

Performing Arts Grants

ment in January has been abandoned without the slightest explanation in the House.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: It is not a question of the government having promised anything to the House with regard to the equalization matter or having promised anything to me. It is a matter of statements made.

I must say I am disappointed in the Minister of Finance. I am disappointed in the government. I hope the government and the Minister of Finance will make a full statement to the House at the earliest possible opportunity explaining why the government changed its position and at least offer the House some apology for making representations to the House which were asserted early in January and in respect of which the position has since been completely changed.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the Chair will allow the Prime Minister to reply to the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition on a question of privilege. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition does not want me to rule whether there is privilege in the sense that the matter might be referred to a committee. I would be inclined, of course, not to make a ruling because there is no motion suggested or remedy proposed. Normally in such circumstances the minister or member whose conduct is referred to in a statement based on privilege is allowed to reply. The minister is not here at this time. I am not sure whether it might not be better to allow the minister to reply on some other occasion. The right hon. Prime Minister indicated he wanted to reply on behalf of the government. I take it that it is not only the minister but the government that is impugned or referred to in the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition. Perhaps it might be better to allow the matter to rest for the time being.

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PERFORMING ARTS**ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAM OF CAPITAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, the federal government's programs to encourage the arts during the past few years have had a profound effect on the cultural life of the country. This has manifested itself through the burgeoning demand of Canadians for access to the work and performances of our artists in all sectors of our cultural life. Nowhere has this demand been more acutely felt than in the area of the performing arts. As a result, many of our performing arts organizations are faced with the problem of expanding their facilities to meet this demand.

I am pleased, therefore, to announce that a program of capital assistance has been established to enable the gov-

[Mr. Stanfield.]

ernment to act on some of the more pressing applications for capital grants. The first grants will go to the Centaur Theatre in Montreal, which will receive \$350,000; the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake, which will receive \$300,000; and the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver, which will receive \$1 million.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Faulkner: The federal contribution to the cost of renovating the Orpheum Theatre, the new home of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, will be paid over three years beginning in 1975. At the same time, I would like to announce a grant of \$1 million toward building a new home for the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton. These funds will be paid in 1975-1976 and 1976-1977.

The basic criteria for this new capital assistance program will be as follows: first, the grants will be available for well established organizations whose artistic and managerial competence has been proven. Second, there will have to be evidence of the organization's ability to meet the operational costs connected with a new or improved facility. Third, careful consideration will be given to the impact that any expansion program is likely to have on the situation of other artistic groups and facilities, to its over-all usefulness and to its relevance to the performing arts in Canada. Fourth, there will have to be adequate financial partnership among federal, provincial, municipal and private sources.

Over the years, the government's investment in the development of the arts in Canada has paid excellent returns. The benefits to the people of Canada far outweigh the dollars spent. I am confident that these measures I have announced today will result in further development of our national artistic life, as well as in greater access to the performing arts for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Heward Grafftey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, we members of the Official Opposition support in principle the statement made by the minister. I am also sure that the minister will understand our satisfaction that this statement was made today in the House of Commons. I sincerely hope that the minister made this announcement today about these grants only after close consultation and co-operation with the associations and people concerned.

[*English*]

With regard to the grant to the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver, I certainly know how much members of the Official Opposition from British Columbia have worked toward this end, as did the hon. member for Edmonton Centre.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Grafftey: Just look at their mail.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1120)

Mr. Grafftey: There is one thing I would like to mention in terms of the criteria outlined to the House by the minister this morning, and I am not saying it too critically.