

INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 1989, members of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture started receiving letters, petitions and personal interventions from people in the National Capital Region and elsewhere expressing their grave concern for the direction in which the new Board of Trustees and the new senior management were taking the National Arts Centre (NAC). This concern was echoed in the public media, particularly before and during the strike by the NAC Orchestra musicians in the Fall of 1989. The Committee felt that the issues raised by this public concern were central to the future well-being of the NAC and that they could be usefully addressed in a public forum.

With this objective in mind, the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture unanimously adopted the following motion on 13 December 1989:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture study the role of the National Arts Centre, in particular its involvement with the performing arts in Canada and make recommendations for future action using as a base "The Tom Hendry Task Force Report", the proposal "The Third Decade and Beyond" and, if necessary, "The Nielsen Report" (Economic Growth, Culture and Communications).⁽¹⁾

One month later, the Chairman of the NAC, Mr. Robert Landry, wrote to the Chairman of the Standing Committee, Mr. Felix Holtmann, inviting the members of the Committee "to a meeting in an informal setting here at the Centre for an in-depth discussion on plans developed by management to meet the NAC's goals and objectives as set forth in *The Third Decade*."⁽²⁾ However, the respective schedules of Committee and NAC representatives made this briefing session impossible.

Due to its workload, the Committee could not immediately commence its study and opted to send the Centre 46 written questions touching upon many aspects of its operations and mandate. The questions were sent on 23 March 1990 and the response was received on 15 May 1990 (the questions and their response have been made public). Thereupon, the Committee decided that a sub-committee would best be able to concentrate on the completion of the study and the Sub-Committee on the National Arts Centre was established on 29 May 1990 for this purpose. It was given the following mandate:

That it study the role of the NAC, in particular its involvement with the performing arts in Canada and make recommendations for future action by reviewing: the NAC's reply to the questions sent to the NAC by members of the Standing Committee, the previous testimony of witnesses from the NAC, the 1986 report of the Task Force on the National Arts Centre, the NAC document "The Third Decade and Beyond", the report of the Nielsen Task Force on Program Review, and any other documentation as deemed necessary.