

help to create awareness and understanding of the different regional cultures that make up Canada.

In January 1986, the Honourable Marcel Masse, then Minister of Communications, mandated a Task Force to review the role of the National Arts Centre. The report of this Task Force was submitted to the Minister in September 1986 (referred to as the Hendry Task Force after the name of its Chairman). Several of its recommendations were intended to help the Centre better fulfill its national mandate. The Task Force envisaged the creation of an "Electronic Touring Program" as a complement to an enriched program of physical touring and as a cost-effective and intrinsically valuable approach to cultural animation.

The Centre has recently created the position of Executive Producer — Electronic Distribution. While this is a laudable move to reach Canadians outside the capital region, the Committee notes that the Hendry Task Force suggested that new initiatives in electronic distribution be funded through a new annual appropriation of \$2 million (in 1986 dollars) and not through a reallocation of existing funds. Seeking additional resources for a new program or activity is a normal practice of federal institutions. The Committee will make a recommendation about funding in a later chapter.

Two of the 12 electronic distribution projects undertaken by the Centre are for the application of High Definition Television (HDTV) to the performing arts. These HDTV projects have received much attention. They have also been criticized for being funded at the expense of artistic programming, particularly at the expense of the Orchestra. It appears from testimony given by representatives of performing arts organizations that there is uncertainty about the use of HDTV in the performing arts. With reference to these HDTV projects, the Committee believes that experimentation in the application of this television technique should not be undertaken with the limited funds currently at the disposition of the Centre but that it should be carried out only through additional special funding. Given the considerable experience acquired by the Department of Communications in the demonstration of this technique, the Centre should actively seek the advice and maintain during the entire course of this experimentation close cooperation with the HDTV experts in the Department. In the meantime, the Centre should put the HDTV projects on hold.

Recommendation 1

- a) **That the Board of Trustees of the National Arts Centre suspend its HDTV projects until it is granted special project funding.**

The Centre's mandate to assist the Canada Council in the development of the performing arts elsewhere in Canada is amplified in Section 9(2)(e) of the Act. It states that the Centre may: