

6.2 The Committee further recommends that Canada's international cultural, scientific, and educational foreign policy seek to:

6.2B assist Canada in becoming a major participant in the global knowledge-based economy.

Response

*The Government agrees. Canada's participation in the global knowledge-intensive economy is not only a foreign policy issue. It involves other levels of government, the private sector, institutions of higher education, NGOs and others. The Government recently released a Government-wide action plan, Building a More Innovative Economy, which focuses on four interdependent areas for action:*

- *building a healthier marketplace;*
- *expanding trade;*
- *building efficient infrastructure; and*
- *technology — innovating instead of falling behind.*

*A key component of the Government's plan to build a more innovative economy is the task of transforming today's telephone, cable and computer networks into a fully integrated system — the information highway. The United States, Europe and Japan have launched massive programs to build their information highways. Our present information infrastructure and networks would soon become inadequate without rapid development. The Government will adopt a series of policies and programs to encourage the builders and users of the information highway.*

*One element of this strategy is to give Canadians access to competitive regional and global mobile satellite facilities enabling them to tap into wireless telecommunications services (cellular telephones, paging, broadcasting). These initiatives will clear the way for new radio-based services such as digital broadcasting, personal communications devices, advanced mobile satellites and wireless cable TV.*

*Another element is to extend the Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE). The Government will support CANARIE's business plan to speed the development of key parts of the information highway, including inter alia the creation of a high-speed experimental network to test advanced networking technologies, and an increase in the speed and reach of the Canadian Internet network.*

*Expanding SchoolNet — a joint federal, provincial and territorial initiative to electronically connect schools, libraries, community colleges, universities and hospitals in Canada — is*