

When the Canadian Conference of the Arts recently appeared before the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada we argued that cultural considerations had to be central to all public policy decisions, and that the responsibility for achieving federal cultural objectives had to be shared in a coordinated and comprehensive manner by all federal departments and agencies. Not surprisingly, the commissioners expressed interest in the use of the tax structure in this context. (Accordingly, a copy of the CCA brief to the Macdonald Commission is appended to this submission.) While the issue of the larger framework in which specific decisions and actions may be situated is perhaps beyond the immediate mandate of the Standing Committee in respect of taxation and the arts, it is, nonetheless, well within your larger and ongoing mandate and therefore worth bearing in mind in contemplating the specific problems to be addressed during your review not only of taxation issues but the policy recommendations and initiatives flowing from the Applebaum-Hébert Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee.

The Canadian Conference of the Arts feels it wholly appropriate for the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, in addressing specific and immediate tax problems affecting individual artists, to make reference to the larger policy issues raised by these problems. Accordingly, we would welcome any observations and recommendations you might wish to make. We look upon your task, then, as twofold: first, you must consider the immediate and pressing problems currently facing the arts community and make recommendations for their resolution; second, these issues must be related to the broader, long-term policy questions raised by the conflict between federal cultural policy and federal tax policy.

RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

As mentioned above, the CCA will rely upon its members to bring to your attention their specific problems and recommendations for their resolution. While the comments which follow will be perforce general in nature, we would welcome the opportunity of discussing them in detail with the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

A Moratorium

If the task of the Standing Committee is to be made easier and worthwhile, and if the arts community is to endure until that task is completed, tax actions detrimental to the arts community must be deferred pending the results of your review. We would therefore urge you again to insist upon a moratorium until your recommendations may be considered and acted upon.