



# Canadian Library Association

## **Critical Issues Facing the Government of Canada**

Q: “What is the difference between the old economy and the knowledge economy?”

A: “It’s simple really. If you have a dollar and give it to me and I have a dollar and give it to you, we both have one dollar each. If I have one useful piece of information or idea and share them with you and you have another useful idea or piece of information and share it with me, we then each have two useful pieces of information. As we build on each idea we both get smarter and our enterprises get better. The information and idea economy will move nations.”

***Libraries are the Answer. Libraries Transform Lives***

*prepared by the  
Canadian Library Association Political Action Task Force*

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# Critical Issues Facing the Government of Canada

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[www.cla.ca/top/whatsnew/wnap1904\\_2.htm](http://www.cla.ca/top/whatsnew/wnap1904_2.htm)

# *A Message from the Canadian Library Association For the Next Government of Canada*

A call for a new partnership between the Government of Canada and the libraries, librarians, trustees and library workers of Canada.

## **What Canada Needs**

Canada needs a renewed balance in the Rural/Urban Agenda. Canada needs to create communities for continuous lifelong learning. Canada needs to ensure the success and effectiveness of e-government and government online. Canada needs to re-create itself for the emerging global knowledge economy to ensure that it can sustain our quality of life and our social values. This is Canada's challenge as we begin the new century.

## **What Libraries Offer**

Libraries offer a tested and trusted vehicle to serve all regions of Canada in over 22,000 locations from sea-to-sea-to-sea. They connect directly with the 21 million Canadians who are members and regular users of at least one library. Libraries offer trained and motivated staff. They reflect local needs and serve everyone equitably and fairly. They have a sustainable formula in place for service. Libraries have the ability to cost-effectively integrate services for all levels of government. Libraries serve everyone in a special and personalized way including the public,

business, university, college, school, government and the not for profit sectors. They cover all subject domains and have the ability to create and implement effective technological and face-to-face solutions. And lastly, and importantly, libraries are trusted, impartial, accessible, flexible and fair. An estimated 97% of Canadians believe libraries contribute to their quality of life and surveys consistently show that Canada's libraries rank in the top three services those

## **Our Commitment**

communities' value and use. Canada's libraries, librarians, trustees and library workers commit to work with the next government of Canada to ensure the success of Canada in the 21st century. Our organization commits the resources and members of the Canadian Library Association to continue to work with the government of Canada in achieving these goals.

During this 2004 election, CLA encourages a debate about the role of libraries in their communities and institutions in improving Canada and Canadians. Enjoy this publication about our perspectives on the issues facing Canada and the challenges of the information and knowledge-based economy. Please contact us for more information.

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***It is time for Canada. It is time for libraries.***



# **“More Libraries than Tim Hortons and McDonald’s”: Capturing the Cultural and Economic Impact of Libraries on Canada**

by Alvin M. Schrader

This article is based on the results of the national survey by the National Core Library Statistics Program (NCLSP). All figures refer to 1999 unless otherwise stated.

## **What do Libraries and Librarians Mean to Canadians**

This surprisingly complex question can be answered in as many ways as there are types of services provided by library staff.

For one thing, virtually 100 per cent of Canadians over the age of three recognize a library regardless of whether it is a company library, a school library, an academic library, a government library or a public library.

Perhaps this is because there are so many libraries in Canada: 22,000 of them, forming a vast network of library staff finding answers and publications for clients. The general public may not always be able to recognize a library from the

outside. But from the inside, libraries are instantly recognizable. Library users and non-users alike know when something is a library – even if it is mostly computer workstations.

Canadians have a high awareness of libraries.

Another way of answering the question is in terms of Canadians making choices. Think of libraries as library services, and then think of libraries as the many individual and personal choices made by Canadians of every age and every walk of life, every day, everywhere. These choices are about where to look for answers to questions and where to look for publications. While there are lots of places that the individual might choose to try, the surest place is a library. It might be a library at work, a library at school, a library at college or university, a library in a government department, a library in a not-for-profit agency, or a local public library.

Millions of Canadians are making library choices every year. In 1999, Canadians asked library staff a staggering 40 million questions – 40 million choices. Every one of their questions represents an answer to the question of what libraries mean to Canadians.

And there is also the enormous use of the vast collections of publications and other materials that library staff make available for on-site and off-site consultation. In 1999, it was 400 million uses. That means 400 million individual library user choices.

But there is more. Question answering and collection services are by no means the only services provided by library staff.

*There are more libraries in Canada than Tim Hortons and McDonald’s restaurants combined - 22,000 compared to 2,049 “Tim’s” and more than 1,200 McDonald’s. And for every three donuts sold by Tim Hortons in 1999, one book or other item was accessed by someone in a library somewhere in the country. In 1999 twice as many Canadians went to libraries as to movie theatres.*

Depending on the clientele, many other services are offered to meet user-centred needs and interests.

*The National Core Library Statistics Program: Statistical Report, 1999*

represents only a partial response to the cultural and economic information gap about the activities and benefits of the library sector to Canadian society.

## **Canadians as Library Users**

One key indicator in information delivery by librarians across Canada is question answering services. While many library services are organized for unassisted self-service, Canadian library users also seek staff assistance on a regular basis. They asked library staff more than 110,000 questions per day every day of the year – an average of 1.3 questions per person for every woman, man and child in the country.

Another major benchmark is library collection use. When external borrowing and on-site use of library holdings are combined, it is evident that Canadians are voracious consumers of the cultural

materials collected by librarians. Altogether, Canadian library users are estimated to have consulted well over a million library publications per day every day of the year - on average more than 13 items per person for every woman, man and child.

### **Libraries as Economic Incubators**

An important indicator of the economic impact of libraries on Canadian society is employment. More than 38,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff was employed by libraries across Canada in all sectors. This amounted to 73 million hours of library services. Librarians accounted for 22 per cent of all staff FTEs, and technicians for 19 per cent. Expenditures on staffing totalled \$1.4 billion. Although actual staff headcount numbers were not captured in the NCLSP, Canadian workers employed in libraries both full- and part-time were estimated to total 50,000 individuals.

In addition to paid staff, Canadians volunteered thousands of hours to public and school libraries across Canada. It is estimated that 9,000 to 10,000 volunteer trustees served on municipal and regional public library boards and advisory committees that year. Public libraries also relied on volunteer staffing – 7,500 in Ontario public libraries alone. In addition, 41 per cent of school libraries were reported to have relied on volunteer staffing in 1998-99. In total, volunteer public library trustees and volunteer library workers in public and school libraries numbered at least 35,000.

Library expenditures on goods and services are also a measure of economic impact. Librarians spent \$ 2.5 billion to provide library services across the country in all sectors, of which 57 per cent went to staffing and 22 per cent to collection development. When capital expenditures, in public and academic libraries, for both multi-purpose and purpose-built building projects are taken into account, it is reasonable to factor in \$500 million to \$1 billion per year of additional disbursements that typically do not show up in library accounts. As well, some electronic resource expenditures are not included, instead forming part of institutional program allocations.

Equally notable is the determined investment by Canadian librarians in library collection infrastructure. More than \$550 million went to expanding library collection holdings already totalling 465 million items. Such economic investment and cultural infrastructure are not

only substantial, they are also virtually impossible to appraise, particularly when value-added services of selecting, organizing, displaying, storing, preserving and retrieving collections are factored in.

Altogether, then, library expenditures were \$3 billion to \$3.5 billion or more. Conservative estimates suggest that 60 to 65 per cent of expenditures are local, meaning that Canadian libraries add well over \$2 billion to local economies through direct purchases of goods and services, and the multiplier effect magnifies this investment far beyond this amount.

Canadian libraries are economic incubators, stimulating career and business opportunities, education and literacy improvement, and the local economy. Policy makers would be well advised to take note of the significant economic purchasing power of Canadian librarians and their impact on the Canadian economy.

### **Valued-added Contributions to Canadians' Quality of Life**

The research undertaken for the NCLSP makes it evident that the people of Canada are eager consumers of library expertise, services and collections. Library staff in all four major sectors – public, academic, special and school - contribute to Canadian quality of life on a daily basis by making the records of human culture available to a wide range of the general public; to post-secondary students and faculty; to employers, employees and other primary clientele in the government, not-for-profit and corporate sectors; and to children of all ages from pre-school to high school as well as their teachers.

In Canada's goal to become a knowledge-based society, it is difficult to imagine what this country would look like without librarians at the forefront. They add substantial value to an ever-expanding universe of cultural, educational, literary, artistic and business information and publications in formats ranging from pamphlets and photographs to web sites and e-books.

Libraries and library staff make a vital contribution to Canadian society as places for the construction of community, whether it is the community of the general public in towns and cities and rural areas across the country, the community of post-secondary students and faculty, the community of workers employed in government, industry and the not-for-profit sector, or the community

of elementary and secondary school students and their teachers.

In short, the research from the NCLSP reveals the profound impact that libraries and library staff have on the cultural fabric and economic infrastructure of Canadian society. Together, these institutions and people add both measurable and immeasurable value to the cultural and economic life of Canadians.

### No Price Tag

Several important dimensions of library service were not captured in the NCLSP for 1999 - in particular, unassisted use of electronic information in networked environments, which has become a major service provided by Canadian libraries in all sectors.

We should remember, nonetheless, in the quest for quantitative description and generators of economic activity, that every library transaction - whether it is a reference question, on-site consultation of material, borrowing for off-site use, or remote access - represents a "moment of truth" in the lives of Canadian library users. Each interaction is an opportunity for librarians and their staff to contribute to the personal and professional satisfaction of clients of every age and walk of life, every day of the year in every corner of the nation. Every outcome of library service is an individual's story.

As a result, an important dimension of the achievement of librarians does not have a price tag. Libraries and library staff meet a multitude of cultural and economic needs, but their characteristic mode of operation is individualized. That is what a service orientation means.

Hence, both qualitative and quantitative contributions to Canada's emerging knowledge-based economy need to be acknowledged and valued.

The Citizens First report echoes these conclusions. Of 24 public and private services rated by a random sample of 2,900 Canadians in the spring of 1998, public libraries ranked second in service quality after fire departments. They ranked ahead of police, telephone companies, public transit, the public education system and hospitals. Citizen assessments of service quality rested on five factors: timeliness, knowledge and competence of staff, courtesy and comfort, fair treatment, and outcome.

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### NCLSP: An Overview

Canada's National Core Library Statistics Program was established as a partnership venture to capture and analyze key statistical indicators and measures of the overall broad impact on the people of Canada of the facilities and services provided by libraries and library staff across the nation. These key indicators are question answering services, collection use, collection infrastructure, staffing, service points, and expenditures. Library service impacts are broadly conceived as cultural impacts and economic impacts.

Data have now been collected and analyzed for 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1999. In the future, rather than annual surveys, a three-year cycle is envisaged if stable funding can be secured. To date, the types of libraries included in the program fall into three sectors: public, including provincial and territorial libraries; academic, consisting of university and college libraries; and special, consisting of government, not-for-profit and for-profit libraries. So far, it has not been possible to include school libraries in the program. The 1999 survey covered 1,490 libraries in the three sectors: 60 per cent public, 15 per cent academic, and 25 per cent special libraries.

When libraries in all four sectors, including school libraries, are counted together and estimates made for institutions and values missing from the 1999 NCLSP, the data show that libraries and their staff provide impressive cultural and economic benefits to the people of Canada. It is also clear that total library usage far exceeds the levels represented in the National Core Library Statistics Program itself:

- \* 40 million questions answered by library staff
- \* 403 million publications (print and other materials) borrowed by library users or consulted on site
- \* 465 million publications in library collections in print and other formats
- \* 19,000 libraries and 38,000 FTE staff delivered services to Canadian library users through 22,000 service points across the country
- \* \$3 billion to \$3.5 billion in expenditures to provide library services, including staffing at \$1.4 billion and capital expenditures on the order of \$500 million to \$1 billion for multi-purpose and purpose-built building projects in the public and academic library sectors.

# A Modest Manifesto

by Alvin M. Schrader

The library sector is enormously complex. Library staffs serve a plethora of needs, with multiple types of services and clientele spread across the entire fabric of Canada's economic, social and cultural life. The organizational infrastructure of libraries is multi-varied and multilevel within both public and private sectors. And the relationships of libraries with government departments at all levels of government in Canada are complex, confusing and fragmented.

The following suggests a framework - a modest Canadian-style manifesto - for visioning a stronger role for libraries and librarians both in formulating information policy at all levels of government and in organizing and delivering information and expressive content to Canadians:

- \* Libraries have power. They are the brain of the nation. Librarians are user centred. They are the interface in a knowledge-based society. They support imagination and creativity.
- \* Libraries have content. Librarians create access. They organize content for anticipated use. They select and manage collections, real and virtual, and they acquire access to alternative collections around the world.
- \* Libraries foster freedom of choice. Librarians are advocates for access as the foundation of all human rights - freedom of expression and the freedom to receive expressive content.
- \* Libraries are a network 22,000 strong. Librarians are multi-sector. They are connected to each other across the country, to the lives of those living in their communities, and to Canadian society at large.
- \* Libraries provide multiple services to multiple communities of users. They are collections of users in competition among themselves for scarce resources. Librarians mediate this competition.
- \* Libraries make a difference in the quality of life enjoyed by Canadians in both the personal and social realms. Librarians change lives. They strengthen communities. They promote and sustain literacy and reading.
- \* Libraries have a key role to play in information infrastructure, in government e-learning strategy, and in government information e-communication initiatives. Librarians manage a preferred venue for Internet access.

- \* Libraries are economic incubators. Librarians benefit local businesses. They are economic multipliers stimulating local economies through direct purchases of goods and services.
- \* Libraries are socially responsive and fiscally accountable organizations and institutions. They generate goodwill and other intangible assets that do not appear on the balance sheet. Librarians are dedicated to a service ethic of both individual care and community. They enrich all of humanity.
- \* Libraries support the economic, social and cultural life of Canadian society, Canadian business and Canadian democracy. Librarians create cultural and social space. They create intellectual capital.
- \* Libraries and librarians are worthy of social and economic policy support by government officials and elected politicians at all levels of Canadian society. Librarians shape and implement information policy. Libraries and librarians make a difference in the lives of the people of Canada.

The Canadian Library Association believes that there are 9 key issues where the federal government should focus its attention and investment in libraries to improve Canada's future prospects. These are:

1. Preserving Canadian Culture
2. Preparing Canada for the Global Knowledge Economy
3. Educating for the Future: Addressing the Competency Gap
4. Ensuring Equity for all Canadians
5. Ensuring an Innovative Nation: R&D and Information Support
6. Strengthening Canada's Communities
7. Ensuring the Benefits of e-Government
8. Focusing on Children
9. An Investment in Libraries is an Investment in Our Nation's Future

We expand on these issues in the following pages and invite national debate and discussion on Canada's future and ensuring that our economy and citizens are competitive and ever more successful.

## 1: Preserving Canadian Culture

“It’s never felt more Canadian to be Canadian than it does now.”

Douglas Coupland

Canada is beautiful, vast and endowed with great natural and agricultural resources. In our over 137 years as a nation, we have created a great store of artistic, historical, cultural, and literary achievements that are distinctly Canadian and tell OUR stories.

“How does one define Canadian culture? Well, Canadian cultural expression can be described in terms of the television shows and movies we watch and produce, the radio programs and music we broadcast and enjoy, as well as the books, magazines and newspapers that we publish and read. Through pictures, sounds and words, these communicate a uniquely Canadian perspective.”  
(Government of Canada website)

Our federal government plays a key role and can play a greater role in protecting our cultural resources. Protecting and preserving our past is a foundation upon which we can build a uniquely Canadian contribution to the global knowledge economy.

### Library Community Talking Points

***The Government of Canada must invest in preserving our culture. This includes such initiatives as:***

- \* Dealing with the deplorable condition of the National Library of Canada. As recognized in the latest Auditor General of Canada’s report, our literary and cultural history is at extreme risk from hundreds of disasters in our nation’s ‘attic’.
- \* Ensuring that there are library services and strategies for Aboriginal Canadians and Reserves so that the unique history and culture of our nation’s first nations are preserved.
- \* Ensuring that our nation’s heritage is preserved and made accessible by fixing the deplorable physical state of the facilities of many of our museums, national treasures and archives. Most of these institutions contain artifacts and resources that are unique to our local and national history.

- \* Funding digitization projects to increase access to and preservation of unique collections across Canada.
- \* Increasing support for Canadian publishing, local, literary, educational, and academic to ensure Canadian stories are available for Canadians. Indeed, an initiative can be proposed to fund the provision of Canadian books to Canadian school libraries. This meets the mandate of supporting Canadian publishing with the very important outcome of getting books in the hands of school kids so that Canadian kids get Canadian stories.

## 2: Preparing Canada for the Global

“There was a time when Canada was best known for its access to natural resources. However, our country has come a long way since that time. And today, the make-up of Canada’s business sector is as diverse as its population. While industries such as metals and minerals, grains and forest products continue to be important contributors to our economy, knowledge-based industries are equally key to our competitiveness. Thanks to a strong focus on innovation, research and development, Canada has become a world leader in high-technology industries such as telecommunications equipment, lasers, environmental technologies, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, aerospace and software.”

DFAIT Canadians in the World website  
[www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/economy-en.asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/economy-en.asp)

“Americans should never underestimate the constant pressure on Canada which the mere presence of the United States has produced. We’re different people from you and we’re different people because of you. Living next to you is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is effected by every twitch and grunt. It should not therefore be expected that this kind of nation, this Canada, should project itself as a mirror image of the United States.”

Pierre Trudeau

## Knowledge Economy

Canada is endowed with a highly educated citizenry. As the global knowledge economy emerges we can clearly predict that information, in all its forms, will serve as the foundation for discovery, invention and development. Libraries and their professional approaches to preserving, organizing and providing access to information, are essential to exploiting this change in our economy. At the beginning of this century, the sheer amount of information will be a continuing challenge. Those businesses and institutions that can intelligently access and use the 'best' information will have the competitive advantage. Canadian libraries and their trained staff will play a key role in ensuring that Canada will be successful in this challenge.

### Library Community Talking Points

*The Government of Canada must invest in preparing Canada for success in a world where knowledge is economic capital. This includes such initiatives as:*

- \* Encouraging policies and programs that build the knowledge economy and ensure that the competencies and information resources are there and easily accessible for Canadians to succeed. Libraries, paper and virtual, are essential strategies for this transition.
- \* The Federal government has a role in being a model user of information, a model provider of information as well as setting national standards. A clear national standard would be one for information literacy for school or for school libraries in Canada.
- \* The Federal government as a model user would be one where openness and accessibility are held to a high standard. The Federal government's publications should be placed in the public domain and government publications should be easily available through libraries in both paper and electronic formats through the federal depository services program.
- \* The government must ensure that our freedom to read and research without oversight is protected.
- \* The Federal government must ensure that all Canadians' right to personal privacy is protected.
- \* With respect to legislation in the area of copyright, the rights of copyright users must be balanced fairly with the rights of copyright owners. Copyright should not be seen as an

exclusively economic right and must be understood to be essential to a nation's ability to read, invent, research and discover without stifling restrictions.

- \* The funding of higher education research and study through such programs as the Canadian National Site Licensing Program through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation are essential to the progress of our universities and research institutions and must be expanded.
- \* The federal government should monitor, world-wide, all threats to intellectual freedom and ensure that Canadians continue to have a high standard of intellectual freedom in a free society.
- \* The Canadian knowledge economy requires equitable and equal access to the new tools provided by the emerging Internet backbone for communication and research. CLA supports the recommendations of the government's Broadband Task Force to ensure critical infrastructure broadband and security. The government must ensure that the North, rural and native access keeps pace with the access available in urban and the south.
- \* When Canada investigates the roles it might play in the global trade complex, (GATS, TRIPS, etc.), we must ensure that the free flow of information and Canadian cultural property rights and uniqueness are protected. The basic freedoms and rights to free access to information cannot be abrogated.

### 3: Educating for the Future: Addressing the Competency Gap

"It is the task of the rising generation of Canadians to create a new confidence and a new sense of cultural and civic duty in Canada. Unless we achieve some success on this front, and I believe we are beginning to do so, the very real attractions of the vigorous society to the South of us may attract too many of our able people. Then the human resources and skills required to shape and direct a complex industrial economy will simply not be available to us in Canada."

Mitchell Sharp

We know that the new knowledge economy requires new and changed skills and competencies.

This requires that we not only educate the coming generations for their future with the learning they will need but that we also become a nation of continuous learners. Libraries are critical to any strategy that involves learning and self-directed learning. This is the key strategy that will prepare Canadians for the jobs of the future while, at the same time, ensuring their success in the current job market.

### Library Community Talking Points

***The Government of Canada must invest in preparing Canadians and ensuring that future generations have the skills and competencies needed for a knowledge economy. This includes supporting and expanding such initiatives as:***

- \* Building the knowledge economy by identifying the skills required for this new economy and providing the transition and development funding to schools, colleges and universities to develop the programs that will endow learners with the skills and competencies required for the future job market.
- \* By funding higher education properly, we can educate more students, re-educate adult learners and provide continuing education.
- \* CLA is very concerned about the crisis in school libraries and preparing our children for the future. We cannot continue what our National Librarian, Roch Carrier, called a national 'disgrace' in the destruction of school libraries. We do not believe that it is possible to prepare students for the new economy without proper school library programs and staffing. Research proves this. Experience shows that economies start to deteriorate with reduction in libraries for students.
- \* CLA supports all programs that will increase literacy - reading is fundamental. It is a national problem that Canada has too many people who cannot read well enough to participate fully in the economy, democracy and culture of our country.
- \* We must invest in a national Information Literacy program for all elementary, secondary and post-secondary students. Information literacy is essential to successfully and safely using the resources available through the Internet.
- \* The Federal government should expand SchoolNet and LibraryNet to ensure that Canadian content and stories are developed and shared

easily and seamlessly across our country.

- \* The Federal government must provide support for Canadian textbooks. Too many school programs in Canada are using insufficient numbers of textbooks written by Canadians or are using textbooks that are imported from other countries.

### 4: Ensuring Equity for Canadians

"It is through technology that we can catch up, that we can connect native communities to the rest of the world. This will allow us to compete. We missed the Industrial Revolution. We will not miss the Information Technology Revolution."

Matthew Coon Come, former Grand Chief, Assembly of First Nations

"Full-access communications allow us to: take increasing individual responsibility for the quality of our lives; participate as citizens in an ever more complex and interdependent world at whatever level we choose from grassroots to global; acquire the skills and make the time to enjoy the benefits of our growing wealth - in leisure, recreation and the pursuit of personal interests, as individuals or with others."

National Broadband Task Force

While Canadians have enjoyed the best quality of life in the world for the past decade and more, not all Canadians share equally in this advantage. There are parts of our national community that have less. Often, these deficits in education, health, and income are interconnected.

Canadians have a strong commitment to sharing our collective wealth to reduce disparity. Today, we need to make a concerted effort to use full-access communications to include more Canadians on the plus side of the digital divide. With better access to knowledge, participation and opportunity, more and more Canadians can improve the quality of their own lives and, in turn, the quality of Canadian life.

Full-access communications are especially important to these communities and populations:

- \* Rural and remote communities
- \* First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities
- \* Persons with disabilities
- \* Women
- \* Seniors
- \* Francophone Canadians
- \* Ethnocultural communities

### Library Community Talking Points

*The Government of Canada must ensure that ALL Canadians have equitable access to the necessary services and equipment for participation in the electronic world. This includes supporting and expanding such initiatives as:*

- \* Expanding and renewing the Community Access Program (CAP) sites across Canada.
- \* Expanding library service strategies for Aboriginal Canadians and Reserves.
- \* Ensuring equity of access including equitable broadband, Internet, technology, etc. No Canadian should be better advantaged than another.
- \* Expanding library services for persons with special needs across Canada.
- \* Funding a national and equitable program for alternate format library service for print-disabled Canadians. With the growing number of Canadians with print disabilities, this is essential to prioritize.
- \* Ensuring equity for both official languages and native languages.

### 5: Ensuring an Innovative Nation: R&D

“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.”

Louis Pasteur (1822 -1895)

Canadian inventors are responsible for some of the most important discoveries ever made – discoveries that have changed the lives of people all over the world. But one of the most astounding discoveries of all is that most of us don’t know it! The recent National Science Literacy Survey showed that two-thirds of Canadians couldn’t name a single Canadian scientist or inventor, living or dead!

Canadian inventions span a wide variety of industries. Canadians have made important discoveries in the areas of communications, transportation, medicine, aerospace and biotechnology, among others, and have been involved in the invention of everything from the jet airliner to insulin to the telephone.

So, how do we continue this record? And, how do we ensure that Canadian researchers, public and private have the necessary support to continue their research.

### Library Community Talking Points

*The Government of Canada must ensure that Canadian innovation and research and development continue. Canadian researchers and scientists have excellent access to best data, databases, tools and information available in the world. To accomplish this, Canada must support and expand such initiatives as:*

- \* The funding of higher education research and study through such programs as the Canadian National Site Licensing Program (CNCLP) through the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) are essential to the progress of our universities and research institutions and must be expanded. This program must be expanded beyond scientific, medical and technical research into all domains.
- \* Librarians have supported the CFI model across Canada as a successful model to deliver content cost effectively to Canadian researchers. This model could be applied to the funding needs of family literacy and a fair way to develop an unbiased granting foundation that helps to rise above jurisdictional issues. This government should consider promoting this model as a means to provide grants to fund early childhood education, reserve libraries, family literacy, etc.
- \* Canada must invest in R&D and in so doing ensure that the results of that R&D are available for future researchers. The role of Canada’s libraries in protecting and preserving and providing access to scientific and research knowledge cannot be underestimated.
- \* The Depository Service Program, (DSP) which provides access to the wealth of scientific research of governments at all levels must be

expanded and protected. The DSP arrangements are a working partnership between libraries in Canada and the government, which saves the government money and meets the need of governments to disseminate information to the citizenry.

- \* Additional funding of the National Research Council (NRC) and, in particular the internationally renowned library, Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI).
- \* All education levels including adult continuing education should have equitable access to library and research resources to support their lifelong learning activities.

## 6: Strengthening Canada's Communities

“The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village.”

Herbert Marshall McLuhan 1911-1980  
Canadian media philosopher 1967

The quotation above was issued in the context of a 1960's media-driven world. We struggle today with a world driven by electronic media unimagined but still feared decades ago. We believe that these new technologies have the ability to transform our country for the better in the context of our core values and principles. That said, we must ensure that our communities – city, town rural – indeed village – continue to support and nourish our citizens.

Canada is a country of diversity. Most of us live within miles of our southern border. Millions of us live in rural and town environments. More of us live in cities. Many of us live in the far north and many of us live on reserves. To ensure that our economy remains successful and our social fabric remains admired internationally, we must reinvest in the fabric of our cities, towns and rural communities, north, south, east and west.

Community assets that contribute on multiple levels – community events, learning, meetings and assets, strengthen a community's ties. Libraries get top marks on all of these levels. Libraries ensure that their communities are connected – to learning, to the Internet, to the world and to their governments. Libraries ensure that they

enhance the fabric of their communities – through their local web sites, through parents and tots programs, through community meeting rooms, and more. Libraries support every citizen – regardless of age, national origin, language, gender, ability, or race. Libraries preserve local culture – through local history collections, web sites, book and object collections, even museums. Lastly, libraries provide access – intellectual and physical, aided and unaided, open and honest. Libraries assure that the content is safe, high quality, appropriate and provided with access points and service professionals. Libraries are unbiased, trusted, successful services.

A smart government invests in libraries because it knows that an investment in libraries is a dollar well invested. Libraries add value to everything they do and provide synergy for every program they ally with – schools, governments, business and charity. There is no need to create any new infrastructure to deliver many new government programs in Canada when that infrastructure already exists - the public libraries of Canada.

### Library Community Talking Points

***The Government of Canada can ensure that their investments in the knowledge economy are successful by supporting Canada's cities and towns and rural communities through their libraries. To accomplish this, Canada must support and expand such initiatives as:***

- \* Consulting with the leadership of Canadian public libraries to ensure that their programs are aligned with their ability to deliver them successfully.
- \* Providing financial resources to build an improved delivery infrastructure to ensure that Canada's communities can compete.

## 7: Ensuring the Benefits of e-Government

“To compete successfully in the global environment in the 21st century, and maintain our quality of life, we need to recognize that the performance of our economy is interdependent with the performance of our public services.”

National Broadband Task Force

All levels of government in Canada are actively involved in connecting with citizens electronically. Using modern Internet communications technology, our nation is moving firmly down a path to create an entirely new way of interacting with our elected officials and public servants.

With a PC and a fast link, we can access much more of the vast amounts of information and knowledge, paid for by us that reside in governments. And we can have a lot more direct input into government, participating in online consultations, connecting with other citizens, and monitoring political performance.

These are just some of the recommended areas for action:

- \* Governments must be model users of information and communication technologies.
- \* Full-access communications should be available at every public access point in the country, including libraries, learning institutions, health care and government offices.
- \* Governments must be involved in making full-access communications available to people and places that can't be served by market forces alone.
- \* Governments, our biggest spenders, can spread the wealth through online procurement.
- \* Traditional bureaucratic processes can be done effectively and efficiently online - getting information, making inquiries, submitting applications and concerns.
- \* Public services can become more efficient, accessible and responsive. (e.g., tele-justice using video conferencing could relieve clogged courts and save on trips for participants.)
- \* Governments must create policies and regulations that support the development and deployment of communication networks, services and content.

(National Broadband Task Force)

What's the rub? It is that all Canadians do not have access at home to the technology needed to use these tools. Indeed, all Canadians do not have access to technologies other than television and telephone. This is not a great problem. Nearly all Canadians have access to a library. Trained professionals whose service ethic is admired globally staff all libraries. It could be a simple matter to support government's efforts to expand e-government and access to the work of

government by using the infrastructure in place in libraries already.

### Library Community Talking Points

***The Government of Canada must ensure that their investments in e-government are successful. Canadians also need equitable access and assistance in using e-government services. To accomplish this Canada, must support and expand such initiatives as:***

- \* Work with the Canadian library leadership to ensure that Canadian libraries and library systems of all types are included in their e-government strategies.
- \* Consult with the leadership of Canadian libraries to set standards for service in libraries with respect to e-government including such issues as privacy, technology, assistance, etc. By working with the library community in advance, we can ensure that service standards are uniform and fair across the country.
- \* Provide funding to upgrade the technology infrastructure in the current library systems to adapt to e-government needs and demand, rather than build a more expensive, parallel structure.
- \* Provide training in government electronic services to the library community to ensure that service standards and knowledge across the country are well implemented.
- \* Involving Canadian libraries in government online initiatives and funding the incremental costs, can be an excellent working partnership that will save the Canadian taxpayer and the government money.

### 8: Focusing on Children

“ . . . We must all make the effort to ensure that our schools have the resources to provide the print and electronic sources, the technology, and the professional library staff to give all of our children the skills and the tools they need to navigate their way in this knowledge society.”

Roch Carrier, National Librarian of Canada

The study, entitled *The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries: The Case for Reform and Re-investment*, was written by Dr. Ken Haycock, professor and former director at the graduate School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. "The evidence is there for all to see," says Dr. Haycock. "That's why governments in the U.S., Europe and Asia are aggressively investing in their school libraries. What's disturbing is that Canadian policy-makers are ignoring the findings of literally decades of research that shows why school libraries and qualified teacher-librarians are essential components in the academic programming of any school."

Children are our future – nothing more, nothing less. Then again, what else is there but the future?

It seems a shame that children and their learning needs have become a political issue in Canada. However, it is a fact that Canada has too many children living in poverty, too many children in under-funded schools, too many children struggling to read, and too many children who do not have equity of access in comparison to other Canadian children. This government must focus on these needs with a larger perspective. Libraries for learning and children are an essential component of that strategy.

Canadian libraries are one of the strategies that governments can use to fix some of these problems. Schools with libraries produce better performing students. Poor communities improve with libraries. Reading improves with library programs and access to the wealth of information in the world improves when computers are managed and programs delivered by libraries.

It must also be emphasized that, for children, importance of public libraries in fostering a love of reading in pre-school children and throughout their childhood years is crucial in ensuring success in the school system. This is too important an undertaking to be left to local and provincial funding exclusively. Indeed, the entire library community plays a key role in promoting family literacy through school and public library advocacy and programs.

It seems a simple solution that governments must invest in libraries – especially at this critical time in the development of our economy – it is an essential investment in our children and their futures.

### Library Community Talking Points

***The Government of Canada must ensure that our children are prepared for the knowledge economy that they will meet upon graduation. To accomplish this Canada, must support and expand such initiatives as:***

- \* We must set national standards for school libraries and invest in financing all school libraries equally across Canada. The destruction of Canada's school libraries is a national disgrace.
- \* We must ensure that Canadian students have access to Canadian stories. We must support the publishing of these stories as well as the access and distribution of Canadian books and stories through libraries and the web (such as SchoolNet).
- \* We must ensure that Canada's public libraries have the financing and resources to support children in their communities and to encourage reading - because reading is fundamental.
- \* Canada's government must ensure that all children, regardless of ability, have access to learning and learning resources. Libraries are a critical component of this effort.

### 9: An Investment in Libraries is an Investment in Our Nation's Future

"Don't you know what a library is for? It's to prevent us from making damn fools of ourselves."

George Locke  
Chief Librarian, Toronto Public Library 1908- 1937  
quoted in the *Toronto Star* April 3, 1982

Whether we are talking about the major library systems in a Canadian city, the small, beautiful rural library branch, the happy school library, the major research library at a university, the technical library of a college, the proud library on a reserve, the hospital library for patients and medical pros, or a fresh law library in Canada's newest territory Nunavut, we can clearly recognize

that libraries support nearly everything we care about in Canada:

- \* Learning and schools for our whole lives
- \* Preparing children for their futures
- \* Medical care and good health and nutrition
- \* Peace order and good government
- \* Healthy and effective communities
- \* Entertainment, the arts and culture
- \* A great democracy
- \* A wonderful country

Whenever the Federal government has invested in libraries (e.g., public Internet access through the CAP Community Access Program, Canadian National Site Licensing Project, SchoolNet, LibraryNet, DSP, etc.), libraries have delivered extraordinary, cost-effective, nationally significant results, straight to Canadians.

The Canadian Library Association encourages the next government of Canada to seriously involve the library community in their consultations and decisions. We encourage governments at all levels to recognize that libraries, trustee already have the service, technology and staff infrastructures to deliver key strategies into Canada's communities. Libraries are essential to economic, community, learning and future-oriented strategies for achieving success in our emerging global knowledge and information economy. Canada's libraries, librarians, trustees and library workers stand ready to advise and serve their country.



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### ***CLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom***

[www.cla.ca/about/intfreed.htm](http://www.cla.ca/about/intfreed.htm)

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those, which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available the entire library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles