minds, which means that consumers will have a choice to make and if they are unwilling to pay for this anti-corrosion guarantee, they will probably have to buy other makes than those offered by these automakers who will no longer follow this code.

[English]

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, given the answer to me in this House on November 14, 1978, by the then minister of consumer and corporate affairs, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, who said, "We feel that if the voluntary code is a success, we will not have to legislate", and given the fact that the code is now obviously in jeopardy, will the government now make the anti-rust guidelines mandatory?

[Translation]

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, I must repeat, in reply to the hon. member's supplementary question, that I will have to confer with my provincial counterparts, because, as the hon. member probably knows, this is an area of mixed jurisdiction and it is necessary to secure the provincial legislatures's co-operation to adopt legislation making this code compulsory. I suggest to the hon. member that it might have been possible to act more promptly, had the previous task force not been abolished during the federal-provincial conference of consumer affairs ministers which was held last year in Newfoundland.