

*consciously subscribe to a great many symbols of Canadian citizenship. One of the few unifying symbols they do identify is the CBC, but as our data show, even the CBC is beginning to lose some of its impact as a unifying force as a result of the pressures of globalization and audience fragmentation. In a world where not only broadcasting, but also the other cultural industries, will be experiencing these pressures to a greater extent, it will be important for the future of Canada to maintain and strengthen these distinctive cultural voices through a variety of measures. I strongly believe that the federal government's role will continue to be central in this regard, since we have a clear and unequivocal obligation to ensure that Canadians from one part of Canada are able to communicate and share their experiences with Canadians in other parts of this vast country. — Letter from the Honourable Perrin Beatty, Minister of Communications, to Bud Bird, M.P., Chairman of the Committee, January 24, 1992, p. 1, 2.*

A summary report included with the Minister's letter provides detailed public opinion data on the role of the CBC. (Special permission was granted by Environics for DOC to share their survey results with the Committee. The Committee gratefully acknowledges this assistance.)

*The CBC has always played an important role in affirming and communicating a Canadian identity. Environics surveyed Canadians on the issue of the CBC. It reports that about half of all Canadians believe the CBC contributes a great deal in only two areas — keeping in touch with world events and finding out what is happening in Canada. At a time when Canadians seem to feel a greater need for a sense of Canadian distinctiveness, the report suggests that a declining number believe the CBC is doing a great deal in this regard. Just 31 percent, a decrease of eight points, think the CBC is contributing a great deal to maintaining a distinctive Canadian culture. A plurality of 44 percent think the Corporation contributes somewhat and 14 percent, an increase of nine points, think it contributes "not at all". — Summary Report in letter from the Honourable Perrin Beatty, p. 5, 6.*