

The matter was then referred, although not at the direction of Cabinet, to yet another interdepartmental committee with broader concerns. Whatever may have become of the other issues on the agenda of this committee, the recommendations of the Disney Report disappeared without a trace. We would like to think that during the years consumed in the process of reviewing the Disney Report to no apparent avail, members of Cabinet had been impatiently drumming their fingers and casting anxious glances at their calendars. Unfortunately, and until recent developments jogged their memory, they probably long ago forgot that they had considered the report and instructed departmental officials to provide them with advice in the matter.

The futile interdepartmental discussions of the Disney Report were followed by the launching of what came to be known as the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, co-chaired by Louis Applebaum and Jacques Hébert. In anticipation of this review, the Canadian Conference of the Arts developed and published A Strategy for Culture in late 1980, followed in 1981 by More Strategy for Culture. In both documents we argued that the tax system should be used in a systematic way to encourage growth and development in the arts and the cultural industries. In the first of these documents, we stated that "the provisions of the legislation and regulations affecting income, sales, excise, gift, customs and other taxes or duties represent an important means by which the Government of Canada can improve the financial position of individuals involved in the creation of Canada's culture, strengthen the financial position of companies involved in the production of Canadian cultural goods and services, provide an increased incentive for increased investment in Canadian cultural production activities, help to improve the competitive position of Canadian cultural products vis-à-vis their foreign competition, and encourage individual and corporate donations to not-for-profit arts and cultural institutions and activities." Given the active interest of the cultural community in such matters, the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee received similar representations from other associations and individuals and gave them its consideration. While the federal committee's treatment of these issues was not as comprehensive as had been hoped for, and while the recommendations in its report were not as strong as the problems merit, the attention paid in the Applebaum-Hébert report served at least as a reminder to the federal government that serious problems existed.