

Canada Council

I myself and some other colleagues felt that this may have been wrong; that maybe the idea should have been to establish another aspect of the Canada Council to deal with these fields and to leave the Canada Council for humanities and social sciences and support in what you might call the general arts subjects. The idea of a grant to the endowment fund would have interested us largely because of the success of the Canada Council in keeping this endowment fund in good shape and earning a rate of interest from it that would compare quite favourably with what private organizations are doing. This is one of the reasons we think further consideration of the endowment idea would be worth while.

I would like to compliment the Minister of Finance in connection with this program, because I imagine that an unconditional grant of this size coming at the end of the session is an indication that either he has relented or he has approved the project; and I would like to take it as an indicator that there is at least one member of the cabinet who is favourable to further support for universities.

With regard to the matter referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, it fits rather awkwardly into this announcement at this particular time, but I certainly feel that the point raised by the telegram from the students of Mount Allison is one that the government now has a responsibility for, in view of the fact that the government has the student loans fund in existence on such a large scale. If that student loans fund is to become in a sense the forerunner or the opening of the door for universities to run up their fees in any uncontrolled way, it really means that the students and the federal government in a sense are becoming one more and rather odd way in which universities finance themselves.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Marcoux (Quebec-Montmorency): Mr. Speaker, I think that few people will object to increasing the funds at the disposal of the Canada Council, even if the increase only amounts to \$10 million. We know that such grants are necessary especially in the field of arts. Even with those \$10 million and much more money, it would be impossible to satisfy everybody.

Although I do not have the Canada Council annual report here, I understand that several candidates complained that they could not obtain the scholarships they were entitled to while several persons thought that other candidates who did not seem to be serious candidates obtained them.

I take this opportunity to say how much I am in favour of the recommendation of the committee on procedure and organization requesting the establishment of a standing committee on cultural affairs so that we can, not only intervene directly in the administration of the Canada Council, but at least take a look at the guide lines, the basic principles of that agency's policy.

If I remember correctly, we were told that the Canada Council made fairly large income producing investments in order to support and assist various people who applied for scholarships. And if I am not mistaken, last year the Canada Council stated in its report that it had granted loans to various companies, including finance companies. Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent was among the directors of one of those finance companies.

I suggest that the house should be able to discuss and scrutinize the reports made by the Canada Council as well as those of all other cultural bodies and should endeavour to lay down a policy which the council would have to follow, so that the interests of the Canadian people would be preserved.

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, we can only rejoice when the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) tells us that a special amount is to be granted or given the Canada Council for the purpose of assisting the arts and the humanities. I also heard the right hon. Prime Minister talk about increasing scholarships for special studies.

In view of the fact that the Canada Council grants many scholarships for special studies in this country, I would suggest that our Canadian artists benefit more therefrom. I believe that the council has a large amount of work ahead, and it should assist to a greater extent the performing arts.

We have a great number of artists, many talented opera singers who were applauded in New York, Buenos Aires, San Francisco, at the Scala of Milan, the Vienna Opera; we also have others who belong to the Sadler's Wells Ballet, but unfortunately in Canada we still lack a professional and permanent opera company.

We have musicians who belong to symphonic orchestras in every country, but our orchestras are still lacking in that financial assistance which would allow them to prosper. We also have theatre groups which should be granted greater financial assistance, though our theatrical groups have benefited greatly since the establishment of the Canada Council.