

Imperial Oil and Louis Hébert is the chairman of "La banque canadienne nationale".

[English]

**The Vice-Chairman:** Mr. Schreyer?

**Mr. Schreyer:** To continue, Mr Chairman, since we have reached that point now where I understand three-quarters of the monies available for grants are voted by Parliament and one-quarter is received from the Council's investments, I would like to ask whether the Council follows the practice of earmarking grant money. For example, do you earmark the money from your investments to be given as grants to the arts, and that received from parliamentary votes earmarked for grants to the social sciences?

**Mr. Boucher:** No, sir. We have a total budget and then we say, so much for the arts, so much for the humanities and social sciences.

**Mr. Schreyer:** The reason I asked that question, Mr. Chairman, is that it seems to me the Canada Council is moving into stormy waters in the years ahead because more and more dependence will be placed on parliamentary votes and the Council will be giving grants to the fine arts, to artists for purposes or projects or works to which, I am afraid, large numbers of people will object.

I am in agreement with Mr. Dwyer that we ignore, at our peril, *avantgarde* art but it seems to me that as parliamentarians, we will find ourselves under quite a bit of pressure to at least make objection known to such works as the examples that have already been given—the destructive art type in Calgary, the court jester in Vancouver, and one or two other examples.

I close with this question. Does the awarding panel have in mind some kind of criteria or standards in judging an application as to whether or not it is obviously aesthetic, whether or not there is literary or artistic value, or does it simply pass on applications as to whether or not the artist is well known?

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**Mr. Martineau:** Mind you, this 2 per cent is very much in our minds and if you look through the annual report you will see that most of our money is spent on what are called the classical arts, and there can be no question at all about it that the majority are in favour of it. Only a very, very small part goes to the *avant-garde*. We believe that we cannot prevent that. There are certain chances which

we must take but we are not making mistakes such as have been made in the past. No doubt, we will make mistakes. We have made some but they were not costly ones; far from it. And they do not count, Mr. Schreyer, when you put them on a balance and you look at this small thing on one side and the enormous good we do on the other, but with an operation of this magnitude it is difficult to prevent it.

**Mr. Schreyer:** I wanted to ask if you might not agree that it would be more beneficial—perhaps "easier" is the correct word—if moneys for granting to artists which you might call *avant-garde* could be provided from a fund that does not come from parliamentary appropriation. After all, you have your earnings from your investments.

**Mr. Martineau:** It is an idea.

**Mr. Boucher:** We could always make this distinction. I think it would be largely fictitious. Actually, four years ago the Council had to decide whether it would go on being relatively poor and proud, but poor at the expense of its parish and proud for its own benefit. We have decided to take the risk. I think it is impossible to manage an operation like the Canada Council and only make safe decisions. It is just not possible.

On the other hand, on the whole, when Mr. Martineau says the majority, I would say almost the total of our decisions are noncontroversial; something like 99 per cent of what we do is noncontroversial. There is a fringe that is controversial. If you take the Ortiz case, for example, that award was not given to stage a public event. That award was given to take an artist from New York to meet other artists in Vancouver. The fact that this spilled all over the place, and was represented in the light of whether it would be attractive to the public in Vancouver, is something which of course is not of our making. It turned out that way and we have a problem. We probably spent a great deal more money on salaries and so on in discussing this issue in the Canada Council than we have awarded to Ortiz, and one can ask if it is worth it. Of course, it is a problem for us.

However, these things are minimal and for an agency that deals with quite possibly the more controversial segments of the Canadian public, namely, the academics and the artists, I think that one would have to say that the Canada Council has had remarkably little trouble and, on the other hand, has been able