notably China, Vietnam, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Myanmar, the concern with national and cultural identity is difficult to disentangle from a concern with more or regime security, a collective image that will be dealt with in the next section and one that should be kept distinct. Despite the ambiguity of these cases, it is clear that there is a consistency across several countries that views the Internet as a potential threat to cultural security.

The specific policy responses that are forming around this collective image have varied from country to country. Among liberal-democratic states, such as Canada and France, for example, there is a principled reluctance to censor or block out communications with the rest of the world.[24] An important exception is the willingness to censor communications that violate norms of "decency," a measure that has been attempted over the Internet with uneven success by the United States, Germany, and others.[25] Apart from censoring indecent communications, the primary policy response appears to be active state support to ensure a "national voice" has a "presence" on the Internet. For example, the Canadian Heritage Ministry states as its goal to "increase the creation, production and distribution of high quality Canadian content in both official languages to sustain a strong Canadian presence in conventional and new media."[26] This has and supposedly will entail capital investment in Canadian media and entertainment

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[24] For a good overview of Canadian communications policy with special reference to the Internet, see Eli Noam and David Johnston, "Comprehensiveness, Access, and Canadian Content: The Three Pillars of Canadian Internet Policy," (Paper delivered to the Impact of the Internet on Communications Policy conference, December 2-5, 1997, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Found online at: http://ksg.www.harvard.edu/iip/fileserver/Papers/johnston.html

[25] See David Hudson, "Germany's Internet Angst," Wired News (11 June 1995); Stephen Lehnus, "Computer Songs Gain Favor as Answer for Smut Internet," New York Times, September 16, 1995).

[26] See strengthening and Celebrating Canada for the New Millennium, Canadian Heritage Portfolio – Overview of Priorities, (Canadian Heritage, 1999).