

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND LEISURE

15.1 Changes in cultural growth

Cultural activities, including attendance at movies and live performances, listening to radio, records and tapes, reading books and periodicals, watching television, and pursuing arts and crafts, now absorb more hours in a Canadian's day than any other non-work activity except sleep.

Culture plays a significant role in Canada's economy, providing jobs and contributing to national income and growth. In 1985, the cultural labour force was estimated at 307,000. The cultural sector is the fourth largest employer in Canada — three times larger than the forestry sector and equal to the agricultural sector. Cultural revenues totalled about \$10 billion, placing the cultural industries on a par with the metals and mining industry. The cultural industries' direct and indirect effect on Canada's economy is estimated between \$15 billion and \$20 billion.

While the cultural sector is healthy in many respects, certain components require support in order to ensure outlets for distinctive Canadian talent. In acknowledgement of this, the federal government's February 1986 budget allocated an additional \$375 million over five years for the assistance and enhancement of Canadian culture. In announcing the allocation, the government made specific mention of its desire to assist new initiatives that would support the maintenance of Canada's national identity in artistic endeavours.

15.1.1 Federal policies for the arts

The Minister of Communications has been responsible for the government's cultural and artistic initiatives since 1980. In that year, the government transferred responsibility for all federal policies and programs related to arts and culture from the Secretary of State to the Minister of Communications. This was done in recognition of the important link between communications and culture. It ensures that communications policy is formulated with full regard for the cultural implications of communications technologies and that the cultural milieu benefits from technological advances.

The Minister of Communications reports to Parliament on behalf of Canadian cultural boards and agencies, including the Canada Council, the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, Telefilm Canada, the National Arts Centre, the National Film Board, the National Library of Canada, the National Museums of Canada and the National Archives of Canada.

The Department of Communications develops and administers legislation, policies and programs related to the arts, culture and heritage. Its objective is to foster the creation, production, distribution, marketing, use and preservation of Canadian cultural products, objects and activities. Its work addresses the needs of performing and visual artists, crafts people, arts organizations, museums, archives and libraries. In 1986, federal and provincial governments began a joint study of the economic importance of the arts.

Support for arts and artists. The government has taken a number of steps to improve the economic situation of artists and arts organizations. In 1986, task forces examined artists' training and educational opportunities, taxation, employment mobility, professional and trade union affiliations, and access to government programs and services. These reviews were supplemented, in 1986, by a government-commissioned study of proposals put forward by the artistic community during the 1986 Canadian Conference of the Arts. In addition, to ensure a balanced perspective, the Bovey Commission was appointed to investigate broader issues associated with arts funding. This task force, which released its report *Funding of the Arts in Canada to the Year 2000* in June 1986, framed its recommendations within the context of how other countries handle arts funding issues. In early 1987, the Minister of Communications announced the appointment of a seven-member Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of the Artist.

Book publishing. In 1985, the government announced a new policy designed to encourage Canadian presence in an increasingly foreign-owned publishing industry. Citing the impor-