

Government Orders

That is why the government wishes to establish the Canadian Council on the Status of the Artist permanently, so that it can carry out the necessary research and work and propose viable solutions to the problems that have confronted artists for many years, concrete problems like access to private benefit plans, tax matters or unemployment insurance.

The Council will therefore advise the government on projects and measures to promote the status of artists in Canada.

Furthermore, the Government of Canada intends to provide artists, creators and performers with a favorable climate for artistic creation and expression and to take more account of the realities of their profession.

With this in mind, the government proposed additional measures in response to the report of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture to improve economic conditions for artists. These measures include raising public awareness of the arts, improving tax breaks for visual artists who give works to organizations designated by the Cultural Property Import and Export Act or to the state, considering a compensation program for artists in case cultural enterprises fail, preparing a study on access to private benefit plans for self-employed artists, and introducing measures to enable salaried artists to deduct for income tax purposes work related expenses up to \$1,000 or 20 per cent of their income from artistic activities.

These examples show that the Government of Canada wants to give artists their rightful place in Canadian society. I would add that many decisions made in previous years already went in that direction. For example, for several years, artists have been able to deduct the depreciation of their musical instruments from income tax. National service organizations in the arts sector will soon enjoy special tax status giving them the same benefits as charitable organizations.

In 1988, we revised the Copyright Act to better protect the economic and moral rights of creators.

• (1830)

In March 1990, the government of Canada established the Task Force on Professional Training for the Arts in Canada to help develop a policy in that area.

Madam Speaker, in closing, this government intends to live up to its commitment to the arts community. On October 31, 1989, the Prime Minister told this House that the government would act as swiftly as possible to allow the legitimate needs of the Canadian arts community to finally be met, and this for the first time in our history.

However, I want to point out that, had it not been for the commitment of the Siren-Gélinas Task Force, for the perseverance and untiring co-operation of the Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of the Artist as well as for the support of the arts community, there would never have been a bill on the status of the artist.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

[English]

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the wish of the House to suspend the sitting until seven o'clock p.m., at which time we will proceed with private members' hour?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The sitting of the House was suspended at 6.32 p.m.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 7 p.m.

[Translation]

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being seven o'clock, the House will now proceed, pursuant to Standing Order 30(6), to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.