

questions concerning the way grants and funds are awarded under the special cultural initiatives program administered by the Department of Communications.

The special cultural initiatives program was created in 1981 to give financial assistance to non-profit Canadian cultural professional organizations. The initial program was approved for a three-year period with a \$39.6 million budget to support activities in deficit reduction, administration improvement, acquisition of assets and special demonstrations of national significance. During the first three years of the program, more than 500 cultural organizations from every region of the country received assistance through this fund. In 1983, the program was renewed until March 31, 1985 after its terms of reference were modified so as to replace the deficit reduction program by other activities related to arts and technology. The renewed program had a \$34 million budget and over 343 cultural organizations from various parts of Canada were able to benefit from that phase of the program.

• (1815)

[English]

The areas addressed by the program are those activities which complement other funding programs of the Government of Canada including those of the Canada Council and provincial Government programs.

In reviewing request for financial assistance, the program staff consults with other federal and provincial Departments and agencies familiar with the project or the organization and the cultural ecology in which it operates. The Canada Council represents an important source for such information and the level of contact between the Council and program staff is significant. Following an analysis of the request and the information garnered during the consultation process, a recommendation is formulated for the Minister's consideration.

The Minister also receives representations from Members of Parliament from all sides of the House as well as representations from his provincial colleagues, which place the project in the context of the realities of the local community and its needs. This information is directed to the office of the Minister as the background information he requires in order to make an informed judgment on a project submitted for review. Such information ensures that the Minister has the broadest field of information possible on the merits of a project and its impact on the community.

Since March 1, program officials have been actively consulting officials from all provincial Governments to ensure that the objectives, criteria and priorities of any continuing program are consistent with the regional realities and needs of the Canadian cultural community. In light of the central role played by the provincial Governments in co-funding projects submitted to the program, such consultations are essential to ensure a truly responsive and responsible program of support for Canadian cultural organizations.

### Adjournment Debate

The Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse) will make public his intentions in this respect in the very near future, at which time any revised criteria will be distributed to Canadian cultural organizations as well as all interested Members of the House of Commons. In the interim, the criteria of the Special Program of Cultural Initiatives approved for the period of April 1, 1983, to March 31, 1985, will continue to apply.

[Translation]

Finally it should be noted that, since September 4, 64, or 48 per cent, of the 134 grants awarded under the program went to ridings represented by Liberal and NDP Members. Those figures clearly indicate that the complaint voiced by the Hon. Member—that the main criterion for awarding grants or contributions is related to political allegiance—is totally unfounded. Besides, I might add that a review of projects funded under the program would reveal that it has been and still is an efficient tool to help Canada's cultural organizations.

• (1820)

### MINES—CONSTRUCTION OF CARTOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE AT SHERBROOKE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to rise during this adjournment debate to come back to a question that I put to the Minister of State for Mines (Mr. Layton) last March 25 with regard to the construction of the Cartographic Institute in Sherbrooke. Mr. Speaker, I know how sensitive you are to this issue and I would like to take this opportunity to give the Government a chance to clearly state its position. Everybody knows that the background to this question is terrible. As you are well aware, in 1977, under the decentralization policy announced by the then Government, it had been decided that one of the services would be decentralized to Sherbrooke. Since then, this project has been plagued by all sorts of problems which we all regret. Unfortunately, for many years, there were language related problems, but this difficulty has finally been corrected. Regionally, there has always been a political will to settle the issue, but the population lost patience with good reason perhaps, because of the incredible delay in implementing projects which were so vital to the region.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, for this and many other reasons, I am certain that you have succeeded in winning the confidence of the public, and in this regard, we must all acknowledge the results of the last election, while keeping in mind the commitments made by Government Members then in the Opposition. This is what everyone is worried about. Mr. Speaker, it had been said that this project had been put off for too long, that nothing had been done and that with a new Government, there would be no such delays.

Mr. Speaker, we have been assured since September 4 that there would not be any delay. We were told that the project would be carried out soon. Nothing of the kind happened. We were then told: You will have to wait for the next Budget. Now we are told that it will not be in the next Budget. I would